

Church of God, The Eternal

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Announcement Letter September 1992

Warmest greetings brethren,

In five weeks the Feast of Tabernacles will be here. Invited to attend by God are all who *really* love the truth, are genuine peacemakers, and who have no confidence in the flesh. The faithful are coming joyously to hear the unadulterated truth and to profit thereby.

Though we will process the October issue of the *Announcement Letter*, this present issue is the last in which we can convey a message prior to the Feast. Have a glorious and safe trip to one of the appointed places. May this Feast be your most rewarding—ever!

Spiritual Principle: Revelation: When?

These last days are times of great deception, perversion of God's Word, and religious confusion. That being a given factor, is it possible to have confidence in any writings, preachments, or other communications of any so-called ministers?

We must take note of the terrible depravity and depth of perversion which prevails today. In fact, the Apostle Paul stated emphatically that God would take a hand in the perverse situation which would surface in the last days (II Thess. 2:11–12). In this prophetic scenario the Apostle Paul makes three points very clear. One, the time is clearly indicated (II Thess. 2:1). Two, the faithful must exercise great caution against deception (compare verses 3 and 9–10). And, three, the premise of such apostasy is a lack of real love and appreciation for the truth which had been given (vv. 10–12). The logic of the above is this: The truth had been given, many had accepted it but far too few had really loved it. And finally, with the help of God a major test of faith in that which was originally given was experienced. Note carefully: There is no indication of a progressive growth into truth. On the contrary, there is indicated only a progressive breakdown of truth—a departure.

When writing to Timothy, Paul states emphatically that the cause of the turmoil within the body of the church was Satan (II Tim. 2:23–26). Idiotic and totally unacceptable questions were surfacing, causing great damage to faith and conviction. It was a matter of not trusting the truth which obviously had been given earlier. The people had heard the truth through the preaching of the Apostle Paul but had allowed themselves to question the veracity of that which they heard due to the influence of Satan. The time element of the above consideration was not specifically the days of the Apostle Paul but the last days. See the first verse of chapter two. Take specific note of the word "also." The usage of that word infers that the concepts of chapter one are equally applicable to the last days as are those of chapter two where we are informed that the time *is* the last days. Therefore, in these last days, far too many are questioning the truth given and are under the influence of Satan. The hope is that they can be redeemed from this adversarial influence and gain control of the required faith and conviction manifested in their initial belief.

In II Tim. 3:5–8 Paul further explains the turmoil generated within the body of the church in the last days. By being enamored by their own studies (vs. 7) they lost faith in the revealed truth of God and are now unable to come to an acceptable knowledge of the truth. Why? Because their minds have become perverse, resisting that which was first given, and have rejected the way initially delivered to the chosen of the last days (vs. 1).

God is allowing such conditions to exist for specific reasons (I Cor. 11:19). Such a condition is of significance to the ministry. The true servants of God must not become involved in the debate, agitation, strife, and contention inherent in such situations (II Tim. 2:24).

For the above reason, we are not entering into any sort of contention and verbal assassination of anyone. Our purpose is singular. We want to make plain the logic of God's Way of life.

Truth Must Be Revealed:

The truth of spiritual things cannot, indeed will not, ever come by personal study. Only by revelation, that is a personal revelation—not the deceptive concept that revelation is the initial writing of the Bible out of which we must come to a knowledge by study. Man of his own ability, through study, can never come to the knowledge of spiritual things. Remember the word "study" in II Timothy 2:15 does not mean a personalized concept of study as we might use it today. It literally means to "endeavor." We are obligated to act on the faith delivered so that we will be approved of God. The Greek word is *spoudazo*. It is used as follows: 1. Gal. 2:10, "was forward to do"; 2. Eph. 4:3, "endeavoring"; 3. I Tim. 2:17, "endeavored"; 4. II Tim. 4:9, "Do thy diligence"; 5. II Tim. 4:21, "Do thy diligence"; 6. Titus 3:12, "be diligent"; 7. Heb. 4:11, "Let us labour"; 8. II Pet. 1:10,

"give diligence"; 9. II Pet. 1:15, "I will endeavor"; 10. II Pet. 3:14, "be diligent." The only place where the word is translated to "study" is in II Timothy 2:15. Taken in the context of other usages, it should be translated only as "serious endeavor."

