

The Good News

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THE CHURCH OF GOD

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Our GROWTH Is a *Challenge* for the Future!

Do you realize how much God's Church has grown during the past few years? How big we are destined to become?

by Roderick C. Meredith

THE "PHILADELPHIA" era of God's true Church has grown *amazingly* during the past six years! An anniversary which helped point out this growth has just occurred. But before giving you the significant facts behind this, let us consider the *most recent news* of the growth of God's Church.

Nation-wide Tour

Last month we told you about the nation-wide baptizing and counseling tours in progress. Mr. Gerald Waterhouse and Mr. Bill McDowell had been sent out on a tour from which they have now returned. They traveled through the Southern states—to counsel with many and baptize some of the people who had written in saying that they considered themselves members of The Radio Church of God, and that this was their real church home. In addition, they visited many who had been missed by the regular baptizing tours.

Visiting the people in their own homes, during a period of about three months they managed to visit 233 people and give them personal counsel and help! Of this number, 54 new people were *baptized*—added by God to His Church through the indwelling of His Spirit.

Both of these men report that they can see more than ever that people all over the United States are being helped tremendously to understand God's way

through The WORLD TOMORROW broadcast and The PLAIN TRUTH magazine. In talking to many about their past baptisms, they found that *very few* have ever come to a REAL knowledge of God's truth and to *real* REPENTANCE without having previous contact with God's true work. This should not surprise any of us, for God's Spirit is only given to those who *obey* Him (Acts 5:32). Therefore, it is very unlikely that a minister *without* the Spirit of God would ever bring anyone to *real conversion, repentance*, and the *receiving* of God's Holy Spirit—which they themselves do not possess!

All of us must be willing to follow the command of the apostle Paul: "Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (II Cor. 13:5). If any of you are ever told by a true servant of God—ordained by and representing the very Church and work of Jesus Christ—that you are *not converted*, you should be willing to *very seriously examine yourself*, pray to God about it with all your heart, and be willing to come to *real* REPENTANCE if you have never done that before. Never forget that God's Church is composed only of those who are *filled with* and *led by* His Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14).

Some Fail to Apply the Truth Personally

Another basic problem mentioned by Mr. Waterhouse is that many of you people do not seem to take the spiritual exhortation and correction on the broadcasts and in The PLAIN TRUTH articles as applying to *you personally*! Many of our other baptizing and visiting tours have said the same thing. I have found this to be the case in my own experience on numerous tours.

Millions of people hear The WORLD TOMORROW broadcast, and several hundred thousand are now readers of The PLAIN TRUTH. God's *last warning* is going out to the world! The problem lies in the fact that *VERY FEW* people apply the message they hear to *themselves* PERSONALLY!

On many of our tours, we have talked to literally scores of people who have read articles in which God's laws, the Sabbath, the Holy Days, different basic points on prophecy, and many points on Christian living are all made very clear and thoroughly explained. Yet these *same people*—after telling us that *they have read* the very articles that contain this information—will sit in their chairs and ask us to explain these things as though they had never heard them before! We may give them the same explanation which they heard on

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scattered abroad*

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the broadcast or read in the magazine articles, and they seem satisfied. As I said before, the problem is that they have *failed* to apply God's precious truth *personally* to THEMSELVES—their home, their family, their situation.

Could this mean YOU? Yes, in all too many cases *it certainly could!*

In the future, then, why don't every single one of you begin to apply every statement made on the broadcast and in each article you read *PERSONALLY*—to *yourself* and *your* situation? If you will heed this admonition, you will *GROW* in the grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ many times faster. And you will qualify for a *much greater* position of service in the soon-coming kingdom of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour! "He that hath ears to hear, *let him hear.*"

Two Anniversaries

There are *two* anniversaries in which we can all rejoice at this time! You have undoubtedly read of the one big anniversary by reading Mr. Armstrong's article on the 25th Anniversary of The WORLD TOMORROW broadcast in the January issue of The PLAIN TRUTH magazine. Of course, we don't celebrate anniversaries in the usual sense in which this world does, but nevertheless, the fact that God has used Mr. Armstrong and this broadcast for over 25 years to reach this world with His message—and the fact that many of us have had a part in it for some of those years—is certainly something to be *very thankful* for!

However, this past Sabbath, December 20, many of us were giving God thanks for another anniversary which is also

important and significant. Let me tell you about it.

Remember that Jesus Christ said that the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed—the smallest of all herbs when it is sown—but grows to be the *greatest* among herbs and becomes a huge tree (Mat. 13:31). This is certainly a description of the way God's kingdom—and His work—have started among men.

Six years ago last Sabbath morning, the Philadelphia era of God's true Church had only *one* preaching minister and two local elders. There were only *three* local churches still in existence. There were only about seven or eight hundred known members on the entire surface of the earth!

The WORLD TOMORROW broadcast still had to rely mainly on the Mexican stations, and had very few United States stations carrying the broadcast regularly. There was virtually no foreign work, and no foreign broadcasting. The PLAIN TRUTH magazine came out very irregularly and was usually only 16 pages—and sometimes as little as 8 pages. There were only a few booklets to be sent out, and no Correspondence Course was then available.

The income for God's work was rather erratic—particularly during the summer months when the Mexican stations did not reach out as far. Also, the irregularity of The PLAIN TRUTH was a contributing factor to this. But Ambassador College had been started and The GOOD NEWS was just beginning to be published as a 16-page magazine to supplement The PLAIN TRUTH for those on the mailing list.

By June of 1952, Ambassador College had graduated two classes, and there were now a few men who were beginning to get full-time experience in the service of Jesus Christ. None were yet ordained, but were being trained and tested in the actual responsibility of carrying on God's work.

Then, later that year, on December 20, 1952, *five men* were ordained to the full ministry of Jesus Christ by God's servant, Mr. Armstrong. For the first time in many years, the Philadelphia era of God's Church had *several* fully ordained and qualified preaching ministers to help carry on the gigantic task set before God's Church in this end time! These men were Herman L. Hoeh, Raymond C. Cole, Richard D. Armstrong, Dr. C. Paul Meredith, and Roderick C. Meredith.

That was indeed a memorable and joyous Sabbath afternoon! And it was just the *beginning* of many more local churches and many more activities in the world-wide ministry of God's Church.

Great GROWTH in the Work of God's Church

Now there are 21 full-time preaching ministers in addition to Mr. Armstrong, five local elders, and many advanced theological students who are fully capable of serving directly in the work of the ministry whenever required to do so! Including our churches in the British Isles and in the Philippines, there are now at least 30 local congregations in the true Church of God! And we now have about 10,000 known members—with the church constantly growing, and additional hundreds being baptized each year.

The WORLD TOMORROW broadcast is now sent out on over 5,000,000 watts of radio power each week! And many of these watts are going *around the world* in foreign broadcasting. The PLAIN TRUTH magazine is now 32 pages and comes out *regularly*. In addition, we now have the 12-page GOOD NEWS magazine sent only to those in God's Church. Also, we have the wonderful Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course and *many* new booklets which we did not have a few years ago. The world-wide mailing list is now getting into the hundreds of thousands and is constantly *growing*.

