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## Holy Days 2021

Trumpets - September 7, 2021  
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**May 29, 2021 --- Issue No. 17**

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**Publisher:** Church of God, Bismarck, Darwin & Laura Lee, **Editor:** Laura Lee, **Assistant Editor:** Darwin Lee We do not necessarily agree with all contributors or their works submitted and printed in this newsletter. It is up to you to get out your Bible and see whether these things are true. Iron sharpens Iron

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## Articles

### Are You Sure Leaven Is Symbolic of Sin?

by John Leitch (Canada)

#### ***Christ Defines the Meaning of Leaven.***

This writer finds it strange why people will lock into John’s definition of sin (1 John 3:4) but completely ignore Christ’s definition of leaven (Matt. 16:11-12). **Christ’s explanation of leavening in this case is doctrine (Strong’s #1322-didache- meaning instruction or teaching-Matt. 16:11-12.** I believe a broader definition of leaven would be “something that causes change by its influence” and teaching is just one way.

Teaching can be based on sincerity and truth (God the Father’s leavening) or can be based on deception and untruth (Satan’s leavening). Teaching (or doctrine) in and by itself, can be either correct or it can be misguided. As humans, we all have been deceived into accepting a wrong type of leavening which allows Satan to influence us, but few people realize the Bible also speaks of a good type of leavening (Lev. 7:13, Lev. 23:17, Matt. 13:33) that influences in a good way.

#### ***Sincerity and truth, leavened with correct teaching (Strong’s #1322).***

This paper’s purpose is to show the bread Christ offered His disciples at the Last Supper, was a kind of bread, different than the unleavened type. Unleavened bread typifies affliction, remembering coming out of the bondage of Egypt (Deut 16:3) and also typifies sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5:8). The bread that represented Christ was bread much different than the unleavened type. The bread that represented Christ, had an effect of comfort (Matt. 11:29-30) not affliction; and hope of eternal life (John 6:51), not fear that death was a certainty because of sin. The bread offered at the Last Supper was symbolic of sincerity and truth leavened with correct teaching. Jesus Christ is the living word of God (truth) and is the light (teacher who supplies doctrine (*Strong’s #1322*) of the way (John 14:6 & John 1:4). In eating unleavened bread for seven days each Passover season, we gain a knowledge and appreciation for the true bread (Jesus Christ) that came from heaven, offered to us by the Father (John 6:32-33).

#### ***Is sincerity (attitude) and truth (God’s word=the Bible) all that’s needed?***

If all a person needed was a bible and the right attitude, then the gift of a teacher supplying doctrine and influence would not be necessary (Eph 4:11). The bible is the most published book ever and most people in North America have one in their home, but what influence has it had on their lives? The Ethiopian eunuch was sincere and had the truth (scripture) in his hand but was in complete confusion until Philip supplied the teaching (or leavening—Acts 8:27-35). The teaching (or leavening) of the Pharisees had an opposite effect, it led people away from God (Matt. 23:15). This is the type of “old” leavening Christ warned about and Paul wants us to purge out.

#### ***Was Jesus Christ Devoid of Leaven (Doctrine or influence)?***

It seems strange that a person could think Jesus Christ is devoid of leavening (influence); after all, there is a lot of teaching in the “sermon on the mount” alone. One of the titles people addressed Christ by, was “teacher” (John 3:2). The main

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purpose of a teacher is to have an influence on their students. If we let Christ explain the meaning of leaven as doctrine (Matt. 16:11-12), then has not “traditional Christianity” missed the mark by saying “His body is represented by bread that is lacking leaven”? After all, if unleavened bread is the bread of affliction and with no leavening (influence), then is a person not saying “The bread which represents Jesus’ body is an affliction to me, and without any influence? As Paul would say “let it not be”. Christ equated His words (doctrine) to spirit (John 6:63) and His influence, will have its effect (Proverbs 22:6) if one does not rebel against it.

***The symbolic bread of “the last supper” changed in the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD.***

Christ established true doctrine and people were amazed by His doctrine or teaching (Matt. 7:28, Matt. 22:33, Mark 1:22). Unger’s Bible Dictionary makes the claim (under the “Lord’s Supper” heading) that the Latin Church changed its representation of Christ from leaven to unleavened bread in the 8<sup>th</sup> century C. E. and I presume they have documentation of this. Are we to believe the early church that had been taught by the Apostles or had been taught by teachers the Apostles taught, had no idea what kind of bread typified Christ? Did it take approximately 600 years removed from the fact, to finally have teachers from Rome come and explain the proper type of bread to use? This writer finds this hard to believe.

