

The Goals of CBCG Outreach

Elders Conference 2012
Fred R. Coulter—May 19, 2012

Ordination of Elders

Being the greatest in the eyes of this world is not how the Bible wants us to behave. Jesus said to the disciples, ‘The one who is greatest among you let him be the servant of all.’ And He said, ‘Furthermore, you are not to lord it over the brethren. You are not to exercise authority of them for your own personal use. You are not to merchandise them. You are not to take advantage of them, but *you are to feed the flock; you are to serve the brethren.*’

Let’s read the qualifications before we have an ordination of an elder. 1-Timothy 3:1: “Faithful is the saying, ‘If any man aspires to *be* an overseer, he desires a good work.’ Now then, it is obligatory... [it’s mandatory, it’s necessary] *...that* the overseer be blameless, *the* husband of one wife, vigilant, serious-minded, respectable, hospitable, skilled in teaching” (vs 1-2). I’m happy to say that our elders are skilled in teaching and growing in that ability.

Verse 3: “Not given to much wine, not a bully, not greedy for selfish gain; but kind, not a quarreler, not a lover of money; One who rules his own house well, having his children in subjection with all respect” (vs 3-4). That is unless they’re all grown up and on their own.

We’ve been coming here about 14 years now and I’ve seen the families grow. Marlin Fannin has done a great job with his family and been an exemplary elder in serving the brethren as well as has Roger Kendall and all of the other elders. But I saw Tom this morning, and his son’s daughters are about full grown. I looked at him and he’s got his hair cut real short, and I said, ‘I wonder if there’s any gray hair up there.’ He said, ‘Yeah, it’s coming.’

So you see, over time we grow, we change, we overcome, we serve, we help. That’s why it says, v 5: “(For if a man does not know *how* to rule his own household, how will he take care of *the* Church of God?) Not a novice, lest he become conceited *and* fall into *the same* condemnation as the devil. It is mandatory that he also have a good report from those *who are* outside *the Church*... [In other words, he’s also respected by the community. He’s respected by those that he works with, etc.] *...lest* he fall into reproach and *the* snare of the devil” (vs 5-7).

Marlin recommended that you need an elder here in this area. I appreciate his recommendation and we also verify with the brethren, because the brethren know the men much better than someone at

a far distance. So, first of all we are going to have Marlin and Roger come forward and we’re going to lay hands on Roy Mack and ordain him as an elder.

(prayer and ordination ceremony)

Also we have another situation that arises. This situation that comes about is this: from time to time there are elders who have served in other Churches of God. Of course, someone sends them something from Christian Biblical Church of God or gives them a message or gives them a book or a Bible and they become convicted of the Truth and they leave the organization that they have been associated with before.

In that case we give a space of time to understand whether the man is an elder indeed. As you know, many have been ordained elders who were never really, really elders because they didn’t do it the way that the Bible said. Too many were political appointments.

So what we do in cases like this, when a man has proved himself, proved by the qualifications, proved by his ability to teach, proved by the conduct of his life that he is truly an elder, then we re-affirm his eldership. We do that with the laying on of hands. So if Marlin and Roger could come forward again we will re-confirm Wendell Yeary’s eldership.

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We’re living in very unusual times. I remember back 52 years and we were all excited because we had anticipated the return of Christ in a very few years. So, you old-timers there with gray hairs like I have, I can see you shaking your head, ‘Yes, yes, yes.’ We even had the spot picked out where we would avoid the tribulation. We even had our escape boxes—first aid kit, Bible, medicines, even your vitamins. But if you get into the wilderness there’s no place you can buy them.

I don’t know if we’re going to eat manna if we get there, but I think for the majority of us, as we look at the world around us, there’s a whole lot more time than we have ever anticipated. Most of us will be in the place of safety—*in the grave*. I mentioned to someone yesterday we’ll be pushing up cardboard. Said, ‘What do you mean by that?’ I said because my wife Dolores said when she dies she doesn’t want an expensive casket, just go to the appliance store and get a carton from a refrigerator.

But nevertheless, the end of the age is going to come and it’s going to be far different than we have anticipated. Not that we have been wrong, but

we have not understood the magnitude of how these events are going to be or the magnitude of how men are going to grow and develop.

Who would have ever thought when we first heard the World Tomorrow Program on a radio station—and almost everyone here listened to WWVA. Then after awhile there were radio stations everywhere and you could hear it 3-4-5 times a day. But who would have ever thought that now you can have everything in the palm of your hand wherever you are in the whole world—24/7? Could never have guessed.

