

Prepare to Take the Passover with Self-Examination (Go To Meeting)

Roger Kendall—February 11, 2022

We're all looking forward to the spring Holy Days, which are only about eight weeks away. I know it's a long time, but it's something we need to be thinking about, particularly now. When we take the Passover, we will be renewing our baptismal covenant with our God.

As we know the Passover commemorates the crucifixion and death of our Savior Jesus Christ Who laid down His life and shed His blood for the sins of the whole world can be covered.

Preparation to take the Passover should include extra prayer and study, but it also should include self-examination. This should be done throughout the year, but it's especially important at Passover time, because we want to approach God in a way and a manner that's pleasing to Him and one that is in a worthy manner.

It is time that we need to focus on the importance and meaning of Christ's sacrifice for us personally, individually, as well as to examine our own spiritual condition before God.

I hope to touch on a few elements that will help us all to have a more meaningful and heartfelt experience in keeping this memorial service to our Savior.

The Passover service is a solemn occasion where we are to remember the suffering, pain, agony and the death of Jesus Christ. All that He went through to pay the full price of sin so that we could be reconciled to God our Father in heaven. It was truly the greatest act of love that the world will ever see.

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son, so that **everyone who believes in Him** may not perish, but may have everlasting life."

To believe in Jesus Christ is more than just to accept Him as Savior. The Greek implies *a deep ongoing conviction of faith with loving obedience to God the Father and Jesus Christ!*

It's more than just knowing Him and knowing Him as Savior. It requires action! It requires something we must do. God loved us and we are to love Him in return in a meaningful way.

In His love for mankind, Jesus Christ gave up everything so that we might have opportunity to be in the Family of God. He emptied Himself of His power and glory, His immortality, to become human flesh.

2-Corinthians 8:9: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: that although He was rich, He became poor for your sakes, so that by His poverty you might become rich."

Christ came from the Divine to become flesh, and died for us, so that we can have the opportunity to come from the flesh to the Divine; to live with Christ and the Father for eternity! ***What an incredible act of love!***

Hebrews 2:14: "Therefore, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, in like manner He also took part in the same, in order that through death He might annul him who has the power of death—that is, the devil; and *that* He might deliver those who were subject to bondage all through their lives by *their* fear of death. For surely, He is not taking upon Himself to help *the* angels; but He is taking upon Himself to help *the* seed of Abraham. For this reason, it was obligatory for *Him* to be made like *His* brethren in everything that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest *in* things pertaining to God, in order to make propitiation for the sins of the people" (vs 14-17).

We can look back and consider the very purpose for the creation of mankind was that God desires a family, of sons and daughters who will dwell with Him, having the same spiritual body and character as Himself. God created Adam and Eve in His own image and likeness.

1 Cor. 15—the physical comes first and then is followed by the spiritual. In a sense, God is making a prototype of Himself; not yet spirit, but in the flesh.

He gave them His laws and commandments. He taught them about His plans to be changed into spirit to be part of His Family later on, in the future. We don't know if this happened or not, but it probably might have.

We do know one thing, God instructed them not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil that was in the midst of the Garden. Well, there was another tree there—the Tree of Life, but He specifically told them not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

It's interesting to note that they were not barred from eating of the Tree of Life. Nowhere does it say that they could not eat of the Tree of Life. So, they had a choice! God had instructed them how to live and how to faithfully worship Him.

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But it appears that they used their own free volition and agency to choose of their own self whether or not they would fear God. They had a choice!

In a sense, that's exactly what we have today, we always have a choice. We know the story. Under the influence of Satan the devil, Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and they partook of the 'forbidden fruit' from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Through their disobedience, sin entered the world. As punishment, the law of sin and death was put upon Adam and Eve and all the generations of humans that would follow.

As a result of this, all human kind has sinned and earned the death penalty for 'the wages of sin is death.'

Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned..."

Romans 6:23: "For the wages... [penalty] ...of sin *is* death..." That's **eternal death**, not just the physical death.