It should be made plainly clear and understandable, personalized study cannot bring one to the truth. The truth must be revealed. There is no other way to know it. Further, it must be understood that after being called study is imperative for the servant of God. What we are saying here is that personalized study will not afford you a revelation of spiritual truths. They must be revealed (I Cor. 2:9–11, 14).

The Order of Revelation:

There is an order to this revelation. God does not make it known to human beings on the basis of a personalized study. Revelation comes in accord with a system determined by God many years before the time of Christ.

Revelation is imperative because the way of life was kept secret from men until a time appointed by God (Rom. 16:25–26). The Scriptures were written many years earlier; yet, they were not understood until the appointed time of revealing. No amount of study would have assisted anyone to understand them though they had been previously written.

At the appointed time Jesus Christ came bringing the words which God, the Father, had given to Him. He said that He spoke nothing that the Father had not given to Him. In turn, Jesus Christ had given these same words to the disciples, to become the apostles, before He returned to heaven (John 17:18; 20:21). Then Christ commissioned the apostles to go forth and to preach the same message which He taught. Further, before His ascension, Christ made it clear that in a comparable fashion He would call and commission someone in the last days (Matt. 28:19–20). Please note: The twelve Apostles are not living in these last days. Therefore, the substance of these verses refers to someone called and commissioned in the last days—someone who would and did preach the same gospel which He brought and gave to the apostles also.

Prior to the fulfillment of Matthew 28:19–20 there was another unique call and commission—that of the Apostle Paul. Before he was commissioned to go forth and preach, the truth was given to him (Eph. 3:3, Gal. 1:11–12). The central question, why did God give the truth to specially chosen servants? Interestingly, only by *their preaching* were the people, in general, called and given a revelatory knowledge of that same truth (I Cor. 4:1; 1:21, Rom. 10:13–15).

God calls specially chosen servants to whom He reveals His truth. Those chosen servants are then sent—commissioned—to speak that same truth (I Cor. 15:3; 11:23). Through their preaching God calls and reveals His truth to those predestinated to be

knowledgeable of that way. Paul states that there is no other way for the called to know that truth.

Remember, Jesus Christ said that same truth would be given to someone in the last days (Matt. 28:19–20). Then we are informed that a major departure from the revealed truth would occur. From that departure would surface a host of divisive groups, each advocating his/their own concepts. The revelation was a personalized revelation, first to a chosen servant, and then to those chosen from the foundation of the world. That revelation is a personalized revelation—not a conceptual revelation based on a personal study of the Bible. God revealed His truth to some chosen instrument in these last days. From his preaching many people were called and the truth revealed to them. Tragically, a host of contentious and divisive groups would surface from those who once knew the truth but lost faith and confidence due to a plethora of causes.

Validity of Revealed Truth is Not Dependent upon Individual Acceptance:

In the great apostasy many would depart from the revealed truth. Only a remnant would remain faithful. Because the many rejected the truth of God, that does not render it ineffective. The truth will remain the truth if all mankind rejects it. Referring to the last days, note what Paul said in Romans 1:21–22, 28. They knew God. The truth had been given to them. But, the vanity of their minds overcame them. They turned from the revealed way and became mentally darkened. The truth came first. The perversions of vanity followed. It was not the other way around. To the Corinthians Paul gave the same warning (II Cor. 4:1–5). They knew the truth and then because of insufficient faith and love for it, they departed from that which had been delivered to them. When writing to Timothy, Paul again addressed the same situation. The truth was delivered but the people had become argumentative and had lost faith in that way. They turned to their own minds and concepts (I Tim. 1:3–7, 18–19). Referring to the last days specifically, Paul tells us that by a lack of love for the revealed truth and a turn to confidence in the human mind, enamored by personalized study, many would be influenced by Satan, creating an exodus from the revealed ways of life (I Tim. 4:1–2, 6–7).

It is evident, therefore, that the truth was first revealed—a direct call and revelation—to those chosen of God. Because of a lack of love for the way revealed, there would be a major departure from that truth. Revelation of truth is a very real and meaningful concept to those called and chosen of God—clever arguments about the meaning of revelation notwithstanding. Revelation is truly a revelation. It is not a conceptual orientation derived from personalized study. God revealed His truth to a chosen servant in the last days. As the Bible makes clear, that servant went apostate. Many followed in that path of error. However, the validity of that truth is not dependent upon what fallible man does. The revealed truth remains absolute.