***People today seem to disagree with the meaning Christ gave to leaven.***

Many people today understand leaven to be a Bible representation of only sin, rather than an alternative meaning Christ gave it as doctrine (Matt. 16:11-12). When leaven is understood as an influence (teaching in Matt. 16:11-12) it becomes clearer why they left the leavening or influence of Egypt behind (Ex. 12:39) and pressed on toward the mountain. At the mountain we find two loaves that are strangely enough, now leavened (Lev. 23:17). If leaven is only sin, as some would speculate, then why is it in these two loaves? God does not accept sin or a blemished offering. Could these two loaves represent Israel and the Gentiles who came out of Egypt with them? The Church in the New Testament also seems to be two distinct groups; the circumcised and the uncircumcised (Acts 11:1-3 & 1 Cor. 7:18). The two groups that escaped Egypt now had Jesus Christ’s leavening (teaching and influence) in their midst (1 Cor. 10:3-4). This is only speculation on my part.

***Throwing out the “old leaven” and becoming a new lump is the responsibility of called out people; not Christ.***

The culture of Egypt was nothing more than men influenced by Satan (Rev. 12:9). Satan’s influence is not only false (John 8:44), but it also leads to malice and wickedness. Paul called it the “old leaven” (influence or teaching) in 1 Corinthians 5:8. It is the called-out people who are to throw out the “old” leaven and influences that lead to malice and wickedness. It is the people who are to become a new unleavened lump, not Christ. Christ never did or ever will have this “old” type of leaven. The Messiah brings the true doctrine and influence to be added to the called-out people after they have dispelled the “old” teachings and influences (or leaven). Repentance (purging out the “old” leaven) comes before receiving the Holy Spirit (the true leaven). This true influence will act much in the same way as “the starter” in sour dough bread.

***Strong’s Definitions***

In the Bible, the Greek word for unleavened (bread) is “azumos” (Strong’s 106) used nine times in the New Testament and the Greek word for ordinary leavened bread is “artos” used at least seventy-two times (Strong’s #740). When a person mentioned leaven at the time of the Apostles, “artos” automatically came to mind (Matt. 16:6-7). The two were related in the people’s minds of that day. In the Last Supper accounts (**the day before The Feast of Unleavened Bread**) in Matthew 26:26, Mark 14:22 and Luke 22:19, Jesus took bread (artos), blessed it, broke it and gave it to the disciples. Christ claimed this artos (strong’s #740) represented His body. Christ also compared himself to leavened bread (artos) in John 6:33 where He called Himself the bread of life. Why did Christ, repeatedly compare Himself to “artos”? Artos is a word with its primary meaning, “a raised loaf”. Did the witnesses of the last supper, really witness “azumos” (unleavened) but instead recorded “artos”? What motive would they have to use a word with its primary meaning opposite to what they had witnessed? Also, a word which people of that day related to leaven (Matt.16:6-7). This writer believes the witnesses recorded “artos” because it was artos, the same bread the early church used up until the 8<sup>th</sup> century when it was changed by the Latin Church (according to Unger’s Bible Dictionary).

***Christ did not come to abolish the law.***

We all realize the law requires all bible-believing people to eat unleavened bread for only seven days once a year (Lev. 23:6). If unleavened bread is commanded to be eaten also on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan, would that not make eight days in a row, instead of seven?

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By cleaning our house of leaven each year, we are symbolically throwing the “old leaven” (old doctrine and vile influences) out of our lives much in the same way as Israel left the leavening of Egypt behind. Christ did not come to abolish the law (Matt. 5:17-18) so this is still required of us today. This unleavened bread is called the bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5:8) but is also called the bread of affliction (Deut. 16:3). We must throw out the old leaven (“old” influences) and strive for sincerity and truth (thy word is truth-John 17:17). Sincerity and truth, in and by their selves are entirely unleavened as far as the “old leaven” to which Paul referred. Paul also orders the people to not observe the feast with the leaven (influences) of malice and wickedness. If malice and wickedness are not purged, they will grow and spread. Their influence can be seen at a church gathering in 1 Corinthians 11:18-22.

***Lesson learned by the baking of bread.***

Paul, in 1 Cor. 5 draws a parallel between the spiritual growth of a Christian and the bread making process. Paul points out, that we should not keep the feast with the old leaven (or teaching). Much of the old doctrine of men, constituted teachings leading to bondage (Acts 15:10 & Gal. 5:1) and a behavior of malice and wickedness. Sincerity and truth, explained by a person with the gift of teacher (Eph. 4:11) are the opposite of that. We should not be leavened with either the old influences or evil practices (1 Cor. 5:11 & 1 Cor. 11:18-22). Discarding these old influences has given us the opportunity of a new beginning. The idea is to get back to the basic pure ingredients (sincerity and truth) and to start again. People who throw away their old doctrines and evil practices (“old” leaven) are compared to a new batch of dough. The point most people miss is that in bread making, the first thing you do to a new batch of dough is to mix in the leaven starter. The starter (the piece that has influence) is sometimes called the living bread because it contains a living organism. Christ also referred to Himself as the living bread that brings life (John 6:51 & verse 57). Does this living bread sound like unleavened bread with no life in it that cannot influence, or reproduce itself?

***A small amount of the living bread (the starter) changes the whole loaf.***

Bread through most of history, was made by a process that is known as “sour dough”. A small amount of leavened dough from the previous batch is mixed into the new batch. The pioneers used this method to make their bread. Sometimes the starter could live on (it contains a living organism) for many years. If people thought their neighbor had better tasting bread, they would request a piece of that neighbor’s starter. The starter contains life and under its influence would reproduce (with the proper conditions and time) a product identical to the original loaf the starter came from (if the ingredients were the same). “The property of a leavened product is to change or assimilate to its own nature the meal or dough with which it is mixed” (Adam Clarke) and Christ’s leavening (influence) will have a similar effect. Christ came from the Father and is now residing in each called out person. Using Christ’s definition of leaven as teaching (Matt. 16:11-12) we can see that if we are subject to His influence, then we will become more Christ like as time goes by.

***Throwing out the “old leaven” and baptism, teach a very similar lesson.***

A person, when they understand how bread was made throughout much of history, can see the similarity between de-leavening and baptism.

- Baptism represents the death of the old person who was deceived by “old” teaching and influences and sometimes was full of malice and wickedness (1 Cor. 5:8). The average person, with their focus mainly on the concerns of how they can make it in this competitive world, views the laws of God as foolishness. This is the very person that we put to death through baptism. Although baptism symbolizes death, we must not remain dead, flat and lifeless. The Christian must rise in the newness of life (Rom. 6:4-5, Col. 3:9-10) and renewed in knowledge.
- De-leavening also represents death because leaven is a living organism that will multiply and by removing it, you take that influence out of the host substance. (In this case, the influence that caused the old person to be off track and sometimes filled with wickedness and malice). When this old leaven is removed, all that is left is, the basic pure ingredients of sincerity and truth.

Being sincere and having truth is not enough. We need Christ’s leavening (teaching and influence) to understand truth. That is what the “sermon on the mount” was all about. A person needs a life-giving force, (like the leaven starter in the sour-dough bread), to give them the knowledge to obey God’s laws (Rom. 2:13): feed the hungry, visit the sick, watch over the fatherless, etc. Nature hates a vacuum. If a person remains in an unleavened state (of no teaching or good influence) for an extended period of time, sometimes the old leaven (the bad influence) will return stronger than before. Matthew 12:43-45 brings out this principle, although in this case it is about demons. The old man who was buried in the

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baptismal waters, could possibly return even more powerful than when he was buried, if no good influence replaces the bad influence.

I realize this is opposite to what many have believed over the years, but I would like the reader to notice how Christ's doctrine or teaching makes the law come alive, with the parable of the “good Samaritan” (Luke 10:30-36). Without Christ's teaching, the people who passed the injured man without offering assistance reasoned that they had transgressed no law.

***Is Christ required to throw out his true doctrine (Leavening) to comply with the law? Is Christ's leavening (doctrine and influence) regarded as the “old leaven” to which Paul referred?***

Some people point to Christ giving bread (Artos = Strong's 740) to the two men in Luke 24:30, and say that it would be against the law to have leavened bread because it was the Days of Unleavened Bread. The bread offered to the two men was leavened (artos) but **not** with the leaven that represented the “old influences”, but it was bread that symbolically represented the Messiah and His true doctrine. The two men, when supplied this bread which symbolized Christ Himself, recognized the Messiah instantly and we will also. Is there anyone that would believe there is old leaven in bread that represents Christ, who is the bread of life and leavened with the pure leaven (or influence) of the Father (John 6:57)? The only leaven Paul orders people to discard is the “old leaven” (old false teachings and influences). Why else would Paul use the word old, if there was not a new type to replace it? During “The Feast of Unleavened Bread”, all bread leavening belonging to humans is symbolically regarded as “old”, but this was bread, which was offered by and represented Christ Himself, the bread of life. **This was a one time symbolic supernatural event.** Just to restate again; “The property of a leavened product (good or bad) is to change or assimilate to its own nature the meal or dough with which it is mixed”.

Many people see the seriousness of purging out the old false leaven so it will not grow and engulf their whole person but are totally blind to the effect that the true leaven will have on them. We as Christians must choose life and feed on Christ's symbolic body. After all, that was one of the main reasons Christ came to mankind (John 10:10). “Christ is the bread of life” (John 6:48).

This writer finds much comfort in knowing that the true influence (Christ) will act in a similar way as did the “old”. It will be a process that will never stop until it is complete. The end result (if a hostile environment is not created to replace it) will be a person in the very image of God. We are in the process of being transformed (II Cor. 3:18). This has been God's will from the beginning (Gen. 1:26); to create a man that will not sin (1 John 3:9). This, of course, can only come about with the fulfillment of the new covenant (Jer. 31:31 – 34, Heb. 8:8 – 13).

In summary, just as there are two ways to mark the death of the Messiah (the first way is the biblical Passover and the second, the traditional Good Friday), there also seems to be two ways to partake of the bread and wine.

**A** Use unleavened bread, that has never had life in it and is incapable of reproducing itself. This bread has no leaven (represented as doctrine in one place-Matt. 16:11-12 but I believe in a broader sense, can mean influence that causes change) contained in it. This method of traditional Christianity frequently has unleavened bread and most often is supervised by an official representing their particular religious division.

**B** Use leavened bread, the same as was used by the early called out people for over 600 years, up until it was changed to unleavened bread by the Latin Church.

***Each person has their own personal responsibility.***

Each reader must personally determine what best typifies Christ for their self (Phil. 2:12), unleavened bread that lacks any influence or doctrine (Christ's definition of leaven) and could never in its existence reproduce; or the leavened bread that has no limitations on its influence. If you answered leavened, the bible does seem to agree. The bread is called “Artos”, with its primary meaning as, “a raised loaf” (Strong's 740).

## Other Items

### Masons and Masonic Halls

by James Steinle (Swanville, Minnesota)

**"Is it acceptable for a member of the Body of Christ to also be a member of the Masons or any affiliated group?" and "Is it proper to hold Sabbath services in a masonic hall?"**

I was intrigued by the questions asked by someone if it was proper to be a mason or to have services in a Masonic hall. Some years back I was able to procure a book written by Albert Pike in 1871 called *Morals and Dogma*. Albert Pike was the one who wrote how the three world wars would come about (just lacking the last one yet). I always figured it would be a great research book for the big questions surrounding the Mason questions. There is a lot of information on the internet about the Masons, both pro (<https://masonicfind.com/how-to-join-the-freemasons>) and con (<https://www.cuttingedge.org/free13.html>). I don't know if the 'con' people have all the right answers either.

I see from some of the articles that Masons or Freemasonry put a lot of emphasis on the Temple of Solomon and the Ark. In a pro-article it mentions, "The fact that God's name is not mentioned is not due to paganism but shows tolerance towards other people's beliefs." (<https://masonicfind.com/can-christians-be-freemasons>) "Freemasons mention the Supreme Being (or Great Architect of the Universe), but they do not see this as paganism as when they think of the Supreme Being they are thinking of God, who they believe is the real great Architect of the Universe." The question this brings up in my mind is, which God or god are they referring to, Yehovah El Shaddai (the All-Mighty God), or the god of this world, the Adversary (ha Satan), the great deceiver? The Mason's say, "Freemasonry is all about uniting men of good character, even if they are from different ethnic or social backgrounds." So, Freemasonry can sound good; the question is, is it? Peter in Acts 4 and talking under inspiration of the Set-apart Spirit and in relation to Yayshua Messiah or Jesus Christ, says in verse 12 "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Why do Masons not want any name used in their 'temples or halls? Just so they don't offend others of different beliefs. That would put me off. How would that fit in with having a service in one of their halls?

Albert Pike was a 33rd degree Mason and an educated and smart man. I don't know that he would appreciate what modern Mason rituals and rules are like now. He didn't even like what they were like in his day. He wrote in his book about the Masons in his day, "Masonry long wandered in error. Instead of improving, it degenerated from its primitive simplicity, and retrograded toward a system, distorted by stupidity and ignorance, which unable to construct a beautiful machine, made a complicated one. Less than 200 years ago, its organization was simple, and altogether moral. Its emblems, allegories, and ceremonies easy to be understood, and their purpose and object readily to be seen." (page 325, *Morals and Dogma*).

I do not know that I can answer for that other person who asked the questions about Masons, but for me, I do not plan on becoming a member of the Masons, nor would I want to attend a service using their temple or hall. Why complicate the life we have in the simplicity of our Master Yayshua with something that is questionable?

### Questions Answered About Masons

by Keith Slough (Kannapolis, North Carolina)

**"Is it acceptable for a member of the Body of Christ to also be a member of the Masons or any affiliated group?" and "Is it proper to hold Sabbath services in a masonic hall?"**

First question: A true Christian cannot be a Mason for TWO basic reasons. To be initiated into the masons, you must

- 1) believe and agree to the pagan doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and
- 2) you must be willing to take OATHS (forbidden by James 5) of secrecy. As a true Christian we cannot do these things.

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Second question: Why should there be a problem meeting in a masonic hall since Paul preached Jesus to the heathen on Mars Hill with pagan idols ALL AROUND him? A "hall" is a place to have a meeting. And Colossians 1:16 says all that was made was made FOR CHRIST.

**13 Colonies; The 13<sup>th</sup> Tribe?**  
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"America, conjointly with Britain, has a very important and noble part to perform in the affairs of humanity in the near future." – Adam Rutherford, 1934

PETER SELLERS SAID that if you asked him to play himself, he wouldn't know how to do it, because he did not know who or what he was. The same can be said about America and Britain today. We have lost our identity and our purposes in life. But if we did know our national identity, we wouldn't be just sitting around watching our decline and fall. A friend recently gave me a valuable, and timely I think, book. A few excerpts:

- The U.S.A. was formed by 13 states that signed the Declaration of Independence.
- The first flag had 13 stars and 13 stripes, and when first hoisted it was saluted by 13 guns.
- Their first navy consisted of 13 ships.
- Abraham Lincoln's prayer for the nation consisted of 13 petitions.
- The Great Seal has 13 arrows in one of the eagle's talons, and the olive branch in its other talon has 13 feathers.
- The American eagle's tail has 13 feathers.
- The motto on the scroll in its beak has the words E pluribus unum (13 letters).
- Above its head is a cloud with 13 stars.
- On the other side of the Seal is the pyramid, with 13 steps.
- Over the capstone is another motto, Annuit Coeptis ("He prospers our beginning"), again 13 letters.
- In the Great Seal are altogether 52 letters, 4 times 13.

I DON'T KNOW HOW TO BREAK IT TO YOU, BUT THE FOUNDERS WERE TRYING TO TELL US SOMETHING, AND I THINK THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO FIGURE OUT WHAT IT WAS.

This is a controversial, though mostly ignored, topic in mainstream academia. The history departments would poo-poo the premise of the book my friend gave me. Needless to say, the premise used to be accepted at least as one theory on our origins in earlier, more "normal" times. This is the title of the book:

ISRAEL-BRITAIN,  
or Anglo-Saxon Israel.

An Explanation of the Origin, Function and Destiny of the Anglo-Celto-Saxon Race in the British Empire and U.S.A.

In the PREFACE, Adam Rutherford (you can't get more Anglo-Saxon than that name) starts by mentioning the four great world empires predicted in a dream to the king of Babylon (and interpreted by the prophet Daniel). He implies the question, "Why wouldn't God prophecy anything about the empire that was greater than all four combined (and the sun still never sets on the English language, which is a propitious fact)"? Rutherford wrote his line about the "noble part" we would play seven years before we got into World War II, which prevented the complete extermination of the Jews in Europe. He concludes his Preface:

"This volume is written to explain the origin, function and destiny of these great Anglo-Celto-Saxon nations, including the U.S.A., and to show the Divinely appointed WAY OUT OF THE 'TIME OF TROUBLE' into lasting peace and prosperity..."  
" [my caps]

WELL, I'm running out of time on the library's computer, so I'll have to let you regurgitate and ruminate on this column until my next one.

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P.S. More to come.

PPS: In his first inaugural address, Thomas Jefferson said that God brought our first settlers here "as Israel of old" into a land with enough resources for a thousand generations. If we can keep it.

## **A Blast from the Past**

### **First Love**

**by Arlan Weight (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

**Continued from Issue #16**

#### **How Did It Happen?**

Think back, how many years after **Herbert Armstrong's** death was it that the keynote address at the Feast of Tabernacles was not reflective of that future time and the new world order, but was mainly again about the person of Christ? Was it one year or was it two?

The change was gradual but none-the-less, it was changing. The deviation of messages given from headquarters was very slight at first. In fact, it was almost indiscernible. But as time went on it became more and more noticeable in just about everything the church was involved with. Even the hymn books were changed. Why? What was going on? To this writer it seemed someone could not wait until **Herbert Armstrong** was dead and wasted no time to affect these changes.

The '**World Tomorrow**' telecast, the '**Plain Truth**' magazine, the booklets, everything began to be refocused. I was in charge of our local church library, and as I recall, nearly every week a new 'official' listing was sent out as to what was now to be acceptable church literature. We were told to get rid of many of the reprint articles and booklets as they were no longer valid. What? How could this be?

The church appeared to be focusing itself more and more on itself and less and less on giving out the gospel of God's Kingdom, the message we once embraced and committed ourselves to. In short, the church had taken its eyes off the goal. It had lost its way. Why? Because it had **changed the message**.

It was a conditioning process. It took about 7 years from the time of **Herbert Armstrong's** death to make the complete change over. It started at the time of his death or possibly shortly before, and by July 1992 was complete. Notice the July 27, 1992, Pastor General's letter to the church.

"I call the changes we have made **growth**, not to obscure the fact that they are changes, but because I believe they **are** growth! It grieves me that someone can actually feel that the spiritual health of the Church is threatened **because we preach Jesus Christ!** Jesus says that if any will deny him before men, he will deny them before his Father in heaven. (Matt. 10:33). Jesus Christ, the Son of God who dwelt among us, died for our sins, and was raised from the dead, and sits on the right hand of God as our Intercessor and Ruler, is the focal point of all the Bible. **He is the Gospel. He is the kingdom of God.** He is the light of the world, the bread of life, and the prince of peace."

There it was! What started out to be a gradual, almost indiscernible leaning in the message, now was in print. The bold statement was made changing the message from what Christ preached to the person of Christ. Doubts began to enter the minds of some. They began to reason... "maybe we've been led down a blind alley... maybe the message we had heard was not all we believed... "maybe the world's churches were not so wrong after all."

Just think of the effect these words had on the church at that time. Whether we realized it or not, saying 'Jesus is the Gospel' or that 'He is the kingdom of God', made **Herbert Armstrong** out to be somewhat of a liar. Maybe it was not so bold at that time to make the statement, but his credibility was on the line. Suddenly some began to think **Herbert Armstrong** was not as truthful as we once thought. "Why, how do we know he didn't just think up this plan to build his own empire." Soon all kinds of rumors and allegations began to surface. They did not need to be verified. But the writing was on the wall. From this point on many began to lose heart. Why?

Why should this appear strange as happening? The Bible is quite explicit about certain things like this, but for some strange reason, we never thought any error could emanate from headquarters. Why that was 'holy ground', or so we thought. But somehow, we seemed to forget the words Herbert Armstrong drilled into us that we should not believe him or anyone else simply because they said it... "**prove it from your own Bible.**" Somehow or other we had forgotten the

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words of Paul as shown before that men would rise up "of your own selves... speaking **perverse** things." (Acts 20:30)

When we think of the word 'perverse', we generally think of something totally immoral or dirty. It carries with it that type of connotation. We say things like, "he's a pervert..." meaning a total deviate or shameful person.

The Greek word for 'perverse' here is '*diastre*', which means "to turn diversely". (**Young's Concordance**) In Galatians 1:7 Paul says, "there be some that trouble you and would **pervert the gospel of Christ**." The Greek word here is '*metastrepho*'. It simply means "to turn".

So, there you have it. The word in the Greek does not necessarily carry with it an evil or immoral connotation, except as maybe in the context of how it is used. It simply means to divert from going in one direction to that of going in another. It does not even mean something totally opposite either. It can mean a very slight change.

But what were the words of Paul? What did he tell them to do? He says, "But though **we** or an **angel from heaven** preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Here, even Paul recognizes that it would be possible for an 'apostle' to begin teaching something different. Didn't we know that?

Yes, many did. And from that time forward many began to withhold tithes and offerings. The interest, the enthusiasm people once had suddenly began to wane. The change in the message seemed to have a direct connection with the financial health of the church. Notice the August 25, 1994, Pastor General's letter.

"Income seems stable at about 7 percent below last year... The unpleasant news I bring to you now is that our projections for next year **must again anticipate a decline**."

By March 27, 1995, the income had suffered severely. Layoffs were now imminent.

"Last month I shared with you my sadness about having to terminate **hundreds** of church employees due to a **30 percent decline in income**"...

How quickly the church had gone from growing, to a steady decline, and splitting up. Could it have been the same as what happened to the 1st church age? Again, the words of Revelation 2:5.

"Never-the-less I have somewhat against you because you have left your **first love**. Remember therefore from whence you art fallen, and repent and do the first works or else I will come unto you quickly and remove your candle stick out of his place, **except you repent**"...

Had the candle stick been removed 'out of his place'? Had God removed his blessing from the church? Did the church of the 20th century rewrite the same history of the 1st century? Did we lose our **first love**? Did we substitute something else for the love we once had for that **message**?

### **Conclusion**

Throughout the 50 years from the mid-30's to the mid-80's the message **Herbert Armstrong** reintroduced to this world was that of God's kingdom and the world tomorrow. This was far different from what the churches of this world, even those claiming to be Christian, taught. Throughout that time also, he pointed out that the real god of this world is Satan and that this message struck at the very heart of what he has deceived the nations about.

Since **Herbert Armstrong's** death in 1986, many articles and books have been written condemning **him** and the **Worldwide Church of God**. But let us stand back and really think about it. Who taught us to really open up our Bibles and let it be that which we believe? He was the one who really showed us God's Holy Days verses the days this society observes.

As a result of his persistent efforts over those years we have come to really see some things we never knew before. Things which the so-called Christian churches never taught us. We have come to see God's plan for mankind in his holy days and by observing them we had come to understand these truths more fully. We have come to see God's plan offers life to all and that he has a timetable to deal with it. These things we came to see by observing the true holy days. In short, we've come to understand the truth of the Bible is far more fantastic and exciting than we ever thought before.

We began to see the Old Testament and New Testament as one. The message of the Old Testament is basically that of the same Christ and the apostles preached in the new. The Old Testament writers talked about rebuilding the 'old waste places, deserts 'blossoming as a rose', and people living long, abundant and satisfying lives.' There are hints of a resurrection and eternal life also in the Old Testament when you consider some things written in Job, the Psalms and elsewhere.

Chapter 11 of Hebrews talks of God giving many promises to the forefathers of old, which have never been fulfilled in their day. But the time is coming when they will be. How close are we to that day? In one sense we are 15 years closer than when **Herbert Armstrong** died. In another sense we are as close as our next breath because we do not know when

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that next one is that will be our last.

Yes, it is true, the **true gospel** has not changed, but some have tried to 'pervert' it or change it in some way. The god of this world would have us get our eyes off that future hope and stop growing, stop being excited about it. We must not let that happen. For many of us it was a hard-fought battle at first to commit ourselves. It was like Matthew 13:46 finding that '**pearl of great price**'. Once we found it, we sold all and bought it. Why now do we want our money back. Has the 'pearl' lost its value? No. Of course not!

Again, there are many voices out there who would have you believe all the effort and sacrifice you gave, by believing the gospel **message** was in vain. But let us clearly understand what the Bible says is **vain** and what is not.

In Matthew 15:9 and Mark 7:7 Jesus said, "In **vain** do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Jesus clearly says it is possible to worship him and do it all in vain. Until **Herbert Armstrong** came along, I did not know that this world's religions are following doctrines and practices that are not commanded in the Bible. When talking about Christmas, notice what it says in Jeremiah 10:3. "For the customs of the people are **vain**...

To the contrary learning what we did in the **Worldwide Church of God**, while **Herbert Armstrong** was alive..., what God says we ought to observe, is not in vain. But many folks are going about saying it was all for nothing.... wasted time and effort. But look what God thinks of that kind of talk. "Your words have been stout (hard, severe) against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, what have we spoken much against thee? **Ye have said, it is vain to serve God:** and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance..." Mal.3:13-14

What good was it to keep the "Feast" days? Yes, many voices out there are telling you it was foolish for you to travel each Sabbath 200 miles to observe it, listening to messages promoting the true observances. Many are saying we wasted our substance by tithing... spending all that money to promote the **true gospel**. They are saying it was utterly futile to support a building program for **Ambassador College**, which was to be a showcase to the world promoting **true values**. The words telling you these things God says are **hard, severe** against him.

If we begin to have regrets about everything, we've ever learned about what's true and what isn't, **that is the real tragedy!** But if we go on and so continue to fear God in the proper way by observing His Holy Days, striving to keep the commands he tells us, striving to overcome our own human natures, he says it is worth it.

He says, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought on his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels (**special treasure**) and I will spare them, as a man that spareth his own son that serveth him. **Then** shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

Furthermore, is God forgetful to forget your prior service? Just because the 'church' is presently scattered, does not mean he's forgotten you or the commitments and love you displayed toward Him or the other members you fellowshiped with in the past. "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of **love**, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." (Heb 6:10)

So, take heart, God says there's a time coming when we will know just who's who. He says it is not in vain to observe His Holy Days or that we have tithed and sacrificed in other ways. Quite the contrary... there is great reward...

Rather, let us look back on those times in the past when we had joy in fellowship concerning the big questions of our existence and that of the future... our lives and the hope of all mankind... the true gospel message...**the kingdom of God**. Let us remember our **First Love**.

(This article has been updated and re-printed from "The Church of God Messenger" September/October 2001— Issue No. 5.)

## **Iron Sharpening Iron**

New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)  
As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

## **Is Disfellowshipping a Christian Practice?**

by Mike Martin (York, Pennsylvania)

Scriptures ignored but that are relevant include Matthew 18:17 and Revelation 2. In the latter there are three places where Christ tells us that evil and evildoers are not to be tolerated within the church.

However, having said that here are some points.

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- 1) It is NEVER up to a church leader or subgroup of a church to make a decision to disfellowship, but ONLY the entire church. There is no support in the scriptures for anything less than the entire church taking a disfellowshipping action.
- 2) There is NO support for disfellowshipping for reason of disagreement of theology or practice OTHER than a person claiming as good that which God has identified as evil.
- 3) Divisions are never to be allowed, including disfellowshipping, over what Paul calls "disputable" matters.

**Response to: Is Disfellowshipping a Christian Practice? by Arlan Weight (Issue #4)**

## **Are You Sure Leaven Is Symbolic of Sin?**

**by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

Many times, an article can be true but the conclusions the writer comes to can be wrong. Not because the writer is trying to deceive anyone on purpose, but because he or she does not understand a certain point that he or she is writing about and it throws the entire conclusion off.

In this instance, the Bible does talk about good and bad leaven and I like the way John has described that in this article. On the other hand, because they ate leavened bread for the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:23) and I did check, it is leavened bread, John then comes to the conclusion that for the Passover we can choose to eat leavened bread.

What makes the conclusion wrong is as follows: Exodus 12:15 Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel. (KJV)

That means the Days of Unleavened Bread are only seven days long. According to the Hebrew Calendar Passover week starts on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan and runs to the 21<sup>st</sup>. Or from the 14<sup>th</sup> at even until the 20<sup>th</sup> at even. Either way you word it, it is seven days, and it is talking about the same period of time.

Because the Worldwide Church of God taught Passover on the early part of the 14<sup>th</sup> which coincides with what is known as the Lords Supper in the Bible this has caused a lot of misunderstanding as well as contention. Where the problem comes in is that Christ had to keep His last Passover Meal the day before the preparation for the Passover because he was going to die the next day as the Passover Lamb with all the other Passover Lambs. The thing is that you cannot eat the Passover Lamb before it is killed but you can eat lamb.

So, Christ was killed with the Passover Lambs the day after what is known as the Lords Supper in the Bible. The Passover Lambs were killed on the preparation day for the Passover which would be the latter part of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan. Passover/Days of Unleavened Bread starts the minute that the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan turns into the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan or at Even. Days are reckoned from one evening to the next evening instead of from 12 Midnight to 12 Midnight.

So, since the Lords Supper was kept before Passover/Unleavened Bread started, it was perfectly okay for Christ and His disciples to eat leavened bread. But once Passover/Unleavened Bread starts we are commanded to eat unleavened bread for seven days.

Worldwide Church of God taught that Passover (Bread and Wine) should be kept on the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> and that a night to be much observed should be kept on the actual night of Passover/1<sup>st</sup> Day of Unleavened Bread when in reality both the bread and the wine and the meal should all be on the same night, the very beginning of the 15<sup>th</sup> of Nisan. Then scripture fits perfectly, and it explains exactly why it was leavened bread they ate at what is called the Lords Supper.

Also, the wave offering is a grain offering which is offered during the Days of Unleavened Bread and the Wave Loaves which are leavened do not happen until Pentecost.

**Response to: Are You Sure Leaven is Symbolic of Sin? by John Leitch (Issue #17)**

## **Masons and Masonic Halls**

**by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

I totally agree with James Steinle's assessment of the Masons but for a totally different reason.

Back in the early 2000's Darwin and I were both disfellowshipped from "The United Church of God an International Association for cause (of course). But before we were disfellowshipped the church here in Bismarck North Dakota had been holding Sabbath Services in a Masonic Lodge for well over a decade.

I am originally from Wisconsin and the church there met mostly in schools. So, until I moved to North Dakota in 1999 I had essentially never been in a Masonic Lodge or Hall. However, as I looked over the podium either before or after services one day, I noted that professionally imprinted into the podium of the Masonic Lodge were the symbols of Satan.

Years before this while living in Wisconsin I knew a whole family that was involved in the Masonic Lodge and one day I was at their house and their 12 year old daughter was showing me her dress for "Job's Daughters" a part of the Masonic Lodge there and it looked exactly like the dresses I once saw in some sort of satanic movie I was watching as a teenager where these very young girls were doing some sort of circle dance around a sacrifice. When I asked her what they do at "Job's Daughters" I was told that the dress was for a secret ceremony and that is all she could tell me.

So, for those reasons I would avoid even going into a Masonic Lodge in the future.

**Response to: Masons and Masonic Hall by James Steinle (Issue #17)**

## **Questions Answered About Masons**

**by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

I totally agree with Keith Slough's answer to the first question, but I am having some difficulty with his answer to the second question.

It would probably be okay to preach in a Masonic Lodge to the people who regularly attend the Masonic Lodge because that would be a similar situation to Paul preaching to heathens on Mars Hill.

I am pretty sure the Masonic Lodge was not made for Christ even though He owns it. Masonic Lodges are places where they worship Satan. So, it would be better if you are in charge of making arrangements for Sabbath Services that perhaps you should make arrangements at a school or something similar and not in a Masonic Lodge.

**Response to: Questions Answered About Masons by Keith Slough (Issue #17)**

## **Holy Days 2021**

**Passover - March 28, 2021 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)**

**Unleavened Bread - March 28, 2021 to April 3, 2021**

**Pentecost - May 17, 2021**

**Trumpets - September 7, 2021**

**Atonement - September 16, 2021**

**Tabernacles - September 21 to 27, 2021**

**Last Great Day - September 28, 2021**