God made preparation for this possible action by Adam and Eve, because it was foretold that Christ would be the Lamb of God (Rev. 13:8). That from the foundation of the world He was selected to be the perfect sacrifice for sin.

Since the founding of the Church in 30_{A.D.}, God has been calling a select few out of this world to be the firstfruits of salvation. We know that when a person accepts Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and they repent of their sins and are baptized by emersion. When they have hands laid on to receive God's Holy Spirit they now enter into covenant with God the Father and Jesus Christ, and they have their sins forgiven, and it's an ongoing process.

We are forgiven because we are justified before God, and we are in right standing before God as long as we continue to repent of those sins on a daily basis. We're not only justified, we are sanctified and made Holy through the very faith of Jesus Christ. It's a marvelous process.

1-Corinthians 6:11: "And such were some of you; **but you were washed**... [baptized] ...you were **sanctified**... [made Holy] ...you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

By its very process, we came into covenant with God and now we have committed ourselves to God and Jesus Christ to serve and love Them with all our heart and all our being.

How marvelous and wonderful it is to think about among the billions on the planet that we have been chosen and selected to come under God's grace, and to be part of His future Family.

It's now **our job to remain faithful** to our calling and to endure to the end! We all know that and are living that now in a world that is truly going more and more sinful every day.

Romans 5:8: "But God commends His own love to us because, when we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more, therefore, having been justified now by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For **if**, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His own Son, **much more then**, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (vs 8-10).

What a wonderful blessing to be called in this age! The Passover reminds us that since Christ died for us, we now must devote ourselves with total heartfelt commitment of faith to **let Christ live His life in us!**

Through covenant with God, we have committed our lives to overcome our sinful nature and to take on the very righteousness and character of our Savior.

Paul brings out a very interesting fact; Galatians 2:20: "I [Paul] have been crucified with Christ, yet, I live. *Indeed*, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me...."

That is exactly what God the Father and Jesus Christ are doing, living in each of us through the Holy Spirit.

"...For *the life* that I am now living in *the* flesh, I live by faith... [By Whose faith?] ...that **very faith of the Son of God**, Who loved me and gave Himself for me" (v 20).

We see here that we are to let Christ live in us. We must be committed to get sin out of our lives and to become like He is.

There's one thing that we can all do to prepare for the spring Holy Days. Study the message that Fred gave: *How to Overcome the Sin Within* {truthofGod.org}

Rom. 6 talks about overcoming sin and putting on righteousness, which is our duty and obligation to do so.

Romans 6:11: "In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves to be dead to sin..."—*in our attitude and living life we are not pre-disposed to walk in sin, but to walk in righteousness!*

"...but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof. Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of

unrighteousness to sin; **rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead**, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For **sin shall not rule over you because you are not under Law, but under grace**” (vs 11-14).

Verse 18: “And having been delivered from sin, you became *the* servants of righteousness. I speak from a human point of view because of the weakness of your flesh... [the spirit is strong, but the flesh is weak] ...for just as you *once* yielded your members in bondage to uncleanness, and to lawlessness unto lawlessness, **so now yield your members in bondage to righteousness unto sanctification**” (vs 18-19)—*unto Holiness!*

Through God’s grace we now have direct access to God the Father and Jesus Christ through prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit. Through the Word of God we have the means now to overcome sin. But that it takes effort and work. We need to strive and recognize that is what we need to do. By the fact that we have the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, we do know and understand that by faith that you and I are ***a Temple of the Living God!***

1-Corinthians 3:16: “Don’t you understand that you are God’s Temple, and *that* the Spirit of God is dwelling in you? **If anyone defiles the Temple of God, God shall destroy him because the Temple of God is Holy**, which Temple you are” (vs 16-17).

- How do we defile the Temple of God? *By sinning, living in sin and doing that which is not according to God’s will!*
- How do we defile the temple of the human body? *By abusing the human body!*

As we approach the Passover, it’s appropriate that we give extra time to prayer, Bible study and fasting so that we can take the Passover with deeper understanding, with greater humility and in a worthy manner. It’s time that we examine our lives using the Word of God as the Holy Spirit leads and guides us.

