

The Spiritual Battle in the Mind

First Day of Unleavened Bread

Fred R. Coulter—April 9, 2020

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to the Feast of Unleavened Bread! Here we are still going forward toward the Kingdom of God, and like it has been all down through the history of the Church, the expectation of the return of Jesus Christ is always out in the future.

How far, we don't know! But in the meantime, we are to continue to grow in grace, knowledge and understanding of the Word of God. We are to do it every Sabbath, every Holy Day, every Feast, in fact, *every day of our lives*, as we will see with this Feast of Unleavened Bread.

I want to show you the consistency of God as we find beginning in Exo. 23. I want you to see the pattern that God has set, and why that is so important.

Exodus 23:12: "Six days you shall do your work, and on the seventh day you shall rest, so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your handmaid, and the stranger, may be rejuvenated. And **be watchful in all that I have said to you...**" (vs 12-13).

Don't forget what God has said. Think of this, because the next verse with the Feast, and I want you to compare that with the holidays of the world.

"...And make no mention of the name of other gods, **neither let it be heard out of your mouth**" (v 13).

What happens when they substitute Sunday for the Sabbath? *They get all the holidays of the world, and the other gods and Satan the devil!* So cleverly packaged, so truly deceived that they don't even grasp it, though they know they are pagan.

Verse 14: "You shall keep a Feast unto Me three times in the year. You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. You shall eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded you, at the time appointed in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. And no one shall appear before Me empty" (vs 14-15). *Then it lists the other Feast days!*

Exo. 34—this is after the golden calf. This is after God had to write the Ten Commandments all over again, because Moses broke the tablets when he saw what the children of Israel were doing. God had him cut two more tablets of stone, take them, and God wrote the Ten Commandments again. Notice how consistent that God is:

Exodus 34:18: "You **shall keep** the Feast of Unleavened Bread. You **shall eat** unleavened bread seven days... [not an option] ...as I commanded you, in the time of the month Abib, for in the month Abib you came out from Egypt."

Verse 21: "You shall work six days, but on the seventh day you shall rest. In plowing time and in harvest you shall rest. And you shall observe the Feast of Weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the year's end. Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord GOD, the God of Israel" (vs 21-23). **Consistent!**

Deut. 16—consistent again, because God is *the same yesterday, today and forever!* Remember that when anyone starts arguing about the holidays of this world, and that you don't need to keep the Feasts of God because 'we're under a New Covenant.' You can tell them that, 'yes, we're under a New Covenant so we can understand the Truth of the Bible.' Not that we can substitute the things of God with the things of Satan the devil.

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: 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, according to the blessing of the LORD your God, which He has given you**" (vs 16-17).

So, when we take up the offering, which we will in a minute, look at:

- your blessings
- what God has done
- what God has given you
- how He has given understanding and Truth from His Word
- how He has dealt with you with His Spirit
- how God has given us the greatest and most precious promises of all

The ultimate goal of the Feast of Unleavened Bread is to become like God!

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...**"'" (vs 1-2).

These are *appointed times*, established by God in resetting the calendar on the fourth day of the re-creation week. That calendar is so accurate that you can go forward in time into perpetuity, and you can go back in time. Notice that the ministers and elders have no choice; they cannot add to and they can't take away from.

“...which you shall proclaim to be Holy convocations, even these are **My appointed Feasts**. 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” (vs 2-3). *Same thing: Exo. 23, Exo 34, Deut. 16!*

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... [according to the Calculated Hebrew Calendar] ...between the two evenings... [between sunset and dark] ...is the LORD'S Passover” (vs 4-5).

We've already had that, the Lord's Passover and *the Night to Be Much Observed to the Lord*. That's not some sort of feast that some man invented. That's what God says it is.

Verse 6: “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 6-8).

Since there are no more sacrifices, we take up offerings on the Holy Days. This is the beginning of the Feast season, which started with the Passover. But now the beginning of the Feast to give us meaning and understanding as to:

- why we are here
- where we are going
- what God is doing
 - ✓ to us
 - ✓ through us
 - ✓ in us

To prepare us for the Kingdom of God!

With that in mind and remembering the blessings that God has given you, we'll take a pause and take up an offering now.

(pause for offering)

The greatest mystery of man and all mankind in the world is:

- Why are human beings so well-intended, but so evil?
- Why do they have such great potential, and yet, it all ends in catastrophe?

That's the whole reason for the Feast of Unleavened Bread!

