

## Are You Eating the Unleavened Bread of Life? Scott Ashley March 26, 2013

Good afternoon, everyone. It's wonderful to be here with you all on this Holy Day, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread—one of God's commanded assemblies, or divine appointments, with His people.

By way of introduction, *what is the name of this Feast?* It's not a trick question. The name of this feast is the Feast of Unleavened Bread. It is not the Feast of *not eating* leavened bread, or the Feast of *No* Leavened Bread. It is the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*. Why do I mention that? I mention it because this is a Feast of great symbolism built around two primary symbols—one being leaven, which we are to avoid, and the other being unleavened bread, which we are to eat. Let's notice the biblical instruction regarding this Feast. I won't read all of them, but these are representative of what God tells us to do during this Feast:

### Exodus 12:17-20

**17** So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread . . .

**18** In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening . . .

**20** You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.

### Exodus 13:6-7

**6** Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to the LORD.

**7** Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days. And no leavened bread shall be seen among you, nor shall leaven be seen among you in all your quarters.

### Exodus 34:18

**18** "The Feast of Unleavened Bread you shall keep. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you . . .

### Leviticus 23:6

**6** And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; seven days you must eat unleavened bread.

### Numbers 28:17

**17** And on the fifteenth day of this month is the feast; unleavened bread shall be eaten for seven days.

Do you notice a pattern here? Do you notice the repeated command to eat unleavened bread? Is there a message here for us? Obviously so. And again, it's reflected in the name of this Feast—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, not the Feast of avoiding leavened bread. Why do I draw that distinction? I make that distinction because most of our focus during this Feast is on *avoiding* leavening. That's what most of our messages have been about over the years. And there's nothing wrong with that, because it's absolutely critical that we understand the symbolism of leavening and what it represents and why we need to avoid it.

But in doing so maybe we're somewhat neglecting the other side of picture, and perhaps we haven't fully understood and appreciated the *symbolism of the unleavened bread* that we are to

be partaking of throughout this Feast. And that brings us to the title of this sermon, which is **Are You Eating the Unleavened Bread of Life?**

As we saw from the biblical commands earlier, there is at least as much emphasis on eating unleavened bread as there is on avoiding leavened bread. Why is that? What are we to learn from that? Is there part of the picture that maybe we haven't fully understood and appreciated as we should? I think there is. And it boils down to *understanding what the unleavened bread of the Feast of Unleavened Bread represents.*

If I asked you what leavening represents in this Feast, you'd all say that it represents sin—and you'd be right. But if I asked you what *unleavened* bread represents in this Feast, what would you say? You'd probably say that it represents leaving Egypt in haste, which is true. You might also think of **1 Corinthians 5:6-8**, where Paul says—

**6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?  
7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.**

**8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**

So here we see that unleavened bread represents sincerity—genuine intent—and truth—doing what is right and good and what God tells us to do. But *how do we do that?* And does unleavened bread represent more than that? Surely there is more to the Christian life than just sincerity and truth, isn't there? So is there more to the symbolism than this?

One thing that struck me in preparing for the Passover this year is that the Gospel of John, in talking about Christ's last Passover with the apostles, *doesn't talk about the bread and the wine that evening at all.* He goes into great detail about the footwashing, but then skips over the bread and wine to go into great detail about Christ's last instruction to His followers. You can easily see that for yourself in John chapters 13 through 17.

Why does John skip over something that important without any explanation? He gives us the details of what happened right before the bread and wine and right after that, but says nothing about the bread and wine. Have you ever noticed that and wondered about it?

One book I was reading about the Gospel of John pointed out that when you read the other Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, it's like you're looking at a snow-covered field and you see three sets of footprints marching side by side across the field, and that's Matthew, Mark and Luke's story of Jesus Christ. But with John, you have another set of footprints in that field, and it's going out here and over there and occasionally crossing those other three sets of footprints, but John never steps in the footprints of Matthew, Mark and Luke. He's always giving different details, presenting a different perspective, and filling in the blanks.

And I think that's a good description of John's Gospel. John wrote his Gospel most likely in the 80s or 90s A.D., about 30 years after Matthew, Mark and Luke. It seems clear to me that John had copies of their Gospels when he wrote his, and he deliberately chose to cover different material than they did. And so when John writes about that last Passover, he doesn't talk about the meaning of the bread and wine. He doesn't need to.

