

June 12, 2024

Dear Brethren and Friends,

Continually doing the Work of God by effectively preaching the Gospel and feeding the flock is our ongoing goal. However, a few questions have come up in addition to this purpose. What sets us apart from all the rest? How do our efforts differ from other Church of God groups? Are we that much different?

We have consistently expressed the importance of unity in our organization, especially during our annual conferences when doctrinal topics are addressed, as well as other methods to continue and improve our efforts in continuing the Work for the very goal of speeding up the return of Jesus Christ to establish His Kingdom on earth. The work that we do NOW will benefit all of mankind when they will later have the opportunity to understand what their potential is, what we in the Church understand now. Our purpose is not to make this current world a better place, for the only One who could do that is Jesus Christ when He returns. Until that happens, we have a specific job to do.

We have just finished this year's conference of 2024, and we have seen fruits in our abilities to get the word out through our Google advertising campaigns and distribution of our booklets. We have had continuous success advertising *The Fall and Rise of the Jewish People* booklet to English-speaking nations as well as the booklet *The Rise and Fall of Germany and Europe* in both English and German-speaking nations. We have also continued with the advertisement of the German Ten Commandments booklet, leading to reprints and further reprints of the above-mentioned booklet, along with some other booklets. Due to our advertising, our online viewership has gone up and our subscription list to the English Update has also increased from 700 to around 1060 since last year. In addition, we plan on creating a subscription list to the German Current Events (*Weltnachrichten*).

When it comes to the internet and our websites, we discussed ways to increase our website recognition through Google ads and also additional avenues to promote our booklets. We have successfully launched a Spanish site [www.dioseterno.es](http://www.dioseterno.es) where we have so far posted 8 translated booklets, along with Q&As and editorials, and plans to create videos to promote these booklets are upcoming, along with a Spanish YouTube page. Plans for creating a French website are also in the making.

Continuing with booklet advertising, we have begun promoting the booklets we have available in English through video ads which are sent out to all our subscribers. The plan is to promote a booklet each month through one of the 23 video ads we currently have. Booklets advertised so far include *The Rise and Fall of Germany and Europe*, *God Is Our Destiny*, and *God's Teachings on Sexual Relationships*.

Further plans for additional booklets to be translated into German include the booklets *The Fall and Rise of the Jewish People* and *Middle Eastern and African Nations in Bible Prophecy*.

The Feast sites for 2024 have been established for Tempe, Arizona, in the United States, and Kalkar, Germany. We will also shortly produce new pocket Holy Day calendars for the next ten years.

When it comes to doctrinal issues, we discussed at length what the distinctions are between the *Church of the Eternal God* and its international affiliates, and other Church of God groups and our thoughts regarding attending other groups. There is a unique focus through the work we are doing,

and we believe that we have the most solid doctrinal understanding compared to others. The *StandingWatch* and *AufPostenStehen* programs we produce are our unique identity which we use to preach the Gospel to the world. We give benefit to other members in the body of Christ who look for this kind of information.

There seems to be a lack of unity in other organizations, a trend of liberalism, and a lukewarm attitude which is what we are doing our best to avoid by doing the job that God expects of us. We should never underestimate Satan and how he attacks even the "smallest things," and if we begin to compromise, one thing will lead to the next. Attending other groups for church services or events where religious activities would be included that differ from what we believe and teach, would be inadvisable.

When it comes to anointing through other Church of God ministers who are not in our group, that would also not be advised since we have our own ministers who could even send an anointing cloth, unless under extreme circumstances where there is absolutely nobody around who could provide anointing.

What do we do in the case of the death of our leading ministers? We are a small group, and the reality of mortality has set in as leading ministers are getting older. Under Mr. Armstrong at the time shortly before his death, he chose the one who he thought would keep the Church together, not because of doctrine per se. Yet from a human standpoint, putting Mr. Tkach in charge was the worst decision, but it happened this way to fulfill prophecy. God is very aware of the situation we are in, and He has a plan as the Work has to continue.

Training others for backup duties is vital in continuing the Work when focusing on technical matters and the broadcasting of our services, behind-the-scenes work with recording, uploading, and advertising, as well as all the other work that is involved for the success of the Church. Our younger generation is beneficial in this aspect, as well as women in the Church who also have a crucial job in helping out as much as they can, as appropriate.

Continuing on that topic, we discussed what specific roles women have in the Church of God in distinction to women in public affairs, in politics and as leaders. We have a Q&A titled "Sermons by Women?" which goes into the specifics of what women can and can't do regarding roles in the Church. Women in politics or in the business world are separate from what the roles are of women in the Church. The ideal situation for women to stay home while their husbands work is not the case anymore. In today's society, it is almost impossible for married women with children not to work. The societal impact turns things upside down and is inverted. Women in the Church are supposed to be supportive and they can have a business, as Proverbs 31 proves. The woman is able and allowed to do what she is doing with responsibility and trust as it is also beneficial when both spouses complement each other in a work environment with unity when they trust each other, which also goes beyond the family and society.

