

# Church of God, The Eternal

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## Announcement Letter August 1989

Dear Brethren:

Only two more full months until we all will be looking forward to the Feast of Tabernacles with renewed anticipation and excitement. What a time of the year for all who truly love and cherish the Truth of God! In this time of deception and hypocrisy, what a marvelous blessing a supposed "curse" turned out to be.

### **Spiritual Principle:** How and why we should request anointing.

In a brief and succinct manner let us understand the Biblically imposed requirements for anointing the sick. It bears basic duties for both the one requesting the anointing and the minister who does the anointing. Clearly, then, we must understand so that both can fulfill those responsibilities and be faithfully obedient to God.

The minister must be a man of faith and exemplary obedience. He must be a man of character, conviction, and purpose. He must be a called and chosen servant of Christ, for he is the representative of God and Christ here on earth. He must believe and be faithful to his call and responsibility.

On the other hand, those called of God to understand His ways are to seek that ministry for their spiritual needs—instruction in the ways of Truth, counselling, and anointing among others. James was pointedly inspired to write: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church . . ." (Jas. 5:14). In this instruction there is no ambiguity. The people must call in faith and the elders must anoint in faith. Why? The rest of the instruction found in James makes it very clear that certain knowledge and admissions are inherent in the duty. The duty of the elder is to know and understand the situation and thereby pray in faith; and the duty of the afflicted individual is to "confess" his weaknesses and needs—to admit that illness and disease are the results of mistakes and weaknesses of human nature. By careful analysis of James 5:14–16, the reader can readily see that the context of the confession is not a general revealing of private matters to one another in the church, but specifically admitting to the ministry the weaknesses which result in illness. In no way does this text imply a confessional—a place and time in which the people reveal their private sins and difficulties. In context, the substance of the text implies the generalized admission of weakness and cause. How else are we going to learn from the experiences of life unless we apply the lessons which are being taught?

There is a further implication that we may not be experiencing the healings we anticipate because we are not as aggressive as we should be with regard to this admission. For some reason James, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, found it necessary to write, "Confess your faults [sins] one to another [between the minister and the one requesting the anointing] . . . that ye may be healed" (Jas. 5:16). It seems that the most difficult thing any one of us must do is to confess our weaknesses—that is, to admit they exist.

It goes without explanation that when a large geographical area is involved, a minister cannot always personally appear when called. In anticipation of this need, the Apostle Paul was inspired to use the method of anointed handkerchiefs which were sent to the afflicted ones. However, it should be remembered: The instructions and needs mentioned above are still valid, regardless of geography. Faith is necessary. Counselling sometimes is essential. Confession is still imperative. For these reasons, the instruction to contact the minister directly is still valid. And we must always remember that the act of admitting our liability—our faults—is for our good, not that of any other human being. A minister seeking anointing is under the same responsibility as any other member called of God.

At this juncture it is necessary to ask why anyone should seek a minister for anointing and healing. This request goes far beyond the mere act of obedience—doing what is specifically mentioned in the Bible.

Christ is our example: Let us learn from the One who became a minister of the Truth and benevolence to those who came to Him. For Christ is the example of a successful ministry which He transferred to others called to carry on that ministry until He returns.

Those who faithfully accept Christ and believe wholeheartedly are blessed with answers and solutions to problems they bring before Him—sometimes without even addressing Him directly. Note a classic example of this in Matthew 14:36. "And besought [hunted for] him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole." The people had faith and confidence in the Messenger whom God had sent. They acted obediently and were thusly rewarded with the desires of their hearts. And this acceptance was not a matter of the recognition of the personage himself. It was the acceptance of His message and power. On one occasion the religious leaders, either mystified by His actions or belligerently resentful, asked Him by what authority He did the things they were seeing. They asked: "... By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?" (Mark 11:28) They recognized the presence of power and authority. Their only question was from whom these responses came? Though Christ refused to tell His interrogators at that point in time, He had made the point very clear at other times.

In the life of Christ, who was actually doing the many mighty works which the people were experiencing? The Apostle John tells us: "I [Christ] must work the works of him that sent me ..." (John 9:4). Christ said the works which He was performing were the works of the Father. In another text the Apostle John records the words of Christ which make the concept perfectly clear. He said, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, *he* doeth the works" (John 14:10). Christ was not doing the works. They were done by the Father who was dwelling in Christ. Furthermore, the people were required to believe that the Father was doing the works, and that these works were given to Christ by the Father. He was required to perform them to be faithful to His ministry.

