



LEGACY INSTITUTE

P.O. Box 7, Dundee, Ohio 44624

www.legacyinstitute.org

anita_showers@legacyinstitute.org

Bangkok, Thailand

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Dear Fellow-laborers in God's Harvest,

I want to thank all of you for your prayers on our behalf about our house in Dallas. It has finally sold! Gloria is in the US signing papers, moving our things out and putting some items in storage. We will now become full residents of Thailand and devote all our time to God's Work in Asia among the peoples He is calling. We feel, if only just a little, what Abraham must have felt when God told him to leave his home country and travel far away to a new place God would choose. I tell you, it is sobering. And we trust God to take care of us. He always does.

Legacy Institute Leadership Training Centre

Plans are on track for the new school. We now have 4 volunteer instructors coming from the U.S. to teach for one year. We have been sponsoring computer education for Jack Aungmin, one of the Karen members here in Thailand, and he is now at the level that he can help teach the computer classes. Our plan is to teach both Bible and vocational skills (English, Computers, Office Skills, Health & Hygiene, Music, Sports, Vocational Organic Farming, Fish and Poultry Raising, etc.). I will teach the Bible & Leadership classes. The main purpose of the school is to train young leaders to evangelize their own peoples. But we also consider that these young people must earn a living. We need to help provide them a means to do so. For example, even the Apostle Paul was a skilled tent maker and used this vocation to support himself when necessary.

In the past, areas such as Asia and Africa have relied too heavily on outside direction and support for spreading the Word of God. Legacy Institute, on the other hand, encourages our brethren in this part of the world to work toward self-sufficiency and develop a self-sustaining Work that looks directly to Almighty God to provide for their every need.

The mentality of some is that they can't do anything without western money and leadership. I have actually heard one man tell me, "If you provide me with funding, I can then preach the Gospel in *such and such* a place." I told him, "First go and preach the Truth of God. God will then provide you with what you need." What God's people in Asia need is encouragement, education and empowerment. God will take it from there; raise up leadership from their own peoples, and provide for their needs.

Our goal is to open officially around Pentecost this year. Gloria and I will move to Chiang Mai before Passover. In many ways we will be glad to get out of Bangkok. The city is so polluted

and the traffic never seems to stop. The country atmosphere in Chiang Mai will be a much better place to live and teach. Please pray that God blesses this important training center for His Work.

The Passover This Year

The Passover will soon be here. Gloria and I are looking forward to spending Passover and Unleavened Bread in Sri Lanka and India this year. Scattered brethren will be coming together (some for the first time in years) to keep the Spring Holy Days together. We hope to see old friends again and meet new people God is calling.

This is one of the most important ceremonies a true Christian can participate in. Each year we gather to renew our dedication and resolve. But what is it we are rededicating ourselves to? What is it we are resolving to do? Why is the Passover ceremony so important to us? Do we stop and really ponder what each of us is actually participating in? Or do we just get melancholy and sentimental about our sins and consider that our participation in the ceremony somehow “washes us clean” for another year? Perhaps we have been so busy looking inward that we have missed the full meaning and implications of the Passover ceremony.

I remember as a little child going several times to Baptist church services in a little one room, wooden church building on top of a hill. This group called themselves “deep-water” Baptists, giving the impression that they were better Baptists than others because they had been baptized in *deeper water*! Anyway, I always got scared in that place whenever the people would start “*testifyin*”. Grown adults would get up and cry and moan and weep and “testify” about what terrible sinners they were! They would beat their breasts and yell out for Jesus to save them. Other “backsliders” would then get up and start yelling and “testifyin”. The whole place would erupt into bedlam. All I could do was slink down and press my little body deeper into my mother’s side. It was really a scary experience.

Why did those people “testify”? What purpose did it serve? I can only now understand that this all was some sort of a cleansing ceremony, where people felt a lot better after they had confessed their sins before everybody in a public frenzy. Testifyin’ was what some in the Counseling field would call therapeutic. Those people left that little wooden church feeling real good about themselves. They were on some sort of emotional high. At least until next time they got to “backslidin”.

Thinking back on that experience long ago makes me ask the question now, *is this what the true Passover is all about? Does participation in the Passover really cleanse us from the sins of the past year?*

We in the Church of God do not leap up, cry out and “testify” our sins to one another. But do we, none the less, make the Passover an evening of “emotional therapy”? Do we leave the ceremony free of guilt and feeling “clean” once again until the next year? Is this all there is to the Passover ceremony? Absolutely not! There is much more to the Passover than emotional sanitization. In this letter, we will take another look at the Passover Jesus kept with His disciples. Maybe there are some things we can learn that will make this year’s Passover more significant for us than the year before.