There are some questions that we can ask ourselves as we examine ourselves:

- Are we truly loving God with all of our heart, soul, mind, strength and being?
- Are we truly loving our neighbor as ourselves?

Mark 12:30—*Jesus says*: ““And you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This *is the* first commandment. And *the* second *is* like this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater

than these” (vs 30-31).

- Are we keeping God’s laws and commandments faithfully

or

- Are we trying to cut corners and putting it aside and saying that ‘the little things are not that important’?

No! All things in God’s Law are important!

- Are we continuing to overcome the works of the flesh?

We all have our own individual weaknesses. We even need to change the way we think, so we can act and conduct our lives more in harmony with the way that Christ is. We need to become like He is.

We need to go before God the Father and ask Him to take off our blinders; take off the blinders that we might have so that we can see the hidden sins that are within. That’s why I recommend that message—*How to Overcome the Sins Within*—so that we can know what those sins are and get rid of them and present ourselves as a Holy person before Him as we take the Passover.

- Are we truly loving and serving one another from the heart?

1-John 4:11: “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also are duty-bound to love one another.”

- Are we truly reaching out and loving one another as family, brothers and sisters and willing to go the extra mile to help and serve one another?
- Are we growing in the fruits of God’s Holy Spirit?

Galatians 5:22: “But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control**; against such things there is no law” (vs 22-23).

The one to truly look at is love. For God is love, and we’re to become like He is. That should be a key fruit that we need to be producing in abundance. The love of God is ‘agape’ love; a love that is wholehearted desire to serve, love God and our brethren with all of our being.

That’s the first commandment in the Law, to love God and our neighbors as our self. That’s a key part of love. But it also should be a discipline of our very mind, thoughts and actions that leads us to do good for others, without expecting anything in return. It’s a deep-hearted concern for the well-being of others. That even that all would come to repentance, to have entrance into the Kingdom of God.

Paul describes ‘agape’ love; 1-Corinthians

13:4: “Love is patient... [forbearing] ...and is kind... [gentle in spirit] ...love envies not... [not prideful; generous in giving] ...does not brag about itself, is not puffed up. Love does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in iniquity, but **rejoices in the Truth**.... [hates evil as God hates evil and sin] ...Love bears all things, **believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things**.... [knowing]: Love never fails...” (vs 4-8)—**bringing us through every trial and hardship that we face! That’s ‘agape’ love!**

Paul admonishes us to examine ourselves so that we can approach the Passover with a pure heart, proper understanding, and in a worthy manner.

1-Corinthians 11:23: “For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread.”

This shows that Christ observed the Passover with His disciples at the time commanded by God in Exo. 12, at the beginning of the 14th of Nisan between the two evenings. Not late on the 14th nor on the 15th. It’s on *the beginning* of the 14th. That’s when we keep the Passover, using Christ’s example and what was taught in Exo. 12.

Verse 24: “And after giving thanks, He broke *it*... [the bread] ...and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body, which *is* being broken for you. This do in the remembrance of Me.’”

In remembering Christ’s sacrifice, Christ took the total burden of sin and its consequences upon His own body so that we might be saved and redeemed—brought back—from our sins. What great suffering and anguish that Christ went through for us, so that we might achieve eternal glory in the Family of God, to be like God, to be a Spirit being.

Christ took the sins of the whole world upon Himself, and as a result He suffered betrayal, public humiliation, violent beatings, scourging, crucifixion, and finally, death on the cross. He suffered rejection by His own people and ‘injustice’ at the hands of the ‘religious’ leaders at that time and the Roman authorities of a common criminal. The mental, emotional and physical pain and suffering that Christ went through, and what He endured was total and beyond human description. **He went through a great deal for us!**

Isaiah 53:3: “*He*... [referring to Christ] ...*is* despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him, He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He has borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows; yet, we esteemed Him stricken,

smitten of God, and afflicted. But He *was* wounded for our transgressions; **He was crushed**... [smashed, beaten down] ...for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace *was* upon Him; and with His stripes we ourselves are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned each one to his own way; and the **LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all**. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet, He opened not His mouth... [**He did not sin at all; not once**] ...He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth” (vs 3-7).

