

November 2010
(Originally written June–July 1977)

Dear Brethren:

For this month, the subject of specific "identifying signs of a Christian" will be covered. I sincerely hope you will find the contents informative, helpful and encouraging.

1) "*Not my will, but thine, be done.*" A Christian *lives* his beliefs and convictions. They are far *more* than *mental conceptions*. As spiritual principles, they fully inspire, animate and control the subject—the Christian. Then as moving, aggressive and dynamic ways, they can be read and observed by any and all onlookers. Truly, a light is shining. There is abundant evidence of a Christian's *modus operandi*.

He has brought his body under control. The mind of Christ gives direction to his life. He is performing the will of God, not his own. By the help of God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Christian's life is ordered. He overcomes all weaknesses of the flesh. Becomes obedient to concepts which were once irrelevant to him. In essence, he lives the will of God—NOT his own.

The whole demeanor of the individual bespeaks a total God-orientation. By the exercise of volition and personal character, he restrains the self with all of its appetites and objectively practices the principles of the Spirit. His claim of conversion is substantiated by behavior. He does not speak one thing and live another. The practice of self-deprecation is obvious. He is known for his efforts. His reputation (not to be compared with the villifications of antagonists) is spoken of broadly. His community image is not clouded. He will be disdained for his beliefs and practices, but he will be admired and respected for his integrity and honesty.

He is condescending. He is impartial. His station is with people of ordinary background. He truly walks in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. He is humble, self-sacrificing. One who has divested himself of all selfish and self-aggrandizing goals. Yes, he is the epitome of God's will being wrought in the flesh. It is the life of Christ again, through the Holy Spirit, being lived in the flesh.

2) *An outgoing concern for others.* Christ came to serve mankind. He came not to please Himself. He gave His life, in both life and death, for mankind.

Christianity is a way of life. A way not possible by the individual efforts of man. It can be achieved only by Christ's life being lived within us. That life does not change. It is consistent—the same yesterday, today and forever. There is no hint of turning or change. It is completely trustworthy. And since it is the same life Christ lived in His own fleshly body, it presently manifests itself in the same outgoing concern for others and trustworthiness. Christianity is to be Christlike. It means to live, think and act as Christ did. In fact, it is the self crucified and the present life lived by Christ—through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The life of Christ was the Word of God—the Bible—personified. The very spiritual intent of God's Word, made in animate form. How can you know if you are living up to the requirements of Christianity? Compare yourself with Christ—the living, animate Word of God. Never compare yourself with another human being. To do so is unwise and the height of folly. The standard of life is Christ! He is the perfect example. If He lived it, if He practiced it, if He taught it and if He embodied it in His own fleshly existence of some 1,950 years ago, then He will do exactly the same thing in your life. To do any less than Jesus did is to deny Him. You know the consequences of denying your Savior and Master.

How do you manifest concern for others? How did Christ?

1. Do you love all humankind—even those who persecute and despitely use you? Christ did!
2. Do you have a sympathetic and heartfelt concern for widows, fatherless children and orphans?
3. Do you really love the brethren?
4. Do you pray and fast for all humankind?
5. Do you give advantage and preference to others?
6. Are you a peacemaker? (Being a peacemaker *does not* mean you condone, accept or practice error.)
7. Are you cautious and careful with the usage of the tongue?

To that list could be added many other requirements, but it is sufficient to give all an idea of what it means to manifest a genuine, outgoing concern—love—for others. But knowledge is of no practical value except as it is applied. You must practice and

live—day by day—the principles listed above. The abundant rewards and blessings are yours for such obedience.

3) *Family in harmony.* The family unit pictures the Kingdom of God. That Kingdom will be a family—the family of God. The very hope of salvation is the promise of being born into His family—a spiritual family.

Until the time of Christ, that ultimate objective was hidden (Romans 16:25–26; Colossians 1:24–26). In Christ's life was found the fulfillment of every member of the family unit. He was the husband personified. A living, compassionate leader (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:21–33). The one who bore authority and responsibility. Yet, at the same time, He was the wife personified. The Church is the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:27; Revelation 19:1–9). And the Church is the body of Christ (Colossians 1:24; Ephesians 1:22–23). Obviously, the body and life of Christ pictured the responsibility of the wife in the marriage relationship. And that marriage relationship pictured the covenant relationship with God—the one who became Jesus Christ. That physical relationship, then, pictured the forthcoming spiritual relationship. Christ had to die—to absolve the bonds of that first marriage. With His death, He then became free to marry Israel of the spirit—those called and begotten by the Holy Spirit—the Church. By the understanding of this great mystery (Ephesians 5:32, then the entire chapter), it becomes obvious that Christ was the complete picture of oneness—the oneness required of us to be the bride prepared for the marriage of the Lamb at His return.

Christ, in the flesh, was an example of the husband and wife. But there is yet more! He was the representation of a perfectly obedient child—in this case, a son. (Compare Revelation 12:1–5; Acts 7:37–38; Romans 8:29; Hebrews 2:10; 1 John 3:1–2; Colossians 1:18; Hebrews 5:8; John 5:30 and John 6:38.)

In the final analysis, Christ was the personification of a perfect husband, a perfect wife and a perfect child. He was—and is—all in all. Regardless of station, responsibility or component of the family relationship, Christ is a perfect help. Each of us, knowing station or responsibility, can look to Christ and implicitly rely upon Him for the help needed to live perfectly that station and charge. And when we, of our own volition, will to live the obedient life—the results are a oneness of heart and mind. The extent to which we are not in total harmony, is proportionate to the defect which yet exists in our lives. The only way to improve that harmony is to evaluate the self and effect the necessary changes in that one life for which you are responsible—YOURS. Each member of the family (or the Church as the spiritual family), fulfilling individual responsibilities, will bring about harmony and oneness. The results of those changes are observable. They are the fruits by which we are *KNOWN*.

A family in complete harmony, each member fulfilling his God-given responsibility, is a perfect example of the soon-coming Kingdom of God—and, for the present, the foundational principles of Christianity. Indeed, such a harmonious relationship is perhaps the most significant of the identifying signs included in this letter.

One clarifying point needs to be made. Obviously, the perfect example involves a unit where both are converted and the children are yet teachable. Then, from that standard, all forms of possibilities develop. A divided home. Children are nearly grown—before conversion of parents. In every case, God knows the times and the circumstances. You will be judged on the basis of how well you have done with the possibilities presented, once the understanding is achieved. Even in a broken home, the mate can live the Christian life as near perfectly as possible. And you are judged only on how well you perform in your physical station—not on how well you can compel your mate to live up to your expectations. Remember, the one life for which you are judged is the one and only life over which you *CAN* have perfect control.

May your family be exemplary—each member exercising his personal responsibility. The fruits cannot be hidden.

4) *Keep the physical body under control.* The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the laws and ways of God. The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. The feet lead us to do much evil. Our hands are problematic. Eyes are never satisfied, and create much trouble for the individual. Ears are far too quick to hear evil. Then there is the epitome of trouble and heartache—the tongue.

The Christian, through the help of God's Holy Spirit, has partially brought and continues to bring the *WHOLE* body under subjection. The act of conversion is, in essence, the beginning of a mind transplant. The carnal mind is being replaced with the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5). Christ's mind was an obedient mind—obedient to the Father. It was a mind of self-control, a mind by which He kept Himself in total submission to the will of the Father. By that mind He was completely obedient to the laws, statutes and judgments of God the Father.

Beginning with the mind of Christ as our chief weapon against the weaknesses of the flesh, the Christian can conquer himself. He not only eliminates the carnal thoughts—but gives positive direction to eyes, ears, feet and hands. He uses these bodily instruments for real spiritual and humanitarian purposes. With this control, the tongue—the chief mischief-maker—is brought under complete control. It is no longer a ravaging fire—setting the whole world aflame with the flame of hate, resentment, bitterness, contempt and self-justification.

The tongue becomes an instrument of kindness and love. Eyes are quick to observe good. Ears love to hear the praise of others. Feet are quick to aid. And hands labor for good only. A conversion process is observable. The physical is being replaced, in an orderly and systematic manner, by the spiritual.

Again, a very easily observable mark or identifying sign of Christianity. As Paul said, anyone who *practices* the weaknesses of the flesh cannot and will not inherit the Kingdom. But, those practicing the fruits of the Spirit have no law against them. They are walking in the way of life. It is not difficult to observe the fruits of either way. Such is not a matter of judgment. It is a matter of fact. Our problem is in the acceptance of God's Word at face value. (The matters of repentance, overcoming and spiritual growth are matters of another concern. They will not be explained in this letter.)

