AMBASSADOR COLLEGE

Bible

LESSON 35

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

The Church In God's Master Plan

DID you know that unless Christ's disciples were KEEPING the Day of Pentecost *they wouldn't have received God's Holy Spirit?*

Without God's Spirit NO ONE could ever inherit eternal life! Without God's Spirit you can't even *worship* God as you should! John said, "God is a spirit: and they that worship Him *must worship Him in SPIRIT* AND IN TRUTH!" (John 4:24.)

No one can worship God in spirit if he has not the Spirit of God!

God's Holy Spirit came to the disciples for the *first time* on the Day of Pentecost, Monday, June 18, 31 A.D. It changed their lives. *It can change yours!*

You need to thoroughly understand the importance of the Day of Pentecost—the day on which Jesus founded the New Testament Church. Pentecost pictures the little-understood THIRD VITAL STEP in God's Master Plan!

Steps In God's Plan Reviewed

God's seven annual festivals outline His Master Plan. Because the world rejects these Holy Days, it has lost the *knowledge* of the *purpose* for human life. These holy periods of time are not "Jewish." The Jews rejected Christ because they failed to keep the Passover on the right day. They did not receive the Holy Spirit because they failed to keep Pentecost on the right day!

The PASSOVER is to remind us that *Jesus Christ* paid a tremendous price for our sins. He offered something more valuable than anything we could offer—the sacrifice of *His perfect human life!*

Because we broke God's law and earned the wages of sin, which is death (Rom. 6:23), Jesus had to *die in our stead*. We need the cleansing blood of Christ to pay for our sins. The Passover was given to us as an *annual memorial so we would never forget it.* The Passover—or communion service—is the *first step* in God's Master Plan of salvation!

Next, God reminds us to QUIT SINNING! The DAYS OF UNLEAVENED BREAD picture putting the *leaven of sin* (I Cor. 5:7-8) out of our lives, and beginning to live in complete submission and obedience to God's laws. When we begin to obey God and totally surrender to Him, we take the *second step* in God's plan. But that is not enough! We need the Holy Spirit of God if we are to ever inherit eternal life.

This *third step* in God's plan is pictured for us by the DAY OF PENTECOST, or Feast of First-fruits.

Let's begin LESSON THIRTY-FIVE. . . .

Christ Promised Spiritual Help

1. Did Jesus Christ promise spiritual help to His disciples? John 14:16. What was the "Comforter" that Christ promised? Verse 26. What else is the Holy Spirit called besides "Comforter"? Verse 17. Was the Holy Spirit dwelling *with* the disciples in the person of Christ? Same verse. But had the disciples received the Holy Spirit dwelling *within* them as yet? Same verse.

COMMENT: The Holy Spirit had been *with* the disciples in the person of Christ. But now He was to ascend into Heaven. He promised to send the Holy Spirit to be *within* them as it had been in Him! The word, "comforter" is translated from the Greek word, "*parakletos*" which means, "one who goes alongside to help."

2. Was Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit repeated *after* He had been crucified and

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
Bible
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE
LESSON 35
Herbert W. Armstrong, *publisher and editor*
Dr. C. Paul Meredith, *director*
Sent FREE to all who request it, as the Lord provides.
Address all communications to the editor,
Box 111, Pasadena, California 91109
© 1964 Ambassador College 864
Printed in U.S.A.—All Rights Reserved

NOTICE: Be sure to notify us immediately of any change in your address. IMPORTANT!

resurrected from the dead? Acts 1:8-9.

3. Did Christ tell the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until they received God's Spirit? Luke 24:49.

COMMENT: The word, "tarry" does not refer to an ecstatic, emotional, pseudo-religious meeting held in Jerusalem as some deluded people believe, but merely means "wait". It is an archaic English word which was used in 1611, when the King James Bible was translated, to mean "wait".

4. When did the disciples actually receive the gift of God's Holy Spirit? Acts 2:1-4. On what DAY did the Holy Spirit come? Same verses.

5. Was there a meeting going on in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost? Acts 2:5-13. Who were these people who had gathered in Jerusalem from all over the Roman Empire? Same verses, especially verse 5.

COMMENT: These Jews were called "devout" men because although they were not yet disciples of Christ, they lived according to God's laws revealed in the Old Testament. Remember, at this time the only Bible people had was what we call the Old Testament. The New Testament had not as yet been written.

6. Why were Christ's disciples gathered together with "devout" Jews from all over the Roman Empire? Had everyone gathered together at a specific time and in a specific place for the Day of Pentecost? What was significant about the Day of Pentecost? Acts 2:1.