When we read these sobering Scriptures on the Passover night, we need to keep these words clearly in mind as we partake of that small piece of broken unleavened bread.

1-Corinthians 11:25: “In like manner, *He* also *took* the cup after He had supped, saying, ‘This is *the* cup of the New Covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in the remembrance of Me.’”

We know that it is Christ’s shed blood that covers our sins—sanctifies and justifies—and reconciles us to God the Father.

Christ administered new symbols for the Christian Passover. He put in the unleavened bread and the wine to replace the sacrificial Passover lamb. But notice, He did not change the time or day that the Passover was to be observed. Indeed, this is the **Christian Passover Service!**

Verse 26: “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you *solemnly* proclaim the death of the Lord until He comes.”

We need to understand very clearly that Passover is a yearly and memorable memorial service of the death and suffering of our Savior. The wine represents His shed blood, and the broken unleavened bread representing His broken body.

As we partake of the wine and the bread on Passover night, we symbolically partake of the very death of Jesus Christ. At the same time we pledge our lives to continue to keep our covenant relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. That’s how important the Passover service is! To remember His sacrifice, yet, to commit our journey to the Kingdom of God fulfilling His will and purpose.

“...as often as you drink *it*...” (v 25) does not mean that you take the Passover many times throughout the year, as you would wish. The Greek is very clear that this is an annual service, that it is restricted to the one day of the years, Nisan 14, with the exception as explained in the book of Num. 9. It explains that if a person was, for some reason, not disposed to take the Passover, perhaps was on a

journey, sick or not otherwise not able to take the Passover, they could take the Passover that year one month later. But doing exactly the same instructions that was for the regular Passover service.

It may apply to some of us as we approach the Passover and for one reason or another may have to take the second Passover.

Verse 27: “For this reason, *if* anyone shall eat this bread or shall drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, he shall be guilty of the body and *the* blood of the Lord.”

Fred explains very clearly in *The Christian Passover* book what it means to take the Passover ***in an unworthy manner***. Conversely how to take it in a ***worthy*** manner.

Verse 28: “But let a man examine himself, and let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup accordingly, because **the one who eats and drinks unworthily is eating and drinking judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord**” (vs 28-29).

There are a couple of things here that we can think about: the body of the Lord that the unleavened bread represents His broken body, but it also represents the whole Body of Christ, represented by members, who are the saints. So we need to realize that the Body of Christ includes all of us, as well!

Verse 30: “For this *very* reason, many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many have fallen asleep.... [died] ...Now, if we would examine ourselves, we would not be judged” (vs 30-31).

The word *examine* comes from the Greek: ‘dokimazo’ meaning to *test, discern, prove*. So, as we approach the Passover, it’s important that we do that, test, prove and verify our faith. That we are truly:

- converted
- part of the Body of Christ
- seeking God Kingdom
- seeking His righteousness

Paul admonishes us to do this very thing:

2-Corinthians 13:5: “**Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith...**”

- Are you converted?
- Do you truly have the Holy Spirit?

“...prove your own selves. Don’t you *of* your own selves know that Jesus Christ is in you? Otherwise, you are reprobates. But I hope that you will recognize that we are not **reprobates**” (vs 5-6).

Meaning one who does not pass the test of

faith, as being a truly converted member of the Body of Christ! A reprobate is rejected by God because the Holy Spirit is not dwelling in that person, they’re not of the faith.

Paul emphasizes that we may confirm that Christ dwells in us through faith and that we are part of the Body of Christ.

Romans 8:9: “However, you are not in *the* flesh, but in *the* Spirit, if *the* Spirit of God is indeed dwelling within you. But if anyone does not have *the* Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. But if Christ *be* within you, the body *is* indeed dead because of sin; however, the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness” (vs 9-10).