Leaven during the Feast of Unleavened Bread pictures sin, human nature, evil, which is naturally in us. But the reason that it is leavened is because the action of leaven cannot be seen, but you can see the results of it. When bread is rising, with leaven in it, you can see the action of the leaven making the bread rise. But you can't see the leaven.

Likewise, why are human beings evil? *That goes back to the original sin of Adam and Eve and their disobeying the voice of God!* You know what happened there; God gave His judgment against Adam, Eve and the serpent, and also gave the first prophecy of the coming of the Messiah to save man from his evil.

Let's look at what happened to all human beings, every one of us all the way down through history. We know from the account in Gen. 3 that that sin was so grievous, so absolutely horrible right before God that the two that God created with His hands and gave into their minds a language so He could communicate with them. He gave them every opportunity in the Garden of Eden, but they turned their backs on God and followed Satan the devil.

So, the whole environment was changed. Now thistles and thorns being in the field of crops, and with sorrow and difficulty and labor and things like this. Not only that, it was passed on to all their progeny, all mankind, all men and women everywhere, every nation, makes no difference.

Romans 5:12: “Therefore, as by one man... [Adam] ...sin entered into the world...” *This is human sin!* It's not talking about Satan's sin, which occurred before the creation of Adam and Eve.

“...and by means of sin *came* death... [that's what God said to them, ‘dust you are and unto dust you shall return’] ...and in this way death passed into all mankind...” (v 12).

Every man and woman has the death gene! That's why Paul writes, ‘As in Adam we all die!’ Only through Christ shall we all be made alive, *with eternal life!* Adam could have stopped it when Eve said, ‘This looks good, let me pick it.’ Adam should have told her to throw it down and don't bother with it. He should have turned around and cast the serpent out of the Garden of Eden. *But he didn't!*

God judged Adam because Adam *listened to*

the voice of his wife, which is actually the repeating of what Satan said, *instead of listening to God! So, sin—or death—passed into all mankind!*

“...and **it is for this reason that all have sinned**” (v 12). *When you have a nature of death, you also have a nature of sin!* Without the Holy Spirit of God, with the world going the way that it did and following the way of Cain, and coming on down to the time of the Flood.

Just like Jesus said, ‘As it was in the days of Noah before the Flood, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of man.’ They were eating and drinking, and building and all of this. They didn’t know that the Flood was coming until it came upon them! Likewise, it’s going to be with the return of Christ.

I want to focus in on the conduct of people. I want you to think about the world today as I read this, and think about all the things that come along that look really, really good, but are enticements to evil.

Genesis 6:5: “The Lord saw...” *God has seven spirits traveling all the time seeking those who are seeking God!* He knows what’s going on everywhere at all times through that and through the power of His angels and through Satan the devil and the demons.

“...that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth, and every imagination...” (v 5).

Have you ever just sat down to think and your imagination is just kind of running wild. What do you usually end up with? *Something that’s not too good!* Once in a great while you may have a good thought that way, but that’s rare.

“...of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually” (v 5).

- Isn’t that the way that the world is today?
- Isn’t that the way that the Christianity of the world is today?
- Isn’t that the way of the societies?
- Isn’t that the way of the governments? *Yes!*

That’s why God has called us *so that we*—through loving God and keeping His commandments, Sabbath and Holy Days—**can be converted and changed** so that we can rule the world with Christ! *So, the stakes are high!*

So bad was it that God was sorry, v 6: “And **the LORD repented that He had made man on the earth**, and He *was* grieved in His heart. And the LORD said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and

beast, and the crawling thing, and the fowl of the air; for I repent that I have made them.’ **But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD**” (vs 6-8). *We’re all here because of Noah!* You need to think about that!

Let’s see what Jesus said that human nature was really like. I want to call your attention to something that we find in another account of when the rich man came to Jesus and said, ‘Good Master...’ Jesus said, ‘Why do you call Me good. There is none good but God.’

Hold on! He was God manifested in the flesh, but why did He not count Himself good? *Because He had to carry the law of sin and death within Him in order to condemn sin and death in the flesh!* So, He was not good as God is good as a spirit being. Let’s see what Jesus said about human nature, and this is from birth. All you have to do is read *Psa. 51*. It tells you that this is the natural state of human beings:

Mark 7:21: “For from within, out of the hearts of men... [and women] ...go forth evil thoughts...” —*all kinds of evil thoughts!*

Who is one of the great purveyors today—not the only one—that introduces children to sin and evil under the guise of fun, games and excitement? *Walt Disney! Universal Studios! Television! Movies! All of these things!* Look at them, they’re all filled with evil.