COMMENT: The Day of Pentecost was observed LONG BEFORE the Holy Spirit came in A.D. 31 as recorded in the Book of Acts!

Pentecost was called the "Feast of Firstfruits" in the Old Testament and was observed by "devout" people (including Christ's disciples) for many generations (Lev. 23:15-21).

The Greek word *pentecost* is derived from two Greek words: *pente* meaning "fifty" and *cost* meaning "to count." Literally translated Pentecost means, "count fifty." (Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, article: PENTECOST.)

Christ's disciples waited in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded until the Feast of Pentecost or Firstfruits when they were all together in one place on one of God's ANNUAL HOLY DAYS. It was then that Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit and began the New Testament Church!

If Christ's disciples had not obeyed Him—if they were not KEEPING THE DAY OF PENTECOST, or Firstfruits—they WOULD NOT HAVE *RECEIVED GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT!* God gives His Spirit *only* to those who OBEY HIM! (Acts 5:32.)

Christ the Wave Sheaf

Almighty God knows man is best reminded by what he repeats *year after year!* God established His Holy Days—memorials of the PLAN of God—in conjunction with the two ANNUAL HARVESTS. God uses the physical harvest seasons as a pattern of the two SPIRITUAL HARVESTS.

In Palestine there are two annual harvest seasons. The first one is a small spring harvest following the winter rains. It begins on the day of the Wave-Sheaf offering, and ends at the Day of Pentecost. In the late summer and early autumn the second harvest season occurred. It followed the late spring or latter rains in Palestine. It ended with the Feast of INGATHERING, which is called in your Bible THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. This fall harvest is the much greater harvest. You will learn all about it in future lessons of this Correspondence Course.

The Day of Pentecost pictures the VERY SMALL early harvest.

The Days of Unleavened Bread occur about *the beginning of the small spring harvest season* (Lev. 23:10-11). The shoots of grain, planted earlier, have grown to maturity. They are now fruit-bearing stalks—ready to be harvested.

This first harvest began in the following manner:

On Sunday morning, following the weekly Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread, a small handful of newly sickled stems and heads of barley was brought to the priest to be accepted by God. This was called the "Wave-Sheaf Offering," or the "first of the firstfruits."

1. Why did God instruct the Israelites to cut a small handful of grain and wave it to be accepted by Him during the Days of Unleavened Bread? Lev. 23:10. What does the Wave Sheaf symbolize? I Cor. 15:20-23. Who was the *first* of the firstfruits of God's spiritual harvest? Same verses.

2. After Christ was crucified, buried and resurrected, did He need to be *accepted* as the firstfruits of the spiritual harvest? John 20:17. Were His disciples permitted to touch Him? Same verse.

COMMENT: Because Christ was a holy sacrifice, and was the *first* human being to be resurrected, He fulfilled the symbolism of the Wave-Sheaf Offering. The morning after He was resurrected, He had to go before God the

Father to be accepted, just as the High Priest in the Old Testament had to wave the sheaf of barley to be accepted by God before the spring harvest could begin. When Mary met Christ in the garden, she couldn't touch Him because His sacrifice had not yet been accepted in Heaven.

3. After Christ's sacrifice had been accepted by God the Father, could His disciples touch Him? Compare Mat. 28:9 with John 20:20-28.

4. What day was it when Mary saw Christ in the garden? John 20:19.

COMMENT: This was the day following the weekly Sabbath during the Days of Unleavened Bread. It was the *very same day that the Wave Sheaf was offered!* It was on this very day that Jesus Christ, the first of the firstfruits of God's spiritual harvest, was accepted as the Wave-Sheaf Offering in heaven!

5. After Christ was accepted in heaven and returned to earth, what day was it when the disciples were permitted to touch Him? John 20:19. Clearly, Christ went to heaven as the *first resurrected* Son of God—the first harvested product of God's Master Plan—and returned to His disciples *all in the same day!*

Pentecost in the New Testament

Once the Wave Sheaf was offered, the spring harvest began. The spring harvest ended with the annual Sabbath of the Feast of Firstfruits, when all the people gathered to give thanks for the produce God had given them. Another name for the Feast of Firstfruits was the Feast of Weeks (Deut. 16:9-12). Among Greek-speaking peoples it was called "Pentecost."

The word "pentecost" refers specifically to counting the fifty days that elapsed from the day of the Wave-Sheaf Offering, up to and including the Feast of Firstfruits or Weeks. (Lev. 23:15-16.)

