

Church of God, The Eternal

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Dear Brethren:

Warmest greetings to you all. With the Monthly Letter schedule change effected for the last four months, it seems that I have not personally written a Monthly Letter for a considerable period of time. Now that I am struggling with the operating mechanics of a new computer, I may wish I had much more time available to complete this Letter. However, knowing Who directs and is responsible for the actions of those who endeavor to be honest and subservient, I am sure all will come out acceptably. The real fruit of this endeavor will be found in the finished product. You all may be the final judges.

Since the Announcement Letter gives introductory information about general situations or problems in the world, we no longer felt it imperative to include it in the Monthly Letter. Therefore, we will move directly to the subject at hand. The subject is the continuation of the topic introduced many months ago -- the "Two Facets of Knowledge." With this present issue that subject will have been thoroughly and exhaustively analyzed; this monthly presentation will be the final one. Having completed this subject, we will be afforded opportunity to begin covering many other topics which have been generated for many reasons in the past months and years.

Synoptically, a few comments seem to be warranted. We shall be most brief. Presented will be just a sufficient amount of material to establish a foundation for the topic to follow.

God is the Author, Designer, and Creator of all that exists. In His eternal wisdom, He willed to subject us to a human plane -- limited to knowledge which can be acquired physically, mechanically, and mentally. As majestic, miraculous, and unbelievable as that capacity is, it is a far cry from the capability of those who reside in the spiritual domain. The arrogance of man, regarding his knowledge and achievements, is predicated on the fact he does not, and cannot, know things of that spiritual domain. By creation, man was established with mental limitations. Until that superior knowledge is given to him, he cannot know of these imposed limitations.

Only through true spiritual conversion is a human being given a vision of a world, a purpose, completely beyond himself. Those

called of God to understand the revealed knowledge of the spiritual domain are permitted to comprehend "all things." With that view, the spiritual above and beyond the physical, the called are made to realize just how small the physical realm really is.

Just who are the called of God -- those who truly understand spiritual things? Can they be differentiated from the average man of the street? Can just anyone recognize a true Christian?

The world is replete with assumptions of every type and description. But assumptions leave those so oriented embarrassed when true realities present themselves. How can one know that he is assuming or arrogating to himself concepts or understanding which are not substantiated by revelation from God? Intellectual honesty is not a forte of man. Man may have acquired a degree of brilliance mentally, but honesty in fact is not one area of that brilliance. Yet the man of understanding, one called of God, comprehends this plight of the unconverted individual. He recognizes the spurious manifestations of struggling mankind. Because of this understanding, the converted evidence tolerance, compassion, pity, and mercy.

How, then, do those called comprehend? What are the distinct marks by which recognition is made?

I. Two Classes Of Humanity: The Called And The Uncalled

Human beings are physical beings -- composed of flesh, carnal. In composition they are all alike. Yet, intangibly, there is a marked difference. One is flesh through and through. The other, the called, is undergoing a transformation, a spiritual change. Biblically he is "of the spirit." Nationality, race, creed, color, and other delineations are all characteristics of the flesh. They are but minimal variations. In a much more important way, there is one significant dividing factor. That factor is one of mind only at this present time. A change of composition will follow in the time appointed by God.

In Matthew we read of this differentiation as emphasized by Christ. The disciples of Jesus wanted to know why He addressed the multitudes in parables. His reply, ". . . Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given" (Matt. 13:11). The difference? The awesome matter of what knowledge is known and understood. In a word, the major consideration dividing men is that of knowledge and understanding. One understands much in the world of the physical;

the other can understand knowledge from both the physical and spiritual "worlds." Indeed, this is a key difference not known or understood by many.

The called can understand spiritual things. But, can they understand all spiritual things any time they will to comprehend? Or, in the same manner as there exists a difference between the called and uncalled, there is a difference in level and scope of knowledge among those who are called. Jesus clarifies this matter, also. Continuing in the 13th chapter of Matthew, we read, "But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them" (Matt. 13:16-17).

Not only does a call to understand spiritual things come from God, but the scope of that spiritual knowledge is also determined by God. The determinants are times, the plan or purpose of God, and the servant through whom God elects to reveal specific knowledge. The called can understand only that which God makes known. All other so-called "spiritual" knowledge is mere assumption. This factor alone tells us that a pronouncement by man -- that he is enlightened -- does not necessarily make it so. Neither does any assumed erroneous belief by one called of God make that belief correct in the sight of God. Even the called can understand only that which God chooses to make known.

