

Church of God, Santa Rosa

Outline of Beliefs

PREAMBLE

The following are brief statements regarding the fundamental beliefs of the *Church of God, Santa Rosa*. The doctrines, teachings and beliefs of this Church are based on the Holy Bible, the only inspired words of God. As Jesus stated in Matthew 4:4, we believe we should live by every word of God as recorded in the inspired scriptures. This is not intended to be a comprehensive statement of the beliefs of this Church, but to give the reader a simplified list of the core beliefs of this Church.

God the Father

- There is one supreme God, God the Father.
- The Father is a spirit being of eternal existence and has ultimate power and authority.
- The Father is a God of supreme love, mercy, justice, wisdom and knowledge.
- God the Father, in His supreme love, desires a family; to share eternal life and power with those who will be born into His family because of their desire to live by the same values that He does.
- Currently the family of God consists only of God the Father and Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
- God the Father created a “Plan of Salvation” whereby human beings will be “born” into His family through a resurrection from the dead.
- All that Jesus Christ has and will accomplished, all that mankind should do in following the will of God the Father as expressed in His inspired Bible, repenting of sin, conversion, becoming members of the Father’s Church, keeping His commandment to love Him and our neighbors, observing the Sabbath and Holy Days, all through the power of His Holy Spirit, should be done to the glory, honor and worship of God the Father. All else that follows in this list of beliefs is recorded in the hope of helping to accomplish that purpose.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God

- Jesus of Nazareth, born of the virgin Mary, is the Christ, the Messiah prophesied by many Old Testament scriptures.
- Jesus Christ is the only true “begotten” and “born” Son of God.
- There is only one name under heaven whereby humans may be saved, Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God.
- Jesus Christ has always existed as God, however, He was known as the Word or Logos during Old Testament times.
- Through Jesus, God the Father created heaven and earth, the universe and all that exists.
- Jesus Christ gave up His spiritual body and existence to become flesh and blood, conceived through the Holy Power of God the Father, the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. He is therefore referred to both as the “Son of God” and the “Son of Man”.
- Jesus Christ was still God while He dwelt as flesh and blood among human beings.
- Jesus Christ, while in the flesh, though tempted in all ways, lived a perfect life without sin.
- The life of Jesus Christ, who is the Creator of all human life and all that exist, is worth more than all human life combined; and therefore, His death can satisfy the death penalty for sin for every human who will ever live.
- Jesus Christ was resurrected by God the Father after three complete days and three complete nights (72 hours) in the grave, ascended to heaven and now sits on the right hand side of God the Father as our spiritual High Priest.

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

- Jesus Christ will return to this earth as Lord of Lords and King of Kings to defeat evil and establish the Kingdom of God on this earth. This is referred to as the “Second Coming of Jesus Christ”.
- At the Second Coming of Jesus, the “first resurrection” will occur in which all saints from the first 6000 years of human existence will receive their reward of eternal life in the Family of God.
- Jesus will rule the earth upon the throne of David as his descendent with His resurrected saints for a thousand years after His Second Coming. This is often referred to as the “Millennium”.
- The resurrected saints will “sit on thrones” along side Jesus Christ ruling over mankind during the Millennium thus establishing a Kingdom of God upon this earth.
- The Second Coming of Christ is imminent.

Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit Power, “energy” or “life force” of God the Father.
- The power of the Holy Spirit is mediated by and through Jesus Christ to human beings that the Father calls to be Christians.
- The Holy Spirit is a “comforter”, an aid, a guide and spiritual strength to help humans obey the Father.
- The Holy Spirit is a “down payment” of the spiritual essence of eternal life that the Father offers mankind.
- The Holy Spirit is not a separate being or individual, but a power that emanates from God the Father.