5) *Be inflexible with principle.* God is a God of character. The sum total of that character is contained in the statements of Numbers 23:19: "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it: or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" "Repent" means to change. Eternal values do *not* change. Of course, God has at times expressed willingness to change a degree of justice toward man. This attests to His compassion and mercy, only. No place, in all the Bible, even hints that God changes principle—His standard of perfection, righteousness. That which was abolished at the death of Christ was *never* intended to be eternal. It was *added* (no past eternity) until the reformation (no future eternity)—at the second coming of Christ. But His Law is spiritual. It is for all time, eternal. Spiritual things are eternal. And the eternal things of God are not seen—are not observable—except in their manifestation through the lives of the human recipients.

Because of moral upbringing and a dimension of integrity, many "old-timers" lived principled lives of honesty and trustworthiness. You could count on them. They could be trusted. Today, nothing but change is held to be sacred. Society is mobile. Friendships are ephemeral. The end justifies the means, in any and all situations. Revolt is the order of the day. There seems to be nothing basic or foundational. And anyone who dares to practice and cherish inflexible principle, is considered "odd" and not quite "with it." How tragic!

Carnally, many people can be a law unto themselves. The physical dimension of right can be ascertained and practiced. By principle, all humankind can restrain themselves from lying, cheating, committing adultery, killing and—in general—taking advantage of neighbor. It is the spiritual dimension which must be revealed and accomplished through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

Once the spiritual dimension is revealed, the most significant principle of all comes into play. Continuity! Can we be faithful? Can we become as God and Christ—possessing their very nature—the same YESTERDAY, TODAY and FOREVER? In whom there is not even the slightest hint of turning?

God's priceless Truth will be delivered to His chosen people but once! And once given, it must be loved and respected. It must be cherished with life.

At every era of time, God has called those whom He pleased—stripped the blackness of ignorance and error from them, made them pliable and teachable by experience and given them His most priceless possession—the TRUTH—with the Holy Spirit as the essential ingredient to stabilize character. Brethren, just as Israel received God's message and the first-century Church of God had that way of life imparted to them, so has God called us—as well as thousands of others who have turned from it—and imparted that same message (Hebrews 4:2). Now, for the \$64,000 question: Do we have the character, the courage, the will, the spiritual discernment, the dedication, the vision, the faith and the purpose to continue in that way which we were taught? Can we, in the midst of turmoil and spiritual darkness, remain inflexible with that revealed way of life? Can we suppress the forces of our own carnality, to which Satan appeals—and which, if subscribed to, would lead us into the way of destruction? Now, as never before, is the time to resist Satan and all his cohorts. Do not second-guess your conversion, baptism and relationship with God! Truly, now is the time of the trial of your faith. Believe unto the end. Be inflexible in those spiritual ways—the ways God delivered to you. Your life—for all eternity—depends upon it. It is another mark of Christianity.

6) *Possession of our bodies by patience.* The requirement is perfect control. It is the absolute mastery of every volatile characteristic inherent in our makeup. It is the capability of total emotional control. The natural impulses are repressed. By knowledge and conviction, the Christian compels himself to live (manifest) the spiritual principles rather than give vent to the physical drives and emotions.

To gain such mastery—control—we must understand the magnitude of the enemy. What are those characteristics? How deceptive are they?

The enemy is self! But what is the natural state of any human being?

By nature, we are wrathful (Ephesians 2:1–3). We exercise every devious avenue whereby the self is justified or protected. There is a natural, volatile reaction to censorship or correction. A complete dislike for control, imposed limitation or any constituted authority. Paul was inspired by the Spirit of God to write, ". . . the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are *contrary* the one to the other: so that *ye cannot do the things that ye would*" (Galatians 5:17).

When someone points out a mistake, our natural inclination is to resist—advance explanations of self-justification. But when the Spirit dominates, we face the reality of our mistakes. We admit them and attempt to correct the situation.

When our tongues speak injuriously of others—once the circumstance is known, we express remorse and regret. We do not allow any fleshly manifestation of self-defense. We accept our guilt and, by admission (confession), find joy and satisfaction mentally. Implicit happiness and the way of peace are elusive to the carnally dominated.

