

Church of God, The Eternal

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The Two Facets of Divine Revelation—Part XIV To Whom Is the Second Revelation Made Initially?—Continued

May 1982

A warm greetings to all our Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

People around the world have come through one of the most difficult winters in their memory. As God's people we did not entirely escape the ravages of the times. But, thanks to a most benevolent and kind God, He saw us through these difficulties.

No place in all the Bible are we promised total protection from adversity and trial. On the contrary, Christians are to be subjected to these trials and situations. Our blessing comes from the promise and assurance that God will see us through them all safely. Our reward comes from *enduring* trials—according to the plan and purpose of God—not from avoiding them.

As God's chosen people, we are not here to obtain the natural carnal objectives of humanity. We have renounced the carnal purposes. Our hope is spiritual—looking to the future, not the present. Our hope and confidence is entirely wrapped up in the purpose of God. The Father and Christ are working in our lives.

The troubles and difficulties of Christians are often directly proportionate to the rejection of the physical and determined acceptance of spiritual responsibility. On the other hand, those who pursue the physical, encounter at some time in their lives, the troubles automatically written into the pursuit of that way of existence. No one accepts troubles—regardless of his course of behavior. The one accepts trials and difficulties as the fabric out of which character and purpose are made. The other encounters the results of a way of living selected because of the natural nature inborn.

Now that the test of winter is "past," it is time for each of us to evaluate. How did we do? Progress, in the future, cannot be made unless we carefully, wisely, and accurately assess the past. The wise will see and learn—effecting significant change in attitude and purpose. The unwise will use a whitewash brush on himself or "cheat" on

the personal evaluation responsibility. Remember, the only one who is ever deluded by such thinking is the self. There is a true day of reckoning coming. Christ, the appointed judge, reads both hearts and minds. Mercy will be extended only if we have been honest with ourselves and at the same time extended mercy and kindness to all with whom we fellowship.

All evidence points to the rather apparent fact, we are presently existing in the troublesome last days. This conclusion is inescapable. Being in these dark, foreboding last days, events will grow much worse before they improve—improvement occasioned by the appearance of Jesus Christ.

To weather these terrible, dark, gloomy last days, a good understanding is essential. Without such an understanding some will undoubtedly misread the intent, purpose, and significance of the trial, or trials. As the Apostle Paul was inspired to write, ". . . be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). What is the time element (Eph. 5:16)?

These are the last days! Let us understand and accept the will and purpose of God. Through it all, God will graciously and benevolently lead us all—if we allow His perfect will to be wrought in us.

Let us count all things as a joy and purpose from God. By so doing we are being made into the fit candidates for a new kingdom and society of tomorrow.

For this month (May) the remainder of the chapter, "To Whom Is That Second Revelation Made Initially?" is given. This chapter is a part of the long series of *Monthly Letters* dealing with the subject, "The Two Facets of Divine Revelation." An understanding of this basic subject is absolutely imperative to comprehend God's spiritual purpose for man in these last days.

Now, to that outline:

To Whom Is That Second Revelation Made Initially?—Part II

Under this point we have thoroughly documented the fact that the truth was hidden from the beginning. Therefore, no understanding is possible short of a divine revelation. The logical question which follows the above point is: To whom is that truth initially revealed? As we exhaustively demonstrated, from the time of the Patriarchs until the

days of the Millennium, God has always chosen specific individuals. The truth was revealed to them. In turn, they were held accountable for remaining faithful to that call. As the servants of God, they were bondslaves. They were not at liberty to preach or proclaim what they pleased! They could go only when, where, and to whom God sent them. There were significant limits imposed upon them.

IV. These Servants Must Be Commissioned And Sent.

A. John the Baptist was sent: He did not appropriate responsibility.

1. John 1:8—"He [John] . . . was SENT to bear witness of that light."
2. John 1:33—"He [God] that sent me [John] to baptize with water . . ."

Note: Please note the specifics and limits of the commission given to John.

B. Jesus Christ, our Example, was commissioned and sent.

1. John 3:17—"God SENT not his son into the world to condemn . . ."
2. John 3:34—"For he [Christ] whom God hath SENT speaketh . . ."
3. Luke 4:18—"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath ANOINTED me to preach . . ."

