

THE PRESENT TRUTH



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“For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth.”

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INTRODUCTION

2 Peter 1:12 – “For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth.”

We, as the church of New Testament need to be established in the present truth because it is the only way we are going to survive in this perverse generation. The present truth is the reality we need to experience as the children of God, and this is the gospel of Jesus the Christ. The present truth is the gospel of the kingdom that reveals who Jesus is.

The plan of God since the creation of the world was to extend His rulership through Man; God wanted to rule the earth through Man.

Gen 1:26-28. Man was thus entrusted to not only establish the Kingdom on the earth, but to also ensure the continuity of the kingdom until the enemy is totally subdued. However, in Gen 3, man willingly surrendered this authority to the devil and that is why Christ came to seek and find what was lost. **Luke 19:10** – *“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”*

Jesus started His preaching by declaring that, "...repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt 4:17

Jesus brought back the Kingdom and man's authority to represent the Kingdom of heaven as it was in the beginning, and it is only through the same Jesus that we get the revelation of the Kingdom of God. **John 3:3-5, Act 4:12, Heb 1:1-3**

The present truth is the preaching of who Jesus is and the Kingdom of God, because God is in these last days speaking to us through the Son, Jesus. **Heb 1:2** "*... has in these last days spoken to us by His Son...*"

Therefore the apostles preached Jesus the Christ because He is the present truth of all ages. **Acts 5:42** – "*And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.*"

THE PRESENT TRUTH: JESUS THE MESSIAH

“God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ (Messiah)” Act 2:36

The word Messiah comes from the Hebrew word Masiach which comes from a root word Mashach which means to rub with oil or anoint. Masiach (Messiah) means the anointed one, usually a king or a priest.

Israel expected the Messiah/ Christ (the anointed king) who was to come from the lineage of David. Since in **2Sam 7:12-14** God promised David that, *“I will set up your seed after you... He shall build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his Kingdom forever. I will be His father and He shall be My son.”* This scripture was prophetically speaking about Jesus.

Jesus is the promised king, the son of David **Matt 1:1** who was to seat on the throne of David forever.

At His baptism, Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit without measure. **Matt 3:16, John 1:33**. This confirmed Him as the Messiah/ Christ, Israel’s anointed King. **Matt 27:11** – *“Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked him, saying,*

Are you the King of the Jews? And Jesus said to him, "It is as you say.""

The Jews expected Jesus to rule with a rod of iron, so that they would finally physically revenge on those who politically oppressed them through waging a physical war and restore the kingdom to them - in a physical way. But they missed the fact that this King/ Messiah had brought His Kingdom with Him.

"Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the Kingdom of God would come, He answered...for indeed the Kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:20-21

Prov 25:2 Gold in rocks

"It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter."

The kingdom was brought with Jesus but left unseen. **It is time to search the matter – the Kingdom of God.**

How do we see and enter the Kingdom

Jesus said unless we are born again we cannot see or enter the kingdom of **God John 3:3-5** – “*“Jesus answered and said to him, Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?” Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”*”

We are born again by grace through faith in Jesus the Christ. Eph 2:8. After we are born again, we are to put His kingdom into focus, **(Mat 6:33)** seek the kingdom and righteousness.

In the Lord's prayer, **Matt 6:9-13** “*...Your Kingdom come, your will be done...*” The Kingdom of God is the primary focus for all prayer.

THE TRUTH RESTORED

The present truth that is being restored is simply the peaching of Jesus the Christ. We as the church today don't need unscriptural prosperity teachings but Jesus the Christ to be taught, because it is teaching and preaching Jesus that will bring the church to maturity.

Jesus our Example

Acts 2:22 - Peter is introducing Jesus to those who had gathered, this was his first preaching after the Holy Spirit had been poured on them. *Acts 2:22 - "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know"*.

Jesus did not bring His Own ideas, but he came to fulfill the plan of God. In **John 5:19** *"...the Son can do nothing of himself but what He sees the Father do*. We have to understand that the Son carries on the Father's work. Therefore, we need to follow Jesus' example and walk a life led by the Spirit of God.

The truth and the commission

The truth restored is the commission restored. The commission is seen in **Mathew 28:18-20** – *“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and in earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age”. Amen.”*, which we termed ‘The Great Commission’, making disciples of all nations. Till today, The Great Commission is not well understood because the church side trucked from the truth and preached another gospel, The doctrines of men, The doctrine of demons, Strange doctrines, The doctrine of Pharisees and Sadducees.

In the previous chapter, we explained that through being born again, we see and enter the Kingdom of God. However, the Great Commission is much more than preaching the gospel of bringing people into salvation. It is bringing the people into the lifestyle of Christ through discipleship.

The Kingdom is lived now! And so, believers are to live the Kingdom life style while still on the earth, and the Great Commission which is all about making disciples is the way through which we put off concerning our former conduct, and put on the new man that was created in the image of Christ. **Eph 4:22-24.** – *“That you put off concerning your former conduct, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God in true righteousness and true holiness.”*

Jesus gave the pattern of ministry which is making disciples. He taught them all that His heavenly Father commanded Him and we are to do the same. Discipleship is the way we transfer the Kingdom life into the lives of believers, teaching them to observe ALL that Christ commanded.

For ages, the church has thought that growth is just having numbers added to it. However, the reality is, growth is having the lifestyle of Christ being conformed in us through discipleship. **Rom 8:29** – *“For whom He foreknew, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the*

firstborn among many brethren.” , Gal 4:19 – “My little children, of whom I labor in birth again until Christ be formed in you,”

Who is a disciple?

- A disciple is a follower; one who follows a teacher and clings to their teaching.
- A learner; learning the lifestyle of the kingdom and the teacher.
- Teachable; willing and able to learn
- Correctable
- Committed to following the teacher and his teaching.

Jesus is our principal teacher. However, He has given us fathers/ teachers in the body that unfold the mysteries of Jesus' Kingdom. This is among the present truth being restored.

Among truths being restored

One of the strange teachings preached by the church was that of going to heaven saying; that the church was to go to a physical geographical place called heaven. Even uneducated men believe their failure to explain this geographical place does not hinder its

existence, because all believe that there is a geographical place called heaven.

This teaching was much developed in the church history in the time of the Roman catholic church when the bible was not allowed to be used by every believer to read and exercise the authority of the word of God; many other books/teachings were sneaked in, and many taught about going to heaven which is actually the opposite of the idea of Jesus coming in the Earth to introduce the Kingdom of God Matt 4:17 – “*From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*”

But the reality is that Heaven can only be accessed in the spirit, even now because you are in the spirit you can access this spiritual realm called heaven. This is mind blowing to many in the church today! God is a Spirit according to **John 4:24** – “***God is a Spirit.....***” that means everything of God is be accessed in the spirit. **Eph 2:1-6**

WHO IS JESUS?

The church / disciples need to know who Jesus is and this can save the whole world. From the Old Testament to the New Testament, the bible is talking about Jesus, hidden in the Old Testament and revealed in the New Testament. The only way we can get to know who Jesus is, is by sitting down under the true Apostles and be disciplined.

Mathew 28:18-20 says ‘And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, *“All authority has been given to me in heaven and on the earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*

Now from the above Great Commission that Jesus gave to his Apostles whom he disciplined himself for 3 years, they were sent with full understanding of who Jesus was and so, they started preaching Him (Jesus) alone and no other name.

The apostles preached Jesus

Acts 8:4-5 “Then Phillip went down to the city and preached Christ to them.”

A study of Acts 5,

When the apostles did much healings of the sick, **V16**

That the high priest and Sadducees rose up with much with indignation, **V17**

They threw the apostles in prison, for preaching the name of Jesus **V18**

God paved a way and the prison doors were opened and Apostles came out of the prison, **V19** They started to preach the gospel again **V25**

The high priest asks, “Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine...” **V28**

Peter and other apostles stand by their faith in the name of Jesus **V29**

These apostles spoke with boldness and stood strong on their faith they had got the revelation of who Jesus was!

Ephesians 3:12 Paul testifies that in Jesus, He has confidence and boldness.

Through much persecution and tribulation, the apostles never ceased to preach and teach Jesus the Christ. **Acts 7:54-60,**

The revelation of who Jesus is

When Peter got a revelation that Jesus was the Christ, **Mathew 16:17,** Jesus said to him that, “...for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father who is in heaven.” V17 The revelation of who Jesus is comes from the Father.

There is power in knowing who Jesus! And it is upon this revelation that Jesus builds His church, “**The gates of the hades shall not prevail against it.**” V 18,

When the church gets to know who Jesus is, it sets its way on the work of being edified and built by Jesus Himself and is consequently given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, to start operating from that kingdom and bring the rulership of Christ on the earth.

From the above, we get to know why we need to understand who Jesus is. We are called to grow in the understanding (maturity) of Christ Jesus. **Col 1:28** – *“Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus”*, **Eph 4:13** – *“till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;”*

JESUS IS GOD

John 1:1- 4, 14 **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and He dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.”**

1Peter 1:19-20 **“He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”**

John 8:53-58 **“Most assuredly I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM,”** **V58. Micah 5:2, “...the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”**

Jesus existed before all things. In Philippians 2:5, we continue to see Jesus' existence in godliness before coming in flesh. This shows us that Jesus is the eternal one who manifested in the flesh. 1Tim 3:16. "And without controversy, great is the mystery of Godliness: **GOD WAS MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH...**"

JESUS IS THE I AM

In **Exodus 3:13-14** God revealed His Personal name to Moses, as He was sending him to the Israelites. "**God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM...thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you.**"

The revealed name of God in the Old Testament is I AM which is the same as YHWH or Jehovah. Almost all English translators translated the personal name of God as LORD, a mistake that has misled many generations not to understand God by His personal name. Whenever LORD appears in English Bible translations, it is the name of God, YHWH. On the other hand, Lord in small letter means Adonai, literally, a master, or one above you.

In John 8:58, Jesus called Himself I AM. The response of the Jews who heard him took up stones to throw at Him because they

understood from their fathers that this name I AM was ONLY ascribed to the Eternal one, God Himself. To them, Jesus calling Himself I AM was blasphemy and so they took up stones.

Jesus calling Himself I AM reveals to us that He is God who manifested in the flesh. **John 20:28** – *“And Thomas answered and said to Him, My Lord and my God.”*, **Titus 2:13** – *“Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ”*, **Philippians 2:5-6** – *“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God”*, **Colossians 1:15-16** – *“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creation. For by him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created by Him and for Him”*

CHRIST IN US

“...Christ in you, the hope of Glory.” Col 1:27

Why is Christ in Us? What does it mean?

1. Transformation within us
2. Purpose of God to be well known to the church mt16:18
3. Christ / character is to be lived in our community.
4. Christ in you is a way of discipleship Mat 28:19
5. Bearing His image: Rom 8:29, Col 3:10 that is how we can influence others
6. Union with Christ; Is the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation.

How can Christ be in Us?