One reason that he doesn't need to is that *John has already talked about the meaning of the bread and wine* in much greater detail somewhere else. He has talked about their meaning in

great detail much earlier, back in John chapter 6. And if we want to understand the significance of the symbolism of the unleavened bread of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, we have to understand what God's Word, and Jesus Christ Himself, has to tell us here. So let's turn back to **John 6:1** and begin reading here.

**John 6:1-**

**1 After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias.**

**2 Then a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased.**

Later we'll see that this "great multitude" numbers 5,000 men, so perhaps 10,000 total or more when we include women and children. Jesus has performed a number of miraculous healings of people—healing people of fevers, of paralysis, of leprosy, of crippled limbs, of demon possession, of blindness—and He's raised at least one person from the dead. As this story unfolds we'll see that people have different motivations for following Him. Some want to hear His teaching. Some want to be healed. Some want to see a miracle. And some want a free meal.

**3 And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.**

**4 Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.**

Notice the *timing* of this—it's shortly before the Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread. This also helps us understand why there are so many people involved—they're travelling through Galilee on their way to Jerusalem for the Feast of Unleavened Bread. So keep in mind the timing of this as we read through what Jesus will say.

**5 Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"**

**6 But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.**

**7 Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little."**

A denarius is a day's wage, so Philip says in essence, "\$40,000 worth of bread isn't enough to give everyone in this crowd a piece of bread." This gives us some idea of the size of this crowd—how much bread could you buy with \$40,000?

**8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him,**

**9 "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"**

**10 Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.**

**11 And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.**

**12 So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost."**

**13 Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.**

So this is one of Jesus Christ's greatest miracles, where he multiplies five barley loaves and two small fish to feed thousands of people. Skipping down to verse 22—

**22 On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone—**

**23 however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks—**

**24 when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got**

into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

**25** And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “Rabbi, when did You come here?”

**26** Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.

Here we see that some of the people were coming just for the physical benefits of following Him around—they got their bellies filled with free food.

And now we see something that happens quite often in Christ’s ministry, that He uses the setting or the circumstances or both for a teaching opportunity to impart a vital spiritual lesson. He says:

**27** “Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.”

He tells them that they need to get their priorities straight—that they should focus not on food that is temporary, that would hold them over until their next meal, but they needed to focus on *something bigger and more important*. Rather than focus on filling their bellies, they needed to focus on filling that spiritual vacuum, that hole inside us that only God can fill.

And here we also see that although eternal life is something God gives us, it *takes effort* on our part to receive that gift. Jesus Christ says we have to *labor* for that food that leads to eternal life. His point is that eternal life is something that has to be nurtured, that has to be worked on, that we have to strive for and put effort into in this life if we are to receive that gift from God.

**28** Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?”

**29** Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

**30** Therefore they said to Him, “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do?”

So we see here that some people were following Him around because they wanted to see a sign—a miracle—from Him. And of course, He had just performed a great miracle the day before, multiplying the loaves of bread and fish to thousands of people.

**31** “Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”

Why did they say this about manna in the desert? Because the previous day they had seen a very similar miracle, where Jesus had multiplied a few loaves of bread and fishes to feed thousands of people out in an uninhabited area. Perhaps they wanted Him to repeat that miracle He had done the day before, or, if He really were the Messiah, to literally create manna for them and repeat that miracle that had been done about 1500 years earlier.

**32** Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you *the true bread from heaven*.

Jesus now plays off the fact that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is about to begin and playing off their statement about God having given the Israelites manna to eat in the 40 years in the wilderness. So He comes back with a stronger statement that challenges them to either put up or shut up. He first says it wasn’t *Moses* who gave the manna, but *God* who gave the manna. And further, that *manna was only symbolic* of something much better, which was the *true Bread from heaven* that would sustain them because it came from God. And then He says—

**33** “For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

He says that God is going to give something much better than physical manna. He is going to give *the Bread of God that gives life to the world*—not just to the Israelites as with the manna, but to the entire world.

**34** Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.”

**35 And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.**

And He speaks here with authority, claiming to be the true Bread from heaven. Notice the three different phrases He has used—first He talked about “Bread from heaven.” Then He said “Bread of God.” Then He said “Bread of life.” This Bread that God would provide would do much more than satisfy their physical hunger. It would satisfy the *much deeper spiritual hunger*, filling the spiritual vacuum that exists in every human being.