Note: The specifics of Christ's commission are given in the text above (v. 18). The limits of that commission are given in Matthew 15:24.

4. John 4:34—"My [Christ's] meat is to do the will of him [God] that SENT me . . ."
5. John 5:36–37—" . . . the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath SENT me . . . the Father himself, which hath SENT me . . ."
6. John 7:16—" . . . My doctrine is not mine, but his that SENT me."
7. John 7:28–29—" . . . I [Christ] am NOT COME OF MYSELF, but he [the Father] that SENT me is true . . . I am from him [the Father] and he hath SENT me."

8. John 8:16—" . . . my judgement is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that SENT me."
9. John 8:18—" . . . the Father that SENT me beareth witness of me."
10. John 8:26—" . . . he [the Father] that SENT me [Christ] is true . . ."
11. John 8:42—" . . . I proceeded forth and came from God; NEITHER CAME I OF MYSELF, but he SENT me."
12. John 12:49—" . . . the Father which SENT me . . ."
13. John 16:5—" . . . I go my way to him that SENT me . . ."
14. John 17:18—"As thou hast SENT me into the world . . ."
15. John 20:21—" . . . as my Father hath SENT me . . ."
16. John 17:3—" . . . they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast SENT."
17. John 6:38—" . . . the will of him [the Father] that SENT me."
18. John 9:4—"I must work the works of him [the Father] that SENT me."

C. Ministers of Christ must be SENT.

1. Matthew 28:19—"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . ."

Note: How long? Verse 20, ". . . unto the end [consummation] of the world [age]." The commission was from the time of Christ until His Second Coming. See the determination of time as indicated by Jesus Christ in Matthew 24:1–3.

2. Romans 10:15—"And how shall they preach, except they be sent?"

Note: By the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul was inspired to elaborate upon Isaiah 52:7. Because of circumstances of his day, Paul had to explain a cardinal fact: Only those so called should preach, and then only within the limits imposed by God. As we proceed these points will become more clear.

The above two texts are general in nature. Regardless of time, conditions, and circumstances, the servants of God are first called, then SENT, or commissioned. Their commission always carries limits—geography, message, or time. A few examples (below) will give depth of meaning to this concept.

D. The twelve disciples selected, trained, and commissioned by Christ.

1. Matthew 10:1, 5–6. The twelve disciples were *called*, *given* specific powers, *sent*, and commanded. Specific limits were imposed.

2. John 4:38. Christ SENT the twelve disciples out to reap a harvest for which they had not labored.

3. John 15:16. Christ makes the relationship clear. "Ye have not chosen me, but *I have chosen* you, and *ordained* you . . . should go and bring forth fruit. . ."

4. John 15:19. The twelve were chosen by Christ. ". . . I have chosen you out of the world . . ."

5. John 17:18—"As thou [God] hast SENT me into the world, even so have I also SENT them into the world."

6. John 20:21—" . . . as my Father hath SENT me, even so SEND I you."

E. Servants following Christ (including the Twelve Apostles) were chosen and sent.

1. John 13:18–20. As was the case in the days of Christ and the Twelve Apostles, Christ KNOWS whom He has chosen and SENT. Those who hear and respond to (receive) the message AND the servant SENT, receive Christ.

The Twelve Apostles were the initial ones called and SENT by Christ. This responsibility did not begin and end with the apostles. The operation of God continues until the Second Coming of Christ (Matt. 28:19; Eph. 4:11–13).

F. What about the Apostle Paul and his fellow Laborers?

1. Col. 1:25—"Whereof I am MADE a minister, according to the DISPENSATION of God which is GIVEN to me for you . . ."
2. Gal. 1:15–16—" . . . when it pleased God . . . called me . . . To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen . . ."
3. Eph. 3:7–8—"Whereof I was MADE a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me . . . that I SHOULD PREACH among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ . . ."
4. Titus 1:3—" . . . manifested his [God's] word through preaching, which IS COMMITTED unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour . . ."
5. 2 Cor. 6:4–7—" . . . in all things APPROVING ourselves as the ministers of God . . . BY THE WORD OF TRUTH . . ."
6. Eph. 6:19—Praying " . . . that utterance may be given unto me . . . to make known the mystery of the gospel . . ."

