

PARACLETE

ADVOCATING FOR THE TRUTH OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH



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Another Paraclete: To Your Advantage

By Dr. Don Bierle, *FaithSearch* President

[Editor's note: Again, we will provide the promised Part 2 of "Is 2022 the Beginning of the End?" after Pentecost, in our next issue.]

The night before His crucifixion, Jesus spent the evening with His apostles, preparing them for their coming crisis of faith, which they would face following His death. One of His primary provisions was the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit:

And 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... He abides with you and will be in you (John 14:16-17).

"Another?" Who was the previous one? According to 1 John 2:1, it was Jesus Himself:

My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

"Advocate" and "Helper" are translated from the same Greek word, **paraclete**, from which we also take the title of this newsletter. It was used in the first century as a legal term – the one who is your representative in court, advocating for your cause. Jesus presently advocates for believers at the throne of God while the Holy Spirit is our advocate (paraclete) here on earth.

God is clearly and constantly "pulling" for us. Jesus even went so far as to say, "it is to your advantage that I go away" (John 16:7) so He could send the Holy Spirit to be in every believer and provide help simultaneously. (See 1 Corinthians 6:19.) Besides, the Holy Spirit's ministry is many-fold, including: inspiration of Scripture



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Woodcut for *Die Bibel in Bildern*, 1860, by German artist Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld. "They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit..." (Acts 2:1-4a)

(John 16:13-15); gifting and maturing believers (1 Corinthians 12:4,11; 2 Corinthians 3:18); and assisting in our mission of reaching the lost by convicting people of their sin (John 16:8).

Pentecost

The Holy Spirit is typically identified with Pentecost which Christians celebrate fifty days after Passover. It is the occasion when Jesus' promise of the indwelling Holy Spirit was fulfilled (Acts 2). In 2022, Pentecost is on June 5.

God established the physical Jewish feasts to have a remarkable anticipation of the subsequent spiritual meaning and understanding of the events. The first day of Passover was the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** since the Jews were required to purge their homes of leaven (identified with impurity). Subsequently, God revealed the spiritual meaning:

Clean out the old leaven [sin from our lives], that you may be a new lump, just as you are in

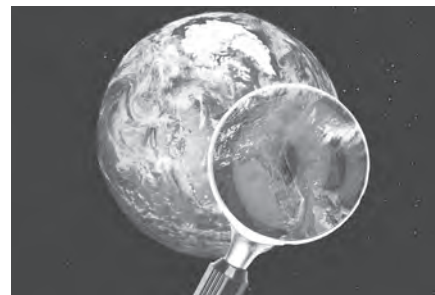
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IN THE NEWS

A Biblical Worldview – Really?

The Family Research Council's Center for Biblical Worldview conducted a nationwide survey of American adults in 2021. A robust 51% of Americans claimed to have a biblical worldview. [A worldview is like a lens consisting of our pre-suppositions, convictions, and values through which we see and understand the world.]

After more vigorous follow-up questions, it was determined that only 6% of those who *claimed* to have a biblical worldview actually hold to one. As examples, the study revealed that only about one-third (33%) of those who claimed a biblical worldview believed that humans are born with a sin nature and can be saved only by Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Fewer than half (47%) believed they will go to heaven after death because they have accepted Christ as Savior.



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A worldview is a "lens" through which we understand and interpret the world.

The results of this study highlight the urgent need for Americans to return to God's Word as the authority in all things. The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy that he should "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

Source: *Answers Magazine*, October-December 2021, p. 42.

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fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed (1 Corinthians 5:7).

Jesus is our “*unleavened bread*” on which we feast. His sacrificial death and shed blood on the cross are what purifies and renders believers unleavened, forgiven of their sins: our Passover (Luke 24:46-47).

The second day after Passover God had instituted the **Feast of First Fruits**:

When you enter the land which I am going to give to you and reap its harvest, then you shall bring in the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord for you to be accepted; on the day after the sabbath the priest shall wave it (Leviticus 23:10-11).

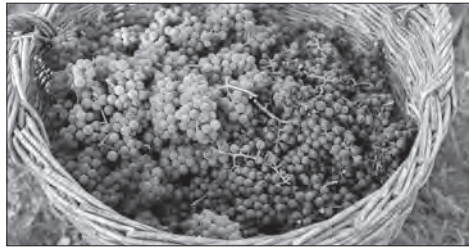
The “*day after the sabbath*” was Sunday when Jesus rose from the dead as the sheaf of first fruits: “*But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep*” (1 Corinthians 15:20). Our faith in the “*sheaf of the first fruits,*” Jesus Christ, which Christians celebrate on **Easter**, makes us acceptable to God.

The expression “*first fruits*” anticipates a full harvest that will come later. Again, God instituted the **Feast of Weeks** fifty days after Passover when the Jews were to present another wave offering in thanksgiving for God’s faithfulness to fulfill the harvest (Leviticus 23:16). God was anticipating what He was going to do fifty days after Passover – **Pentecost** – when the Holy Spirit generated a spiritual harvest of 3,000 who were saved and added to the Church (Acts 2:41).

Sealed and Pledged

Pentecost, then, was a very important historical event. Its spiritual meaning continues to have great significance. We read what accompanies our salvation:

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the Gospel of your salvation – having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise...” (Ephesians 1:13-14).



The first fruits of the harvest were to be presented to God in thanksgiving for His provision of the land, rich in wheat and barley, grape vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil, and honey.

The Romans placed a seal on the tomb of Jesus to indicate their authority and ownership. Each person who repents and embraces Jesus through faith, He “seals” with the indwelling Holy Spirit to mark His possession. They belong to Him.

Since Pentecost the apostle Paul says that the Holy Spirit is given to each of us “*as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory*” (v. 14). When purchasing a home, we are usually required to deposit earnest money as a guarantee that we will return at a future date to complete the purchase. The “*pledge*” in this verse is an earnest, except in this case the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit is God’s earnest. It is God’s guarantee that Jesus will return someday to claim His own and complete our redemption by taking us to be with Him forever.

Living Water

Jesus wanted His gift of the Holy Spirit to be extremely desirable. His invitation is like the discovery of an oasis in the desert by a quenched traveler:

“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. By this He meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were later to receive” (John 7:37-39 NIV).

May we all drink deeply of Jesus’ free and precious gift! 



IN THE NEWS


God’s Creation Denied

The American Medical Association (AMA) urges the **removal of sex designation on birth certificates**. According to them, designating sex at birth “perpetuates a view that sex designation is permanent and fails to recognize the medical spectrum of gender identity.”



The position of the AMA is that every person has the right to determine his or her own gender identity without risk of being stifled or marginalized. Anna Mae Smith, MD, from California, representing the Women Physicians section of the AMA, stated that “gender is not a binary but a spectrum... sex assigned at birth primarily on genitalia is... actively deleterious to their health.”

This is a direct denial and rejection of God’s Word: “*And God created man in His own image... male and female He created them*” (Genesis 1:27). Jesus confirmed this in His ministry when He said, “*Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female...*” (Matthew 19:4)

Would it not be most beneficial to everyone’s health to follow the Manufacturer’s instructions? 

Source: *Answers Magazine*, October-December 2021, p. 41

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