As I’ve said many times in our message going through the Gospels, we need to understand those words in their original context—what they meant to those who heard them then and there—if we are to properly understand what they mean for us today.

So what did bread mean to the people of that day? First, **bread was a staple**, probably the most important staple, of their diet. It was eaten at every meal. It was so common that the term “break bread” meant to eat a meal. The words “bread” and “food” were virtually synonymous. Also, eating utensils hadn’t come into common use in that part of the world at that time, so you ate with your right hand and you typically used a piece of bread as a kind of spoon to scoop up food out of a dish to bring it to your mouth. If you went on a journey you would typically take bread and maybe some cheese to sustain you on the trip. A considerable part of the woman’s day was occupied with grinding grain to make flour and baking bread from that flour.

Bread was a key part of life throughout the day. It meant everything to the people of that time. Bread was the biggest part of your diet. Bread *sustained* their lives. Bread meant *life*. If you didn’t have bread, you starved to death. This is why part of the Lord’s Prayer is “Give us this day our daily bread.” This is why Jesus said, “Man shall not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” Bread was absolutely crucial to people then. This is why bread is mentioned more than 60 times in the Gospels.

They even had a special prayer that they prayed before every meal:

*Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haOlam Ha Motzi Lehem min haAretz.*  
Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who gives us bread from the earth.

This prayer was also given in the first century as the Jews cut the first of the grain at sundown after the Sabbath that fell during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the grain that would be offered in the wave-sheaf offering—“Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who gives us bread from the earth.” And the Bread of Life, Jesus the Messiah, had just been resurrected inside the tomb where he had been planted in the earth three days and nights earlier. They thanked God for bread from the earth as God gave mankind the true Bread, Jesus Christ, resurrected from the grave.

Notice again what Jesus calls Himself—the “Bread from heaven,” the “Bread of God” and the “Bread of Life.” What He’s saying is that just as physical bread was essential for physical life, He as the Bread of God and the Bread from heaven and the Bread of life is *essential for our spiritual and eternal life!* He is so essential that *without Him we do not have and cannot have eternal life!*

Skipping down to **verse 47**, He continues this theme—

**47 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.**

In that first-century culture having belief or faith in something had a very different meaning than it does today. Today people believe all kinds of things, but that intellectual belief doesn't affect their lives. In that day *believing* and *acting on what you believed* were inseparable. If you *believed* something, you *had to act* on that belief and live accordingly.

If you believed God existed, that wasn't just a nice thought you kept in your head—no, that belief and that fact *guided everything you did*. If you believed in God, you did your best to obey Him *with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind* because that's what His Word told you to do: "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.*"

This is why the apostle James writes that "faith without works is dead," and "even the demons believe, and tremble." Because believing in something, having faith in something, meant that you *ordered your life* around that belief and that faith. Belief and faith required action, required commitment, required you *to live that faith and belief*. So if you believed in Jesus as the Messiah or believed in Jesus as your Rabbi, that meant you did everything in your power *to become just like Him in every way* because that was the whole point of being a disciple or follower—you didn't just want to know what He knew and learn what He taught, *you wanted to become just like Him in every way*.

And only in that way, Jesus said, would we have everlasting life. Continuing—

**48 "I am the bread of life.**

He's talking about *salvation*. We know that all of God's holy festivals are about His plan for salvation—including the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*. God's plan for salvation begins with the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, as portrayed by Passover. And what's the next step? We remove leaven, picturing sin, from our lives. But how do we remove the spiritual leaven from our lives? The way we do that is by *putting unleavened bread into* our lives—the unleavened Bread of Life, Jesus Christ.

It's like getting the air out of a glass. If you want to get the air out of a glass, you fill it up with something else—fill it up with water, and there's no more air. If you want to rid your life of the leaven of sin and wickedness, you have to *fill your life with the unleavened bread of life*, Jesus Christ. Continuing—

**49 "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.**

A lot of good that manna did them, in other words. God performed many great miracles for Israel in bringing them out of Egypt and providing for them in the wilderness for 40 years, but they *didn't believe* and are dead. And the thousands who gathered there that day who ate the miraculously provided barley loaves would die just like their forefathers unless they learned the spiritual lesson of the true Bread of Life. Continuing, He says—

**50 "This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die.**

**51 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."**

**52 The Jews therefore quarreled** among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?"

**53** Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

**54** "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

**55 “For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.**

**56 “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.**

**57 “As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who *feeds on Me* will live because of Me.**

“Feeds on Me” doesn’t mean just taking that little symbolic piece of unleavened bread at Passover and eating a little unleavened bread throughout the Feast of Unleavened Bread. No, we have to *feed on* Jesus Christ *all the time*. We have to *seek Him and hunger and thirst* for Him. If we don’t do that, as He says here, *we have no life in us*.

**58 “This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread *will live forever*.”**

What Jesus said here freaked out a lot of people. A few verses later John tells us that people who had been following Him up until this point turned away and followed Him no more. There’s no question that this is a hard saying. But what did Jesus mean by these statements that we must eat His flesh and drink His blood?

Again, we need to understand these in the culture and context of the day. We obviously understand with 2,000 years of hindsight that He’s talking about the symbols He gave on that last Passover with His disciples, of the bread being symbolic of His body bruised and beaten for us and of the wine being symbolic of His blood shed for us. But there’s another layer of meaning for us in His words as the people who heard them would’ve understood them.

How were sacrifices carried out at the temple at that time? There were **four main types** of sacrifices or offering that a person could offer.

- There was the grain or meal offering, which was grain or flour, some of which was burned (burning symbolic of being given to God and eaten by Him) and the rest given to the priests to eat.
- There was the sin or guilt offering, which was an animal, with part of the animal burned and part of it eaten by the priests.
- There was the burnt offering, which was an animal that was completely burned up and none of it eaten.
- And last there was the peace or fellowship offering, which was an animal sacrifice in which part of the animal was burned—symbolically given to God—but the rest of the animal would be cooked and eaten by the worshipper and his guests as a peace or reconciliation meal with God.

So when Jesus talks about eating His flesh, the way the people hearing that would’ve understood eating flesh is in the context of *the peace offering*—which is probably one of the few times in the year that the average Jew of that day would’ve eaten a nice slice of meat or enjoyed a steak, since meat was a luxury that the average person couldn’t afford. This was the *only* sacrifice in which the worshipper was allowed to eat the flesh or meat of the sacrifice.

And which sacrifice was this? It was the *peace or fellowship offering*, which represented what? It represented *peace and reconciliation with God*. How do we have peace and reconciliation with God? *Through the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ*. What is Jesus saying when He tells people that they must eat His flesh? He’s saying that *He is our peace offering that reconciles us to God!* He offered himself as that sacrifice, and *we symbolically eat of that sacrifice to show that we are now at peace with and reconciled to God*. What a beautiful and awesome picture! So yes, we have to accept His sacrifice and eat of that sacrifice to be at peace with and reconciled to God!

Again, that freaked people out because what came to their mind wasn’t the Lamb of God who

takes away the sins of the world, but rather human sacrifice. They didn't understand that Jesus was speaking symbolically to teach them a greater spiritual truth. In the same way, when He talked about drinking His blood, they also freaked out because they knew that they were forbidden from drinking *any* kind of blood, much less human blood. That was forbidden back in

**Leviticus 17:10—**

**10 . . . I will set My face against that person who eats blood . . .**

**11 For the life of the flesh is in the blood . . .**

Notice a few more:

**Genesis 9:4—**

**4 But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.**

**Deuteronomy 12:23**

**23 Be sure that you do not eat the blood, for the blood is the life.**

**Leviticus 17:14**

**14 You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood.**

Notice the reason they are not to consume any blood: *For the life is in the blood*. To Jesus' audience, *blood represented life*. They saw that all too often. If someone were seriously injured, or if someone were wounded in battle, or with the sacrifices they witnessed at the temple, they saw that *as the blood* flowed out of the body, so did *life* flow out of the body. If enough blood flowed out, *the life was gone*. They understood that connection clearly, because it was spelled out in Scripture that the life was in the blood, and they were not to eat blood, so it was abhorrent to them that Jesus Christ told them that they needed to drink His blood.