Note: Why would the Apostle Paul request such prayers from the saints? He knew that God had given him knowledge of the gospel of mystery and for which he was responsible to preach it to whomever and wherever God SENT him.

In every era of time historically covered in the Bible—time of Patriarchs, Church in the Wilderness, Judges, Levites, Prophets, Christ, and the apostles—God CALLED, gave the required message, and commissioned (SENT) these servants. It is an irrefutable fact. Why, once again, do we allow ourselves (humanity) to assume that an unchanging, immutable God has a different style of operation today? Is not any such presumption a denial of both God and Christ? How can the Bible be of any practical value if we pursue such a concept or belief? Is not the Bible relevant for all time?

G. Someone presumed to speak for God in the last days.

1. Jer. 23:20–21. God emphatically states: "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied."

H. Presumption is a historical fact.

1. Jer. 14:14. Concerning the captivity of Judah, God said: "The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I SENT them NOT, neither have I COMMANDED them, neither spoke unto them . . ."

Note: What happened historically and Biblically is recorded and written for the admonition and learning of this final generation (See 1 Cor. 10:6, 11 and Rom. 15:4).

I. A time coming when presumption will be dealt with for what it really is.

1. Zech. 13:2–6. No ministerial presumption will be allowed to continue.

Note: Up to this point we have clearly seen: 1. Truth (The spiritual knowledge about which we are principally concerned) was hidden from the beginning of time. 2. As a hidden commodity, it must be revealed—revealed by the only One who knows and understands. 3. Historically, it is demonstrable that that truth was revealed, initially, to the Patriarchs, Prophets, Levites—through Moses, Christ, the apostles, last-day servants and will be given to those chosen to lead in the Millennial Kingdom. 4. That no called and chosen servant could presume. He could speak for God only when the message was given and he was commissioned to go forth and proclaim the message.

Now, we must understand what message God's chosen servants could proclaim.

V. What God's Chosen Servants Were (and Are) to Teach—Deliver.

A. Moses, Levites, and the Prophets.

1. Ex. 25:22—" . . . I [God] will meet with thee [Moses] and commune . . . all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."

2. Ex. 29:42–44 —" . . . I will meet you [Moses], to speak there unto thee . . . I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office."

Note: Need anything be said about the examples of those who presumed to arrogate that office to themselves?

3. Num. 11:24–30. People sometimes contend about the purpose of God.
4. Num. 12:1–8. God's purpose stands regardless of whether people agree or not.
5. Jer. 1:9–10. God gives the words which are to be proclaimed.
6. Jer. 7:21–28. God called, commissioned, and gave His word to all whom He sent.
7. Jer. 26:2–5. Words of servants, the prophets, to be obeyed.
8. Jer. 27:14. Sometimes the words may not be those authorized by God.
9. Ezek. 3:4. God spoke through Ezekiel.

B. What Christ taught.

1. The truth which He heard from God, the Father.
 - a. John 8:40.
 - b. John 8:26, 28, 38.
2. The words of God, words of Eternal Life.
 - a. John 3:34.
 - b. John 6:63.
 - c. John 6:68.
3. The doctrine of God, the Father.
 - a. John 7:16.

4. The will of His Father.
 - a. John 5:30.
5. The works of the Father.
 - a. John 5:36.
6. Only what the Father authorized Him to say and do.
 - a. John 10:18.
 - b. John 12:48–50
 - c. John 14:10
 - d. John 14:24.
 - e. John 17:4.
 - f. John 17:8.
 - g. John 17:14.
7. That message was the same as the one delivered to Moses.
 - a. John 5:46–47.

C. What message did the apostles teach?

1. The mystery of the Kingdom of God.
 - a. Matt. 13:11.
2. The message they heard from Christ.
 - a. 1 John 1:1–3, 5.

3. What Christ commanded them.
 - a. Matt. 18:19–20.
4. The doctrine Christ had taught them.
 - a. Acts 2:41–42.
5. The faith (doctrine/works) which Christ had delivered.
 - a. Jude 3–4.

