



"To many people, virtue consists chiefly in repenting faults, not in avoiding them."

—Georg Christoph Lichtenberg

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## Why Do We Observe Unleavened Bread? (Part Two)

Last time, we saw that the instructions for the [Feast of Unleavened Bread](#) reveal the primary reason for its observance is to remember God's deliverance. Second to that is the instruction to eat unleavened bread every day for the duration of the Feast. These two elements of the commanded observance set the stage for what comes next.

[Exodus 12:19-20](#) gives a third, vital aspect of this Feast: We must eat nothing leavened nor have leavening in our houses. Applying this spiritually, we understand our responsibility to overcome and "not let [sin](#) reign in [our] mortal bod[ies]" ([Romans 6:12](#)). Whether we are speaking of the leaven of corrupt doctrine and practice ([Matthew 16:12](#)), the leaven of hypocrisy ([Luke 12:1](#)), or the leaven of malice and wickedness ([I Corinthians 5:8](#)), leaven is a symbol of corruption. A major part of pursuing [holiness](#) ([Hebrews 12:14](#)), and going on to perfection ([Hebrews 6:1](#)), involves identifying sinfulness, removing it where we find it in our lives, and avoiding it where it tries to make inroads.

Yet, from what we have seen, this aspect of avoiding sin—of overcoming—is not actually at the top of the list for this Feast. Certainly, it is *on* the list,

and we dare not neglect it lest we be cut off ([Exodus 12:15](#)). *But our ability to put all the corrupt things out of our lives completely depends on the first two aspects of this Feast.* In other words, if we overlook God's deliverance or neglect the eating of unleavened bread, we will be unable to perform the third aspect—the putting away of sin that [God](#) requires.

[Colossians 1:13](#) informs us that God "has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His [love](#)." The apostle Paul writes in [Galatians 1:4](#) that [Jesus Christ](#) "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age." Numerous verses relate this in various ways. Because our life-debt has been paid, we are no longer under the sway of the one who has the power of death ([Hebrews 2:14](#)). We have a new Master and a new lease on life. God purchased us, taking away Satan's dominion over us, so now we can be slaves of righteousness instead ([Romans 6:18](#)).

This Feast, then, is a joyous remembrance of the difference God has made between us and those who are still under the spiritual Pharaoh—still enslaved to sin and death. Our deliverance is an indescribable and rare blessing, and it opens up avenues that [this world](#) can only dream of. As with Israel, it is only because of what God has done that we have this freedom.

Paul says something quite encouraging in his rebuke of the Corinthians: "Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our [Passover](#), was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the Feast . . ." ([1 Corinthians 5:7-8](#)). He is writing to a fairly carnal group, yet even with their manifest weaknesses, he still tells them, "You truly are unleavened." It is another way of saying that righteousness had been imputed to them because of Christ's sacrifice. In essence, he says, because they truly are unleavened, they need to start behaving like it. Since Christ's righteousness was imputed, they now needed to conform to it to make it their own.

In the same way, we "truly are unleavened" because we are in Christ. Our sins have been forgiven, and we have been delivered, so now we have the opportunity to walk in conformity to that unleavened state that has been imputed to us through our fellowship with Christ. But it all begins with what the Father and Son did on our behalf.

The second aspect of this Feast—eating unleavened bread—corresponds with what Jesus says in [John 6:53-58](#):

Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."

Christ epitomizes the absence of corruption, so the Bread of Life is entirely unleavened.

This passage reveals some of the astounding things that have been made available to us. It speaks of eternal life, of being raised up, of abiding in Christ and having Him abide in us, of living because of Him, and living forever. What He offers us here is beyond comparison, but it all hinges on our eating and drinking.

In verse 54, the verbs "eats" and "drinks" are in the active tense, indicating an ongoing action. In verse 56, the verbs "eats," "drinks," and "abides" are also in the active tense. What this shows is that our abiding in Christ depends on our eating the spiritual unleavened bread—the Bread of Life—on a continuous basis.

In verse 57, the verb "feeds" is in the active tense, as well as "eats" in verse 58. Therefore, all of these outstanding gifts are dependent on our "eating" the Savior through taking in His Word and consuming His involvement in our lives. This is something we must always be doing. If we neglect it, these incredible privileges could slip through our uncaring hands.

- David C. Grabbe

## **From the Archives: Featured Sermon**

### **[The Fruit of Repentance](#)**

by John W. Ritenbaugh

We are continually in need of repentance. The churches in Revelation 2 and 3 were warned to repent, prefiguring the identical conditions which would be extant in the current greater Church of God. Like faith, repentance must exist in the end times. We are admonished to change our mind and attitude, bringing about a total about-face in behavior, in which we abhor our human nature and diligently seek God's nature. Repentance must be motivated by a Godly sorrow which leads to a dramatic change of behavior. The Corinthian congregation was beset with myriad sins, including party-spirit and porneia, even though they were puffed up with pride because of their spiritual 'gifts.' Paul addressed the Corinthian congregation as carnal, even though its members were converted. The congregation in Paul's letters to the Hebrews had become dull of hearing, losing their spiritual maturity. Faith and repentance are inextricably linked as we move on to perfection. Godly sorrow leads to perfection, while worldly sorrow leads to death. Repentance has seven distinct fruits: 1) diligence (the motivation to accomplish), 2) clearing of self (washing away), 3) indignation (anger at injustice and sin, especially at ourselves), 4) fear, 5) vehement desire (a strong and persistent craving for righteousness and a burning desire to change), 6) zeal (wholehearted ardor for accomplishing a task), and 7) vindication (setting things right). We must, in repentance, voluntarily surrender the self, striving to imitate our Heavenly Father and our Elder Brother.

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## **From the Archives: Featured Article**

### **[Christ, Our Passover](#)**

by John W. Ritenbaugh

Many people, even in the church of God, believe that Passover focuses on our sins—but they are wrong! We are certainly to examine ourselves to take it worthily, but the Passover's central figure is Christ, the Lamb of God. John

Ritenbaugh explores His awesome, gracious sacrifice that enables forgiveness of sin and opens a relationship with God. How well do we know Him?

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