***Sundays, and the Old Testament Feasts  
  
Colossians 2:18-19  
  
COL-204***

**© Berean Memorial Church of Irving, Texas, Inc. (1995)**

Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God is alive and active, and sharper than any double-edged sword. It penetrates even to dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow; and, able to judge the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

Acts 20:32: "And now I entrust you to God and to the Word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

Revelation 2:7: "The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

We are studying Colossians 1:25-29, "The Mystery of the Church," segment number 19.

**Secrets**

Within the eternal decree of the Godhead, which has determined the course of human history, there are some things which God has kept secret. This is indicated to us, for example, in Deuteronomy 29:29, where Moses says, "The secret things belong to the Lord our God. But the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of the Law." These secret things of God are referred to in Scripture as "mysteries." These divine secrets cannot be known by man until God reveals them to him.

**The Mystery of the Church**

One of the great secrets of God was the mystery of the dispensation of the church, with its marvelous grace way of life. This is a lifestyle in which sinful man receives unbelievable blessings from God's grace and kindness. These blessings are from the point of salvation, as a grace gift apart from human marriage and from human good works, to living a supernatural life of holiness by the grace power of the Holy Spirit, and the guidance of doctrine. The secret of the church age was revealed in detail to the apostle Paul following his conversion to Christianity.

It was no secret, of course, in the Old Testament Scriptures that God would bring salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, the Messiah Savior, to gentiles, as well as to Jews. What was secret in the Old Testament was the unthinkable thing that God planned to form a distinctive body of saints made up of Jews and gentiles called the church. For Jews and gentiles to be united in a spiritual relationship was unheard of, and was unthinkable. To this new species of church-age believers, God would give unheard of spiritual power; closeness to the members of the Godhead that was beyond anybody's fondest dreams; knowledge of the mind and the plan of God; personal freedom to do what is right; and, great material and spiritual prosperity.

All this was hidden from generations of believers living in the previous dispensations. They simply never imagined such a time in human history, and such a marvelous and a prosperous time of relationship to the living God, and, to be able to walk in the family-like relationship, was something that nobody ever dreamed of. And suddenly, it was to be commonplace in this particular age. Finally, the exciting dispensation of the church was revealed to Paul, and he eagerly taught it to the believers throughout the Roman Empire.

**The Dispensation of the Church**

This morning, a look at this mystery dispensation of the church. In the historical progression, the dispensation of the Jews, where they were the chief stewards responsible for that age, is divided into the period of the patriarchs, and then the period of the Mosaic Law, and then comes a seven-year period of the tribulation. That completes the total dispensation of the Jews. We know this seven years from the timetable which was given to the Prophet Daniel. This is no guesswork. We also know, from chronological studies, that the Lord Jesus Christ was officially and finally and formally rejected as Israel's Messiah on Palm Sunday, in the month of April, in 32 A.D., and that that marked the last day of the 483rd year of Jewish history. They had seven years beyond that to go, when all of the promises of the Abrahamic and other covenants would be fulfilled to Israel. And the Jews would be ruling this earth under the Messiah Savior as the ruling nation, and the kingdom of God would be on this earth.

What happened was that, with the rejection at this point, the period of the dispensation of the Jews came to a temporary pause. It was not a termination – just a pause. There was an interruption here in which God was now going to insert the marvelous era of the church, which had been kept secret up to this time. So, the dispensation of the church comes in between the era of the Mosaic Law, and the yet future tribulation period. So far, we've had two years, and I suspect that we're nearing the end of the line on that period of time. Every other period of the dispensations has also lasted for 2,000 years. One on under the gentiles was 2,000 years. One under the Jews has been 2,000 years. And this one under Christians will, in all likelihood, be the same thing. Then the final 1,000 years will be the millennium. And God does work in a series of sevens throughout the Scriptures. That's a perfect number.

