

## First Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Fred R. Coulter—April 19, 2011

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—a Holy Day before God! We know that it is the Sabbath and Passover and the Holy Days that separate us from the world. Jesus said that even though we are to live in the world, we are not to be *of* the world. And the Feast of Unleavened Bread is that which shows us how we are to live *in* the world but not be *of* the world, and how we are to live our lives before God and not be a part of this world.

Leviticus 23 contains all the Holy Days of God, but let's also look at something that's very important concerning the first part of Lev. 23, because what it does, it gives us an overall principle which is this: It is the Sabbath Day that is the umbrella, overarching all of the Holy Days. A lot of people have mistakenly thought that the Holy Days were ritual days of God. But, if they were just for ritual, why make them Holy? You can go online and you can download a sermon: *Which Came First, the Day or the Ritual?* Obviously, the Holy Days came first.

We all know that whatever Moses told the children of Israel was only what God told Moses. I don't find any place in the first five books of the Bible called *The Law*, where it is said, 'Thus sayeth Moses.' No! Not one place!

Right here, Leviticus 23:1: "And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the children of Israel and say to them, "*Concerning* the appointed Feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be Holy convocations, even these are My appointed Feasts'" (vs 1-2). So, we see they belong to God. They don't belong to the Jews. They don't belong to the Church. They belong to God! And wherever those are who are serving God, we'll be keeping these days, and keeping them in the right way, in the right manner, at the right time.

Verse 3: "'Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of rest, a Holy convocation. You shall not do any work. It *is* a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwellings.'" So, He gives the weekly Sabbath first. That's why when you come to the Ten Commandments, you will find that every one of the Ten Commandments states that that commandment is and then you can go into the judgments and the statutes and the precepts and you find that those are subdivisions of the overall command. So, likewise, the weekly Sabbath is that which sanctifies the annual Sabbaths.

So, God continues right here, and I know for

some people who have been so used to hearing, 'the Old Testament has been done away; all those rituals have been done away; all those days are only ritual days so they have been done away.' I know it's hard to really put yourself into it, but you've got to come to understand the truth concerning the whole Word of God:

Verse 4: "'These *are* the appointed Feasts of the LORD, Holy convocations which you shall proclaim in their appointed seasons. In the fourteenth *day* of the first month, between the two evenings, is the LORD'S Passover... [We've gone over when to keep the Passover so many times, I'm not going to mention it any more than this here.] ...and on the fifteenth day of the same month *is* the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD. You must eat unleavened bread seven days. On the first day you shall have a Holy convocation. You shall not *do any servile work therein*, but you shall offer a fire offering to the LORD seven days....'" (vs 4-8).

When they had the animal sacrifices they did it everyday. when you read this, a lot of people think: 'Should I give an offering everyone of the days during the Days of Unleavened Bread? *When you read Num. 28-29 you see the sacrifices for the morning and evening sacrifice and for every one of the days for the months and for all of the Holy Days.* And everyday during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, as well as everyday during the Feast of Tabernacles. This is what it is referring to.

Concerning our personal responsibility and what we are to do, let's come to Deut. 16, which shows that we are to bring an offering during that time, that comes from our own resources, not just necessarily the animal sacrifices which were commanded by God for the Levitical priesthood to offer.

Deuteronomy 16:16: "Three times in a year shall all your males appear before the LORD your God in the place which He shall choose..." Today, since we're scattered in the world, the place that He chooses is wherever two or three or more are gathered together in His name, or even individually and separately if you happen to be forced to keep the Feast alone, God will be with you there, because He's chosen to put His Spirit *in* you and that's where He has placed His name—*on* you and *in* you! So, when we come to the New Testament, we find that that is expanded even more. Not just a certain physical location, but for each one of us individually called, received of the Holy Spirit of God, and we are here to worship Him *in Spirit and in Truth*.

“...in the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and in the Feast of Weeks, and in the Feast of Tabernacles. And they shall not appear before the LORD empty, every man *shall give* as he is able... [Here’s how you gauge what to give in an offering, because we take up an offering for every Holy Day.] ...according to the blessing of the LORD your God, which He has given you” (vs 16-17).

- we need to think of the *blessings*
- we need to think of the *answered prayers*
- we need to think of *God’s intervention*
- we need to think of *how God has led us* with His Spirit this past year
- we need to think of *everything in our lives*

We know the world is in confusion and turmoil, lawlessness and is in total upset. But that is not to affect us. We are called out of the world, though we live in the world. So, we are to bring an offering to God. How are we to bring it? ‘Well, there they go again, asking for an offering.’ As you will see, we don’t ask for money; we don’t solicit for money, but God does command that we have our financial obligation. He commands tithes and offerings that we are to do.

2-Corinthians 9—here we will see and overall principle that we need to apply to our lives. How we live our lives before God with His Spirit and with the motivation and understanding that we need. How are we doing spiritually? That will reflect also how we are doing physically. But we are not to equate physical blessings with spiritual ability. Those don’t equate. Here’s a principle that we need to understand, because we’re part of the harvest of God toward eternal life—are we not? *Yes, we are!* Here’s a principle:

2-Corinthians 9:6: “But this *I say*: the one who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and the one who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully.” I’ve seen that as a living principle all the years that I’ve been in the Church of God, that I’ve been a minister of God, I’ve seen this to be absolutely true!

- those who are penurious
- those who are selfish
- those who are stingy
- those who don’t believe in tithes
- those who are very ‘cheap’ with their offerings

*Look at your spiritual life!* I’ve seen that this living principle works. You cannot out-give God! Jesus said, ‘It’s more blessed to give than to receive.’ All of these principles apply—don’t they? *Yes, they do!* We all have our parts in this world. We all have our financial obligations in this world. But

also, we need to understand that if we don’t take care of those things that belong to God—as Jesus said, ‘render to God the things that are God’s, and render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s’—He was talking about money.