A lot of evil thoughts seem very good to people, because they get a benefit. Remember, **Satan always gives a benefit**, but that benefit is a **curse from within!**

“...adulteries, fornications, murders” (v 21)—*the leading crimes everywhere in the world with all human beings in every nation and society!*

Verse 22: “Thefts, covetousness, wickednesses, guile, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evils go forth from within, and **these defile a man**” (v 22-23).

That’s why Christ came, to save us from our sins. Conversion is not just so that we have better exterior behavior. There are a lot of people who have good behavior. But it is the conversion of the heart and the mind, and that’s what God wants. **That we will see is the meaning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread!**

1-Cor. 4 helps to understand about:

- the sin within us
- the righteousness that we need to follow

- what God wants us to do
- why leaven is pictured as a type of sin

It's because it puffs up!

1-Corinthians 4:6: “Now these things, brethren, I have applied to Apollos and myself for your sakes; that in us you may learn not to think of *men* beyond what is written, **so that no one among you is puffed up on behalf of one of us against the other.**”

That's what they were doing! ‘I’m of Apollos, I’m of Paul, I’m of Christ, I’m of Peter, I’m of whatever...’ *That's puffed up!*

Verse 7: “For what makes you superior to others? And **what do you have that you did not receive?...**”

I want you to think about that statement in everything that you have. Everything you have you have received beginning with your very being, and that came from God. Everything else came from God came through other people, and God has provided that, so that we don't get all puffed up, leavened up to exalt men! That's the opposite of what Christ wants. They were so puffed up that they were about ready for the Kingdom of God. *It doesn't work that way!*

“...But if you also received *it*, why are you boasting as if you did not receive *it*? Now you are satiated. Now you have been enriched. You have reigned without us.... [they were thinking that they were better than the apostles] ...And I would that you did reign, so that we also might reign with you. For I suppose that God has made us apostles last, as it were appointed to death; for we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. *We are* fools for the sake of Christ, but you *are* wise in Christ...” (vs 7-10).

- Isn't that the way it becomes?
- Isn't that why God had to punish His Church and scatter it?
- *Yes, indeed!*

“...we *are* weak, but you *are* strong; you *are* glorious, but we *are* without honor” (v 10). *What a thing that Paul had to fight!*

Verse 11: “To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and wander without a home; and we labor, working with our own hands. When railed at, we bless; when persecuted, we bear *it*; when reviled, we entreat; for unto this day we are as *the* refuse and *the* off-scouring of the world” (vs 11-13). *He had a purpose in writing that!*

We will see what that is. To get to the very heart and core of human nature, and why it needs to be converted and changed. That's what the Feast of Unleavened Bread is all about. ***That we do not stay with the way that we are! We have to continually:***

- shed the evil
- shed the things of the flesh

and learn the things of God and the things of the Spirit that are far more important than anything else!

Verse 14: “I do not write these things to make you ashamed, but as my beloved children I warn *you*. For you might have ten thousand tutors in Christ, but *you do* not *have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I did beget you through the Gospel” (vs 14-15).

That doesn't make him a father, he's just using an analogy!

Verse 16: “Therefore, I am exhorting you to be imitators of me.” *Later we will see that Paul told the Ephesians to be imitators of God!*

Verse 17: “For this cause I sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved son, and faithful in *the* Lord, who will remind you of my ways that *are* in Christ, exactly as I teach everywhere in every church. Now, some of you are puffed up... [filled with vanity and great ideas of the flesh and mind] ...as though I were not coming to you; but I shall come to you shortly, if the Lord wills; and **I will know not merely the words of those who are puffed up, but the power**” (vs 17-19).

The power and Spirit of God is what we're looking for; not human persuasion, not human things, ***but what God wants us to do!***

Verse 20: “For the Kingdom of God *is* not in words, but in power. What do you desire?... [they were really in bad shape, so Paul was giving them an option] ...Shall I come to you with a rod... [correct you, verbally beat you up so you will repent] ...or in love and a spirit of meekness?” (vs 20-21).

Why did Paul say that? *Because they were starting to make a carnal religion out of the way of God!* They were allowing sin, disaster, arguments, competitiveness and quarrels against each other.

1 Cor. 5 becomes a very important chapter for the Feast of Unleavened Bread

1 Corinthians 5:1: “*It* is commonly reported... [and known] ...*that there is* sexual immorality among you, and such immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—*allowing* one to have *his own* father's wife”—*incest with the step-*

mother!