So, the interruption was placed in there, but you must understand that there is no relationship to the Mosaic Law and to the patriarch period, which came before, and there's no relationship of the church to the seven-year tribulation period which comes after it. We have in the English language, therefore, a word that describes that it's called the "intercalation." An "intercalation" means something that is inserted between two other things, A and B, and it has no relationship to A, and it has no relationship to B. It's the perfect word for describing what the church is. It is an interrelation between the era of the Mosaic Law, and the era to come of the tribulation.

Once the church is over, and the rapture has taking place, and we're out of here, then the period of the Jewish dispensations starts clicking off again to its conclusion. And the last seven years are then fulfilled. Until that time, everything is temporarily postponed for the Jews.

Now, this church dispensation was a total secret, or mystery, in the Old Testament Scriptures. But during the lifetime of our lord, near the end of His ministry, He began to give little hints of what was coming. And you must try to put yourself back in the place of these apostles who knew nothing about this. They were well-versed in Old Testament Scriptures, but they didn't know anything about this new idea of a church made up of Jew and gentile, because nothing like that has ever been revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures.

**I Will Build My Church**

The first inkling is recorded for us in Matthew 16:18. The Lord Jesus Christ crosses out of Israel, out of Jewish territory. He crosses, interestingly enough, to the gentile territory of Caesarea Philippi. And at that point, He makes an enormously dramatic declaration. Verse 18: "And I also say to you." And the context of this is that (after they crossed over), He had asked them, "Who am I? Who do people say I am?" And they gave various answers. Some of them thought that you're John the Baptist, reincarnated. Some think you're Elijah reincarnated. Some think you're Jeremiah. Some think you're one of the other prophets. He said, "And who do you think I am?" And then Peter stepped up and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. You are the Messiah Savior." And that said it all. And all the Old Testament was bound up in that simple little statement.

Then Jesus looked at Simon Peter and said, "That's a blessed thing for you to know that, Peter. And you did come up with that on your own. It was revealed to you by My Father.

Then we come to verse 18, and remember that the background is Peter's statement. Jesus is going to refer right back to that. Verse 16: "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. Be careful that you make that connection. That's the way it is in the text.

Verse 18: "But I also say to you: you are Peter." "Peter" means "pebble" (little rock): "I also say to you, "You are Peter, a pebble. But upon this rock," and there's a different Greek word. Here is where you need a little help to understand the English Bible, because in the Greek Bible, the people would have seen this immediately, because the word "rock" there is "boulder:" "You're Peter. You're a little pebble. You're a human being. But upon this majestic rock (the confession that you have just made, which God has made clear to you, that I am indeed the Messiah Savior, I am the Son of the Living God. I am the God-Man, sent by God, and brought into this world to produce salvation. Upon this testimony" (and this great truth), five dramatic words were now spoken by the Lord: "*I will build My church,*" and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it."

Satan moved right in on this verse. He moved in immediately, and he distorted it into the Roman Catholic concept – that Jesus was talking about Peter as the rock upon whom He was going to build His church: the first pope. And you can be tricked by that if you just read it in the English. But now that you know better, the words that the Holy Spirit said are "pebble" and "Boulder" – much different, and obviously not referring to Peter.

"I" – Who's going to bring about this new thing? They didn't know what a church was. You must stop thinking in terms of everything that you know, and put yourself back into their lack of knowledge: "I" – Jesus Christ is going to be the builder. "Will." It's going to be in the future. It's not something that has been done? It's a very ignorant thing that many Christian groups say: "The church began in the Old Testament with the people of Israel, and we are the new Israel." That's because they don't understand that this is an intercalation. So, they're trying to mix, constantly, the Jewish Law with the Christian way of life. It doesn't work. And all it does is create a monstrous hybrid that is nothing but religion.

"I," Jesus Christ will do the building. "I will." It'll be in the future. "Build." It's going to be block-upon-block, as one person after another is saved, and added to this temple, the church. "My." It belongs personally to Jesus Christ because this church is going to be His body. And in the future, when He returns, it will be His bride. Just that very word should give you a little clue as to the intimacy that is involved between a human being and God. That was not known in the Old Testament. And what will He build? "My church." This is the word for "assembly." This is a common word in the New Testament Greek word world. But God the Holy Spirit took this word, and gave it a technical meaning: a special group; and, a new species of human beings.

