

Announcement Letter September 2015

Dear Brethren:

We have finally arrived at the Holy Day season in God's plan picturing the final phases of God's dealing with man under the rulership of Jesus Christ as King. We are pleased to write to all of you again this month and to share your enthusiasm for that glorious spiritual plan, as well as the physical aspects that we will fulfill very soon by convoking before God in designated places around the world.

We often hear members of God's church at large lament that we do not experience the kinds of miracles today that were once commonplace during the early years of Mr. Herbert Armstrong's ministry. Compared to the days when many brethren were obeying God's commandments and acting in faith to put Him first, there is no argument that the last forty years since the apostasy set in has seen dramatic changes. And would that not be expected? Since the time God's called people began to challenge His divinely-revealed Truth and turn to the wisdom of human scholars, why would we think that He would continue to bless them, when everything written in the Bible warns that He will withdraw His special favor under such conditions?

But, some may say, why does it seem that those who *did not depart* from the revealed doctrines (like Monday Pentecost, the sanctity of marriage, etc.) *likewise* began to receive fewer miraculous interventions? We have covered at length in the past the fact that there have always been periods of time in God's dealing with Israel in which He made them wait patiently through relative darkness (Zechariah 4:10). But that is not the only answer. It is this author's opinion that even among those who may have kept certain *technical doctrines* and avoided embracing the *gross perversions* of our parent church in 1974 and afterward, there was nonetheless a *new prevailing doubt* that afflicted the whole (or much) of that church. It was the kind of doubt and skepticism that took hold once the ministry was proven to have "feet of clay" concerning failed prophetic speculation, etc. Many of those who "held firm" *technically* still became afflicted with a sense of hardness—a loss of the *simple innocence* of the little child that Christ said was requisite for entering into the Kingdom (Matthew 18:3–4). We became suspicious, wary, and turned—in our own individual ways—to *our own wisdom* as the source of our new confidence. Mr. Raymond Cole dealt with many in this remnant body who had this trait, and he had endless difficulties in trying to point the brethren back to the real requirements of genuine faith. How do you encourage people to become trusting children once again when they have been so brutalized by the misbehaviors of past leaders? It is very difficult to get back that innocence.

The whole church lost its innocence, but that did not negate God's requirement that we learn to be teachable in order to have His special favor. Therefore, just because some of us were in a physical fellowship holding firm to the original doctrines did not mean that the brethren received the same level of miracles in their lives that the church experienced commonly before the 1970s. Sadly, at best, most of us became "lawyers" in our mentality, and while that is certainly understandable, it does not mean that it is pleasing to God.

Submitted for your consideration is the proposition that we are indeed *beginning* to see some of those former kinds of miracles in the lives of our brethren today. This is not an attempt to claim legitimacy for this particular remnant group by asserting that "God is blessing us, so we must be right." Such is a ploy practiced by most religious groups, both within and without the Church of God community. We do not intend to play that game. Truth is truth, and we are happy to let the fruits of those original teachings either stand or fall based upon real evidence over time (Romans 3:3–4). Our confidence is not dependent upon miracles. Many lying signs and wonders are prophesied for the last days, so chasing after miracles is a sure way to become deceived.

No, what we are describing is a *sincere observation* of circumstances as they exist today within our fellowship. And that observation includes a number of inspiring interventions received by our brethren in recent months regarding divine healing. These miracles include a serious dog bite with resulting blood poisoning that was healed, an apparent serious appendicitis that was healed, a serious injury to a joint that was restored, and lastly, a severe crushing injury to a two-year-old that resulted in no broken bones or lasting internal injuries.

What do these separate events have in common? In some cases, medical attention was sought, while in some of the life-threatening instances, no doctor was contacted at all. Regardless, in all cases, modern medical "recommended intervention" was spurned, and the individuals stepped out in faith to trust God for healing against the advice of the "wise of this world." The first action taken in each instance was a request for anointing from the ministry, as God commands, followed by *personal actions* which demonstrated a *real intent* to rely upon God and His promises. What is interesting (and perhaps only coincidental) is that in none of these cases was the first (or second) thought to have the church pray for them. We made no emergency request for prayer on their behalf. Yet God did indeed intervene strongly! Their hope was not in the false notion of "ganging up on God" with multiple prayers in an attempt to "rouse Him from slumber" and "convince Him to be nice." It is not that the prayers of the brethren would not have been a very worthy activity for us all, but the *confidence of the afflicted* was properly in *God alone*, giving credit in advance for His *perfect will* to bless according to His ever-abundant grace.

Also of note is something else these particular church members all seem to share in common: a sincere orientation of believing the Truth and eschewing the combative, "wrangling" demeanor of many concerning doctrine. Manifested in each case is a humble, "child-like" acceptance of divinely-revealed Truth, and a focus upon trying to put on more of the nature of Jesus Christ personally, rather than to argue about interpretations. In that regard, it is striking that these individuals seemed to manifest the kind of thinking as did many of God's church members in the early years. Is it just possible that this was *always* the criteria for God drawing near to help us in our times of need? God knows if we are actually "reserving the right" to accuse Him later of being indifferent to our suffering if He does not "intervene" on our prescribed timelines. It is not that any of these individuals are perfect in their level of faith. Not even close! God knows we are all weak and subject to doubts, humanly. But He has promised to strengthen us against unbelief if we will do our parts. How many in past decades have truly sought to increase personal faith—knowing that God's character is not what should be on trial—vs. an orientation of seeking justification for making "lateral moves"?

The intent of these paragraphs is not to highlight particular individuals as being "poster children" of faith. Again, we all fall far short of the example of Jesus Christ. But when we witness some true examples of God's intervention within a short interval of time, and they all seem to have some common denominators, it might just be worth our attention to learn from these cases.

God's promise to heal (and to fight our battles for us in every other way too) is valid for you *right now*. Regardless of the relative lack of miracles we think we may have experienced compared to early years, never doubt that God is active and attentive to children who are showing real respect for Him and His promises. Faith is not something to be "ginned up" at the moment of a crisis, but a daily way of thinking and acting. If we are sincere in learning to accept God's instruction as humble children, and to apply ourselves earnestly to overcoming our natural natures, this perfect, loving God we serve will indeed go to bat for us and show us His divine—miraculous—interventions.

New Moon

The new moon, Tishri (seventh month), begins Sunday, September 13. The new moon day is Monday, September 14 (Feast of Trumpets).

Feast of Tabernacles

In Yachats, OR, the Feast will be held at the Yachats Commons, located at 441 Hwy 101 N.

In Townsend, TN, the Feast will be held at The Barn, Event Center of the Smokies, 7264 East Lamar Alexander Pkwy.

If you need further information, please call the church office at (541) 344-8880.

Please take note that the weekly Sabbath services on September 26 will be held in Townsend, TN, (at 1:00 P.M.), and in Yachats, OR, (at 2:00 P.M.) since the Feast of Tabernacles will begin the next evening, Sunday, September 27, (at 7:30 P.M.). Please make your plans and reservations accordingly.

Trip Schedule

Mr. Jon Brisby

- September 12. Phoenix, AZ
- September 14 (Trumpets). Modesto, CA
- September 23 (Atonement). Eugene, OR
- September 26–30 (FOT). Yachats, OR
- October 1–5 (FOT). Townsend, TN

Mr. David Brandenburg

- September 26–30 (FOT). Townsend, TN
- October 1–5 (FOT). Yachats, OR

Mr. Richard Litz

- September 26–October 5 (FOT). Yachats, OR

Mr. Robert Litz

September 26–October 5 (FOT)..... Townsend, TN

Mr. John Byrd

September 26–October 5 (FOT)..... Townsend, TN

Recorded Sermon Schedule

Sermon #	Mailed	Played	Title
CL2-135	07-30-15	08-29-15	Meekness #4
WSE-JB 138-33	08-20-15	09-05-15	The Family Handbook #33 Child Rearing #5
CL2-136	08-20-15	09-12-15	Meekness #5
WSE-JB 138-34	08-20-15	09-19-15	The Family Handbook #34 Child Rearing #6
CL2-137	09-10-15	09-26-15	Meekness #6
WSE-JB 138-35	09-10-15	10-10-15	The Family Handbook #35 Child Rearing #7
WSE-RC 39-1	09-10-15	10-17-15	Confrontations and Responses of Jesus Christ #1

In Christ's service,



Jon W. Brisby