

What the Church of God Believes, and Why (1917)

1. We believe the Bible is the book through which God has revealed His will to man, and that all other teachings contrary are false and spurious.

REASON: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2 Tim. 3:16,

2. We believe in examining everything in the light of the Bible, weighing everything in the balance of the Bible and if it will not stand the test of the Bible reject it, but if it will accept it.

We believe in granting liberty of thought, and speech, and stand for an open forum where advanced light can be given stimulating a growth in knowledge.

REASON: I Thess. 5:21, "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good." "Grow in grace and knowledge." 2 Peter 3:18.

3. We believe in God the Father, the Creator of heaven and earth.

REASON: Gen. 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

4. We believe that Christ is the son of God. That after His death, burial and resurrection He ascended to heaven and is now at the right hand of the throne of God.

REASON: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Matt.3:17 "He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." Mark 16:19.

5. We believe that Christ was in the grave just three-days and nights. That He resurrected in the end of the Sabbath, and placed in the tomb just three days and three nights previous.

REASON: He said He would be in the earth three days and three nights. Matt 12:40

It was in the end of the Sabbath when the earthquake occurred, and when the angels descended, when the stone was rolled away and when the resurrection occurred.

Matt. 28:1-6.

(Send for tract on Crucifixion and Resurrection.)

6. We believe that the Commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus are the standards of righteousness by which the future destiny of mankind will be determined in the day of judgment.

REASON: In Rev. 14:9,10 an account of the destruction of the wicked is given, and in verse 12 we are told that the saints, the ones who are saved, are those who Keep the commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus. See also Rev. 12:17; Rev. 22:14; 1 John 5:3; and James 2:10-12.

7. We believe in the literal, personal, visible return of Christ to the earth at the end of this age.

REASON: The inspired apostle Paul says He will come personally and literally,

Acts 3:20, 21; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17; 2 Thess. 1:7,8. John, Peter, and James also testify the same. The angels from heaven said in Acts 1:11, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." And Jesus Himself said he would come again and the event would be as the lightning flashing from the sky. Matt. 24:15-31.

8. We believe God's people will be posted regarding the length of time Jesus will be away, and will therefore be looking for His return, and expecting Him when He comes.

REASON: "Ye brethren are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief, ye are all the children of light." 1 Thess. 5:4, 5.

"If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief." Rev 3:3.

Speaking of His coming, and giving a series of events which will transpire before He returns, Christ says, Matt. 24:33, "So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the door."

9. **We believe when people die they become unconscious and remain in the grave in this condition until the judgment:** but their thought perish, and all hatred, love and envy ceases.

REASON: Ecclesiastes 9:5, "The living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything." Verse 6, "Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished." Psa. 146:6, "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."

10. We believe the righteous dead will be resurrected to life at the coming of Christ.

REASON: 1 Thess. 4:16, "The lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first ."

1 Cor.15:52, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

1 Cor. 15:22, 23, "For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming."

11. We believe that the signs of the times indicate the nearness of Christ's return.

REASON: The perilous times, "This know ye that in the last days perilous times shall come." 2 Tim. 3:1. This is a time of worldliness and pleasure, covetousness and ungodliness. 2 Tim.3: 2-5. A time when knowledge is increased as never before. Dan, 12:10 says, "In the time of the end knowledge shall be increased." We are living in the time of the automobile and other chariots, vehicles and street cars spoken of in Nah. 3:3-5. And the prophecies of God have nearly all been fulfilled: Dan. 2; Matt. 24; Luke 21; Dan. 7, and many others.

12. We believe that the living and the dead will be judged and receive their reward at the coming of Christ at the end of this age.

REASON: 2 Tim. 4:1, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick (living) and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom."

As this was spoken 66 A.D., it was a future event at that time and as no occurrence of this nature has ever transpired since; it is yet a future work.