By the dominance of God's Holy Spirit, we have tolerance for the convictions and feelings of others. We recognize the natural tendency to force others to accept our views. Conversion is a process by which we recognize our own imperfections and partiality. And in this process, we become aware of the unalterable, immutable and unchanging nature of God's perfection. Oneness and harmony come by the singularity of that one way of life. Perfection is achievement, *individually* and by personal conviction, of that irrevocable and unalterable standard of life. As each daily reaches for that perfection, harmony is greatly enhanced. Such oneness is, and can only be, achieved by a revelation of that truth—a personal call by God to each of us and a final concerted effort, with the help of God's Holy Spirit, to gain complete mastery of the self. Herein lies the meaning of the need to possession of our bodies by patience. Possession is a matter of control—control of the life and body which God gave to us to overcome. How? By patience. And patience is a manner by which we can accept the occurrences of life. It has nothing to do with condonation of wrong, apathy or indifference. Rather, it is the ability to accept conditions and circumstances in a right spirit and then begin a judicious and concerted effort to effect necessary resolves or changes.

We can either accept things in patience—taken in stride, as a matter of trial for our good—or manifest resentment, wrath and bitterness: a form of self-pity, arrogancy and utter carnality. Happiness, satisfaction and contentment come only from living up to the spiritual requirements of life. So absolute is this principle that many of God's true servants have been able to accept martyrdom with love and understanding. Have we resisted the pulls of flesh unto the shedding of blood?

7) *Perfect relationships with God and Christ.* Salvation is knowing the Father and the Son (John 17:3). In order to perfect those relationships, we must first come to know them. How? By revelation. Jesus Christ said one of His first-appearance purposes was to make known the Father and Himself. Though Christ—the God of the Old Testament, the Spokesman of Israel—had *verbally* manifested Himself to our ancient forebearers, the Father was known in no way (John 5:37). Christ came to reveal Him (Matthew 11:27).

By the operation of God's Holy Spirit, we are called to an acceptance of both the Father and the Son. Such a call is a profound miracle—a miracle far greater in magnitude than that of some great physical sign, wonder or healing. It is a call to *know* God. And to "know" implies a knowledge of background, character, ideals, purposes and principles of life. Character involves a principled existence—manifestations which warrant confidence, assurance, trust and reliance.

To come to such a knowledge requires effort and purpose on our part. It is not automatic. The revelation of Himself, with the Son, is but a beginning step. That knowledge must grow more profound daily. It becomes the source of every worthwhile and eternal joy and satisfaction in life. Its magnitude and depth are such that the innuendoes, lies and villifications of antagonists are countenanced or received for not one single moment. The one who truly KNOWS God the Father and the Son, by revelation, cannot be persuaded in any form of denigration. But that knowledge (TO KNOW) must be nurtured, fed and enhanced. It is not static. God and the Son, as Spirit Beings, are not seen. There is presently no manifestation. They are understood by the character, nature—as defined by the Way of Life—which was once (and only once) delivered to us. Delivered at the time of our call. Then it becomes our inviolate responsibility to retain that way and conviction of faith. Our faith must not become tarnished and clouded because of disuse. But how do we keep our confidence in that knowledge viable and strong? Since everlasting life is to KNOW God and His Son, Jesus Christ, it is most imperative that we understand.

First, we are required to *study* daily. That study is the means by which we refine our knowledge of Him. Christ was the Word of God personified—the very Word which we are required to study. By reading that Word, we are studying the character and nature of Christ. Also, Christ was the express image of the Father. He came to reveal the Father—to make Him known. He said, ". . . he that hath seen me hath seen the Father . . ." (John 14:9). Then by the study of God's Word, the Bible, we can enhance the revealed knowledge of Him. (In no way does this imply a change of belief or practice.) Revealed knowledge cannot be changed or altered—otherwise, it is not the Word of God which cannot change. On the contrary, the growth in knowledge of God—His way and character—only makes more beautiful, more deeply understood, more comprehensive and astounding, the originally revealed truth. This, truly, is the expansive—magnifying—characteristic of the Word of life. As we study and apply the pearls of life, new and exciting dimensions unveil themselves consistently. For example, God does not change—His character and innate glory are eternal. Yet, we become more cognizant of that glory and beauty only as we daily study His Word. It seems, daily, we are amazed and refreshed by new understanding which augments what we previously understood. This is the meaning of growing in grace and knowledge of Him, who has everything to do with our hope of everlasting life.

