

Church of God, The Eternal

P. O. Box 775
Eugene, Oregon 97440

Switzerland
Case Postale 2 701
CH 1002 Lausanne

Canada
P. O. Box 76946, Station "S"
Vancouver, B.C. V5R 5T3

Announcement Letter November 1991

Dear Brethren:

We are sorry for the terrible ordeal imposed upon you these past few weeks. Please bear with us for the much needed information contained in both this *Announcement Letter* and the *Monthly Letter*. As I have said, from this time forward we are determined to be constructively oriented only. We have much to be done—that which is spiritually necessary to prepare the children of God for these troubled last days and the ultimate inheritance of the Kingdom of God.

Spiritual Principle: Who Is Responsible?

Each time an unsettling circumstance develops within the "church," members attempt to assign guilt. As was true with Christ and the Apostles—also the prophets of old—the first ones held accountable are those in the ministry—especially those who bear ultimate responsibility. Are we ever correct in attempting to determine liability of anyone else? Why will we allow our confidence and spiritual equilibrium to be challenged by the "whisperings" of any other human being? We are not held accountable for the unknown, the mysterious. We should always maintain faith and confidence until we see, for ourselves, what is obviously wrong or a violation of principle upon which our faith has been anchored. We should never be influenced by the interpretations of another party. If we did not come to conclusions on our own, based upon our own observations and what was personally heard or seen, we should never respond emotionally to what someone else says. Just remember our original faith and conviction were not predicated upon the faith and conviction of another member, unless of course, we admit we were not walking in the footsteps of Christ initially, and that we were merely following another human being.

Rumors and evil reports galore surfaced in the last years of our former affiliation. We took no action until specific fruits were manifested. A departure from the original truth was admitted and much sought after, for months, by those who did not really love the truth of God. Considerable effort was expended by those faithful to address the issues involved, all to no avail. No departure from the church was even remotely contemplated by us until all avenues of redress had been exercised.

Today, as on occasions in the past, many members are making decisions wholly predicated on what others are saying and what a personalized emotional involvement dictates. Can truth ever be determined by such behavior? Never! If we are emotionally or personally troubled, we are under obligation from God to go to the parties with whom we have any ill-feeling, an altercation, or a question about faithfulness. We are spiritually under obligation not to listen to or respond to the emotional outcries of any other human being. But honesty and integrity are most difficult requirements for all mortal beings. We, by nature, are self-justifying, defensive, and pulled by human ties. Truth is never served by anything which proceeds from the natural minds, hearts, and emotions of carnal beings.

In the above context, we are occasionally asked, why do you, as a minister, not go to those who left the church? Before we can answer that question, a brief explanation must be made about these past activities.

What Really Happened

A series of sermons regarding authority, its purpose, and diversities as determined by God were given here in the Eugene Church. About the middle of the series I was accosted and challenged regarding the curse God imposed upon women for Eve's part in the rebellion which occurred in the Garden of Eden. I stated, as I had heard Mr. Armstrong several times state, that this was a curse which was to be lifted at the time women were born into the family of God, a time when we are neither male nor female. The feeling given to me by the one who challenged me was that a subservient relationship would continue forever in the Kingdom of God. I simply referred him to the Biblical texts which I had quoted. Even so, I was emphatically told, "I do not agree with you."

For a number of weeks we, as ministers, had been discussing the matter of ministerial counselling and handling of personal member problems. The hardest and most unrelenting attitude manifested toward certain members, and workers in the office, came from those who defected. Toward the end of these discussions, I finally made it quite clear that I did not come out of Worldwide to presume a hard and unmerciful attitude toward anyone. This is an attitude which I have attempted to maintain from the beginning of our activity in 1975. In no way did I intend to be a part of a tyrannical control over the members. Let me assure you, if I had been so inclined, those who were demanding hard intervention toward those with whom they found fault, would have been recipients of much censor themselves. Much mercy and kindness had been shown over the years.

Mr. Clark and I have recently learned that some discussions of a private nature were occurring among these ministers before the time of the defection. The subject

material was *never* discussed with us. Such an action—defection without any kind of discussion—in no way can be justified humanly let alone considered acceptable to God.