It is within the nature of the uncalled man to presume, that is, to arrive at unsubstantiated beliefs. Such orientation is not a major tragedy in itself. But, it is a tragedy for one called of God to pervert, corrupt, change, or in other ways alter or add to that knowledge which God delivers. The called should always beware.

Despite the many characteristics by which men can be divided, the great, broad line of demarcation is the matter of divine call. In this sense there are only two classes -- the called and the uncalled, both a matter of mental orientation.

II. Only Those Called Of God Can Understand Spiritual Things.

A. Spiritual Things Are Not Seen.

Spiritual things are not seen (II Cor. 4:18). Not being seen, they cannot be observed and evaluated by the

natural man. Then, comprehension of those things which are spiritual is outside of and completely beyond any natural acquisition of knowledge. One cannot be schooled in the spiritual domain by formalized education. All the learning expertise and research capability extant in the world today, as well as in the historical past, will not help any mortal man to acquire a basic knowledge of the supernatural realm. Until there is a change of mind, accomplished by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, true understanding of the spiritual is impossible. Regardless of the ridicule and verbal castigations often heaped upon those called by God, the called do understand the Truth, and they alone comprehend. The one truly called is a humble and contrite individual. He is clearly aware of the Source and limits of his knowledge -- that knowledge which God has given to him. Conversely, one who presumes any arrogance of knowledge only manifests his own inherent deception. In all probability, he is not aware of the source of his deception. Satan, the invisible enemy, has deceived man into believing he can of himself be spiritual, the recipient of Biblical knowledge. Because of man's blanket acceptance of this gross deception, the world is literally full of institutions of higher learning promulgating religious knowledge of man's devisement, though varied and individualized in concept. Generally speaking, it is not within man's nature to be honest, admitting that he simply does not know, that he does not have "inside" knowledge. For, the full characteristics of honesty and humility are possessed only by those who are called to understand, those who truly do possess the knowledge of the spiritual.

What is this knowledge which God has willed to give only to those He chooses to call? Being impartial toward all His created subjects, all mankind, He has some specific purpose for ensconcing His Truth in secrecy, subsequently revealing it to those only whom He chooses to call in their respective times. What is that knowledge? The purpose? Ultimately, such knowledge and purpose will affect every human being born. But each one in the time which God elects to call and bring to pass the very purpose of that knowledge.

Again, what is the essence of that knowledge? What makes it so relevant for those called and chosen?

B. The Called Of God Receive Knowledge Of Salvation.

Natural man is subject to death. He lives with the knowledge of this inevitability, and in the dread or fear of it, all the days of his natural existence. Even his work and mental endeavors are greatly tainted by the certainty of this eventuality. Men draw up wills; they create great monuments by which to establish, hopefully, the remembrance of themselves; they heavily insure themselves; in many other ways they act with a subtle underlying awareness of the certainty of death.

Is this momentary existence in the flesh the ultimate intended achievement of human life? Within the framework of the physical, nothing else is even remotely possible. Many people of differing persuasions consistently speak of the possibility of living forever in the flesh. But, for those who understand, this is as incongruous as saying that black can become white. Eternal life and physical life are opposites fundamentally. Flesh is flesh. By virtue of being flesh, it cannot live eternally. The possibility of eternal life resides only in a dramatic change which has been promised to those called by God and who receive the Holy Spirit. By the receipt of that Spirit, we are given a knowledge which no longer is limited to the mundane -- to those things which are of this world. By that Spirit we are inheritors of a different mind, the mind of the spiritual. With that mind we are now knowledgeable of God's awesome plan and purpose for man -- the salvation of humanity. That plan of salvation began with those first called to understand. By some miraculous plan, God afforded the opportunity of salvation, prior to the time of Christ, to the prophets and righteous men in the times of the Old Testament. Since the death of Christ, the privilege of salvation has been given to all called to comprehend the spiritual purpose ordained of God. What is that spiritual purpose God designed for human beings -- for those chosen to know that purpose? The Apostle Peter makes it clear. He said, "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye

have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you" (I Pet. 5:10).

