

Church of God, The Eternal

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Announcement Letter March 2001

Dear Brethren:

We are living in the prophesied times during which the only real peace of mind is that which you create for yourself with the help of God. Do you have confidence in your call? Do you know and have implicit confidence in that which you believe—that which was taught by a chosen servant of God in these last days? To further complicate the matter, even the concept of the times in which we live is energetically and hatefully denounced by some. Did not Jude make reference to this very fact? Of those who once knew and believed the same truths which we hold, Jude said, "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy [Spirit]" (Jude 16–20).

This is a time during which we all must take to heart the words and promise of Christ. He said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Our confidence in Him comes because we believe His promises. We know He is with us exactly as He promised, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because

greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (1 John 4:1–6).

With the above confidence we need not sink in despair. We can keep our eyes focused on Him, "And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matthew 14:23–31). How tragic and troubled our lives become when we lose sight of Christ—the One and only Christ who said He would be with us in these last days.

Indeed, the world boils with confusion, anger, and hatefulness. But, if we keep our eyes fixed on Christ—the revealed Christ—we can have much happiness, joy, and confidence.

Explanation

Did I ever even tacitly agree with divorce and remarriage?

Will people ever be absolutely honest? There must be significant reason for God's indictment of some who should know better. One of the charges of God is that there would be false accusers in the last days.

I now learn that I am accused of supporting the change of the divorce and remarriage doctrine initially. Someone will have to tell me how that is possible since I refused to take part in the Doctrinal Committee meetings because I did not want my name associated with the discussion of the subject. I told the men responsible for the meeting preparations, "I will have no part in the dismantling of the doctrine of the church."

It must be asked of anyone who is spreading such wild and irresponsible rumors, does he have an agenda in mind? Such people have not asked me. Are they simply espousing what they want people to believe regardless of facts? The conclusion seems to be obvious.

Satan and his demons are most active today (2 Timothy 2:24–26). They have gone forth aggressively (1 John 4:1–6). The reason God is allowing such activities is found in 1 Peter 1:3–7 and 1 Peter 4:12–14.

In comparable fashion to what is happening in this world so that man might come to recognize ultimately that God is very active in the affairs of mankind, (Daniel, chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7—take note especially of Daniel 5:17–21, and Daniel 2:17–22) the God of infinite knowledge is active in another area of human activity, (2 Thessalonians 2:7–12). In that body of the called, who once understood the Truth but turned away from revealed knowledge, there is occurring, even at this very present time, that which is both ordained of and precipitated by God Himself. Note how the Apostle Paul addresses this matter. To the Corinthian church he wrote, "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Corinthians 11:18–19).

In some way God is not only allowing but at the same time precipitating specific responses to compel people—the called—to make decisions about where they stand and what they believe.

Succinctly, brethren, as I have said from the beginning, so say I once again, I had nothing to do with the change of doctrine—divorce and remarriage, Pentecost, or any other of the changes. Responsible individuals in Pasadena were informed and know of my emphatic beliefs.

Why, then, the rumor? Suppositions could be many. But, I prefer never to guess, presume, or effect personalized suppositions. Yet, even in times of distress and regret, elements of honesty, logic, and fairness surface. In this case one man who had heard these rumors immediately called the office to ascertain the facts. Such courage, honesty, and integrity deserves commendation. And, indeed, we do hold in even higher esteem and respect this courageous and honest man, if that is possible, than felt initially.

For the record, let me once again stress, I never agreed with, supported, or had anything to do with any of the doctrinal changes. In fact, when the names of specific ministers were used to give broad appearance of approval of the Pentecost change, I made

it very clear my name or presence would not be so used in the future. Anyone so using that concept is building on a foundation of sand. Again, I never agreed with the "reproving" process commenced in the early 1970s. How was it possible to support the changes which followed? For the honest and wise sufficient is said.

Death

Mr. Benjamin Ortiguero: We were saddened to learn that Mr. Benjamin Ortiguero died from a second stroke on February 7, 2001 at the age of fifty-seven. Mr. Ortiguero was an early member of the church in the Philippines and worked closely with his father, Mr. Pedro Ortiguero, in significant ministerial and administrative responsibilities over many years. Although disabled by an earlier stroke a few years ago, he had continued to serve our faithful ministry in Luzon and Mindanao in managing our financial accounts. He was a dear friend, and we will miss him very much. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his wife, Teresita, his children, grandchildren, siblings, and his mother, Mrs. Pedro Ortiguero.

Holy Days

Passover. Friday, April 6

Night to be Much Observed. Sabbath, April 7

1st Holy Day—Days of Unleavened Bread Sunday, April 8

2nd Holy Day—Days of Unleavened Bread. . . . Sabbath, April 14

Trip Schedule

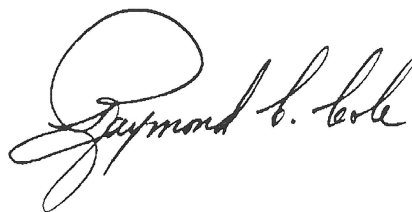
April 6, 7, 8	Austin, Texas	R.C.C.
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June 2, 4, 9	Switzerland, England	J.W.B.
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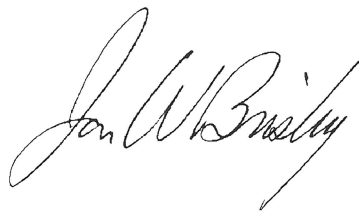
Tape Schedule

Tape Series	Mailed	Played	Title/Tape #
WSE-JB 22-23-12B	02-14-01	03-10-01	Fund. of Belief (Sabbath or Sunday for Christians?)
WSE-RC 93-7	02-14-01	03-17-01	The Continuing Body of Christ #7
WSE-JB 22-24-12C	02-28-01	03-24-01	Fund. of Belief (Proper Sabbath Observance)
WSE-RC 93-8	02-28-01	03-31-01	The Continuing Body of Christ #8
WSE-JB 22-25-13A	03-14-01	04-07-01	Fund. of Belief (Why God's Holy Days?)

In Christ's service,



Raymond C. Cole



Jon W. Brisby