

Church of God, The Eternal

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Announcement Letter
June 1991

Dear Brethren:

Spiritual Principle: Meetings on Sabbaths and Holy Days

All holy days are commanded convocations—under pain of death in the Old Testament. They are times when we must convoke, assemble, before God. Times when God said He would appear in the midst of His people.

Convocations are mandatory on all holy days. Those called and who can read and hear the instructions of God will appear before God at the times of appointed assemblies. But search the whole Bible and you will find only the faintest, for the most part, instruction on how those services were conducted, or the number of meetings which were held. The one area on which we can be most explicit and mentally assured is this: All convocations were ordained as times for the proclamation of the words—truths—of God. The times when God through His chosen servants gave specific messages to His people. They are the times when the words of God, not the ideas of men, must be taught. In fact, the Apostle Paul during the time of the establishment of the first century church of God gave, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, specific instruction to the ministry. He said, "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 . . ." (II Tim. 4:1-2). There must have been a tendency creeping into the church even in that first century which God employed as a basis for what would prophetically occur in these last days. The ministry would not be faithful to the Word or the doctrine.

Custom and tradition in and of themselves are not wrong. Both of these principles are used in a number of ways in the Bible. Traditionally, what was the custom of the Church of God in these last days regarding services on holy days? With the exception of some special occasion, the weekly Sabbaths were times on which a single service was held. On all holy days, there were always two services daily, with the exception of Atonement, a day on which there was only one service conducted. This is a custom, or tradition, which we have felt obligated to continue.

One factor we all must understand: It is Christ who said: ". . . The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath" (Mark 2:27). Inherent in this statement is a fundamental spiritual principle. It is a principle of mercy, compassion, and consideration for human beings. Note the context of Christ's statement, verses 23–26. Technically, violations may have existed, especially in the case of the shewbread. But, the overriding principle of the moment was the urgent need of the human beings involved. In such cases adjustments to "norms," customs, or traditions may be warranted and justified. It is for these very reasons we, as the ministry of Jesus Christ, have placed lead men in charge of every appointed area where services are authorized to be conducted. These men are our eyes and ears—attentive and responsive to the "real" needs of the members in their areas. When they deem it legitimately necessary to make an adjustment to the "customs or traditions" of the church, they have that authority. Of course, we, as the ministry, want to be informed. Further, these men also understand the seriousness of employing any such authority. We feel confident that they will not use such responsibility unwisely nor at any time except where not to use it might create a hardship for a servant or servants of Christ whom they must serve with compassion and understanding.

Lead men assigned to given areas are authorized to make and execute plans for all holy day services in their respective areas. Of course, we expect them to remain thoroughly committed to the "original, revealed" truth, even in respect to traditions and customs except where mercy and understanding override. Further, these lead men will always check with and keep the ministry advised. All appointed area servants are responsible to the ministry, not to anyone else. They are the local extension of the ministry; carrying out a responsibility of the ministry which they cannot accomplish because it is not possible for them to be in all places at one and the same time.

Spiritual Principle (No. 2): Offerings of Holy Days

"Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the Lord empty: Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee" (Deut. 16:16–17). In Exodus we read, "Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year . . . and none shall appear before me empty" (Ex. 23:14–15).

The instruction is quite explicit. We must not appear before God empty on a holy day. Though we may have carelessly offered our offerings to God in a rather generalized way in the past, it does seem that we need to be more conscious of what is specifically required. For that reason, we are encouraging all lead men in their assigned areas to assume the responsibility of that offering. It should be taken up at the time of

the meeting on the holy day itself. Personally, I have felt lax about the command itself. Traveling as much as I do, I had, in times past, made out my check before leaving. But, for the past couple of years, I have changed that mode. Now I make out the check for the day of the offering and leave it with a family member to be taken up on the day of the offering. There is much satisfaction in knowing that the letter as well as the spiritual intent of the command of God has been fulfilled.

Life is made up of exigencies. Indeed, there will be those who cannot legitimately attend the holy-day services in one of the appointed areas. These people probably should take their offerings before God on the specific holy day in their own private way, even though they cannot convoke at any appointed place, and then subsequent to the holy day send it directly to the church office here in Eugene. You, too, will then have fulfilled the command not to appear before Him empty—on the day itself.

Prayer Requests

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Blessings of Brethren

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Births

Mr-s. Scott Leeman: Son born May 9, weighing in at 8 lb. 10 oz., named George Broderick Leeman. Mrs. Leeman and the baby are doing fine.

Mr-s. Mike Hughes: Daughter born May 23, weighed in at 5 lb. 14 oz., named Tiffany Rachel. Mrs. Hughes and the baby are doing fine also.

Deaths

Funeral services for Mrs. Ruby Painter were conducted by Mr. Raymond Cole on May 8. Mrs. Painter was 84 years of age and had been confined to a nursing home the past few years.

We were saddened to hear of the death of Mrs. Ruth Dorman on May 30. Funeral services were conducted by Mr. Cole on June 3. Mrs. Dorman was 88 years of age. She will be missed by all who saw her weekly at the Eugene church.

Trips

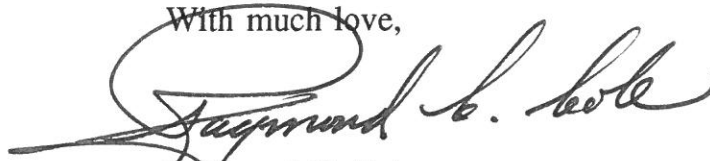
June 8	Bryce Clark, Pittsburgh
June 15	Bryce Clark, Dallas
June 15	Raymond Cole, Rochester
June 22	Raymond Cole, W. Palm Beach/Florida
July 6	George Leeman, Allentown
July 13	George Leeman, Austin
July 13	Robert Sloneker, Baltimore
July 20	Robert Sloneker, Nashville
July 20	Bryce Clark, Sacramento

Tape Schedule

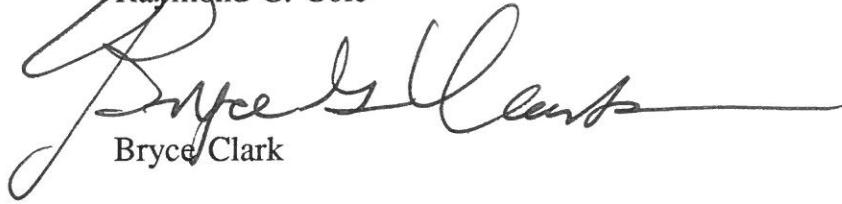
Tape series:	Mailed:	For:	Title/tape #:
WSE-RS 10	5/1	6/1	"Let us"
WSE-GL 9	5/15	6/8	What is your relationship with God? #3
WSE-BC 132	5/15	6/15	What to look for in a mate
WSE-RS 11	5/29	6/22	The enslavement of sin
WSE-RC 51	5/29	6/29	How to keep the Sabbath, #9
WSE-BC 122	6/12	7/6	Great men of the Old Testament, #39

WSE-GL 9	6/12	7/13	How to keep the Sabbath, #4
WSE-RC 52	6/26	7/20	How to recognize a true Christian
WSE-RS 12	6/26	7/27	Signals of danger

With much love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raymond C. Cole". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Raymond C. Cole

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bryce Clark". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Bryce Clark