

Church of God, The Eternal

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Greetings Brethren:

As the called of God according to His purpose, we are required to overcome human nature, that we might become His very own children, inheriting His Kingdom—His government—and then teaching this world how to overcome human nature and to put on the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Let us read Romans 8:17–18:

And if children, then heirs; heirs of God; and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

And in Isaiah 64:4 we read:

For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

I know we have read these scriptures many times, but if we read them focusing on the fact we are the called of God, then those of us that wait upon him and suffer for the cause of Christ, are they who will be responsible for bringing incredible peace, joy, and freedom to this world. Note Isaiah 11:5–9:

And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Meditate on the above and compare that to the present. Brethren, this present world is bursting at the seams with human nature on a rampage of destruction. Just since September 11, 2001, a handful of terrorists brought the symbol of our economic power to rubble—twisted metal, dust and ashes, thousands killed and many more wounded. Thousands of employees were thrown out of work and have had to relocate. Many, no doubt, have had to ask for unemployment benefits and welfare. If we did not understand the revelation, and to some extent have the wisdom of God, it would be most baffling indeed to understand human beings killing other human beings because of religion, whether "Christian" or otherwise.

Now we are seeing those who do not fall under God's protection stand in fear that they could be the next victims of terrorism, or worse yet, victimized by our own people. Consider the latest headlines of children taken from their beds by neighbors and used to satisfy their perverted sexual urges, or sold into prostitution, pornography, or left dead in a wooded area alongside a highway, or in a shallow grave. Is this supposed to happen to a Christian nation, a God-fearing people? NO IT IS NOT. This nation has more places of worship than schools. Just take your pick. Worship on any day or night you like and any way you like, for that matter. So if we are so religious as a nation, does this mean God no longer has power over Satan? Is God losing this "struggle" between Satan and Himself? Please read the first chapter of Job to see there has never really been a struggle at all. God has always been in total control. Satan can do only what God permits. So if such a powerful God is allowing such atrocities, something else has most surely gone awry.

For the answer to these troubling crimes let us read Leviticus 26:14–16:

But if you will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;
And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that
ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also
will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you TERROR [let me repeat
that again] I will even appoint over you TERROR [emphasis mine].

Do you think we have entered a time of terror? Yes indeed we have, and there is more to come. Just keep reading all of Leviticus, chapter twenty-six.

Let us also notice the nature of man in the last days:

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are

good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away (2 Timothy 3:1–5).

In spite of our national claims of devotion to "god," we should recognize it is merely a "form of godliness," and God does not accept it at all.

Corporate Theft and the Eighth Commandment: Thou Shalt Not Steal

Arthur-Anderson just a few years ago was one of the world's most prestigious bookkeeping firms with the highest standard of ethics until human nature began to creep in. Lust and greed for more and more began to erode away their moral ethics until they were sucked into a whirlpool of corporate stealing, taking hundreds of millions of dollars from company employees and stockholders and taking down other corporations with them—the very backbone of our economic power. Enron, Global Crossing, WorldCom, Intel, and even Johnson & Johnson are now under investigation for criminal wrongdoing. Many other corporations are having to downsize their workloads because so much damage has been done by this domino effect and it looks as if this is only the beginning. The Dow is really taking a pounding. The future does not look good for investors.

The trust in our system is rapidly eroding and it may very well have eroded to such a depth that it cannot be restored until Christ returns to take control and restore all things. And if things continue to erode as they have in the past few months, what is left of this nation in the near future will eventually be crying out for help. Yes, brethren, from all indications this world has entered a time of trouble and sorrows. "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these are the beginnings of sorrows" (Mark 13:8). Yes, indeed these are very troublesome times for those who have lost their life savings, once hoping for a comfortable retirement. And many are simply too old to start over. All of this only adds to the horror of September 11.

But, brethren, we must rejoice because we know the revelation given by the Holy Spirit in these last days: that all of this difficulty is leading up to the return of Christ and the wonderful world tomorrow. In that day, human nature will be under major surgery. We will then come to know God from the least to the greatest.

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying,

Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more (Hebrews 8:10–12).

Yes, His laws will finally change human nature on a grand scale. But what law is He talking about?

Turning From Human Nature

And how does one turn from his own human nature? Let us read:

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him (1 John 2:3–5).

Let us go now to John 15:10, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

Now in conclusion, let us go back to 1 John 5:3, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." How could anyone read these scriptures and say God's law was done away with? Fact is, they were not. Notice Deuteronomy 7:9, "Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations." Brethren, how many years is a thousand generations? Think about it.

The real solution to man's problems will be found in keeping the immutable laws God gave to govern human beings. Breaking those laws in ignorance and defiance has brought every evil we are now experiencing. Learning to love God's laws and to practice them will be the thing that finally allows humanity to live in peace and harmony. That will only occur when Jesus Christ returns to establish His perfect government on this earth. It is a time in the future that God's called await with great joy and expectation.

Your servant in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John R. Byrd". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent capital 'J' and 'B'.

John R. Byrd