Verse 2: “**You are puffed up...**” *Same thing that we have today with this world of the alphabet perversion!* There are so many genders that you have to take every letter of the 26 letters of the English alphabet and that will stand for some perversion of sex.

“...and did not grieve instead, so that he who did this deed might be taken out of your midst. For I indeed, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged *concerning* him who has so *shamelessly* committed this *evil deed* as if I were present: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, and my spirit, together with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ. To deliver such a one to Satan for *the* destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus” (vs 2-5).

That’s the total power of correction that the Church has: *disfellowshipment!* **You cannot have people living in gross sin while strutting around as righteous creatures!**

Verse 6: “To deliver such a one to Satan for *the* destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying *is* not good. Don’t you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?”

This is why we have the Sabbath every week, and we have the annual Feasts every year when they come, because sin during the Feast of Unleavened Bread is pictured as leaven! If you don’t nip the sin in the bud and get rid of it, then it leavens and leavens! Look at what happened during the days of Solomon.

Solomon was so evil with all of his wives and concubines, and false religions, incense burning and temple building for their gods, that God had to take away the ten northern tribes from him because of his evil!

If you don’t stop sin in the beginning, it will grow and become worse! That’s the whole lesson of the Feast of Unleavened Bread!

Verse 7: “Therefore, purge out the old leaven...” *The attitude of the man living in sexual immorality and having that sin within the congregation, purge it out!*

“...so that you may become a new lump, even as you are unleavened...” (v 7).

Here’s a good example. They were unleavened in their homes, because we’re to get rid of the leaven in our homes. But they put up with this sexual immorality as a good thing! Why do we do

all of this that we are doing, and here’s the crux of the whole matter up to this point:

“...**For Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us**” (v 7). *His shed blood for the forgiveness of sin! His stripes for the healing of our sicknesses!* God manifested in the flesh, the One Who gave the law of sin and death into Adam and Eve and passed on to all human beings.

Now He came and took it upon Himself and lived a perfect life and didn’t sin. He was crucified and His shed blood and body was the perfect sacrifice for the sin of the whole world!

But it’s *not yet* given to the whole world! **It is now given to the firstfruits, those of us whom God has called at this time!**

Verse 8: “**For this reason...**”—*based on the very fact that Christ was our Passover, crucified on the Passover Day—the 14th day of the 1st month!*

“...let us keep the Feast... [he describes it here, the Feast of Unleavened Bread] ...not with old leaven... [not with the old sins that you still have in your life] ...nor with *the* leaven of malice and wickedness... [all these things within your mind] ...**but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and Truth.**” *That’s what God wants!*

- His Word is Truth
- His Spirit is Truth
- Christ is the Truth, the Life and the Way
- The Word of God is the Truth

All of this must be taken in to transform our mind and our life, and to be eaten! The Word of God says, **‘Taste and see that the Lord is good.’** That means His Word!

- it will nourish us spiritually
- it will teach us mentally
- it will correct us when we sin
- it will encourage us when we’re discouraged

All of this is in the Word of God, and God has given all of this to us now! We, in this generation, have the entire Word of God.

- What are we going to do with it?
- Are we going to be like Corinthians and let sin abound in the congregation and just let it be?

or

- Are we going to love and serve God, and do what He wants?

That’s the question! The reason that we keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread is because that unleavened bread pictures sinless food!

In Gal. 5 there were quite a few things at stake, as we've covered in the Galatians series, but one of them was circumcision. We have covered that, but those of the Pharisaical party said, 'It's impossible to be saved without physical circumcision.' ***That's not true!*** We're going to show that it's impossible to be saved without ***spiritual circumcision of the heart!***

Galatians 5:9: A little leaven leavens the whole lump. I am persuaded concerning you in *the* Lord that you will be otherwise minded; and he who troubles you shall bear the judgment, whoever he may be. But I, brethren, if I still proclaim circumcision, why am I yet being persecuted? Then the offense of the cross has been taken away. I would *that* they would even make themselves eunuchs—those who are throwing you into confusion” (vs 9-12).

- Do we have confusion today because of false doctrine within the Churches of God?
Yes!
- Why is that? *Because they are not rightly dividing the Word of God and truly following in an unleavened sense!*
 - ✓ changing the meaning of the Bible
 - ✓ changing the meaning of doctrine

WOE to those who do that! Doctrine is important and we have to:

- guard the Truth
- guard the doctrine
- guard the teaching
- guard our mind
- guard our lives

All of that together!

Verse 13: “For you have been called unto freedom, brethren; only do not *use* this freedom for an occasion to the flesh; rather, serve one another with love. For the whole Law is fulfilled in this *commandment*: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’” (vs 13-14).