1. How long is the Feast of Firstfruits—Pentecost—to continue to be KEPT among God's people? Lev. 23:14, 21.

2. Should God's people still be KEEPING PENTECOST TODAY? Same verse.

3. Did Christ's disciples know they must appear before God on the Day of Firstfruits—Pentecost? Acts 2:1-4. Did they think that God's ANNUAL HOLY DAYS *were done away by the death of Jesus Christ*? Same verses.

4. Did the apostles continue to KEEP Pentecost after the crucifixion? Acts 20:16 and I Corinthians 16:8.

COMMENT: The last part of Acts 20:16 can be translated, ". . . if it were possible for him *to celebrate* at Jerusalem, the Day of Pentecost." Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, was *hurrying* to KEEP PENTECOST at Jerusalem, 25 years after Christ's crucifixion and ascension into heaven!

5. Does the Greek New Testament refer to Pentecost as the day of Weeks anywhere in the New Testament? Acts 13:14 and Acts 16:13.

COMMENT: In Acts 13:14, the "Sabbath" day Paul kept in Antioch of Pisidia can properly be translated, "day of WEEKS"!

In Acts 16:13, the Sabbath meeting held by the river in Macedonia was actually the *annual Sabbath of Pentecost!* Again, the word, "Sabbath" should be translated "WEEKS" from the Greek word, "*sabbaton*", which means either "sabbaths" or "weeks."

The Apostle Paul KEPT PENTECOST, or the Feast of Weeks, with Gentile Christians in Asia Minor and Northern Greece years after God sent His Holy Spirit to the New Testament Church! Until 300 years after the death of Jesus Christ the Day of Pentecost was commonly called the Day of Firstfruits.

Counting Fifty Days

What day of the week does the Day of Pentecost fall on? Was it on SUNDAY? Let's be sure we understand how Pentecost was to be counted.

1. What day was it that Israel began their early spring harvest? Lev. 23:10-11, 14.

COMMENT: The Wave-Sheaf Offering was to be made by the Levitical Priesthood. Since there is no Levitical Priesthood today (it has been replaced by the Melchisedec Priesthood of Jesus Christ—Hebrews 7:12, 17) this ritual is not continued today.

2. What day of the week was the Wave Sheaf offered? Lev. 23:11.

COMMENT: The day of the Wave-Sheaf Offering—the day *after* the weekly Sabbath—is the day after Saturday, that is Sunday.

The Sabbath mentioned in this verse does not refer to one of the annual Sabbaths of the Days of Unleavened Bread. It refers to the weekly Sabbath that came during the Days of Unleavened Bread. We know this is true because Pentecost must be *counted* every year. If it were an annual sabbath that the Wave Sheaf was offered, the Day of Pentecost would never have to be counted. It would always fall on an exact day of the month. But since Pentecost must be counted, it can fall on different *dates* during the month—but *must always fall on the same day of the week!*

3. How many days were the Levites to count? Lev. 23:15-16.

COMMENT: The phrase "seven Sabbaths" does not mean to count seven Saturdays, but "seven weeks," as Hebrew scholars admit. The word "Sabbath" here comes from an original Hebrew word which can mean "weeks" (Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance*). The Greeks who translated this word into "*Pentecost*" clearly

understood that it *meant weeks*, and that they should number, not seven Saturdays, *but* seven weeks and a day—or *fifty days!* Now turn to Numbers 28:26. Here you find the expression "after your weeks be out." The Hebrew word here can mean only weeks, not Sabbaths.

4. What day was the Day of Pentecost to be kept?

COMMENT: God's church is to count *from* the day *after* the Sabbath, that is from Sunday. One day from Sunday is Monday. Seven days from that Sunday is the next Sunday. Numbering forty-nine days *from* Sunday would bring you to another Sunday. But the Levites were not to stop there. They were to *count one more day*. A TOTAL OF FIFTY DAYS. They held the Feast of Pentecost on a MONDAY, a full fifty days from the Sunday that the wave-sheaf of barley was offered.

5. Did the disciples of Christ understand how to count Pentecost? Acts 2:1.

COMMENT: If they did not understand how to count Pentecost, they wouldn't have been able to be "in one accord" and "in one place" on the *exact day* of Pentecost, and wouldn't have received the Holy Spirit from God!