John 1:12 – *“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become the sons of God, to those who believe on His name”*, when we accepted Jesus, we were brought into His family and through baptism, we are placed into the body of Christ. **Rom 6:3-4, Gal 3:27, 2Cor 5:17.**

When we are added to the body of Christ, we are to manifest and live the new life in which we have been brought into **Eph 4:22-24** – “– *“That you put off concerning your former conduct, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God in true righteousness and true holiness.”*. We are living another/ Christ’s life because He now lives in us.

Romans 8:29, “**For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son.....**” We have been called to bear the image of Christ here on earth. **1 Cor 15:49**, “**And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly man**”

Putting off the old man and putting on the new all takes place in the mind. Real transformation happens by renewing our minds everyday with the word of God. **Rom 12:2** –“*And do not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*”

More scriptures to explore:

In **2 Cor 4:6-7** Paul describes the believers as earthen vessels that contain **His treasure**. What is this Treasure? **Christ in You**.

Gal 1:15-16 “...*But when it pleased God to reveal His son in me...*”. God’s plan is to reveal His Son in us, from within rather than to us from outside. In other words, God reveals **CHRIST, TO US FROM WITH IN US**.

Gal 2:20, “**I am crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me...**” The Christian life is not a matter of believing in Christ, but allowing Christ Himself to live in and out through us.

Gal 4:19; “**My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you.**” Paul viewed the believers in Galatia as his spiritual children. He had labored to help them receive CHRIST at their salvation and in this verse, he continues to labor so that Christ they received would fully be formed in them.

Eph 3:17 Christ makes a home in our Hearts.

Christ in you... Col 1:27, this verse shows that Christ is in us as our hope of glory. When we believed in Him, Christ came to live in our spirit, now making His Home in our hearts.

When He returns, He will spread this glory to our outward body so that God's glory can shine through us in a full way. **Phil 3:21, "Who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body..."**

APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE

Acts 2:42 – “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

The word doctrine also means; faith or belief. The teachings which we received.

What is the Apostolic Doctrine?

The first example of the Apostles’ doctrine in the New testament is the testimony of the four gospel writers, while there is no evidence that Mark and Luke were Apostles in the ministry of the Church, they both worked with Apostles very closely over a long period of time and passed on the actions and testimony of Jesus.

The actual gospels as written are primary apostolic doctrine. They include the actual teaching of the Lord Jesus and a testimony of His acts. These gospels show us what Jesus;

1. Taught
2. Did
3. And commanded

So, if we teach what Jesus taught, obey what He commands, practice what He did; that's the Apostolic doctrine.

Points to ponder:

1. Jesus preached and taught the Kingdom of God and made disciples.
2. True doctrine is derived from clear statements in the Bible. True doctrine is the Bible; correctly interpreting, teaching and practicing what is written. Rhema which is a quickened word comes from the Logos (the written word).

LET US EXAMINE THE APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE IN THE FOUR GOSPELS:

1. MATHEW

Mathew's gospel among other things shows the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. E.g Mat 1:23 – *“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which is translated, God with us.”* is the fulfillment of Isa 7:14 – *“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the*

virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

Therefore, the interpretation of the Old Testament is an important aspect of the Apostolic doctrine.

The book of Hebrews demonstrates this aspect of Apostolic doctrine more fully as it is a total interpretation – showing the fulfillment of the Old Testament types and shadows.

2. MARK

Mark 1:1 “the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God”. So, the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God is the Apostolic doctrine. The gospel is the good news which includes the promise of salvation and its fulfillment in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus the Christ.

3. LUKE

Luke 1:1-4 – “INASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all

things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.”

In introducing his gospel Luke gives us important insights as to the nature of the apostolic doctrine:

- i. It is a clear, orderly narrative (story) of the life, teaching and ministry of the Lord Jesus.
- ii. It is delivered by the eyewitness and ministers of the word
1John 1:1-3
- iii. Luke has received perfect understanding from the Apostles’ testimony. Remember Luke is a Gentile who became a disciple of Paul a number of years after Jesus’ death and resurrection.
- iv. Having been instructed, Luke is able to write an orderly account so that another may “know the certainty of those things” which Luke has come to know from receiving apostolic teaching. So, apostolic doctrine is to be passed on
2Tim 2:2 (Apostolic succession).

4. JOHN

John 20:31 – “But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have Life in His Name.”

John wrote his gospel so that people could believe and be saved.

Apostolic doctrine is teaching and preaching Jesus the Christ Acts 5:42

N.B The book of Acts of the Apostles clearly shows how the early church practiced the Apostles’ doctrine. Acts 2:42, Acts 5:42 etc. It emphasizes who Jesus is, that He is God who manifested in the flesh.

SOME FALSE DOCTRINES

The Bible warns us that there are other doctrines a part from the apostles’ doctrine;

- The doctrines of men Mk 7:6-7
- The doctrine of demons 1Tim 4:1
- Strange doctrines Heb 13:9
- The doctrine of Pharisees and Sadducees/ Religious doctrines; the Law contained 613 laws., but the Pharisees

had added about 1000 more of the their own and they were emphasizing them more.

In the 19th century, the Church has experienced other doctrines like rapture, prosperity, one world government etc, which have left her (the church) in fear and without vision.

Eph 4:14 – “that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.”, babes are swept away by every wind of doctrine. That’s why we need to make disciples.

We have one true doctrine – the Apostles’ doctrine = the doctrine of God = the doctrine of Christ. 2John v9. And we need to keep and contend for it **Jude3-4 – “Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

THE FEASTS

Three things to share in this chapter will be:

1. THE JOURNEY
2. THE FEASTS
3. TABERNACLE.

The three mentioned above, which will be explained one by one are literal historical events! The journey of the children of Israel from Egypt to the Promised land - a picture, shadow, model, pattern, or blueprint of the journey we are moving as the church. The feasts, which mark our journey to maturity and the Tabernacle, which represents a place of intimate relationship with God.