Notice what Paul warns if there's leaven within the congregation, *spiritual leaven*, and you're not loving the brethren as yourself, and you're not loving the brethren as Christ has loved us, what happens?

Verse 15: “But if you bite and devour one another, watch out *lest* you be consumed by one another.”

How do we overcome that? *We've all gone through this!* That's why we need the Feast of Unleavened Bread each year, so we can cleanout all

the leaven that accumulates, that we have allowed because we haven't been diligent enough to put it away regularly. Paul says, ‘Here's the solution':

Verse 16: Now *this* I say, ***walk by the Spirit***, and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” *Here Paul is showing that ***the spiritual battle is in the mind!*** ***IF*** you walk by the Spirit:*

- loving God
- continually growing in grace and knowledge
- using the Spirit of God to lead and guide you

THEN you're not going to fulfill the lust of the flesh!

Paul shows that it's a ***spiritual battle!*** So, let's understand that the Spirit of God within us is that which convicts us of sin. We've all got a whole lifetime of sin piled up in our mind! ***That has to be expunged!*** We will see how Paul says that is to be done.

Verse 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. But if you are led by *the* Spirit, you are not under *works of law*” (vs 17-18)—*because God's Spirit will lead you!*

Then Paul lists all the works of the flesh! Because you find sin within, don't get discouraged; that is God's Spirit revealing it to you. If you did not have the Spirit of God in you, you really wouldn't know that that was sin. There would be no way. So, don't be discouraged because ***it's God Spirit helping you to see the evil that is still within so you can repent of it and overcome it!***

Romans 8:1: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who are not walking according to *the* flesh, but according to *the* Spirit.”

We will see what that means and how—through the Feast of Unleavened Bread and drinking in of Truth and righteousness and God's way—that we

- overcome the sin
- get it out of our lives
- grow in grace and knowledge

(go to the next track)

Romans 8:1: “Consequently, *there is* now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus...”

That is having this battle going on between your mind and your thoughts, and bringing your thoughts into captivity to Christ! With the Spirit of God, the Spirit of God is revealing those things to

you so you can repent. If you repent there is no condemnation.

“...**who are not walking according to the flesh**, but according to *the Spirit*” (v 1). *If you’re walking according to the Spirit it means that:*

- God is first in your life
- you want to do the things that please Him
- you obey His voice
- you keep His commandments
- you keep His Sabbath and Holy Days
- you are growing in grace and knowledge through:
 - ✓ prayer
 - ✓ study
 - ✓ living

Verse 2: “Because the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has delivered me from the law of sin and death.” *He didn’t take it away, but He has given deliverance:*

- through Christ
- through repentance
- through learning how to live righteously from the Word of God

Verse 3: “For what was impossible for the Law to do...” *Let’s stop right here and understand Law!*

Law tells us what to do and what not to do, *but law has no power to make you do one thing or the other! But God’s Spirit has the power*, that’s the key.

“...in that it was weak through the flesh, God having sent His own Son in *the likeness of sinful flesh*, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh” (v 3)—*and that flesh was the flesh of Christ!* So, it’s already been condemned.

- that’s why God is *willing to forgive*
- that’s why there is *overcoming*
- that’s why there is *repentance*

All of those things are important because they come through the motivation of the Spirit of God!

The reason that Christ came was for this, v 4: “In order that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us...”

The perfect spiritual nature of the Law becomes fulfilled in us through the power of God’s Spirit. ***But*** only to those who are converted.

“...**who are not walking according to the flesh**... [who are the unconverted] ...but according

to *the Spirit*” (v 4). *That’s:*

- the love of God
- the laws of God
- the commandments of God
- the Truth of God

Verse 5: “For those who walk according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh...” *They wouldn’t even be concerned with any of those thoughts, because they couldn’t know or understand:*

- what is right and what is wrong
- what is true and what is not true
- what is evil and what is righteous

It’s an impossibility!

“...but those who walk according to *the Spirit* mind the things of the Spirit” (v 5)—*that’s the things of God!*

In God’s way of life, we’re to grow in grace and knowledge, have the laws and commandments written in our heart and mind so that we can walk in the Spirit, ***and do those things that are motivated by:***

- the Spirit of God
- the love of God
- the Truth of God

That’s spiritual-mindedness!