Compare: James 2:14–24

D. What message did the Apostle Paul teach?

1. The mystery of God—mystery of the Kingdom.
 - a. 1 Cor. 4:1.
2. That which Christ had revealed to him.
 - a. Gal. 1:10–12.
3. The Gospel.
 - a. 1 Thess. 1:5.
4. The very word of God.
 - a. Col. 1:25–27.
 - b. 1 Thess. 2:13.
5. The message which was committed to him.
 - a. Titus 1:3.

6. The same message Christ had given to the Twelve Apostles.

a. Matt. 28:19–20.

b. Gal. 2:2, 5–10.

c. Gal. 1:23.

Note: The Gospel (the Faith) which Paul taught was the same one which he earlier persecuted and attempted to destroy.

7. The same message heard, believed, and practiced by the Jewish churches in Judea.

a. 1 Thess. 2:14.

E. What about the true ministry today?

1. The same message Christ taught to the twelve disciples.

a. Matt. 28:19–20.

b. Heb. 13:8.

c. 2 Cor. 4:18

Note: What things are not seen? 2 Corinthians 4:18. The things of faith (Heb. 11:1), which are of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22–23). The words of life (John 6:63, 68), which are the truth (John 17:17). And truth is absolute, it cannot change. The author of change is Satan, the Devil.

VI. Faithfulness Is Required Of Stewards.

A. Moses was Faithful.

1. Heb. 3:2.

2. Heb. 3:5.

B. Jesus Was Faithful.

1. John 14:31—" . . . as the Father gave me commandment, EVEN SO I DO. . ."
2. John 8:28—" . . . as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."
3. Heb. 3:2.

C. The Apostle Paul.

1. 1 Tim. 1:12.

D. Those chosen to follow Paul.

1. 2 Tim. 2:2 —". . . the same commit thou to FAITHFUL men . . ."
2. Eph. 6:21.

E. Prophets today (perhaps, refers to all ministers today).

1. Jer. 23:28.

F. The great example—God, the Father.

1. 1 Cor. 1:9.

G. Those called to be leaders tomorrow—in Millennium.

1. Heb. 3:6.

Note: If we cannot learn to be faithful today, as God is faithful, how can we be given awesome responsibility of leadership in the Kingdom?

H. A general principle.

1. 1 Cor. 4:2

VII. How Do The People Come To Know The Truth?

Note: From Genesis to Revelation, only one event is recorded where God spoke directly to the people, as a whole. This was a very limited meeting. How, then, does God reveal His way of life to the people in general—the elect which He purposed to call in their respective times? The Bible is clear. Let us understand.

A. God spoke to the people in general only once.

1. Ex. 19:9.

2. Deut. 4:33.

B. As a result of this encounter with God, what was the request of the people?

1. Ex. 20:19–20.

C. Did God accept this proposal?

1. Deut. 5:22–29.

D. As a result, what arrangement did God make?

1. Deut. 18:15–19.

F. A safeguard was necessary.

1. Deut. 18:20–22.

F. God address His people THROUGH the prophets.

1. Ezek. 3:11.

2. Ezek. 3:17.

3. Ezek. 3:27.

4. Jer. 25:2–7.

G. God speaks to His people THROUGH Christ.

1. Deut. 18:15–19.
2. Matt. 17:5.
3. Acts 3:21–23.

H. God and Christ address the people THROUGH the apostles.

1. Matt. 10:6–8, 14, 27.
2. Acts 13:7.
3. Acts 13:46.
4. Acts 15:7.
5. 1 John 1:1–5.

I. God and Christ speak to the Gentiles and Jews THROUGH the Apostle Paul and his fellow-laborers.

1. Acts 13:47.
2. Eph. 1:13.
3. Col. 1:23–26.
4. 1 Thess. 2:13

J. Even presumption could be respected—IF!!!

1. Jer. 23:21–22.

K. The problem does not lie totally at the feet of the ministry.

1. Deut. 29:4.

Note: The natural, carnal man cannot hear and/or understand. A call and conversion are imperative.