It is also important to note that The New Testament is the fulfilment of the old testament and Jesus Christ came to fulfil the law and the prophets. Matt 5:17

Please read Exodus 12.

THE JOURNEY: Exodus 12.

Exodus also means DELIVERANCE. God took His people out of Egypt after they had been there for 430 years. (Exo 12:40) God had a place already prepared for them to be - the promised land/ Canaan. God worked many signs, miracles and wonders before Pharaoh in Egypt so that His people may experience and know God and took them through the desert to humble and test them.

Deut 8:2 – “And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, and to test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.”

Keep this at the back of your mind; God uses pictures/shadows to make His people see what they cannot see.

Their journey started in Egypt and ended in Canaan. As the New Testament church, we are moving our journey into God. Our journey also has a starting point which is being Born Again, John 3:3-5 and ends in perfection or maturity. Isaiah 11: 9. When we became Born Again, it is the fulfilment of the start of the journey as shown in Exodus chapter 12. Acts 2:37-38

The purpose is maturity

1 pet 2:2 After coming to Christ as newborn babes/children (John 1:12) we are to desire for the pure word because it is by this that we are able to grow. Like the Israelites passed through the desert to be humbled and their character tested, we also enter a phase in our journey where our character is being worked upon (Rom 8:18), our former conduct tore down and we are gradually being conformed to the image of Christ Rom 8:28-29, Eph 4:22-24, Rom 12:1-2. Our mind is worked upon by the word **Eph 5:26** – *“that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word”* and God has put in His body ministers to edify His church until she is presented perfect, a mature son. Col 1:28,

Rom 8:19 – *“For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.”*

We start as children, then grow into young men and finally, fathers/sons/mature. **1 John 2:12-14** – *“I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children,*

Because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one.”

THE FEASTS

There are 7 Feasts of Israel, though these can be categorised in three major feasts;

Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. Exo 23:14, 34:22-23

1. PASSOVER. Exo 12, Exo 23, Lev 23:4-8

2. Unleavened Bread, Lev 23:6-8

3. Wave Offering, Lev 23:11-14

4. PENTECOST - Mt Sanai, Exo 31:18, Exo 34, Lev 23:15-22

5. Trumpets Lev 23:23-25

6. Atonement Lev 23:26-32, Lev 16

7. TABERNACLES. Exo 23:16, Lev 23:33-34, Deut 16:13

God gave the feasts to the children of Israel with a purpose that they would help them on their journey to the promised land.

THE PASSOVER

The Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread and the Wave offering

The first feast was the feast of Passover, that Israel celebrated on their last day in Egypt. It marked the beginning of their journey to the promised land. The feast revolved around the sacrificing of a lamb without blemish by every household, which was eaten with unleavened bread, and bitter herbs. Exo 12: 3,5,8. The blood of the lamb was for their salvation! God commanded them to put blood on their doorposts V7 for their protection as God avenged their enemy, Pharaoh.

In its celebration, the feast was further observed by eating unleavened bread (and taking away any leaven) and bringing a grain offering (a first fruit, a sheaf of barley) which was waved before Yahweh in the temple following the Passover Feast. Lev 23:5-11. The feast was commanded by God to be observed by Israel as a Holy convocation, to remember their redemption from Egypt.

The fulfilment of the Passover

The Passover feast in the New Testament is all about our Born Again Experience and salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the true Lamb that takes away the sins of men, **John 1:29** – *“The next day John saw Jesus coming unto him, and said, Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”*

Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us 1Cor 5:7. Just like the lamb was a central sacrifice in the Passover feast in the Old Testament, the lamb -Jesus- is the center of our salvation. God provided a lamb for man’s redemption, Gen 22:8 and when John the Baptist saw Jesus, he recognised him as the “Lamb of God!” John 1:36

Old Testament fulfilled

- The lamb was taken and kept 4 days Exodus 12: 3-6. Jesus fulfilled this; Luke 22:66-71, 23:1-12, Mat 16:23,24
- A lamb for a household Exo 12:3-4. Fulfilled in Acts 16:31-34 “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.” V31

- The blood of the lamb at their doorposts covered them from death. Exo 12:13. The blood of Jesus took away all our sins, past, present and future. 1John 1:7, John 3:16.
- A lamb without blemish Exo 12:5, A male of one year V5. The Lamb of God 1 Pet 1:18-19 and 1Cor 5:7, Rom 5:15
- At evening/ twilight you shall kill it V6. Mark 15:33
- Blood for atonement. Hebrew 9:22 and Col 1:14
- Eat the flesh of the lamb V 8-10 - The flesh - the body of the lamb John 6:53 - Roast with fire - Hebrews 12:29 - The unleavened bread John 6:18 and Luke 22:19 - Eaten with bitter herbs - the sufferings, bitterness of Calvary John 19:28 - Not a bone broken John 19:33-36

Points to Ponder

- a) Do you remember your Born Again experience?
- b) Do you see that being Born Again is the starting point

FEAST OF PENTECOST.

The second feast of Israel came at the stage of their journey to the promised land when they reached Mount Sinai. Exo 19. Three important things happened.

1. The Law
2. Worship
3. Covenant

Israel received the law, the revelation of the way they had to worship and became the covenant people of God. They came to mountain Sinai in the third month and here, God gave Moses the tablets on which was the law. On the same day, 3000 people died in God's fury after worshipping the golden calf made by Aaron.