Verse 6: “For to be carnally minded is death... [there’s no salvation] ...but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace... [with God now] ...because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God, for it is not subject to the Law of God; neither indeed can it *be*. But those who are in *the flesh* cannot please God” (vs 6-8). ***It’s impossible to please God without the Spirit of God!***

They may be able to do some ‘good’ things, ***but that has nothing to do:***

- with conversion
- with overcoming
- with loving God

Verse 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.” *That’s quite a thing!* This is why the Feast of Unleavened Bread:

- we get rid of the sin
- we have our mind converted
- we have our mind changed
- we are conscious of truth

- we are conscious of the love of God
- we are conscious of the things of God

because we are minding the things of the Spirit of God! That's the whole purpose of Unleavened Bread.

Let's see how this is done; let's see the spiritual action of God within our mind when we repent and are baptized and receive the Spirit of God. There is something that happens in our mind that is unseen and unfelt, but it happens. The Spirit of God: if we are to grow in grace and knowledge and the Spirit of God. How is this done? ***We will see that this is called the circumcision of the heart!***

Colossians 2:6: "Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, be walking in Him..."—*walking in the way of the Lord!* Look at all the Psalms that we have covered that He will:

- direct your paths
- direct your thoughts
- guide your way

IF you're walking in Him, that will happen!

- yes, we'll have trials
- yes, we'll have difficulties
- yes, we'll have things we have to overcome

That's all part of being perfected! As long as we are in the flesh we're still in the process of being perfected.

Verse 7: "Being rooted and built up ***in Him***, and being confirmed in the faith, exactly as you were taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving."

Think of everything that we have with the Word of God. Today we have so much, and yet, you need to understand that even if we have many, many different things, many booklets, many books, many studies, these are all necessary for us to grow in grace and knowledge.

We can't say, 'Look at all that we have, we've got it made.' ***Nonsense! The only time we will have it made is at the resurrection!*** Keep that in mind! We know that Satan is always coming around trying to knock down what Christ has built up in us. He does this through different things:

- by people
- by means
- by practices
- etc.

Verse 8: "***Be on guard***... [we always have to have our guard up] ...***so that no one takes you captive through philosophy***..."—*the religion of*

this world!

Let me state a truth that you already know: ***all philosophy is logical to the human mind, but all logic of philosophy is not true to the Word of God! But all of the Word of God is spiritually logical!*** I'll just let you take those things and think on that!

"...and vain deceit, according to the traditions of men... [it can be an old tradition or a new tradition] ...according to the elements of the world... [the way the world thinks, believes] ...and ***not according to Christ.***"

It's logical by philosophy to have Sunday as a day of worship. ***But it is not Truth!*** and ***It's not according to Christ!*** Who declared Himself to be the Lord of the Sabbath? ***None other than Jesus Christ!*** Man was not made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath was made for man, therefore, the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath Day, ***not Sunday!*** But it sounds logical, but it's not true. ***Nor is logical according to the Word of God!***

Verse 9: "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." ***Do you want to know how to become like God?*** *It tells us here that it's through Christ!*

Verse 10: "And you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power in Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ" (vs 10-11).

This is the circumcision of the heart! How is that done?

Verse 12: "Having been buried with Him in baptism, by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead. For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses. He has blotted out the note of debt against us *with* the decrees of *our* sins, which was contrary to us; and He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross" (vs 12-14).

Now let's see how Paul describes it another way. This is the way that God:

- calls us out of the world
- gives us His Holy Spirit
- changes our heart and mind

It' through the circumcision of the heart! That takes away the raw carnality of the heart of flesh!

Here's where we were when God started working with us, every single one of us:

Ephesians 2:1: “Now, you were dead in trespasses and sins... [that’s why Jesus said, ‘Let the dead bury their dead’—*they’re spiritually dead*] ...in which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air... [Satan the devil] ...**the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience**” (vs 1-2). *Satan is training their minds:*

- with his way
- with his thoughts
- with his religion
- with his logic
- with his rebellion against God

It all sounds so good to the carnal mind! But notice what it really is:

Verse 3: “Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind...” *A lot of good discipline of the mind:*

- to do better
- to become better
- to increase
- to be more successful
- to make more money
- to be stronger
- to be thinner
- to be more beautiful

*Whatever! **All of those things are not of Christ!*** They may have a temporary benefit, but they’re still all sin, *because they don’t lead to life!*

“...and were by nature *the* children of wrath, even as the rest of *the world*” (v 4).

Then all of a sudden, one day something happened! *God intervened in your life!*

Verse 4: “But God, Who is rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (*For you have been saved by grace.*)”

The love and grace came with the Spirit of God and began to deal in your life, and then led you to baptism, after repenting, and the receiving of the Holy Spirit of God. *God has a great plan for us!*

Verse 8: “For by grace you have been saved through faith...”

