

Church of God, The Eternal

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Announcement Letter February 1997

Dear Brethren:

Generally this column of the *Announcement Letter* has been reserved for the Current Event and the Spiritual Principle involved in the Current Event covered. This month, it was decided to cover the problem I am having with my (Raymond Cole's) vision. I do not want my failing vision to become the basis of rumors and/or a lot of second-guessing.

What happened? For several days prior to my departure for Hawaii I had begun to notice a certain type of blurred vision—a type that was quickly affected by a simple stretching of the neck from side to side. Remembering that I had received a number of calls from many places geographically, all asking for anointing for a severe case of the current flu—a flu of which one of the key symptoms was affected and distorted vision, I came to the conclusion that I, too, was struck with that particular flu, even though I had no usual manifestations of a viral infection—watery eyes, lung congestion, fever, etc. I certainly had the commonly mentioned disturbance with the eyes. I paid little further attention to the matter due to the press of time usually afflicting me at the time of departure for another trip. I had even considered having a professional neck and shoulders massage from a friend here in Eugene. The pressure of time kept me from having it done. The day of departure for Hawaii came. The vision had not improved. Myra and I flew to Hawaii. I did not feel bad and the body had not been traumatized. We had a good flight; I continued to do well—no growing indication of some physical problem with the eye.

When in Hawaii, I usually organize my material and my time to study, read, and write. It has always been one of my best times to accomplish much creative work. To keep fresh and find the time I want to converse daily with God, I arise early and go for a two mile walk. On the second morning of these walks, it happened. There was no pain or any condition which I considered dramatic. I simply could not see—especially the kind of vision which allows one to make routine decisions and judgments related to action and behavior. Since my route of walking required I cross the unbelievably busy highway which passes by the front of Dewey and Ruth's home, I was immediately confronted with my first major

difficulty—how to get across that highway. After standing there a few minutes, I realized I could not make such a decision on my own. Then, at the same time I realized a car attempting a left turn at that particular point would necessitate acceptable traffic conditions similar to those I needed. So, I simply waited for a car indicating a left turn. I followed him across the road—making it back to the house safe and sound. I went walking only one other time—on this walk I was accompanied by Dewey. I strongly regretted the fact my planned work was aborted. I could not see to read or write. I was forced to give the eyes a partial rest. After intense endeavor I was able to put together my notes for the sermons planned for the group there. Since I could not read, I had Myra to read the texts and I provided the commentary. This worked for a small group but would be unacceptable for a larger group.

My purpose and determination to serve the people over whom God has given me a charge has not changed. I feel most confident—assured. I am His servant. He has all power and ability. What I need to continue, what God has in mind for me, will be provided. Wisdom dictates the necessity of making some adjustments. Schedules and programs will be revised as the need dictates. Hopefully, we will be able to provide, always, sufficient advance information to assist those of you involved in making necessary arrangements, or, where necessary, changes.

May I personally request your believing and prevailing prayers? I do not want to dramatize this situation at all. Simply stated, I want to continue in that responsibility to which I was called. Your help will be so very greatly appreciated.

At this point in time I cannot tell you exactly what happened or what the condition of the eyes is. Since I felt the optic nerve had been constricted, I had adjustments made to the neck and upper shoulders. The same action one would expect on a person who had a broken arm. However, whatever the basic problem is, I shall with courage and conviction leave the matter in God's hands. What greater assurance could any human being have?

I do want to have a good examination of the eyes—hopefully thereby, to know what happened. When I know I will inform you all. I am your servant. You have a right to know.

In the meantime, let us not despair. Have faith and confidence in God. He knows what He is doing. That which He wants done will be accomplished. I have all faith in that fact. For the present, I apologize for any failure. All frailties and deficiencies rest at my feet, and at my feet solely. God is never responsible. In all confidence I look forward to being even more aggressive in whatever He plans for the future. Let us unitedly move forward in all faith and optimism.

In humility and regret I admit my weaknesses.

Deaths

Mrs. Mildred Kalvig: Mrs. Kalvig, of Kansas City, Missouri, in her late 80's, died on January 8. She had been in ill health in recent years. Mrs. Kalvig, a long-time member of the Church of God was at one time secretary of A. N. Dugger of the Church of God, Seventh Day at Stanberry, Missouri. She will be missed by all those who knew and loved her. Mr. Jon Brisby officiated at the funeral services. Our condolences are extended to her family.

Blessings of Brethren

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Feasts

Mr. Bill McCammon has been able to again secure the town hall at Townsend for the Feast of Tabernacles. He is contracting with the officials so that we cannot be summarily kicked out like we were when the movie people took over the town hall for storage space in order to produce the "Christy" TV series. Just as we said at the time, Christy would become history and we would still be in Townsend.

There will be services held in Townsend on the Sabbath following the Feast of Tabernacles. Any who wish to stay over and attend should firm up their accommodations now. Please remember that there is limited parking at the facility.

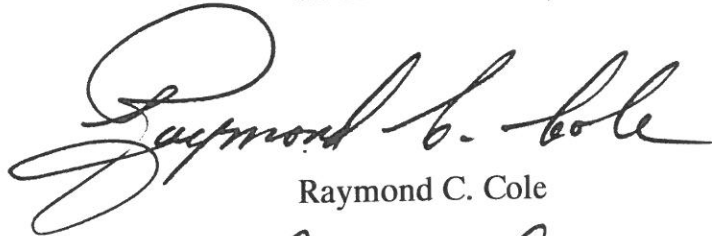
Trip Schedule

February 8	Baltimore	R.C.C.
February 15	Kansas City	R.C.C.
April 19	Knoxville	R.C.C.
April 26	Austin	R.C.C.

Tape Schedule

<u>Tape Series</u>	<u>Mailed</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Title/tape #</u>
WSE-RC 59-55	12/11	02/01	Despair or Glory, Which? #55
WSE-BC 147-33	12/11	02/08	Mighty Acts & Miracles of God #33
WSE-RC 59-56	12/24	02/15	Despair or Glory, Which? #56
WSE-BC 149-14	12/24	02/22	The Teachings of Christ #14
WSE-RC 59-57	01/08	03/01	Despair or Glory, Which? #57
WSE-BC 147-34	01/08	03/08	Mighty Acts & Miracles of God #34
WSE-RC 59-58	01/22	03/15	Despair or Glory, Which? #58
WSE-BC 149-15	01/22	03/22	The Teachings of Christ #15
WSE-RC 59-59	02/05	03/29	Despair or Glory, Which? #59

In Christ's service,



Raymond C. Cole



Bryce G. Clark