But is that what He meant, that they were literally to drink His blood? Of course not. We know that He is speaking figuratively and symbolically. So what does this mean figuratively and symbolically when Jesus says we must drink his blood? One meaning is what we covered two nights ago at the Passover. We took that small bit of wine that symbolized His blood shed to cover the penalty for our sins that we might receive forgiveness.

But think about these scriptures telling us that the life is in the blood. Is there another layer of meaning to Christ's words here in **John 6** that we may be missing? Let's look at it again:

**53 “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.**

**54 “Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.**

There's no equivocating here. He says unless we eat His flesh and drink His blood, *we have no life*. But if we do that, *we have* eternal life and He will raise us up in the resurrection of the righteous at His return.

**55 “For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.**

**56 “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood *abides* in Me, and I in him.**

What does this mean, that if we do this we “abide” in Him and Him in us? This word means “remains” or “lives in” or “dwells in.” So this is saying that he who eats His flesh and drinks His blood *remains and lives in and dwells in Him*, and *He remains and lives in and dwells in us*.

So if blood is equated with life, and the one who became Jesus Christ is the One who inspired those passages to be written, are we seeing another layer of meaning here? Yes we are. What Jesus is telling us here is that *we have to take His life* into the very center of our being. When He says that we must drink His blood, that what He's saying is that *we must take His life* into the very core of our hearts and minds and being—that *our life and His life become one and the same*.



That's what it means when He says *he abides in Me and I in him*. Our lives are becoming intertwined, one and the same.

**57 “As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.**

“Feeds on Me” doesn't mean just taking that little piece of unleavened bread at Passover and eating a little unleavened bread throughout the Feast of Unleavened Bread. No, we have to *feed on Jesus Christ all the time*. We have to seek Him and hunger and thirst for Him every day. How long is the Feast of Unleavened Bread? It's seven days. What does the number seven symbolize in the Bible? It symbolizes completeness. We eat unleavened bread over seven days to symbolize that we are taking Jesus Christ into our lives *all the time*. That's the picture of this Feast.

**58 “This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”**

Again, He doesn't equivocate. He doesn't mince words. If you want to live forever, *you have to partake of the bread of life*, which is Jesus Christ. You have to make Him a key part of your life.

But what does that mean? We've probably all heard the term of *internalizing* something. Think about it this way. You all have a Bible, probably one on your lap. It contains many examples written down for us to learn from. But if we don't read and study that book, *how much good does it do us?* If we don't read and study it, it might as well be any other book sitting on a bookshelf unread and gathering dust. It doesn't do us any good; it doesn't do anyone any good.

But if you take that book and you *read* that book and you *study* that book and you *ask God to help you learn from that book and make it a part of your life and your thinking* every minute of every day, you are then *internalizing* the Bible. You remember the stories. You remember the examples. You remember Bible verses. You *feed your heart and mind on Scripture* by reading and studying it regularly. You are *feeding on it and internalizing it*. It's *becoming a part of you*. But it takes *time*. It takes *work*. It takes *effort*. It doesn't happen miraculously—though God can miraculously open your mind to better understand and recall what you're learning. But you have to read and study it first, because *God won't help you recall and understand what you never read or studied in the first place*.

So how does that apply with feeding on or eating the unleavened bread that is Jesus Christ? We have to *take Him into our lives*. I've talked before about the relationship between a rabbi and his *talmidim* or disciples in the first century. What was the goal of the disciples or *talmidim*? They didn't want to just know what the rabbi knew, *they wanted to become just like him in every way*. And so they *lived* with him, *traveled* with him, *ate* with him, *slept* with him, *walked* with him, *did everything with him*.

How does that apply to you and me? How badly do you want to be a disciple? How badly do you want to be like Him? I'll share with you a quote I heard from a teacher from whom I've learned a great deal about first-century Jewish culture, a lot of which I'm sharing with you in our studies on the Gospels. This teacher studied with a great Jewish scholar who studied a lot about Jewish history in the first century, and although this scholar doesn't accept Jesus as Messiah or Son of God, he does think Jesus was one of the greatest rabbis who ever lived.

And this scholar, who knew more about Jesus and the Gospels than any of us, said, “What is it with you Christians? You say you want to follow Jesus and be like him. You don't know what you're talking about. If you say you're a Christian but you're not reading through all four of the Gospels at least once a month, *you're a liar*. You're not trying to become like Jesus, *you're just*

*a pretender.*” This scholar knows what it meant to be a disciple and follower of a rabbi. It meant *everything*—not just studying your Bible occasionally and coming to services once a week.