As admitted to at least one member, the departure did not occur because of Pentecost. It was the series of sermons on authority which was the basis of their separation. Yet, for anyone who will take the time to really study the Bible, those sermons were packed with Biblical texts and the concepts themselves came directly from the Bible. Their major contention was in regard to authority within the ministry. Strong emphasis, according to the defectors, was laid upon the fact the ministry must exercise real authority over the members. However, according to them, all ministers are equal and no one minister must exercise any control over others.

The real clincher for the defectors came as a "revelation" from God. Supposedly prayer had been made and God made it clear that the church was wrong about Pentecost and that they must separate because of the authority issue.

There is something most troubling about the above concept. It seems to be in harmony with a clear cut prophecy of the last days mentioned in both Jude and II Peter. We read: "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities" (Jude 8). Who are these dreamers? The Greek word for dreamer is *enupniázomai*. It means to dream, a dreamer. Since it is used also in Acts 2:17 (the only other text where the word is used), "your old men *shall dream* dreams," it is obvious the word can be used in a constructive sense. However, the context of Jude 8 makes it clear that Jude was using it in a most negative sense. Most commentators recognize that the meaning in Jude is one of presumed—false—conception of vision or revelation. One lengthy quote will suffice. From *The Interpreters Bible* we read: "Dreamings may refer to 'visions' as well as to dreams in the ordinary sense. This is somewhat obscured when the meaning of the term is restricted to lasciviousness, as in the rendering, **these filthy dreamers defile the flesh . . .** But here dreamings lead men not only to defile the flesh, but also to reject authority, and revile the glorious ones. Licentiousness is only one outcome of their dreamings. Dreamings probably refer here to vision experiences alleged to be the mediums of divine revelation. . . . Jude is charging that the vaunted 'spirituality' of the errorists is spurious because it is empty of moral content (cf. vs. 19). They justify licentiousness, rejection of authority, scorn of the glorious ones, on the basis of revelation. True revelation, however, builds up character instead of degrading and demoralizing it. By that test, therefore, these errorists, like the false prophets of antiquity, 'prophesy the delusions of their own minds' (Jer. 23:26 Amer. Trans.). Instead of the truth of God as contained in 'the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints,' the dreamings of these visionaries are a texture of lies (cf. Isa. 29:10; 56:10; Jer. 27:9). Their dreamings cause these men also to reject authority . . ." (Page 328).

Ministerial Authority In The Bible

By reading the context and analyzing I Corinthians 12 one can come to no other conclusion than this: Paul is explaining order and responsibility within the true body of Jesus Christ. The line of demarcation is precise. Paul says: ". . . I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed . . ." (v.3). That is, one who possesses the Spirit of God will not be found indicting those called to be a part of that body, claiming any validity for separate rebellious bodies, nor will they be antagonistic toward the internal authoritative structure of Christ's own body, the church.

According to the Apostle Paul here is what the called and faithful will comprehend: 1) Correct and acceptable delineations of responsibility (vv. 4–10); 2) Organization is determined by God (vv. 11, 18); 3) There is one body only (v. 20); 4) There is absolute order in the body (vv. 24–25); 5) And finally, there are *levels* of ministerial responsibility (vv. 28–29). Indeed, no one can admit these authoritative factors unless he possesses the Holy Spirit (v. 3).

Order In The Body

God places the called in the body as it pleases Him. The order determined by God is most clearly given in Eph. 4:11–13. Priority of order is there clearly spelled out. However, let us note a text, one among many which could be given, which makes that order most clear. In I Timothy, the first chapter, the Apostle Paul gives authoritative commands to the Evangelist, Timothy. See verses 2–7. Here is a clear example of what we are attempting to do during this present crisis. The problem is that so many are mesmerized by their own concepts, so much so that they cannot even hear the warnings—warnings which could save their spiritual lives if only they would take the time to hear and respond.

Paul was called and commissioned by God. Timothy was a servant of the church, assigned responsibility by the Apostle Paul. Did he bear any specific charge and authority? Note carefully I Tim. 5:20. Here we read: "Them (whom?, see v. 17—local elders) that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." Did Timothy, as an Evangelist, have any authority over local elders? Indeed he did! Then, may I ask what is the problem today? Is it one of rebellion against the responsibilities which God placed within the church—as it pleased Him—I Corinthians 12?