Then, periodically, the Lord Jesus kept dropping a little hint there, and a little hint elsewhere. And the disciples began to see that something was up. In John 31-32, for example. Jesus says, "When, therefore, he had gone out (that is, Judas), Jesus said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified. And God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately." They must have wondered: what this special glorification of Jesus Christ? Well, he's referring to verse 33, as He indicated in verse 33: "Little children, I'm with you a little while longer. You shall seek me. And as I said to the Jews, I now say to you: 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'" Where was He going? He was going to heaven. Well, what happened to the kingdom – the kingdom of God on this earth? That's what He came to establish. He came to fulfill the promise to Abraham. What happened to the kingdom? That wasn't clear to them.

In John 14:3, Jesus says, "Again, I'm going up to My father's house. I'm leaving. And there are many dwelling places there." He's referring to the new Jerusalem. And He says, "I'm going to prepare a place up there for you. Every one of you is going to have your own apartment in the New Jerusalem. In verse 3, he says, "And if I go (and I will), and prepare a place for you, I will come again." He's referring to the rapture. "I will come again, and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also."

Now, other Scriptures clarify in detail what the rapture is all about, but it wasn't that clear here. Well, what is this: "Going to where we cannot come? Where is He going? Where is He being removed to? He says, "I'm going to take you." Who is going to be removed? He was talking about the coming church.

Notice John 14:16-17: "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another helper, that He may be with you forever. That is the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him. But you know Him because he abides with you, and will be in you." Here He talks about God the Holy Spirit coming to indwell the believers, and to be with them after He is gone. Now, they are more confused than ever. They had never thought about God the Holy Spirit coming and living within their human bodies. What is this?

Little by little, Jesus is laying the ground for a magnificent new relationship of human beings to God. And I think it is so pathetic that most Christians don't have the foggiest notion about this. They never rise to the magnificence of the freedoms of living in Christ, under the power of doctrine, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In John 14:20, Jesus adds another concept, a principle of positional truth – a position in Christ. "In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father: you in Me; and, I in you." Now this is even more amazing. Not only is the Spirit of God go to indwelling them, but even the Son of God will take up His residence in them spiritually, while He is physically in heaven."

Then verse 26: The magnificent foundation of this age is the teaching of doctrine – the knowledge of the word, which is the mind of God. John 14:26: Jesus says that he's going to send them a helper – the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My Name. He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I told you." In any church service, the people who are in spiritual temporal fellowship are the people whom the Spirit of God teaches. The pastor-teacher cannot teach you. All he can do is explain the information. He can lay out the truth before you. But for spiritual phenomena to hit you between the eyes, and impact itself into your brain, and become part of your thinking process, that has to be done by more than clever words of some human being. It is the impact of the Word of God. Some people never get it. Consider yourself honored and distressed when you step out of the will of God, and you step aside from the principles of the Word of God, which we all do. God is willing to do this much for us – to convert our mind into his mind, so we think the thoughts of God.

In John 16:12-13, we have the same principle of the ministry of the Holy Spirit to every believer: "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when he (the Spirit of Truth comes), He will guide you into all truth. For He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak. And he will disclose to you what is to come." Here again, God the Holy Spirit is going to be there. He's going to be present, to be able to teach the Word of God – the mind of the living God. And when you have that, you have everything. If you don't have that, you have nothing.

The whole chapter of John 15 is the production of divine good works through maintaining temporal fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the vine, and we are the branches. And the term "abiding in Him" means that all known sins are confessed; temple fellowship is in force; and the Spirit of God is in control. That is summarized in John 15:5: "I am divine. You are the branches. He who abides in Me (that's a technical expression for temporal fellowship – being filled with the Spirit), and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me, he can do nothing. Don't you get sick and tired of all the important people in our world that are constantly on television; constantly in the entertainment world; the opinion-makers; and, these people being put forth for us to stand up, and sit before our TV sets, and listen to their words of wisdom? And they're nothing but a bunch of losers. They're nothing but people who can do nothing, because they do not have Christ living in them; they do not have the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit; and they are not branches in the living vine, Lord Jesus Christ. So, they're nothing. Yes, they're rich. Yes, they're impressive. But they have nothing but botched-up lives. They're nothing but human beings who are crippled; they're monstrosity; and, they're Halloween ghouls. Yet they walk around; smile at each other; complement one another; and, pretend they are something.