The Bible

- The Bible, as canonized by the New Testament Church, from Genesis to Revelation, is the inspired revelation of the Father to mankind.
- Every word and thought in the original writings is inspired and cannot be discredited.
- The words of the Bible are the foundation of all spiritual truth, knowledge that mankind could not otherwise discover on his own.
- The words of the Bible reveal of God’s Plan of Salvation for mankind.
- The Bible is the final authority on Christian faith, hope and love; the teachings or doctrines of God necessary to obtain salvation, the gift of eternal life.
- All of the commandments of God found in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible (this does not include Old Testament rituals) are holy, spiritual, perfect, just and good for mankind and are still in effect.
- All of the laws of the Bible are based on the two great commandments:
 - Love God with all your heart, mind and soul.
 - Love your neighbor as yourself.
- The commandments in the Bible reveal the character and love of God, that is, how He would live and interact with humans if He lived among humans. This, therefore, is exactly the example that Jesus Christ set for mankind.
- The most famous of these laws are the Ten Commandments which Jesus endorsed and spiritually magnified.
- Obedience to these commandments of God leads to blessings and happiness, some in this world, but mostly in the “world to come” -- meaning the Kingdom of God.
- God also expects us to obey the laws of the nation we live in, as long as they do not directly conflict with His laws.
- Both the Old and New Testaments record various covenants that God has and will make that include specific promises to those who keep the terms of each of these covenants.
- The most important of these covenants is the “New Covenant” which promises eternal life to those who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and commit to obeying the laws of God the Father.
- Approximately one-third of the Bible is prophecy with the majority of those prophecies yet to be fulfilled just prior to, during and shortly after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
- The Bible is written in such a way that it can easily be misinterpreted without guidance from the Holy Spirit.

Mankind

- Mankind was created in the image of God with the potential to be born into the family of God.
- The creation of Adam and Eve was approximately 6000 years ago.
- Human beings are made of mortal flesh and are subject to death and bodily decay.
- God breathed the breath of life into the first man Adam and he became a living soul.
- The “soul” is simply the “breath of life” in a human being and it is not eternal; when a human dies, the soul is also considered to be in a “state of death”.
- God does “preserve” the souls of the dead for yet future resurrections.
- God puts a very small part of His spirit intellect (not the Holy Spirit) in all humans and this is referred to as the “Spirit of Man”.
- The “Spirit of Man” gives each and every human the powers of reason, mental creativity and self awareness – a “mind” -- whereas animals only have a brain.
- The purpose for mankind on this earth is to develop the “character of God” by obeying God’s laws and to continually increase the “fruits” of the Holy Spirit so they can become the spiritually born children of God in a future resurrection.

Sin and Forgiveness

- Sin is the transgression or breaking of the laws and commandments of God as revealed in the Bible.
- Sin separates humans from God resulting in the misery and suffering currently existent in this world.
- The penalty of sin is death and this penalty had to be satisfied before humans could be forgiven and receive the gift of eternal life.
- All humans, starting with Adam and Eve, have sinned and therefore are under a “death penalty” which can only be forgiven by accepting Jesus Christ as Savior and His shed blood as payment for our individual sins.
- God the Father’s great love for each individual human is the reason He sent Jesus Christ to be His Son in the flesh and gave Jesus over to crucifixion to sacrifice His live for all humanity.
- The death and shed blood of Jesus Christ satisfies the penalty of sin for those accepting Jesus Christ as their Savior. In other words, Jesus Christ died in place of those sinners who accept Him as their Savior.

God’s Plan of Salvation

- God’s “Plan of Salvation” is to enlarge His family through the spiritual event of humans being “born” into the Kingdom of God.
- God’s “Plan of Salvation” includes everything He has done to enlarge His family including the creation of mankind, the revealing of His laws to define sin, the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ in order to forgive mankind’s sins and the gift of eternal life through a resurrection from the dead.
- God created man in “His Image” and patterned human life after what He seeks to achieve in His spiritual family. Therefore God gave man and woman marriage in order to teach love, faithfulness, kindness, moderation, self discipline, communication, etc. In this marital relationship, children are born and a family is created. The Bible draws many parallels from human marriage and families to teach us about God’s family and our relationship with God the Father and God the Son. The family should also be the foundation upon which any human society is built. When this family relationship is degraded and destroyed the moral fiber of society is degraded and destroyed.
- God’s “Plan of Salvation” is a “mystery” revealed at this time to the “firstfruits” of those “called and chosen” to be Christians.
- Salvation is a “gift” from God that cannot be earned, but is obtained through the mercy and grace of God only to those who love God and demonstrate that love by striving to obey God’s laws and repenting when they falter.