Indeed, local elders do bear responsibility (I Tim. 5:17). But, it must be remembered that they must be obedient to those who are over them in the Lord. It is in this area that our present problem exists. All other issues are superfluous. The Pentecost

issue was not even a problem until those who rebelled sought for some form of justification which could be used to confuse you members—if you will allow it to happen.

Why We Do Not Go To The Defectors

They are not sheep who lost their way. They are revolters, as the Bible calls them. As such we are in the same situation Moses was in when Korah rebelled. Please carefully read the 16th chapter of Numbers. All the answers are contained therein. Once you have read Numbers 16, please turn to Jude and II Peter 3. Here you will see that the Korah situation would also prevail in these last days. Should those of us who do still love the truth of God, violate the specific instructions of God? I think not!

Brethren, for those who truly want to know the ways of God, we will try to keep you informed and will continue to teach those truths which we initially accepted and were the basis of God's work in these last days. Of course, there are detractors within our former affiliation who will claim that we are not doing what we claim and that we are not following the "faith once delivered." But, anyone who makes any such comment and yet continues to stay within the former affiliation, which has abandoned nearly all original truth, must surely be classified as a hypocrite. In those areas where there were technical difficulties—third tithe and holy day offerings several times a year—we have been quick to mention them to you. In the case of Pentecost, we have never said that the count in Hebrew and English are the same. What we said is this: The truths which are manifest in the holy day, and its significance, have never been changed—regardless of the language used.

Let us, always, be sure we are comparing oranges with oranges; that is, be sure you are quoting what we do say and teach. Too many mistakes are made by attempting to interpret what someone else believes. Honesty dictates that *you* be sure what is believed and practiced.

Prayer Requests

[Omitted for confidentiality]

[Omitted for confidentiality]

General Requests

A number of the scattered brethren have written in to express their deep appreciation for the receipt of the Feast cards with the signatures of the brethren. Rather than mentioning all of them by name, this announcement should suffice for their thanks.

Blessings of Brethren

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Births

Mrs. Kollina Nalder: A son was born September 12 and named Nickolas Joseph, weighing 6 pounds, 7 ounces.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Seibel: A daughter was born September 16, weighing in at 8 pounds. She was named Rachel Ariana.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Davidson: A daughter was born on October 30, named Cynthia Ann. She weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces.

Trips

November 16	Raymond Cole	Sacramento
November 23	Bryce Clark	Rochester
November 30	Bryce Clark	Baltimore
December 7	Raymond Cole	Pittsburgh
December 14	Raymond Cole	Nashville
December 21	Raymond Cole	Vancouver, BC

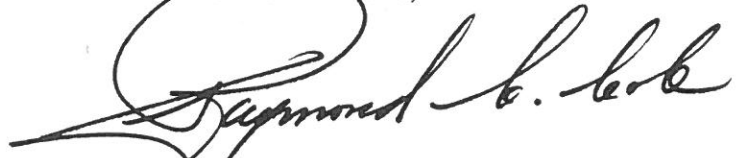
Office

Mr. King requests those who have received Feast tapes to return them as soon as they have finished with them. Also, any other sermon tapes should be returned if they are not being used. Music tapes are an exception to this request.

Tape Schedule

Tape Series	Mailed	For	Title/tape #
WSE-BC 134-3	10/2	11/2	Great Women of the Old Testament #3
WSE-BC 122-42	10/2	11/9	Great Men of the Old Testament #42
WSE-BC 136	10/16	11/16	What We Must Do To Overcome
WSE-RC 54-6	10/16	11/23	What Is the Purpose of Authority? #6
WSE-RC 54-7	10/30	11/30	What Is the Purpose of Authority? #7
WSE-BC 137	10/30	12/7	The Present Tribulation
WSE-RC 54-8	11/13	12/14	What Is the Purpose of Authority? #8
WSE-BC 138-1	11/13	12/21	Paul's Epistles #1
WSE-RC 54-9	11/27	12/28	What Is the Purpose of Authority? #9
WSE-BC 138-2	11/27	1/4	Paul's Epistles #2

In Christian Love,



Raymond C. Cole



Bryce G. Clark