We are called to inherit the eternal glory possessed by God, the Father. Beyond the pale of this mortal flesh is a hope of everlasting life in the same glory experienced by God. How many people really understand that awesome purpose? When speaking of salvation, most professing "Christians" will deny this possibility in one or two ways. One, the vast majority of people are deceived into believing that they already possess immortality. This concept is believed by most people of the earth, in one form of doctrine or another -- even those generally classed as pagans. Two, a number of minority groups believe that salvation is a kind of super-flesh form, a state somewhat inferior to the God-plane. Only the called of God have correctly understood that men are naturally flesh, destined for extinction unless some dramatic purpose is wrought in their lives by a Source outside of themselves. And that the hope of salvation is an actual birth into the same substance and plane of the divine family -- the whole family of heaven and earth.

The called of God are permitted to understand their purpose and their awesome future. They, and they alone, can understand these facts. Peter made it clear that such a future cannot be realized without a degree of suffering first. That suffering, when understood properly, takes on meaning. As human beings called of God, any complaints we make are manifested only because of insufficient faith or conviction to really believe the purpose which God is working out. By our negative actions we clearly reveal our level of conviction, faith, and belief in the call of God. For, even those called to understand can lose their direction if they do not keep alive the faith initially given. This is accomplished through consistent growth, development, and use.

How possible is it to keep such faith and conviction alive and strong? Men are not born naturally with such capability. That power and purpose must be given. It comes by "receiving Christ." John wrote, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name"

(John 1:12). God calls. Once called, we are given the opportunity to understand His purpose, the plan of salvation. We, then, have the right to determine what we will do with the call. We can either accept or reject it. The Bible speaks of those "receiving" Him. This emphatically implies that man has a choice. He can accept the call. Or, if he does not receive Christ, he most definitely has rejected Him. Considering all these possibilities, the initial required knowledge of salvation must be given -- the knowledge that comes with the receipt of Christ.

C. The Knowledge Of Christ Must Be Given.

What knowledge is revealed? Is it knowledge about Christ? Or, is it the very knowledge which He possessed -- the knowledge which the Father had given to Him, before he departed from heaven to come to the earth, to fulfill a specifically assigned purpose? Paul makes this point quite clear in the letter to the Ephesians. He informed them, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph. 1:17-19).

Our eyes are enlightened to understand the very knowledge which Jesus Christ possessed. The knowledge which Christ had was that given to Him by the Father (John 12:49-50). We, then, being called and given that knowledge are made aware of the purpose of God the Father -- the salvation of the saints, human beings being recreated to dwell in the spiritual world (Ph'p. 3:21). This is the awesome power of creation now operative in the lives of those called and chosen to be the recipients of the Holy Spirit. The vital ingredient, as Paul said, is belief. What is occurring in the converted is exactly the same as that which took place in the life of our Example, Jesus Christ. By His life and death we, too, can enter the domain of everlasting life as promised by God. In that spiritual domain Christ will have become our full-fledged elder

brother. Brothers and sisters come from the same family stock. They are always from the same substance; in the human domain, that substance is flesh. In the spiritual realm it will be of the Spirit.

Recalling the statements of Matthew, the greatest blessing given to any man is in the fact he sees and understands (Matt. 13:10, 11, 15-17). The mystery of salvation -- the salvation of man -- is revealed to a very few people at this time. Until it is revealed it cannot be understood. Those called of God alone, and they alone, are the ones who comprehend the Way of Life.

Though called, man of himself still does not have the power and ability to effect lifesaving changes in his nature. The element of conversion is achieved by miraculous powers only.

What is that way by which men can be changed? The power bringing about this miraculous conversion?

D. Knowledge And Conversion Both Accomplished By The Holy Spirit

Basically, two things must happen in the lives of those chosen to accomplish God's purpose here on earth. Since man was created subject to the nature of flesh, it must be changed -- changed from a carnal, selfish nature to a divine, merciful nature. And since man is made of the dust of the ground -- flesh -- he must be changed from this substance to that of spirit. Both of these changes occur by the power of the Holy Spirit. To more fully understand the change of attitude, outlook, and behavior required, please study and carefully compare the following texts: Philippians 2:5, Romans 12:1-3, Galatians 5:17-25; 6:8, and I Peter 1:22. In like manner, to secure a better grasp of the substance change, read and compare these texts: I Corinthians 15:44-46 and John 3:3-8. Christ Himself was an example of these transformations (1 Pet. 3:18).