Here’s how it works, v 7: “Each one as he purposes in his heart, *so let him give*... [You have to sit down and work this out between you and God. You have to look at the blessings that you have and give accordingly.] ...but not grudgingly or by compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.” That’s how it needs to be with us. The things that you give and that you send to us we try to make that multiply in serving thousand and thousands of brethren. and also thousands of new people out in the world.

- that’s why we have our website
  - that’s why we have Church at Home
  - that’s why we have the books
  - that’s why we have the Bible
  - that’s what all the money goes for
- You need to keep that in mind.

Now, if you’ve been in an organization where some of the ministers and those in charge have abused the tithes and offerings that you have sent, well then, you need to understand *that’s not God’s fault!* Part of our stewardship is to see that what is being done is being done in accordance with the will of God and being done in accordance with reaching out and being done with this kind of attitude:

“...a cheerful giver... [knowing this]: ...For God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you so that in *every way* you may always have sufficiency in all *things*, and may abound unto every good work” (vs 7-8). That’s what God wants us to have and to do.

(pause for taking up the offering)

Now, let’s continue on with the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. When Jesus appeared to the disciples in Galilee—after He was resurrected from the dead—‘all authority in heaven and earth has been given to Me. You go into all nations and make disciples, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.’ And part of the all things have been commanded are the Holy Days of God—the Passover and the Holy Days and things like that. All of those have been commanded by God, and that’s what they taught.

Let’s come here to 1-Corinthians, the fifth chapter, and let’s see exactly what the Apostle Paul taught—Jews and Gentiles. There’s no difference. We’re all to be taught the same thing. We’re all to live the same way. He taught concerning the Passover and he taught concerning the Feast of

Unleavened Bread. And furthermore, right here in 1-Cor. 5 we have a New Testament command by the Apostle Paul—the apostle to the Gentiles—to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread based upon the fact that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ at the Passover was the basis for keeping the Feast. So, all of those who keep the Passover should keep the Feast—it stands to reason.

They were having a real problem there in the Church at Corinth, because they had sexual immorality where a man was even having relations with his own step-mother. That is, as Paul said, *shameless!* Yet, they were so carnal there in the Church at Corinth that some were glorying in it. So he says here:

1-Corinthians 5:6: “Your glorying *is* not good. Don’t you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?” That’s a key principle concerning life. And during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, leaven pictures sin. That’s why we are told to get leaven out of our houses (Exo.; Lev.). In the New Testament it is a type of sin. So, not only are we to get leaven out of our homes—because we see the way that it’s worded here that they certainly did this—but we are to get the level of *sin out of our lives!*

“Therefore, **purge out the old leaven, so that you may become a new lump...** [a new creation] *...even* as you are unleavened.... [They were unleavened in their homes. But to take the leaven out of the homes and not to get the leaven out of our lives is to of no avail. Getting it out of our homes teaches us and tells us that sin so easily besets us. Sin can be found in the most unexpected places. We sin many times in the most unexpected ways. Therefore, we get the leaven out of our homes.] ...For Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us” (v 7). That’s why we do everything that we do, because of the sacrifice of Christ.

“For this reason... [the sacrifice of Christ on the Passover Day—Who was the Lamb of God; the Passover.] ...let us keep the Feast... [the Feast of Unleavened Bread] ...not with old leaven... [No! Not with the way we used to have been living] ...nor with *the* leaven of malice and wickedness...” (v 8) We’re to get that out of our lives. The thing is, God is going to take those of us with a carnal mind, that is deceitful above everything else, desperately wicked and filled with vanity, and He’s going to bring it to perfection.

Part of the way we understand how that is, is through the Feast of Unleavened Bread. After we’ve had our sins forgiven through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we’re not to live any longer therein—are we? No! We’re to become a new lump. Here’s what we’re to do:

“...but with *the* unleavened *bread* of sincerity and Truth.”

- the Word of God is Truth
- the commandments of God are Truth
- the Spirit of God is Truth
- Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life

You see how it all fits together. We are to be true and sincere from our very beings, being changed through the Spirit of God. Let’s see what it says back in 1-John, the second chapter. Not only that, we’re not

- to live in the world
- be part of the world
- act as the world
- be as the world.

That’s why there are so many things that are difficult with the brethren, because they are living too much in the world, being too much a part of the world. This is how we can function in the world, but understand that we are not to be *of* the world. Just like Jesus said, ‘I am not of the world, and neither are these of the world.’ No! Notice what the Apostle John wrote; here is a living principle, concerning:

- Christian living
- growing and overcoming
- getting the spiritual leaven out of our lives
- to do the things that are right before God

1-John 2:15: “**Do not love the world...** [Who are we to love with all our heart, mind, soul and being? *God the Father and Jesus Christ*—isn’t that correct? *Yes!* We’re to love our neighbors as ourselves, and we are to love each other as ‘Christ has loved us.’] ...**nor the things that are in the world...** [We can be sure today, we have so many things in the world that we’re ‘gadgetized’ to death! If we use them in a right and proper way—don’t let them become stumbling blocks for us in our relationship with God—then we can use the things of the world, but not love the things of the world.] ...If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him, because everything that *is* in the world—...” (vs 15-16).

Next time you sit down to your television and I want you to watch the programs that you watch, the news the watch, and especially the commercials—myself, I’m very thankful for the gadget that has the mute because I don’t like to listen to those commercials—and if that depicts the world there’s nothing wrong with the world, everything is right, except if you are taking certain medicines that might make you insane or have suicidal tendencies or might cause you a heart attack or whatever. But, everyone is smiley and happen and rosy and good and everything is fine. Look at the reality of it when

you look at the news and it's completely different— isn't it? *Yes!*

“Because everything that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pretentious pride of physical life—is not from the Father, but is from the world” (v 16). Now, isn't that the whole basis of things that we see on television today. Rarely do you get things that are true and honest. There's more truth that you can get on the Internet, and also more error that you can get on the Internet.

- we have to have judgment
- we have to have truth
- we have to have understanding

Here is what is the key and the whole modus operandi of our living in the world and going toward eternal life, v 17: “And the world and its lust is passing away... [because it's all vanity] ...but the one who does the will of God abides forever.” God is taking us from a state of sin, from a state of vanity, from a state of carnality and granting us repentance and conversion and His Spirit so we can be *changed from the inside*. That's conversion!

Let's look and see what it says concerning human beings, Psalm 39. What are we at our very best state? If you get lifted up in pride and vanity go to this Psalm and use this as a means of repentance and part of your prayer and to understand exactly what your human nature is. This makes it very clear; this is what we need to do:

Psalm 39:1: “I said, ‘I will take heed to my ways so that I do not sin with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked are before me.’.... [we control what we say; we control our minds] ...I became dumb, keeping silent; I said nothing good, and yet my sorrow grew worse. My heart was hot within me; while I was musing, the fire burned; then I spoke with my tongue” (vs 1-3). What is this life all about? Why is it that we are doing these things? *So that we can overcome human nature!*

Verse 4: “O LORD, make me to know my end and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how short lived I am. Behold, You have made my days as a handbreadth, and the span of my days is as nothing before You. Surely every man at his best state **is altogether vanity**. Selah” (vs 4-5). That's what God wants us to overcome.

- Vanity equals leaven!
- Sin equals leaven!

That's why during the Days of Unleavened Bread we're to put out the leaven. It also says that we are to eat unleavened bread seven days, so that we may have the laws of God written in our hearts and in our

minds. We know that eating the unleavened bread pictures **putting in**

- the *way* of Christ
  - the *life* of Christ
  - the *thoughts* of Christ
- and all of that overcomes vanity.

Yes, he says, v 6: “Surely every man walks about in a vain show! Surely they are in an uproar in vain. He heaps up riches and does not know who shall gather them. And now, LORD, what do I wait for? **My hope is in You**” (vs 6-7). That's where our hope is, in God the Father and Jesus Christ with

- mercy
- forgiveness
- understanding
- the Spirit of God

These are putting in all the things that are unleavened which come from Christ, which come from the Word of God.

Notice what else it does, v 8: “Deliver me from all my transgressions; make me not the reproach of the fool.” Isn't that amazing?! It's put another way by the Apostle Peter in Acts, the third chapter. What do we do when we find ourselves in this condition, which we are? How do we respond to God? Since God subjected all the creation to vanity—not willingly—but He subjected it in hope and in change, because of mercy and Truth and God's Spirit and God's way. But here's what God wants us to do, Acts 3.

- that's why there's repentance
- that's why there's God's Spirit
- that's why there's conversion

and conversion changes the leaven inside to the unleaveness of Christ.

Peter was speaking to all these people there at the temple after healing the man who had been lame for how many ever years, waiting at the Gate Beautiful to be healed, taking alms. Peter is speaking to the whole crowd there, Acts 3:19: “Therefore, repent and be converted in order that your sins may be blotted out, so that *the* times of refreshing may come from *the* presence of the Lord.” That is to each one of us:

- be refreshed in heart
- be renewed in mind
- be transformed in spirit

All of those things are important for the Days of Unleavened Bread and that is all involved in putting out the leaven. That is all involved in the process of conversion:

- overcoming vanity

- overcoming self
- overcoming the world
- overcoming Satan the devil

the ‘god of this world.’ He’s the one who wants to come along and cause us difficulty. Yes, Satan is after us, that is true. But if we are unleavened in Christ and strengthened with the Spirit of God, we *can* overcome, we *will* overcome, and we *will be converted!* And our whole lives will be a process of changing, growing and overcoming—through repentance and yielding to God. ***That’s what the Feast of Unleavened Bread is all about.***

Now, come here to 2-Timothy, the second chapter, and let’s see the command here. This is quite a thing! This is what we need to do. Notice how clear this is. It applies not only to those of us in the Church, but it also applies to everyone in the world who professes the name of Christ.

2-Timothy 2:19: “Nevertheless, the foundation of God stands firm, having this seal... [We’ve all been sealed with the Holy Spirit of God—haven’t we? *Yes, indeed!*] (here’s the seal): ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Let everyone who calls upon the name of Christ depart from unrighteousness.’” We are to put it out of our lives and we are to leave it behind us. That’s why we’re not to love the world, the things that are in the world, bring these things into our lives. No! We are to live differently.

- That’s why we are to pray!
- That’s why we are to study!
- That’s why we are to grow and change!

—every single day of our lives, and yield to God to let Him do His workmanship within us. That’s what it’s all about, brethren.

Let’s look at the contrast here, now. Let’s come to Galatians the fifth chapter. Paul also brings out here ‘a little leaven leavens the whole lump.’

- He shows the fight!
- He shows the struggle!
- He shows the contrast!
- He shows that overcoming is not easy!
- He shows that we have to yield to God!
- And we have to go forward all the time.

Galatians 5:14: “For the whole law is fulfilled in this *commandment*: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” Some people say we don’t have to worry about the Sabbath, we don’t have worry about idols. NO! That’s not true. This has to do with the law of *loving your neighbor*.

Here’s something that’s very true. This is what was happening in the churches there in Galatia. We see the same thing happening in the Churches of

God today. Listen, we need to have the love of God; we need to have the repentance toward God. And if any are doing things they ought not do, what we need to do is pray for them, that they’ll repent. Isn’t that what John wrote in 1-John 5—If you see someone ‘sinning a sin that is not unto death, pray for him.’ Listen, wherever the problems are in the Churches of God, we need to be praying asking God to help them, asking God to give them wisdom and understanding, asking God to grant them repentance. Now, they have to choose to do so, and if they don’t here’s what will happen, and unfortunately, this is what has happened in too many Churches of God.

Verse 15: “But if you bite and devour one another, watch out *lest* you be consumed by one another.” Boy, that is sure true! Brethren, part of the unleaveness that we need to have is to not get involved in biting and devouring one another and backbiting and all this sort of thing. The truth is this: Wherever there’s a difficulty, you need to identify what that difficulty is and learn the lesson from it and not partake in it. We need to learn the lesson so we can say, ‘Watch out, don’t do this. Watch out, don’t do that.’

Verse 16 is the key, here’s the true application of unleaveness, which then pictures God’s Spirit as well, because

- it is Truth
- it is righteousness
- it is Holy
- it is from God

Verse 16: “Now *this* I say, walk by *the* Spirit...” That is *led by* the Spirit of God, *yielding to* the Spirit of God. Remember what Paul wrote in Rom. 8: ‘As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God!’ (notice the contrast; also notice what it will do for you, because we read we’re not to be involved with the lust of the world, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life—correct? *Yes!*): “Now *this* I say, walk by *the* Spirit, and **you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**” You can overcome it! That’s what the Feast of Unleavened Bread is all about. You can overcome it! You can have—through God’s spirit:

- *change of heart*
- *change of mind*
- *change of attitude*
- *convert your outlook*
- *everything*

But, you’ve got to yield to God and do it God’s way! so the Feast of Unleavened Bread we have every year for us to realize that as long as we’re in the flesh, we have not arrived. As long as we are overcoming, God is with us. As long as we walk in the Spirit we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Now then, he shows another principle here, v 17: “For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these things are opposed to each other, so that you cannot do those things you wish to do.” Because it’s pulling you down. Have you had things come along that pull you down? That you haven’t been able to do what you need to do? Well, you’ve slipped and fallen and yielded to the lust of the flesh rather than the Spirit of God.

Verse 18: “But if you are led by *the* Spirit, you are not under law.” And that is under Judaism’s law; that’s what it’s talking about here.

Notice the works of the flesh; and again, I draw your attention to television, to movies, to music, to the way that people live today. Even in the United States Armed Services they recognize Wickens or witches as a bonafied religion. Did you know that?

Verse 19: “Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, licentiousness... [Again, is that not what television is all about? *Lust of the eyes, the pride of life, the lust of the flesh!* On Church at Home I’ve got a whole series on *Obsessed with Sex*. Isn’t interesting that those are the first two things of the *works of the flesh*? *Yes!*] ...idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, strifes, jealousies, indignations, contentions, divisions, sects” (vs 19-20).

We shouldn’t be involved in these things, yet, look at how many churches are involved in this. We have the book that we just produced—*Lord, What Should I Do?* And the whole Christian world out there is getting wrapped up in all the *works of the flesh*. Why? *Because they don’t keep the Sabbath, they don’t keep the Holy Days, and they don’t have the Spirit of God!* A lot of people who go to those churches to find God, end up leaving. That’s why we have the new book: *Lord, What Should I Do?* and geared to those people out there in the world who are disgusted with a different version of Christianity that they find. Isn’t that amazing? *Yes!*

Notice what else takes place out there, v 21: “Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such things as these; concerning which I am telling you beforehand, even as I have also said in the past, that those who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.” That’s why we’re here! *To inherit the Kingdom of God*

- through the resurrection
  - through conversion
  - through transformation of the mind
- and eventually*
- through the transformation of the body at the first resurrection

But, we have to overcome! Remember what Jesus

aid to every one of the seven churches: ***The one who overcomes!*** And we need to be overcoming. That’s why during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, set your course to look at the things you need to overcome. Ask God to help you in prayer and study, and be honest with yourself. Don’t be pointing the finger at the other person. They have their problems, but remember, every time you point the finger, there are three more pointing back to you.

(go to the next track)

One of the things that’s going to be helpful for us to understand is this: We have to be honest with ourselves, honest with God, honest with each other in overcoming a deceitful nature that likes to make itself appear ‘good’ and accepts lies concerning itself and is self-deceiving, let’s remember this Scripture. Let’s not bring those things into our lives or into the Church:

Galatians 6:7: “**Do not be deceived....**”  
How are the three ways you are deceived?

1. by *self*
2. by *Satan*
3. by *others*

“...God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.” Remember where we started with the offering. If you sow sparingly, you’re going to reap sparingly! If you sow carnality, you’re going to reap carnality! If you sow vanity, you’re going to reap vanity! That’s just the way that life is. When we come to understand that—with the Spirit of God—then that helps us to change, grow, overcome, so we can

- *yearn* for the Truth
- *yearn* for God’s Spirit
- *be led* of God’s Spirit

that’s the way out of the leaveness of sin and human nature and vanity.

Verse 8: “For the one who sows to his own flesh shall reap corruption from the flesh.... [It’s just going to happen, a living law!] ...But the one who sows to the Spirit shall reap eternal life from the Spirit.” That’s what we need to do.

Notice the fruit that we are to produce. You have the *way of the world* and you have the *way of the Lord*. And Jesus said, ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.’ Let’s apply it. This is what we need to be building. This is why when we eat the bread of *sincerity and Truth*—that means tasting the Word of God so to speak, putting it in our lives. Remember, Christ said concerning the Passover: ‘The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day. And the one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood shall live by

Me, even as I live by the Father.’

Notice what that will produce, because the solution to human nature is self-improvement courses which the world can have, but it’s all based on vanity and lust. Oh yes, you can make yourself better and more successful in the world, but that’s not what God wants within the Church. What does He want?

