

Church of God, The Eternal

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Announcement Letter June 2007

Dear Brethren:

Our love and deep appreciation is extended to all of you receiving this letter, with hopes that you enjoyed a very marvelous Pentecost Feast and have been renewed in your determination to keep fighting to stir up that Spirit in your lives more completely. Your continuity in the face of widespread apostasy is a continual inspiration to this ministry. Thank you for your examples of faith. Thank you for the love you manifest toward God and toward your brethren. Even the smallest act which reflects the power of God's Holy Spirit in action is a bright beacon—a true witness.

All of you depend upon this ministry to tell you the truth, faithfully relaying the messages God wants you to receive. It is an honor to fulfill that role to be messengers in His divine service. But we are human, just like all of you, and we are subject to all of the same challenges presented by these carnal minds. One potential test for us can be discouragement—when it sometimes appears the people are just not "getting it." We believe very much in what we have been called to do. We strive very much to feed you spiritually with those things required for salvation. We take much time to prepare, seeking God's guidance and inspiration. We never want to offer you something that is of our own minds, but only that which God delivers.

But within any assembly of God's people there are always some who take those admonitions via sermons and letters more seriously than do others. That is just the way it is. The truth is, not all who attend with us and count themselves "members" really take our words to heart. That statement is not intended to be an accusation. It just reflects the realities presented by these carnal minds which make it so difficult for human beings to truly embrace the way of God with enthusiasm. Some know they should, and they may want to, but are still finding it difficult to get excited about their spiritual calling. All of us may have experienced that to one extent or another. When we are bogged down in such spiritual doldrums, listening to sermons and reading spiritual letters can seem a burden of obligation rather than a blessing of opportunity. So we can easily find ourselves just going through the motions.

In that state, if we live in an area where we can attend weekly Sabbath services with others, we may do so out of habit and of "expectation," but our hearts may not be in it. When the *Monthly Letter* arrives in the mail, we may just file it away without reading it, or perhaps give it only a quick and cursory review. After all, no one else knows if we really study the Bible, pray, fast, or read the *Monthly Letters*. Right? But although human beings are pretty good at creating facades, true fruits always reveal themselves in many ways over time. Christ said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). That does not mean we are digging into your personal lives, inspecting to try and find flaws. None of us should be doing that in any way. But we all manifest fruits outwardly—we telegraph subconsciously—in what we say and what we do, which provides a reflection of our states of mind, most usually when we do not even know we are doing it.

That being the case, the ministry certainly receives feedback—directly and indirectly—which gives us a sense of how much God's instruction is being heard, accepted, and applied. It is gratifying to hear from you that particular written or recorded words (coming from God by inspiration, not from our own minds) have helped you. But it is even more inspiring to see God's people actually applying those principles, not just nodding their heads and telling us what they think we want to hear. Please understand. The last thing you should be concerned about is how you are perceived by this human ministry. We are not your judges. We are only messengers. We are going to serve you to the best of our abilities, whether your fruits presently are "sterling" or not. Some who are struggling right now just need more time and patience. You will receive that patience and long-suffering from us. You do not owe us anything, and we certainly do not want you to feel like you need to say and do things to "tell us what we want to hear." That concept bespeaks the quaint image of congregants filing out of the Protestant church on Sunday morning, each greeting the parson on the front steps on his way out, saying, "Great sermon, Reverend." Maybe it was, and maybe it wasn't. But there is an unwritten expectation that you have to say something nice and supportive, whether you were truly inspired or not. But please do not ever feel that such is required when dealing with us. It is not. And besides, words not supported by bona fide fruits ring hollow indeed.

With that in mind, it can be discouraging to your ordained servants when it appears that "a lot" of members are not really yet applying cardinal principles or being energetic in personal overcoming. Were that discouragement only based upon our own carnal desire to "be influential," then so what? Such is a vain consideration and should be dismissed, by both you and by us. But often our potential discouragement can derive from a heartfelt love for you, and disappointment when we see you suffering from causes that are preventable. If we have poured out ourselves to teach from God's Law, so that you may receive the blessings God desires for you to enjoy, it is sad for us to see some continue to struggle under the penalties of sin because they simply have not taken God's admonitions through us to heart.

We feel deeply for you, and share the sentiments God Himself expressed towards Israel, His beloved people:

Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? (Ezekiel 18:31).

So it can be disheartening to see some continue to suffer, especially when it is likely they have been disregarding very clear principles which have been preached. We sometimes marvel when certain questions arise among those who "ought to know better." Did we not just recently cover that topic in an issue of the *Monthly Letter*? Did they simply not read the letter? Did they not pay attention when that principle was emphasized in a recent sermon? All of these are thoughts that can run through the minds of your servants. They are thoughts that can tempt us to become discouraged.

Such discouragement in us is never justified, no matter what. Elijah became discouraged when he "thought" he was the only one holding fast to the Truth, in spite of all his dynamic effort in God's service to the people. He was wrong in that interpretation, and had no legitimate cause to feel discouraged (1 Kings 19:18). Neither do any of us ever have a legitimate cause to be disheartened. Is not God's will being accomplished at all times, no matter what? So the ministry today should likewise remain stalwart, never fainting because of setbacks along the way.