Too many people have felt merely because God records the method by which Pentecost is counted, they are qualified to come to *independent conclusions* about when Pentecost should be kept! They are WRONG! They have attempted to take to themselves a responsibility that God placed ONLY in the hands of His *called and chosen ministers!*

Notice that the instructions for counting Pentecost are given in the book of Leviticus—the book for the Levites. The Levites were God's priests doing the work of the ministry in the Old Testament. Leviticus is written, not so the common lay-members of the church could "second guess" God's ministry, but so His ministers could know how Pentecost is to be properly counted. The ministers then were to pass this information on to the whole congregation. Almighty God is *not the author of confusion!* (I Cor. 14:33.) He has placed specific offices in His True Church today to determine just such things as how to count Pentecost (Eph. 4:12-13). Pentecost ALWAYS FALLS ON A *MONDAY*, there is *NO OTHER DAY ACCEPTABLE* IN GOD'S SIGHT!

God Calls the Few Today

1. When the Eternal brought Israel out of the bondage of Egypt, did He tell them plainly this was not the time for them to be able to understand His Master Plan completely? Deut. 29:2-4.

2. Why did God blind these people? Romans 11:32.

COMMENT: Ancient Israel isn't lost forever. Their time of understanding and participating in God's plan has not yet come. (Rom. 11:26, II Pet. 3:9, 10, and I Tim. 2:3-4.)

3. Were the vast majority in Christ's day receptive to the witness He gave them? John 5:18 and 10:31.

COMMENT: The Jews of Jesus' day tried several times to kill Him for what He was saying. Finally they succeeded in murdering their Saviour.

4. Did Jesus Christ disturb the blindness of the Israelites of His time? Mark 4:11-12. Do you catch the *significance* of this verse? Why did Jesus Christ speak in parables? Was it, as you may have heard, to make His meaning *clearer?* Verse 12. Isn't this merely a fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah? Isa 28:11-13. Did God want them to understand with their hearts? Same verse.

COMMENT: A man's heart in the biblical sense is the place which is the seat of intellect—or mind.

5. Is it possible for any person with a carnal, natural mind to fully understand the things of God? I Cor. 2:14. How are *spiritual things* known and understood? Same verse, see also Rom. 8:7-8, and Eph. 4:18.

6. Are people in our modern twentieth century able to understand God's plan, or are they, too, blinded to it? Will it be the great majority, or only the few, who understand God's plan today? Mat. 7:13-14.

A Parable Tells

Today the keys that unlock the secrets of God's Plan are available. Because of God's mercy you don't have to remain blinded, but now *you too can understand the deep things of God.* These are TRUTHS that men have wanted to know for thousands of years!

Now understand the most important parable Jesus ever uttered. It's found in Matthew 13.

1. What happens to the "seed" of spiritual truth when it falls by the wayside? Mat. 13:3-9, 18-23. Notice especially verses 4 and 19. Did these people ever understand their part in God's Master Plan? Verse 19.

COMMENT: These people hear the warning message of God's ministers but never comprehend the implications of what they hear. The message of God's coming Kingdom and God's Master Plan makes no impression on them.

2. What happens to the seed as it falls on stony ground? Verses 5-6 and 20-21. Did these people originally begin on God's plan happily? Verse 20. But when the going became difficult, were they able by their own human power to continue? Verses 6 and 21.

COMMENT: These people gratefully receive

Christ's Passover sacrifice as payment for their past sins. They begin to try to obey God—unleavening their lives—but they don't seek the help of His powerful Holy Spirit. Therefore they have no depth! Soon the spiritual life—a germ of strength—dies. They have failed to fulfill the purpose for which they have been born!

3. What of the seed as it falls among the thorns? Verses 7 and 22. Does this group bring forth fruit—obedience to God's commands—or are they too busy with the selfish cares of this degenerating world? Verse 22.

4. Who is it then that God is ultimately concerned with? Verses 8 and 23. Do these people understand God's Master Plan? Verse 23. Have they allowed God to work in their lives—helping them to overcome their human nature? Same verse. Do they BEGIN TO GROW SPIRITUALLY—imbibing of God's own character by SUBMITTING TO HIS HOLY SPIRIT, and OBEYING HIS COMMANDMENTS—until they become mature, fruit-bearing Christians? Same verse, see also Luke 8:15.

COMMENT: These people become a part of the HARVEST OF FIRSTFRUITS. All of the other seed of the parable never BROUGHT FORTH FRUIT OF OBEDIENCE in God's harvest plan.

5. Is God concerned with HOW MUCH we do? Verses 8 and 23.

COMMENT: God knows how much each of us can do in bringing forth good fruit in his Master Plan. By allowing God's Spirit to work within us we will produce thirty, sixty or one hundred weight of good fruit—our changed lives.