It would be very absurd to think of the dead receiving their reward before they were judged, and this would be an impossibility. They are judged when Christ comes therefore they could not receive their reward before that time, and this is exactly the teaching of Christ. In Rev. 22:12 He says, "Behold, I come quickly and my reward is with me to give to every man according as his work shall be." This forever does away with the belief that people are now in heaven receiving their reward, which would place the judgment in the past, and to believe it would necessitate our denying the plain statements of our Savior to the contrary.

13. We believe in the inspired church name, "Church of God"

REASON: It is the only church name found in the Bible. There are over six hundred different church denominations, not one of which, the name is mentioned in the scriptures, as pertaining to the name of a church. The statement is once made "The churches of Christ," is made, but in every other place it is mentioned, ten times in all, it is called "The Church of God." It was the Church of God that Christ purchased with His own blood, Acts 20:28. It was the Church of God Paul persecuted before his conversion, 1 Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13, and it was the Church of God of which he afterwards became a member, 1 Cor. 1:2.

14. We believe that among the different instruments of law given by God the Father the ten commandments were far superior to any other; and that they constitute the fundamental organic code of all law and the constitution of the supreme court of heaven.

REASON: They were thundered from Sinai's quaking summit, with a voice that shook the earth. Ex. 19:16-18.

They were written with the finger of God on tables of stone, Ex. 31:18; 32:15, 16. No other code of law in the Bible was written with the finger of God on tables of stone, but the other documents were written by Moses in a book. But not so with the Ten Commandments. God did this work Himself, with His own finger on stone. By this very act we see that He magnified them above all else, that they were exalted by the Almighty and considered superior to all other documents or codes.

15. We believe that the wages of sin is death, and that all sinners will be destroyed out of the earth.

REASON: "The wages of sin is death," Rom. 6:23. "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He shall destroy the sinner out of it," Isa. 13:9.

16. We believe sin is the transgression of the law.

REASON: "Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

17. We believe that one becomes a sinner in the sight of God just as soon as he breaks anyone of the commandments of this eternal code of law. That to break any one of them makes him a transgressor of the law, and therefore a sinner.

REASON: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." James 2:10, 11.

NOTE: This eternal document often commandments contains the two above named precepts, therefore it is, beyond any question of doubt, that this was the law to which the apostle referred. This was twenty-seven years after Christ's ascension. James informed the people of that day that if they kept all these commandments and yet violated just one, they were guilty of all. That is, as "sin is the transgression of the law," to transgress in only one point would make the guilty party a sinner, showing that this code of law which God wrote with His finger on tables of stone was still in force.

18. We believe that as the 4th precept, or article of the constitution of high heaven forbids labor on the seventh day of the week, and commands that this day be kept holy, it would be a violation of the law to desecrate it, the same as to break anyone of the other ten commandments, and thereby make the guilty party a sinner in the eyes of Cod.

REASON: "If you keep the whole law and yet offend in one point you are guilty of all." James 2:10,11.

"This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandment are not grievous." 1 John 5:3.

Those who are saved in the end of the world are the ones who have kept the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. Rev. 14:12.

19. We believe that the life that Christ lived while on earth is the life that will save, and that all Christians should accept Him as their example, and follow His footsteps, and that if they will do this they will not be in darkness, but will have the light of life.

REASON: "In him was life, and His life was the light of men." John 1:4. "If we follow Him we will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." John 8:12.

20. **We believe that all professed Christians who keep Sunday for the Sabbath, are not living in accordance with their name, as they do not follow Christ in this practice.**

REASON: Christ never in all His life mentioned the first day of the week, neither did He keep it as a sacred or holy day, but to the contrary He kept the seventh day Sabbath all His life. "He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." Luke 4:16. 'The following verses tell of the sermon He preached. Christ's mother, and the holy women "kept the Sabbath according to the commandment." Luke 23:56.

21. We believe that the commandments which were done away with, and nailed to the cross, included only the code of commandments contained in the sacrificial ordinances, viz., the atonement for sin by animal sacrifices, the yearly sabbath days, governed by the day of the month, or moon, the feasts and other holy days included in the same code of law, and did not in any way whatever affect the commandments of God, which is, and will forever be, the constitution for the supreme court of heaven and earth.