Galatians 5:22: “But **the fruit of the Spirit** is ... [the Spirit of God] ...love, joy, peace... [you have peace with God, peace with the brethren, peace with husband and wife, peace with your children (hopefully)] ...long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control... [are those not all the characteristics of the character of God? *Yes, indeed!*] ...**against such things there is no law.**” (vs 22-23). Here’s the key. This shows part of the work that we are to do, expressed in the way that Jesus expressed it when He said you have to ‘love Me more than father, mother, brother, sister’ or anyone else and you have to ‘pick up your cross and follow Me.’ Pick up your cross means that you *crucify the deeds of the flesh* as Paul is writing here:

Verse 24: “But those who *are* Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. If we live by *the* Spirit, we should also be walking by *the* Spirit” (vs 24-25). In other words, our lives have to be true to what God wants. Of course, there are going to be times when we sin; that when we repent. But really, we need to repent everyday because of the imperfection that is in us. The whole goal of being a Christian is to ***come from deception to Truth, from vanity to perfection.*** An amazing process—isn’t it? That’s why we have the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Now, notice what is to happen to us, Romans 12. Let’s notice how this process is done and let us notice how these things are to affect our lives. It has to begin, first of all, with conversion and a change of heart and mind; that can only be done by the Spirit of God. Notice what we are to strive for. Paul makes it very clear.

Romans 12:1: “I exhort you therefore... [we’re being exhorted by the Apostle Paul] ...brethren, by the mercies of God...”

- God wants *mercy*, not sacrifice.
- God wants *love*, not condemnation.
- God wants *repentance*, not ogling in sin.
- God wants *overcoming*, not reveling in vanity.

“...by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice...” Not an animal sacrifice on some altar out there, but a living sacrifice—

- you living for God in this evil world

- you helping other people and brethren
- you growing and overcoming

and all of us together doing it individually, because here’s the key—let’s just use an example: If you have ten parts or ten elements to something; if all of them are selected from the best and then put together, then you will have a fine product—right?

Same way with our lives: If you have two people who are changing and growing and overcoming, you can develop and be transformed with the Spirit of God. If we do this independently, which God expects us to do day-by-day, then when we come together as brethren it will be a great event because we’re all yielding to God. Not like it was there at Corinth. Oh boy, they had some coming with psalms and some coming in with tongues, and some coming in and saying ‘I’m for Peter.’ Others saying, ‘I’m for Paul.’ Others saying, ‘You’ve got it all wrong, you’ve got to be for Christ’—at least those that said that had that right. But Paul said, ‘Are you not carnal?’

What does this tell us? *The place to overcome is in your life, at home, and in your daily activities!* When we come together for Sabbath services and Holy Days, we don’t bring the junk with us.

“...to present your bodies a living sacrifice, Holy and well pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service.... [v 2 ties right in with 1-John 2:15]: ...Do not conform yourselves to this world...” (vs 1-2). We’re not to be like the world. We’re not to live like the world.

- We are to be *changed!*
- We are to be *converted!*
- We are to become *unleavened* in Christ!

“...but be transformed by the renewing of your mind... [Isn’t it the renewing of the Spirit of God by the washing of the water by the Word? *Yes!*] ...in order that you may prove what *is* well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God.” (v 2). *Yes, indeed!* The renewing of the mind!

Now, in renewing your mind there are some things that you are to do. Remember the parable of the Ten Virgins—five were wise; five were foolish. Five—even though they had their faults and problems as depicted by sleeping and slumbering—took oil with them in an oil-carrying vessel so they would have oil for their lamps. That means that they did the works and they did the preparation so the Spirit of God would be there. But the five foolish did not do it. Then they came to the five wise when the call went out that the bridegroom is coming. ‘Give us of your oil.’ *We can’t!*

It’s not a matter of being selfish. You can’t

get the Holy Spirit from another person. You've got to get it from God! So, how do we not conform ourselves to this world? How are we transformed with the renewing of our minds? Let's come to Proverbs, the fourth chapter. Here we have a real principle that we need to apply all the time, especially those of us living in this age, when we are affected by so many things visually. I mean, you can even go into the supermarket and the first thing you are assaulted with is music, advertisement, glitzy things—buy this, buy that, value here, discount there—then you go by the news rack and you see all the things of the pride of life, the sinfulness of this world. Then especially right as you go through those checkout stands, all the magazines for the women. I've looked very hard; only on one occasion did I ever find one for a man. I tell you what, when you see all of these things, you watch television, listen to the radio, you see other people, you hear what they have to say.

Here's a principle that we need to understand. This is part of getting the leaven out of our lives and putting in the unleaven, and also standing guard over what we think and do and act—which then leads to the transformation and the renewing of our minds.

Proverbs 4:18: “But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shines more and more to the perfect day.... [Is that not also a prophecy of the resurrection? *Yes, indeed!*] ...The way of the wicked *is* as darkness; they know not at what they stumble” (vs 18-19). They don't even know what's right. They don't even know what is wrong. They're leading their lives, and coming down to the end of it filled with sin and the penalties of it.

So, here's God admonition to us, v 20: “My son, attend to My words... [the words of God] ...incline your ear to My sayings.... [the faithful sayings of Jesus Christ] ...Let them not depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart” (vs 20-21). Let it be right there

- to guide you
- to direct you
- to lead you
- to keep you from evil
- to keep you from sinning
- to overcome—through the Spirit of God—any temptation that comes along

“For they... [the words from Christ and the Spirit of God] ...*are* life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh” (v 22)—and health to your spiritual character. When you do these things, you're building the character of God! You're building the mind of Christ! You're using the Spirit of God to write in your heart and to write in your mind the Truth of

God. This is what conversion is all about and the transformation of the mind.