As stated above, we now have *many* foreign stations broadcasting God's truth around the world. Mr. Benjamin Rea broadcasts the program in the Spanish language every week over an entire chain of stations in South America. And throughout Europe, South Africa, Australia, the Philippines and many parts of Asia The WORLD TOMORROW program is reaching hundreds of thousands of English-speaking people around the world! To take care of the foreign mailing list, we now have a full office and staff in London. Through God's calling, several churches in the Philippines have accepted the truth and a great work is anticipated there.

With *twenty-one* additional ministers and many other elders, God's Church has grown TREMENDOUSLY during the past six years!

The Challenge of Our Growth

Are YOU, personally, *growing* as rapidly spiritually in proportion as is God's work? This is a CHALLENGE to every one of us!

Considering the remarkable growth during the past six years, think of the *tremendous* growth that must lie yet ahead of us before we reach ALL nations with the truth of God and His last warning message to mankind! We, as a Church, must be constantly *praying* and *yielding* to God as His instruments

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Is the Feast of Tabernacles commanded in the NEW TESTAMENT?

Is there proof IN THE NEW TESTAMENT that Christ, the apostle Paul and the New Testament Church observed the Feast of Tabernacles? — and proof that we too are commanded to observe it?

by Herman L. Hoeh

THE CHURCH OF GOD today is a New Testament Church. And in the New Testament is PROOF — *astounding proof*—that the apostle Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, *kept the Feast of Tabernacles*. And PROOF that Christ kept it and that *Christ commanded us to do the same!*

Do We Keep Christ's Words?

Jesus declared: "If ye love Me, *keep My commandments*" (John 14:15). And He said again: "If a man loves Me, he will *keep My words*" (verse 23).

Notice it! If we love Christ we will be keeping not only His *commandments*, but also His *words!*

Jesus said further: "He that loveth Me NOT keepeth NOT My sayings" (verse 24).

Here is the test of whether we are God's Church—the test of whether we love Jesus Christ. If we keep His words and His commandments, we are His Church, His people. This is the teaching of the New Testament. This is New Testament doctrine!

But what are Jesus' *commandments*? What are His *words* we should be keeping? Do Jesus' commandments and His words require us today to observe the Feast of Tabernacles?

Christ's Commandments or the Father's?

A commonly assumed idea is that Christ Jesus came in New Testament times to establish different commandments, different teachings from those of the Father. But notice what Jesus Himself said: "The word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me" (John 14:24). And also: "For I have not spoken of Myself; but the Father which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak" (John 12:49).

Jesus spoke nothing contrary to the Father's will. Then what Jesus spoke is according to the Father's will. *We are also to be judged by what Jesus spoke*. Notice it: "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words, hath one

that judgeth him: *the word* that I have spoken, *the same shall judge him in the last day*" (John 12:48).

Christians—those who love Christ—are to *keep* Jesus' commandments and His words. Those who reject His words are to be *judged* by them in the last day!

But do Jesus' words and His commandments include observance of the Feast of Tabernacles? Is keeping the Feast of Tabernacles one of the tests by which we know if we love Jesus Christ? Is keeping this Festival a *New Testament teaching?*

Live by EVERY Word of God?

Consider the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 4:4. "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by EVERY WORD that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

This is the teaching of the New Testament. These are the very words of Jesus! These are the words which shall judge us! These are the words which Jesus said those who love Him will be keeping. Then it is plain that God's Church is to be living by *every word* that proceeds out of the mouth of God!

Is keeping the Feast of Tabernacles a part of the words which have proceeded out of the mouth of God? Indeed it is!

But how can we be sure that God commanded the Feast of Tabernacles for *New Testament* times as well as for Old Testament times? Is keeping the Feast of Tabernacles part of the New Testament example and teaching of Jesus Christ? Did Jesus ever command men to observe the Festival of Tabernacles or Ingatherings forever?

Notice the testimony of Scripture!

Who Spoke the Law to Moses?

A common assumption is that the Father came personally to Mt. Sinai, spoke the Ten Commandments, commanded the judgments and statutes (which included the requirement to observe God's Festivals) and appeared

visibly to Moses. That Jesus Christ the Son did not appear until New Testament times, but when He appeared He abolished all the Father's laws.

On this assumption it is argued that Jesus commanded something different than His Father did in the days of Moses and of the patriarches.

But this assumption is false!

It was *not* the Father who came to Mt. Sinai and appeared personally to Moses. It was the One who became Jesus Christ who appeared. It was *Jesus Christ who*, speaking in Moses' day for the Father, *commanded the people to observe the Feast of Tabernacles*. Those are Jesus' words in the Old Testament and *when He reappeared in the New Testament He commanded us to keep His words*—He commanded us to live by every word of God!

Notice the proof that it was Jesus who commanded His people to observe the Feast of Tabernacles in the Old Testament.

Jesus declared in John 6:45-46: "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me. *Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He which is of God, He hath seen the Father.*"

We are all taught of God, declared Jesus, but no man has ever seen Him except the Son. In other words God the Father has always spoken through agencies and messengers, never directly to any man except to Christ the Son and to His apostles (II Peter 1:17). Compare this with John 5:37.

Then *it could not have been the Father* who spoke to Moses and whom Moses saw. It was Someone Else who commanded the Festivals to our fathers.

Paul wrote to the evangelist Timothy that the light and glory of God the Father is such that "*no man hath seen, nor can see*" until composed of spirit at the resurrection (I Tim. 6:16).

But we read in Exodus 24:9-11: "Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the

elders of Israel: and *they SAW the God of Israel*: and there was under His feet as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel He laid not His hand: also *they saw God*, and did eat and drink" in His presence.

This Divine Person could *not* have been the Father. No man—except Christ—has seen Him!

Now understand John 1:18: "*No man hath seen God AT ANY TIME*; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." And I John 4:12: "No man hath seen God the Father at any time."

Then Who was it that came down from Heaven to command the people to observe the Festival of Tabernacles forever?

It Was Christ!

Jesus said in John 8:58: "Before Abraham was, I AM!"

Jesus existed before Abraham. He said, "*I am* before Abraham." He did not say, "*I was* before Abraham," but "*I am*." In the Greek language in which John was inspired to write, the expression for "I am" is *ego eimi*. It is the present tense, indicating that Jesus eternally exists. "I am" is the name of the Lord God in Exodus 3:14. Christ is the Lord who spoke to Moses! He is the One who reveals LAW.

When Moses asked the NAME of the One who was about to give the law at Sinai, He replied to Moses, "I AM." That is Christ's name.

Christ therefore existed before Abraham. He said so! "Before Abraham was, I am."

Jesus Christ told Abraham to walk before Him and be perfect. Abraham obeyed. "Because that Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws" (Genesis 26:5). This was not God the Father speaking, because no man ever saw the Father. Abraham and Sarah *saw* the Lord (Gen. 17:1 and 21:1). This Person must have been Jesus Christ.

It was the Lord Jesus Christ who appeared to Abraham. The Lord also appeared to Enoch and to Cain. He appeared to Adam and He appeared to Eve. He appeared to Isaac and to Jacob. But no man has seen the Father at any time.

So this Divine Person who spoke in Old Testament times was the One who became the Son. Jesus the Son said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."

Were Jesus' commandments given to Abraham different from the commandments He gave to Moses—different from the commandments that we ob-

serve today? We read that God "changes not" (Malachi 3:6). He is not like men who have human legislatures and must constantly amend their laws. That is man's law. The spiritual laws that God gave are unchanging. Spiritual things do not change as matter does.

The laws that man makes change. But not God's spiritual law.

God expects us to keep the same commandments Abraham kept. Notice it. He said, "Abraham kept my commandments." Jesus also said, "If *you* will love me, you [we today] will keep my commandments."

Jesus is "the same yesterday [in Abraham's and Moses' day], today [in the apostles' day], and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Therefore, what He revealed in the New Testament *must be in agreement* with what He said before, since it is His words that are to judge us!

What Are the "Words" of the Lord?

Jesus said "If any man love Me, He will keep My word."

Now let's turn to the book of Exodus. We all know that chapter 20 of Exodus contains the record of the *commandments* Jesus Christ spoke to Israel. If we now turn to chapter 23 of the book of Exodus, verses 14 to 16, we find man is commanded to observe certain festivals three times in a year. This includes the Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread at the beginning of springtime, the Feast of Weeks or the Firstfruits, that is, Pentecost, at the end of springtime, and then, in the fall, the Feasts of Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles or Ingathering, in Exodus 23:16.

Next, notice Exodus 24:3. "And Moses came and told the people all the *words* of the Lord, and all the judgments, and all the people answered and said, 'All the *words* which the Lord hath said, we will do.'"

Here are more than just the Ten Commandments. Here we find specifically, definitely stated, the *words* of the Lord. Moses told them all the *words* of the Lord.

What are included in the *words* of the Lord? The requirements to observe the Festival of Tabernacles! (Exodus 23:16.)

Remember, Jesus said, "If you will love Me, you will keep My words."

If you love Jesus Christ, you will not only be keeping His commandments—won't be committing adultery, you won't be bowing down and serving idols, you will not be stealing and lying to your neighbor, and you will not be observing Sunday, but rather the Sabbath.

God loved us first by showing us the way to love, and by making it possible for our sins to be taken out of the way through Christ's blood. In similar man-

ner, we return the same love by obedience to God, by observing the commandments.

But Jesus requires more than keeping His commandments. He said, "If you love me you will keep My *words*." And that included observing the annual Festivals. If you do not observe these days, you do not love Jesus' words! That is *New Testament teaching*. Jesus was not talking to the Jews of the Old Testament times in John 14:23. He was talking to the apostles of the New Testament Church when He commanded them to KEEP HIS WORDS!

So it was the One who became the Son who spoke the words in Exodus 23: "You shall observe a Festival three times in the year"—and that included the Feast of Tabernacles.

Before the Old Covenant

But many will respond that the command to keep the Feast of Tabernacles is a part of the Old Covenant—and since the Old Covenant was broken, it is no longer necessary to keep the Feast.

Consider two facts! The Old Covenant was a marriage agreement (Jeremiah 31:32). If a marriage agreement is broken, that does not abolish the laws that regulate marriages. The laws incorporated in the Old Covenant are like the laws which regulate a marriage covenant. They exist before a marriage agreement and regulate it. Israel's breaking of the Old Covenant did not abolish the laws to which Israel agreed.

This brings us to the second fact! *The Old Covenant did not institute the Holy Days!*

The statutes which regulate the annual festivals existed *prior to* the Old Covenant. What the Old Covenant did not institute it cannot abolish. The Old Covenant was merely a marriage agreement between God (the Husband) and Israel (the wife) in which the wife agreed to *obey* the Husband's laws *which were already in force*. In return for obedience, Israel was physically blessed and provided for above all other nations.

Notice that the statutes which regulate the Holy Days were required to be kept *before* the Old Covenant was made!

Turn to Exodus 15:26: "If you will diligently hearken unto the voice of the Lord your God, and will do that which is right in His sight, and will give ear unto His commandments, *and keep ALL HIS STATUTES*, I will put none of these diseases upon you that afflict the Egyptians."

Here is the One Who became the Lord Jesus Christ speaking. He is commanding His people to keep all His statutes *before* the Old Covenant. These statutes could not have been

instituted by the Old Covenant because the Old Covenant was not completed until Exodus 24. The statutes which God was revealing to Moses and the people before Sinai were later incorporated into the Old Covenant—just as the weekly Sabbath (Exodus 20). But the Old Covenant did not begin them. The Old Covenant merely included them. Notice that among all the statutes which were *in force before Sinai* and later incorporated into the Old Covenant *are the requirements to observe the annual festivals*—including the Feast of Tabernacles (Exodus 23:14-17). If the annual festivals had not already been God's laws they could not have been included in the Old Covenant!

Here is absolute proof that among the statutes commanded to be kept *before* the Old Covenant were the laws regulating the annual Holy Days.

Began with the Church

The weekly Sabbath began with man. It was made at creation (Genesis 2). But the annual festivals God gave first to the Church when the Church began. The twelve tribes of Israel were first formed into a Church—a Congregation or Assembly—*IN ORDER TO KEEP THE ANNUAL HOLY DAYS*. The first time the word Congregation is used for the tribes of Israel is in Exodus 12:3, where the annual festivals are first introduced!

Just as the Sabbath keeps man in a right relationship with his Creator, so the annual Holy Days keep the Church in a right relationship with God. Any group which refuses to keep holy these days God made holy is not in a right relationship with God. Such a group is spiritually like the Egyptians who scoffed at God's festivals!

When the Congregation of Israel—the Church in Old Testament times—began to sin (began to be in a wrong relationship with God) and to break these laws, God temporarily added—after the making of the Old Covenant—various physical rituals and sacrifices which were imposed on every day of the year until the coming of Jesus Christ to shed His own blood for our sins (Hebrews 9:10 and Galatians 3:19). These temporary, physical laws did not exist prior to the Old Covenant (Jeremiah 7:22-23). They were given only to the Old Testament Church for a limited duration. Jesus never practiced these ritualistic laws. You cannot find one place in the New Testament where He set us any example to keep them. But He did keep the Feast of Tabernacles as an example for us—and He commanded those who love Him to keep His words, which included the observance of the annual festivals.

Now we come to the New Testament. What do we find as its teaching?

Nailed to the Cross?

Were the annual festivals a part of the ceremonial law added "till the seed should come"? Were the Holy Days "nailed to the cross"? After everything was nailed to the cross DO WE STILL FIND THE APOSTLES AND THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OBSERVING THESE DAYS?

In I Corinthians 5:8 Paul commands the Gentiles to observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread. "Let us therefore keep the feast," he exhorts the Gentile converts at Corinth. By becoming neglectful of the Feast, the Corinthians were allowing the leaven of sin to creep into their midst.