REASON: "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, the law of commandments contained in ordinances." Eph.2:15 (Not the ten commandments).

Speaking of the sacrificial commandments Paul says, "Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things, By his own blood he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." Heb. 9:10-12

The commandments of God did not cease at the cross, for 57 years afterwards, John tells us, that this is the love of God that we keep his commandments and his commandments are not grievous. 1 John 5:3. And 63 years after the cross he told the people that the ones who are saved in the end of the world were those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Rev. 14:12.

The seventh day Sabbath was also sacred and holy 31 years after the cross as Paul mentions the seventh day, and tells the people to enter into that rest as God did, and that there remained a rest, (Margin "the keeping of a Sabbath") to the people of God. Heb 4:4-11.

22. We believe that the foreknowledge of God is portrayed in the scriptures of truth by divine prophecy, and that God purposed the authenticity of His word to be proven by the response of history to the call of prophecy.

REASON: Isa. 41:22,23, "Let them bring them forth and show us what shall happenand know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are God's."

Deut.18:22, "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord and the thing follow not nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken."

23. We believe that there is but one faith of which God is the Author, and only one form of baptism acceptable to Him.

REASON: Eph. 4:5 "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

24. We believe this one faith of which God is the Author, is the one revealed to us in His Word through the life and teachings of Christ and the gospel of the apostles, and any other gospel foreign to this, regardless of the claim of divinity is not genuine but counterfeit.

REASON: Speaking of Christ John 1:4 says, "In Him was life; and His life was the light of men." Paul says, "But though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Gal. 1:8.

25. We believe this one form of baptism acceptable to God is immersion, being buried, or planted in the watery grave which is typical of the burial and resurrection of Christ.

REASON: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." "For If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Rom. 6:3-5.

Matt. 3:16, "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." In John 8:12 we read, If we follow Him we won't be in darkness but will have the light of life.

Col. 2:12, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God."

NOTE: This is the gospel of the apostles, and Paul says as noted above, Gal.1:8, "If an angel from heaven preach any other gospel.... let him be accursed." Is there a different gospel from this being preached today, and can we discern the genuine from the counterfeit?

26. We believe that faith is the essential quality through which soul salvation is gained, and not through dead works.

REASON: Gal. 2:16, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law (sacrificial code), but by the faith of Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Jesus Christ, and not by the works of the law," (offering sacrifices).

Gal. 3:26,27, "For ye are all the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

NOTE: After Christ the great sacrificial Lamb had been slain, redemption and remission of sins could only be received through faith in Him, and not by the works of the law which commanded the killing of lambs for a sin offering, which commandments ceased at the cross. See Heb. 9th and 10th chapters. Those who rejected Christ continued the works of the law and the killing of animal sacrifices.

Speaking of the ten commandment code of law written on stone by the finger of God Paul says Rom. 2:13, "Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers shall be justified."

27. We believe that the individual having faith, will thereby be prompted to higher ideals, and will conform his life to the requirements of God, and his faith will be manifested by works.

REASON: James 2:18, "Shew me thy faith without thy works and I will shew thee my faith by my works." James 2:17, "Faith, if it hath not work is dead being alone."

Christ says, "Not all that say, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but they that DO the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matt 7:21.

28. We believe that in the day of judgment many will be disappointed and rejected who have believed in Christ and performed works in his name. Therefore admonish everyone to carefully consider:

REASON: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Prov 14:12.

"Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works, and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from Me." Matt. 7:22.

James. 2:19, "The devils also believe and tremble."

"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. 10:12.

29. We believe that the Benefits of God's plan of salvation will only be realized by those who through faith accept it as divine, make use of it in accordance with God's purpose, and conform their lives to His requirements, and do His will continually.

REASON Rev. 14:12, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

Rev. 22:14, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Matt. 7:21, "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but they that do the will of my Father which is in heaven."

30. We believe that man is mortal and therefore is subject to death.

REASON: Job 4:17, "Shall mortal man be more just than God?"

31. We believe that man will put on immortality at the resurrection and not at death.

REASON: 1 Cor. 15:51-53, "We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

32. We believe that God only hath immortality.

REASON: 1 Tim. 6:16 "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."