Quartodeciman Controversy

The rest of the so-called Christian world doesn't have a clue about observing the Passover, since they abandoned it long ago. One of the most insidious subversions ever perpetrated by Satan the Devil was to foster the observance of Easter Sunday on the Church in place of the true 14 Nissan Passover. One can find extensive historical evidence of this 2nd century controversy (*called the Quartodeciman Controversy*) between the Eastern Church in Asia, which wanted to continue keeping 14 Nissan Passover, and the Western Church centered in Rome, which changed the day of observance to the first Sunday after the full moon succeeding the vernal equinox. They also changed the meaning of the day to commemorate Jesus' resurrection, and not His death.

First, *Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna* and disciple of John the Apostle, went to Rome to contend with Anicetus, that city's bishop. Polycarp was unsuccessful in persuading Anicetus to continue keeping the Passover. The move in Rome was in full swing to divorce Christianity from Judaism and embrace Pagan practices in order to please the people. Later, near the end of the 2nd century, *Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus* and disciple of Polycarp, defended the Passover against the Easter Sunday teachings of Victor, Bishop of Rome. The controversy continued until the matter was settled, at least in the eyes of the false church, by the *Council of Nicea* in 325 AD. At the end of this council, Emperor Constantine of Rome decreed that Christians were to stop "Judaizing" by observing the 14 Nissan Passover, and instead were to observe Easter Sunday. All who did not were to be considered "heretics." But 14 Nissan Passover observance continued in areas of the Eastern part of the empire and other areas outside Roman control. For instance, the Celtic Church of God in England, Ireland and Scotland *continued observing the Sabbath and Passover* until it was finally stamped out by the Catholic Synod of Whitby in 664 AD!

Change Removed the True Meaning

Not only was the change from Passover to Easter Sunday intrinsically evil because it violated God's command, it was insidious because it destroyed the meaning of the day and also removed the important symbols of bread, wine and footwashing entirely from the ceremony!

We are the elect of God. It is important for us that we NEVER stop learning more about the Christ we worship and the Passover ceremony He instituted. Let's now go to the pages of our Bibles and relive the events of Christ's last evening with His disciples.

Jesus knew that He was the fulfillment of the sacrificial Passover lamb (**1 Cor 5:7**) and would have to be killed on the Passover (**Matt 26:13**). It is important to note that the shed blood of the Passover lamb symbolically covered the houses of the Israelites in Egypt during the evening that God executed judgment on Egypt and their gods. When God passed by and saw the blood of the lamb, He "passed over" them. The blood of the lamb *protected them from the judgment of death* (**Ex 12:12-13**). When God executes judgment on humanity for sin, He sees the blood of Jesus the Christ "covering" us, and sin is no longer imputed to us. This is how we escape the "*curse of the law*," (**Gal 3:10**) which is the execution of judgment for breaking God's Law – *eternal death!*

After the incident when Mary of Bethany pours expensive spikenard on Jesus' feet in preparation of his death and burial (**Mark 14:3-9**), Judas departs in disgust to betray Him. Notice that this woman is the only one at that gathering who really believes Jesus when He says He is going to be killed soon (**Matt 26:2-3**).

Jesus commands His disciples to go prepare for the Passover (**Luke 22:7-13**).

Now notice. After they sit down together, what is the very first lesson of the evening? Christ was a teacher. He was continuously teaching His students – His disciples. Since this is the last time He would be with them before His crucifixion, it is reasonable to believe that WHAT he is teaching them is extremely important. So what is the first lesson? A lesson in Godly leadership! (LK 22:24-30) First Jesus explains to them that an appointment to Godly leadership is NOT one of being served, but rather means *servicing others*. The context here indicates that Jesus was serving the food to His disciples as an object lesson. Jesus then states that, BECAUSE *they stuck with Him and participated in His trials*, they were appointed to rule the 12 tribes of Israel.

Each of the disciples had given up their regular lives and vocations to follow Him. They had sacrificed their means of livelihood to serve the Master. They spent 3 ½ years traveling and living with Him under sometimes very difficult circumstances. They endured ridicule and abuse. At times they even had to hide from the authorities. Later, all would endure unbelievable hardship and finally, all except John would be martyred in service to Jesus.

An appointment by God to be a Christian means SERVICE to others and it means SACRIFICE of the self. The first part of the ceremony that we perform is the FOOTWASHING, which symbolizes this attitude of sacrifice of the self and service to our fellowman. Isn't it interesting that footwashing comes first before the taking of the wine and bread?