By that standard, how do we measure up? How much are we eating the unleavened Bread from heaven, the Bread of God, the Bread of Life?

The days of unleavened bread are *supposed to change us*. They are supposed to change us from a life of the leaven of sin to *an unleavened life filled with Jesus Christ*. That means we accept Him as the final authority in our lives.

This is what the apostle Paul is talking about in **Galatians 2:20—**  
**20 “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.**

This is a very profound statement. It took me a long time to figure out what it meant to have Christ living in us. But it’s talking about internalizing Him and making Him a part of your life in everything you do. It’s allowing God’s Spirit to work and shape you to become like him in every way. It’s becoming the “new man” that Paul talked about that we are to become after baptism.

He isn’t some distant figure who lived a long time ago, but He’s someone very real, very immediate, very accessible, who wants to be our friend and companion. That’s why He died for us—*so He could have that kind of role in our lives*. That’s why He’s our High Priest and Intercessor now—*because He wants us to be in His Kingdom*. That’s why He’s returning to earth soon as King of Kings and Lord of Lords—*so He can transform our lowly bodies to be like His glorified spirit body and give us eternal life so that we can be part of the family of God forever!* That’s why He wants us to partake of Him as the Bread from heaven, the Bread from God, the true Bread of Life.

**So how do we partake of that true Bread of Life,** Jesus Christ? I want to leave you with five takeaway points.

**1. Realize that just as you need physical bread or food to sustain your physical life, you need the unleavened Bread of Life, Jesus Christ, to nourish you spiritually.** He has to be part of your spiritual diet every day.

**We’ve read through most of John 6** today. This talks all about that.

**2. Learn about Him!**

That’s the purpose of our detailed series of studies on the Gospels—to learn about Jesus Christ. God gave us four books of the Bible to teach us about what He is like. How can we become like Him if we don’t know much about Him? Again, His disciples—His *talmidim*—lived with Him 24/7 so they could learn not just what He knew but how to become just like Him. How much **time do we spend with Him?** An hour or two a week? An hour or two a month? A few hours a year? Are you a **follower or just a pretender?**

**3. Study His teachings.**

Again, that’s another purpose of our detailed studies on the Gospels. What did he teach? What did He say? What did He do? We’re spending a great deal of time going over that.

And it's not just the Gospels, but the entire Bible is His revelation to us.

**Matthew 4:4** tells us—

**4 Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.**

We've talked a lot about bread today, and how there's more to life than pursuing where your next meal is coming from. It's far more important to fill yourself with the Word of God than with physical bread. And even more important is to fill yourself with the true Bread of Life, Jesus Christ.

**4. Make His priorities your priorities.**

**John 4:34—**

**34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.**

**John 6:38—**

**38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.**

What is most important in your life? How well do your priorities align with His? There's a simple test: You'll know what your priorities are by how you spend your time.

And the last point—

**5. Lay down your life for others as He laid down His life for you.**

**John 15:13—**

**13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.**

**1 John 3:16—**

**16 By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**

What is our purpose in this life? What are we called to do in this life? God created us to become like Him, to become like our elder brother, Jesus Christ. He was the greatest servant of all. And what are we called to become? We are called to become servants. That will be our job in His Kingdom. Not to lord it over others, but to serve others, to teach them God's way.

I want to close with **Colossians 1:27—**

**27 To them [the saints] God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.**

One of God's great mysteries—and miracles—is "*Christ in you.*" Jesus Christ's life in ours, and ours in His, intertwined and becoming one. That's why we eat the unleavened bread during this Feast of Unleavened Bread. Yes, we remove the leaven and sin and unrighteousness, but we do that by eating the unleavened bread of life, Jesus Christ.

And when we partake of that unleavened bread of life, making His life a part of our own, the end result is what we see here—the hope of glory—a glorious transformation to ultimately become like Jesus Christ in every way when we are transformed into God's spirit sons and daughters to be a part of His Kingdom forever.

The Feast of unleavened bread is all about salvation. It was all about Israel's salvation and deliverance from Egypt, and it is about our salvation and deliverance through partaking of the true unleavened Bread of Life, Jesus Christ.