**The (Real) Lord's Prayer**

This was no small thing when Jesus said, "If you don't abide in Me: first, through salvation; and, then maintaining temporal fellowship, you're nobody. The whole chapter of John 17 is the High Priestly Prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ for a new class of believers – the church saints. You don't find any prayer like this anywhere else in the Scripture. The "Our father who art in heaven," that is referred to as the Lord's Prayer is not the Lord's Prayer. That is the Apostle's Prayer. They are talking about a prayer, which is going to be prayed in the millennium. It's a travesty, and an insult to God, every time churches all over this metroplex are standing up and intoning: "Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Your Name," as if they're worshiping God by that little magical formula "prayer,: that doesn't even apply to Christians. It's a prayer which is not even in Jesus name. It's a prayer which is based entirely upon Christ as King of the world, sitting in Jerusalem, and righteousness is enforced on this earth. It's a millennial prayer. That's what he was talking about there. It's a prayer for the apostles to orient what life will be like for them in the kingdom.

So, this prayer, in John 17, is the true Lord's Prayer. You go through that, and you will see very clearly: how you should conduct yourself; what it is that the Lord was concerned with; and, how He wants you to walk apart from the world; how He wants you to live your life in service to Him; and, let the dead of the world bury their dead (spiritually dead bury the spiritually dead of the world systems of institutions). It's all there. And it's all centered upon the Word of God. "Thy Word is Truth. Sanctified them. Set them aside to the special life of church-age believers." Now, that's magnificent.

In the book of acts, all of these were little previews that the apostles didn't fully grasp, that the Lord was dropping, about what was coming. In Acts 1"4-5, the Lord Jesus Christ takes the disciples. He has been raised from the grave now for 40 days. He has spent that time in giving them a lot of instruction, and I suspect beginning to orient them to this new species of human being: Jew and gentile in the new body, the body of Christ, the church. And the Lord takes them aside, and He says to them: "Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, which he said, you heard from Me." What was it that the Father promised to do for them?

Verse 5: "For John baptized with water, but you should be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." And boy, as soon as the devil heard that, he zeroed in right on that. And if there ever was a doctrine that was distorted, and twisted up, and wrongly presented today, it is this doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Anything that was key and crucial to the church is what Satan distorted, and brought confusion on. He does it to this day.

So, Jesus said, "Don't leave Jerusalem. Wait for the beginning. (What he was telling them was) To wait for the beginning of the new dispensation, which will be based upon a new power, the power of God Himself working through you constantly, and which will be inaugurated by a brand new relationship." They didn't understand. There was never any such thing as the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament – to be baptized into the power of God, so that that was what enveloped you, and that that was your atmosphere in which you lived and moved. This was a new ministry and a ministry of God the Holy Spirit – to stay in Jerusalem until this happens. This was the timetable that he was giving them for the beginning of the dispensation of the church. From the time of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, He spent 40 days instructing His disciples, and, now doubt, a great deal of this teaching was upon the things which were to come, relative to the new dispensation of the church.

Acts 1:3 said: "To these, He also presented Himself alive, after his suffering, by many convincing proofs: appearing to them over a period of 40 days, and speaking things concerning the Kingdom of God." He was telling them, "Boys, the Kingdom of God has been postponed. We're going to come to an intercalation. You don't have the details. You wouldn't be able to handle them. The Spirit of God after I'm gone will tell these to you later, about this church that I've been talking to you about, and the new relationships I will have with you, since I'm going to heaven, and I'm leaving you behind. The kingdom has not been established. But I want you to understand that the kingdom is still the plan of God. He is going to keep His Word to Israel. All this is going to come about. But in the meantime, you have to shift gears, because this interruption is going to go on for many centuries." And they began to get a little bit more and more the picture of what was going to happen.

