

# Church of God, The Eternal

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## Announcement Letter August 2001

Dear Brethren:

It is a pleasure once again to address God's faithful remnant through this month's edition of the *Announcement Letter*. Your devotion to that revealed way of life is a continual inspiration to all of us who are committed to your service. We think of you often, and pray that God will continue to see you through the trials and difficulties we are each facing in different ways in these last days.

By now, most of you are aware of the critical health condition of Mr. Raymond Cole. On Wednesday, July 18, at 6:30 P.M., he was affected by a serious stroke while at home. The stroke paralyzed his right side, and effectively eliminated his ability to speak. For more than three days his throat was also mostly paralyzed, making it almost impossible to receive nourishment. In spite of this life-threatening trial, he remained at home, according to his previously-voiced wishes. Thankfully, since those first few days, he has been able to swallow, and now seems to be in stable condition as of the writing of this letter. Mr. Cole is alert much of the time, and can understand everything that is said to him. We can tell that he has appreciated the visits of many brethren from the local Oregon congregations, and those who have phoned and spoken to him. He is struggling to speak, but even though he cannot yet make most of his words intelligible, we are encouraged. He has also moved his paralyzed arm and leg a small amount, which gives us even more reason for optimism. We ask for your continued prayers and fasting, that God will restore his capacity to move, speak, and assume physical independence. I know you will also be remembering Mrs. Cole and the family members who are enduring this serious physical and emotional trial.

Most of you receiving this *Announcement Letter* are also on the sermon tape program and should have received the special tape from July 21 addressing Mr. Cole's condition, setting the stage for our response to this recent development. Brethren, I just want to reiterate that no matter what God's will may be for Mr. Cole at this time, this work will continue undaunted. God has promised to sustain His Truth, and we do not intend to let it

fall. God has blessed us with the resources and the capacity to continue all of the services we have offered during these past years, and as long as God sustains, that will never change.

This is a time of trying for the faithful of God. Apart from any other purpose, this current trial is certainly for the benefit of the Church. If we have paid close attention to those principles God has taught us through the ministry of Raymond Cole for the past twenty-six years, then our faith will be unshaken. Mr. Cole has never asked us to place our confidence in his physical personage, but instead to remain steadfast to the faith which was once delivered to the called of God in this age, through the ministry of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong. That is precisely what Mr. Cole has done for all of these years, and precisely what each of us must be willing to do if we wish to preserve our names in that Book of Life. The specific human instrument that God uses at any given time is not what is critical. It is the message that is spoken through that chosen servant which is the Word of Life. If our eyes are focused on Christ, and we have learned to recognize the legitimate Word—Christ personified—then we can effectively evaluate any who claim to be acting with the authority of Jesus Christ, and always make the right decision. I can assure you this is exactly what Mr. Cole wants each of you to do now.

The Apostle Paul stated, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). God preserved, through Paul, the very means to make choice. The standard is the gospel that was preached from the beginning. Even if the very man through whom we first learned that Truth himself turns to a different doctrine, we are not to follow. And even if an angelic being appears with great miraculous signs, if the message is not absolutely consistent with what we first heard, it is not of God. But if the message we are hearing is the same, then you can have confidence that it is from God. God will never allow any human being not approved of Him to even accidentally proclaim the unadulterated Truth. No, if you are hearing that uncorrupted doctrine preached, you can be sure that the human agent so preaching is sent from God.

God can commission and decommission any particular human agent at His will. Therefore, the man himself should never be the focus. But He has absolutely promised He would never leave His people without a teacher—one acting in the name, and by the authority of Jesus Christ (Matthew 18:19–20, 24:45–46). This means that no matter what God may have in mind for Mr. Raymond Cole at this time, that message will continue to be proclaimed just as strongly as it has been. If you continue to hear that same message defended and expounded, then you can know God's will is still being done, and that He is keeping His promise.

## **Feast of Tabernacles**

Among other things, Mr. Cole's disability will certainly affect our plans for the Feast of Tabernacles this year. Knowing that all of you are very interested in our revised plans, a summary agenda is provided here.