Notice what this means. Either Paul was not the apostle of Jesus Christ and was trying to re-establish what was already abolished, or else the laws regulating the festivals were not abolished at the cross! Isn't that plain. Paul would have been without any authority whatsoever to command these Gentile converts to "keep the feast" unless it was still God's law to keep the Holy Days of God.

Now notice the examples of Paul himself planning to *keep* an annual festival. The first is found in Acts 20:16. Paul is rushing by Ephesus in order to be at Jerusalem?—in order to preach to the Jews? Not at all! Notice how this verse reads: "For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hastened, if it were possible for him, TO KEEP the day of Pentecost at Jerusalem."

Paul was determined to KEEP the day of Pentecost with the Headquarters Church before launching on a campaign into Spain. Many translations obscure the real meaning of this verse. The original, inspired Greek word here translated "to keep" is *genesthai*, which is an infinitive form of *ginomai*. The King James and other versions incorrectly render it "to be." The Greek word for "to be" is *einai*, but Luke was inspired to use *genesthai* here in Acts 20:16 which can mean among other things "to keep, to celebrate, or to solemnize a festival" according to the *Analytical Greek Lexicon*.

This same root word is used in Matthew 26:2, which ought to be translated: "Ye know that after two days the Passover *is celebrated* . . ."

So here we have two important examples of Paul—1) commanding the Gentiles to observe the Days of Unleavened Bread and 2) planning to KEEP the day of Pentecost with the Head-

quarters Church at Jerusalem.

But what New Testament examples are there for keeping the Feast of Tabernacles?

Feast of Tabernacles in the New Testament

We have two ways of knowing what Christians ought to do. One is by the examples of Scripture, the other is by explicit command of the Scripture. We have already seen that Christ gave an explicit command in the New Testament that we should keep His words—that His words included the keeping of the annual festivals. Now let us turn to the examples of Scripture to see if Jesus and Paul kept the Feast of Tabernacles.

Turn, first, to I John 2:4-6. "He that saith, I know Him and keepeth not His commands, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso *KEEPETH HIS WORD*, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked."

Notice that the apostle John teaches us to keep the words of Jesus and to follow the example of Christ. What was Christ's example?

The last autumn before He died, Jesus went up to Jerusalem to observe the Feast of Tabernacles! The entire seventh chapter of the Gospel according to John is devoted to what Jesus said and did at that Festival. Because of the Jews, Jesus did not go to Jerusalem with his family, but separate from them (verses 8 and 10). He did not appear publicly to teach in the temple until the middle of the Feast of Tabernacles (verse 14). John records parts of the sermon of Christ delivered on the last great day of the Feast in 30 A.D., beginning with verse 37.

Paul Kept Feast of Tabernacles

Paul obeyed Jesus Christ. Paul kept the Holy Days Jesus commanded. That included the Feast of Tabernacles. Where, in Scripture, do we find Paul keeping this festival? Turn to the book of Acts for the answer!

God used Paul to reach the Gentiles with the Gospel. In 50 A.D., Paul crossed over from Asia into Europe and began to preach the gospel at Philippi "on the day of weeks"—Pentecost—according to the original Greek (Acts 16:13). Most versions improperly render the Greek expression "on the sabbath day"; but the original inspired Greek means Pentecost. This was exactly 19 years to the day since the Holy Spirit came in 31 A.D. (Acts 2). After a few weeks at Philippi, Thes-

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What Church Members should know about MASONRY

Is it all right to be a Mason? What is membership in the Lodge like? It is a highly respected Christian organization, isn't it? Here are surprising answers based on Mr. Elliott's revealing book in this second of a series of articles to our Church brethren.

by Jack R. Elliott

THE FIRST installment of this series gave the facts and figures of the size, importance and structure of Masonry. It also makes plain how the Lodge foists off ambiguous and extravagant claims on the gullible unquestioning public. Claims which are heralded widely but which are not backed up by any *proof* because Lodge activities and teachings are secretly closed to non-members. Even the prospective member cannot know what lies ahead until he has been carefully screened, accepted and sworn to the strictest secrecy.

During the initiation ceremony, the candidate is also required to solemnly swear never to reveal any of the secrets of Masonry under any less penalty than having his throat cut across, his tongue torn out by the roots, and his body buried in the rough sands of the sea. To add solemnity to this gruesome oath, the candidate is made to kneel before an altar with both hands on the Holy Bible. The entire program for this initiation is included in the *Handbook of Freemasonry* by Ronayne available thru the Ezra A. Cook Publishing Company.

Once initiated, the new brother is allowed to attend meetings of the first, or "Entered Apprentice," degree only. He is not allowed to attend or to learn any of the secret work of the higher degrees. To attempt to do so is a grievous sin in Masonry.

A Lodge meeting consists of three parts: The *opening*, the *closing*, and the general Lodge business in between. The opening is an elaborate, monotonous routine primarily concerned with excluding all but bona-fide members from the meeting. The *close*, also routine and lengthy, must surely tax the patience of Lodge members. The *central portion* of the meeting is concerned with Lodge business such as lodge dues, finances, charities, passing, raising, initiating candidates, and finally "work" in each of the first three degrees.

Secret Work

The first part of Lodge business is

the reading of the minutes by the secretary. The second is the reading of petitions of applicants for admission into the fraternity, and the assigning of a committee to search into the character of the applicant. Third order of business is the consideration of reports made by committees assigned one month earlier to look into petitions entered then. Fourth, is the report from standing committees.

Fifth part is the business of voting on a prospective candidate on which the committee has reported favorably (after one month's consideration). Voting is done by secret ballot, worked out by placing black or white balls into a box. A white ball is a vote *for* admitting him, and a black ball is a vote *against* admitting him. If a candidate receives only one black ball, he is rejected. The seventh order of business is unfinished business from the last meeting. The eighth is new business. The ninth is the work of the individual degrees. This is work of a SECRET NATURE, and proceeds through the first three degrees.

If there is work to be done in the first degree, all remain present since all members are of the first degree or higher. The "Worshipful Master" simply "reduces" the Lodge down to the first, or Entered Apprentice, degree. The members then proceed to initiate the candidate.

Once finished with "work" in the first degree, all first degree Masons are discharged because they are not allowed to see what goes on in a higher degree. Then follows the "raise" to the second, or Fellow Craft, degree. This is done in similar fashion to the act of lowering to the first degree.

Once finished with work in this degree, the officers discharge all but Master Masons (the officers, especially the "Worshipful Master," hold much higher degrees).

Finally, when the initiation of Master Masons and all other work is completed, the Lodge goes through the elaborate "close" ceremony.

Advancement

Once our candidate has become a member of the Entered Apprentice degree, he is eligible to become a candidate for the next, or Fellow Craft. Before he can do so, however, he must master the art of giving the secret signs, passwords, and the examination.

