

Church of God, The Eternal

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Announcement Letter January 1994

Dear Brethren,

This is the beginning of a new year only in the eyes of men. Regardless, the last twelve months have been fraught with change, violence, fear, lying, and dishonesty as well as an insidious erosion of true freedom and human rights. A general comprehension of prophetic events destined to occur in these closing days of this era of time reveal a horrible, frightening, and sobering array of calamitous circumstances. May our courage, conviction, and faith be sufficient. We must endure. And, with God's help we can.

Spiritual Principle: ". . . let him call for the elders of the church . . ." (James 5:14)

Human beings were created—destined to face a crucial test. Will they respond confidently to the way of life determined by God; or, will they seek to pursue a way which seems right to them—that which satisfies the dictates of the flesh, that which can be seen, demonstrated, and physically substantiated?

A second factor in the equation of life is this: Unless revealed and made comprehensible the spiritual realm is beyond the grasp of human mind. Due to that incontrovertible fact, a warfare has been going on since the creation of man. No carnal mind is going to admit that it cannot understand spiritual things and that its way is a way of rebellion against the fundamental principles of the spirit. Denial or not, the way of the flesh is rebellion against the truth—the way—of God. In this fact is found a problem of significant dimension even among those called of God. That problem relates to the matter of food, disease, and healing.

What is the problem?

Spiritual things cannot be seen. Acceptance of them requires fundamental faith. And that faith, if genuine, refuses to accept the rationale of the flesh—the demand to see

from a physical perspective or act on the basis of a physical orientation. Faith is an implicit trust in the word and promise of God. Real faith manifests no equivocation, doubt, or distrust. It believes regardless of what appear to the carnal mind as insurmountable obstacles.

For the spiritually maturing child of God, the pressures of the natural mind are encountered daily and mastered with faith and confidence in God. Yet, there are times when some weaken and begin to look to and trust the natural mind once again. In other words, the rationalizations of the carnal mind seem to be most acceptable. No area in our lives manifests this devious trait more than that of healing and our nutritional relationship to it.

Since we cannot see faith—the only ingredient required for healing—we devise ways which seem justified in order to satisfy the demands of the carnal mind—demands which require some physical action. Therefore, we, since we reject the concepts of allopathic medicine, must replace that with something which still has a physical handle on it. Too many turn to alternative systems, believing them to be approved of God. No medical, or alternative system, is approved of God for those called to have faith and trust in Him. God is our Healer. He needs no help from anyone. Further, healing is the forgiveness of sin. Can any man forgive sin?

Stability of mind is not really common to the human flexible mind. Soundness of mind is achievable only through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. The natural mind not fully oriented to God and His way of life, when confronted with the spiritual knowledge of the error of allopathic medicine, turns to some other system which still allows for personalized intervention. There are many other systems generated by a force and power determined to mesmerize, disorient, and confuse all humankind. There are many examples of how human beings rationalize their actions. The people were warned against touching the Ark of the Covenant. Some thought it an imperative "right" to steady the Ark on one occasion when it seemed necessary to steady it. The results prove otherwise. Consider the example of King Saul. He did not firmly seize consecrated responsibilities. He thought he was doing the right thing. Again, the results proved he was wrong. There are other examples.

James 5:14

"If ill"—a condition outside of prescribed and promised benevolence of God for faithful obedience—"call for the elders of the church." The Greek for the expression, "let them call for" is *proskaleomai*. The prefix, *pros* is a preposition of direction, toward. The root word used above is *kaleo* which means to call, summon, or invite. Taken together, the expression simply means the ill individual should call an elder, or elders, for spiritual

reason. The broad usage of the expression gives us a clear understanding of its intent and purpose. In Matthew 10:1, "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples," Christ had tendered an invitation, or summons. Any one of those called could have refused. Such refusal, however, would have been a colossal sin and resulted in the ultimate indictment. In Matthew 15:32, the expression used simply implies the necessity of hearing and understanding. In Luke 16:5, the expression bears a degree of authority based on the position of the individual involved. Any one could have refused to come; however, to refuse would have resulted in some measure of punishment, or ill-orientation. Acts 2:39, the expression, ". . . even as many as the Lord our God shall call," is an amplification of Matthew 10:1. In Acts 5:40 we find a legal usage of the day. In Acts 6:2 (1–4) the apostles used the term in relationship to the discharge of an internal church responsibility. They called the body of the church together to address a pertinent and imperative situation demanding immediate attention. In Acts 13:2 we find the expression used involving the authoritative position of God, through the Holy Spirit, to call and commission. In all the cases above, can there be any doubt about the authority involved? Not in the least. Likewise, the duty of the ill person is to call for the elders of the church.

A Dual Implication

Does not the concept of calling when ill imply the necessity of seeking the cause of illness and its remedy? Indeed, it does. There is a dual responsibility placed—by God—upon the shoulders of the ministry. First, it is the duty of the ministry to teach the whole of God's Word (Deut. 8:3 and Matt. 4:4). That Word reveals what is good food, and what must be rejected. Further, it indicates times during which structuring one's intake of food is necessary for good health—remember the example of Timothy. The example of those who were riotous eaters of flesh. There are other examples. We must not forbear teaching the rule of good health (Deut. 28:1–14, Gen. 1:29–31). It is the duty of the ministry to emphasize the cause of disease (Ex. 15:26, Deut. 28:15–63). But some will say, the ministry does not have the academic skill to evaluate and to assist in such matters. In a comparable matter, the erudite of Christ's day took exception with His call of the unlearned disciples which He had chosen. All this says one thing: When God calls, He, in turn, must reveal all knowledge which is imperative in the discharge of any spiritual duties given. The failure to recognize that fundamental truth is the cause and reason for the development of physical systems to cope with disease and other physical problems. Christ was faulted for not sanctioning the physical systems of His day. Why did He refuse to cooperate with the erudite of His day? Because, as He taught, the truth of all things comes by revelation—a revelation which comes from God only. The understanding of things physically is a big help in addressing specific physical problems. However, the lack of such knowledge, does not render the spiritual duties given to the ministry ineffective.

