

CHURCH OF THE
ETERNAL

"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." – Mathew 24:14

January 10, 2002

Dear Brethren and Co-Workers,

The Church of the Eternal God is entering its seventh month of existence. Month after month, God has continued to bless our unified efforts. We, also, have all had individual roles in sustaining our small work. Many have rallied mightily in so many ways to faithfully serve God. Thank YOU!

Now, we are looking forward to our upcoming ministerial conference in early February. Our goal is to broaden the efforts of the work we have before us while continuing to meet the needs of our brethren. In both of these areas, we are mindful of the need for God's continual help and your encouraging participation.

Brethren, although we have begun well, our task is nothing short of awesome as we seek to follow the clear Biblical challenges set before us. The hard part is yet ahead of us—we must FINISH that part of the work God has committed to each one of us.

Christ did just that during His lifetime. Note what Christ said to the Father in John chapter 17 and verse 4: "I have *glorified* You on the earth. I have *finished* the work which You have given Me to do." We, brethren, who are called "Christians" face this same challenge.

How can you and I *glorify* God? How can we *finish* what God has given us to do?

Again, we find the answer in the teachings of Christ in John 15:8, "By this My Father is *glorified*, that you *bear much fruit*; so you will be My disciples." We know that Christ and the disciples He taught individually and worked with were *very fruitful*—they, indeed, did *glorify* God. In turn, if WE are to likewise *glorify* God, WE must also be *very fruitful*.

That kind of productivity comes from first getting ourselves acceptable in God's sight. We must set our own house in order (Cp Matthew 7:1-5). But we are not to stop there!

For us to "bear much fruit," we must be actively involved in the ONGOING WORK OF JESUS CHRIST—preaching the good news of God's imminent Kingdom and its establishment on this earth. Let us all remember that Christ is alive and now actively guiding His Church in His office as High Priest over the spiritual household of God.

Returning to John 17, notice what Christ said to the Father about His disciples in verse 18, "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent *them* into the world." In verse 20, He further shows that His prayer included all of *us* who would later follow in the calling to God's way: "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word."

Considering what is here stated in the book of John, we should be ever vigilant of the opportunity that we have. It seems that people who lose sight of their responsibility to *finish* the job are soon filled with confusion and lack of discernment.

In the face of our trials, are we able to stay focused on the goal that God has established for us? Jesus did! We find this interesting statement that He made against the backdrop of their physical hunger in John 4:34, "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to *do the will* of Him who sent Me, and to *finish His work*.'"

In the difficult times in which we find ourselves—both in this trouble filled world and in the scattered remnants of the Church—we must be careful stewards of that which God has committed to us. Many of us remember the final letter from Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong that was dated January 10, 1986, in which he stated: "*It may be that the Work God has given me to do is complete, but not the Work of God's Church, which will be faithfully doing God's Work till Christ, the True Head of this Church, returns...The greatest work lies yet ahead.*" Although he died six days later, his words ring loud and true for all of us.

In Matthew 25, we find the parable of the talents. Christ here praises and rewards those who were faithful in, as He puts it, "...a few things." What is implied is an important lesson for us. These who were given their individual talents took care of what they had been given. They didn't dilute their efforts by focusing on the amount of talents that others might have been given. They didn't make excuses—unlike the faithless and fearful individual with the one talent. They simply took care of their master's goods until he returned.

Brethren, the first two servants *finished* their jobs. They were *fruitful* with those things entrusted to them.

What are our talents?

From the standpoint of the work ahead of us, our talents involve you, the converted Christians who live their lives dedicated to God. It is you, the elect of God, whose prayers God hears. It is you with whom we are joined to the Father and Christ by one Spirit—called *brethren* with Christ!

In 2 Timothy 4 and verse 7, Paul states: "I have fought the good fight, I have *finished* the race, I have kept the faith." He participated in the same task that has been placed before all Christians—*finishing their individual part in the work of God!*

We have *MUCH AHEAD* of us—as individuals and as a Church. We have begun to produce booklets that are carefully prepared. Right now, this is material that each of us can use, personally. However, these publications are destined to go beyond the borders of our membership. They will serve as very important tools in reaching people with the truth of God.

Our Web site has valuable information to assist both the Church and those drawn by God to His way. In addition, we have continued to organize the administration of the Church to fulfill God's instructions in caring for as many of His people as He gives us opportunity. The ministry is endeavoring to visit local groups as resources permit.

But this is all preliminary to those things God may have in store for us.

Brethren, let each one of us continue to zealously commit ourselves to our calling from God. He has placed us in His spiritual body—His Church. It is God who has given us of His Spirit along with an important job that we must be prepared and dedicated to *finishing—His WORK!*

In Christ's Service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David J. Harris". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

David J. Harris