Now we're confronted with some things. Someone asked me: What is the mandate for the end-time Church of God? We have a mandate right from the Scriptures. In Rev. 2 and 3 we have a unique prophecy. We have direct letters. I want you to all study Rev. 2 and 3 of the seven churches. Because we have something very, very unique, which is this: ***These are direct letters from Christ to the Church, meaning the brethren and all those who serve!***

In there are many warnings about what happens:

- if you lose your first love
- if you follow the ways of trying to organize the Church the way that Satan organizes his religious system
- if you start bringing in false doctrines or allowing people to teach within the congregation those things that are not right.

Even in the Church of Thyatira He said 'as many as not known the depths of Satan I will put upon you no other burden.' Satan's objective is to come after and destroy those who have the Holy Spirit of God. So then, He shows in those churches that we are not to have incomplete works, that we are not to be lukewarm, but rather we are to patiently keep the Word of God.

This shows us something else. This shows us that because the churches have made mistakes and have not repented, that's the whole key. Every one of the churches He says *repent* and *to the one who overcomes*. When the churches have not made the corrections they need to or they fight among themselves, then we end up with the first need in serving the brethren. ***That is to help them be spiritually healed!***

And here's why. Because most of the churches make the mistake of not teaching the brethren to have a direct relationship between them and God the Father and Jesus Christ, but it is through the ministry. That ends up in a problem that the brethren look to the ministers in place of God.

They may not think that they're doing that, but I'll tell you how that is manifested and made known.

Remember, God told Pergamos, 'Unless you repent I will fight against you with the sword of My mouth.' Which means God would bring the correction. Christ would administer it, because He's the Head of the Church—no man, no group of men.

We've all experienced what is happened when that correction comes—haven't we? What is the first thing that happens because you have not put your trust in God the way that you should of? *You become disillusioned!* Many people have just given up on God, walked away, forgot everything. Others have been hurt. Others have said, 'I'll never trust a minister again.' Others have said, 'I never want to join another church.' Those are the wounded.

The wounded in the Churches of God need to be healed. That's one thing that we need to do. I know in the series that we have on the *Love of God*, it was directed to those people. The title of one of the sermons is, *When All Else Fails, Remember God Loves You*, because they've had all hope squished out of their lives because of the practices and teachings of ministers who are more concerned with rank and corporation and hierarchy than they were in serving the brethren. More concerned with their salaries than being concerned to stand for the Truth in spite of their economic circumstances. A lot of you know those brethren.

I know that some of you have done an awful lot to help them, to help them heal. We have that aspect of what we need to do helping the Church heal. We're going to begin seeing the same thing happening in the Protestant and Catholic churches of this world, especially the Protestants. Every survey that is done indicates that it is declining at a very precipitous rate. People are leaving in droves. Mega churches are being repossessed and foreclosed upon by the banks.

Many of those people have not been hurt as badly as those in the Church of God. But nevertheless, give you an example:. When Dolores came home from visiting our daughter and son-in-law in Temple, Texas, she was sitting on the plane, reading the book, *The Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah*. The man sitting next to her saw that she was reading something about the Bible, so he struck up a conversation with her. He said, 'I'm a Baptist and I'm tired of hearing lies when I go to church, so I quit.' Dolores-on-the-spot said, 'Here, I'll give you this book.' He was grateful for it. Then she said, 'Just a minute.' So she got in her purse and pulled out a Church at Home card and said, 'Go online, this will help you.'

So, there are a lot of people out there in that condition. But I'll tell you one thing that it has done,

which is very good and we hear this constantly. Jay and Maryanne told me the same thing last night. They checked us out for a year and a half. They have checked out other Churches of God. They have given up on all of the Protestants.

Today with the websites, with everything that we have—with ChurchatHome.org and CBCG.org we have so many tools available. This helps everyone to check their Bibles, check the Word of God, compare it with what is true, look at what is not right, and God is using that to help call a lot of people.

We have a man in Arcadia, actually he lives in Altadena, Southern California. He used to work in the computer department of WCG (Worldwide Church of God). They would run all kinds of computer tests and things like this concerning brethren. One of the tests was this: from the time that they ordered their very first piece of literature until they started attending church, what was that length of time? *Average: 2 to 3 years!*

We've had ChurchatHome.org there for a little over 2 years now and we have had here in the last couple of months 15 baptisms because of that. It's not what we do, but as I pointed out yesterday—here let's go to Acts 18; let's look at what God told Paul.