In Lev 23:15-16, "***And you shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count fifty days to the day after the seventh Sabbath; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord.***" The feast is also known as the Feast of Weeks or the Feast of Harvest since it was celebrated after 7 weeks but also brought to Yahweh the first

fruits of their harvest. It is also the Feast of Pentecost because of the Greek translation. The Greek word for fifty is Pente and since the feast was celebrated 50 days after the last Sabbath of the Feast of Passover, it is Pentecost in Greek.

The fulfilment of Pentecost

In Acts 2, when the day of the Feast of Pentecost had fully come, the HOLY SPIRIT fell on all who were waiting in the upper room and the first church that Jesus spoke about in Mat 16:18 was born. The church (body of Christ) became the new Israel of God and His covenant people 1Pet 2:9. **Gal 6:16** – *“And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them, and upon Israel of God”*

Unlike the case at Mt Sinai, on the day of Pentecost, there was a sound as of a rushing mighty wind, tongues as of fire and they received the spirit; the law of God into their hearts, Jer 31:33, Rom 2:15 and thus entered into a new way of worship in the spirit. The exchange was made from external shadows to the true pictures -spirit. The gifts of the Holy Spirit also manifested and

the life and pattern of the New Testament church was established
1 Cor 14:26 and they received the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Just like Israel was equipped at Sinai to move their journey to the
promised land, the church is also being equipped Eph 4:11-12 to
move and reach our destination: reaching maturity/ being
conformed in the image and likeness of Christ.

A Journey beyond Pentecost (MT.SINAI)

“You have dwelt long enough at this mountain” Deut 1:6. There is
more beyond Pentecost, more for the people of God! It is time for
the people of God to grow up and realize the full purpose of God.
Yahweh has a destiny for his church - MATURITY.

Rom 8:19, Heb 6: 1(b), 1Pet 2:2, Heb 5:14.

Points to ponder

- a) What does PENTE mean?
- b) Is Pentecost our destination? Discuss

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

This is the other feast that God gave Israel. It was the third and the greatest of the feasts. The name of this feast comes from the booths/ dwellings/tents that Israel dwelt in for seven days of the feast to remember their life and journey in the wilderness. The feast of Tabernacles is also called the Feast of ingathering. It was a harvest and thanksgiving festival for the harvest of the fruit of the land and was celebrated after reaching the promised land to possess it.

The feast had three other feasts in itself.

1. The day of trumpets
2. The day of Atonement
3. The feast of tabernacles

The feast started with the memorial blowing of the trumpets in the seventh month, on the first day. Lev 23:24. On the 10th day of the seventh month, the Day of Atonement was observed where Israel afflicted their soul and offered a sacrifice to God. Lev 23:27-29 On the 15th day of the same month, they celebrated the Feast of

Tabernacles for seven days offering sacrifices of burnt offerings and fruits Lev 23:34,36,39,40.

The fulfilment of the Feasts.

The blowing of trumpets:

In the old testament, God commanded Israel on several trumpets that would be sounded to convey a particular message to the people. (Exo 19:19-20, Num 10:2-10, Lev 25:9-10) in the Feast, the trumpets were calling Israel to prepare for other upcoming feasts in the Feast of Tabernacles.

In the New Testament this represents the preaching of the word that calls people to get ready and to move to perfection, for the Feast of Tabernacles - fully dwelling in the presence of God.

The feast of tabernacles was the seventh, which speaks of completion and fulfillment. It crowned the fulfillment of a year of growth in the land. A great harvest festival to celebrate the fruitfulness of the land and as such it is symbolic of the great spiritual harvest in the closing years of the church age. The church is not going to go out in failure, snatched out / raptured out of the way before tribulation but is to be completed and perfected to be an instrument of God to bring deliverance to the earth. The feast

of tabernacles contains in type and shadow of all those truths which pertain to this, which will give us an understanding of how the purpose of God will be achieved. And an overview of what God is doing in the earth today. When the moon comes to fullness in the seventh month then will the church come to her fullness.

The feast of tabernacles speaks of fulfillment. It celebrates the end of the journey. It is fruit harvest, and fruit is the result of that which is sown. The fruit is not the seed, it contains the seed, the seed is planted, the shoot comes forth the plants comes to maturity and when it comes to maturity it bears fruits and so it speaks of Maturity, of fullness The Greek word for perfection as used in the New Testament ,is the word teleos, which means the end of something ,in the sense of the fulfillment of it. Heb 6,1-2 Let us go to perfection, or you can say let us go to maturity full nature of Christ. SO THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES SPEAKS OF FULFILMENT ,OF GROWING UP,OF MATURITY ,OF ALL THAT GOD WANTS TO BRING HIS PEOPLE TO, IT SPEAKS OF THE PROMISED LAND AND OUR PROMISED LAND IN THE SPIRIT IS THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST COME FORTH IN A PEOPLE, A CORPORATE BODY. The body of Christ is a corporate, an understanding which began to come at the feast of

Pentecost because Paul said 1 Cor 12 as the body has many members, so also is Christ. The revelation of the body of Christ begins at the feast of Pentecost when we were filled with the Spirit, but the fullness of it is when we begin to understand the implications of that corporateness. When we begin to understand that God wants to show forth His glory then we can see the meaning of the feast of tabernacles. The feast of tabernacles relates to the fulfillment of God's purpose. It is the high time we grew and understand the original purpose of God and we shall see the body of Christ mature and conformed in the image of His Son Jesus the Christ, Romans 8:29.