The Holy Spirit is an absolute requisite for the fulfillment of God's purpose for man. Such powers are not inherent in men. Man must count on receiving that power as a gift. That promisory gift is certified by Jesus Christ. In the book of John we read, "But when

the Comforter [the Holy Spirit] is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me" (John 15:26). The Apostle John was further inspired to write, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come" (John 16:13). The Truth requisite for salvation must be given. As the One responsible for the salvation of mankind, God will give the necessary knowledge at appropriate times. This knowledge will not come as a result of the efforts of men. Men do not dictate to God. They receive the promises of God at His discretion.

In a word, the called are both converted and educated by the power of the Holy Spirit working in their lives. And, by the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, we have Christ abiding within.

Millions claim to know Christ, to have accepted "the Lord" as their Savior. But, religious deception seems to be the most common of all. For all men with their varied dichotomy of beliefs cannot possibly have that oneness of spirit, manifested in doctrine, purpose, and body. Who, then, has really accepted Christ, the Savior of mankind?

E. Only The Called Can Truly Accept Him.

How can anyone really accept that which he does not know or understand? We have already come to realize that Christ must be revealed. He cannot be found by the endeavors of men.

A multitude of "christs" have been created and accepted. These are christs created in the mental images of various human beings. In their own minds they have determined what He is, what He believes, and what they would have Him require of them. The acceptance of such images does not mean that the true Christ has been comprehended and accepted. The true Christ is unchanging -- the same yesterday, today, and forever. He is living the same life in those chosen to serve Him today as He lived in His own physical body when He

walked upon this earth. The acceptance of Christ is literally the acceptance of a manifested spiritual being who is living the same Way of Life as lived by the One who physically appeared and left us an example to follow. So many have problems recognizing the true Christ because their minds have been tainted by false concepts. The Apostle Paul was confronted with this same situation. In the book of I Corinthians he wrote, "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (I Cor. 1:23-24).

Somewhere within a society that encompasses people who either stumble over the true Christ or ridicule His actual manifestation, there does exist a small segment who believe and accept Him. These are the called ones. To them, the true Christ is the power and wisdom of God. By revelation they recognize Him, and in turn accept Him. They alone are the ones who have truly accepted Him. To accept a christ created in the image of some human being is not the acceptance of the real Christ -- the Christ of the Bible who must be revealed before He can be known.

Without the acceptance of the true Christ it is impossible to be instructed in the Way of Life. For until acceptance is accomplished human beings cannot hear the voice of the true Christ. They will hear only what they want to hear.

F. How The Called Of God Hear The Voice Of Christ.

Acceptance of Christ implies an initial call. How can anyone properly accept or reject an idea or concept he has sought out for himself? In such mental orientations, the individual is progressively creating a christ -- or god -- in his own image. Men seldom, if ever, reject that which they have created for themselves. Therefore, the creation of a divinity from the machinations of a human mind answers to the natural call of that mind. Mysteriously, men desire to worship something outside of themselves. There is no man who does not idolize something. That something, to satisfy the demands of the natural mind, must be made in some

image of the Creator. In this way, men really idolize and serve themselves.

But, God created man in His own image. Initially, the image conformity was in shape only. But, the promise of God is that we eventually will be in the same mental and substance configuration. If the ultimate purpose is that we should bear the same capacity and form mentally and substantively, it follows that we should be endeavoring to conform in those areas into which we are to be ultimately born. How, then, do we hear the voice of that One, Christ, whom we must emulate instead of the voice of our own rebellious and self-assertive wills?

In the book of John we are told that the life of Christ bore witness of the Truth -- the very reason for which He was sent into the world (John 18:37). At the same time, Christ said that everyone who is of the Truth hears His voice (same vs.). Obviously, in our day, this hearing is not by audible voice. It is strictly by the recognition of Truth which proceeded from the mouth of Christ. Truth does not change. As the manifestation of the Truth, Jesus Christ did not change. He is the same today as He was when living in His own fleshly body approximately 2,000 years ago. These factors being undeniable, the Truth can only be that to hear the voice of Christ is to hear the same Truth which he lived and taught in His own day. How many really do hear the voice of Christ? As we have seen, one must be called to the Truth. Once called, men can then, and then only, begin to hear the voice of Christ.

Clearly, those called can and do hear the voice of Christ. Yet, we have not seen the means by which this hearing occurs. In Christ's own personal day, the people called could hear His voice directly. But what about those who lived and do live subsequent to His time? How do they hear His voice? Let us once again look to the book of John. Here John was inspired to write the very applicable words of Jesus Christ. We read, "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth

whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me" (John 13:18-20).