The part referred to as the *examination* is often called by other names such as "lecture." The word examination will be used here to keep from confusing it with the lecture delivered by the "Worshipful Master." The examination is a ritualistic catechism of the signs, tokens, and working tools of the degree.

There is an examination to be memorized for each of the first three degrees, but none for the degrees beyond that. The degrees above the third or Master degree are very recent in origin and are in actuality adoptive — the first three originally comprising the total of Freemasonry.

Because the examination must be taught orally, a "bright" member of the Lodge is assigned to "post" the candidate in the examination. That means that one who has already mastered it must teach the candidate, supposedly without the aid of written material, the whole examination. This examination is so long that when written out it covers seven typewritten pages.

When the candidate has learned the examination of the first degree, he is ready to apply for the Fellow Craft degree. Here he is initiated, introduced to new "working tools," taught the new handshake, due-guard, distress sign, secret words, and given a lecture on their symbolic meaning. Then he is required to memorize another examination.

The same is true when he becomes a candidate for the Master Mason degree.

It is only after a man has completed the Master Mason degree that he is a Mason in the true sense.

Before he has received the "Master's secrets," he is considered an apprentice or learner. These secrets are drawn

around a legend about a man named Hiram Abiff, and its setting is supposed to be Solomon's Temple.

It is interesting to see what the Master's secrets are, and for those who care to take the trouble they can be found in Ronayne's *Handbook of Freemasonry*.

Grand Lodge Masonry

Progress becomes easier for the candidate after he passes the first three degrees, or the "Blue Lodge." There are no examinations to learn, and he can take whole blocks of degrees at one time. In fact, one brother in the Church related to me that he took all the degrees from the fourth through to the thirty-second in four days.

In the case of the brother above, he and a group of Master Masons received the fourth through the fourteenth degree the first day after arriving in the city in which the Grand Lodge was located. After a night of fun and revelry (and very little sleep), they went through the conferring of the "Chapter of Rose Croix," which is the fifteenth through the eighteenth degrees for the Scottish rite (Southern Jurisdiction). After another night similar to the first, he received the Council of Kadosh, or the nineteenth through the thirtieth degrees. Finally, on the fourth day, he received the "Consistory," or the thirty-first and the thirty-second degrees. The fact that they received little sleep at night seemed to be planned on the part of the officials, perhaps for the purpose of dulling the candidate's senses during the rituals. A clear head would seem inappropriate for receipt of these "honorable mysteries." The brother related that he had a hard time even remaining awake.

After a man has reached the thirty-second degree, he can, if he chooses, become a Shriner. The Shriners are probably familiar to you. They are that group of jolly individuals who take over whole towns at convention time, wearing red hats adorned with tassels and "sausage knives." They engage in much celebration and revelry.

Shriners, as you probably also know, can point with pride to their hospitals for crippled children, which open their doors to all the underprivileged, no matter what race or creed. The Shrine is the order, above all others, which attracts the public's attention to Masonry. As an advertisement, it is very effective.

The Shrine, then, is a side order of the thirty-second degree. There remains only one degree higher than the thirty-second: that is the thirty-third or "Inspector General," which is honorary. It can only be conferred for some act of benevolence, endeavor, or esteem far and

above the line of duty. It is usually conferred on presidents and kings and certain other dignitaries.

With this introduction we are ready to plunge into an exposé of the mystery and deceit of Masonic philosophy and practice.

Christian or Pagan?

It is our responsibility to take these seemingly harmless proceedings and examine them in the light of the Holy Bible. The results will be shocking.

The average member of a popular denomination would see absolutely nothing wrong with Masonic proceedings. They appear wholesome and upright to him; and unless a member of God's true Church is alert, he may see nothing wrong either—especially if that member is a new convert.

We should realize that the average Lodge member has not had the advantage of seeing any Masonic teaching or symbol in the TRUE LIGHT of Scripture. He received all teachings at the hand of an apparently wise and trusted leader. The leader nearly always pointed to the Bible to prove that certain symbols are in accordance with God's teaching. Meetings are always opened with prayer and a Holy Bible is always open before the Lodge. To question Masonry would seem to him sacrilegious.

Who Can Be a Mason?

No place in the Bible can it be found where knowledge of the way to live obedient and enlightened lives in service to God is limited to those over twenty-one who are free from physical defects, and of irreproachable manners; nor are wives and children prevented, nor men who are unable to pay heavy dues. God does not even keep His truth from the ears of the weak-minded; instead, they are responsible for all that they can comprehend.

If Masons do have such truth, they would be selfish indeed to zealously withhold it from the weak, the lame and the blind. Furthermore, they must either be guilty of this or be liars, because they do claim that Masonry is a way to happiness and immortality.

Swear an Oath

One of the most predominant traits that characterizes Freemasonry is its *oaths*. The oath of the Apprentice given earlier is a typical example. Here the candidate swears, without reservation, not to reveal the secrets of Masonry under the penalty of *death*. He does so with both hands on the Holy Bible. In this holy book are the words of Christ himself, "But I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne; nor by the earth; for it is His

footstool; neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil" (Matt. 5:33-37).

Do the Masons not read this? Surely they do! They insist that it refers only to the use of profanity. They even make a pretext of keeping profanity out of the Lodge. The Scripture shows very clearly that profanity, *as well as oaths*, comes of evil.

Secrecy

One might ask, "If Masonic teachings and morals are so high and pure, as Masons claim, why must they be *secret*?"

Masons answer, "Because the Bible says, 'Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world' (James 1:27). Masons do take care of widows and orphans and they *do* keep themselves apart from the world *by means of secrecy*."

If the Mason *really knows* his craft he will not have to stop here. He will quote Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

He will be confident that every good Mason will be doing just that, and any reference you might make to the fact that his Lodge meets in secret and carries on business in secret will only reassure him that his action is according to the Scripture. If he is of the intelligentsia he may also remind you that Christ taught the disciples in parables to *hide the meaning* from the rest of the world (see Matt. 13:13). He will give this as the reason his Lodge uses secret words and symbols so that the uninformed will see or hear and not understand.

Even if the Mason is not well versed in Masonic teachings, he at least has heard them and will be convinced that if the "Worshipful Master" or some other officer were present he could refute anything said against Masonry.

Your task of showing him that Masonry is not scriptural is further complicated by his belief that you are not enlightened if you are not a Mason and that he should cease talking lest he reveal Masonic secrets to you and *be worthy of death*. He cannot tell you Masonic teachings; and if he feels that you are not truly familiar with them, further discussion is futile. The fact that you question Masonic teachings is enough to convince him that you don't know much about them.

What is the answer to all these highly

convincing arguments? Can you refute them?

The true ministers of God's Church did not teach in secret, nor hide the fact that they were Christians.

Paganism has always been a practice of secret and mystic rites. Masons *make no bones* about the fact that it is this system which they follow. They point with pride to the fact that most of their philosophies and symbols are borrowed directly from the "Ancients." They see no wrong in doing so. They only attempt

to prove them to be in accordance with Scripture *too*. This is not too hard to do if the one to whom they are attempting to prove it is somewhat careless.

