

The Good Leaven

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I believe that the parable of the leaven (Matthew 13:33) pertains to the most essential part of our calling. It applies to the very core of our conversion and our entrance into the Kingdom of God. Without the leaven which is symbolized in this parable, we will never, ever, be able to inherit God's Kingdom.

The members of the various churches have been repeatedly led astray on this crucial subject concerning this leaven. They are taught that all leaven in the Bible is bad, but that teaching is wrong. There's a good leaven spoken of in the Bible, and I think we can prove this from the Holy Scriptures today.

Now the majority of these churches teach and preach that the leaven in the parable in Matthew 13:33 and the leaven in the baked wave loaves of Leviticus 23 represent sin.

Brethren, nothing could be further from the truth! On the contrary, the leaven spoken of here represents a good leaven; it represents the very Spirit of God Himself.

In Matthew 13:33 we read "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven". Brethren, you cannot say "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto sin". The Kingdom of Heaven has no sin. The Kingdom of God has no sin and never will! God never has, and never will, dwell with sin.

As we dissect this parable, we will see how it's talking about the church being given a portion of God's Spirit, and how that Spirit is to grow and amalgamate, and bring the entire body of believers into unity with each other and into unity or oneness with God.

Let's look at some of the Greek words used in this parable. First, the woman here represents the church. That Greek word translated "took" is the same Greek word translated as "receive" in Acts 2:38, used by Peter on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given. After Peter addressed the crowd, and after they realized they had crucified the Messiah, their hearts were pricked, and they asked "what shall we do?" Peter's reply was: repent, be baptized, and you shall "receive" the gift of the Holy Spirit. In both places it's referring to God's Holy Spirit.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven (God's Spirit) which a woman (the church) took or received, and "hid" in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened. The word that's translated as "hid" means, in Greek, "incorporate", meaning to "coalesce" or to grow together into one body. The "whole" being referred to here is the church.

God gives each of us individually His Holy Spirit at baptism and laying on of hands. That Spirit is to grow in us and to unite us. We are to become one with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Sin does just the opposite - sin separates us from God.

Further proof that the leaven mentioned in Matthew 13 represents God's Holy Spirit is found in Leviticus 23, concerning the wave loaves. The leavening agent demonstrated in the making and baking of the wave loaves will prove beyond any doubt that this leaven here cannot represent sin, and can mean nothing other than God's powerful Holy Spirit.

God gives us the physical (which we humans understand quite well) to help us to better understand the spiritual (which we humans do not always understand that well). I want to look at the physical side of the making of bread, and compare it to the spiritual. Let us not forget, Mathew 13:33 is a parable, and parables are there to reveal the "mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven" (and not to everyone, but to His disciples).

When one makes bread, they put in the ingredients (the flour, the water, maybe salt, whatever the recipe calls for). Not all bread recipes call for leavening, but leaven is required in the wave loaves, and for an essential reason.

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After the ingredients are added, the dough has to be kneaded, which involves pressing, stretching and even beating. Yes, the dough actually gets beat up a bit as it's put through this process, and it takes time to accomplish.

Christ's disciples were aware of this process; James even mentions this "kneading" in James 1:2 where he says: "count it all joy when you face fiery trials." Paul and Barnabas described the kneading process while visiting Antioch when they said: "we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God."

Now as this process of kneading and beating continues, a peculiar thing begins to happen: the dough begins to rise. And even after the baker beats the dough back, it continues to rise back up.

Now we need to ask two important questions here. First, what is making the dough rise? Well, we all know it's the leavening agent. Now let us ask this question: what is the leavening agent doing to the dough that is causing it to rise up? The leavening agent is "changing the nature of the dough". That's what leaven does - it's an element that produces an altering or transforming influence. It's called fermentation. And it produces what is called "conversion". In this case we are speaking about "spiritual" conversion - changing from sinfulness to righteousness.

Brethren, that cannot be accomplished if the leaven introduced in Mathew 23:13 and in the wave loaves is sin. God is not trying to convert righteousness to sinfulness. On the contrary, we are born with sinful natures, sinful natures that need to be changed.

Let's go a little further with this. We are told these wave loaves are baked with this leaven. Baking brings another factor into the equation that we need to consider concerning this leaven. When the dough is being worked, kneaded, stretched, and

pulled, as it rises, it's beaten back down, and again it rises back up, and again it's beaten back down. This process continues until the baker gets the dough just the way he wants it. Then the loaf is placed into the oven and baked. Once baked, it becomes a finished product, and its nature can no longer be changed - it's permanent!

If we were to be baked with sin (like all the pulpits in the churches of God preach, saying the leaven in the wave loaves represent sin because the brethren in the church are sinful) we would possess sinful natures forever.

God will not bake anyone who retains sin in their nature. This is echoed throughout the Bible: "Transgressors shall not inherit the Kingdom of God", "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." The Scriptures are quite clear that we have to completely change from our old sinful ways and be upright, pure, unblemished, and unspotted before any baking takes place.

