

How Must We Keep the Feast? First Day of Unleavened Bread

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Keeping God's holy days sets us apart from almost every other "Christian" religious group. And I put "Christian" in quotes. There are those who keep the Sabbath, but they don't keep the holy days and we do both.

The Catholics and the Protestants say that God's holy days are no longer necessary; they are no longer to be kept. In the fourth century, the Catholics said that these days were "Jewish" and so they changed from keeping the holy days. They said that Christ did away with the holy days. (The Tkachs in the Worldwide Church of God said exactly the same thing.) And all of those who make these claims ignore one very clear scripture. There is a scripture in the New Testament that says very plainly that we are to keep the holy days but in addition to that, this scripture also tells us how we should be keeping the holy days.

In 1 Corinthians 5, the context here is that Paul is correcting the Corinthian Church in general about keeping the Passover and about keeping the Days of Unleavened Bread which we covered a few weeks ago. But the context in the first seven verses of 1 Corinthians 5, Paul talks about casting out a member who was committing unspeakable sins. In 1 Corinthians 5:8 with the context of casting this person out and getting rid of evil, he says because of casting this evil out:

1 Corinthians 5:8. *Therefore let us keep the feast, ... (NKJV)*

The margin of the King James says "holy day."

1 Corinthians 5:8. *Therefore let us keep the holy day, ... (KJV)*

Now it can't get any clearer than that. Then Paul goes on to tell us how.

8b) ... not with old leaven, [not or neither] with the leaven of malice [or the leaven of] wickedness, ... (NKJV)

Three things: Don't keep it with old leaven. Don't keep it with malice. Don't keep it with wickedness.

Then he goes on to say in essence, please keep it; we should keep it:

8 continued) with the unleavened bread of sincerity and [the unleavened bread of] truth. (NKJV)

It's amazing how much is in one verse! In one verse, Paul establishes the fact that we should keep the feast; he gives us three ways that we should not keep the feast and three ways how we should keep the feast—all in one verse!

So, is there any doubt that the holy days are to be kept? Absolutely not. There are many other scriptures that show that. So in this one verse, Paul tells us that we should. He tells us how not to and, then, how to keep the feast.

Now we're in the Laodicean era. There is no question about that. The key is we don't have to be Laodicean even though we live in the Laodicean era. Therefore, these words that Paul is speaking apply to us today because, in the sermon I gave a little while ago about Corinth and Laodicea, we established the fact that Corinth was a type of Laodicea. So, these words apply not to just Corinth back then, but they especially apply to Laodicea and those in the Laodicean era today, but, as I said, we don't have to be Laodicean.

So, let's examine this scripture in detail to see how we must keep the feast. There are three things not to do and three things we should be doing.

We are instructed not to keep the feast with leaven. We're going to talk about the three ways we should not be keeping the feast.

1. The first way we should not be keeping the feast is with old leaven.

It says we cannot keep the feast, we should not keep the feast with "old leaven." What does Paul mean by that?

The Greek word for "old" is Strong's #3820. It's the Greek word "palaiós" (pal-ah-yos'). It means *antique*; that is, *not recent*. It means *worn out*. Now the root word is #3819, just one digit away, and it means *in time past*, meaning *old*.

And it's used in the context, as I said, with casting this person out who was committing these horrible sins. We see that, as with us today, Paul told this man that he had to leave the church and he told the people to cast him out. As they did with him, we are to cast out leaven in our lives today. They were casting out leaven. Paul told them to cast out leaven back then, but we need to do it in our lives today.

Also, Paul was referring to the way they were keeping the Days of Unleavened Bread and keeping the Passover. Remember what Christ said in Matthew 16? He said to the disciples, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees." And the disciples were confused. In talking among themselves they said, "Is it because we didn't bring bread? We don't have any bread." They didn't understand and Christ said, "Don't you remember that we fed all those people twice with loaves and fishes two different times—4,000 and 5,000? Don't you remember that? I'm not talking about bread." He says, "Beware of the doctrine" (which He says is leaven). "Beware of the leaven; beware of the doctrine of

the Pharisees.” So, there were Jews in Corinth and Paul was telling them, “Beware. Be careful. Don’t keep the feast with old leaven.”

Now, let’s go to Hebrews 8:13 and see what Paul was trying to get across to them and to us today about old leaven. This is talking about a new covenant, a new testament versus an old.

Hebrews 8:13. *In that He [referring to God] says, "A new covenant," He has made the first old. ... (KJV)*

The New King James translates that “obsolete.” The Hebrew can also mean *obsolete*.

13b) ... He has made the first [obsolete]. Now that which [decays] and [waxes] old is ready to vanish away. (KJV)

That covenant was going away.