Those called, during whatever period of time, hear Christ, and thereby hear the Father, if and when they receive (hear and favorably respond to) those sent by Christ. Who is sent? His true ministry is sent -- not just sent in the days immediately following Christ's time, but consistently until the time of His Second Coming (read, study, and compare Matt. 28:19-20 and Eph. 4:11-13).

If called, we will hear the voice of Christ through His true ministry in whatever time we live. Conversely, we can know who the true ministry is by employing the Truth initially revealed as the yardstick by which to evaluate. Further, the true ministry can know those who are faithful and loyal by applying the same yardstick.

Once called to hear the voice of Christ, is it impossible to fail the responsibility given? Is salvation assured and absolute to all who have seen and initially understood the Truth?

G. After Call, Volition Is Imperative.

As seen earlier, ". . . as many as received [heard the call, voiced him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). An initial call is an assurance of opportunity only. It is not an absolute certification or guarantee of salvation. Overlooking the ultimate objective of any divine call, for the moment, we must be aware that the real purpose of that call has yet to be realized. Much mastery of the self and personal overcoming are imperative. Such mastery and overcoming become the greatest battlefield of war ever experienced by man. The called experience great mental and carnal confrontations. How successful we are in waging this war will determine our final judgment. Only those who have been called and who have faithfully discharged the responsibility of personal mastery will realize the ultimate objective of salvation. Indeed, volition is absolutely imperative. This will of purpose can be kept alive by faith only. If we lose vision, the image of tomorrow will grow dim, sadly dimmer as we grow more

removed from the objective of our call until the actual image is lost altogether. By constant and fervent contact with God -- through Bible study and prayer -- we must keep the initial image sharp and clear. Personal volition is absolutely essential. We must recognize the value of that which has been given to us. If we place little value upon the opportunity for life, why should God give such a priceless commodity to us?

In these last days deception is rampant. There are millions who claim to be the servants of Christ. Can you unequivocally accept the claim of any human being?

III. Can You Accept The Claims Of Anyone?

Considering the events which are presently transpiring, we know these are the last days. In a generalized manner, we can grasp the pattern of activities to unfold in our time. Even though the Apostle John wrote about specific events which were occurring in his own day, we are clearly instructed that those events foreshadow those to occur in our time. Carefully read 1 John 2:18-28. Here John tells us that antichrists will surface doing their level best to deceive and abuse the gullible and unstable. This factor alone tells us that we cannot arbitrarily accept the claim of anyone. How then are we to know?

Let us remember that it is impossible for any human being to comprehend the Truth until he is called and by revelation that Truth is given to him. By faith he knows he has received the Truth. By faith only is he able to retain that initial conviction. Others are not going to see the Truth in you because they are deceived into believing that they themselves possess the Truth. Only the called are going to know they alone possess the Truth. Only they who retain that faith will understand the necessity of living by the instruction given in I John 2:24. We are instructed, "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father." Clearly the Way is given initially. Continuity in the Way is accomplished by simply remaining in the Truth given at the beginning. By continuing in that Way first given to you, you will have resident within you the Son and the Father carrying out the work they have assigned to themselves -- the creation of everlasting life, salvation.

Let us carefully evaluate. Is there any need to be troubled by the claims of anyone? Not in the least. If called, you already know the Truth. You alone will know that. Once you have received that Way of Life, the basic requirement is to continue in it. Why should you be troubled by the claims of any other person? To be casting about for principles or concepts other than those which you received is to manifest doubt in your call and the Truth given to you. The Bible clearly tells us that such a man need not expect to receive anything of the Lord.

In a word, hold fast to the Way you have been given. Then, as the Apostle Peter wrote, let us grow in grace and Truth. Holding the initial Truth inviolate does not mean that subsequent growth is impossible. Growth, in the Biblical sense, is adding knowledge to that which has been given previously. These principles are not in conflict with one another.

All people do not have faith. The very purpose of the trials and experiences of man is to determine the level of and to effect a refinement of his faith. Knowing the nature of man, it is not possible that all will grow positively in discharging the responsibility given to them by the call which God tendered. Some will repudiate the faith which God gave as an initial gift. Carnal tendencies will overpower them.

A. Some Will Reject The Way.

Until men have been called by God they are not subjected to the final judgment of God. Once called, however, we must be prepared to pay for our faithlessness. It makes little difference that such individuals maintain a semblance of the Truth. Paul says, "... the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold [suppress] the truth in unrighteousness" (Rom. 1:18). These are "called" people who warp, pervert, and corrupt the Truth in order to cater to the natural dictates of the flesh. They have rejected the efficacy and power of the Truth. Once such an attitude prevails they will change "... the truth of God into a lie . . ." (Rom. 1:25). Why? Because they do not like to retain God in their knowledge (Rom. 1:28). The result is that God will give them over to a reprobate mind. They will now feel "comfortable" doing whatever comes to their natural minds (Rom. 1:28).

The results of such rejection are devastating. Though many may not be cognizant of what attitude possesses them, they nonetheless manifest many abominable characteristics. This very conduct bespeaks the turmoil transpiring in the minds of those so oriented. They are restless, troubled, unsettled, accusatory, hateful -- always looking for someone to use as the object of their guilt assignment. In Romans 1:29-31 we read of the troubling characteristics which plague these people who once knew the Truth and turned away from it. Paul said they are ". . . filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." A terrible state for any man to encounter. And yet the likelihood is ever present for anyone who has received the Truth of God and fails to adhere faithfully to it. Because of the blackness of this orientation, there is but one recourse by which such troubled minds can gain any satisfaction. Paul speaks of it in verse 32. He said of these people, ". . . knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." The blackness of rejection is only mitigated slightly by an insidious destruction of others. They find momentary pleasure in wresting others from the Truth. Indeed, misery does love company. If honesty still prevailed, the hope of reconciliation would still exist. But these now know the judgment of God. Vindictiveness dictates the necessity of injuring others. Before one listens to others espousing concepts different from those originally revealed, he had better carefully consider the motive involved. It just could be that someone is seeking solace and comfort in his own defiance and rebellion.

B. The Mental State Of Those Who Reject Truth

Notice how the Apostle Paul addresses this situation when writing to the Ephesian Church of God. These were

Gentiles who had resorted to the vanity of their own minds. The result was a matter of "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph. 4:18-19). When resorting to the vanity of the carnal mind, after having once been called, the man so inclined finds no solace or peace. He has lost the sense of positive feeling and empathy. He is blind to objectivity -- incapable of seeing and understanding simple principles which were once believed and observed. It is a heartrending situation to see and experience the frightful reaction of such tragedy unfolding in the lives of those once warm and convivial while responding to Truth. How far one can pursue the path of those walking in the manifested difficulties of Ephesians 4:18-19 and yet return to God at some future date, only God knows. It is a most precarious route to follow. It is a very difficult thing to change mental orientation once it is established.

What usually happens to people who turn from the Truth -- rejecting the knowledge once revealed to them? A diabolical influence and the demands of the natural mind will generally not allow such an embittered man to assume a low profile, attempting in no way to influence adversely other people with whom he might come in contact. On the contrary, such an individual will become most assertive.

C. Course Of Action Taken

If faith has been destroyed, for whatever reason, almost immediately there is an assumption of a special call to negatively preach, write, or teach others. To Timothy, Paul explained it this way. He warned, "Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof

they affirm" (I Tim. 1:4-7). People become disillusioned for cause, so they believe. Because of this feeling, they are usually driven to espouse a doctrine or concept which justifies their action. As stated earlier, you must be aware of motivation. Being dishonest by nature, one cannot trust the verbal answer which might be given by such a person to anyone who asks a reason for a particular endeavor. Actions and substance of the endeavor are the only reliable indications. Any man is known by the fruits which he produces -- not by the words which proceed from his mouth.

For those called, they know that there is but one opportunity given for eternal life. The day of judgment is inevitable. It is the day of reckoning. The years between the time of their call and that ultimate day are spent in diligent personal mastery. In the concluding words of this Monthly Letter we want to make just a few comments about that day of reckoning.

IV. The Ultimate Day Of Reckoning

The purpose of God is being worked out here on this earth. Few understand that purpose, however. Until called, any comprehension of that true spiritual purpose is impossible. Therefore, those not called are not anticipating any form of final reckoning. They believe they are going to live forever in either heaven or hell, or that they will be reincarnated in another life form. That is not to say, however, that there are not many trials and difficulties those uncalled are yet to experience. It is by these experiences that they will eventually be brought to the knowledge of whom the Father and the Son really are. They will begin to see themselves for what they are. But, the fate of those called will be quite different. They must give an accounting for the talents of the Spirit given to them. What is the basis of this judgment?