This is also specified in Leviticus 23. Verse 15 says that seven Sabbaths shall be complete. Seven Sabbaths means seven weeks, or to be more specific, seven churches – remember, this is the feast of weeks, the feast of first fruits, that's us - the church. Verse 16 says "even unto the morrow after the seven Sabbaths (weeks) shall you number 50 days."

Brethren, being complete comes first, before day 50, before the day of Pentecost. That word "complete" is very significant and very enlightening. Most overlook the significance of that word by thinking it just means that 7 weeks need to be completed or finished. But that word "complete" means a whole lot more.

That Hebrew word translated as "complete" in this verse is normally used exclusively to address Christ Himself. It means unspotted, unblemished. It's the same word used in Exodus 12:5 where they were to choose a lamb "without blemish". It's used twice in Numbers 19:2 speaking of a red heifer "without spot" and "unblemished".

Yes, normally that word is referring to Christ. But here in Leviticus 23:15 it's referring to us, the members of God's church. (It's not talking about an unblemished week of seven days.) We have to be unspotted, unblemished, complete - just like Christ, our Chief cornerstone. We have to be complete before day 50, before we are baked. This "completeness", this "perfection" if you will, is also seen in 1st Kings 6:7, where it says that the house of God (the church) is "made ready" before it is brought thither, or to the other side, before it is baked.

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If you investigate how the Temple was built, the stones were all cut at the quire. And not only cut, but buffed to perfection. Once completed, then brought to the "other side" and put into their place. They fit so perfectly, that there was no need for any mortar between the stones. Let us remember who is building this Temple - Christ Himself. He and the

Father both are perfectionists. When they tell us "be ye holy" and "be ye perfect" it's not a loose slip of the tongue, it's a requirement.

I'm just about finished, but we need to go just a little bit further concerning this crucial subject, because the proper understanding of this leaven involves another very important issue that needs to be understood. It involves a very bad "spirit" that has been lurking in the churches of God, and has all but permeated the entire church in these latter days. It's the spirit of antichrist.

The Apostle John tells us that the spirit of antichrist can be recognized quite simply, just by trying (or testing) the spirits, whether they are of God, or not of God, or antichrist. Very few in God's church understand the simplicity here. John tells us in 1st John 4:2 that IF the spirit confesseth (acknowledges) that Christ came in the flesh, that that spirit is of God.

But if the spirit confesseth not that Christ has come in the flesh, that spirit is not of God, and is a spirit of antichrist. Well was Christ flesh like us, or not?

Now all these church leaders will tell you that yes, Christ came in the flesh, but they don't really believe it. They don't really believe that Christ was as flesh as you and I. They believe that Christ could walk this earth sinlessly, but that it is impossible for us (mere human beings) to follow suit.

In John 1:14 we read: "And the Word was made flesh". That word "flesh" used there for Christ is the same Greek word used in the Scriptures when referring to us and the rest of mankind. Strong's defines the flesh that applies to us and Christ when He walked this earth like this: "Human nature, with its frailties (physically or morally) and passions, or (specially) a human being, carnal".

Christ was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, and we are to follow in His footsteps, and become just like Him. If you ask a member of God's church "what is a disciple?" most will answer, "a pupil, or learner." That is partially correct, but not fully. There is a Greek word that means exactly that, a pupil or learner, but that Greek word is nowhere found in the Bible. If you investigate the meaning of the Greek word that is used in the Scriptures for "disciple", it actually means a whole lot more. It means one who not only knows what his master teaches, but walks in the same exact way as his master. A true disciple of Christ walks upright.

Pertaining to sin, Fred (a well know Church of God minister with many followers) told his congregation that they need not worry about their everyday sins, because we will all be committing those sins right up to our change. CGI (Church of God International) has the same belief as Fred. They have a booklet out titled: "The Assurance of Salvation". If you read it, it will make you feel really good concerning your conversion process, stating that if you find yourself falling back into your old sinful ways, it's no problem, that everyone does it from time to time. They say repeating your old sins is nothing to worry about, because the Father has placed you into Christ's hands, and He says He will lose none.

They don't mention any Scriptures like: "Work out your own salvation with fear & trembling" or anything along that line.

It's a bad spirit that all the churches of God seem to possess. A spirit of antichrist, believing that Christ's fleshly existence was very much different than ours, that He was able to walk this earth uprightly, but no one else can. Those churches have many false beliefs and teachings. That's why we had to separate ourselves from them in the first place, so we wouldn't be condoning them.

Brethren, we are living at the time when the majority of the brethren in the church (as the Scriptures foretold) want to hear smooth things. We are living at the time when good is called bad and bad is called good, a time when the way of Truth IS evil spoken of. Let us not be deceived into thinking that the leaven in the parable of Mathew 13:33, or the leaven in the wave loaves represents sin, because it does not.

My admonition is for us at this crucial time, as the day of the Lord rapidly approaches, is to not hold back our tongues, but let us boldly speak as a witness to our God. We need to let others know that our sins do matter, and that the committing of them can be stopped, and must be stopped, and that it's crucial to our salvation to do so, and it's accomplished by the power of His Spirit, the powerful leavening agent that He has given to us.