

Church of God, The Eternal

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The late Raymond C. Cole
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Announcement Letter July 2008

Dear Brethren:

We hope and pray that you all had a very rewarding and inspiring Pentecost, and that you are renewed once again in your determination to fight forward against all obstacles to put God first in your lives. The power of God's Holy Spirit is the key to that spiritual growth incumbent upon each one of us. As we continue to remind you so very often, you are the dearly beloved children of our Heavenly Father, and it is you with whom He is working at this time to prepare Kings and Priests for His Son's soon-coming Kingdom. Having once again rehearsed the meaning of Pentecost and the role of firstfruits in God's master plan, we now look forward to those fall Holy Days picturing the culminating events of Christ's arrival and completion of that awesome work with the entire world. May you never forget who you are in that incredible plan. As your devoted servants set apart to minister to you in Christ's name today, we pray for your success and commit ourselves to your help and aid. May God keep us and sustain us together through every trial that we experience at this time, and may we continue to manifest that unity of Spirit which is the hallmark of a faithful remnant of God.

Spiritual Principle—Past Recordings of Mr. Armstrong

Periodically, we have been asked why Church of God, The Eternal does not choose to release copies of Mr. Herbert Armstrong's old recordings as part of our weekly sermon program. After all, do we not release archived sermons of Mr. Raymond Cole? Since we also revere the teachings of Mr. Armstrong prior to the apostasy of 1974, why not also copy and distribute his recordings from that era? It is a very good question, and one that provides an excellent basis for an explanation of the orientation of this ministry.

There are several reasons we do not distribute Mr. Armstrong's recorded messages. Firstly (but not most importantly), we are not confident of the true legal ownership of all that

material. Yes, it is all readily available on the Internet, and many individuals have copies of old Radio Church of God broadcasts in MP3 format. It is nice to have access to that material, and we certainly have copies. But as an institution, for us to mass duplicate it and to distribute it as part of our own formal service to members, we are not sure about the technical legalities of that. It may be doubtful that all of that material is truly considered "public domain." Perhaps it is, but we are very wary about copyright infringement. We are very happy to make referrals to sources who are offering that material, but resist getting involved in its distribution ourselves.

Secondly, the only messages we have ever made as part of our sermon mailing program have been sermons given by ministers of Church of God, The Eternal. In the past it included primarily sermons recorded live in a Eugene, Oregon Sabbath service, or else recorded in the Eugene church office studio. Only after Mr. Cole's death in 2001 did we begin to include "old sermons" in the regular rotation. It had rarely been done before that time. The reason we did that was because we did not have enough ministers here in Eugene to speak live each Sabbath to produce a new weekly sermon, and also we wanted the people to continue getting all the meat from Mr. Cole's messages. They are timeless for the Church of God today. Oh yes, some would say that Mr. Armstrong's messages are timeless too, and we certainly agree, but please read on.

Thirdly, very few actual *sermons* were recorded of Mr. Armstrong that we know of, at least prior to 1974. Most of the recordings we have of him are twenty minute radio broadcasts from *The World Tomorrow* program. Those messages were not written with "converted members" in mind. They were written to be heard publically by the masses in the world. There is no doubt much of that same material also became the source of sermon material within the church, but the "target audience" of those recordings was not for a holy Sabbath convocation. That is not to say it would not potentially work for a holy convocation, but it was never prepared by Mr. Armstrong for that purpose.

Fourthly, those broadcast messages convey the "milk" teachings of the church. Those teachings are foundational, which is why this ministry defends them and preaches from them strongly ourselves. But much deeper things were taught to the church by Mr. Armstrong that were never given in broadcasts. Also, we have learned so much more, especially in the wake of the apostasy of 1974. Those old broadcasts do not provide what the people need to hear to avoid being seduced by all these other apostate groups out there today. In the days Mr. Armstrong recorded those broadcasts, the "threat" to the church was perceived as coming from the Catholics and the Protestants. No concept of our own ministry going astray was anywhere considered. Only those messages which God inspired after the onset of that apostasy through a faithful remnant ministry provide the deeper insight needed to avoid deception today. Many individuals and groups profess many of the "milk" doctrines of the

past. It is important not only to proclaim those original truths, but to do so in the context of current threats to the church. That is what Mr. Cole's sermons provide which old broadcasts cannot convey. We have definitely grown in grace and knowledge over the past thirty-five years. We have built much upon that original foundation without repudiating any of that first revelation. We want to keep focus on the *expanded* understanding we have today. We could have none of it without what God did through Mr. Armstrong. But we have been growing for over three decades since that time. It is Mr. Cole's messages that provide the real context to help God's people most today.

