

CHURCH OF THE  
E T E R N A L

---

*"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." – Matthew 24:14*

May 21, 2004

Dear Brethren and Friends,

In the very short history of the Church of the Eternal God and its affiliated associates in both Canada and Great Britain (Church of God a Christian Fellowship and The Global Church of God), we have witnessed sweeping changes in the world! Now, East and West Europe are uniting! America has been effectively more and more REMOVED from world dominance in terms of its international prestige! We are beginning to see a more dominant role emerging for the Pope and Catholicism!

All of these things—and more—are the fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. The unfolding timeframe of Matthew 24 that Jesus Christ gave for His disciples—especially for those faithful to Him at the end of the age—is playing out before our eyes! In Matthew 24 and 25, we are told by Jesus to WATCH and to BE READY!

The work that God is leading us to accomplish focuses on these very things. Just as we began with what God had given us—faithful men and women and their families who believed in standing firmly in the truth—so we now continue to seek to carry on with the work given to us.

True to what the Church of God must ALWAYS DO, we have grown in our understanding, in our zeal and in our love for one another. Notice how Paul states this principle: "but speaking the truth in love, [we] may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ" (Ephesians 4:15). Peter also admonishes us: "but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ..." (2 Peter 3:18). (*You might want to read the Editorial in our Update for May 14, 2004, by Norbert Link on this subject entitled, "How Do You Grow?"*)

Our blessings—including our continued existence—are a direct outgrowth of our mutual commitment to do what we can and what God grants for us in fulfilling the instructions of Matthew 24:14: " 'And this gospel of the kingdom WILL BE PREACHED IN ALL THE WORLD AS A WITNESS TO ALL THE NATIONS, and then the end will come.' "

We understand that the gospel was not preached to the world at large after the first century and until God called Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong in the last century. We also know that some will arise to finish this awesome task at the very end of this age—notably, the two witnesses spoken of in Revelation 11 and Zechariah 4. Right now, the job remains unfulfilled in this, our generation! Although there was a work that reached the lives of millions in the recent past, a whole new generation has arisen. We must build on the foundation of truth we have received and carry on with the work of God.

The knowledge of the TRUTH that we have been given is what we must impart to all who will listen. Some will embrace the way of God while others—perhaps most at this time—will reject it. Regardless, God's message must go out powerfully in the days, weeks, months and precious FEW YEARS AHEAD! Each month, we send out letters to all of you who stand together with all of us in this calling, and, indeed, it is an unparalleled CALLING from God! Always, we say, "thank you," for all that you do and for your continuing faithfulness!

But we must remind one another that the job is still ahead of us! It HAS NOT BEEN FINISHED! God is indeed allowing us to be productive in so many ways, but He expects us to do more than what is required. An interesting exchange occurred between the apostles and Jesus when they asked him to " '...Increase our faith' " (Luke 17:5). The sum of what Jesus said to them is found in verse 10: " 'So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, "We are UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS. We have done what was our DUTY to do." ' "

That means that if we are to really please God—our Master—then we must all do more. Most importantly, we are to persevere without quitting and to overcome the obstacles that hinder us in our service to God. These might seem inconsequential at first glance, but we start the process by being faithful in the little things! Jesus taught in the parable of the Minas this basis for true faithfulness. Here is the principle that Jesus related as recorded in Luke 19, verses 11-27, but

note, in particular, verse 17: “and he said to him, “Well done, GOOD SERVANT; BECAUSE YOU WERE FAITHFUL IN A VERY LITTLE, have authority over ten cities.” ’ ”

Brethren, this translates to our circumstances, today. What we have been given to shepherd is the truth of God. We indeed KNOW what the Church of God must do in terms of its commission. We KNOW what God expects of us in terms of how we now live our lives. We must be careful to not bury the talents given to us to accomplish these things! Also, consider this stern caution from Jesus: “ ‘And that servant who KNEW his master’s will, and did not PREPARE himself or DO according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes’ ” (Luke 12:47).

We are about to observe the Feast of Pentecost on May 30. This most remarkable time commemorates God giving His Holy Spirit to mankind so that we could truly become like God—even to the point of having perfect character just like Him (Compare Matthew 5:48). That wonderful truth is the very heart of the message of good news, which we have a part in boldly proclaiming to this dying age.

Luke 9:62 states, “But Jesus said to him, ‘No one, having put his hand to the plow, and LOOKING BACK, is fit for the kingdom of God.’ ” We have been called out of this world, and we are among those who have continued to look forward to the job at hand as well as what surely lies before us in future times.

Our own good news is that we have been given God’s Holy Spirit to help us complete what God has begun in us; we have Jesus Christ as our High Priest to help us and to protect us from the forces of darkness ruled over by Satan; we have a future and a hope because God has included us in His great master plan.

Paul, a very faithful servant of God and apostle of Jesus Christ, completed the work that God gave to him. Here is his approach—one that helped strengthen him in his own calling and one that can encourage us in our calling, today: “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39).

Brethren, this must be our persuasion as well. Let’s also keep in mind the kind of ZEAL that the Father and Jesus Christ want to see in us: “ ‘You shall love the LORD your God with ALL your heart, with ALL your soul, and with ALL your strength’ ” (Deuteronomy 6:5).

In Christ’s Service,



David J. Harris