Notice, we have a responsibility. Just put in your notes: Job 31:1—he said, ‘I made a covenant with my eyes’—when they were trying to accuse him of lusting after other women. He said, ‘I made a covenant with my eyes.’ We can do that with many different things. That covenant with his eyes was, ‘I'm not going to look, I'm not going to lust, I'm not going to get involved in that.’ We can apply that principle to many, many different things—can't we? *Yes!*

Apply it right here, because this is a real key in overcoming, and this is a real key of conversion, a real key of getting out sin, a real key to grabbing hold and doing the things that are motivated by the Spirit of God to bring in the unleavened bread of sincerity and Truth of Christ.

Verse 23: “**Above all guard the door of your mind...** [or heart] ...with diligence...” It takes work! It takes effort! It's not going to happen just sitting back and thinking about it.

- You have to apply yourself.
- You have to apply your thoughts.
- You have apply your mind.
- You have to apply the Word of God.

How many times have we heard: *prayer and study*? Brethren, I'm here to tell you, those are the basic, fundamental building blocks of conversion. That's why in the new book, *Lord, What Should I Do?*, we show them how to pray. We tell them how to study. We tell them who is a true Christian. Their lives have been so mixed up and topsy-turvy and turned upside down by the ‘Christian religions’ of *this world* they need help, and they need to start by repentance and prayer and drawing close to God—likewise do we—on a daily basis: repentance, prayer and drawing close to God and studying His Word. When we do that the Spirit of God is writing it in our hearts, in our minds and inscribing them in our very being so that we have the character of God. That's the whole purpose of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—is it not? *YES!*

“...**guard the door of your mind with diligence, for out of it are the issues of life**” (v 23). For us, that's the issues of eternal life. We're no longer trying to figure out how to live in this world. We're yielding to God to understand what it is to become *spiritually-minded!* To be spiritually-minded is peace and to change and grow and overcome.

Notice, we are to guard, but also—this ties right in with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, v 24: “Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and devious



lips put far from you. Let your eyes look right on, and let your eyelids look straight before you. Ponder the path of your feet, and all your ways *will be* established. Do not turn to the right hand nor to the left; remove your foot from evil” (vs 24-27). All of that fits right in with what? *The Feast and meaning of Unleavened Bread* and why we keep it.

Let’s come to the New Testament and let’s see something very important that Paul explains how we need to do it. 2-Corinthians, chapter ten, these Scriptures tie right together with the book of Proverbs—each work together. Remember the *unity of Scripture*. All Scripture works together. It’s inspired and written to be ‘line upon line, line upon line; precept upon precept, precept upon precept; a little here and a little there, and you put it all together. The proper way of studying the Bible is called *the principle of addition*. You don’t use one Scripture to fight another Scripture. You put it together, ‘rightly dividing the Word of Truth.’ Let’s see what the Apostle Paul said. I know we’ve covered some of these things in the past, but we need to understand these and go over them. One of the best teachers is repetition.

2-Corinthians 10:3: “For although we walk in *the flesh*... [Yes, we live in the world; we’re still *fleshy*—correct? *Yes!*] ...we do not war according to *the flesh*.... [In other words, our spiritual war and battle is not according to the carnal ways and means of this world, but are *spiritual*. That’s how we overcome.] ...For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to *the overthrowing of strongholds*” (vs 3-4).

Have you ever had a thought, some lust in your mind, stuck in your mind that’s just like a stronghold? Have you ever had bitterness, envy or hate stuck in your mind? Have you ever had to where you see someone—even a brother in the Church—and they go by and you get all upset? *That’s a stronghold in your mind that you need to overcome*. What is the stronghold in your mind? *Ask yourself; you can overcome it!*

“...but mighty through God to *the overthrowing of strongholds*.... [Notice how he describes it here]: ...casting down *vain imaginations*...” (vs 4-5). You’re guarding the door of your mind, a vain imagination comes along and you discard it out of your life; you don’t get caught up in it. You don’t get lifted up in pride. Remember how we’ve covered recently, and this has really left an impression upon my mind as I look back and see all the things that have happened in the Church. How that Hezekiah got lifted up in pride because of what God did for him. Then when the ambassadors for Babylon came, he showed them all the wealth that God had given him, all the wealth of all the kings.

And God said, through Isaiah, ‘What did you show them? And he said, ‘Everything!’ Isaiah said, ‘It’s all going to Babylon.’ Did it go to Babylon? *Yes, indeed! Without a doubt, it did!*

But when you read the account there, you find that it says, because of the business with the ambassadors from Babylon, God ‘left him to try him to know what was in his heart.’ Whenever you get involved in pride and carnal things, God can take a step back just to see what you’re going to do. Are you going to return to Him? or Are you going to continue in your own way? What is it?

Likewise, this is a principle which has happened to the Churches of God. Brethren and ministers get lifted up in pride and, lo and behold, false doctrines and different things come in and pretty soon POOF! they’re gone! I look back and I think: What happened to all of those who professed to be part of the Church of God? And when God’s judgment came because of sin, because they all got lifted up with pride, and God stood back and left. What happened? Where are they? How did they survive the test? We need to ask that of ourselves, because the Feast of Unleavened Bread is a perfect time to come back to God. Let’s do that!

Verse 5: “Casting down vain imaginations, and every high thing... [Where? *In the mind!*] ...that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity... [***Guard the door of your mind!***] ...every thought into the obedience of Christ.... [That’s something—isn’t it? *Yes!* That’s why I did the sermon series: *The Washing of the Water by the Word*. That is God’s Spirit and the Word of God to sanctify us.] ...and having a readiness to avenge all disobedience, whenever your obedience has been fulfilled” (vs 5-6).

Then Paul asks a question, v 7: “Are you looking at things according to their appearance? If anyone is persuaded in his *own* mind that he is Christ’s, let him reconsider this concerning himself; for exactly as he *is* Christ’s, so also *are* we Christ’s.” That shows you part of the division that was there in the Church at Corinth, which is exactly what the Church of God is today. Look at all the Churches of God. What are they? What are they doing? I hope and pray every one of them return to God, stay close to God and grow, change, overcome and do what is right. But just like everything else, it gets down to each one of us as individuals.