A woman will be seen clothed with the sun, a woman who gives birth to a man child who will take his place in the heavens, cast out Satan and his hosts and bring forth the government of the next age. Then will God enter again into His rest as He hands over to the man made in His image the stewardship of creation. This will be the fulfillment of all the sabbaths kept in Israel which were only a type and shadow of the rest that remains for us to enter into in order that God may enter into His rest when He has a people ruling and reigning on the earth. Jesus is God who came in flesh 1 TIM 3,16 with a mission and in Mat 4:17 the mission introduced;

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND. Jesus came to restore what man had lost which is the glory and presence of God in the earth. As the body of Christ we need to come back to the true teaching of the word of God if we are to grow to maturity Eph 4,13-14 no longer babes tossed to and fro by all men's doctrine.

God caused them to have three celebrations or feasts of COMMEMORATION by which they could remember the three stages of the journey, the deliverance from Egypt, PASSOVER, the giving of the LAW which is PENTECOST and the entry into the promised Land which is TABERNACLES. THERE IS MORE BEYOND PENTECOST, God has a full plan and purpose no plan B needed because God can do what He PURPOSED before the world began 2 Tim 1:8-9 and Eph 3:11 I know God is speaking to someone out there to renew your mind and obey the voice of God and move on, the journey continues, don't allow yourself to die in wilderness, Manna and water ceased, God will only provide for His vision and purpose.

We can see the fulfilment of these in the New Testament The three levels of our growth to maturity.

- Infant stage / born again 1 Pet 2:2. 1John 2:12

- Young adult / 1John 2:13-14 overcoming the evil one because the word of God abides in them. Making disciples, equipping the Saints Eph 4:12, training the church battle.
- Father/ sons relationship receiving the fullness of Christ in us Eph 4:13

According to Heb 9:1 The Old Testament priests were serving the COPY, THE TYPE AND SHADOW OF HEAVENLY THINGS.

1Tim 4:13 *“Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*

LIFESTYLE OF A DISCIPLE

Jesus' last recorded statement with His disciples in - **Mathew 28:18-20** – *“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.” Amen.”*

- Jesus said, go and make disciples of all the nations.
- All power and authority was given to Him both on Earth and in heaven.

WHO IS A DISCIPLE?

The word "**disciples**" in Gk is "**Mathetes**" which means.

- a learner
- one who follow another
- one who abide and takes the life of the teacher.

- one who accepts the teaching of the teacher.

- an imitator

LIFESTYLE

1 Peter 2:21 – *“For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps:”*

- the suffering of a disciple for **Christ** brings everlasting joy.

- the disciple must walk the crucified life of Christ. (Mathew 16:24-25)

Romans 6:5-6 – *“For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.”*

Vs 5 - the disciple must understand that his life was joined with the life of Christ in death and resurrection.

Vs 6 - we are no longer slaves of **sin**. Hallelujah

CHARACTER OF A DISCIPLE

John 13:14-15 – *“If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet; you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.”*

- Jesus' washed the feet of His disciples to show them the level of obedience and service towards one another.

- washing the saints' feet, is not a business to earn money, it is ministry to the saints as a sign of humility to the minister. (1 Timothy 5: 9-10)

Hebrews 12:28-29 – *“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.”*

- the disciple is always ready to obey the call of the Father (God)

John 15:7 – *“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done for you.”*

- A disciple abides in the word

- If we abide in the word, we become true disciples. **John 8:31** –
“.... if you abide in My word, you are my disciples indeed”

- a disciple continues steadfastly in the word. (**Deut 8:1-3**), (**1Cor 10: 3-4**)

Acts 16: 1-5 – “ *Then came he to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was a Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they knew all that his father was a Greek. And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.*”

The biblical disciples stuck with, lived with, imitated and followed the teacher.

- Timothy accepted to be a disciple of apostle Paul.

- he accepted to be circumcised because of the gospel.

- he gave in all his life to serve Christ in Paul. **2Timothy 3: 10-11**

– “ *But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra--what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me.*”

KINGDOM FINANCES

Deut 16:17 – *Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you.*

Prov 21:26 – *All day long he craves for more but the right was given without sparing.*

Prov 14:31 – *whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is **merciful** to the needy honors God.*

According to one's ability

2Cor 8:12 – *“For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have”*

- Offering and tithing should not be received in a controlling way'
- We should respect the integrity of God's people to give as they are able.

According to John 3:16 out of Love is how God gave to the world His Son.

Mainly giving doesn't help God to know where your heart is, but it helps you to know where your heart is. People will always give

time, resources, money, support where their hearts are. Check your self, how do you spend?

Striving Vs Resting

Ecc 2: 22-23 – “***For what has man for all his labor, and for the striving of his heart with which he has toiled under the sun? For all his days are burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. This also is vanity.***”

Contrast what worldly striving to what Jesus is telling us about how it should be when we follow Him. **Matt 11:28** – “***Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest***”

Matt 6:33 – “***But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you***”

Therefore we no longer have to strive to get ahead, now we can rest in the financial work of Jesus and this would get people from trying to make things happen.

Listen to this promise in **Deut 28:2** – “***And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God***”

Obedience is better than sacrifice

Because Jesus Obeyed God perfectly and because we are now in Him we are legally entitled to all those blessings in the first part of deut 28. We can set aside the worry about how things are going to work out because the result is God's responsibility not ours. Our role is to hear from God and follow His Plan.

God's system is abundance; God is extravagant and blesses His children

Manipulation in the church

At the other extreme we see some people who take advantage of the generosity of others. These folks tend to manipulate the emotions and sympathies of others trying to convince those they are manipulating into giving more. We need to learn the right way of "receiving" not "taking" the offering.

The role of the church is to help bring the Kingdom of God here in to the world around us. Since finances touch everything that happens in our lives, its vital that we have a kingdom perspective **for them** too.