Christ spoke in parables because it was not given for the world to understand. Why was it not given for them to understand? Verse 15 of Matthew 13 explains, "For this people's heart is waxed gross (hardened) and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes *they* have closed."

Why would a person harden his heart,

close his eyes and refuse to hear God's laws and learn of *His ways*, unless he does not like them? Men have proven time and time again that they will not follow God's way or take His plan seriously. They will only do what *they* like best and try to reassure themselves that it has God's sanction.

Jesus knew that if He spoke plainly they would understand Him, they would repent as before and again agree to follow God; but as before, they would fall back into worldliness. To keep the masses from doing that and losing eternal salvation by failing to fulfill the New Covenant, they were kept in ignorance.

It is not God's plan to save the world now. He is merely calling out some—the "first fruits." Large scale salvation is reserved for the Millennium and Great White Throne Judgment when Christ will be here in person to *supervise and rule with a firm hand*.

Do Masons know this? Is that why they *use* secret signs and symbols?

No! Freemasons use secret signs because their whole philosophy is centered around giving and receiving aid from a fellow Mason to the exclusion of all others. As stated above, they borrow this practice from the ancient pagans.

Legendary records show that ancient pagans held public and secret assemblies in honor of their gods. The secret ceremonies and doctrines were known only to those who had been initiated and who possessed signs and tokens by which they were able to recognize each other. It is this practice that Freemasons copy and very few Masons are ignorant of the fact. Pagans took advantage of the allurements of secrecy to attract the gullible and because their lewd and licentious practice could not bear the light of public witness.

The references to meeting places in the initiatory "work" of the first degree of Masonry is very significant. It states, "Our ancient brethren met on high hills or low vales, (why?) the better to guard against the approach of cowans and eavesdroppers ascending or descending." (This is not what Christ did. He let them hear, but they could not understand because of the hardness of *their hearts*.)

But this is exactly what the *pagans* did—worshipping atop high hills or in the depths of valleys! Read what God says about it in Jer. 2:20-23 and II Kings 17:9-11.

Freemasonry uses secrecy to accomplish much the same that the ancient pagans did. While they do not practice sexual immorality in their meetings, their foolish eccentricities cannot bear the light of public observance, and the gullible are attracted to their ranks by prom-



FIGURE 4

A Candidate Being Conducted About the Lodge

ises of secret enlightenment. Furthermore, they accomplish the *exclusive* nature of the Lodge by its use, and are able to profitably exchange their "brotherly love" among the initiated.

Their claim that they use secrecy to keep from being a part of "this world" is quite absurd. Masons take an active part in government, politics, economics, law enforcement and any other department of this world's society. Their attempt to explain away their purpose for secrecy in this manner only demonstrates their ignorance of what God meant when He said that we must come out of this world and be separate.

This ignorance is due to the hardness of *their* hearts, and the true mysteries of God which they claim to possess are actually hidden from them.

—To be continued—



FIGURE 5

Right, Candidate Taking Masonic Oath

Is the Feast of Tabernacles commanded in the NEW TESTAMENT?

(Continued from page 5)

salonica (Acts 17:1), Berea (Acts 17:10) and at Athens (verse 16), Paul came to Corinth in the late summer of 50 A.D. After spending several sabbaths teaching in the synagogue (Acts 18:4), Paul continued to hold meetings in the house of Titius Justus (verse 7) for "a year and six months" (verse 11). This brings us to the spring of 52 A.D.

After a riot stirred up against the Apostle was quelled, we read the following about Paul: "And Paul after this tarried there a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria" (Acts 18:18). It must now have been well into the summer of A.D. 52. The Days of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost—the two festivals near the beginning and end of spring—were now past.

To continue with Paul's journey. On his way from Corinth to the port of Syria, "he came to Ephesus" and "entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; but bade them farewell, saying, I MUST BY ALL MEANS KEEP

THIS FEAST THAT COMETH IN JERUSALEM: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus" (Acts 18:19-21).

Paul planning to keep the feast with the Headquarters Church at Jerusalem? Indeed! That is what the Scripture says!

Which Feast? Obviously the Feast of Tabernacles! The spring festivals were already past. The two late summer or early autumn Holy Days, Trumpets and Atonement, could be held at any of the local congregations. Here was a major festival being held at Jerusalem *in the autumn*. The only major festival that occurs in the autumn is the Feast of Tabernacles! Paul told the Ephesians that he "must by all means keep this feast" with the Headquarters Church in Jerusalem. Paul had just completed his first journey into Europe with the gospel. He felt he had to report the progress of the work to the Headquarters Church and the brethren in Palestine (verse 22). What better time than to do so while keeping the Feast of Tabernacles!

Here is the example of Paul the apostle to the Gentiles. After years in the

ministry he is still *KEEPING THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES*.

Verse Left Out in Corrupted Manuscripts

Acts 18:21 appears correctly in the King James Version of the Bible. But numerous modern versions leave out that portion of the verse which tells of Paul's intention to keep the Feast. This verse, in its entirety, *belongs in the Bible*. It has always been in the Greek "Received Text"—which is the inspired text handed down to the Greek speaking world by the original true Church of God. The overwhelming majority of Greek Manuscripts have this verse in it.

The only manuscripts which leave it out are those copied in Egypt and in the Latin speaking portions of the Roman Empire. There would have been no reason to add this verse to the Bible if it were not there originally. **BUT THERE IS EVERY REASON WHY MEN WOULD LIKE TO REMOVE IT FROM THE INSPIRED TEXT!** The Catholic version of the Bible leaves it out as do almost all modern Protestant versions of the Bible. But these are just the churches who do *not* want to keep this feast!

Here, brethren, is proof from the New Testament—from Christ's teaching and example, and the apostle Paul's example — that the New Testament Church is commanded to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. How plain the Scripture is when we are willing to believe and practice what it reveals!

HOW to Observe God's Festivals

Here is a clear, simple explanation showing how YOU can keep God's festivals if you live with unconverted relatives.

by Herman L. Hoeh

HOW SHOULD you observe the annual festivals if you are at home with unconverted members of the family? How can you *keep* from offending them? What should you do if you are unable to assemble at any of our local congregations?

Here is what *everyone of us* needs to know about observing God's festivals!

Purpose for the Festivals?

God wants us to be happy. He is not the stern God He has so often been pictured. One primary way God has provided for our happiness—as well as our growth and development in the true Christian life—is through fellowship with brethren at the annual festivals.

But not all are able to have this kind of fellowship. Many hundreds of you brethren are all alone in this world—except for the spiritual fellowship you have with God. Yet you, too, can have real happiness at every festival *if you know what to do and how to be an example to unconverted members of your family*. There may be many difficulties, it may take time, but there is a way you can achieve peace and harmony in your home even if all the members of your family are unconverted.

What Is a Festival?

A "festival," or "feast," is a part of time ordained by God for our physical, as well as spiritual, *rejuvenation*. There is one chapter in the Bible which mentions all the festivals God has ordained—Leviticus 23.