The Restoration of Health and Blessings Is Accomplished, Oftentimes, through the Ministry

God is our Healer and the One who blesses (Psa. 103:2–3). He is the ultimate source of power by which conditions and circumstances can be altered or changed. There is a prior responsibility necessary for the receipt of every blessing promised (Mark 2:2–11). Have not men sought a physical avenue for freedom of pain and disease because they do not want to admit their wrongs—because their minds and hearts are in opposition to the real orientation and way of God? (Rom 8:7) Regardless of human responses, the only way to regain good health and the ultimate blessings of God is found in James 5:15. Man must come to the ministry for teaching on the principles of God, primary instruction relevant to foods, and he must seek the forgiveness of God for sins committed.

From the beginning it has been most difficult for human beings to empty out their vanity and to adhere literally to the positive instructions of God (Gen. 2:17; 3:6–7, II Cor. 10:2–5). Because of this defect and the manifestation of a deficiency of faith, many of us seek some physical orientation by which our consciences are soothed and we can avoid specific spiritual responsibility.

Indeed, there is a basic requirement imposed upon the ministry to teach the whole of God's Word. That includes information regarding the basics of nutrition—what foods are good and what must be avoided. To some extent specifics are addressed, as occurred in the case of Paul in his instruction to Timothy.

The emphasis laid upon the presence of Luke, a physician of his time, probably a natural physician, indicates the validity of some specific counsel regarding matters of health. Yet, in no way does this infer a bypass of ministerial responsibility. First, the spiritual obligations must be met. Then, at the suggestion of the minister involved, other, more specific counsel, can be recommended. In no way should any of us attempt to bypass the spiritual duty, first, to call for the elders of the church. We are attempting to ascertain the best scientific and honest knowledge regarding the needs of the human system. Such knowledge is secondary. It will be of no value unless we subscribe to the primary area of responsibility—to call for the elders of the church—*first*. If further counsel is required, it must come from the suggestion of the ministry. Anything less than that order will be simply deemed, by God, as a means of circumventing primary responsibility given by Him. If the term "call" manifests the seriousness of our call to the knowledge of the truth and a spiritual relationship with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, it is equally obvious that the need to call the ministry is a serious responsibility which none of us should overlook. That duty is first incumbent upon us all. After that, at the suggestion of the minister, further detailed help, from a physical perspective may be allowed—as long as our effort is not deemed, by God, to be a rationale to avoid spiritual responsibility requiring repentance and forgiveness.

In summary, the sum total of the instruction above is simply this: If we are going to honor and obey God, the duty of first calling the ministry is absolute. Whatever secondary advice is indicated must come from the suggestion of the ministry and is just that, *secondary*.

Let us all find joy in doing the full will of God. In that, and that alone, is all that we can possibly hope to receive from our loving and benevolent Father.

Prayer Requests

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Births

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Office

The cut-off date for 1993 contributions is January 5, 1994 provided any contributions received by this time were dated before January 1, 1994. This is a necessary office procedure in order to close out the 1993 books appropriately.

Sabbath services of January 22 will be held at the Irving Grange since the Santa Clara Grange will not be available. Anyone requesting directions may contact the office.

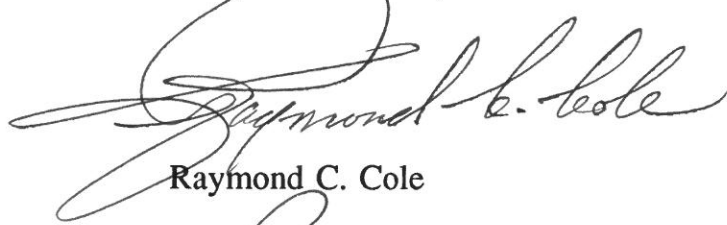
Trips

January 15, 22	R.C. Cole	Hawaii
February 12	B.G. Clark	Knoxville
February 19	B.G. Clark	Amarillo

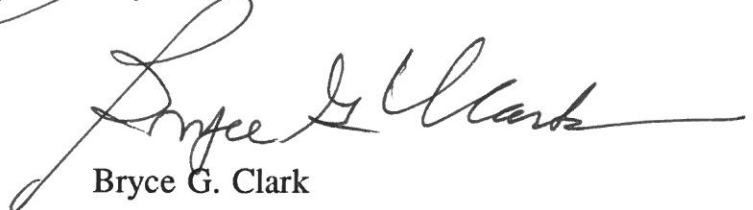
Tape Schedule

Tape Series	Mailed	For	Title/tape #
WSE-BC 143	11/03	01/01	What Happens When You Trust the Scholars?
WSE-RC 58	11/03	01/08	Why Should You Be Rejoicing on the Holydays?
WSE-BC 138-47	11/17	01/15	Paul's Epistles #47
WSE-RC 59-1	11/17	01/22	Despair or Glory, Which? #1
WSE-BC 138-48	12/01	01/29	Paul's Epistles #48
WSE-RC 59-2	12/01	02/05	Despair or Glory, Which? #2
WSE-BC 138-49	12/15	02/12	Paul's Epistles #49
WSE-RC 59-3	12/15	02/19	Despair or Glory, Which? #3
WSE-BC 138-50	12/29	02/26	Paul's Epistles #50

In Christ's Service,



Raymond C. Cole



Bryce G. Clark