6. Just HOW MUCH does God expect us to do? Luke 17:7-10. Did the master of this servant *give commands* which were to be obeyed? Verses 7 and 8.

7. For merely obeying instructions, doing *no more* than was REQUIRED of him, did the servant deserve thanks? Verse 9. Doesn't Jesus Christ say that when we have done only what is required of us in God's plan and *no more*, we are *still unprofitable*? Verse 10. Does He expect us to do MORE than the minimum requirement of the Ten Commandments? To go above and beyond the call of our duties? Same verse.

What It Means To Be The Firstfruits in God's Plan!

Fifty days after Jesus Christ's sacrifice was accepted in heaven, the Holy Spirit came according to the promises Jesus had made (Acts 2:1).

1. What was the special offering made on the Day of Pentecost in the Old Testament? Lev. 23:17. What does the Bible say these loaves symbolized? Same verse. What are these firstfruits called in New Testament times? James 1:18.

COMMENT: Notice there are *two* loaves, covering the two periods of the Old Testament and the New Testament Church.

The word "church" has been translated from the Greek word, "*ecclesia*" which means the "called out ones."

Pentecost, or Firstfruits pictures to us the first part of the spiritual harvest, the calling out of God's True Church—a *few people* and a *small first harvest*. God is not dealing with the vast majority of the world today, but He has made these wonderful truths plain to the few that He is calling.

2. Why do we find leaven put into these loaves of the firstfruit offering? I Cor. 5:7. Since the Bible uses leaven as a type of sin, does this mean that there is still sin in the Church? I John 1:8. Does this mean that sin *should remain* in the New Testament Church? I John 1:9. Of course not! Sin is to be put out whenever found. But only Christ is without sin.

3. Does the Bible plainly state that converted Christians in this age are considered "firstfruits" in God's plan? James 1:18.

4. Is the term "firstfruits" applied to specific living Christians after the coming of the Holy Spirit in 31 A.D.? Romans 16:5.

COMMENT: After Christ was accepted as the Wave Sheaf, the general harvest of firstfruits could begin. Still only a *small harvest of people during this age is to be reaped* at the second coming of Christ!

5. What are those who stand before Christ called at His second coming? Rev. 14:1-4. How are they described? Same verse. Did they have to come out of the world and separate themselves from the God-rejecting majority of mankind? Verse 4. What is the outstanding characteristic of those who are called the "firstfruits" of God's people? Rev. 14:12.

6. Are these "firstfruits" mentioned in the plan of resurrections? I Cor. 15:20-23 and I Thess. 4:13-18.

COMMENT: First Jesus Christ, the Wave Sheaf, was resurrected, and became the first of the firstfruits of God's Master Plan (Col. 1:18). After a period of time symbolized by the fifty-day period ending with Pentecost, those who are Christ's and have the Holy Spirit are to be resurrected as the completed first harvest in God's plan.

7. Notice what Christ wants us to learn about the spiritual harvests. It is found in Mat. 13:24-30 and 37-43. What happens when Christ sows the seed of truth among the people of the earth? Verses 24-25 explained by verses 37-38.

8. How did Christ know the wheat, the good grain, from the tares, or worthless weeds? Verse 26. Although some people try to hide their wicked works, is the fruit of their disobedience easily recognizable to God? Verses 26 and 38. What is the final end of those who do not pro-

duce the fruit of God's Holy Spirit in their lives? Verses 30 and 41-42.

9. What happens to those who produce righteousness, obedience and the other fruits of God's Spirit? Verse 30 and 41, 43.

10. When is the harvest? Verses 30 and 39.

COMMENT: The phrase "end of the world" should be translated "*end of the age*" indicating the final days of man's rule over the earth and the time of the second coming of Jesus Christ. This is the time of the harvest of firstfruits. The fifty-day period between the Wave-Sheaf offering and Pentecost symbolizes what has been going on since Jesus Christ sent His Holy Spirit in 31 A.D. During this time God has been calling out an "elect" or chosen people as "firstfruits" of His Master Plan. These "firstfruits" will be reaped at the second coming of Jesus Christ—*only a very few short years from now!*

11. Who is it who does the reaping of God's firstfruit harvest? Verses 30 and 39. Compare I Thes. 4:16-17 and Mat. 24:31.

COMMENT: When Jesus Christ returns to this earth He will send forth His angels and gather those who are elect, chosen, the good grain, into His Kingdom.