Now look at the next chapter over, Hebrews 9:10. He’s talking about the worldly sanctuary in verse 1. So picking it up in verse 10, he says:

Hebrews 9:10. *Which stood [referring to the temple or the worldly sanctuary] only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. (KJV)*

“The time of reformation” refers to Christ’s arrival to change all of this. After the coming of Christ, the physical temple and the sacrificial system were no longer necessary Paul says.

11) But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, ... (KJV)

That is, not something built with the hands of men.

*11b) ... not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building [this sanctuary];
12) Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.
13) For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, [sanctifies] to the purifying of the flesh:
14) How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (KJV)*

How much more is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ than that of an animal?

15) And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first

testament, they which are called [referring to each one of us] might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. (KJV)

That covenant became obsolete in part because it was not based on obedience from the heart. There is a huge difference. We can obey when we have a gun put to our head, or we can obey because of selfish reasons, but the new covenant is in place because it changes everything. We obey because we want to, because we love God, which comes from the heart unlike the covenant which was wasting away, the obsolete covenant.

Let's go to Deuteronomy 5 to see in detail how they did not have the heart. They had the old leaven. They did not have the heart to obey a new covenant. Deuteronomy 5, we'll begin in verse 22. Remember Deuteronomy is Moses looking back, standing and looking into the Promised Land. He was not allowed to go over into the Promised Land, but he's writing this as a summary of what happened as he looks back.

Deuteronomy 5:22. These words the Lord [spoke] unto all your assembly ... (KJV)

Moses is talking to all of the Israelites.

22b) ... unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.

23) And it came to pass, when [you] heard the voice [of God] ... (KJV)

They were hearing the voice of God:

23b) ... out of the [middle] of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that [you] came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders;

24) And [you] said, Behold, the Lord our God [has showed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the [middle] of the fire: we have seen this day that God [does] talk with man, and [we live]. (KJV)

We're still alive!

25) Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die.

26) For who is there of all flesh, that [has] heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the [middle] of the fire, as we have, and lived? (KJV)

Now think about that. They didn't view hearing God's voice as a privilege, as an honor, as something that had never happened before. And they lived and they should have viewed it as a tremendous blessing, but they did not because of a reason that Christ, the God of the Old Testament, brings out. Verse 27, the Israelites said to Moses:

27) Go [you near], and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak [you] unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto [you]; and we will hear it, and do it. (KJV)

And in verse 28, Moses tells Israel:

28) And the Lord heard the voice of your words, when [you spoke] unto me; and the Lord said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto [you]: they have well said all that they have spoken. (KJV)

Then God, Christ, laments.

29) O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever! (KJV)

They didn't have the heart.

And just as in Corinth, this fornicator's behavior did not work and he had to be cast out of the church, the old leaven and the old way does not work. We can't keep the feast with the old leaven or the old way. And the Corinthian Church was not keeping the Passover, not keeping the Days of Unleavened Bread from the heart. Just like Ancient Israel, they weren't keeping those days from the heart. They were keeping the Passover but some were hungry. Some were drunk. Some came to eat a meal. Not from the heart. And if it's not from the heart, it won't work. Nothing will work if it's not from the heart.

So, as Corinth was encouraged to do, we must put away Judaism. We must put away heathenism and we must put away sin of every kind and it must come from the heart, not with the old leaven, but it has to come from the heart. So, today in Laodicea and the Laodicean era, we must keep the feast, not with the old leaven, but with the heart. That's the first way we should not keep the feast.

2. The second way we cannot keep the feast is with the leaven of malice.

It's interesting that of all the words Paul could use in saying "Don't keep the feast this way," he chooses the word "malice." We need to figure out why. What's he trying to get across? The Greek word for "malice" is Strong's #2549 and it's the Greek word "k-a-k-í-a," pronounced "kak-ee'-ah." Zodhiates says this about the word "kakía;" listen very carefully. Kakía means, "*Wickedness as an evil habit of the mind.*" Notice this distinction, "*not only doing evil but being evil.*" He goes on to say that it is an act that "*emanates from being inherently evil.*"

That's a very important distinction to remember. This is not sin that results from a moment of weakness or just a flash of temper. It results from someone being inherently evil inside.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary says this about malice, which is probably the best definition I've ever heard: "*A disposition to injure others without cause from mere personal gratification or from a spirit of revenge.*" This means wanting to get back, wanting to do evil.

Let's turn to Titus 3:3 and see what Paul says to Titus because Paul addresses this just like he addressed it to the Corinthian church. Notice what Paul says and we can all relate to this.