In Acts 18:3 Paul came to Corinth and he went with Pricilla and Aquila because they were of the same trade. Verse 4: "And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath... [to the Jew first and then to the Gentiles] ...and persuaded *both* Jews and Greeks. Now when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was stirred in his spirit *and* was earnestly testifying to the Jews *that* Jesus was the Christ. But when they set themselves in opposition and were blaspheming..." (vs 4-6). Just picture this in the Church, because a synagogue is much like a church.

"...Paul shook his garments *and* said to them, 'Your blood *be* upon your own heads. I am pure *of it*. From this time forward I will go to the Gentiles.'.... [How far did he leave?] ...And after departing from there, he went into *the* house of a certain one named Justus, who worshiped God, whose house adjoined the synagogue.... [*Right next door!*] (Not only that, the unthinkable happened): ...But Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with his whole house; and many of the Corinthians who heard believed and were baptized. And the Lord said to Paul in a vision in *the* night, **'Do not be afraid; but speak, and do not be silent, For I am with you; and no one shall set upon you to mistreat you because I have many people in this city'**" (vs 6-10).

What we do, even though it looks like we are initiating something, whatever we initiate God has already prepared a way ahead. Every one of us experienced—didn't we? There was a time, and you can look back, BING!, when God first began dealing in your life—correct? *Yes!* Now of all that's going on out in the world there are a lot of people that God is dealing with that we don't know anything about.

Remember what God told Elijah. He said, 'Look, don't come and moan and groan and cry in My ear here in this cave, because I've reserved to Myself 7,000 that have not bowed the knee to Baal.' How many people are out there in the world? And God has given the perfect vehicle.

I know you know Satan takes advantage of it, but that perfect vehicle is the Internet. Everything we put on the Internet is up there up 24/7 in every time zone of the world. So, we need to realize as Jesus told the disciples, 'Don't say there are yet four months to the harvest, lift up your eyes, look at the fields they are white ready to the harvest now.' Then He said, 'The laborers are few but the harvest is plenteous.' *Pray the Lord of the harvest for workers to go into His field.*

So, brethren, I think we're right at that crossroad. Who knows how many people God has prepared. I also say this. I'm not saying we're the only one. My prayer for every single Church of God and ministry is that we altogether repent and yield to God and preach the Gospel and feed the flock and give a witness to the world. Just think how that would be powerful.

If you go to Bible Sabbath Association you are going to find that there are 500 denominations of the Church of God.

- Pray for them
- Christ is the Head of them
- Pray that they'll repent
- Pray that the ministers will see the Truth
- Pray that the brethren will be taught to love God

We don't want to get into church wars. We don't want to get into fight over brethren because God has called every one of you to a great and fantastic purpose. As Norbert brought out in his sermon (*Cutting the Coal*), fantastic indeed.

We also have the Gospel to preach as a witness. Actually this gives us two tracks that we must fulfill:

1. To serve the brethren, to serve those who are long-time members so they can grow in grace and knowledge; to serve those who are wounded in the Churches of God.
2. To help fulfill as God leads us because He has paved the way and has many people in

many places. We fulfill that through ChurchatHome.org

This is going to be much more important as we go down the road because as time gets dangerous and money disappears and the cost of things skyrocket, Church at Home is where it is going to be. And that God will bless the efforts of Church at Home; use that to call people. But for those who don't, it is a witness.

- We witness concerning the coming one-world government.
- We witness concerning the coming one-world banking system.
- We witness concerning the coming beast.
- We witness concerning the coming false prophet

—*and we don't hold back the Truth!*

As God told Paul, 'I am with you. No one's going to set upon you.' As long as we're wise as serpents and harmless as doves, we have got to be a witness to the world as well. We cannot play politics. We cannot pull the punches, but we have to wise as to how we present it.

That answers the mandate as to what is the mandate for the Christian Biblical Church of God. The two messages this morning support that and show what we need to be doing to love and serve God.

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Timothy 3:1-7
- 2) Acts 18:3-10

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 2; 3
- Acts 18:3

Also referenced:

Sermonettes:

- *Cutting the Coal* by Norbert Bohnert
- *Sign of True Brethren* by Wendell Yeary

Sermon Series: *The Love of God*

Book: *The Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah*
by Fred R. Coulter

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