It’s clear that only those who are truly baptized are to partake of the Passover service each year; those truly baptized in the faith.

As we examine ourselves as we approach the Passover, it’s also very important that we clearly understand what it means to take the Passover in a *worthy* manner, as well as to understand the spiritual meaning of this special ceremony.

To take the Passover in a ***worthy manner*** means:

1. taking it in the proper manner using the correct symbols and on the correct day and time
2. having a humble, loving and repentant attitude

Coming before God appreciative and being very thankful for the Passover service!

3. discerning the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sin
4. discerning the broken body of Christ for the healing of our sicknesses and infirmities

These are things we’ve covered here; the meaning of the symbols and why we’re taking the Passover, which is precluded by the foot-washing, which has a lot of deep meaning and symbolism itself.

By disregarding and not believing and taking these things in the proper manner, one could find themselves taking it in an unworthy manner, therefore coming under judgment.

These are things that we need to understand as we go forward. As we remember the purpose of Passover, as He took the bread and wine and said, Remember and do, and remember the death and suffering of our Savior as we renew our baptismal pledge, to walk in the way of Jesus Christ.

When we keep the Passover, it shows God that we are committed to loving and obeying Him.

To grow in His righteous character and to be led by the Holy Spirit. All of that is contained within taking the Passover in a worthy manner in a right attitude and understanding.

Are we being faithful to our baptismal covenant that we made with God? ***Our personal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ must be based on love!*** The love that comes from God down to us and our love, devotion and obedience back to Him. Love is the greatest thing because from that love comes:

- faith
- belief
- hope
- patience
- understanding
- endurance

Love and commandment-keeping go hand-in-hand; go together to show the true love of God!

John 14:15: “If you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.”

Verse 20: “In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father, and you are in Me, and I am in you”—***the unity of the Spirit!***

It’s very similar to what Christ told us in the Lord’s prayer that He gave in John 17: *You are in Me and I am in you!*

Verse 21: “The one who has My commandments and is keeping them, that is the one who loves Me, and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father...”

We read elsewhere that God the Father loves us in the very same way that He loves Jesus Christ.

“...and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him” (v 21).

Verse 22: “Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him’” (vs 22-23). *We are to love God in return:*

Mark 12:30: ““And you shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This *is the* first commandment. And *the* second is like this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (vs 30-31).

We must diligently pursue the Kingdom of God with all of our mind and being, and with a strong determination lest we fall or fail and come

short of our goal. That’s the journey that we’re on now. It’s a difficult journey because it’s uphill, we’re struggling through trials and difficulties.

We live in a world that’s totally anti-God and full of satanic evil. Probably many of our families do not believe what we believe, so it’s a struggle, a battle. Yet, with God’s love, mercy and grace, we can achieve and go forward to the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 6:33: “But *as for* you, seek first the **Kingdom of God and His righteousness...**”

This idea of searching and keeping is to do it, and keep on keeping on. It’s an ongoing effort. But notice that there’s two parts to this:

“...and all these things shall be added to you” (v 33).

That is the physical things. ***If*** we put things in the right priority:

- loving God
- keeping His commandments
- walk in His way

Then He will provide those other things that we have need of!

We need to make making it into the Kingdom of God a top priority in our lives. We must be zealous and devoted to putting God first in our lives. We must be willing to carry our cross, that is to face the difficulties, abuses and trials that we may face because of our faith. Also, we must be putting to death the sins within.

Galatians 5:24: “But those who *are* Christ’s have **crucified the flesh** with its passions and lusts.”

We must not take on the Laodicean attitude of having a ‘warm-hearted feeling’ thinking that we’ve got it made and rich and have need of nothing. That we can now coast and take it easy on into the Kingdom of God. ***That’s a satanic lie!***

We need to recognize that we must strive and put in maximum effort as we strive to achieve the Kingdom of God. Not get distracted by things in the world, but keep our eyes focused in Christ and the goal of knowing that there are forces of evil that will try to make us fail to achieve that goal.