- Christians are born into the Kingdom or Family of God through a resurrection.
- When born into the Family of God, humans will become spirit beings “like” God.
- Salvation is a difficult process requiring patience and faith during tests and trials and total love for God and His laws.
- God the Father has allotted 6000 years for human kind to pursue their own ways resulting in spiritual deception for most of the world.
- God the Father has allotted 1000 years, the Millennium, after the Second Coming of Jesus Christ where every human born during this period will have the opportunity to know God in truth.
- After the Millennium, there will be another resurrection to physical life for all humans who never had a chance to know God and the promise of a Savior. At this time they will be granted an opportunity for conversion.
- After this, those few who permanently reject God and refuse to repent will be thrown into a “Lake of Fire” to be burnt up, ceasing to exist, eternal death.
- These resurrections: to a second physical life, to life eternal, to destruction in the Lake of Fire, is referred to in the Bible as “the Judgment”.

Conversion

- In order to receive the gift of salvation, each individual human must completely surrender their life and will to God.
- Each individual must acknowledge and truly repent of all their sins.
- When an individual is mature enough to understand the basic principles of God’s Plan of Salvation they should dedicate their life to following God’s laws as the result of their love for God.
- Baptism by complete immersion is the physical ceremony through which one proclaims this decision to give up their old way of life to follow after God’s way of life.
- The “laying on of hands” should take place immediately after baptism and it is through this act that an individual receives the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- The gift of the Holy Spirit should truly “change” a person; greatly increasing the evidence of the love of God in how they live their life and demonstrating continual growth in the fruits of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
- Only those who have the Holy Spirit and are lead by the Holy Spirit “belong” to God and are eligible to receive the gift of eternal life.
- God’s people have a direct relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. This relationship is strengthened through prayer, Bible study, meditation and fasting.
- Faith is a spiritual belief in God and His promises for which there is no scientific explanation. Those who have faith, order their lives according to their belief in God. Without this faith, it is impossible to please God.

Sabbath and Holy Days

- The seventh day Sabbath was sanctified at “creation week” and is the only day of the week set aside by God as holy time.
- The Sabbaths and Holy Days are the only times where God commands us to rest, to refrain from labor, and worship Him in “holy convocations”.
- The Sabbaths of God are from sunset to sunset.
- The Sabbath and Holy Day help us to understand God’s Plan of Salvation through the meanings inherit in each of them.
- The seven annual feasts of God are to be observed by all mankind forever.
 1. Passover (not a holy day but a holy occasion and convocation)
 2. Days of Unleavened Bread (first and last days are holy days)
 3. Pentecost
 4. Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)
 5. Atonement (Yom Kippur)

6. Tabernacles (Sukkoth) (first day is a holy day)

7. Eighth Day or Last Great Day

- Passover is during the early evening on Abib 14, shortly after the sunset ending Abib 13.
- Pentecost is always on a Monday.
- The official Jewish governing body establishes the calendar that should be used in determining the seven annual feasts and holy days.

Church

- God the Father established His Church through Jesus Christ with Jesus Christ as the only Head of the Church.
- The Church of God represents or continues “the body of Jesus Christ” as a cooperative collection of His disciples – those individuals who spiritually strive to live their life as He did.
- Repentance and baptism by complete immersion are prerequisites in order to be a spiritual member of the Church of God the Father; however, anyone of any age may physically attend the convocations of the Church.
- The name of God’s Church is the “Church of God” and a location as desired.
- All members of the church are spiritual brothers and sisters in Jesus. God gives different spiritual gifts to each individual in the “Body of Christ” (the ministry is only one of these many gifts).
- God the Father and Jesus Christ work through a ministry, ordained through the laying on of hands, within His Church to inspire, lead, encourage, teach, help and correct His people.
- The ministry is to serve their fellow brothers and sisters, “helpers of their faith”, not to rule over them with a “Gentile form of government”.
- The government in God’s Church is through the unity of the Holy Spirit. People of like-mind agree to same principles and “submit” to each other in the love, humility, gentleness and kindness of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ is the only Head and Ruler of the Flock of God the Father.
- The mission of the Church is to hold firm to the original doctrines that Jesus delivered and preach them to mankind, baptizing those who repent upon hearing this Gospel of Jesus.
- Tithing is an act of worshipping God still valid in New Testament times; and God in His wisdom has granted those tithes to those ministering to His New Testament Church.