Titus 3:3. *For we ourselves [all of us] also were sometimes foolish, [we were sometimes] disobedient, [for sure, we were sometimes] deceived, [for sure, we] [served different] lusts and pleasures, ... (KJV)*

Notice this last part!

3b) ... living in malice ... (KJV)

That's kakía.

3b) ... living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. (KJV)

He said we were all that way. And, if we're honest with ourselves, yes, we were.

Christ teaches us to live the opposite way of malice. We, as Christians, should not even get close to that. In fact, we should be 180 degrees opposite of that. Let's go to Romans 12:1. Paul had a lot to say about the subject of malice and how it cannot be part of our lives. We're talking about the second way we should not keep the feast. Paul uses the word "beseech" which is a powerful word. He said, "I am crying out to you."

Romans 12.1. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that [you] present your bodies a living sacrifice, ... (KJV)*

Not selfish, but sacrificing for the benefit of others and sacrificing to the worship and praise of God.

1b) ... acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service [or your reasonable duty].

2) And be not conformed to this world: but be [you] transformed by the renewing of your mind, ... (KJV)

Not the old way of malice but something new, something different.

2b) ... that [you] may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. (KJV)

Now down to verse 10.

10) Be kindly affectioned one to another ... (KJV)

That's opposite of malice.

10) Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; (KJV)

A self-sacrifice. Verse 14:

14) Bless them which persecute you: ... (KJV)

What a concept! Those that come after you, who have evil hearts against you, Paul says:

14) Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. (KJV)

That's the opposite of malice. Verse 17:

17) Recompense to no man evil for evil. (KJV)

There is no revenge here at all. There is no getting back here at all.

17b) ... Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18) If it be possible, as much as [lies] in you, live peaceably with all men.

19) Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, ... (KJV)

There should be no spirit of vengeance or revenge among any of us as God's people. Paul says what we should be doing:

19b) ... but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, [says] the Lord.

20) Therefore if [your] enemy hungers, feed him; if [he's thirsty], give him [something to] drink: for in so doing [you shall] heap coals of fire on his head.

21) Be not overcome of evil [by having malice], but overcome evil with good. (KJV)

Peter echoes the same thing. You can use as a reference 1 Peter 2:1 where Peter says:

1 Peter 2:1. *Wherefore laying aside [all kakía] all malice, and all guile, and [don't be hypocrites, don't envy, don't speak] evil, (KJV)*

Just lay it aside.

We get rid of kakía, malice, by putting on the following. Let's go to Ephesians chapter 4 and we'll read verses 31 and 32. This tells us the antidote for malice, for kakía. Paul says this is the way we have been and this is what we have to do, Ephesians 4:31-32.

Ephesians 4:31. *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice [kakía]: (KJV)*

As we see, malice is a motivation. It's the motivation behind evil speaking, and clamor, bitterness, and wrath, and anger. Verse 32, here is the antidote that Paul offers to kakía.

32) And be [you] kind [to one] another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake [has] forgiven you. (KJV)

On Passover night, it should be impressed upon all of our minds the depth of Christ's sacrifice and how through His blood our sins are forgiven. Paul is saying, "If He did that for you, you have an obligation to do it for all human beings no matter what they do to you."

Now go over to Colossians, a couple of books over, chapter 3 and Paul says this again in different words. He adds to it. Colossians 3, we'll read verses 8 through 10. This is a very important subject, and Paul repeats it and repeats it and repeats it to the churches and I'm sure he repeated it when he visited them face to face.

Colossians 3:8. *But now [you] also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice [kakía], blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.*

9) Lie not one to another, seeing that [you] have put off the old man with his deeds; (KJV)

Now he offers the antidote, the solution to kakía, verse 10.

10) And have put on the new man [the new woman], ... (KJV)

That's the key.

10b) ...which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him [Jesus Christ] that created him [referring to the new person]: (KJV)

So, our obligation, the antidote for kakía or malice, is to put on Jesus Christ, to be transformed into His image. That is, when we look into the mirror, do we see Christ in us? And do we want other people to see Christ in us? So the second thing that we cannot keep the feast with—malice—should never be found in any of us.