So, after 40 days, Jesus directed the disciples to wait at Jerusalem. After He left at the end of those 40 days, He ascended to heaven, to wait until the coming of the Holy Spirit, to provide them with the spiritual power to be able to live in the church age. There was the great difference. The Jew had 613 rules by which he would achieve righteousness, if he could keep them. But there was no way he could do it. With his sincere efforts, he failed every time. The sin nature whipped him. The world system whipped them. The devil whipped them. Now God said, "You're going to be a people of righteousness. You're not going to be perfect, because you won't get the sin nature removed until you're in heaven. But you will be able to live far and above the mass of humanity, in walking in a way that is godly, and that is prosperous under the hand of God.

So, Jesus, at the end of those 40 days ascended to heaven (Acts 1:8). He told him, "Stay in Jerusalem till you receive the power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. And you shall be my witnesses then in Jerusalem. Then you'll branch out to the provinces of Judea and Samaria. And then you'll branch out to the remotest parts of the earth. This is why we encourage you to take the Berean evangelism booklet. Keep handing it out left and right in your association. Get over your fear. You would not have any hesitancy of warning a person who is about to step into a terrible danger.

I was horrified one time in sitting in a little commuter plane in Cancun, to hop over to Cozumel on a scuba trip. And one passenger came rushing in late, and everybody was on-board ready to go. So, he's going to get on-board. They've got the door open. The way I'm looking out the window, the props spinning, and just the way the glare of the window was, it looked to me like this man was walking right into the propeller. And I literally shouted, "Hey." I don't know I thought he could even hear me. But it was just the refraction. And what should I have done: said, "Hey, this is going to be interesting," because I don't want to disturb him, and he'd be embarrassed if I yelled at him. He'd feel like a fool. I don't want to. He'll get mad at me. I don't want to say this." Of course, you'd would have said something, almost involuntarily, which is what I did.

You want to obey the Lord here, and say, "Go on out as far as you can, and reach out with modern technology through tapes to the uttermost parts of the earth, and keep doing that, and keep doing that. And every week, strip those boxes of brochures at the offering boxes, and get them out there. Don't be looking for someone else to do this. This is to you personally – the duty of the church believer.

Scripture says, "To those to whom much has been given." And I guarantee you, that you're the group that much has been given to, of all people of history: "Of them, much is required." So, the disciples waited for 10 days for the fulfillment of the coming of the Holy Spirit, to form this new body of believers, the church.

In Acts 2:1-4, it happened: "And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place." There were three feasts in the spring of the year that the Jews had to observe. First, there was the Pentecost feast. Secondly, there was the feast of the firstfruits. And third, there was the feast of Pentecost. There were not at the third one in the spring season, so people were from all over the Roman world – Jews of the dispersion had come to remember the Feast of Pentecost: "And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven, a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as a fire, distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit had given them utterance."

**Tongues**

The Greek word for tongues, I point out to you, is the Greek word that can only apply to real known languages. There is another Greek word that applies to gibberish. It is used in this context periodically, but what it means is determined (is defined) by this statement, "They began to speak in other tongues," and the Greek word means real languages. Here again, you need to remember that when you read the English Bible, so you will not fall into the foolishness of the trap that Satan moved right in on this too, and distorted it, as in the charismatic movement today, who think they're speaking in tongues. This is because down at the temple, they did speak with gibberish. That's why they had to have a different Greek word to describe that. That's "glossolalia." And they spoke in this gibberish. And that's how the pagans worshiped their gods. They just lost control of themselves, and their vocal cords would just pour out these sounds. Satan said, "That's good. I can make people do that. If they let me, I can make them do that." But God the Holy Spirit always carefully uses the right word as he guides the writer. And this word means real languages. That's what was happening.

