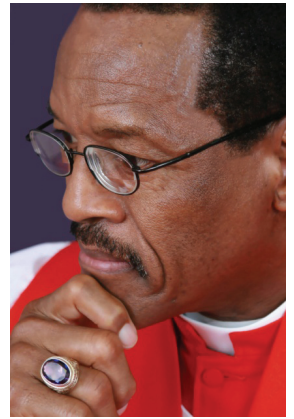




THE CENTENNIAL PROCLAMATION AN APOSTOLIC MISSIVE YOUR SERVANT IN CHRIST

I am confident He will finish what He starts in You! (Phil 1:6)

September 2007



To all the Saints throughout the Church and around the world!

I greet you in the name of Christ our Lord. My prayers are that God will do a wonderful work in your ministry, your family, and the local communities you serve. Grace and Peace from our Lord, Jesus Christ!

To my fellow workers: What a joyous time for us who celebrate this 100th year since the establishment of Pentecostalism as we know it now. God has given to the Church of God in Christ such a wonderful heritage and even a brighter promise for the future!

The seventh in apostolic succession, I am humbled by the providence of God and the blessings He has secured for the Church of God in Christ. In retrospect, each experience of my life has been a stepping stone toward this moment in human and religious history. There have been many citations that warm my heart and sober my focus for the years ahead of us. Not by coincidence, nor mere accident, do I assume this role in the year of our centennial.

We are workers together with Him. As the matters of life become increasingly more complex and as we move into a new millennium of opportunity, it is imperative that we prepare ourselves for the Will of God concerning the Church of God in Christ. Because of the ancient landmarks our fore-parents erected for us, let us recommit to the dimensions of Holiness that brought us so much success, prosperity, and integrity throughout the world. We are the largest Pentecostal-Holiness Movement in the world because of the foundations of Holiness that consisted of fasting and prayer; anointing of the Holy Ghost; reaching out to the world beyond the mainland of the United States; sanctifying or setting ourselves apart; fellowshiping with one another; and glorious praise and worship. The advent of the holy convocation must be preceded with a clarion call to global accord that includes renewing our commitment to these things.

Each of you who make up this great constituency of the Church of God in Christ is essential to the work God has called us to do. No matter where you begin in life, there is no limit to what God can and will do in your life. I was named after the founder, Bishop Charles Harrison Mason. I was born a few miles from the road in Little Rock, Arkansas where the Lord revealed to Bishop Mason the name "Church of God in Christ." I serve as the Episcopal leader of Southern California where Bishop Mason received the baptism of the Holy Ghost during the Azusa Revival. And, I have served as a minister of the Church for 50—or half the years of the Church's origin. These are humbling reasons to sincerely prostrate myself before God in submission to His Will for my life and the life of the Church of God in Christ. As an instrument of God's grace, I know all too well that "whatever He has begun in you, He can also finish it before He returns" (Phil 1:6).

Let me add that while we have such a rich heritage, the global challenges of the future must be embraced as our “call” to train, develop, and commission a new generation of leaders. A band of leaders who are equally committed to reversing the ill-conceived trends of urban centers, family disintegration, violence in our communities, global famine and disease, environmental threats, political upheaval, moral leadership deficiency, poverty, and the loss of our youth to subcultures that rob our precious human commodity of their Divinely-inspired destiny. Our future, if we are to remain a constructive influence in society, must be guided by godly principles that penetrate the culture and bring glory to our God. We must take the high road of integrity and authentic leadership around the world. Church of God in Christ, we must lead! And lead, we will!

But, there can be no substantial impact from the Church, that God will honor and favor in the world, without sanctifying a period of solitude, sacrifice, consecration and tarrying in His presence for the joy and splendor of the latter rain.

Therefore, in advance of the Holy Convocation in November, 2007, I want to invite you into a season of spiritual preparation. As in the days of old when the saints declared a season of prayer and fasting to seek the face of God and a great outpouring of His Spirit, we will extend the period of sackcloth and ashes. Let it be known throughout the Church that beginning October 15, 2007, the Church of God in Christ, everywhere, will set aside daily prayer and fasting from Midnight to 3 p.m. to petition the Lord for a mighty returning of an Azusa Street experience of 100 years ago. Our prayer is that God will make us One, again! One in the Spirit! One in Purpose! One in Fellowship!

The twenty-one days we spend in prayer is ample preparation for what can be and will be “Christianity’s Finest Hour,” in this new millennium to commission ministries with cutting edge approach. Also, you may expect that in our convocation great emphasis will be placed on global missions, relief, and education. To this end, prepare your congregations to support the efforts of relieving human life from great suffering, and preparing our youth for leadership and service through education. Let’s determine that each of us will commit to financial giving by sanctifying special offerings to bring to the convocation you can be assured will be used exclusively and entirely for education and missions.

As I close, let me commend to you the words of Apostle Paul when he wrote to the church at Ephesus: “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.” (Ephesians 3:20).

I see the Church of God in Christ, Inc. in the future, and we look much better than we do right now!

In His Service,
The Most Reverend Charles E. Blake
Presiding Bishop
CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST, INC.