

Comments About the Spring Feasts

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BIG SANDY, Texas—If this is the first time you have come to our website and looked at our articles, this article may help you understand what people in our congregation believe about the spring feasts.

I will organize this article by posing and answering questions that sometimes arise.

Question: Does your congregation believe that a disciple is saved by grace?

Answer: Yes. We believe scriptures like Ephesians 2:8-9 and Titus 3:4-7.

Question: Does your congregation believe that God is interested in works—oftentimes called deeds or behavior?

Answer: Yes. But, since works do not save us, our behavior (works) is a reaction to our Heavenly Father's redemption toward us. We believe scriptures like Ephesians 2:10 and Titus 3:8. We believe that our behavior should be loving God and loving our neighbor.

Question: Does keeping the spring feast days save disciples?

Answer: No.

Question: Why do disciples keep the spring feast days?

Answer: We seek to learn the valuable lessons associated with the meaning of the days.

Question: Does your congregation look at the Old Testament lessons of the spring feast days?

Answer: Yes, but. If a disciple does not connect how the Old Testament lessons point to our Lord, he is missing the greater lessons of the spring feast days.

Question: Where are the feast days listed in the Old Testament?

Answer: Leviticus 23:1-44.

Question: Does your congregation keep the feast days implementing the details listed in Leviticus 23?

Answer: Not at all. We are happy that the sacrificial system was replaced by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Question: Does your congregation keep the seventh-day Sabbath in the manner of the Old Testament?

Answer: Thankfully, not. Notice Numbers 15:32-36. The specific offense (picking up sticks) would be shocking in today's world, and the penalty (stoning) would be considered outlandish for such behavior.

Question: Does your congregation keep the Passover in the manner of the Old Testament?

Answer: Not at all. Our congregation does not keep the Seder meal as practiced by the Jewish religion.

Question: What specifically do people of your congregation do?

Answer: We use 1 Corinthians 11:17-26 to determine much of our behavior. First, we meet in the evening picturing the night in which the Lord was betrayed (verse 23). The chronology of the events had the Lord dying at 3:00 p.m. on the next day. Second, we use the symbols (bread and wine) that Paul explained he received from the Lord (verses 23-26). We also participate in a foot-washing ceremony as the Lord described in John 13:1-17.

Question: Do members of your congregation call this event the "Passover"?

Answer: Here are some of the names that people call the event: New Testament Passover, Christian Passover, Lord's Supper.

Question: Doesn't the King James Version of the Bible refer to the "Jews' Passover"?

Answer: Yes. Some places are John 2:13, John 6:4 and John 11:55.

Question: Did the Lord ever use the term "Passover" apart from the Jews?

Answer: Yes. The Gospel writers reported about the Lord giving instructions about preparing the Passover. Notice Luke 22:7-20.

Question: Why do some in your congregation use the term "Lord's Supper"?

Answer: On the night the Lord was betrayed, He shared a meal with His disciples. Later, the apostle Paul wrote about the church in Corinth having a meal called the "Lord's Supper" (1 Corinthians 11:20-22).

Question: What do you say to people who claim that the words "Lord's Supper" are a mistranslation?

Answer: I believe people who use the Bible as their inspired guide need to be careful about claiming something is a mistranslation. And, instead of quibbling over words, here is a question to consider: Is the phrase accurate? In truth, the Son of God had a meal with His disciples.

Question: What do you say to people who strongly condemn the people who accept the words "Lord's Supper"?

Answer: I would remind them that their condemning attitude is contrary to the meaning of the symbols on the night commemorating the suffering and death of our Lord.

Question: Doesn't 1 Corinthians 11:20 say that the meal was not to be called the "Lord's Supper"?

Answer: Not really. Some people say that Paul was denouncing the name "Lord's Supper." I believe that Paul was denouncing their behavior (verses 21-22) as not being worthy of the name or of the original example of the Lord in the Gospels. 1 Corinthians 11:20-22 reminds me of Isaiah 1:11-15. Some people say that Isaiah 1:11-15 was denouncing the concept of the Sabbath. I don't believe that God was denouncing the Sabbath. Just as God was denouncing their behavior on the Sabbath in Isaiah 1:11-15, Paul was denouncing their behavior on the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:20-22.

Question: Does your congregation follow the Bible and have a meal on the night commemorating the suffering and death of the Lord?

Answer: Some members of our congregation who commemorate the suffering and death of the Lord privately in their homes have a meal, but our congregational service commemorating the suffering and death of the Lord does not have a meal.

Question: Why not?

Answer: Church tradition. While having a meal that night would be following the Bible, choosing not to have a meal on that night is not sinning.

Question: Do you believe your congregation will ever want to add a meal to the congregational commemoration of the suffering and death of the Lord?

Answer: I am content either way. We have a nice service that includes the symbols of foot-washing, broken bread and a little wine. And we love to remember 1 Corinthians 5:7, which says: "For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us."

Question: Does your congregation observe the Days of Unleavened Bread in the Old Testament manner?

Answer: Most in our congregation use the symbolism of leaven to focus on two lessons. First, the Old Testament lesson was that the Israelites needed to leave Egypt in a hurry before their bread rose (Exodus 12:34, 39). The idea of being ready to leave can be seen in some of Christ's teachings—in places like Matthew 24:36-44 and Matthew 25:1-13. Second, a New Testament lesson was to consider the concept of putting sin out of our lives—as a reaction to God's grace (1 Corinthians 5:1-8).

Question: Does your congregation believe in the resurrection of the Son of God?

Answer: Absolutely. There are many scriptures in the Bible that reveal the importance of that event. Following are a few:

- Acts 2:22-24
- Acts 2:29-33
- Acts 3:15
- Acts 5:30-31
- Acts 13:28-30
- Romans 4:24-25
- Romans 5:9-10
- Romans 6:3-5
- 1 Corinthians 15:12-20
- Ephesians 1:20-22
- Philippians 3:1-11
- Colossians 2:12
- Colossians 3:1
- Hebrews 8:1
- 1 Peter 1:21
- 1 Peter 3:21-22

Question: Does your congregation observe Easter?

Answer: No.

Question: Why not?

Answer: Our congregation does not value the symbols of society that people have chosen to picture the resurrection.

Question: Has your congregation chosen symbols to picture the resurrection in a better way?

Answer: Not as a congregation. Since the Bible does not mention a group manner in which to picture the resurrection, members of our congregation remember the resurrection in private—as an individual or as a family. They generally focus upon the resurrection three days and three nights following the time of the Lord's death and burial.

In conclusion, I would like to quote Romans 8:11: "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit [which] dwells in you."