Holy Spirit Prepares God's Firstfruits

1. Does Jesus Christ promise His disciples POWER and supernatural help? Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:4.

2. With God's Holy Spirit will Christians be able to do the same works Jesus did? John 14:12. Will true Christians be able to do even greater works than Christ did by the POWER of God's Spirit? Same verse.

3. Could Jesus Christ do anything with just His human power? John 5:19, 30. John 8:28. Where did Jesus get the power He needed to do the works He did? John 14:10 last part. Notice the words, "but the Father *that dwelleth in me*, He doeth the works."

4. Will God's Spirit do the same in true Christians as it was in Jesus Christ? Does it come from the Father? John 14:11, John 14:16.

5. Is it necessary to obey God to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit? Acts 5:32. Did Jesus also have to OBEY GOD to use God's Holy Spirit? Does He expect Christians to OBEY TODAY? John 15:10. Isn't the same Holy Spirit Jesus Christ had from God the Father available to Christians today? Is God a respecter of persons Rom. 2:11.

6. By the power of God's Spirit was Jesus Christ able to overcome? John 16:33 and Rev. 3:21. Does Christ intend for Christians to overcome? Rev. 3:21.

7. What will happen when you allow God's Spirit to lead you? John 16:13.

COMMENT: The pronoun "he" sometimes used to refer to God's Spirit in the King James Version should properly be translated "it." The King James translators, blinded by the false doctrines of Babylon, inserted this flagrant error into our Bible. The Holy Spirit is NOT A PART OF A PAGAN TRINITY! The Holy Spirit is the POWER of God. It is the very seed of eternal life which the Father implants in every son of His.

8. To what is the Holy Spirit compared? John 7:37-39. Had God's Spirit been available before the Day of Pentecost? Same verses. Once Christians have received the Holy Spirit, won't it flow out from them just as it did from Jesus Christ? Same verses.

9. What kind of works will God's Spirit do in the lives of true Christians? Rom. 5:5. What is the love of God? I John 5:3.

10. What are the other fruits of God's Holy Spirit? Gal. 5:22.

11. What is the result of being ruled by human nature—man's carnal mind? Gal. 5:16-17 and Rom. 8:7. Is man's human nature contrary to the ways of God's Spirit? Same verses. What is the result of being ruled by your carnal human mind—of being "set" in the ways of human nature? Rom. 8:6. But if you allow God to guide you through His Holy Spirit what is the result? Rom. 8:1-4.

12. Did the Apostle Paul recognize the battle between God's Spirit and his carnal mind? Rom. 7:23. Who would deliver Paul? Can we deliver ourselves from the grip of our human nature, or must we rely on supernatural help from Jesus Christ—the HELP OF GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT? Verses 24 and 25. What would Paul do when he was delivered from sin? Would he continue to serve—obey—sin? Or would he serve—obey—God's law? Same verses.

COMMENT: The Passover pictures our repentance from sin, and acknowledging that we need Jesus Christ's sacrifice to PAY FOR OUR SINS.

Next, you must make up your mind to QUIT SINNING. You show your willingness to obey by being BAPTIZED and beginning to SUBMIT TO GOD'S PERFECT LAWS. This step is pictured by the Days of Unleavened Bread.

Thirdly, you must receive *supernatural help* from God! God will give true Christians His powerful Holy Spirit to help them OVERCOME. God first sent His Spirit on the Day of Pentecost!

Jesus Christ overcame, Paul the apostle overcame, and *you* can overcome your own selfishness, your carnal human mind, if you yield yourself to Almighty God and receive the help of His Holy Spirit. When you do, you will become one of the few TRUE CHRISTIANS, one of

the FIRSTFRUITS of Almighty God's Master Plan of salvation.

Who Are The "ELECT"?

1. Can you be "Christ's"—can you belong to Jesus Christ—if you don't have God's Holy Spirit? Rom. 8:9-11.

2. Is everything in creation waiting for the time when the FIRSTFRUITS of God's spiritual harvest will be reaped? Rom. 8:23. Do the firstfruits themselves eagerly yearn for the time when they will be able to complete their part in God's plan and become members of God's own Family? Same verse.

COMMENT: The word "adoption" in the eighth chapter of Romans is a woeful mistranslation! Those who translated the King James version of the Bible couldn't understand that *God intends* human beings *to become members of God's own family—very sons of God!* They mistranslated the Greek word "sonship" as "adoption" *because the vital truths you are now learning were hidden from them!*

3. What other term does God use to refer to the Christians He has chosen to receive the firstfruits of His Spirit? Rom. 8:33. Aren't the elect the same people who are promised brotherhood with Jesus Christ, and sonship in God's family? Rom. 8:29.

