

Church of God, The Eternal

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ANNOUNCEMENT LETTER November 1987

Dear Brethren:

Back about July, I had strongly urged everyone to be sure his economic status was sound—debt reduced and all monies shielded. Since we will not *ever* become specifically involved in giving details or absolute recommendations, whatever financial moves you make must be your sole responsibility. Only if God gave us some specific warning—a possibility most people cannot comprehend today—would we convey specific advice to His people.

Based upon our reading and study of factors which affect human existence today, we can, at times, give a form of general warning. The above advice—economic solvency and broad diversification of investment—still stands as sage counsel. Do not go into major debt for anything you do not absolutely need. Uncertainty and chaos seem to know no bounds at the present.

Try to become as self-sufficient as possible. Every area in which you must rely upon others is an area of potential trouble. Take a look at people in general. They are totally dependent—no longer people of the soil. They are dependent upon others for food, water, power, and all necessities of life.

A word to the wise is sufficient: Solomon succinctly stated it in Proverbs 6:6–11. This is a Biblical principle which can be applied in every area of life.

General Work

Mr. Charles "Chuck" Lewis of the Nashville, Tennessee, area is now a minister with us. In keeping with our policy of accepting Ambassador College students and men ordained to serve in the church, Mr. Lewis will be used in the ministry of this operation of God. Those who return to the faith initially delivered will be used of God. As Mr. Lewis, and his lovely, charming wife Mary Ann, devote much time to serving you, brethren, I know God will very greatly bless them.

Schedules for 1988 will reveal the scope of his usage in that year. Please be praying for Mr. Lewis and his family. He has a very heavy physical work load during the workweek, but as his time will allow we will arrange some trips out to other areas.

Thank God for the addition of every willing and dedicated servant. An answer to our prayers that God should send laborers into His vineyard.

Since the Feast of Tabernacles, Mr. Clark and I have been involved in conferences and teaching sessions with Mr. Ufre Edem Akwa, from Nigeria. He attended the Feast at Newport, Oregon. We wanted him to see how we conduct services firsthand. Such observation will be most beneficial to him.

Since the conference will continue a couple of weeks yet, I will reserve most remarks until his return to Nigeria. He is scheduled to return on the 16th of November—arriving in Nigeria on the 18th. Please be praying for his safe return.

Prayer Requests

[Omitted for confidentiality]

General Requests

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Blessings of Brethren

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Feast of Tabernacles

All reports regarding the Feast in both Newport and Townsend were that it was a marvelous Feast, the best in at least twelve years. Many of the brethren who were not able to attend the Feast expressed their thanks for the cards received from the Feast sites. It meant a great deal to know their brethren were thinking of them.

At the Townsend site there were three baptisms and we wish to convey our happiness and joy to those who were baptized and to their families.

Deaths

"Brandy" Brandenburg: We were all saddened by the death of Mr. "Brandy" Brandenburg on October 22. He died at 5:45 A.M. and was buried the same day at 5:45 P.M. A graveside service was conducted by Mr. Raymond Cole. Please pray that Mrs. Brandenburg will be comforted through this ordeal of having to give up her husband of so many years. According to Mrs. Brandenburg, he died peacefully in his own bed, he had a simple but beautiful funeral service, he died in the faith that was delivered to him, and he loved God with all his heart.

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Trips

Mr. Bryce Clark will be in the Sacramento area for the Sabbath of November 21. Also, Mr. Clark will be in the Newark, New Jersey/Pennsylvania area for the Sabbath of November 28. He will then be in Dallas for the Sabbath of December 5. The order of these last two visits has been reversed from what was listed in the schedule.

Mr. John Mitchell will visit the Vancouver, BC, area from December 18-20 for services on December 19.

Office—Programs—Needs

Beginning in January, we plan, God willing, to go to the 3rd-class-mailing program with respect to the tapes. We will need to know as soon as possible how long it takes your tape to arrive from Eugene. If some brethren do not receive tapes for the weekly Sabbath, we can change our mailing schedule here. Please let us know as soon as possible the length of time it takes your tape to arrive so we can iron out any problems.

In the first part of 1975, when this little fledgling operation began, the business part of the work was conducted from a room in my home—a home that had been rented temporarily, awaiting opportunity to buy when an acceptable house could be found. Almost at the onset, the room used for an office, and other circumstances involving the home, made it imperative that larger and more convenient space be sought for the office. An office facility was located in the Santa Clara area—just north of Eugene. For the four rooms we had to pay nearly \$1,000 monthly. We soon learned that we could not sustain that cost for any protracted period of time.

After Myra and I had acquired the home we wanted, it was possible for us to turn a very large double garage and second-story room over the garage into an acceptable office for the church. At our expense—in excess of \$13,000—that garage and upper room were completely finished, carpeted, and made ready for office use. Now for 12 years we have used these facilities. Because of our limited income and a keen, sincere desire to serve the people whom God was sending—people who were deeply troubled by unsettling events in our parent church—we never took from the church sufficient to cover the additional costs incurred because of the presence of the office in our own home. This sacrifice was not made reluctantly. We have been happy to serve the people of God.

As time progressed, I knew we could not indefinitely remain in the limited facilities of our home. Something would have to be done at some time in the foreseeable future.

What happened?

When I initially left Worldwide Church of God, an elderly aunt manifested an intense interest in what I was doing. She had made a number of substantial contributions to the church. Later, she wanted to move from California to Oregon and continue her worm-farming operation. I helped her. But, little did I realize she was financially unable to make such a move and to sustain the undertaking which she accepted. When she ran into difficulty, I aided her—via third tithe—as I had done with a number of other people. The difference was this: If she could not repay the money, I would accept that financial liability. Within 18 months of the time help was given to her, she decided she did not want to continue the farm operation. To protect the church's money I became involved—holding an interest in the farm.

At the very time my aunt departed, I evaluated the property and realized its enormous value as a future site for the offices and church. At that time, however, we were in no financial position to build.

During the early eighties, property values in the state of Oregon—due to a very acute recessionary period—had dropped as much as 43%. There was no way I could recover the church's money by selling the property. Therefore, due to a desire to protect the church's money and also keeping in mind a possible use of the property for church buildings, I began pouring personal money into the development of the property.

Initially we were told that the church could not own property in strategically controlled areas outside the city limits of Eugene. We did not like the idea of private ownership, but we knew we could adequately protect the church with a long-term lease and appropriate agreements. Sometimes we are forced to accept what the laws of the land will allow.

As of this writing I have put around \$60,000 into the development of the property. Both my brother Alfred and I have put untold hours of labor into construction and development.

Further, we have now learned that the church can own property in these controlled areas. With this in mind, my brother Alfred and I want to donate all that we have invested—money and labor—in the property. All other considerations will be legally cleared up so that the church can and will own the land free and clear—exception will be a mortgage.

Since land in controlled areas of the Willamette Valley cannot be divided and subdivided at will, larger acreage than necessary for church buildings had to be bought. Even so, the cost of building outside of Eugene is considerably less than construction within the limits of the city. Another plus is this: We can lease the remaining property and the existing buildings. In this way the church will derive a yearly return from its investments.

Considering the fact I have asked my brother to supervise—and do most of the actual construction of the church buildings—I felt he deserved the initial lease right on the property. Also, in lieu of the value for labor expended, by both Alfred and me, the church would make available monies for certain materials and equipment for development of existing facilities. Both the equipment and materials will then be owned by the church. Neither of us will gain anything personally from the transaction. Even the money used for purchase of materials and necessary equipment will accrue to the benefit of the church. The church will own all property, buildings, and equipment. The above considerations were approved by Board action here in Eugene.

When completed, the church will own a very valuable piece of property. I will be free from a financial obligation which I was unwilling to drop. I wanted to protect the church from the beginning.

I have personally spent many thousands of dollars to help the church. Since we must expand the office, I felt it necessary to let the whole church accept part of the financial burden of that expanded facility.

Both my brother and I want to give to the church. We do not want to take anything from the body of Christ—the church.

Hopefully, all facilities developed on the site can be used for all the people in the church. God will guide us in this matter.

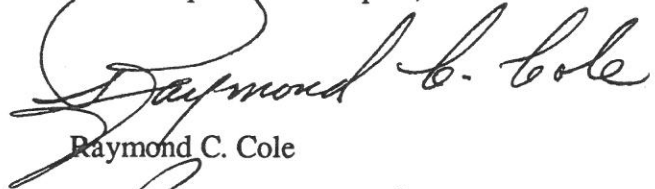
Now is the time to pull together and build that which will honor God and our Christ. One thing is certain: I can no longer personally sustain the heavy financial burden. I have either given directly to the church or to the farm all I can—which we have now *given* to the church.

I have wanted nothing for myself; I have tried to give totally, my life, energies, and resources to the fledgling body of these traumatic days. Wherein I may have failed, please forgive. With all of us pulling together I know we can be the light and manifested glory Christ wants us to be.

Comments

Please remember that our tithing records will not be closed out until January 5, 1988. If you wish to have tithes received after December 31, 1987, credited to the 1987 year, please be sure to send them early enough that they may be received by January 5. Also, please notify us that these tithes should be credited to the 1987 year.

With deep love and respect,

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

Raymond C. Cole

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bryce G. Clark". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'B'.

Bryce G. Clark