Angels, demons and Satan

- God the Father, through Jesus, created million upon millions of angels; spirit beings of tremendous power.
- These angels are “ministering servants” of God, meant to be watchers and helpers of the human race as they developed their potential to be born into the Family of God.
- The Bible reveals the names of only three angels, the “covering cherubs”: Michael, Gabriel and Lucifer.
- A third of the angels, now referred to as demons, followed Lucifer, now called Satan or the Devil, in his rebellion against God.
- Satan is a real spirit being, a “fallen” angel, and is an adversary to God’s Plan of Salvation for mankind.
- Satan rebelled against God in a “spiritual war” that wrecked havoc in this physical universe. While the universe may be billions of years old, the resulting destruction of this “war” necessitated the “recreation” of earth in a literal one-week period to prepare the earth for habitation of mankind.
- Satan and his demons have been allowed to influence this world for 6000 years until the second return of Jesus Christ.
- The influence of Satan and his demons has affected the vast majority of mankind down through history to rebel against God and His laws.

Heaven and Hell

- No human being has ascended to heaven, only Jesus Christ who “came down” from heaven.
- All humans when they die will wait in their graves for one of the resurrections.
- At the first resurrection, humans will for the first time dwell in heaven with God the Father and God the Son.

- Usually when the Bible refers to “hell”, the Hebrew or Greek words simply mean “the grave” or a “hole in the earth”.
- The incorrigible wicked will not suffer for all eternity in an “ever burning hell”, they will be cast into the “lake of fire” and cease to exist.
- Satan and the demons will be cast into outer darkness after the Millennium to dwell there for all eternity.

Healing and Health

- Jesus Christ’s “broken body”, symbolized by the taking of the bread during Passover, was an offering for our physical sins so that we could be forgiven of these just as Jesus’ shed blood cleanses us from our spiritual sins.
- Divine healing is a miracle that God in His mercy and love at times grants those who ask for and have faith in such Devine intervention.
- Those who are sick should call upon the elders in the Church of God for anointing.
- The human body is a “temple for God’s Holy Spirit” and should be kept clean physically as well as spiritually.
- Smoking and “recreational” drugs are scientifically proven to harm the body and Christians should not consume the like.
- The Bible allows the consumption of alcohol, but forbids excess drinking and drunkenness.
- Christians should use common sense in adhering to a healthy diet low in fatty meats and dairy products and high in fruits and vegetables along with adequate sleep.
- Dietary laws regarding “clean and unclean” meats are still relevant and should be observed.

Abraham, Israel and Prophecy

- God’s promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob of physical blessings are being fulfilled currently in the twelve tribes of Israel.
- God’s promise to Abraham of “Grace” for all mankind is fulfilled through Abraham’s descendent, Jesus Christ.
- Salvation is offered only to the faithful descendents of Abraham. However, any individual regardless of race or sex becomes a “spiritual descendent” of Abraham through conversion.
- The key to understanding the prophecies of the Bible is to know who the descendents of the twelve tribes of Israel are in this current age.
- The Jews represent only one tribe of Israel and the promises to Abraham of wealth and power are not fulfilled in them alone.
- The “lost ten tribes” are not lost, only ignored by history and current academia. A significant percentage of the following tribes can be proved to be found in the following nations:
 - Manasseh (Joseph) United States
 - Ephraim (Joseph) Great Britain, Canada and Australia
 - Reuben France
 - Zebulon Netherlands
 - Issachar Finland
 - Naphtali Sweden
 - Benjamin Norway
 - Dan Ireland and Denmark
 - Gad ? central Europe: Luxembourg, parts of Germany and/or Switzerland?
 - Asher ? South Africa and/or Belgium?
 - Levi scattered among other tribes, predominately Judah, some as ministers or priest
 - Simeon scattered among other tribes, predominately in Manasseh and Ephraim