Do We Pursue Riches or the Kingdom of God?

Remember the story of the rich man in **Matt 19**. The rich man came to Christ and asked him what he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus told him that he was to keep the commandments of God. The rich man told Jesus he had done this from his youth. Jesus said to him, "*If you will be perfect, go and sell what you have and give it to the poor, and you shall have treasures in heaven; and come and follow me.*" This was a clear APPOINTMENT or SUMMONS to discipleship. But what did the rich man do? He refused the appointment. He went away sorrowful because he couldn't give up his riches. He was unable to part with his physical wealth and position in order to become a Servant of the Lord. Jesus then told the disciples that it would be extremely difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom.

The disciples were astonished. If a rich man could scarcely enter the Kingdom, where did that leave them? The disciples had the same mistaken understanding many of us do today. We see people in the Church who are "successful" according to the standards of this world. They have nice homes, nice cars, nice looking kids, good educations and hold important positions earning plenty of money. People look up to them and envy them. We say to ourselves, "That is because they are righteous and God has blessed them with all these things because of it". By the same token, some have the human tendency to look down on the person who is poor with many trials and troubles and say, in our hearts, "They are poor and have many problems because they are sinners". But neither of these human-reasoned judgments is necessarily true. God does not look on outward appearance to judge righteousness. Neither should we.

The disciples saw this young, rich, successful man and considered him righteous because of his wealth. But Jesus then said a rich man such as this could hardly enter the Kingdom of God! Why? Because the rich trust in their riches more than in God. They identify too closely with the physical trappings of their success. God is a jealous God. We cannot serve both God and the pursuit of worldly wealth and position (**Matt 6:21-24**).

Then Peter said, "*We have forsaken all and followed you, what shall we receive?*" Jesus now took the opportunity to explain a very important principle to the disciples, and if we have ears to

hear, to us also. He explains to them that *nothing they give up in order to do the Work of the Gospel can compare with what they will receive in return for their sacrifice*. For the 12, it was ruling the tribes of Israel in the World Tomorrow. He also tells them that they would receive manifold, *IN THIS LIFE*, what they gave up! And in the next -- *ETERNAL LIFE*. Mark adds that their rewards in this life would not come without persecutions.

Our society teaches just the opposite. Our society measures success in terms of accumulation of wealth and what position in society we achieve. For many, and I mean *MANY IN GOD'S CHURCH*, the pursuit of "success" in accordance with the world's definition supercedes the importance of accomplishing the Work of God! Some are so busy pursuing "success" that they lose the perspective of *WHY* we are called *NOW*, in this age, in the first place! As a result, we have many, *IN THE CHURCH*, who are enslaved financially and philosophically to a value system and lifestyle that can never compare to the rewards of service to Jesus Christ.

Remember what Elisha said to his servant Gehazi after Gehazi had taken the clothing and silver from Naaman the Syrian:

"Is it a time to receive money and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and manservants, and maidservants?" (2Kings 5)

The point I am making is that the disciples "bought into" service to Jesus Christ, no matter what the cost. If this meant giving up all that they had and suffering persecutions in order to do it, so be it. Jesus, at the first New Testament Passover ceremony said, *"but you are they which have continued with me in my temptations"*. He told Peter that if he wouldn't permit Him to wash his feet, *"you will have no part with me"*.

The Passover is much more than just an introspective evaluation of our sinning natures. While this is important, it is more important that we understand the big picture of why we are taking the Passover in the first place. When we take the Passover this year, and kneel down to wash each other's feet, let's remember that we are participants and fellow-laborers with Jesus Christ in the Work that He is accomplishing on the earth today. We have become bond-slaves to each other and to those God is choosing to call *NOW* and others He will call in the near future! We are bound together with Christ to do this Work of Redemption, no matter what sacrifice we are required to make. Our own selfish pursuits must take second place.

Summoned to Join Jesus in His Work

We are not just called to save ourselves. We are called to help Jesus save **EVERYBODY ELSE!!** **Hebrews 3:1** explains, *"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus"*.

We are not just in this for our own salvation. Rather, we are *partners* with Christ, *partakers of the heavenly calling*. It is our *profession*! Now look at the next verse. The reason we are to consider Jesus is because He was *faithful* to the One who *appointed* Him. Are we faithful to the One who appointed us? Have we, fully and without reservation, "bought into" what Jesus is accomplishing in this age, at this time? If not, we have a lot of examining to do before we take the Passover this year. If we are only *spectators*, we are not *partakers*!