Mr. Jon Brisby will be dividing his time this year between Townsend, Tennessee and Newport, Oregon, so that he can serve both congregations in person. He will travel to Tennessee the day following the Day of Atonement, be in Knoxville for the weekly Sabbath, and then in Townsend for the beginning of the Feast. He will fly to Oregon after the morning service on Thursday, October 4, in time to be at the service in Newport on Friday morning. We are also working on an aggressive plan to broadcast the live sermons from each site to the other (on a delayed basis), so that brethren in both sites will have benefit of all twelve sermons for this year's schedule. We are happy and appreciative for the assistance of several members who are providing technical advice for this project. Whether we end up broadcasting video sermons, or audio only, we should be able to have a program that will be very enriching at both sites during the entire festival. Your prayers for this project are very much appreciated.

## **Returning Used Cassette Tapes**

Those driving to the Feast may bring cassette tapes that are no longer being used. We will once again transport them back to Eugene from the Feast sites. In Townsend, Tennessee, they will be collected and boxed for shipment. Mr. Tim Sherwood will be responsible for collecting and boxing. Remember, you may keep any tapes which have three marks on the side. Duplication of Feast sermon tapes requires an enormous number of new cassettes and these returned tapes help to offset the cost.

## **Holy Days**

Feast of Trumpets: Tuesday, September 18.

Atonement: Thursday, September 27.

Note: Appointed leaders should make necessary arrangements for services in all areas.

## **Slide Show**

This year the slide program Mr. and Mrs. Turlington are preparing for the Feast in Townsend, Tennessee, is titled, "Following the Footsteps of Jesus." The slides show a pictorial timeline of Jesus' activities and His travels. Archaeological digs have uncovered places and structures that date back to the time of Jesus. These discoveries are linked to Biblical references. Surprising facts related to the timeline of the calling of the Twelve Apostles is found in the following scriptures:

John 1:35–51  
Matthew 4:18–22  
Mark 1:16–20  
Luke 5:1–11  
Luke 5:27–32  
Matthew 9:9–13  
Mark 2:13–17  
Mark 3:13–19  
Luke 6:12–15

## **Excess Second Tithe**

This is a reminder of the need for second tithe to cover administrative and facility costs for the Feast. We want to reserve adequate for an enjoyable and meaningful Feast. At the same time, we all must remember, to keep the Feast requires the rental of halls, transportation, aid to those who are deserving, etc. If we all contribute, the burden for each is relatively small. A huge thanks to those whose hearts and minds are willing. May God richly and abundantly bless you in all ways.

## **Second Tithe Requests**

Please be reminded the deadline for second tithe requests for the Feast of Tabernacles is August 15. Any who need assistance should notify us in ample time.

## **Trip Schedule**

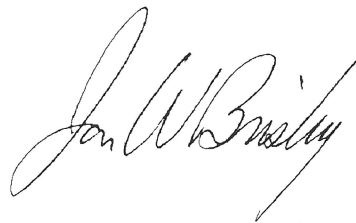
August 18	Austin, Texas	J.W.B.
September 18, Trumpets	Sacramento, California	J.W.B.




## Tape Schedule

Tape Schedule	Mailed	Played	Title/Tape#
WSE-RC 96-4	7-05-01	8-04-01	Purpose for the Continuing Body of Christ
WSE-JB 22-31-14B	7-05-01	8-11-01	Fund. of Belief (Meats in the N. T.)
WSE-JB 30	7-18-01	8-18-01	Spiritual Endurance (Given in Portland on 11-4-00 Played in Eugene 7-7-01)
WSE-JB 22-32-14C	7-18-01	8-25-01	Fund. of Belief (Diet and Unclean Foods)
WSE-JB 32	7-23-01	—	Do You See Christ? (Special Mailing/Special Message RCC Illness)
WSE-JB 22-33-15A	8-01-01	9-01-01	Fund. of Belief (War and Military Service)
WSE-RC 6	8-15-01	9-08-01	What Are the Basic Requirements for Salvation?

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby



Raymond C. Cole