4. These ELECT CHRISTIANS, the firstfruits of God, are those who have God's Spirit and understand His Master Plan. Can these people be deceived, misled, by Satan and his false ministers any longer? Mat. 24:24.

5. Because they are the firstfruits of God's harvest, will He go to special lengths to see they are spared from the terrible things which will occur just before Christ's second coming? Mat. 24:21, 22.

COMMENT: The firstfruits in God's plan are sealed—preserved—by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13). The Holy Spirit which we receive is called "the earnest of our inheritance" (Verse 14). In business terms the "earnest" refers to a *very small* down payment of money that is given to show *good faith* in a business deal. It is the guarantee that the full payment will be made *later*. God has given the "earnest" of His Spirit to those called to be firstfruits. It is God's GUARANTEE to Christians they will receive the FULLNESS of His Spirit, and SONSHIP IN HIS FAMILY WHEN JESUS CHRIST RETURNS TO THIS EARTH!

These consecrated people now compose the *ONLY TRUE CHURCH OF GOD!*

God's Law In Your Heart!

1. Did Christ's death—the shedding of His blood in our stead provide not only remission of sins but also a promise of eternal inheritance to those God is calling? Heb. 9:15-17.

2. Did Jesus Christ—our Passover sacrifice and High Priest—become the mediator of a NEW COVENANT? Heb. 9:15.

COMMENT: The Greek word *diatheke*, translated "testament," means *covenant* or *agreement*, as well as a *testament* or a *will*.

3. Is the everlasting NEW COVENANT called "better" than the old? Heb. 8:6. Why is it better? Verse 7. Who was at fault in the Old Covenant? Did God fail to keep His part of the covenant, or did the people fail to keep their promise to OBEY HIS LAW? Verse 8.

4. What sort of covenant will God make with Christians who are born again? Heb. 8:10-12. Are those with whom God will make His NEW covenant also called "ISRAEL"? Verse 10. Is God's New Testament Church called "Israel"? Compare Gal. 6:16 with Romans 11:17-18.

COMMENT: God is yet to make His New Covenant with Israel and Judah. Not carnal Israel and Judah, but a *spiritually converted* Israel and Judah. God is calling people out of this evil world. Whether Gentile or Israelite by birth, they become "the Israel of God"—they are HIS TRUE CHURCH!

5. What are the conditions of the new covenant or agreement God will make with all those who become spiritual Israelites? Heb. 8:10-12. Does God agree to forget your past sins and *put His law in your heart* if you will OBEY Him? Same verses.

6. Does God promise to put His LAW in your MIND? Verse 10.

7. How will God put His law in your mind? Phil. 2:5. Did Jesus Christ have God's Spirit in His mind? Wasn't He the first ever to have been begotten and actually born of God—the firstfruits of the resurrection? James 1:18 and Col. 1:18. Did Jesus OBEY COMPLETELY—even suffering *death* for us? Phil. 2:8.

COMMENT: God expects our *complete obedience*. To obey God completely we need His Holy Spirit in our minds. It will give us the very same MIND Jesus Christ had. We will see things from Christ's point of view, we will understand and know to obey God's law. Only God's Holy Spirit can give us the SUPERNATURAL POWER WE NEED TO BEGIN TO KEEP GOD'S LAW IN ITS SPIRITUAL INTENT.

8. Without God's Spirit will you be able to really *understand* God's truth? John 16:13. Without God's Spirit in your mind can you worship God as you should? John 4:24.

COMMENT: *Why* the Holy Spirit? God's Holy Spirit will give you the *supernatural help* to live the same life today that Jesus Christ lived as a fleshly human being over 1900 years ago. Today Jesus Christ has sent His Holy Spirit to the members of His True Church. Through that Spirit, Christ is LIVING IN THE FLESH AND

BLOOD members of His Church. They are LIVING the very same kind of life Jesus lived—a life of OBEDIENCE, OVERCOMING and ENDURING TO THE END OF THIS AGE!

9. Should Christians rejoice knowing that God's Spirit can help them to overcome this evil world as Jesus Christ did? I John 4:3 and 4.

True Church Founded On Pentecost

It is vitally important for you to understand where God's TRUE CHURCH IS TODAY!

