

***Christian Theology***  
Distinctions among Christians  
September 20, 2009

***Church of God (Anderson, Indiana)***

- This is an example of a denomination (a self-labeled movement) that grew out of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Holiness Movement. Like many similar groups, it began in the late 1800s.
- As a result, this group is heavily influenced by the theology of Wesley.
- The person who spearheaded the formation of this group was Daniel S. Warner.
- The major problem of the day was sectarianism; the form of church life bothered Warner and his contemporaries. With such divisions, unity was impossible and sanctification—which is both individual and corporate—could not be achieved.
- Another major problem was the use of creeds, which were somewhat misunderstood.
- Warner sounded the call for people to “come out” of these “sects” and join the true church.
- Christian fellowship was not based on subscription to a set of beliefs. Instead, it was based on an individual’s experience of salvation and profession of faith in Jesus Christ.
- The theology of this movement was orthodox. What *was* new here was the combination of Wesleyan salvation and Anabaptist church life.
- This young movement printed a weekly newspaper, the “Gospel Trumpet,” which was first printed right here in Indianapolis, moved frequently, and settled in Anderson.
- After Warner’s death in 1895, the movement struggled to find its identity. In the 1920s and 1930s, a new apocalyptic identity developed. This faded away very slowly.
- By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the Church of God (Anderson) looked and functioned like most other Christian denominations.
- The questions of identity and organization are of high importance in this group today.