Fifthly, we are aware that using old broadcast messages is the practice of some brethren who do not know where—or accept—that there is a faithful ministry still preaching today with Christ's full authority. They have respect for Mr. Armstrong, but have yet to become convinced there is a legitimate continuation of that ministry today. These ones set up their own "Sabbath services" in their homes, using the old broadcasts as sermons. For many, it is actually an act of defiance, denying that Christ is still actively working today "in the flesh." They listen only to old broadcasts of "milk" concepts intended for those lacking any depth of spiritual understanding (Mr. Armstrong's target audience), and think they do not need any other ministry today. Because of that element which exists among some former members of the church, we are not eager to foster the idea that they are OK in doing so. That does not mean that using those old broadcasts is wrong at all. Far from it. But most of the ones we know who have elevated the value of old broadcasts over currently released sermons actually have a problem with church government, if the truth be known. So we continue to produce new sermons to send out, or offer archived sermons by Mr. Raymond Cole, as a means to confirm if the people really accept those messages are coming from Jesus Christ. After all, we are confirming all those things which Mr. Armstrong formerly taught by divine revelation, so if they have the right orientation, the brethren should find those messages to be nourishing spiritual food.

Eugene Church Office Move

Because the writing of this issue of the *Announcement Letter* actually takes place during the prior month, we are not able to confirm yet any details of the actual move which was scheduled for the very end of June. The move was still expected to be accomplished by July 1 as of this writing, and we will be sure to provide an update for you about the actual transition in the August edition of this letter. Thank you again for your patience during this hectic time for our office staff.

Update on Mrs. Judy Berlin of Vancouver, WA

Mrs. Berlin wrote the following note of thanks:

I want to say thank you to everyone for all your prayers and being with me for the last seven months dealing with my breast cancer. God in His mercy has healed me and restored my health.

I am very thankful to have gone through this challenge. God has taught me so many lessons about physical and spiritual sin. His strength and presence were with me from day one, even with the pain and sickness I never felt alone or afraid. God asks only to be number one in all our ways. He will not take second place. How great a God we serve. Thank you everyone.

Judy Berlin

New Moon

The new moon, Ab (fifth month), will begin on the evening of August 1. The new moon day is August 2.

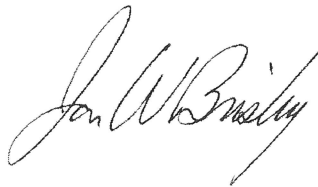
Trip Schedule

July 12	JWB	Lake Tahoe, California
July 19	JWB	Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota

Recorded Sermon Schedule

Sermon #	Mailed	Played	Title
CL2 56 (RC)	06-12-08	07-05-08	Principles of Christian Living: Gentleness #6
WSE-JB 22-95-24H	06-12-08	07-12-08	Fund. of Belief: Divine Revelation Prophets and Divine Revelation #1
CL2 41 (RC)	07-03-08	07-19-08	Principles of Christian Living: Longsuffering #1
CL2 42 (RC)	07-03-08	07-26-08	Principles of Christian Living: Longsuffering #2
WSE-JB 22-96-24I	07-03-08	08-02-08	Fund. of Belief: Divine Revelation Prophets and Divine Revelation #2
CL2 43 (RC)	07-24-08	08-09-08	Principles of Christian Living: Longsuffering #3
WSE-JB 22-97-24J	07-24-08	08-16-08	Fund. of Belief: Divine Revelation Prophets and Divine Revelation #3

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby