

Church of God, The Eternal

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Dear Brethren:

Warmest and felicitous greetings to you all. As the called and chosen of God you are priceless—His spiritual children. As long as you are faithful to the call which God gave you, the promised blessings, divine intervention in the time of need, and, an optimistic, confident outlook are yours. I pray daily that God will allow me to be your help and encouragement all the way to the end. That, of course, is asking for trial and difficulty (John 15:20). Why? Because too many apparently did not know God (John 15:21).

Why This Letter?

I am sure most of you are aware of tragic events occurring within the church. There are people who have set themselves to spread as broadly as possible hateful presumptions, sheer garbage and nonsense, inferences which are nothing short of lies and hypocrisy, and a flood of demonic outbursts—all intended to discredit the truth of God. For those who have been well-taught such manifestations are not surprising, nor shocking. They know that such conditions must prevail in these traumatic days immediately preceding the Second Coming of Christ.

The need of this letter is to reassure you and to make available, in a general way, the information needed to assist you in making critical and life-threatening decisions.

For months, even years, based on many New Testament prophecies relating to these last days, I have attempted to warn and inform you of these prophetic events. Some, devoid of spiritual orientation, may even call and attempt to make you believe such sermons are scare tactics. Interestingly, this is precisely how the enemies of God's Truth in the time of prophetic commissions, classified the work of the prophets themselves. From the days of the apostasy, I have felt strongly inspired to proclaim the warnings contained in these last day prophecies—a responsibility clearly pointed out in 2 Timothy 4:1–4. Regarding these very days in which we live, Paul commanded Timothy, "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; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with

all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

By proclaiming the certainty of these events, as revealed by God, the true and faithful ministry is not precipitating the events. On the contrary the intent is to reassure the people of the veracity of the way of truth, the fact there are people who have no faith, and the duty incumbent upon each called child of God. What would you think of someone who sees the tragic events of these days, and yet had so little care and concern for the people, he refused to warn or to make known the specifics of those conditions? Would you call that an act of love? On the other hand, the people who are intending to take advantage of the ignorance of the called would be more than upset because their nefarious plans are exposed. Just remember, the Word of God tells us, there is some injurious and hateful activity unfolding within the body in these last days. It is called the mystery of iniquity (Read 2 Thessalonians 2:7). What is the time? (2 Thessalonians 2:1). That this warning has a very broad application is clear from what Paul was inspired to write in 2 Thessalonians 2:7–12. We read: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Regardless of other possible past applications, the apostasy of the Church of God in these last days specifically applies to events which will occur just prior to Christ's coming. Some individual, or individuals, involved in the mystery are directly affected by the actual, physical appearance of Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:7–12). See above text.

Satanic Activities

Though not seen, the author of today's confusion and hateful activities is Satan (2 Thessalonians 2:9). Truly he is going about as a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8). He was prophesied to work aggressively within the church in the last days (2 Timothy 2:24–26). Few people, however, have seen or recognized the depth of his activity. God clearly and emphatically gave us the solution to his influences (1 Peter 5:9 and Ephesians 6:10–15). The instruction to the Ephesian church was rather comprehensive. Let us note what the Apostle Paul wrote to them. He said: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against

the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:10–15). How many people recognize the activity of Satan in the world today? Neither do most within the church see the length and breadth of his activity there.

He That Endures

God called you. He started you upon the path which leads to everlasting life. Staying on that path is, in part, the duty of each one of us. We all have been given the guide—the revealed truth—by which to make determinations on a daily basis. However, if we fail to act aggressively on that faith which was given to us, the possession of the knowledge will avail us little.

Remember, we are qualifying to rule with Christ on His throne (Revelation 2:26). He overcame all influences of Satan (Luke 4:1–13). If we are to share that glorious responsibility with Christ, we, too, must resist all influences of our enemy, Satan, and successfully endure to the conclusion of the appointed trial (Matthew 24:13). Enduring does not indicate pleasant and smooth sailing on the seas of life. Living a godly life is difficult (Matthew 7:13–14, 2 Timothy 3:12). It is fraught with physical uncertainty. Only by faith can the called live peaceable and confident lives. Take careful note, the physical and mortal struggle continues to the end.

Do not lose heart. Know who you are! Know what the faith is—the truth which you must hold unchangeable until the return of Christ. With those two ingredients in place you can individually avoid the frustration and sorrow which will be the lot of many who manifest no faith or conviction. Just remember, no mortal will ever sacrifice that which he possesses, mortality, unless he possesses absolute faith in the unseen—immortality, life everlasting.

You Are The Sheep

All Biblical evidence points to an absolute fact. God is doing a work in these last days. A significant work *was* done. From that endeavor came several people who were called, baptized, and received the Holy Spirit. These people became the spiritual children of God. They experienced a litany of trauma and sorrow. They are the people who had to

make, and will yet have to make, very serious decisions. Some have already failed—making wrong decisions because they lacked the faith to endure. For this present time, you, brethren, are at least a part of the called sheep of these last days. What decisions will you make? The true ministry will do its level best to make requisite information available. From that point in time forward you will then have to make those decisions individually. Just stay close to God in fasting and prayer. Absorb the inspiration of God's Word daily. All three, study, prayer, and fasting, are so imperative. No one who is not close to God, will endure these difficult times.

There are wolves who intend to fleece, shear, and merchandise the faithful sheep. Do not let this happen to you. If you do the things you should, you can avoid this tragic experience. If, however, you have already allowed yourself to develop doubt and misgiving, you may find it very difficult to restore yourself to genuine faith and confidence. But, one thing is certain, it is essential that you lose no further time in effecting that restoration. NOW is the time! Some may have grown indifferent, lethargic, and become deeply troubled. Do not lose any time in effecting required decisions, and orientation changes. God does not appreciate things which are "luke warm." Be either hot or cold. Know where you stand, and what you believe! Be the sheep God called you to be!

The Ministry

Please be assured, the faithful ministry are not hirelings. They do not intend to run from the battle. God called us to care for and to feed the sheep. With His help we will be available to guide all who sincerely love the truth of God—and even those who manifest a genuine interest in being helped to return to the fold.

In the Philippines, the two responsible individuals are Mr. Corsino Canta—Luzon area; and Mr. Mario Roque—Mindanao area. In Europe, Mr. Jean Aviolat of Switzerland, is faithful and loyal. Here in the United States, Mr. Jon Brisby remains loyal and a faithful servant to the truth. It is my hope you will hear more frequently from these men.

Yours Truly

Let me assure you, my dear brothers and sisters of the common faith, I have not changed in any degree. I made that determination when I first came out of Worldwide—at the very time I was forced to decide what those experiences were all about and what I was going to do in the future. In a sense I promised God I would be faithful to that which He had made me knowledgeable. Brethren, I fear and highly respect God. I cannot change.

Will you allow the enemies of that revealed truth be my judges? If so, I have no chance of success for Satan hates the way of truth and will do anything to discredit it and eventually destroy it. I have a much higher expectation of those I love, admire, and respect—those I know who manifest the genuine fruits of the Holy Spirit. As stated earlier, I along with the other faithful ministers will serve and help those who seek that help.

Our Plans

Though reduced in numbers, the true ministry intend to stand absolutely firm in those convictions held from the beginning—slandorous accusations notwithstanding. We will not abandon the true sheep of God. Regular Sabbath and holyday tapes will be made and sent to you. If a glitch occasionally is experienced do not worry. It will take us time to change over to this reduced number. I am attempting to speak weekly here in Eugene so that tapes are available to send to our far-flung members. Despite a heavy workload, Mr. Jon Brisby will be making tapes wherever he goes so that relief will be available from the pressure we here at the office could experience. There are other possibilities, too—with God's help and inspiration we will serve all those over whom He gave us a charge.

As I have stated earlier, I do not intend to become involved in personalized castigations. But, let me assure you all, if anyone is troubled or in some way needs help, please do the honorable thing. Write or call. We will help you. There is no one here who is not aware of the need to reassure you all. We will do our best to help you.

Love covers. It does not exploit and take advantage of others. For that reason alone I will not generally send out incriminating material regarding others. I have much material which would surprise most. But, why send it? What do such diatribes have to do with the truth? Mr. Jon Brisby and I, along with the others around the world, are here to serve God and proclaim the truth—that message which was delivered to the chosen in the last days. One final thought in this context. There are men from the Townsend, Tennessee Feast area of 1998, as there are men from the Newport, Oregon area, 1997, who are being hatefully vilified. If you feel it essential to evaluate these implied matters, please send a note to us stating what it is you want to know and who it is you want to address. We will get the information to the specific individuals. I am taking this particular orientation because they, like I, are not interested in any form of mud-slinging campaign. Without their knowledge I am making these comments in this insert. Its inclusion stems from the fact that if you are going to listen to others, you have a moral and spiritual obligation from God to hear the accused, also.

Unauthorized Letters

This seems to be the logical place to address the matter of letters, and other forms of communication with which some are bombarded. It is a Satanic ploy as old as the hills. The Apostle Paul faced this defiant and rebellious spirit (2 Thessalonians 2:2). Mailing lists which were provided to men here in the Eugene area for the purpose of spiritually serving you are now being exploited. If you resent this usage and do not wish to be subjected to this type of activity, all you need do is send a note to the author of the letter or the ones providing such information demanding that your name be removed from their lists. So far as I know it is illegal for them to use such information once you have requested removal from their lists.

In general such letters and other written material fall into the category of that which must be rejected (2 John 10–11). In this day of high technology, the application of many spiritual principles must be tailored to circumstances and conditions. In the circumstances of above, my suggestion is that you simply burn all such material—probably before read, if you have any confidence in that which was first revealed. At least, once you have scanned the letter or material and are aware of the contents or orientation of content, you know what you should do. The imperative question: If you know what the truth is and who has been preaching it consistently why should you feel the necessity to evaluate other material? For me, I have never found any reason to consider material outside of the work of God in the last days—the work of Worldwide Church of God until the apostasy. I do not for one minute believe the prophecy of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19–20) failed. Though the church went apostate, that Truth continues, in a remnant group, following the failure of Worldwide. Jesus said He would be present until He comes the second time. In faith do you know where that remnant is? That is a decision each called and chosen individual will, at some time, have to make. The key to knowing is this: The message revealed in the last days remains the same from time of revelation until the coming of Christ (Hebrews 3:14). Who has remained and is remaining faithful to that which was taught by God's chosen servant in these last days? As for me, I knew, and still know, by faith, that truth was given. I intend to be an example of faithfulness. I would that others might remain faithful, but, I cannot make people remain loyal. I can only set an example, continue to proclaim the message which I have taught now over fifty years, and encourage any who will seek that assistance. Attempting to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, I am well aware of the false accusations which will be hurled, perversions intended to imply behavior unacceptable for anyone, and worse yet, attempts to make acts of kindness and the pursuit of right and good seem evil. Why? Did not Christ experience the same thing? No matter what He did He could not, in the eyes of carnal humanbeings inspired by Satan, do or say the right thing. His servants of the last days were destined to encounter exactly the same level of persecution. Satan hates the truth of God, and will do anything to destroy it.

Men of many persuasions have written about slander. Most caught the vileness of such behavior. We as ministers of Jesus Christ do not intend on being involved in any such activity. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Eternal God." We will leave matters in His perfect and capable hands. And remember, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

I trust all will be reassured. We sincerely desire to get back to the work to which we were called. We will help any and all sheep who call out for that help.

Quotes

Believe nothing against another, but on good authority; nor report what may hurt another, unless it be a greater hurt to some other to conceal it.—*Penn.*

Slander is the revenge of a coward, and dissimulation his defence.—*Johnson.*

Diogenes being asked, "What is that beast, the bite of which is the most dangerous?" replied, "Of wild beasts, the bite of a slanderer; and of tame beasts, that of the flatterer."

Slander as often comes from vanity as from malice.

Slanderers are like flies, that pass all over a man's good parts to light only on his sores.—*Rule of Life.*

No one is safe from slander. The best way is to pay no attention to it, but live in innocence and let the world talk.—*Moliere.*

Who stabs my name would stab my person, too, did not the hangman's axe lie in the way.—*Crown.*

The slanderer inflicts wrong by calumniating the absent; and he who gives credit to the calumny before he knows its truth, is equally guilty.—*Herodotus.*

The slanderer and the assassin differ only in the weapon they use; with the one it is the dagger, with the other the tongue.—The former is worse than the latter, for the last only kills the body, while the other murders the reputation and peace.—*Tryon Edwards.*

Divines do rightly infer from the sixth commandment, that scandalizing one's neighbor with false and malicious reports, whereby I vex his spirit, and consequently impair his health, is a degree of murder.—*Sir W. Raleigh.*

Slander meets no regard from noble minds; only the base believe what the base only utter.—*Bellers*.

The man that dares traduce because he can with safety to himself, is not a man.—*Cowper*.

He, who would free from malice pass his days, must live obscure, and never merit praise.—*Gay*.

It is commonly unnecessary to refute slander and calumny, except by perseverance in well doing; they are sparks, which, if you do not fan them, will soon go out.

That thou are blamed, shall not be thy defect; for slander's mark was ever yet the fair; so thou be good, slander doth but approve thy worth the greater.—*Shakespeare*.

Next to the slanderer, we detest the bearer of the slander to our ears.—*M. H. Catherwood*.

Life would be a perpetual flea-hunt if a man were obliged to run down all the innuendoes, inveracities, insinuations, and suspicions which are uttered against him.—*H. W. Beecher*.

The surest method against scandal is to live it down by perseverance in well-doing.—*Boerhaave*.

How frequently are the honesty and integrity of a man disposed of by a smile or shrug! How many good and generous actions have been sunk into oblivion by a distrustful look, or stamped with the imputation of bad motives, by a mysterious and seasonable whisper!—*Sterne*.

Listen not to a tale-bearer or slanderer, for he tells thee nothing out of good will; but as he discovereth of the secrets of others, so he will of thine in turn.—*Socrates*.

Calumny would soon starve and die of itself if nobody took it in and gave it lodging.—*Leighton*.

Close thine ear against him that shall open his mouth secretly against another. If thou receivest not his words, they fly back and wound the reporter. If thou dost receive them, they fly forward, and wound the receiver.—*Lavater*.

The way to check slander is to despise it; attempt to overtake and refute it, and it will outrun you.—*A. Dumas*.

Have patience awhile; slanders are not long-lived.—Truth is the child of time; ere long she shall appear to vindicate thee.—*Kant*.

Slander cannot make the subject of it either better or worse.—It may represent us in a false light, or place a likeness of us in a bad one, but we are always the same.—Not so the slanderer, for calumny always makes the calumniator worse, but the calumniated never.—*Colton*.

We cannot control the evil tongues of others, but a good life enables us to despise them.—*Cato*.

Your servant in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raymond C. Cole". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large, prominent initial 'R'.

Raymond C. Cole