- We have to change!
- We have to grow!
- We have to pray!
- We have to overcome!

And let’s see how that is here; let’s see how these things are—Ephesians, the fourth chapter. Let’s see

what we are to do because of what God has done for us. Perfectly fitting with the Days of Unleavened Bread—put out the leaven, eat the unleavened bread of sincerity and Truth. Here is what all of this is about. Let's bring it together so we can understand it in its totality.

Ephesians 4:21: "If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, according to *the Truth* in Jesus.... [You know the Truth; you've heard it. How many sermons have you listened to? How many times have you read the Bible? Etc.] ...That concerning your former conduct, you put off the old man... [***put out the leaven!***] ...which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts" (vs 21-22). Isn't that true? *Yes!* 'Every way of a man is right in his own eyes' and he doesn't see his own corruption! He doesn't see his own lust and his own pride. That's just a natural way of living, but it takes the Spirit of God to show that. That's why Paul is writing here. Don't go back and do 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... [God made us to be renewed. We can be regardless of what has gone on in the past. We can be renewed! ***As long as there is life there is hope!*** We can change! We can grow! We can overcome!] ...and that you put on the new man... [notice how this is done]: ...which according to God is created in righteousness and Holiness of the Truth" (vs 22-24). We're His workmanship! Salvation is creation; God's creation in us:

- to change our hearts
- to change our minds
- to give us the mind of Christ
- to give us the understanding through His Spirit

We have the sonship of God. Notice what we're to do; just exactly parallel to what we read there in Prov. 4.

Verse 25: "Therefore, let each one put away lies *and* speak the truth with his neighbor because we are members of one another. *When* you become angry, do not sin.... [That's a challenge—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!*] ...Do not let the sun go down on your anger" (vs 25-27). Don't carry anything to bed with you at night: anger, hatred, jealousy, resentment, any of these things. Do you know why? *You're going to lose sleep!* God doesn't want you to lose sleep. Pray about it! Repent about it! Get it out of your mind, 'casting down vain imaginations, bringing every thought into captivity to Jesus Christ.' *Yes!*

Verse 27: "Neither give place to the devil." All those things give an opening for the devil: 'Yes, you're right with that anger. Yes, you know you're

entirely right.' You may be, but if you're hateful and not praying for the other person, and that anger continues and that jealousy, resentment, bitterness or whatever—what are you doing? How is your life? God expects us to overcome it.

Verse 28: "Let the one who stole, steal no more; rather, let him labor with *his* hands, working *at* what *is* good, so that he may impart *something* to the one who has need. Do not let any corrupt communication come out of your mouth... [Now, that's a challenge—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!* Sure is! A lot of us have to repent almost everyday because of that—don't we? *Yes!*] ...but that which is good and needful for edification that it may give grace to those who hear. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God by which you have been sealed for *the* day of redemption" (vs 28-30).

Don't grieve the Spirit of God! How do you grieve the Spirit of God? Not that it's a person, like Paul wrote there in Gal. 5: 'the flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit fights against the flesh.' If you're giving into the flesh you're causing grievousness between you and God through His Holy Spirit that is in you. That's what it's talking about.

Then he says, v 31: "Let all bitterness, and indignation, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking be removed from you, together with all malice; and be kind... [change your ways; change your thoughts; change the way that you do things] ...*and* tenderhearted toward one another, forgiving one another... [That is the key! *Forgiving! Forgetting!*] (Remember this): ...even as God has also in Christ forgiven you" (vs 31-32)—and continues to do so and will as you yield to God. We need to understand that.

Ephesians 5—this fits right in with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. What are we to do? How are we to bring every thought into captivity of the obedience to Christ. How are we to guard the door of our mind? *With all diligence!*

Ephesians 5:1: "Therefore, be imitators of God... [That's the model for our conduct; not the world; not other people. Paul said, 'Follow me or imitate me as I follow or imitate Christ.] (here he writes): ...be imitators of God as beloved children... [not cantankerous, not foolish, not sinful, not filled with vanity, not filled with carnality. NO!] ...and walk in love, even as Christ also loved us... [Think about what He's done to love us!] ...and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor" (vs 1-2). Remember that! That is putting in the unleaveness of Christ: the Truth of God, the Spirit of God, the love of God. That's what he wants in us. That how it's going to be.

Notice what he says, then, concerning the works of the flesh, v 3: “But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, do not permit it even to be named among you, as is fitting for saints... [NO! Yet, the Church was filled with all of that. No wonder God had to spit it out of His mouth.] ...nor filthiness, nor foolish talking or jesting, which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving” (vs 3-4).

Then he reminds them in no uncertain terms: you can't live like the world and be like the world and expect to enter into the Kingdom of God; it's not going to happen! Verse 5: “For this you know... [you understand this] ...that no fornicator...” (v 5). *Spiritually*—bringing in the false doctrines of the ‘Christianity’ of the world. Why should we go to them and say, ‘How do you understand thus and such?’ How can they have any understanding if they don't love God and keep His commandments? They think they love the Lord. Many of them, I'm sure, are dedicated. But:

- What happens when it comes to the Sabbath?
- What happens when it comes to law-keeping?
- What happens when it comes to Holy Day keeping?
- What happens when it comes down to: should you take the Passover, wash one another's feet?
- What is it?

*Spiritual fornication!* or *physical fornication!* A lot of young people say today, ‘Sex is fine. Our teachers have taught us.’ You need to go through the old series I did on *Obsessed with Sex* (on ChurchatHome.com) You'll find out that you're ruining and destroying your own life.

I got an e-mail from a woman the other day. She said, ‘Oh, please pray for me and my daughter. My daughter was sweet and nice and she grew up and graduated from high school, everything was fine, and when she got to college she got involved with drugs. Now her life is a mess and I have a 13-month-old granddaughter. *The wages of sin is death!* And between death

- It's pain!
- It's misery
- It's rotteness!