L. Who, then, are blessed to hear the Truth?

1. Luke 11:28.
2. John 10:3, 16, 27.

M. Availability and a call are not sufficient!

1. 2 Kings 17:13–19.

Note: Why? See Hebrews 4:1–2. Faith can come only as a gift of the Holy Spirit. That Spirit is promised to those only who will to obey God (Acts 5:32).

N. The whole process of "calling," "hearing," and "conversion" is explained by the Apostle Paul.

1. Rom. 10:13–15.
2. Ph'p. 4:8–9
3. Therefore: Heb. 3:7, 15. When God calls, we must hear and respond: Rom. 11:29.

O. Once having heard, what serious obligation is shouldered by the called?

1. Heb. 2:1–3.
2. 1 John 2:24.
3. 2 John 6–10.

P. Finally: regarding the called, a warning to unfaithful shepherds.

1. Ezek. 34:7–10.
2. Jer. 29:24–32.

VIII. There Are Faithful Servants Until the Second Coming of Christ.

A. Christ said there would be some faithful servants.

1. Luke 12:37–40.

a. Note whom. Luke 12:41–48.

B. If a true ministry failed, then Christ failed!

1. Matt. 28:19–20.

2. Eph. 4:7–13.

3. 1 Cor. 12:27–28.

C. Peter wrote of a true ministry—until the day of Christ's return—Matthew 4:4.

1. 1 Pet. 5:1–4.

D. How one can tell who the true servants of Christ are in the last days.

1. Matt. 24:45–51.

E. In this connection, a text greatly perverted today.

1. 1 John 2:27 (read verses 1–29).

Note: Why was it unnecessary to have a man teach them? John makes the meaning crystal clear in the first part of the verse. He said, ". . . the anointing which ye have received [the Truth] of him abideth in you. . ."

Obviously there was pressure on the brethren to change (2 John 10)—to change the originally revealed truth. John, therefore, was telling the people that there existed no need for NEW teachers. Because the truth had already been received—that which they had received from Christ and which all had practiced for a considerable period of time.

IX. A Last Day Test—What Can We Trust?

A. In the last days, why must the ministry be subjected to a test?

1. 1 John 4:1–3.

Note: The laity must not confuse the AREA of their test responsibility. What is the basis of that required test?

B. A historical command tells us how to administer the test.

1. Deut. 13:1–5.

Note: God had given the truth to His called people. Under no circumstances are we allowed or commanded to decide the scope of truth and thereby accept or reject what God gives. On the contrary, the revealed (given) truth forms the basis by which all judgment is made. For truth from God is eternal, unchangeable. That immutable truth is one and the same from the beginning to the end. What Moses received is exactly what Christ received. And, what they both received is precisely the same we are required to receive and obey today.

C. A basis of evaluation and faith is imperative.

1. Matt. 24:23–24.
2. Matt. 24:11–13.
3. Matt. 24:4–5.

Note: By revelation only can we know (Matt. 11:25–27). If any change were necessary the body could not have been the true body of Christ.

D. The basis of judgment: for us today, too.

1. 2 John 6–11.

F. A mere appropriation of name—a claim—is not sufficient.

1. John 8:42–47.

Note: Fruits must be present. They are irrefutable evidence.

SUMMARY: The whole truth is given by Jesus Christ in the final command which He gave. That command, by the internal evidence, is applicable from the days of the apostles until the Second Coming of Christ. That truth (unalterable, immutable) is revealed to the called—one time only. It must be practiced and maintained by faith. It is the truth taught by God's chosen servants—the ministers. All others, whom God wills to call, will hear and respond to that message given by those servants. The whole process is by decree of the immutable God—our Father. See Matthew 28:19–20

May we commend this study in the hopes you derive much knowledge and inspiration from it. It has been our privilege and pleasure to prepare it for you. Again, a heartfelt thanks for allowing us to serve—for allowing God to continue His work in your lives. We again commend our love and respect to you all. Our prayers and thoughts are always with you.

In deep love and respect,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raymond C. Cole". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'R' and 'C'.

Raymond C. Cole