Note: This forever refutes the claim that the dead saints are now clothed with immortality.

33. We believe that the dead are unconscious between death and the resurrection.

REASON: Eccl. 9:5, "The living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything."

Psalms 146:4, "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."

34. We believe that the soul of man, which is in several places translated person, meaning the essentials of life the real person dies.

REASON: Ezek.18: 20, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

35. We believe that the wicked will be totally destroyed, that they will be consumed, burned as stubble fully dry.

REASON: Nahum 1:10, "They shall be devoured as stubble fully dry."

Mal. 4:1, "all that do wickedly shall be as stubble and the day cometh that shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch."

2 Thess. 1:9, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power."

36. We believe that the righteous will be rewarded and recompensed in the earth and that they will never be permanently removed.

REASON: Prov 10:30, "The righteous shall never be removed; but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth."

Prov.11:31, "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth."

Matt. 5:5, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

37. We believe that the kingdom of God will be established on the earth, and that this is a future event.

REASON: "And the kingdom, and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." Dan. 7:27.

Paul says, 2 Tim. 4:1, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom." In verse eight He says, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." Paul speaking to the apostles 45 A. D. in Acts 14:22, "Continue in the faith that we must through tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." The kingdom at this time was recognized by the apostles as future and with the absence of any history that it was since established, and surrounding conditions such as to plainly

indicate that it was not present with us we conclude with the following testimony of Christ that it is yet future, Matt. 25:31, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory."

38. We believe there have been four universal kingdoms to rule the world, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, and that the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, as interpreted by Daniel, was consequently true, and the fifth universal empire yet to be established, represented by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, will be the kingdom of God.

REASON: Daniel 2:38-40, speaking to Nebuchadnezzar Daniel said, "Thou art this head of gold. After thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass shall bear rule over all the earth, and the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron." After stating that the kingdoms of earth would be divided in their last stages of existence, and that they would not cleave one to another, he said "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven, set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand for ever." Verse 44.

39. We believe that Christ's return to the earth will be at a time of war, bloodshed, and strife, when the nations in their divided state, are angry, and there is a time of trouble in progress as was never before witnessed.

REASON: Rev. 16:14,15, "The spirits of devils working miracles go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." "Behold, I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth."

Dan. 12:1,2, "There shall be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation, even to that same time, and at that time thy people shall be delivered every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall come forth."

Rev. 11:18, "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear My name small and great, and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth."

40. We believe that the ordinance of the Passover or Lord's Supper, as Christ instituted it, should be observed yearly, that the wine and bread are typical of His spilled blood, and broken body.

REASON: Luke 22:17, "And he took the cup, and gave thanks and said, 'Take this, and divide it among yourselves.' For I say unto you, 'I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.' And, he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it and gave unto them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you this do in remembrance of me,' Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, 'This is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you.'"

This was the Passover supper, and was to be a perpetual ordinance from the words of the Savior in verse 16, which reads, "For I say unto you I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." He repeats the same in verse 18, making it all the more emphatic that this ordinance would reach even into the kingdom of God.

As God is a God of order He has set a time for this ordinance which we find to be once a year. Exod. 13:10, "Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year." Judges 21:19, "Behold, there is a feast of the Lord in Shiloh yearly." This feast of the Lord, commonly called the Passover, was instituted by God on the 14th day of the first month and kept by His chosen people for many centuries on that day

Ex. 12 and Lev. 23. The sacrificial lamb, which for hundreds of years was slain on this day painted forward to Christ. The bread and wine which Christ instituted on the same day likewise point backward to Him.

The foregoing forty principles which the "Church of God" as a body accept and hold to as Bible facts are irrefutable and we believe should be sounded to the world. Forty more could likewise be given, and let us with one voice send out the messages of our day. The warning cry, and messages of soul salvation for the hour must go to the earth's remotest bounds, and this is the work for the Church of God, which should, and must be composed of the people of God, whose duty it is to not spend all their time and talents for self, but devote some to God.

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