- you came to repentance
- you believed in Christ
- you believed in the commandments of God

- you saw your sins
- you abhorred yourself
- you abhorred your thoughts

And you had them all buried in the watery grave of baptism! When that happened you were *co-crucified with Christ!* *An amazing spiritual operation!*

“...and this *especially* is not of your own selves; **it is the gift of God**... [here’s a verse that’s a little tricky]: ...not of works... [*our works, our ways or the traditions of men*] ...so that no one may boast. For **we are His workmanship**...” (vs 8-10). *Christ is doing a work in each one of us! Every single one of us!*

“...being created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them” (v 10). *That is the way of the Truth! Also called **the way of the Lord!***

- through our yielding to God
- through prayer and study
- through keeping the commandments of God *which are the works He wants us to walk in*
- through changing, repenting, growing and overcoming
- through keeping the Sabbath and Feasts of God

we are developing and growing in the mind of Christ in preparation for the day of the resurrection!

That’s what it’s all about, and it begins with the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Quite a thing indeed! Let’s see how Paul writes of this, and puts it all together for us, *so that we know that:*

- we have the Spirit of God
- God is working with us
- God is leading us
- God is teaching us
- God is giving us of His way

Colossians 1:9: “For this cause we also, from the day that we heard of *it*, do not cease to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will... [the more we study the Word of God, the more we have the knowledge of His will] ...in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.”

All of that comes from God. This is not knowledge to puff us up and make us great of ourselves. *It is knowledge to make us spiritually strong in the Lord!* Notice that it depends on how we’re living, and the way that we live:

Verse 10: “That you may **walk worthily of**

the Lord...” *That’s why we pray every day that:*

- we walk worthily of the Lord
- keep His commandments
- do what is right
- repent of our sins
- grow and overcome

“...unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and growing in the knowledge of God” (v 10). ***That’s what God wants!***

Listen! There is so much in the Word of God for us that God wants us to learn, that we have to study and re-study, and go over the Word of God over and over again. ***There is no way that we can glean—even with the greatest minds that could possibly be—all that God has in His Word for us!***

It’s a marvelous and a fantastic thing! Brethren, we all ought to be growing in knowledge and grace. I’m still learning things. Never can we say that ‘I’ve been in the Church for so long, Satan has no interest in me.’ ***That becomes dangerous thinking!***

Verse 11: “Being strengthened with all power... [the power of God] ...according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy.”

So, there’s going to be difficult times! But with joy, because we see the goal, the Kingdom of God, being sons and daughters of God, living with God forever!

Verse 12: “Giving thanks to the Father, Who has made us qualified for the share of the inheritance of the saints in the Light.”

Isn’t that amazing? God the Father Himself is dealing directly in each one of our lives individually. That’s something to think about. It doesn’t matter who you are or where you’ve been or what you have done.

- it matters what God is doing with you *now*
- how you are growing in grace and knowledge *now*
- how you are overcoming *now*

Take that every day, day-by-day, by week, by month, by year for however long we may live in the flesh!

Notice what the Father has done. This is quite a statement here.

Verse 13: “**Who has personally rescued us from the power of darkness...**” — *the rule of Satan the devil!* Think about that! God the Father Himself has dealt in our lives individually and particularly to accomplish that.

“...and has transferred *us* unto the Kingdom of the Son of His love” (v 13). *We’re not in it, but we are under it!*

Verse 14: “In Whom we have redemption through His own blood... [on a continuous basis] ...*even* the remission of sins... [that’s an amazing thing] ...Who is *the* image of the invisible God, *the* Firstborn of all creation... [by the resurrection of the dead] ...because by Him were all things created, the things in heaven and the things on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or lordships, or principalities, or powers: **all things were created by Him and for Him**” (vs 14-16). ***And we have a part in that!*** That’s what’s so important!

Verse 17: “And He is before all, and by Him all things subsist... [Christ is in charge] ...And **He is the Head of the Body, the Church**... [no man; we all submit and yield to Christ] ...Who is *the* Beginning, *the* Firstborn from among the dead so that in all things He Himself might hold the preeminence” (vs 17-18).

Christ is always going to be there at the right hand of God the Father! An amazing thing, indeed!

Verse 19: “For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell; and having made peace through the blood of His cross... [that we can have peace with God the Father and Jesus Christ] ...by Him to reconcile all things to Himself; by Him, whether the things on the earth, or the things in heaven” (vs 19-20).

