

Church of God, The Eternal

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Announcement Letter May 1993

Dear Brethren,

Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread have come and gone. Pentecost is just around the corner. Did we profit by the spiritual blessings of the Passover season? Are we preparing for the coming Pentecost season? We each have a spiritual responsibility before God to use the coming days, as we prepare for Pentecost, wisely and profitably. Let us redeem the time for the days are evil!

Spiritual Principle:

Who Is Authorized by God? By Whose Authority is a Work Commissioned?

The final decades of the first century Church of God were marked with the presence of many divisions, splinter groups, and a host of unauthorized men presuming to speak for God. They created a vast array of differing organizations, all claiming to be the true church, or at least a part of that body. These groups were led by ministers who had lost confidence in the truth or by men who had deliberately crept in for the very purpose of dividing and destroying the body.

What is historically obvious is this: Only the called, trained, and commissioned apostles were approved of God to do a work. Others were added to aid and assist the specifically commissioned servants of God. Those added bore no authority to perform a "work" on their own. In departing from the faith delivered to them and establishing a work of their own they were manifesting presumption and self-will. According to the indictment leveled in the pages of the Epistles of Paul and other Sacred Writings they were certainly not authorized or approved. Yet, many of the laity called in those days were deceived and gullibly led into gross error by these "presumers."

Of greater personal concern to those of us living in these climactic last days is the direct inference that the conditions of *that* chaotic time were recorded for *our benefit* today. In other words, a similar situation would develop in these days in which we live. Those called had better take careful note and learn the lesson of history well. If not, we are destined to pursue a comparable path of disillusionment and ultimate rejection.

Based on the prophetic words of God, a genuine work of God was to occur in the last days (Matt. 24:14; 28:19–20). It was a work in which the very same truths taught by Jesus Christ would be proclaimed and believed. Take careful note of Matthew 28:19–20. It reads: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . . Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. . . ." Since it is obvious the original twelve apostles are not still alive, the "you" of the above verses can refer to no other individuals than those commissioned to do that work in the last days—the work mentioned in Matthew 24:14, which is prefaced by the time statement of verses 1–3, the same period of time mentioned in Matthew 28:20.

A commissioned work is the means by which the called of God hear the truth (Rom 10:14). Once called, the chosen of God are led to repent and surrender their lives to God, in faithful obedience to that which was taught, that which they heard. At no time, however, does that call and conversion grant them special privileges to assume a specific duty before God. How many ministers are assuming the "right" to carry out a work in the name of God? Contrary to the belief of many, we are not doing a work. From the beginning of our endeavor, in 1975, we have stated the above fact. Our effort can best be summed up in Jude 23. We are attempting to re-inspire the called to return to the "faith once delivered." Only God can position anyone within the structure of the body (I Cor. 12:18, 28). How many have assumed a position other than that given to them by God? Prophecies relating to our time answer that question thoroughly. Before taking a look at those prophecies, let us consider a couple of other texts. The Apostle Paul states emphatically that only the commissioned of God can proclaim the genuine truth (Rom. 10:15). The term "sent" is the meaning of the concept of a commission. To preach the truth of God requires a commission. To the Hebrews, Paul makes this principle most clear. Using a historical reference to the Israelitish priesthood, Paul stated clearly and emphatically that ". . . no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God. . . ." (Heb. 5:4) If this were a most serious offense under the terms of the old priesthood, how much greater the offense under the terms of the new priesthood—the priesthood of Christ?

There are many texts to show that far too many presumed to do a work for God who were not commissioned and who did not remain faithful to the truth originally given. There are many "presumers" in these last days. When asked about the last days, Christ emphasized the need to watch for such presumptive individuals (Matt. 24:5, 10–12, 24). In I Timothy 4:1–2 we are warned of an influx of demonic doctrines into the once faithful body and a massive departure from the truth given. False ministers had begun to speak with forked tongues. They advocated hypocrisy. In II Timothy 3:1, 7–8, 13–14 Paul was inspired to warn those of us living in these perilous last days. Some would be involved in deep study—a study which caused them to depart from the truth. Their deceptions would reach deep into the hearts and minds of many who were called and once understood the divinely revealed truth. Considering such conditions of turmoil and chaos, we are instructed to ". . . continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them" (v. 14). In II Timothy 4:3–4 we are

informed that in these troubling last days (v. 1) some would not endure the truth given initially and they would seek a ministry who would teach and advocate doctrines appealing to their carnal natures. II Peter 2:1-3, 18-21 and Jude 4 inform us of an apostasy in which many ministers would prey on gullible members, making merchandise of them.

Indeed, as there existed a host of divergent groups in the first century so there were prophesied to be many differing groups in these last days. These men have assumed the right to create works of their own. A terrifying prophesy of this condition is found in Jeremiah 23. Many have assumed, in their own minds, the right to do a work. But, Jeremiah was inspired to write, "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied" (Jer. 23:21). Interestingly, even though God had not sent them, if they had elected to remain faithful to the truth initially given God would have in part accepted their endeavors (v. 22).

Until God calls and commissions someone to continue the work, no one has any right to assume such a charge or mission. The duty of the faithful is spelled out in II Thessalonians 2:15, 1-2, II John 9, I John 2:24, 27, and Hebrews 3:6, 14. Why cannot men wait for God? Why must they presume? Deluding themselves into believing that they are doing the work of God. Is it possible that Christ referred to these "presumers" in Matthew 7:21-23? According to *The Authentic New Testament*, by Hugh J. Schonfield, verse 23 reads, "But then I shall tell them plainly, 'I have never authorized you. Be off with you, you illegal practitioners!'"

Prayer Requests

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Births

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Hughes: A son was born to them on April 9. He weighed nine pounds, two and one-half ounces and was twenty-one and one-half inches long. Both mother and baby are doing fine. Our congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Hughes.

Deaths

The son of Ruth Keohohina, Raymond Tissot, age 47, died in late April. Our deep condolences are extended to Ruth and her family.

Trips

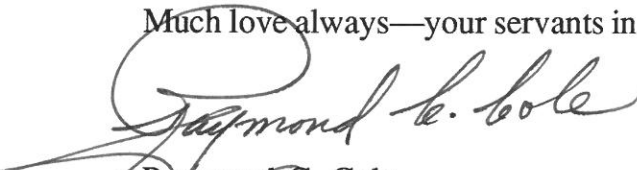
May 15	B.G. Clark	C. California
May 22	B.G. Clark	Nashville
May 29, 31	R.C. Cole	Europe
June 5	R.C. Cole	Europe
June 19	B.G. Clark	Vancouver, B.C.
June 26	B.G. Clark	Amarillo

Tape Schedule

Tape Series	Mailed	For	Title/tape #
WSE-BC 138-32	03/10	05/01	Paul's Epistles #32
*CL 2 -157	03/10	05/08	Humility #20
WSE-BC 138-33	03/24	05/15	Paul's Epistles #33
*CL 2-158	03/24	05/22	Humility #21
WSE-BC 138-34	04/07	05/29	Paul's Epistles #34
Pentecost	05/10	05/31	A.M. & P.M.
*CL 2-159	04/07	06/05	Humility #22
WSE-BC 138-35	04/21	06/12	Paul's Epistles #35
*CL 2-160	04/21	06/19	Humility #23
WSE-BC 138-36	05/05	06/26	Paul's Epistles #36

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

Much love always—your servants in Christ,



Raymond C. Cole



Bryce G. Clark