Notice that the first festival mentioned occurs weekly. It is the Sabbath, which occurs every seventh day of the week (Lev. 23:2-3). It is a period of rest from our usual business and labors and pleasures. Several articles have appeared in previous issues of the *Good News* explaining how to keep the Sabbath. Other articles will appear in future issues. But notice, now, what God reveals about keeping the *annual* festivals.

The first *annual* festival is the Passover (Lev. 23:4-5). The Passover is the only festival that is *not* a sabbath (unless it happens to fall on the seventh day of the week). But the Passover, as

well as every other annual festival, is a COMMANDED ASSEMBLY—a time of convocation.

In this age, however, God realizes that many of you are unable to assemble either on the Sabbath or on the annual Holy Days. We are to worship the Father in Spirit and truth no matter where we may be (John 4:21-24). But whenever it is possible to assemble we are commanded to do so. Many brethren who find it impossible to meet on the weekly Sabbath are, however, able to do so on the annual Festivals.

The whole family is *commanded* to attend whenever possible (Deut. 16:11, 14,16). Jesus and his brothers and sisters came with Joseph and Mary at the Passover and the days of Unleavened Bread (Luke 2:41,42).

How To Observe The Passover

The Passover comes the day before the great spring Festival of Unleavened Bread (Numbers 28:16, 17). Since the Passover is *not* a sabbath day, work may be done on it. That's why the Passover is called a day of preparation (Mat. 27:62). The Passover is a very serious time of the year. Jesus set us an example on the day of his death so that we today might know how to keep the Passover.

For the explanation of how YOU can keep this commanded observance in your own homes, if necessary, be sure to write Mr. Armstrong for the article on "How and When to Observe the Passover in Your Own Home." *This is very important* so you will know *how* to observe it properly.

Although the Passover is the day before the Feast of Unleavened Bread, it was customary among the Jews to use only unleavened bread on the Passover day. That is why the Passover is called *a day* of Unleavened Bread (Luke 22:7).

No leavened product is ever to be used with the Passover service—which is improperly called "Lord's Supper" (I Corinthians 11:20). The morning after the Passover service, which is still the Passover day (all days start at sunset the previous evening, *not* at midnight), is probably the most convenient time to remove any leavening agents or leavened bread.

Be sure that all leaven is removed

from your premises. Don't store it in some other room. Removing leavened products which cost a few cents is just one way God has of testing you to see how much you prize obedience above money and the pleasures of this age. By following His will, God has promised to give you more in this life in return for what you give up in loving obedience to Him (John 10:10).

It is wise to arrange your purchases so that when the Passover comes there will be little leaven to discard. If you do have some left which is suitable to give to neighbors or friends, that may be done. Remember, *there is nothing wrong with leaven*. It is merely used in the Feast of Unleavened Bread as a *symbol* of vanity and sin. There is nothing wrong in giving it to unconverted friends or neighbors who might be able to use it.

Perhaps some of you are wondering what leaven is. A leavening agent is any substance that is used to puff up or produce fermentation causing dough to rise. Yeast, soda, baking powder, cream of tartar when combined with a leavening agent, are such products. Bread, crackers, some prepared cereals and cakes, and some bought pies contain leaven and should be avoided at home and at restaurants during the festival. Home-made unleavened pies, cereals, and unleavened bread are to be used instead, *together with all the regular meats, milk, fruits and vegetables you normally eat*, for the festival of Unleavened Bread following the Passover. Cakes with *beaten* egg white used purposely as a substitute for leaven should not be used. But beaten egg white on pies, etc., is not a leavening agent.

At first it may seem strange to do without leaven in a festival, but once we come to know the mind of God and of Jesus Christ, we see the lesson of obedience it teaches. "Happy are you if you do these things," Jesus said (John 13:17).

As there are many products containing leaven, be sure to examine the labels of all products on your shelves. As will probably happen, there will always be some leavened material that somehow escapes! A very good type of the hidden sins that we don't always

discover upon conversion. We must always throw away this forgotten leaven—a type of sin—upon discovering it.

Festival of Unleavened Bread

Here is the great spring festival, midway in the first month of the sacred calendar, when the people of God are to assemble with one another wherever possible and rejoice over the wonderful new year ahead. The Feast is a seven day period, beginning the day *after* the Passover.

Whenever possible, Christians should gather together for the Passover and the entire seven days of Unleavened Bread. The Festival of Unleavened Bread, although seven days long, has but two *annual* Holy Days or Sabbaths, occurring on the first and last days of the feast. The intervening days are not sabbaths and ordinary work may be done on them.

Annual sabbaths differ from the weekly Sabbath in one particular respect—cooking for the festivals may be done on them. But all other forms of ordinary business or work are not to be done. Exodus 12:16 reads: "No manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, *that only may be done of you.*"

Although the intervening days are not sabbaths and work may be done on them, be sure that the usual routine does not stop you from realizing the purpose of the *entire festival*. It is to be a time of rejuvenating yourself spiritually and physically. The entire festival

is meant to be a special period of happiness. Spend more time in studying and reading your Bible.

The Use of Unleavened Bread

In this Feast, no leavened bread should be in your homes for seven days and no leavened products should be eaten. Use UNLEAVENED bread instead, *together with your customary meals*. If some of you have never tasted unleavened bread before, you have a surprise coming!

Children should be trained by their parents to eat unleavened bread during these days, and also *taught the meaning for so doing*. This will always be a wonderful experience for them, because most children have never tasted nutritious unleavened bread, which can either be bought, or baked very simply in your own home. Unleavened products are sold in most all stores near you. Just ask your grocer.

If some of you would enjoy baking your own unleavened bread, be sure to write us for recipes, if you do not already have some.

What About Unconverted Relatives?

If families are divided with only some converted, difficulties may arise. Perhaps you are a husband or a wife whose family does not follow God. Don't let that worry you. *Never force your will on others*. Don't force them to use unleavened bread against their will. This festival is a matter *between you and God*.

Where the entire family serves God, all leaven must be removed by the beginning of the Festival. If unconverted members are in the family, all leaven should be removed *if they do not object*. But if they object, rather than provoke arguments, it is better to reckon the house as the others' property and not remove the leaven. Doing otherwise would involuntarily impose your religion on the unconverted. However, a wife who does not need to bake can take all leaven from the kitchen where she works and place it elsewhere in the house if no objections would be raised. *Allow others their freedom to eat leavened products if they purchase them or demand you bake them.*

If God has not provided you the monetary means through the second tithe, whether your own or others', then, of course, you will need to observe these days at home. Sometimes it is necessary to explain to your family if they do not understand. You have to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves" in explaining the matter, however.

If opposition will likely develop, it would be better, *before saying anything*, to delight unconverted members of your family with unleavened products long before the Feast so that they will not think anything strange when you first mention it. It is surprising how many people know little or nothing about unleavened breads, but who enjoy them from the very first. Perhaps if the unconverted really enjoy it, nothing need be said about the Festival and you can use unleavened bread for the entire week.

