

# Church of God, The Eternal

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**Announcement Letter**  
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Dear Brethren:

From your brothers and sisters of Oregon, a hearty greeting. You are in our thought and prayers daily.

**Spiritual Principle:** "He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not" (Ps. 15:4)

Society is an amalgam of diverse humanity. As such, communication is imperative. And that communication must be absolutely honest—true and tried in the fire of circumstance. Man's word must be his bond. He cannot equivocate. What proceeds out of his mouth, he must honor and unequivocally perform.

Let us notice the context of David's statement made above. "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. *He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not*" (Ps. 15:1-4).

Obviously, our interface relationships and all commitments must exist in total honesty. The righteous must have complete control over his speech. His words must be seasoned and true. Whatever commitments the acceptable servant of God makes will be honored and upheld, no matter what the cost. Anything less is not acceptable to God.

How could God accept anything less than absolute honesty and a total commitment to honor our words? God has inexorably *bound Himself* to perform every word, and promise, which He has given to us. God requires the same character from His chosen and faithful people.

Christ amplified this concept when He magnified the intent of the law. In what is called the Sermon on the Mount, Christ emphatically stated: ". . . Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:34-37). The Apostle Paul, inspired to address this matter, said: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus . . ." (Col. 3:17). And James was even more pointed and incisive when he said: "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body" (Jas. 3:2).

What are some of the areas in the lives of humanity in which speech must occur and for which we must give account in the ultimate day of judgment? It most assuredly would

seem that if our words are to become the very basis of our final judgment we should be much more careful about what we say and imply. Therefore, think very soberly and seriously about the following areas of communication in which we conduct our lives daily.

#### VOWS:

Vows cover many areas of our lives. They are strong, emphatic promises to uphold our intents and words. God holds us bound to any and all commitments which we make with our mouths. Read and study Deuteronomy 23:21–23 and Ecclesiastes 5:4.

#### VERBAL COMMITMENTS:

Using the example of physical harlotry, God emphasizes the necessity of astute and learned evaluation of promises or commitments. Words and promises can come easily and cheaply. For many, carrying them out is not even a basic consideration. Be cautious and careful about assurances given as well as assurances received. The dishonest at heart care little about the commitments they make. They are interested in personal advantage only. See Proverbs 5:3–14. Remember, the faithful uphold their word. They are trustworthy, even when they commit themselves unwisely.

#### BAPTISM:

Baptism is a symbol, an ordinance which symbolizes the destruction of the self and the implicit acceptance of Christ (compare Mark 1:4, Rom. 6:3–4). Baptism is an affirmation of an acceptance (verbally) of Christ as the unchanging Way of life (Mark 16:16, Heb. 13:8, Acts 2:38–41). If we waffle having once accepted the unchanging Truth, we accuse God and Christ of lying. We either put on Christ at the time of baptism or we did not (Gal. 3:27). If all realized that they will be held accountable for their words, it is suspected most would be more careful about the promises made. Too many have made commitments and then turning back to the rationalizations of their own minds have rejected that which they accepted at the time of baptism.

#### FINANCES:

God emphatically enjoins man, "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another . . ." (Rom. 13:8). In a very personal way God does not want us to be indebted to other individuals. Well managed mortgages for larger purchases—such as houses and/or cars—must be outside of that interdiction. When paying the payment according to agreement, no debt is owed. The agreement has been faithfully executed. However, when we have not lived up to agreement, we are debtors. So strongly does God frown on such conditions that He stated: ". . . if any man provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel [unbeliever]" (I Tim. 5:8). Our duties and obligations of life must be discharged in an acceptable and timely fashion so that no debt obligation is incurred. Any devious attempt to escape responsibility is considered criminal by God. Such an individual is worse than an infidel. The principle of loaning and helping others is found in Proverbs 6:1–5. Please read and analyze most carefully. Of course, the righteous want to help. They give for the purpose of aiding the less fortunate. Once the largesse is received, the recipient must recognize that his salvation is on the line. To fail to acquit himself correctly puts him outside of the confines of the approval of God. He is worse than an infidel. We must weigh our words very carefully. Once we have made a commitment, God holds us absolutely to our verbal commitment. After all, do you not hold God accountable for His promises to you?

## MARRIAGE AGREEMENT:

Marriage is a covenant. The couple must bind themselves to one another by agreement. There are no qualifications. The verbal agreement is absolute. The only exception is in a case where one *deliberately* hides or conceals information which would have not been accepted by the other party. But like most efforts of men, many couples make promises at the time of marriage, and then when things require personal mastery, one or both begin to look for loopholes. "The defect was/is always with the other party. His/her word was no good." Strangely, however, when talking to the other party, it becomes apparent he/she makes the same accusation. At the time of marriage, few are the cases in which one deliberately intends to deceive the other. Both meant their words to be accepted at that moment. That is all that is required to make the agreement permanent. We must accept the matter regardless of the consequence which must be paid. "He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not." Remember, we are not accountable for reading and interpreting the other person's heart. We are responsible for the words which proceed out of our own mouth.

## PROMISES IN GENERAL:

God gave promises. Some had a time element attached to them. On the basis of that time, God has fulfilled or will fulfill every promise which He uttered (I Kings 8:56, II Pet. 3:9, Ps. 105:42). To emulate the character of God, our words must be considered judiciously. What we promise we must live up to regardless of the situation or responsibility. Is it financial, a marriage agreement, baptism, a vow, or some general commitment?

When evaluating the words and promises of another human being there are a few things which we must consider and weigh carefully. First, what is the character of the individual (II Pet. 2:3, Col. 2:4, Eph. 5:6, Rom. 16:18—as opposed to Heb. 10:23, John 17:17, Ps. 119:89). Second, is the party able to fulfill (Rom. 4:21)? Such factors cannot be determined short of really knowing the other party. Knowing requires time, involving a host of experiences under differing and trying circumstances.

Failure on our part to make necessary inquiry makes null and void any "exception" consideration. We cannot hold God accountable for what we failed to do. Our word must be good, regardless of the price which must be paid. God set the example (Ps. 18:30). When we commit ourselves we must live up to our word. Let us cease looking for avenues out of responsibility.

## **New Interest**

We have recently received about twenty new letters from around the world. These are people who have contacted us for the first time. Please pray that fruit will be born from these contacts.

## **Prayer Requests**

[Omitted for confidentiality]

### Trips

February 2, 9, 16	Raymond Cole, Hawaii
February 16	Bryce Clark, Knoxville
February 23	Bryce Clark, San Antonio
March 16	Raymond Cole, Sacramento
March 28, 29, 30	Raymond Cole, Allentown
March 28, 29, 30	George Leeman, Baltimore

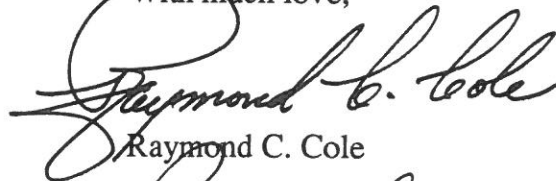
### Office

We could use your help, brethren, in a time-saving measure. Removing the labels from tapes after they are returned consumes many hours. If those of you receiving tapes could remove the labels before you return them, it would be a tremendous help here at the office. One word of caution, however. Remove the labels from all tapes that have 60 or 90 stamped on the top of the plastic tape itself. Some of the labels may have 60 or 90 stamped on them, but ignore this. What we want removed are the labels from those stamped 60 or 90 on the plastic tape itself. If you do not see a 60 or 90 on the tape, then please do not remove the label; simply return it the way it is. Thank you very much for your help in this matter.

### Tape Schedule

<b>Tape series:</b>	<b>Mailed on:</b>	<b>For:</b>	<b>Title/tape #:</b>
WSE-GL 8	1/9	2/2	How to have faith toward God, #2
WSE-RC 51	1/9	2/9	How to keep the Sabbath, #1
WSE-RC 51	1/23	2/16	How to keep the Sabbath, #2
WSE-GL 9	1/23	2/23	What is your relationship with God?
WSE-RC 51	2/6	3/2	How to keep the Sabbath, #3
WSE-RS 7	2/6	3/9	Prayerlessness is sin
WS-RC 51	2/20	3/16	How to keep the Sabbath, #4
WSE-RS 8	2/20	3/23	How to know God's will

With much love,



Raymond C. Cole



Bryce G. Clark