3. The third way we cannot keep the feast is with the leaven of wickedness.

What we're going to find out is that the words for malice and wickedness are linked together. They are tied together. The Greek word for "wickedness" is Strong's #4189. It's the Greek word "p-o-n-ē-r-í-a" (pon-ay-ree'-ah). And it means *depravity, that is, specifically malice* (They are tied together.), *depravity, that is, specifically malice*. Strong's also says, "Concretely plots to do evil, a plot to do evil." It can

mean *sin* and it also can mean *iniquity*. Zodhiates says "... *ponēria*, the endeavor to do evil to others which, emanates from being inherently evil (*kakía*). [Quotation located at #2549.] So, we see here that the malice, *kakía*, is the motivation behind the wickedness or the deeds that result from *kakía*.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary says this about wickedness: *Departure from the rules of divine law*. Can you imagine that in a dictionary today? But in 1828 Webster's says, *departure from the rules of divine law*; this about wickedness, *an evil disposition or practice*. It can also mean *immorality or sin*.

So you see, this form of wickedness that Paul is talking about in 1 Corinthians 5:8 is closely related to malice. Malice is the motive; wickedness is the deed.

Now there is a brazen example of that in the Corinthian Church that we talked about a few weeks ago. There was a member sleeping with his stepmother. Members were suing each other out of malice. Paul said, "There's a fault among you that you take each other to court and with unbelievers." He said, "You would be better to suffer wrong. It would be better to take it and be defrauded than to do what you're doing out of malice, trying to get even, trying to sue, trying to get back." There were members there purposely buying meat that they knew was sacrificed to idols. They were eating it in front of new brethren, maybe weak brethren and they were jamming it down their throats and the motivation was malice. "I'm going to have my way and I'm going to shove it down your throat." You can't keep the feast that way.

They also perverted the meaning of the Passover—not discerning the significance of the Lord's body and blood. When we come to the Passover, that is why we are in a somber mood because God, the God of the Old Testament—Jesus Christ our brother, our Savior—had to die because of my sins, my personal individual sins and He had to go through all of that suffering just for me and what I've done. That's irrespective of anybody else that's ever lived; it's still because of me. So, we come there very solemn and we want to discern the meaning of the Lord's body and the Lord's blood.

What about the leaven of wickedness today? Paul addressed it to the church in Corinth, but how does it relate to us today? Remember that Corinth was a type of Laodicea. And we remember what Christ said to Laodicea in Revelation 3. We won't turn there. He said that they were lukewarm—spiritually treading water. I think—it's just an estimate—but half of the greater church is spiritually treading water today, lukewarm.

Christ said they were rich and increased with goods. Yes. They focused on things below not things above. They were self-righteous and self-sufficient. That's the attitude of the Laodicean Church and we're living in the Laodicean era today.

Notice what Paul prophesied for the last days. We've read this before but let's go to 2 Timothy 3 to read the first four verses. And let's apply it to putting away the leaven of wickedness in our lives today in the Laodicean era.

2 Timothy 3:1. *This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.*
(KJV)

This is a prophecy for today. There is no doubt that these are the last days. Verse 2, the overriding factor is:

2) For men shall be lovers of their own selves, ... (KJV)

“Me first. Me before anybody else!” And because of that, they are:

2b) ... covetous [take to the self], [they] boast [brag about the self], [they’re] proud [look to the self], [they are] blasphemers, ... (KJV)

You can’t stand in the checkout line of an average grocery store and not hear God’s word taken in vain—blasphemy. You can’t watch a television program without God’s word taken in vain.

2 continued) ... disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, (KJV)

Meaning their focus is on things below, not things above.

3) Without natural affection, ... (KJV)

When a young couple pulled over to the side of the road with smoke streaming, not one car stopped. Not one car. Nobody. Just whizzing by them, whizzing by them. Nobody stopped. Smoke was coming out of this van. Nobody stopped to say, “Hey are you okay? Can I do anything to help?”

3) Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, ... (KJV)

That means no self-control.

3b) ... fierce, ... (KJV)

Notice this!

3 continued) despisers of those that are good, (KJV)

We’ve had many people fired from jobs because their immediate boss or the owners of the company despised them because they kept the Sabbath, they kept the holy days. It happens all the time.

4) Traitors, heady, ... (KJV)

Now, Paul used the word “high-minded.” That means “I need nothing. I’m above it all. I don’t need anything. Nobody’s going to tell me what to do.”

4b) ... lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; (KJV)

Rich and increased with goods. This is the attitude that Paul said was going to be prevalent today in the Laodicean era. And all of these are the leaven of wickedness, which we have to put away.

Now, we know where wickedness comes from. Let's go to Ephesians 6 and verse 12. We know who the author of wickedness is and we know that he can provoke us to do things that we in our right mind wouldn't want to do. Paul says:

Ephesians 6:12. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, ... (KJV)

Sometimes we get so wrapped up in situations, if there is a conflict or there is trouble, that we look to the physical. Paul says, "Don't do that. You can't look to the physical."

12b) ... but [we wrestle] against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places [heavenly realms]. (KJV)

The word "wickedness" is the same Greek word "ponēria," wickedness. So we must reject the provocations of the author of sin.