Another way is helping to raise and teach the young. In Germany, one of our members has been making short private YouTube videos that are available to families with children. They go first through an approval process by the ministry, also making sure that Jesus is not displayed in any way. In addition, we have been creating the Bible Story in PDF format in German (2 volumes so far) strictly for Church families and their children.

We also discussed how we address new people who are interested in us and want to know more. When it comes to visiting our services, we need to make sure they understand what we teach and what our dress code is. We ask specific questions for their own good and to know all we can before someone attends our services for the sake of our membership and the consistency of our Church

teachings. As we state in our "About Us" section on our website, "We emphasize that our Church services in local congregations and at our annual Feast sites, as well as during our live broadcasts are holy and sacred convocations. Participants in person and over the Internet should conduct themselves appropriately during services, and this includes proper dress when we are appearing before God. We would encourage any person interested in our services to contact the ministry to receive guidance and answers to any questions. In general, we welcome guests to our Church services, as long as they are not contentious and worship with us in peace and harmony and in accordance with our doctrines and practices."

The question was asked about 2nd Tithe and how we are to spend it correctly. A Q&A was written on November 23, 2023, about this and has been subsequently translated into German and posted on our website. The bottom line is, that the principle of 2nd Tithe is for the Feast of Tabernacles and to be used there. One could also use some of the 2nd Tithe for travel and food on other Holy Days and/or on the Sabbath, but we need to make sure that enough money is still available for the Feast of Tabernacles. When deciding how to spend our Second Tithe, we need to be honest with ourselves when getting gifts or purchases that can or cannot be used for the Feast.

In regard to conspiracy theories and their lack of relevance, the government, for example, provides misinformation regarding Covid and woke theories and we have a duty to speak out. Other examples include the moon landing, the flat earth concept, the holocaust, and conspiracies on 9-11. We as a Church don't need to address these theories unless challenged or when they can negatively affect Church members.

We discussed Matthew 24:13 which states that "he who endures until the end shall be saved" and what this means for someone who is called but suffers from a disease like dementia. Did they finish the race before the sickness occurred, before they "lost their mind"? Death of the mind is not necessarily the death of the body, for God is the God of mercy. He will not let someone die being uncertain whether they will be in the 1st or 2nd resurrection. In the case of King Nebuchadnezzar, he wasn't responsible during that time when he "lost his mind." If a person gets dementia or other similar sicknesses where strong medication is needed, they should not be held responsible as they are not in control of their actions. God allows sicknesses that Satan inflicts, as was the case of Paul's thorn in the flesh for he knew he had to suffer and endure afflictions to be successful and he was also confident that he would make it (compare 2 Timothy 4:5; Philippians 1:4-6). We will address this situation in an upcoming Q&A.

The question of whether God can or cannot change was answered that God can change His mind. He doesn't change His law of the 10 commandments but certain ritual laws have changed. Prophecies can change because of circumstances, depending, for instance, on human repentance.


We also revisited the topic of adding and deleting biblical concepts with an emphasis on Worldwide teachings and how we should go about changing our teachings if needed. As we said in the past, it is wrong to speculate when there is no biblical support; especially, when it is contradictory to Scripture. When it comes to prophetic speculation, we need to emphasize that it is such when the Bible isn't clear on it. When it comes to what Mr. Armstrong taught, if there is something that can be proven from the Bible that what he taught was incorrect, then we would change it. Our premise is to prove that he was wrong in order to change it. There are also many different teachings that we established on what Mr. Armstrong taught and based on his fruits and Scripture, we teach what we understand to be correct. At the same time, we also don't dogmatically state something that the Bible is not 100% clear on, but we use terms like "appear" and "might", for example. We need to be cautious about what we say and don't say. Isaiah 55:8 shows our limitations on what we know and don't know.

Once again like last year's conference, we can see from this year's conference, there was a lot that we covered—things that needed to be addressed and revisited. We need to be unified in the faith and understanding of what this Church represents, based on the Bible, to make sure we are correct in what we are saying and in what we believe, without contradiction. If something needs correction, we need to address that based on what we understand from the Bible.

The Work continues and will not end as we can see from the fruits of our labors in getting the Gospel message out. God has indeed blessed us financially through the help from the members and contributors of the Church which does not go unnoticed. Your gracious contributions have made it possible to continue doing the Work. We pray that God will bless our continuous efforts and God bless you all for your continuous diligence.

We also wish all of you a very rewarding and profitable Feast of Pentecost, being reminded that all glory and honor go to God who has bestowed us with His Holy Spirit of power to do His Work without wavering.

In God's service and with Christian love,



Michael Link