

CHURCH OF THE
E T E R N A L
G O D

"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

November 6, 2003

Dear Brethren and Friends,

As we return to our daily activities and begin to face the season ahead, having enjoyed immensely the fall festivals, we now must endure these next five months before the spring festivals begin—and, we must not let down in our pursuit of God's Way in our lives. Our purpose must continually be in the forefront of our thoughts, which purpose is to see God's Kingdom established on this earth and our part in it.

Church doctrine remains critical to God's Way of life, yet so many seem to have abandoned the teachings we have received. Eternal life hinges on sound doctrine as outlined in God's Word. We must prove these things to ourselves over and over and we must reject anything that contradicts these truths.

Paul addresses these things in his two epistles written to the young evangelist, Timothy. Paul cautioned Timothy to be certain those under him were not teaching contrary to the doctrine as he had been taught (1 Timothy 1:3–4). He continued this line of thinking in 2 Timothy 3:1–5, where he stated that at the end time (our time today) there would be those in the Church who would go contrary to these teachings and would cause much trouble for the people of God.

It is imperative, brethren, that we not get caught up in such activities. We must prove and hold fast to God's Truth. His Truth does not change over time! God does not change (Malachi 3:6). We as a people must strive to remain faithful to the teachings we have received. Satan will tempt us, just as he tempted Christ, because he wants to see us fail. Christ, however, always went back to God's Word in disputing the lies of Satan (Matthew 4:1–11).

We will live our lives, either by God's Ways or by the ways of this world. Time will test us all in these things. Will we be faithful?

We have strong instruction concerning these things in the prophecies of the book of Daniel. We can read of one of these in Daniel 11:32–35:

"Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by the sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. Now when they fall, they shall be aided with a little help; but many shall join with them by intrigue. And some of those of understanding shall fall, to refine them, purge them, and make them white, until the time of the end; because it is still for the appointed time."

We see additional instruction in Paul's epistle to the Romans, chapter 6; verses 16–18:

“Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves to sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves to righteousness.”

What are we willing to endure, brethren, for the prize of the calling to which we have been called? Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 4:16 that we should take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine. If we continue in the doctrine, we will save both ourselves and those who hear us. Are we committed to this Way? If we are ashamed of God and His Way, today, Christ will be ashamed of us at the time of His return (Mark 8:38).

In speaking to Titus, Paul noted that one who was to be ordained as a bishop must be a member who holds fast to “the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict” (Titus 1:9). Since we have all been called to learn to become teachers of God's Way, these words of Paul apply directly to each of us. Now is the time when we must be learning these things.

In verse 16 of Titus, chapter 1, Paul notes those who “profess to know God, but in works they deny Him...” Yet, we read of Daniel, even after he knew a decree had been signed against him concerning His faithfulness to God—he continued to openly serve God, praying to Him and giving thanks, as was his custom (Daniel 6:10). Are we that committed to God and to His Ways that we will continue to serve God, even to the point of being willing to lose our physical lives for this Way? We must come to that level of commitment!

Now is our day of salvation, brethren (2 Corinthians 6:2; 1 Peter 4:17–18). We must continually grow in God's Way and we must not allow the customs and seasons of this world to affect our loyalty to God and to His Way of life. We must never compromise with God's Word. No doubt, in the past, we have all sinned by breaking God's Law. As the appointed time approaches, we must be ever more diligent in committing our lives to His Way!

Let us use these days, weeks, and months ahead as an opportunity to learn even more of God's Way and let us draw near to Him in prayer and in fasting—both for our own benefit and for the benefit of all who may come in contact with us, who “contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3).

In Christian love,



J. Edwin Pope