Cursed Vs Blessed

The world system is cursed and under the power of satan Gen 3:17-19 – *“Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘ You shall not eat of it’: Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”*

Note;

- Everything in the world is hard to accomplish
- Things are hard to get done **with** because everything we do is actively resisted
- Complications and distractions constantly rise up against us to slow us down and drag us off course.

According to Deut 28:11-12 we are not to borrow, but this has become very different today.

Buying and selling Vs Giving and receiving

On the world's system things are transferred between people via buying and selling. A price is set based on how both sides value what is being transferred, unless that price is paid there isn't a sale.

In contrast the kingdom of God works on the system of giving and receiving **Phil 4:15** – “*Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me as concerning giving and receiving but you only.*”

In the contemporary church we see a lot of teaching in the Christian world about giving but there tends to be very little teaching on receiving. As a result, there can be some personal pride as far as receiving is concerned because people tend to think it's only the needy or people who work in ministry who receive yet receiving is part of giving. When we don't allow ourselves to receive gratefully, we prevent others from being blessed in their giving to us.

How to manage Finances in the Kingdom?

1. Set priorities Prov 24:27; *put your outdoor work in order and get your field ready, after that build your house.*
2. Make a budget – keep records
3. Avoid debts
4. Make a financial plan

The two financial systems

God has provided a way for us to transfer our finances into the kingdom of God's system.

- Did you know that the kingdom of God has a system of finances that operates significantly different from the financial system our world uses? God's ways are too much higher than man's ways.

Some people have an idea and thinking that how things work in the kingdom of God is only for after we step in to eternity and is not applicable to us here today in this life, remember how Jesus taught us to pray in Mt 6:9-10 – *“In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your Kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.*

THE CALL

The call is from God. To learn from Jesus, to move in the footsteps of Jesus. We got this when we accepted Christ to be our personal savior and we got born again John3:3. We were born of the Spirit and entered this call

2thess 3:6-8 – “But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the traditions which he received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone’s bread free of charge, but worked with our labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.”

Every born-again believer is called to walk the life of the One who called us. Paul in his epistle warns us not to be disorderly.

In Mat 4:19 Jesus said follow me and I will make you Fishers of men. In order for that transformation to take place, one must know three things if we are going to fulfill the call. The call is for us the body of Christ to grow to maturity as sons to inherit the earth.

Three key important aspects to know and to walk are.

1. COMMITMENT.

This requires extra effort to follow through your commitment, examples Mat 4:19 – they (disciples) left their nets immediately and followed the caller (Jesus).

Acts 16:1 Paul on his mission to Lystra – a region of Galatia after seeing the commitment of Timothy who was a half-Jew, he brought him on his team.

Timothy allowed to be circumcised when he was requested by Paul so that he may not have limitations to preach the gospel to people who were Jews Acts 16:3

- Are you really committed to the call?
- How do you manage your time?
- Do you always follow through your appointments?

2. SUBMISSION.

The level of your submission determines the degree of your authority.

Mathew 8:5-9 – *“Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, “Lord, my*

servant is laying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.” And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.” The centurion answered and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. “For I also am under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go’, and he goes; and to another, ‘Come’, and he comes; and to servant, ‘Do this’, and he does it”

You can only have authority if you are under (submitted) to the right leadership authority .

Are you fully under the true biblical pattern of authority? It is high time we came out of rebellious life and submit ourselves to our Lord Jesus the Christ and his leadership.

This step can also be called equipping, training or discipleship; meaning walking in obedience through faith in the word **1peter 5:6** – *“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in the due time.”*

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

This step is also called the sending or commission.

In the New testament, in Mathew 10 the disciples are commissioned to have power over the demons, to go and put in practice what they have been taught by their Teacher/trainer.

Jesus was watching them, and in this, pride and patience were being checked. At this step reporting back is very vital, we are not independent, we are still being observed...**Acts13:1-3. Luke 10:17** – *“Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the devils are subject to us through your name.”*”, they gave back a report of what had happened on the commission.

THE LORD'S TABLE

The truth is, God is restoring the table of the Lord in His church. When we hear this word “restoring”, that means He is restoring what was in the church already before; in **Act 2:42** – “*And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*” the early believers diligently practiced the Lord’s table. In doing this they were submitting to the Lord’s command about the Lord’s table **1Cor 11:24-25** – “*And when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. In the same manner also He also took the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood: this do ye, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.* (Luke 22:14-19).

FULFILLMENT OF PASSOVER - (EX 12:1-14)

God gave the children of Israel a feast to celebrate and to remember their deliverance from Egypt. He wanted them that whenever they come to celebrate that feast, they remember what happened in that night when they came out of Egypt. Because God was going to strike or to destroy all the first born in the “Land of Egypt both man and beast and against all the gods of Egypt He

was going to execute judgment v12, and he wanted to save his people so he instructed them (Israelites) every house to get a lamb without blemish v3, 5 and to sprinkle some of the blood on the door posts and on the lintel of the houses v7 and then they were to eat the flesh of the lamb v5, v8.

- The blood of the lamb was to protect them from the destroyer.
- The flesh of the lamb strengthened them for their journey, all the household were delivered, all the house were to eat.

On the night Jesus was betrayed, he celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples (mat 26:26-28) Jesus became the Lamb of sacrifice and the fulfillment of the Passover when His blood was shed on the cross **1Cor5:7** – “ *Therefore purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you are truly unleavened. For indeed Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.*” His instruction to His disciples was to take the bread and to take the cup in remembrance of Him.