So, the believers were filled with the Holy Spirit. Ah, but Jesus said they were going to be baptized. Yes. It doesn't say that here. But we know that that's what happened. We know that because, on another occasion, seven years later, it was time to bring gentiles into the body of Christ. Up to then, it had been only Jews. Now, seven years later, comes in the first gentile, the Cornelius household – Peter and Joppa being sent by God to give them the gospel. On that occasion, Peter says this. In Acts 11:15-17: Peter is back in Jerusalem. He is vindicating his ministry to the gentiles. He's explaining to the other apostles that this is what happened, because to them it was inconceivable still that gentiles were going to be part of this special body.

So, Peter, in his defense, before the other apostles, says to them. Acts 11:15: "And as I began to speak (that is, to these gentiles who were receptive to the Word of God), the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning." Peter says, "It happened just like it did to us on the day of Pentecost seven years ago. And what did he mean? He said, "And I remember the words of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'" It's very clear what Peter had in mind when he said, "It happened to us just like it happened to them." What happened was that they were baptized. These gentiles were baptized with the Holy Spirit just as Peter and the apostles had been baptized on the day of Pentecost.

"Therefore, if God gave to them the same gift as he gave to us (the gift of the Holy Spirit) after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could stand in God's way? And when they heard this, they quieted down (that is, the counsel – the Christian leaders. They glorified God saying, "Well, then. God has granted to the gentiles also the repentance that leads to life." Bingo! Finally there comes through the great feature of the dispensation of grace: Jew and gentile; one body; the magnificent body of Christ – Christ, who is the head of that body.

So, what happened was that the baptism of the Holy Spirit did come on that day. And those Jewish believers at that time were combined into one body, and the church began. Then later, the gentiles added.

**The Passover Feast**

This event, as I indicated, took place on one of the holy days of Pentecost. It was the holy day, which was 50 days after the resurrection of Christ. "50 days," is what Pentecost means. In the spring of the year, first came the Passover feast. This represented the death of Christ. And Paul refers to that connection in 1 Corinthians 5:7: "Clean out the leaven before you observe the feast of the Passover. You had to get rid of any bread that had yeast in it – the leaven." Jews do that to this day. Clean out the old leaven. They go through the whole house. They have their little children look under every nook and cranny – whether this little kid was given a piece of bread that had yeast in it, and he dropped it on the floor. And they said, "They must have no leaven in their bread," because they're still thinking that they're saved by their works.

This Passover feast represented the death of Christ on the cross as the Lamb of God for the sins of the world.

**The Feast of Firstfruits**

Then came directly the feast of the firstfruits. This represented Christ in His resurrection. In Leviticus 23:11, this feast is established: "And He shall waive the sheath before the Lord for you, to be accepted. On the day after the Sabbath, the priest shall waive it." This ceremony was the waiving of the firstfruits. The farmer had gone out and cut a piece of the grain. He took a little piece. It was a sample of what was out there. And the sample connoted that more was to come. This was a beautiful symbol of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was the firstfruits. He is the sample of what it is going to be for a human being over whom sin can no longer exercise control, because his sin has been paid for. And now he has been justified. And so Christ was a sample of what it's going to be like for a dead human being be raised to life in a glorified body, which means no sin nature. Leviticus 20:11: "He shall weigh the sheath of grain before the Lord (the priest will do this), for you to be accepted. On the day after the Sabbath, the priest shall waive it." What's the day after the Sabbath? On a Sunday. They had to do this on a Sunday.

Now, notice, along with that, John 12:24: "Truly, truly. I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself. But if it dies, it bears much fruit." So, here Christ, as the grain which is sown, has died. Now, much fruit of resurrection will be borne by His death. He is simply the sample.

1 Corinthians 15:23, therefore, "But each in his own order. Christ is the firstfruits (This is the pastor speaking about the order of resurrections.), and after that, those who are Christ's at His coming." First, there is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. After that, those who are His, when He comes back, and all the dead are raised for heaven or for hell in the two resurrections. This came on the Sunday after Passover – the day that Christ arose. This feast of the firstfruits was on the day that Christ arose.