A. Fabric Of Judgment Laid Down Long Ago

To understand the things of the spiritual realm is a fabulous privilege. This cannot and must not be taken lightly. Initially, this requires a special call from God. Then it requires a revelation of mysterious knowledge kept secret from the beginning. Once given

such priceless comprehension, we are expected to cherish it with our very lives. To do less manifests exceeding folly.

The knowledge of that Way of Life came to us through a chosen instrument of God. Through that servant we heard the voice of Christ. Knowing the carnal tendencies of human beings, God left us with a means by which to check and verify the words spoken. All those called of God are burdened with that responsibility. They are to accept that doctrine which God reveals at the time of their call. Subsequently, they are burdened with the responsibility of faithfully adhering to that Truth initially given. The ground rules for carrying out this responsibility were laid down in a book of the Law -- Deuteronomy.

Moses was instructed of the Lord, "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he [the servant of God] shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die" (Deut. 18:19-20). What a responsibility! One had better not fail to hear the servant whom the Father sends. Yet, one must be able to determine who is speaking in his own name. Thankfully, the responsibility is not a difficult one. Until called, one cannot know one way or the other. When initially called, brethren, you know that you have heard the voice of Christ. You have come out of ignorance and the natural blindness of the world. Once you have come to see that Truth, it is only absolute faith which will keep you from straying or losing confidence in the call and the Way. The very faith you possess regarding the Way is the basis by which to determine all future concepts or beliefs. That is not a difficult task as long as you do not lose faith in your initial confidence. Lose that faith and you are left with absolutely nothing to use as a premise for any evaluation of concepts. A person who does so is hopelessly blinded. He does not even realize his own condition.

The very necessity for a provision by which to determine false premises is an indication such situations would

develop. There are those servants of God who would fail to carry out acceptably their charges. They must be seen and treated according to what they are. Many instructions have been given regarding our relationship with them. In a more constructive vein, now let us take a brief look at what the faithful will be doing.

B. What The Faithful Will Be Doing.

The called are presently called the sons of God. They are now begotten children of the Heavenly Father. Is there any way by which we can truly appreciate the fact that God has called us to be His children, the very privilege of addressing Him as Father? Considering our station in life this is truly an astounding opportunity.

Those who realize the magnitude of the above call will be endeavoring to master themselves instead of routinely attempting to corrupt or pervert that Way of Life which the Father has given to them. Their desire is to maximize the privilege given. They want to present themselves holy and unblameable before Christ at His Second Coming. As the Apostle John wrote, ". . . every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3). They will not be fully satisfied with any improvement short of the perfection of the Father. They want to be as Christ is when He returns. They want to ". . . see him as he is" (vs. 2).

What will the chosen of God be doing? They will be diligently working on themselves daily. They will be showing improvement in their character -- external manifestations of the power of the Spirit working in their lives. Their endeavors will be a proof of their faith in the ultimate day of reckoning. They know that they must give an account of their stewardship -- the talents and responsibilities given. Those truly called will manifest their conviction in the level of personal mastery achieved in their lives.

Brethren, you are the called of God. There may be others, for we cannot judge all situations, but obviously if you will to obey fervently, you are a part of God's select group. As a part of that priceless group, you are given your one and only opportunity to achieve a level of success and purpose heretofore unrealized.

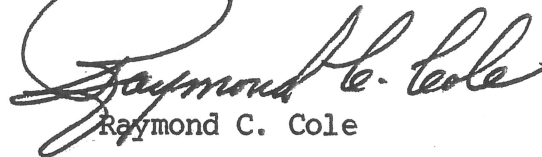
Let us not be failures. We must seize this opportunity by making every effort to overcome. The Truth has already been given; it is the faith once delivered. Put yourselves to the tasks which lie ahead with diligence and perseverance. If you so will, God will see you through to a successful conclusion.

We have now completed this long series on the "Two Facets of Knowledge." It is our hope that these Letters have been informative and inspirational to all. It was our intent to analyze the subject rather comprehensively; we believe we have accomplished this.

Now has come the time to begin preparations for a number of other Monthly Letters which seem to be rather needful. You will be receiving these as our various scheduled months come for writing the Monthly Letter.

May we, once again, take this opportunity to thank you for your continued affection and regard for the Truth which God gave to you. It is always our privilege to serve you.

All our love and kindest regards
until you hear from us next time,



Raymond C. Cole