A NEW WAY OF REMEMBRANCE

Because Jesus knew that celebration of the Passover was pointing on Him, and it was a shadow showing how He is going to bring deliverance to all people who believe in Him, also seeing that the time for Him to fulfill that shadow has already come to pass, when He sat with His disciples spoke these words: **Luke22:15-16** - *“with fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”*. please read Mat 26:26-29, Lk 22:14-20, Mk 14:22-25.

In **Mk 14:25** Jesus said – *“Most assuredly I say to you I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God”*

So we see Jesus was pointing on something new, that one different from that which was practiced. He said He is going to do it new with us in His, Kingdom fellowshiping with Him in His table. We are not like those of the old but new creation. People of the new covenant and the body of Christ. Those of old were remembering the “day”. Eating and ministering the shadow (Heb 8:5) but for us are not remembering the day but Jesus Himself.

THE LORD’S TABLE IS NOT A SYMBOL

We should not see the table of the Lord as a symbol because when Jesus was doing it with His disciples, He did not say that eat; this is the symbol of my body but He said: “ Take, eat, **this is my body**” and the cup He said: “**this is my blood**”.

THE NEW COVENANT

When you read the scriptures about the Lord’s table in Matthew, Luke, Mark and 1Cor 11, Jesus is speaking about the **new covenant**. This covenant was prophesied in Jer 31:31-34 and repeated in Heb 8:8-18.

Jesus instituted the new covenant. The old was based on shedding the blood of bulls and goats, and of the high priest taking blood into the Holy of holies once a year to atone for sins of the people, has been done away with (Heb 8:13).

There are four wonderful promises of the new covenant that we can receive and work in. It is important for the church to understand that our relationship with God is covenantal. God is the one who makes the covenant with us and it is sealed in the blood of Jesus.

Therefore, the covenant is unbreakable, because Jesus has shed his blood. We can rely upon the promises that He has made.

Every believer should know there are four clear promises that are at the very heart of the new covenant, revealing God's will to us and making known His great love for us.

The promises of the new covenant Heb 8:10-12

1. "I will put my law in their mind and write them on their hearts".
2. "I will be their God and they shall be my people"
3. "All shall know me from the least of them to the greatest of them"
4. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and lawless deeds I will remember no more"

BREAKING BREAD IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

Acts 2:42-46 – (House to House)

In the book of revelation 2:1-7, Jesus is rebuking the Ephesians church because they have "lost their first love", He commands them to "repent and do the first works". The way to return to intimacy of Jesus, truly loving Him is to do the first works. This

means meeting daily, “continuing steady firstly in the Apostles’ doctrine, fellowship, the breaking of bread and prayers”.

Acts 20:7 – *“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”*

Acs 27:35-36

THE FIRST MENTION OF BREAD AND WINE IN THE SCRIPTURE

The first mention of bread and wine being ministered is in Gen 14:18-20. Melechzedek met Abraham and ministered bread and wine to him as a priest of the Most High God.

THE TABLE OF SHOW BREAD

The table in the tabernacle known as the table of show bread, was set with both bread and wine “Ex 37:16”. This points to the Lord’s table in the new covenant. The bread and wine held an important place within the house of God, not in the outer court but in the Holy place. Show bread is literally “Face bread”, the face of the

Lord was revealed at the table. Even our Lord Jesus is Known intimately in the Table of the Lord.

POINTS TO PONDER

- Can unbaptized believer receive communion?
- Why do we have unbaptized believers in the church?
- Why don't we obey Jesus' command and the practicing of baptism immediately as the apostles did?
- What about children?

Luke 18:15-17 – Jesus said: “little children come to me”

Exo 12:25-27 – children were involved at the Passover meal.

Who can minister on the table?

- The ministry at the alter in the Old Testament was restricted to the priests who were consecrated and anointed for the task. In the New Testament all true believers (those who have repented and believed in Jesus Christ, having been baptized into Jesus and having received the Holy spirit are priests) – Rev 1:6 – *“And has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and*

dominion forever and ever. Amen.” , 1 Pet 2:9 – “ But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;”

PAUL’S INSTRUCTIONS (1 COR 11)

When do we break bread?

As often (1 Cor 11:25-26).

- In Matthew 18:20, Jesus said “for were two or three are gathered together in my name I am there in the midst of them. “If Jesus is with us whenever we come together in His name, then when do we come to the Lord’s table?”

Who is unworthy to come to the Lord’s table?

- Paul warns us that we are not to eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord “ in an unworthy manner”, if we do we will “be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord”. In 1Cor 11:27 “Unworthy” means irreverently; it means not apprehending the importance of what this table signifies.

- Jesus said that we are to focus on Him, we are not to focus on our own unworthiness, but to focus on and appreciate what Jesus has done for us by going on the cross.

Let a man examine himself

- In 1 Cor 11:28; The word “examine means to test, to prove; it has the sense of being acceptable. On what basis are we acceptable? On what basis can we go ahead to eat and drink? Paul said once a man has examined himself. So let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup v28.

Paul gives us a simple test in 2Cor 13:5 – “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith; Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? – unless indeed you are disqualified.

What is “discerning” the Lord’s body?

- Verse 29. This word discerning is translated elsewhere in the scripture as doubting. Examples of this greek word being translated doubting (Acts 11:12), (James 1:6) and Matthew 21:21-22.

What elements can be used?

- Jesus took bread and He took the cup, it never actually says in the New Testament that there was wine in the cup. Jesus referred to the “fruit of the vine” (Lk 22:18, Mark 14:25, Mat 26:29).

We should not complicate the Lord’s table because the issue is not what type of the elements we are using but to remember Jesus.

Conclusion

- Jesus is calling us (His church) to “repent” and come back to our first love and do His first works (Rev 2:5). The early church led by apostles of Jesus broke bread daily from house to house (Acts 2:46).