Now look at **Romans 8:28-29**:

*“ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who **are the called** according to His purpose. For whom He did **foreknow**, He also did **predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son**, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”*

What a statement that is! Another word for a calling is a “*summons*.” We are summoned to accomplish God’s purpose. God watched us. He knew us before -- he “*foreknew*” us. He then summoned us to accomplish His purpose. He predetermined (“*predestined*”) that we would be conformed to the image of His Son so that He would have many brethren.

Bread and Wine

Now what happens when we take the bread and wine? After Jesus washed the disciples feet, He gave the sop of bread to Judas Iscariot, indicating which DISCIPLE would betray him. Satan entered Judas and he departed. Jesus washed Judas’ feet also, but Judas did not participate in the next 2 parts of the New Testament Passover ceremony – the bread and wine.

Then Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it and gave it to the disciples, saying, “*This is my body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me*” (**Luke 22:19**). By participating in this part of the ceremony, we symbolically share in eating the broken body of Christ.

Next Jesus takes a cup of wine, blesses it and passes it around so that all drink from the same cup. He tells them, “*Drink ye all of it. For this is my blood of the covenant which is shed for many unto remission of sins*” (**Matt 26:27-28**). By doing this, we symbolically share in drinking the blood of Jesus Christ as participants in the covenant with Him, *and* we share in His Great Work to bring the True knowledge of this covenant to others.

At the Passover, we eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus Christ. The symbolism should not be lost on us. The Old Testament Passover lamb in Egypt was to be consumed in it’s entirety and *nothing* was to be left until morning. We are to completely *ingest* Jesus Christ into our very beings. We are to become like Him. We are to BE what He is. We are to DO what He does.

Notice in **John 7** that, unless we eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, we have no life in us. But if we do this, then we dwell in Christ and He dwells in us. We participate fully and completely in Jesus’ life; in Jesus’ Work. We become more CONFORMED TO HIS IMAGE! We become full participants in the Work of the Family of God.

What an incredible calling we have been given!

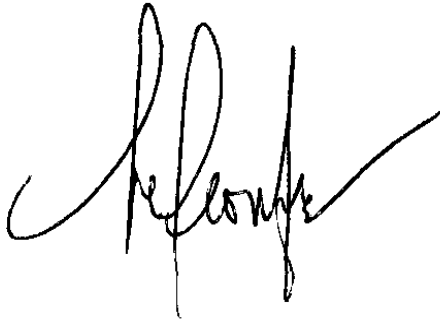
If we understand that participation in the Passover ceremony means that we are rededicating our lives, not just to obedience to God’s Laws, but to actual participation as full partners with Jesus Christ as part of the God Family, it changes the way we look at the Passover, and it changes our lives forever.

This year, let’s let Jesus know that we really want to be a part of what He is doing. Let Him know that we want to give up all our selfish, self-seeking attitudes toward His people, *even if they are in a different fellowship!* Let’s resolve to lay aside our petty differences and get on with His Work. When we wash each other’s feet – drink the wine and eat the unleavened bread; let’s remember that He is now part of us and that we are part of Him; full partners and participants; all together in the Work of the Almighty God, a Work that is *far from over*.

Jesus said we are to work while it is day; that night is soon coming when no man can work. Let's all resolve to work together with Jesus Christ to accomplish what He called us to accomplish BEFORE the great- prophesied darkness falls upon the lost sheep of God.

I want to thank all of you for your CONTINUAL prayers on Gloria's and my behalf. We are making a big move and there is a lot of GOD'S Work yet to be done. Let's all become more committed to the Work that is yet ahead, no matter what it takes, and no matter what sacrifices we will be required to make. We love and thank you all.

Until next time,
In service to the King of Kings,



Leon Sexton

WHAT IS LEGACY INSTITUTE?

LEGACY INSTITUTE is a private, non-profit, charitable foundation and is not affiliated with any human church organization. Legacy Institute seeks to serve and help mankind in the spirit and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. His instructions were to freely give. This means without discrimination and without prejudice. Your donations to Legacy Institute are tax deductible in the USA.

P.S. Gloria's father, Mr. Jebens, has miraculously improved. Mr. and Mrs. Jebens have deeply appreciated everyone's prayers very much and would like to be further remembered for a complete healing.

P.S.S. Some of you have inquired regarding the previous prayer request of Dina Hibbs. She is still quite sick and according to her doctors her outlook is bleak. Our Heavenly Father is a merciful Father. Please pray earnestly for her.