We've seen now three ways how Paul said in that one verse how we shouldn't keep the feast, the Days of Unleavened Bread—not with the old carnal ways, not with malice, not with wickedness.

Paul now instructs, in the second half of 1 Corinthians 5:8, how to keep the feast, and overall he says, "You have to be unleavened. You have to be in a state where there is no leaven in your life."

1. The first way we are to keep the feast is with unleavened bread.

That's symbolic. We understand that. The Greek word for "unleavened" though is very interesting. It's Strong's #106 and it's spelled in English "a-z-u-m-o-s." It's pronounced "ad'-zoo-mos" and it means *figuratively uncorrupted*. Leaven corrupts bread in the sense that it spreads through the bread. But unleavened for us, its figurative meaning is *uncorrupted*.

We talked a few weeks ago about how the Jew's religion became corrupted and tied that into the fact that "Christianity" is equally corrupted, equally polluted. Let's go to James 1:27 to see what James adds to what Paul is trying to get across. We have to keep the feast, the Days of Unleavened Bread in an unleavened state. We often focus on the first part of this verse, but we're going to focus on the latter part today.

James 1:27. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, ... (KJV)

Our ears should perk up if we want to know what “pure religion” is and “undefiled” is.

27b) ... To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, ... (KJV)

Notice this last sentence.

27 continued) ... and to keep himself unspotted from the world. (KJV)

What is James talking about here? The Greek word for “unspotted” is Strong’s #784 and it’s the Greek word “a-s-p-i-l-o-s.” It means *unblemished physically or unblemished morally—unspotted, unblemished.*

In this world today, with the advent of computers, television, modern technology, internet, all of that, it is so easy to become spotted just a little bit by the world—a little of the wrong television and movies, a little of the wrong books, a little of the wrong language, a little of the wrong thoughts and pictures that go through the mind, a little of the wrong motives. Malice is an example.

God looks for purity in us. He wants us pure. He doesn’t want us spotted from the world. Let’s go to 2 Timothy 2:22. Paul was talking to this youthful young minister, who had a lot of responsibility for a very young man, and Paul was giving him some advice.

2 Timothy 2:22. Flee also youthful lusts: ... (KJV)

And we remember in our younger days, we were full of those.

22b) ... but follow righteousness, faith, [love], peace, ... (KJV)

Notice what he says and then he adds to this. In addition to following righteousness, faith, love and peace, Paul says, “Follow with them,” meaning associate with them and notice the example of those ...

22 continued) ... that call on the Lord out of a pure heart [unspotted without malice]. (KJV)

It used to be in the old days in the 1700s and 1800s, certainly in the 1900s too that when a man and a woman were walking down the sidewalk, the man always walked on the street side with the woman on the inside. The reason for that was in the days particularly when the roads and the streets were muddy, that if a carriage went by or a car went by and splashed mud, the man would protect the woman from becoming “spotted”—her long dress. He would take the brunt of it. We don’t see that often today, but the fact is that he wanted to prevent the woman, his wife, somebody he admired, from being unspotted from the muck on the side of the road or on the curb.

And that is true of God for us. He doesn’t want us to be spotted. He doesn’t want one little tiny spot of mud and muck to be in our lives. So, as we have all unleavened our

homes, we must right now focus on unleavening our lives. So, Paul said, the first thing he told us we have to do is keep the feast with unleavened bread which means no leavening in our lives.

I'm going to take the next two in reverse order.

2. The second way we are to keep the feast is with the unleavened bread of truth.

Paul said we are to keep the feast with the unleavened bread of truth. He said, "sincerity and truth," but we're going to talk about truth first. You'll see why in just a minute.

The Greek word for "truth" is interesting because the root word means (And I'm quoting from Strong's.) *true as not concealing*. Meaning sometimes people try to hide the truth.

Mom asks a little kid, "Where did these pieces of china on the floor come from?" And the little kid starts making all kinds of excuses to hide the truth of what actually happened.

The word truth, as I said is *true as not concealing*. Now to a Christian, this means no double life. You can't come to church on the Sabbath and pretend to be a Christian and then live a different life the rest of the week. Webster's 1828 Dictionary says this about truth: "*Conformity to fact or reality.*"

Let's go to John 4 to see what John had to say quoting Christ about how we should worship the Father. We'll read verses 23 and 24 of John 4.

John 4:23. [The hour is going to come and the hour is already here], *when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father [seeks] such to worship him.*
24) *God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (KJV)*

No guise, no hiding things, accepting the truth of the Bible, not trying to wiggle around it, and just open up and say, "God, here I am. Show me what You want me to do. Show me the path. I'll do whatever it is You want me to do. No reservations. No hidden agenda."

But we know Satan wants to turn us from the truth. His big objective with God's people on this earth today is to turn us from that very truth. Let's go to 2 Peter 2. Peter had a lot to say about this. We're going to read verses 17 through 22. Peter was talking about those who Satan provokes to turn us from the truth—human beings that Satan uses to turn us from the truth. Peter says, "These." Now he's talking about Satan's human minions that are provoked by him.

2 Peter 2:17. *These [minions] are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.*

18) For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, ... (KJV)

What happens?

18b) ... they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. (KJV)

In other words, verse 18 says that they are trying to influence those who are called and those who are baptized—that have clean escaped from living in error. This tells us the focal point of these minions that Satan provokes in this world.

19) While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: ... (KJV)

Corruption is the opposite of being unspotted. These minions are full of pollution and corruption.

19b) ... they are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

20) For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, ... (KJV)

The “they” here represents those who are called, baptized, received the holy spirit. Going on:

20b) ... if ... they are again entangled therein, and overcome [of the evil in this world becoming totally spotted], the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

21) For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, ... (KJV)

Notice:

21b) ... to turn ... (KJV)

That’s exactly what Satan wants. He wants us to turn:

21 continued) ... from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

22) But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. (KJV)

What an analogy! We had a little black cocker spaniel. And it would puke in the backyard and then start licking it up. You would sit there and it would just turn your stomach. What we’re being told here by Peter is that’s the way God looks at us when we start turning, when we turn away and we go right back to what we left.

Satan succeeded in the early days of the church in turning a great number of people. And it is sad to say he is succeeding with too many today—turning them from the truth into fables, into lies. As my good friend Harold Lee said, “Barking at the moon.” Just going off after weird stuff.

We know that apart from the holy spirit we are blind. All of us are! We’re subject to deception, to being misled if we do not exercise and use God’s holy spirit. Let’s go to John 14:6. We read this often at the time of the Passover. We study this often before the Passover. It’s talking about the truth. We have to keep the unleavened bread of truth.

John 14:6. *Jesus [said] unto him, I am the way, [I am] the truth, and [I am] the life: no man [comes] unto the Father, but by me. (KJV)*

Or through Him. Verse 15:

John 14:15. *If [you] love me, ... (KJV)*

It’s so simple!

John 14:15. *If [you] love me, [please] keep my commandments.*

16) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another [comforter], that [it] may abide with you forever; (KJV)

Christ comforted the apostles, but He said, “I’m going away.” They didn’t understand what He meant. And He said, “I’m going to send you another comforter but it’s going to stay with you forever.”

Think about that. When we’re baptized, that seed of God’s spirit, that down payment, if we exercise it, that will be with us forever—for eternity.

17) Even [this gift, this comforter] the spirit of truth; [which] the world cannot receive, because it [sees it] not, neither [knows it]: but [you] know [it; because it dwells] with you, ... (KJV)

Right then it was with them allowing them a little bit to understand what was going on and a little bit to perceive what Christ was trying to tell them. And then He said:

17b) ... and shall be in you. (KJV)

That was fulfilled on Pentecost.

God wants us to see His truth with clarity and with purity. And He has given us the help through the holy spirit to make that happen. Verse 26:

John 14:26. *But the Comforter, which is the [holy spirit, which] the Father will send in my name, [it] shall teach you all things, ... (KJV)*

This is a promise! If we exercise the holy spirit, it will teach us all things; and to them:

26b) ... bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. (KJV)

But we have to exercise that gift and if we do so, it will always lead us to the truth. It will always keep us in the truth if we exercise that gift. So we have to worship Him in truth.

3. The third way we are to worship Him at the feast is with the unleavened bread of sincerity.

The Greek word for “sincerity” is Strong's #1505 and it *means clearness, and, by implication, purity*. There are impure diamonds. They have spots that appear under a microscope, but a pure diamond is absolutely clear.

The root word is Strong's #1506, just one digit away and it literally means *the sun's rays* or it can mean *judged by sunlight* That means out in the open, bright light shining and *“that is, tested as genuine, pure.”* It's like the word “dokimos” which means legitimate. This word for “sincerity” means *absolutely pure, no agendas, nothing hidden, genuine and pure.*

Webster's 1828 Dictionary says this about sincerity: *“Honesty of mind or intention,” nothing hidden, “freedom from hypocrisy, disguise or false pretense;”* just openly there, nothing hidden.

The reason I'm bring up sincerity after truth is because if we are not sincere, following the truth means nothing. If we are not sincere about it because we love God and we want to follow God, then following the truth is absolutely meaningless. We have to follow God and Christ out of a sincere heart. If we have another motivation, if we follow for prestige or we follow for a title or we follow for money or we follow for a job, that's not sincere.

Many people talk about the truth, but for insincere purposes. The Bible talks about tares, clouds without water, and wolves in sheep's clothing. They can talk about the truth, but they do so not because of a pure or a sincere motive, there is another agenda behind that.

Let's go to 1 Timothy chapter 1 and look at verse 5. Again, Paul is talking to this young minister; notice what he says. Paul is talking about the commandments, but there is something very interesting here.

1 Timothy 1:5. *Now the end of the commandment ... (KJV)*

Now, what is he talking about? He said, “The end of the commandment.” The Greek word for “end” means *the point aimed at*. He says “The point you’re aiming at, the point all the commandments aim at.”

5b) ... is [to love] out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: (KJV)

That means *not faked, not put on*.

The Greek word for “pure” here is Strong’s #2513 and it’s the Greek word “katharos.” It means *clean and clear*, but guess what else it means? *Not spotted*.

Somebody who is sincere is open, clean, clear, no agenda, not spotted at all. We worship God. We love God with all our hearts clearly, sincerely. And we love our brother because we want to love our brother. We want to do good to our brother. We want to serve our brother. Not to get something. We’re not in it for ourselves.

Look at 1 Peter 1:22, closing out this third point of the unleavened bread of sincerity. Here Peter is saying that as part of our conversion there is a purifying process that goes on which is emphasized by the Days of Unleavened Bread when we put out leaven.

1 Peter 1:22. *Seeing [you] have purified your [lives] ... (KJV)*

In other words, there are no spots.

22) ... [you] have purified your [lives] in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love ... (KJV)

That means *not faked*. That means *sincere love*.

22b) of the brethren, see that [you] love one another with a pure heart fervently: (KJV)

Sincerely, to give. Not to get. Laodicea wants to get; rich and increased with goods. But we have to give as Christ gave. We have to serve as Christ served. Not to get anything but to benefit other people.

So we are to keep the feast with the bread, the unleavened bread of sincerity.

I was thinking is there an example in the Bible that wraps all of this up that in one story illustrates leavening (malice or wickedness), or unleavened bread (sincerity and truth). Yes, there are others, but one popped into my mind after I was praying about it. That is, the encounter, the interaction between Saul and his son Jonathan.

Let’s go to 1 Samuel 18. We’re going to quickly skip through that narrative, but as we go through, keep in mind the two ways: Malice and wickedness on the one side

(leavening); sincerity and truth (unleavened) on the other side. 1 Samuel 18, we'll begin in verse 1. This is after the killing of Goliath.

1 Samuel 18:1. *And it came to pass [after David had killed Goliath], when he [David] had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul ... (KJV)*

I'm reading out of the King James. The Hebrew is "nephesh." It means *life*.

1b) ... that the [life] of Jonathan was knit with the [life] of David, and Jonathan loved him as [much as he loved] his own [life]. (KJV)

Apparently, this was the first time the two had ever met. There was no reason—Jonathan was the son of the king and David was a shepherd, the youngest in his family—so they obviously had never had any interaction together. But when they came together for the first time, there was this bond, this "knitting" that occurred. We've, I think, experienced that. When you met someone and you talk to them for five minutes, then you feel like you've known them all of your life. That's what happened. Verse 3:

3) Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own [life].

4) And Jonathan stripped himself of [his] robe ... (KJV)

The robe was a garment that was worn over the tunic and it was a symbol of one of authority. Robes were worn by people of high rank. Jonathan took that off and he "gave it to David." He also took off "his garments, even the sword," that was a symbol of his authority, "and his bow," a symbol of his power, and "his girdle," which means his belt. And he gave it all to David.

Jonathan understood the truth and accepted the fact that David was going to be the next king although he, through inheritance, was next in line. David had already been anointed king in chapter 16. Jonathan accepted this. He knew this truth and he was sincere about it. Jonathan gave David all the symbols of his rank and authority. He sincerely humbled himself before David knowing David would succeed him. David would be above him. Notice verse 6.

6) And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistines, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, ... (KJV)

As this victory procession came through the little towns:

6b) ... singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music. (KJV)

They were singing loud. The music was playing loud.

7) And the women answered one another as they played, ... (KJV)

On one side of the street, they would sing:

7b) ... and said, Saul [has] slain his thousands, ... (KJV)

The other side of the street would answer:

7 continued) ... David his ten thousands.

Of course, that didn't sit well with Saul.