Christ gives us warning; Luke 21:34: “Watch yourselves, lest your hearts be preoccupied with high living and drinking and *the* cares of *this* life, and that day come upon you suddenly. For as a snare it shall come upon all those who dwell on the face of the earth. Watch, therefore, *and* pray at all times that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand

before the Son of man” (vs 34-36).

The second part of the Scripture of *seeking God and His righteousness*, we need to pursue and grow in Godly righteousness. Peter tells us that we to continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Savior Jesus Christ. We are to come know God and Christ even more and more on a personal basis.

We need to continue to practice the Truth, to live according to His Word. Christ is the Word of God (John 1:1). If we live by and keep His Word, we shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set us free! Christ explained this to the Jews:

John 8:30: “As He spoke these things, many believed in Him... [but not to the depth that they ought to] ...Therefore, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, ‘If you continue in My Word... [obey My voice and keep My Word] ...you are truly My disciples’” (vs 30-31). *That’s one of the marks of a true disciple!*

Verse 32: “And you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free.” *True freedom through Christ!*

When we are in right standing with Christ through justification, we no longer have to fear the death penalty. That has been removed because of God’s forgiveness through the shed blood of Christ. Also, we are going to be able to avoid all of the consequences of evil sin. The pain and the anguish that so many people go through. Sin automatically has a penalty and not only the final penalty of eternal death, but sin brings on its own curse.

With that freedom, comes responsibility that you and I have to walk in the way Jesus Christ and to become like He is; to become righteous like He is and Holy before Him.

Ephesians 4:11: “And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers... [Why?] ...for the perfecting of the saints... [so that we can achieve the Kingdom of God] ...for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ... [the building up] ...until we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in *cunning* craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error; but holding the Truth in love, may in all things grow up into Him Who is the Head, *even* Christ” (vs 11-15).

Philippians 2:5: “Let this mind be in you, which *was* also in Christ Jesus;

So, now being led by the Holy Spirit we can now even take on the very mind of Jesus Christ. We now have the power within to overcome our sinful lives and take on His character, His attitudes, His very way to become like He is in the way that we live and conduct our lives.

Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life. We are to live not by bread alone, the physical bread, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4). We are to become perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.

These are some high goals that we have to ascend to. Perfection is to come at the resurrection, but on the other hand, we are to strive for perfection. Yet, there is one area in our lives that we can maximize that, and that is in the area of loving God and love each other, as we’re going to see.

1-John 2:5: “On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word... [that brings freedom] ...truly in this one the love of God is being perfected....”

This implies that growing in the love of Christ and God the Father *we can become perfected* in love at the human love.

“...By this *means* we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked” (vs 5-6).

Let’s consider Scriptures that shows how we can grow in righteousness of Christ. One important way is to cast out sin by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 4:22: “That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts; and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new man, which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth” (vs 22-24).

We see very clearly that we’re *to put out sin* and *we are to put in Christ*, which is really the spiritual lesson of the days of Unleavened Bread that follows right after the Passover.

When we eat the unleavened bread during the days of unleavened bread it pictures us symbolically putting Christ into our own lives, becoming more like He is, consuming Christ so that we can be like He is, Who is the Bread of Life.

John 6:47: Truly, truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me has eternal life. I AM the Bread of Life. Your fathers ate manna in the desert, but they died. This is the Bread, which comes down from heaven... [referring to Himself] ...so that anyone may eat of it and not die. I AM the living Bread, which came down from heaven; if anyone

eats of this Bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is even My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (vs 47-51).

Are we eating of the Bread of Life daily! It says in the daily prayer to *give us this day our daily bread!* Not just to the physical bread that we might need to sustain our physical life, but it also it refers to the Bread of Life—*Jesus Christ*—so that we maintain and strengthen our own spiritual life.

When we study the Bible, pray and take in more and more knowledge and understanding, we are eating the Bread of Life.

When we put *the words of Life* into practice, we are growing in Holiness and righteousness.

When Christ is actively living His life in us, there will be some amazing changes that will occur in our life as we put out sin and put in Jesus Christ.