On the Day of Pentecost, June 18, 31 A.D., Almighty God founded the New Testament Church. This Church is not a stately building composed of wood, stone, and cement. It is a Church composed of God-called, SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN *PEOPLE*!

The word "church" originally never referred to the building where Christians gather. It is properly applied to the PEOPLE who gather together, who have been given God's Holy Spirit. The word, "church" is a UNI-PLURAL WORD like "family" and "team." There is ONE CHURCH with MANY MEMBERS.

God originally established His Church in the wilderness when He brought the Israelites out of Egypt. It was called the congregation of Israel (Acts 7:38 and Lev. 8:3). These people were the *physical type* of the spiritual Church God later built. Now He is calling people out of SIN. They are called His "Church" because the word *ecclesia* in the Greek which is translated "church" means, "called-out ones." (I Cor. 10:32.)

1. Does the true Church have a foundation? Eph. 2:18-20.

COMMENT: The writings of the apostles and the prophets encompass the whole Bible—New and Old Testaments.

2. What—Who—is the CORNERSTONE God's true Church is built upon? Verse 20.

3. What is this "spiritual building"—the Church of God—to grow into? Verse 21. What is the purpose for building such a temple? Verse 22.

COMMENT: God Almighty dwells in His Church through His Holy Spirit.

4. Notice the comparison Paul makes to help us understand the difference between the Old Testament period and the Church of God in the New Testament. Heb. 12:18-23. What is the church of the New Testament called? Verse 23.

COMMENT: Those who are called, have their names written in heaven—those who are being made perfect—ARE THE FIRSTFRUITS. They are members of THE TRUE CHURCH OF GOD!

COMMENT: You need to know and thoroughly PROVE where the TRUE CHURCH OF GOD IS *TODAY!* You need to know WHICH CHURCH JESUS CHRIST PUT HIS HOLY SPIRIT IN ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST! IT IS THROUGH THE WORK OF GOD'S ONLY TRUE CHURCH THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO LEARN THE PLAIN TRUTH ABOUT ALMIGHTY GOD'S MASTER PLAN FOR SALVATION.

Write immediately for our free booklet, "*A True History of the True Church.*"

Pentecost A Sign

The Day of Pentecost or Firstfruits is a *sign*. It identifies those who have God's Holy Spirit, those who are God's elect, those who will be resurrected when Jesus Christ returns to this earth!

The Day of Pentecost identifies God's ONLY TRUE CHURCH! Only God's true Church keeps the day of Pentecost at the right time in the right way—with the understanding of God's plan. That is because ONLY GOD'S TRUE CHURCH RECEIVED HIS HOLY SPIRIT AND WAS FOUNDED BY JESUS CHRIST ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST IN 31 A.D.!

It is through GOD'S ONLY TRUE CHURCH—THE RADIO CHURCH OF GOD, with its world-wide headquarters in PASADENA, CALIFORNIA—that you have been able to understand the deep message revealed in the Day of Pentecost.

If you would like to be visited by representatives of The RADIO CHURCH OF GOD in your own home, you should write immediately to Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, Post Office Box 111, Pasadena, California (or to your local regional editor). Be sure to mention you have COMPLETED LESSON 35 OF THE AMBASSADOR COLLEGE BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE.

Almighty God has made this wonderful knowledge available to you—but YOU MUST ACT ON IT!

WHY THE AMBASSADOR COLLEGE BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE HAS NO TUITION PRICE

So many ask: "How can you publish a Correspondence Course without tuition price?"

The answer is simple. The GOSPEL must go to the whole world, and it must go FREE. It must not be sold like merchandise. "Freely ye have received," Jesus said to His disciples whom He was sending to proclaim the Gospel, "freely GIVE." Without money and without price, is God's way. We proclaim a FREE salvation. Therefore, we cannot put a tuition PRICE upon The AMBASSADOR COLLEGE BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE.

We have been called of God to conduct this work. It is not our work, but God's. We have set out to conduct God's work God's way. We rely, in FAITH, upon God's promises to supply every need.

God's way is the way of LOVE—and that is the way of *giving*, not getting. God expects every true child of His to GIVE of tithes and offerings that His work may go FREE—that His true ministers may GIVE the precious Gospel to others. We simply TRUST GOD to lay it on the minds and hearts of His people to give of their tithes and offerings that we may be enabled to GIVE the good things of God's Word to the hundreds of thousands who hear the Message over the air, and the scores of thousands who read The PLAIN TRUTH and study this Course.

Many times our faith has been severely tried, but God has never failed us. We must not fail HIM!