When living with the unconverted many of these troubles can be avoided by attending the festival with the brethren. Of course, there might be limiting circumstances, especially if there is a new born child. In I Samuel 1:21-23 we are given an example of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, who, when her son was first born, was not able to attend the Passover and Feast.

The first annual Sabbath or High Day of Unleavened Bread is the *only* other *NIGHT convocation* that is commanded after the Passover (Exodus 12:42). What could be more pleasant for those of you unable to meet with brethren than beginning a festival with an enjoyable dinner with members of your family in thanks to God?

What About Pentecost?

The next festival when all are to gather is the Day of Firstfruits or Pentecost. It usually occurs a few weeks before summer. *Pentecost always occurs on a Monday*.

Pentecost is an annual Holy Day in which no work is to be done except for

Question Box

Your questions answered in these columns! Your opportunity to have discussed those problems pertaining directly to members of God's Church.

Please notify me when the annual Holy Days occur this year. I need to notify my employer in advance so that my vacation can be made to coincide with the Festivals.

It is always a good plan to let your employer know when you need your vacation. Your employer usually does *not* need to know *WHY* you want your vacation at a particular time. On occasions it is necessary to tell him that the Church requires your attendance at an annual Festival. Do not negatively ask him for the time off. Tell him positively, but courteously, that *you are taking this time off*.

Never enter into any doctrinal arguments about it!

We publish each year a calendar at the beginning of the New Year accord-

ing to the sacred calendar. But for those of you who need the information now, here are the dates for the festivals this year (1959):

Passover (not an annual sabbath), from sunset Tuesday, April 21, to sunset Wednesday, April 22. The Passover service is held Tuesday night. The Festival of Unleavened Bread extends from sunset, Wednesday, April 22, to sunset Wednesday, April 29. The two Holy Days are Thursday, April 23, and Wednesday, the 29th. Pentecost occurs Monday, June 15. The Feast of Trumpets falls on a Sabbath, October 3. Atonement is Monday, October 12. The Feast of Tabernacles begins at sunset, Friday, October 16. The first Holy Day falls on a weekly sabbath, October 17. The last Great Day falls on a Sabbath, October 24.

what a person must eat. In local churches there is to be a convocation held on the day, just as we find in the example of the disciples on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 31 (Acts 2:1).

As with every holy day when any of you are unable to gather together in an assembled convocation, there should be a great deal of Bible study. If you are keeping this day alone and with opposition from the family, be very considerate of the others. Give the day a festive atmosphere! *Don't withdraw yourself totally from your family.* Be happy with your family. Let them all enjoy the bounteous material blessings of God in a dinner with you. Avoid, however, any statements that would precipitate religious strife. Let them see that the Holy Days which God set in motion are so much more enjoyable than the burdensome holidays which our modern society has incorporated from the rites of the ancient pagans by way of an apostate church.

The Day of Trumpets

As autumn approaches, there is another single Holy Day—the Day of Trumpets. It is an annual Sabbath day when no servile work should be done, except what is necessary for preparation of food on that day. Make this a day of joy for members of your family. And spend time studying the Bible.

If any of the annual Sabbaths falls on the weekly Sabbath, then *that annual Sabbath takes precedence* and we are allowed to prepare meals on that day.

The Day of Atonement

A most unusual day is this! Imagine God commanding one *fast day* for His people annually.

The Day of Atonement is a *commanded fast*. Leviticus 23:28-32 explains that there is no work whatsoever to be done on it. God's people are to congregate whenever possible, as on the preceding Holy Day.

Even though no one is to partake of food or juices, there is no specific prohibition on water. A fast is a fast, whether it be with or without water. Both kinds of fasts are mentioned in the Bible. See the examples of Moses and the prophets.

No explicit instruction is given infants. Nursing infants were assembled in a special fast (Joel 2:16) but there is *no* indication that they did not nurse on the Day of Atonement. Since fasting on this day has a special *meaning*, little children should be taught to fast *when they can first comprehend the fact that God commands it*, and *not* before. It is worse for a child to turn back on what he should do, than not to have known about it at all.

We should not eat the usual evening meal on the beginning of the Day of Atonement (remember, God's days begin at sunset). Eat in *moderation*, the evening meal that follows the Day of Atonement. Always be careful not to eat the usual amount of *heavy* foods immediately after a fast.

If some of you have never fasted for the first time there might be slight physically uncomfortable reactions. But how small are these compared to the heart-warming benefits that come from doing the will of God!

Since God instructs that no work whatsoever be done on this day, be sure that as much preparation as possible for the day has been previously made so that unconverted members of your family will not have cause to complain. Sometimes a converted wife and mother may have to do certain limited work on this day for her unconverted family.

The Festival of Tabernacles

The greatest and most joyous festival is without doubt the Feast of Tabernacles. What can be more wonderful than, after a hard summer's labor, with much of the winter's store in, that we should rejoice before the Lord of heaven and earth? As we read in Nehemiah 8:9-10 of all the festivals in general: "This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep . . . Eat the fat [animals], and drink the sweet [wine], and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto the Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the JOY OF THE LORD IS YOUR STRENGTH."

The Festival of Tabernacles is a time when we should be separate from the world, rejoicing as in a festive dance, before God who has given us every wonderful material and spiritual gift in the past year.

Although the festival itself is only

seven days long—with one annual sabbath at the beginning of the feast—the last annual Holy Day coming immediately after the Feast of Tabernacles makes it customary to refer to all eight days as part of the same festival. On the first and eighth days no work is to be done except what is permitted for meal preparation. If you are alone and unable to journey to the Tabernacle near Gladewater, Texas, because of some *great* unforeseen circumstance, be sure to study your Bible, and especially the law, these days.

If you are unable to attend the festival at Gladewater (or London, England), the intervening six days are to be celebrated in the same manner as are the five intervening days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Work is permitted on them, although God does not intend you to do the usual routine. The Festival was given to relieve you from your normal duties so that you can rejoice with the brethren. It is to defeat the purpose of the Festival if, when you are unable to attend, you merely rest on the two High Days and neglect the entire festival as a whole period of supreme happiness.

If you have not yet been able to meet once a year during the Feast of Tabernacles with the brethren, *begin now to save your second tithe*—which is God's way of providing you an annual vacation in His spiritual presence with all the brethren.

Our GROWTH Is Challenge for the Future!

(Continued from page 2)

through whom He can work!

Is your *heart* really in the work of God? Do you literally REJOICE over the wonderful news you have just read?

Let me tell you that this is not even a proverbial "drop in the bucket" compared to the awe-inspiring growth and *power* which will manifest itself in God's true Church in the coming years—IF we continue to yield to God as a body, and to let Him work through us as *He* sees fit. If we continually *cry out* to God—*hunger* and *thirst* for knowledge and truth (Mat. 5:6)—and continue GROWING in the *grace* and *knowledge* of Jesus Christ.

Even if He has to raise up *stones* to do His work, God's Church and His work will GROW—*spiritually*, and in *power*! Just be sure *you* are growing with it—and *rejoice* in what GOD is doing!

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