Colossians 3:12: “Put on then, as *the* elect of God, **Holy and beloved**, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint against another; even **as Christ forgave you, so also you should forgive**. And above all these things *put on* love, which is **the bond of perfection**” (vs 12-14).

Referring back to perfecting love in our lives. Let the peace of God rule in your heart to which you were called and be thankful.

Verse 15: “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you were called into one body, and be thankful. Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And *in* everything—whatever you do in word or in deed—*do* all in the name of *the* Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and *the* Father by Him” (vs 15-17).

Do we have the living faith and absolute trust and confidence in God and His promises. God gives us many promises that we can believe in, live by and call upon, and if we need to for the healing of our bodies.

If we do, we know that *all things will work together for good for those who love God and for those who are called according to His purpose!*

Let’s not forget that we have been called according to His purpose. God is preparing for us to be kings and priests in the kingdom, and we will be ruling with and under Christ to bring salvation to the whole world.

All things work together for good, even our trials and hardships that we face. They will work for our good because it draws us closer to God knowing that we do not have the strength or the means to overcome some of the difficulties we face. But with God’s help we can prevail. If we draw closer to God it helps us to build Godly character and prove our faith. If in prayer you go to God needing His help for a particular trial or difficulty, and He answers that prayer, doesn’t that strengthen our faith and belief? *Absolutely!*

1-Peter 1:6: “In this you yourselves greatly rejoice; though for the present, if it is necessary, you are in distress for a little while by various trials, in order that **the proving of your faith**, which is much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is being tested by fire... [severe trial] ...may be found unto praise and honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ; Whom, not having seen, **you love**; in Whom, *though* at the present time you do not see Him, **you believe**, *and* rejoice with unspeakable joy, and filled with glory; *and are* receiving the end of your faith—even the salvation of *your* lives” (vs 6-9).

God preparing us for a wonderful future in His Kingdom! What a tremendous time that will be!

Romans 12:1: “I exhort you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, *Holy and* well-pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service. Do not conform yourselves to this world, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what is well-pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God**” (vs 1-2).

There are a lot of things in this Scripture that we can look at and contemplate.

Paul tells us to be *living sacrifices*, not dead one as in the Old Testament with animals. We are give up of our time, resources, help, aid and be a blessing to our fellow brethren in their time of need. This part of what it means to be doing *good works*; *the good works of salvation* that we need to be doing, so that we show love for one another. To be able to support the well-being of individuals who are poor and need help.

James addressed this very point; James 1:27: “Pure and undefiled religion before God and *the* Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their afflictions, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”

James 2:14: “My brethren, what good *does* it do, if anyone says *that he* has faith, and does not have works? Is faith able to save him? : Now then, if there be a brother or sister who is naked and

destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; be warmed and be filled,' and does not give to them the things necessary for the body, what good is it? In the same way also, faith, if it does not have works, is dead, by itself" (vs 14-17). *This is very clear what James is telling us!*

Proverbs 3:27: "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do it."

When it's in our power to do good for someone else, are we there and 'Johnny on the Spot' ready to help serve and be a blessing to our brothers and sisters in the Church?

The example of the 'good Samaritan' in Luke 10 is a very good example of one laying down one's life to one who needs help.

The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matt. 25:31) reveals the good works that are needed if we hope to achieve the Kingdom of God. We need to have good works, ***the works of God***, in us if we're to achieve the Kingdom of God.

Let's understand that we cannot reach salvation by ourselves. We know that salvation is by grace and not by works. But we also need to understand that without the good works of God we cannot be granted entrance into the Kingdom of God.

Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship..." (vs 8-10).

God is working in our lives like a potter molding clay; molding and shaping us to be like He is, full of righteousness and Truth!

"...**being created** in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them" (v 10). *The good works of God include:*

- keeping the Passover
- keeping the Sabbath and Holy Days
- serving, supporting and building up of our brethren in good works of love

Good works of love toward others demonstrates that the Holy Spirit is in us, that we're growing in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and that Christ is living in us. The love of God is dwelling in us and we are developing the very character and righteousness of Christ, because God is love.