Daily study and application of knowledge will manifest itself in the life of the genuine Christian. He is an OPEN book—known and read by all who care to observe.

Second, the truly converted know their own weaknesses—helplessness in the human state. They know that as they must, through study, drink in the value of the Word—so also they must, through prayer, maintain a daily contact with the source of all help.

Prayer must be daily—just as feeding upon the Word of God must be daily. Read Matthew 6:24–34 and compare to physical needs.

Through prayer, we have opportunity to be honest and candid. We can confess what we are. And if we can be open and honest with God, He is faithful and just to forgive us of all our guilt. Study and prayer are the two lanes of a two-way street. After God calls us and makes us knowledgeable of Him, we grow and become refined only as we aggressively seek Him. He will be heard of those called. They have an open door to the throne of God. We can confess our faults and weaknesses and, at the same time, find the help to aid us in our venture of overcoming.

Third, the need to fast is imperative. Because of our natural complacency and tendency to become dead-centered, it is essential for us to face the loss of those physical commodities so desperately needed for a physical existence but which picture a more significant need, the spiritual. Once we relate the physical need to that of the Spirit, we are more easily persuaded of ourselves to regain a necessary spiritual orientation. Fasting cannot be overlooked. As we drift from its necessity, we lose our spiritual perspective—growing indifferent and calloused—and too frequently begin to rationalize that the need is not urgent. As this process continues, we will find it progressively more difficult to turn the tide and effect a real return to God. As many of God's great servants of the past did, so must we fast more frequently, study more diligently and pray more wholeheartedly for an understanding of God's perfect way of life for us. NOW IS THE TIME. THE END IS MUCH CLOSER THAN WHEN WE FIRST BELIEVED. The diligent and genuinely converted will heed and be richly rewarded thereby. May you have a happy and successful venture.

8) *Lifestyles*. Not faddish, strange or of the world. God's chosen people are normal—natural—in appearance. They are lights of what is acceptable. They set the standard. In no way are they motivated by trends of the world—becoming conformists for the sake of conformity. The usage of physical appearance or wearing of apparel, to differentiate themselves from others, is not Biblical. They are unique in their conservative dress and manner.

All of us are aware of the usage of design or style for specific representations. Customs, designs and styles generated for such purposes are not of God. Frequently, designs or styles are introduced for a certain effect. That which depicts rebellion or revolt, that which accentuates the physical (intended to create lust) and that which is designed to destroy or mitigate the masculinity and femininity of God's created subjects, is categorically wrong. God is the creator of male and female. Their created purposes are not to be violated.

Rather than defensively argue relative to styles, habits, customs and other physical behavioral patterns, why do we not study and conform to the instructions of God's Word? Then, each should live up to his conviction. This, of course, is not to say God will not use an absolute standard when He judges. If all of us are aware of that fact and stand in fear of the Word of God, we cannot avoid an eventual harmony of belief and practice. The Bible does not reveal a multitude of ways, practices and customs. Yet, the Word of God—within certain basic guidelines—does afford the privilege of individuality. Rubber-stamp conformity is nowhere to be found in the pages of the Bible.

Lifestyles do earmark a true Christian. In all cases, he is not a conformist to this world (1 John 2:15–17; James 4:4; 1 Peter 3:1–6; 1 Timothy 2:9–10). He sets a standard of cleanliness, decency, good taste and conservatism. As is true with spiritual concepts, the true Christian will not practice those things created by the Gentiles for whatever their avowed purposes. (Deuteronomy 12:29–32). He does not do that which appears right in his own eyes (Deuteronomy 12:8; Judges 21:25; Proverbs 16:25). He serves God in fear and respect. His foremost desire is to know and practice the will of God (Ephesians 5:17). Since Satan is the god of this world, the Christian knows he cannot accept—at face value—his (Satan's) customs and practices (Luke 4:4–6).