What, then, Is the Duty of the Called—Faithful?

Those who espouse any way or doctrine contrary to that which was originally taught and which was initially accepted must be avoided (Rom. 16:17).

Have implicit trust in your call and initial faith (Eph. 1:12–13).

Continue unmoved in your original faith—remain undisturbed by the plethora of concepts erroneously proclaimed (Col. 1:23).

Continue to remain strong in your original love of the truth, holding the concepts which you initially accepted (II Thess. 2:10, 15).

When you were called, the truth was revealed—the mystery of God’s way of life. Hold to it with an unfettered mind (I Tim. 3:9).

Continue in those things which you initially learned. Do not accept any departure from the original faith, regardless of from whom that change may come (II Tim. 3:14).

Before you were baptized God called and revealed a priceless way of life. Will you allow some clever argument to destroy your faith in that truth delivered to you? Do as God says: Hold fast in absolute love for that way of life.

Revelation as it applies to the called of God does not mean the original writing of the Bible, or that historical revelation which relates only to some other human being. It applies to your call and the enlightenment which occurred at the time you first heard the message from the commissioned servant of the last days.

Prayer Requests

[Omitted for confidentiality]

General Requests

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Blessings of Brethren

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Comments

In the past it has been our policy not to announce baptisms. But since some who have been baptized recently wish their baptisms to be announced, our policy henceforth will be to announce the baptisms of those who inform us they wish to have it mentioned in the *Announcement Letter*.

Trips

September 19	Raymond Cole	Sacramento
September 26, 28	Raymond Cole	Austin
October 10	B.G. Clark	Knoxville
October 12–19	B.G. Clark	Townsend
October 12–19	Raymond Cole	Newport

Office

God requires his servants to be good stewards. This applies to both ministry and laity. As ministers, the administration of the Third Tithe account requires strict accountability before God. At present there is a large outstanding sum of loans that needs to be addressed. Accountability for the loans one makes is a serious matter before God.

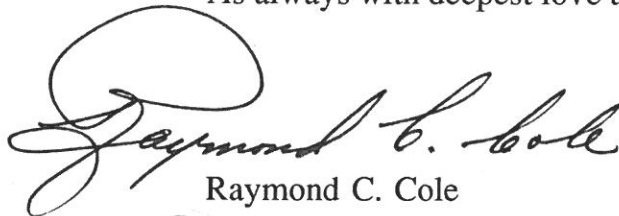
For that reason, beginning January 1, 1993, and quarterly thereafter, we will send notices out from the office reminding those who have taken loans from the Third Tithe account that they have an obligation to meet. Perhaps many have forgotten the loans they have taken out. Whatever the reason, some repayment plan would be beneficial to the church and these notices will serve as a reminder of such.

Tape Schedule

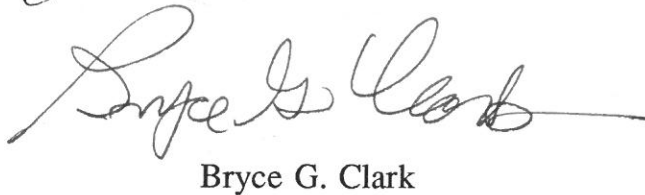
Tape Series	Mailed	For	Title/tape #
CL 2-149*	7/22	9/5	Humility #12
WSE-BC 138-19	8/5	9/12	Paul's Epistles #19
CL 2-150*	8/5	9/19	Humility #13
WSE-BC 138-20	8/19	9/26	Paul's Epistles #20
Trumpets	9/9	9/28	A.M. & P.M. (2 tapes)
CL 2-151*	8/19	10/3	Humility #14
Atonement	9/16	10/7	A.M. (1 tape)
WSE-BC 138-21	9/2	10/10	Paul's Epistles #21
CL 2-152*	9/2	10/24	Humility #15
WSE-BC 138-22	9/16	10/31	Paul's Epistles #22

*Principles of Christian Living series currently being given at Eugene Sabbath Services.

As always with deepest love and affection,



Raymond C. Cole



Bryce G. Clark