The Parable of the Goats and the Sheep is about those who serve their brethren and those who are in need, out of their own volition. The gGoats

felt no need to serve or help others. But Christ said, that ***if you did it to them, you did unto Me!***

Brethren, it's very clear that the sheep show true love for their brethren, actively edifying and providing for others in their time of need, and the goats did not. Are we praying and sending notes to one another and encouraging one another. Are we visiting one another when we're able to, to encourage and help each other. Are we doing those things and visiting the widows and orphans as James talks about.

These are things we need to be thinking about doing, and actively pursuing because in doing so we are showing that the love of God is in our heart and that we are being perfected in love.

Paul says in Rom. 12 to say that we are not to conform to the ways of this world. We know what John tells us in 1-John 2 not to love the world, because if you love the world the love of the Father is not in you. Everything that's in the world—the lust of the flesh, the eyes and the pride of life—is not from the Father! The world and it's lusts are going away!

But the one who does the will of the Father abides forever! We need to keep our eyes on the Kingdom, looking to Christ!

Colossians 3:1: "Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God. Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth" (vs 1-2).

We are to faithfully seek God's will, and understand what it means to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

We must resolve disputes and offences that we have with a brother or sister in the Church. Study the booklet: *Offenses: Ordinance of God* by Steven Greene, and you will understand why this is so important.

We must be willing to repent of any offenses that we've done toward a brother or sister, and we must be willing to forgive those who have offended us, those who have sinned against us. If we do not forgive those who offended us, God will not forgive us of our sins (Matt. 6).

Please take a look at this, because God desires that we all come together reconciled in peace, love and unity before we keep the Passover. It's so very important that we become as one body, one spirit of love and to keep the Passover in peace.

As we approach this day of Passover, we should do it with a humble and contrite spirit, and with a deep understanding and appreciation for the

Prepare to Take the Passover with Self-Examination
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love that God has for us. Let us prepare for the Passover with self-examination so that we can take the Passover properly and in a worthy manner, knowing that our life belongs to God, Whose love, grace and mercy has covered our sins with the blood of Jesus Christ.

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 3:16
- 2) 2 Corinthians 8:9
- 3) Hebrews 2:14-17
- 4) Romans 3:23
- 5) Romans 6:23
- 6) 1 Corinthians 6:11
- 7) Romans 5:8-10
- 8) Galatians 2:20
- 9) Romans 6:11-14, 18-19
- 10) 1 Corinthians 3:16-17
- 11) Mark 12:30-31
- 12) 1 John 4:11
- 13) Galatians 5:22-23
- 14) 1 Corinthians 13:4-8
- 15) 1 Corinthians 11:23-24
- 16) Isaiah 53:3-7
- 17) 1 Corinthians 11:25-31
- 18) 2 Corinthians 13:5-6
- 19) Romans 8:9-10
- 20) John 14:15, 20-23
- 21) Mark 12:30-31
- 22) Matthew 6:33
- 23) Galatians 5:24
- 24) Luke 31:34-36
- 25) John 8:30-32
- 26) Ephesians 4:11-15
- 27) Philippians 2:5
- 28) 1 John 2:5-6
- 29) Ephesians 4:22-24
- 30) John 6:47-51
- 31) Colossians 3:12-17
- 32) 1 Peter 1:6-9
- 33) Romans 12:1-2
- 34) James 1:27
- 35) James 2:14-17
- 36) Proverbs 3:27
- 37) Ephesians 2:8-10
- 38) Colossians 3:1-4

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1 Corinthians 15
- Revelation 13:8
- Exodus 12
- Numbers 9
- John 17; 1:1
- Matthew 4:4
- Luke 10
- Matthew 25

- Romans 12
- 1 John 2

Also referenced:

- **Message:** *How to Overcome the Sin Within* by Fred Coulter {truthofGod.org}
- **Book:** *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- **Booklet:** *Offenses: Ordinance of God* by Steven Greene

RK:bo
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