All principles of the Bible teach the necessity of care and maintenance of possession and responsibility. We are the purchased possession of God. We belong to Him—completely. The care of the possession, God has entrusted to us individually. But the extent and scope of that care, God has determined—for we are the temples of the Holy Spirit. He has provided every necessity for the propitious discharge of that responsibility. We must judiciously and wisely use what God has provided—within each individual's financial capability.

Here seems the logical place to say a word about judging. The final judge has been appointed. The time has been determined. Any tendency on our part to censor, judge or criticize is a usurpation of that responsibility. Though chosen of God, we as human beings were called to obey—not to judge. James wrote, "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou are not a *doer* of the

law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" (James 4:11–12).

We are called to obey—to personally overcome—to live an exemplary life. We are to be lights—each of us, individually. (A concept which will be expanded in point number nine, below.)

Does the above imply there is not judgment in the Church? No! First Corinthians 6 explains the basis of church judgment. But, it is obvious, the scope of such judgment is limited. What is being said is this: We do not have the right to censor or prejudge one another—especially relevant to matters of Church relationships. Paul was inspired to elaborate on this point.

Is it mandatory to become vegetarians? Is abstinence from all alcoholic beverages required? Even a superficial understanding of the Bible will surely acquaint us with the fact that the answer to both questions is negative. Yet, for the sake of conscience and time required for spiritual growth, Paul wrote that a truly converted Christian ought to tolerate such abnormalities—even for a lifetime, if necessary (Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8). What is plainly taught is the necessity of proper spiritual orientation. Physical things, whether right or wrong (and many of them are wrong), should not become our preoccupation. Truly, as Christ said, we had better *first* consider the weightier matters of the law. In process of time, if the individuals are truly converted, the other matters of life will be understood and practiced. But, be careful that no time limitations are imposed. Paul said that, if necessary, a lifetime was not unrealistic.

9) *Proving self daily.* This point and the following ones will be converted only minimally, because I want to comprehensively cover them at a latter time. They both deserve more consideration than that which can be given them in the contents of this article.

Paul said, "Examine *yourselves*, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves . . ." (2 Corinthians 13:5). We all have the monumental responsibility of checking ourselves—not by comparing ourselves among ourselves, but in relationship to "the faith." What faith? Point ten will cover this.

Paul further wrote, ". . . let *every* man *prove* his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another" (Galatians 6:4). Proving is not a reproofing of the doctrine—a reproofing of the way of life. It is the spiritual obligation of proving ourselves in relationship to that way of life given to us. And Paul said if we do not prove ourselves in that regard, we are reprobates (2 Corinthians 13:5). We have a lifetime charge to bring ourselves under control—to subdue the mind and heart. It is no easy task.

If we are truly, aggressively pursuing that responsibility, it will manifest itself in a very tolerant attitude toward others! Why? Because, we are cognizant of the struggle which we fight, making us more sympathetic toward others. Deception on the part of the individual—with respect to his own trials—manifests itself in contempt and disgust for others.

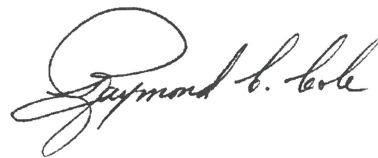
If we are proving ourselves, we will overcome and grow in Christian character and tolerance. We will respect others as the called and chosen children of God.

10) *Living by faith.* Faith is the essential ingredient of salvation (Romans 1:17). But faith in what? Is it solely a vaguely defined trust in God? James says faith without works is dead (James 2:17–26). So, having faith is far more than a mere expression, "I have faith." Indeed! Faith, as defined in the Bible, is an unswerving belief that God *revealed to us* His way of life. That which He revealed to His chosen servants is called "the faith." Then faith is the firm belief that God gave us, by divine revelation, a way of life. And that *faith* will manifest itself in continuity of belief. Those who have faith prove it by their loyal belief and practice of the revealed truth. These are the true Christians.

Let us prove ourselves—our faith. Let us be loyal to God. We can do so by remaining faithful to that priceless gift which He gave to us—to the very truth hidden from the world, the unconverted. And lost to those who had no love for the truth given to them. They departed from it, considering it an unholy thing.

Will we be *faithful*? Only time will tell. For we must endure unto the end—endure the temptations to forsake that way.

In deep Christian love and respect,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Raymond C. Cole". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'R' and 'C'.

Raymond C. Cole