What were the works which the Father had given to Christ—works which He had to perform faithfully? At the very beginning of His (Christ's) ministry He made His mission and purpose plain. He said: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19). Christ had been commissioned. He was sent by the Father to the earth to do the work with which He was entrusted. A part of that work was healing.

With the physical death and the subsequent ascension of Christ, did the work of God come to a conclusion? If not, who was commissioned to carry it forward?

When addressing the disciples on the final fateful evening of His life, after instituting the new symbols of Passover, Christ made many far-reaching statements. In this particular case, He told the disciples, ". . . He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12). Just a little later He made the promise more specific, saying, ". . . I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. . . . As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John 17:8, 18). The ministry was now to be transferred to the twelve apostles whom Christ had been training for three and one-half years. They were to be sent forth exactly as Christ himself had been sent by the Father. They would bear all the authority and power which Christ had been given. To them would the people look for counselling, healing, and instruction. Would the apostles be doing the work? Of course not! The Father, now with the aid of Christ the Son, would still be doing the work. As it was with Christ, success on the part of the people who came for help would occur because they believed—believed that the Father was working in His chosen ministry; that the power and authority which had been given to Christ was now in the apostles.

That same power and authority exists within the true ministry today (Matt. 28:18–20). Read also, and study carefully, Ephesians 4:11–14. The truth is inescapable. The ministry (beginning with the twelve apostles) was destined to continue until the return of Christ.

Have we been remiss? Has the responsibility of anointing been taken too lightly? Have the members taken their duty of calling the ministry too lightly?

We here at the office will be correcting the situation. On your part it must be corrected in your own thinking and actions taken.

1. A minister will review every request received—by mail or call.
2. No cloth will be sent unless the request comes directly to a minister from the one suffering or one who is carrying out an authoritative role, as a husband for his wife, or a wife for her husband, or a parent for a child, or one specifically asked to convey a request.
3. Due regard for causes of illness must be addressed on the part of the one requesting healing. No one should make mockery of the responsibility of anointing.
4. As Christ said: Do not attribute to God things which belong to man. God needs no help from men. But men need all the help from God which they can get. God does not use the health systems of this world. He employs His own. What we need to change is a matter of physical responsibility—obeying God's health laws. That knowledge God has allowed man to acquire for himself. But he must act on it. If we know to do certain things because of good physical knowledge, it is sin to avoid it or lightly esteem it.
5. Recognizing how God does things is imperative. No results for requests can be anticipated unless we recognize the authority of God. It is God who gives responsibilities and to whomsoever He pleases.

## Prayer Requests

[Omitted for confidentiality]

## Blessings of Brethren

[Omitted for confidentiality]

## Trips

August 19	George Leeman, Central Pennsylvania
August 26	George Leeman, New York/New Jersey area
	Raymond Cole, Knoxville, Tennessee
September 2	Raymond Cole, West Palm Beach

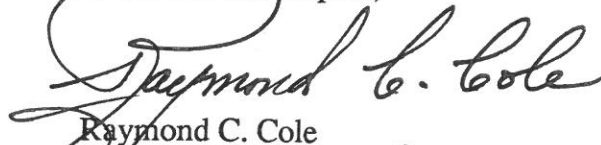
## Tape Schedule

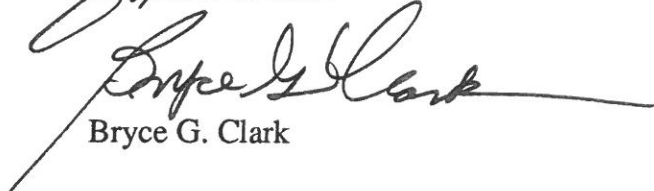
Tape series:	Mailed on:	For:	Title/tape #:
WSE-RC 39	7/26	8/5	Confrontations and responses of Christ #13
WSE-RS 1	7/26	8/12	Pride
WSE-RC 39	8/9	8/19	Confrontations and responses of Christ #14
WSE-BC 122	8/9	8/26	Great men of the O.T. #18
WSE-RC 39	8/23	9/2	Confrontations and responses of Christ #15
WSE-GL 5	8/23	9/9	Essential elements of a Godly attitude
WSE-RC 39	9/6	9/16	Confrontations and responses of Christ #16

## Comments

Much love and affection to you all. Our prayer, as always, is that God will continue to guide, bless, inspire, and direct you.

With love and respect,

  
Raymond C. Cole

  
Bryce G. Clark