

Church of God, The Eternal

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How to Have a Joyous Feast of Tabernacles

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Dear Brethren:

From the Philippines, greetings to all who are called of God in these last days, and also those who happen to read this October letter.

I suppose that as you read this letter you are on your way to the Feast of Tabernacles; or, you are actually in those selected places where God promised to bless you. To be in those places for eight days is a tremendous blessing in itself. Why? It is a special opportunity to be with our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ in a very special way because God is present where He puts His name. "And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to place his name there" (Deuteronomy 16:11). In those chosen places in different parts of the world we rejoice and fellowship with one another while we enjoy the bounty of physical food and more so with the spiritual food—the Divine Truth carefully prepared and enthusiastically expounded to us, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4) and, "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world" (John 6:47–51). It is in this occasion that we experience the foretaste of the millennial rule of Christ, "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (Colossians 2:17). It is here that we can escape for a time from the drudgery of this problematic world, unload from the burdens of our daily existence, and be free from the various pollutants of our physical as well as spiritual environment. It is in these places where we are polished like molded vessels preparing to be useful in the soon-coming Kingdom of God.

Unfortunately, there are a few who do not see and feel these blessings while in the Feast. They fail to understand its significance and so fail to experience the impact and its influence in their spiritual well-being. And so they fail to internalize the powerful messages and consequently go back home empty and "hungry" in spirit and mind.

Still others who fail to attend for reasons of doubt are refusing to obey God's government and the Truth they once held. The Feast days become just traditions of the past, or, if ever observed, were just forms of religious seminars or reunions.

Brethren, rejecting some or much of the revealed Truth from God's Word is precarious, even fatal. It is like rejecting the food they had been eating; convinced in themselves that they are overweight while they are actually undernourished. He who rejects the Truth even in few instances is likened to an anorectic who perceives herself as being overweight even though she is painfully dying of starvation. It is a form of "spiritual anorexia" where one chronically rejects the Truth in order to uphold preconceived ideas or a favorite dogma.

It is alarming that in these last days so many of the former brethren worldwide have rejected much of the revealed Truth they once lived on. More so, they think that they are better off in their newfound "freedom" than they used to be, which is to be expected of them who lay aside the revealed Truth in order to accept bright human ideas. There is wisdom found in being alarmed and cautious regarding such negative examples and trends of the last days, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Timothy 4:1). "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (2 Timothy 3:1–5).

Let us keep the Feast with renewed fervor—a tenacity for the Truth once revealed; drawing our power from Christ. How?

1) Let us realize that the Feast of Tabernacles is not our Feast but God's, "And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are *my* feasts" (Leviticus 23:1–2) [Emphasis ours].

The truth that we are observing God's Feast is vital. With this truth in mind we seek to please God rather than man or ourselves. We realize that God is our host and it is His pleasure and will that we fulfill. Isaiah 1:13–14 states that God is not pleased with man's designated feasts. They are a burden to Him and He hates them.

2) Let us discern God's special presence in the Feast.

When we realize that the place where we are is where God placed His name, we discern the place is holy. God's presence makes it holy just as in the case when Moses talked with God in the burning bush. He said, "the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." God is present where He puts His name.

3) Trust in God's promise of blessing, "Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice" (Deuteronomy 16:15).

When we obey God He will surely bless us. He commands us to rejoice in the Feast. But how can you genuinely rejoice if you did not leave behind your worries and problems of this world. Joy is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, God will bless us in the Feast, and after the Feast, if we bear the fruits of His Spirit in us.

4) Practice and actualize God's rule in the millennium.

How do you imagine living and ruling with Christ a thousand years? It is a time for serving others. It is a time of being at peace with everyone. It is a time to be examples to all alive at that time. It is a time to share all that you have. It is a time to teach others all the Truth you know. Practice all these in the Feast and you are preparing to perform your role in the millennium that the Feast is intended to picture.

5) Act in all reverence and godly fear.

Learning to fear God in reverence to His name is one purpose of the Feast.

Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart (Deuteronomy 6:1–6).

Attending is an opportunity to obey His will. It is our privilege to give back to God our offering according to the blessings He has given us. This gesture demonstrates our love and fear of the Lord. It is the beginning of wisdom.

Brethren, the Feast of Tabernacles as well as other feasts of God are really channels by which to receive the blessings of God. They are part and parcel of the Truth we hold and cherish until the millennium comes when God's great salvation is upon us.

Your Brother In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Corsino C. Canta". The signature is written in a cursive style with some flourishes.

Corsino C. Canta