**The Feast of Pentecost**

Then came (after that) the Feast of Pentecost, This represented the coming of the Holy Spirit to form the church, 50 days after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Sunday**

It also fell on a Sunday. That's why we go to church on Sunday. That is our special day. We don't have the old Saturday Sabbath day, and we don't call Sunday "the Christian Sabbath." That's an oxymoron. The two can't fit together.

How did they celebrate it? Well, they made two loaves of bread of newly harvested grain, and the union of the particles of grain represented the believers joining together as Jews and gentiles. The two loaves represented the Jew and the gentile, and these two were used in the Feast of Pentecost to commemorate now (they didn't fully know then, but we know now) that it was representing this new thing that God was going to do. Interestingly enough, it had to have yeast in it. These loaves had to have leaven, because it represented the structural organization of the church as well. And on the local level, you have people with the sin nature, so there is still evil present.

Now, in the fall of the year, all of these have been fulfilled. These feasts, the Passover feast and the death of Christ has been done. The feast of firstfruits, the resurrection of Christ – that has been done. The Feast of Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit to empower the new church – that has been done.

**Other Feasts**

Then you get to the fall of the year, and I just want to mention these in passing, you had three more feasts that the Jewish males were obliged to come to Jerusalem to observe. First was the feast of trumpets; then of atonement; and, then of Tabernacles. The feast of trumpets came first in the fall of the year. It commemorated the return of the Jews to their land from which they had been dispersed. They still don't have full control of their land. They're still debating with the Arabs how much of their land they can keep and how much they had to give up to the enemies of Israel – the descendants of Ishmael. Then came the feast of Atonement; that is, the cleansing of Israel from sin. Israel, as a nation, has not yet been cleansed from sin. This has not taken place. Then came the feast of Tabernacles, which commemorated their millennial blessings – Israel living under the fulfillment of their covenants. This has not taken place. So, the early part (the spring feasts) have been fulfilled. The fall feasts are yet to come.

So, here we came. It's a marvelous, magnificent, terrific new thing: the church; the body of Christ; and, the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the result was that God now comes in, and he begins explaining in detail, how should we now live? And any Christian who does not know how to live under the age of grace, you're going to go down in flames. And that is so sad. The apostle Paul says that the law was just, and holy, and good, but it was weak through the flesh. Nobody could keep it. Suddenly, Jesus Christ has fulfilled every principle of the law, and He says, "Now you are in Me and you fulfill all the principles of the law. Positionally, you're perfect. And now I'm going to show you how, with doctrine stored in your human spirit, and functioning of the Holy Spirit on a moment-by-moment basis, Who dwells you, and the presence of the comfort of God the Son who dwells you, I'm going to show you how you can walk moment-by-moment in righteousness. You don't have to be a pig; you can be a prince or a princess; and, you are the royal family. No other dispensation was able to do that. Tonight, we will begin looking at how to do it. And if you don't know how to do this, take a handkerchief when the rapture takes place, because you're going to stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and you're going to be one of those Christians that Jesus is going to have to come up to you; put His arm around you; and, wipe away your tears, as you realize how you wasted the potential of your life under the power system of grace, and how your focus was all wrong, and how your self-indulgence never caught on that there's a better way.

Also, I must remind you of something else. All of us are always hearing news reports, or in our own experience, that somebody in the prime of life, all of a sudden he dies, and all of a sudden she passes away, and we're all shocked. And I always think to myself, "Now, when that person got up in the morning, and they walked out and proceeded to do this thing and to do that thing in their planning, did it ever occur to them that this is "adios, muchacho day?" If it had, how would they have felt? Yes, and I have seen people, people who are now facing death, or people who have other members of the family who are now facing that. I've seen the agony. I've seen the nervousness. I've seen the discomfort, because I know that these people so well some time, I know that in their mind, I suspect their realization that an opportunity has been blown. It's never going to come back again. We live one day at a time. But when that day is gone, it’s gone forever. Use it. Under the principles of the power of the church age. Please join us for that this evening.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

[**Back to the Colossians index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/colossians.htm)

[**Back to the Bible Questions index**](http://www.christiandataresources.com/allarticles.htm)