That is a great exaltation of Jesus Christ, and the fact of this supremacy of His existence!

Then Paul brings us back to reality, v 21: “For you *were* once alienated and enemies in *your* minds by wicked works; but now He has reconciled you.” ***Get rid of the things in the mind! Be converted!*** That’s where conversion is, in the mind!

Verse 22: “In the body of His flesh through death, **to present you**... [this is why He did it, present every single one of us] ...**Holy and unblamable and unimpeachable before Him; if...** [there are conditions, and those conditions always exist as long as we’re in the flesh] ...indeed **you continue in the faith grounded and steadfast**, and are not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which you have heard, *and* which was proclaimed in all the creation that *is* under heaven... [a prophecy of it clear to the end of the age] ...of which I, Paul, became a servant” (vs 22-23).

Look at what the Apostle Paul went through

and everything he did to finish off the work of God as far as the writings of his epistles. It's quite wonderful thing, because the New Testament is the only, what they call, 'religious book' in the world that is written in letters, or epistles.

So, consider the New Testament *a personal letter from God to all of us who know the will of God! That's an amazing thing!*

Then Paul says concerning the mystery of God, v 26: "Even the mystery that has been hidden from ages and from generations, but has now been revealed to His saints." *You have knowledge that's greater than any of the great minds of this world!*

Think of that, *little ole us!* God has given us that knowledge and understanding.

Verse 27: "To whom God did will... [it was God's will to do it] ...to make known what *are* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, **the hope of glory.**" *Get out the leaven and put in the unleaven!*

Let's see how we do that. If very important how all of these things come about. The more you yield to God and the more you learn of the Word of God, and the more you put sin out of your life and put in the Word of God, that's getting rid of the leaven and sin, and that's putting in the righteousness and Truth of God. That's quite a great and wonderful thing, indeed, when you think about it.

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":

- of love
- of Truth
- of obedience
- of serving God

Notice this command, v 2: "**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." *That's what we are to do all the time!* Quite a fantastic and marvelous thing indeed!

Ephesians 4:21: "If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, according to *the Truth* in Jesus: That concerning your former conduct... [the way you lived in the world before you were called] ...you put off the old man... [put out the leaven, bring in the unleavened] 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 21-24).

That's what God wants! The ultimate of being spiritually unleavened! How do we do this, because it's a task we have to do all the time.

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. Do not let the sun go down on your anger" (vs 25-26).

When that happens, before the sun goes down *you repent and get rid of it!* **Do not** go to bed and have a sleepless night of tossing and turning, because you didn't get it resolved before you went to bed.

Verse 27: "Neither give place to the devil"—*because the devil will be right there to encourage the hatred!*

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... [that's a big one] ...but that which is good and needful for edification that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not vex... [frustrate] ...the Holy Spirit of God by which you have been sealed for *the* day of redemption" (vs 28-30).

How do you frustrate the Spirit of God? *By not repenting when the Spirit of God reveals sin to you!*

Verse 31: "Let all bitterness, and indignation, and wrath, and clamor, and evil speaking be removed from you, together with all malice... [this is how our conduct needs to be] ...and be kind *and* tenderhearted toward one another, forgiving one another, even as God has also in Christ forgiven you" (vs 31-32).

Ephesians 5:1: "Therefore, be imitators of God..." **How are you going to do that?**

- with His Spirit
- with His Word
- with it begin written in your heart and mind

"...as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor" (vs 1-2). *This is what God wants us to do: put out the leaven, bring in the unleaven:*

- the Truth of God
- the love of God

- the way of God
- the teachings of Christ

Everything that there is, and that's why we keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread!

We've got the rest of this week to really put these things into practice, and to see how we can grow in them. Draw close to God in prayer, extra study, overcoming and yielding to God!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Exodus 23:12-15
- 2) Exodus 34:18, 21-23
- 3) Deuteronomy 16:16-17
- 4) Leviticus 23:1-8
- 5) Romans 5:12
- 6) Genesis 6:5-8
- 7) Mark 7:21-23
- 8) 1 Corinthians 4:6-21
- 9) 1 Corinthians 5:1-8
- 10) Galatians 5:9-18
- 11) Romans 8:1-9
- 12) Colossians 2:6-14
- 13) Ephesians 2:1-5, 8-10
- 14) Colossians 1:9-23, 26-27
- 15) Romans 12:1-2
- 16) Ephesians 4:21-32
- 17) Ephesians 5:1-2

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 3
- Psalm 51

FRC:bo
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