8) And Saul was very [angry], and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom?

9) And Saul eyed David ... (KJV)

That means to keep his eye upon David.

9b) ... from that day and forward. (KJV)

We see here malice is beginning to take root in the mind of Saul.

10) And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied ... (KJV)

The Hebrew word for "prophecy" means to speak under inspiration. What Saul was doing now is speaking under the inspiration of this evil spirit. And he's going to act on the provocation of that evil spirit.

10b) ...he prophesied in the [middle] of the house: and David played with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand.

11) And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice. (KJV)

We see here Saul is exhibiting the characteristics of malice and wickedness. Jonathan had just exhibited the characteristics of truth and sincerity. Look at chapter 20 now, verse 30. Now Saul's anger turns against his own son.

1 Samuel 20:30. *Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, [You] son of the perverse rebellious woman, ... (KJV)*

It's not Saul's fault! He had nothing to do with this. Blame it on the wife.

30b) ... do not I know that [you have] chosen the son of Jesse to [your] own confusion, ... (KJV)

The King James says; the Hebrew means *shame*. “You have chosen David to shame yourself.”

30 continued) ... and unto the [shame] of [your] mother's nakedness?

31) For as long as the son of Jesse [lives] upon the ground, [you will] not be established, nor [your] kingdom. Wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die. (KJV)

What Saul is asking his son now is to join a conspiracy to kill David. Carnally, humanly, the smart move would be for Jonathan to join his father and kill his rival. Then Jonathan could be king. That's carnally the smart move.

So here in front of his dad, Jonathan was at a crossroads. What does he do? What decision is he going to make? He didn't hesitate.

32) And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, [Why are you going to kill him]? what [has] he done [to you]? (KJV)

“Why are you going to do this?” Talk about sincerity and truth.

33) And Saul cast a javelin ... (KJV)

At his own son to kill him just like he would David!

33b) ... whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to [kill] David. (KJV)

Jonathan understood the truth about David becoming king. He accepted it and he sincerely refused to join his father in an effort to kill David. And he refused to join his father's malice and his father's wickedness. He chose truth and sincerity over malice and wickedness.

Look at chapter 23 verse 15. Notice what else Jonathan did.

1 Samuel 23:15. *And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: ... (KJV)*

David was running.

15b) ... and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood [hiding].

16) And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened [him] ... (KJV)

The Hebrew word for “strengthen” means *to encourage or to sustain*.

16b) ... his hand in God. (KJV)

Jonathan encouraged David. He said, “Yes, you’re running. My dad wants to kill you, but God’s promised you’re going to be the king. Don’t worry about it. God’s going to take care of you.”

17) And he said unto him, [Don't be afraid]: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find [you]; and [you shall] be king over Israel, ... (KJV)

What encouragement from the one who had the most to lose over this—humanly speaking!

17b) ... and I shall be next unto [you]; ... (KJV)

“I will be under you. I will be right beside you in that sense. But you’re the king. I’m not the king.”

17 continued) ... and that also Saul my father [knows].

18) And they two made a covenant before the [Eternal]: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house. (KJV)

He sincerely encouraged the one who was going to replace him. He acknowledged the truth of God’s will. What an example for all of us today! So, we see that Saul was motivated by malice and wickedness, Jonathan by truth and sincerity.

Let’s conclude the whole matter now. We have seen that there is one scripture in the New Testament that not only tells us that we should keep the feast, but tells us how we ought to be keeping the feast. Not with the old ways, the leaven of the old ways. Not with malice. Not with wickedness. But rather we should be unleavened. That means unspotted, uncorrupted, and, yet, our motivation should be sincerity and it should be truth.

And God leaves it up to us. “What is it going to be?” God’s saying. “I want you to come out of the world. I want you to be unleavened at this time. I want you to stay unleavened.” God is asking us this day, “What’s it going to be, folks? Which one? Do you want to be like Saul with malice and wickedness? Do you want to be miserable?” He was a miserable man. He felt miserable. He did not have a happy life after he turned against David. “Do you want to be like that?” God’s saying. “Or do you want to be Jonathan, full of sincerity, full of truth, at peace with himself, a pure content man?” God is saying to us, “What is it going to be?”

We have to ask, “Between Saul and Jonathan, who was closer to the kingdom?” I think that’s an easy question to answer. Jonathan, as Christ said to the man who asked him a question, “You are not far from the Kingdom of God,” when the man said, “I’ve kept all of this from my youth up.” Jonathan was not far from the Kingdom of God when he made those decisions.

So the point is, God is saying to us today in this Laodicean era, He says, "Please keep the feast and keep all of the feast days with sincerity and with truth".