The real point is this: Yes, we are obligated to hold fast and let nothing cause us to become discouraged. God helping us, your ministers will manifest that characteristic no matter what the future brings. But when you manifest real faith in your personal choices and show by your actions that you really are paying attention—that you "get it"—there is no way to describe the boost it gives to us personally. Rather than always fighting to maintain our positive orientation against downward pulls, we are spontaneously lifted up by the inspiration of your personal accomplishments. It is nice to hear you say, "Good sermon, pastor." But it is so much more meaningful to see you make correct choices because of your personal faith in God and manifest a positive orientation to trust Him implicitly. Those fruits help us. They encourage us in our own personal battles. May God grant you the power of His Spirit to hold fast and continue bearing much fruit in anticipation of the revelation of the Kingdom of God.

CD/Tape Program Update

As of May 14, 2007, the United States Postal Service has changed its rules for bulk mailing privileges. These privileges in the past have allowed the church to enjoy significant discounts when mailing cassette tapes to all of you. With a minimum batch of 200 tapes, we

were able to avoid paying the much higher rate that each single tape would cost to mail individually. However, the new rules take away that advantage for smaller organizations like ours. Whereas our former effective cost per tape was 23.7 cents, the new cost for that same tape is now 90.2 cents, an increase of 280 percent.

While there are other things we can do to help mitigate that egregious increase (like beginning to send two tapes per envelope—which you are now beginning to see), the very best way to eliminate an increase to our overall cost is to reduce the number of cassette tapes we must mail at all. Sending those same sermons to you on CD, rather than tape, has always been the very most cost effective way to provide this service. We are still absolutely committed to providing cassettes to those who really need them. More than anything else, we want you to have the spiritual meat they contain. But we encourage those who are capable of making the transition (even with some temporary inconvenience and an anxious learning curve) to do so. Digital technology today is as much an improvement over magnetic tape as cassette tape was an improvement over the phonograph record. Some of you might still be longing for the days of the old phonograph, yet you have acclimated to using cassette tapes nonetheless. Is it possible for you to take the next step as well? If so, please contact the church office for assistance in purchasing a compatible player for MP3 CD format.

Scheduling Emcees, Opening and Closing Prayers

We are beginning preparation of printed schedules for the Feast of Tabernacles, so we need to know as soon as possible if any will be attending at a different Feast site than usual. We must soon begin work on the scheduling of emcees and those who give opening and closing prayers. We thank you in advance for your help.

Office

After ten years of service as bookkeeper for the church, Mr. Garner Kirby has decided to retire. Garner's eyesight has begun to fail in recent years, and it has become quite an effort for him to perform the required tasks. We appreciate his years of dedication and service to the church. He has been training Mrs. Kari McIrvin to take his place. She has worked in bookkeeping positions in past employment, and the transition has been a smooth one. So, as of June 7 Kari will be the church bookkeeper, and you can contact her with any bookkeeping needs. Her email address is: kemcirvin@cogeternal.org.

Foreign Currency Contributions

Due to the length of time it takes our American banking system to convert foreign currency, we have decided to implement a new deposit system for foreign currency only. Please take note that all foreign currency will be deposited on the first three Mondays of each month. This will enable us to balance our books at the end of each month without any delay due to the currency conversion process. We hope this new deposit schedule will aid us here at the office as well as those of you around the world who send in your tithes and offerings.

Prayer Request

[Omitted for confidentiality]

Birth

We would like to congratulate Mr-s. Andrew Roeber on the birth of their third daughter, Anabel. She was born May 21, weighed 6 pounds, 14 ounces and was 20 inches long. Mother (Keena) and baby Anabel are doing very well.

Death

Mrs. Leona Bean, of Eugene, Oregon: Mrs. Bean died May 15 at the age of 77 from congestive heart failure. Lee was a willing servant to the brethren in many ways over the years, and she will be sincerely missed by all. Our condolences are extended to her husband, Robert, their children, Rodney, Cindy, and Cary, and their extended families.

Comment

Mr. Robert Bean would like to thank all of the brethren for the tremendous outpouring of love and sympathy he has received concerning Leona's death. He hopes you will be patient with him as he tries to answer the many cards he has received. He greatly appreciates your kindness and prayers.

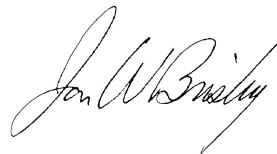
Trip Schedule

June 23	JWB	Knoxville, Tennessee
June 30	JWB	Elkhart, Indiana
July 14	JWB	Lake Tahoe, California (Camp Tejas)
July 21	JWB	Cape Cod, Massachusetts

Tape Schedule

Tape #	Mailed	Played	Title
WSE-RC 7-1	05-03-07	05-26-07	Christian Principles of Child Rearing #1
WSE-JB 80-29	05-03-07	06-02-07	A Survey of the Book of Job #29 Job's Final Speech #4
WSE-RC 7-2	05-17-07	06-09-07	Christian Principles of Child Rearing #2
WSE-JB 80-30	05-17-07	06-16-07	A Survey of the Book of Job #30 Job's Final Speech #5
WSE-JB 80-31	05-31-07	06-23-07	A Survey of the Book of Job #31 Job's Final Speech #6
WSE-RC 7-3	05-31-07	06-30-07	Christian Principles of Child Rearing #3
WSP-JB 91	06-14-07	07-07-07	About Intercessory Prayer
WSE-JB 80-32	06-14-07	07-14-07	A Survey of the Book of Job #32 Elihu's Speech #1

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby