

CHURCH OF THE
G 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

August 15, 2005

Dear Brethren in Christ,

We reviewed in a recent sermon the subject of commitment and the fact that while God expects the wholehearted commitment of each of us in living His Way, He is fully committed to be certain we have all the helps needed from Him to succeed in our calling according to His great purpose! We observed that such commitment requires dedication from those He has called!

We at headquarters were most pleased with the positive attitudes observed and the fervent responses of many of you in answer to the plea for financial support of the work God is doing through CEG as we continue through the tough months of summer. No doubt God observed these favorable attitudes of His loyal disciples as well. Thank you for your continued prayers and support for God's end-time Work!

Paul noted the right attitude of the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians, chapters 8 and 9. Speaking of their unselfish approach, Paul writes of the churches in Macedonia, "that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality" (2 Corinthians 8:2). The giving attitude of these disciples was commended the more due to their dedication and their fellowship, even in the midst of poverty. Verse 5 reveals they did these things having given themselves to the Lord and then to the Church according to God's will.

What does one's willing generosity reveal to our God? Paul illustrates in verses 7-15 of chapter 8 the answer to this question. First, that such a one abounds in the attributes of God (verse 7). Second, this approach proves the sincerity of their love (verse 8). Third, such a one imitates Christ (verse 9). And, finally, fourth, this approach reflects one's desire to help supply the needs of others (verse 14).

Paul goes further with this admonition in chapter 9 where he says, "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver" (verses 6-7).

Speaking again of the generosity of faithful followers in this Way, Paul makes an interesting observation in Philippians 4:15-20 where in he states; "Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account" (verse 17). Paul continues; "And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (verse 19). Yes, God indeed takes note of our generosity!

We have so much to be thankful for, dear brethren, as time continues to draw toward the prophesied world events which will soon astound the nations. This world must face serious calamities in the near future, but in the final analysis, the truth stands – joy and harmony, security and peace, untold abundance and wealth and all that is perfect relative to God's Way will be brought forth as Christ establishes the Kingdom of God on the earth.

These coming events – those which picture world-wide catastrophe and those which reflect the establishment of God's eternal joy on the earth through His great Kingdom – are all pictured in the upcoming fall festivals of God. In observing these festivals, we show respect toward God's plan and His command that we live out these future events through the keeping of His festivals which picture all God will do as He brings about the establishment of the Family of God. The 23rd chapter of the book of

Leviticus and the 28th and 29th chapters of the book of Numbers speak of God's command relative to His holy days.

Again, we do have much to be thankful for as time marches forward toward these world-changing events. God has given us His truth, His faith, and His Spirit, whereby we must learn to live our lives as Christ lived in the flesh. This upcoming fall festival season allows for us special time to illustrate to God our sincere thanks for the calling we have received.

Psalm 100 gives an approach for us to seriously consider relative to the attitudes we should have as we prepare for and attend the fall festivals. We must never be half-hearted in our approach to God, His commands and His ways, of which these festivals are a substantial part.

The inspired words of God in this 100th Psalm reveal some interesting thoughts for you and me. We see that when we come before God on His holy Sabbath and during His holy festivals, we are to shout with joy and sing praises to Him. We worship Him in this way because He is our God! He created us and now has called us to live according to His purpose and His Way. This approach is not the approach of the world!

We are to come before Him with thanksgiving and with praise. We are thankful to Him and praise Him because He is good, His mercy is everlasting and His truth endures forever!

In Psalm 101, David, in speaking to God, says that he will sing unto Him of His mercy and judgment and that he will dedicate himself to living according to God's perfect Way. David is clear in this Psalm that he will avoid those who walk contrary to God's Way, noting specifically "...those who fall away" (Psalm 101:3).

God has called us to a way of life, brethren. He has called us to live our lives as Jesus Christ lived, to walk as Christ walked. David was a man of God. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were men of God. Sarah and Rebecca were women of God. Many others are named in the Scriptures. He has now called you and me to become men and women of God, to be obedient to all His ways, and to obey the commands He has established for our good.

In Psalm 103, David proclaims many of the benefits we receive from God as He does bless those brethren who are faithful to His Way. In pointing to many of these benefits, David makes note of the fact that God forgives all our iniquities, heals all our diseases, redeems our lives from destruction, crowns us with loving kindness and tender mercies and satisfies our mouths with good things (verses 2-5). He is "merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy" (verse 8).

We should be meditating on these things, keeping them in our minds as we approach this festival season; and we must continue to draw near to our God, growing in His truth, His faith and His Spirit so that we might be able to obey our God in doing the things He requires of us!

In Christian love,



J. Edwin Pope