And remember, the first and foremost sin of people has to do with sexual immorality! And the first and foremost sin of those who claim to be Christians is rejecting the commandments of God, the will of God and the Truth of God.

“...or unclean person, or covetous *person*, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the

Kingdom of Christ and of God... [no it doesn't] ...Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words; for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience” (vs 5-6). We're not to let those things come upon us. Listen, brethren, God has called us to Holiness, Truth, sanctification. This is what it needs to be all about. And we have a guarantee.

So, if you have things to overcome, sins in your life that you need to repent of—repent of them; God will forgive you! Strive and overcome; God will help you! ***Guard the door of your mind!*** Bring every thought into captivity to Christ.

Philippians 1:3: “I thank my God on every remembrance of you, always making supplication with joy in my every prayer for you all, for your fellowship in the Gospel from *the* first day until now; being confident... [We've got to have this confidence, brethren] ...of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you will complete *it* until *the* day of Jesus Christ” (vs 3-6). God is going to complete it. God is doing a work in each and every one of us.

- That's why we're here!
- That's why we keep the Sabbath!
- That's why we keep the Passover!
- That's why we keep the Holy Days!
- That's how we can grow, change and overcome!

Let's notice the prayer of Jesus Christ in John 17—we're not going to go through the whole prayer because we just covered it the other night on the Passover, but let's see the goal of what Christ is praying for us; what God wants for us; what Christ wants for us.

John 17:14—Christ is praying to the Father; this is the Lord's Prayer right here: “I have given them Your words...” Think about it, we've got the whole Bible—don't we? *All the words of God!*

- everything necessary to develop Christian character
- everything necessary for the completion of the work that God is doing in unto eternal life

“...and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You would take them out of the world... [A lot times we feel that way. A lot of times, because of the difficulties you're going through, we wish that that would be so. But He can't take us out of the world because we're still fleshly.] (We have to live in the world, but claim this promise): ...of us think about that but that You [the Father] would keep them [the brethren] from the evil

one” (vs 14-15). That’s the whole story of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—is it not? *Yes, indeed!*

“They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in Your Truth; **Your Word is the Truth**.... [tie that in with Eph. 5:25— *by the washing of the water by the Word*. That’s how we’re sanctified. That’s how we are made Holy.] ...Even as You did send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world” (vs 16-18). We’re the result of it. We’re here reading the very words that God wanted us to have, that the apostles wrote down. Isn’t that amazing? Their works are still preaching to us. So is Moses and all the Prophets and Psalms and teaching us. Listen, brethren, we have the fullness of the Word of God. The last thing we want to do is get into a Laodicean attitude and think: ‘Oh my, we have everything made.’ NO! We’ve been through that. We need to be repenting Laodiceans

- with zeal
- with truth
- with understanding
- with overcoming

—yes, indeed!

Verse 19: “And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, so that they also may be sanctified in *Your* Truth. I do not pray for these only, but also for those who shall believe in Me through their word... [That’s us! From that day down to the very last one who is converted.] ...that they all may be one... [One family, sons and daughters of God.] ...even as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You... [spiritually] ...that they also may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that You did send Me” (vs 19-21).

They haven’t yet believed it because the part of what God is working to complete is not yet down, and it won’t be done until the return of Jesus Christ.

Verse 22: “And I have given them the glory that You gave *to* Me... [That is if we have the Spirit of God. We have received that small portion of the glory of God, and the glory—another glory—are the words of Christ and the writings of the apostles and everything that is contained in the Old Testament.] ...in order that they may be one, in the same way *that* We are one.”

- That’s what God wants!
- That’s why God is molding and shaping us!
- That’s why we need to put the leaven of sin out of our lives!

And put in the unleavened bread of *Truth and sincerity* in our minds and hearts to lead us and guide us.

- That’s why we need to *guard the door of our mind!*
- That’s why we need to *bring every thought into the captivity to Jesus Christ!*
- That we may be ONE as They are one.

Notice how Christ explained it, v 23: “I in them... [through the Spirit of God] ...and You in Me, **that they may be perfected**... [that’s right where we started—isn’t it?] ...**may be perfected**...” Changed from:

- carnal
  - vain
  - sinful
- to*
- perfect
  - righteous
  - Holy
  - blameless.

That’s the meaning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

“...perfected into one; and that the world may know that You did send Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me” (v 23).

Brethren, let’s—during this Feast of Unleavened Bread—be sure and apply these Scriptures. Let’s set ourselves a course and a pattern *to be guarding the door of our mind and bringing every thought into captivity to Jesus Christ, and to bring in the unleaveness of sincerity and Truth from God and close the door on the leaven of this world!*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Leviticus 23:1-8
- 2) Deuteronomy 16:16-17
- 3) 2 Corinthians 9:6-8
- 4) 1 Corinthians 5:6-8
- 5) 1 John 2:15-17
- 6) Psalm 39:1-8
- 7) Acts 3:19
- 8) 2 Timothy 2:19
- 9) Galatians 5:14-21
- 10) Galatians 6:7-8
- 11) Galatians 5:22-25
- 12) Romans 12:1-2
- 13) Proverbs 4:18-27
- 14) 2 Corinthians 10:3-7
- 15) Ephesians 4:21-32
- 16) Ephesians 5:1-6
- 17) Philippians 1:3-6
- 18) John 17:14-23

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Numbers 28; 29
- Romans 8

- 1 John 5; 2:15
- Job 31:1

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

Sermon: *Which Came First, the Day or the Ritual?*

Sermon Series:

- *Obsessed with Sex* (churchathome.com)
- *Washing of the Water by the Word*

Book: *Lord, What Should I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter

FRC:bo

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