

Exod 03-06-29b

We are ready now to resume our study. We spent our first session this morning looking at the third chapter of Colossians that talks about the importance of our heavenly citizenship, of setting our minds and our sights on things above, not on things on the earth, and the reflection of that attitude and the reflection of that viewpoint in our interpersonal relationships. It specifically, and in some detail, shows us how this ought to work itself out with one another, between believers.

And he says in verse 16 of Colossians chapter 3, Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you. We can learn the word of God, we can understand the word of God, we can rightly divide the word of truth, and yet not have it dwell richly in us. What does it mean to dwell richly? It means that it is an active part of our thinking, that it is an active part of our strategy and our evaluation, the way we implement our lives and ourselves.

It says, With all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. The difficulty we have is in receiving admonishment. It's no fun to be corrected.

It's no fun to have our shortcomings pointed out. It's a hard thing, some of us more than others, to accept even well-meaning and up-building type of correction. We just don't like to be found in a fault.

But notice that it says, Teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. So does this mean when you see someone malfunctioning, you should go up and sing them a little tune? What it does mean is that we don't necessarily, as fellow congregation members, for example, or as fellow family members, we don't just come up and start rebuking, correcting and instructing. That is the job of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

It is the Word of God that is a judge or critic of the thoughts and intents of the heart, not our fellow believers. I cannot judge the thoughts and intents of anyone's heart but my own. The light that God's Word sheds enables us to judge ourselves so that we will not be judged.

It doesn't say judge one another that you not be judged, does it? So what does it mean when it says, Teaching and admonishing each other? Well, what does a song or a hymn or a spiritual song do? It brings up principles, promises, doctrines, truths of the Word of God in a context outside the teaching of the pastor or the meditation on Scripture. It is an avenue of suggesting doctrinal thoughts, spiritual perceptions in a non-threatening context. We have the opportunity at the beginning of our worship to sing songs and we all contribute to those suggestions.

We see who has a song that might be on their heart and it doesn't mean that they're thinking, Well, I think old so-and-so needs to hear Trust and Obey. Let's sing Trust and Obey so that they'll be more faithful. But it is the natural work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts as a part of our fellowship to unconsciously, in most cases, guide us to share with one another truths.

We may never know that some question that we asked or some observation we made or the way that something affected our thinking is beneficial to another believer who might have been struggling or who hadn't recently thought of that. God the Holy Spirit can implant that concept and bring it to the fore and use it for comfort and for encouragement and even for correction. So this idea is that songs and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God, this doesn't say singing with judgment in your hearts toward one another.

It doesn't say singing with a sharp critical eye on one another. This is thankfulness to God and it is the natural outworking, the natural expression of our own personal growth in the enjoyment and the singing of songs and hymns and spiritual songs. Notice these are not necessarily praise and worship songs that have three lines that repeat over and over again.

Patty and I subjected ourselves to some Christian programming last night and I was watching it like holding my hand over a flame trying to figure out what is it about this that just is so hard for me to watch much less participate and enjoy. And my conclusion is, and this is not any great deep insight, but it just seems to make much more of an issue out of the experience of the singing and the experience of the worship hour and the experience that the worship team can create. We have a good singer and a big backup choir and they're all swaying and when they get to a particularly profound point while they'll all crouch at the knees while they're singing, hug their elbows together and just really squeeze out that note or that lyric and you find yourself completely occupied with the performance and with the performers and having a hard time focusing on whatever content there might be in the songs.

Worship is a focusing of attention, is it not? That's what worship is. If someone says, oh, she worships the ground he walks on, that means she thinks about him all the time. She's a teenager in love or something and she just, to worship something or worship someone in the secular sense of it means you really devote a lot of time and attention in thinking about that person.

Worship is the focus of attention. And whatever may be said and whatever may be intended and whatever may be advertised as you sit through various forms of what is passing today for praise and worship, ask yourself, where is my attention focused here? Am I focused on my own feelings? Am I being consciously buoyed up on a wave of emotion and a wave of sentiment and a wave of musical embellishment and performance where everyone is trying to give me an experience? Or is my attention genuinely focused on God? And for most of us, a good, clear rendition of a fine, standard old hymn like A Mighty Fortress Is Our God or Trust and Obey or He Hideth My Soul in the Cleft of the Rock, the Old Rugged Cross, the standard hymns that you find in a good... You know what surprises me? Inspiring Hymns is the hymnal that was used in most of the churches where I grew up. And that thing was ubiquitous.

You could find it everywhere. It was universal in the standard old hymns and the standard old hymnals. You just couldn't swing a cat without hitting one.

Now, we were looking for some hymnals for some people who worship with us. And you cannot

find those. You can't dig them up.

I am pretty good at searching the Internet. They are not to be found. Nobody is selling them on eBay.

Nobody is selling them used. Nobody carries them new. You have to wait for a church to upgrade to their praise and worship hymnal and throw away the ones they've got back in the choir practice room to get any.

And it's a shame. The singing and worship in the standard old hymns is slowly dying away, being replaced by much shallower, more performance and performer-oriented songs. Well, that's my little soapbox speech for today.

Because it's in our passage. Singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Not with thankfulness in your hearts to the orchestra or the praise team or the great soloist.

Not because there's words up on the screen with an overhead projector and a multimedia presentation and a full orchestra with drums and violins. It's thankfulness in your hearts to God. And it is much easier.

There's nothing wrong with accompaniment. Accompaniment is great. When Miriam is going to sing after they get to the other side of the Red Sea, they're going to have timbrels.

They're going to play the harp. David accompanied himself with a harp. Accompaniment is great.

We're not of those who think you've got to only sing a cappella. But there is a point at which you can overwhelm a song and its lyrics and its praise to God with the performance. And when that happens, we are no longer functioning under the Word of Christ richly dwelling within us.

We are instead engaging in the ways of the world where it's all about raising your lighter and saying, Give me another experience. I really enjoyed that song. Play it again.

And it's all about me and I. Well, okay, I'm off that subject now. Verse 17, Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. This is a great reminder that our prayer is addressed through Christ to God the Father.

There is not a day that goes by that I do not hear in the context of my job and in the context of what I listen to, I heard it this morning before church, someone praying a prayer and then saying, In your holy name we pray, Amen. And praying to the Lord Jesus. That is not the biblical model.

It's not the biblical pattern. The Bible does not teach praying to Jesus. You will not find any prayer addressed to the Lord Jesus whatsoever.

You will never see someone praying to Jesus anywhere in the Bible unless Jesus is in view. If

someone's talking to Jesus, they can see Him. People say, Oh no, you're wrong, Sam, because I go over to Acts and when Stephen is being stoned, he prays to Jesus.

He says, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. See, he's praying to Jesus. Jesus is standing at the right hand of the Father in full view of Stephen when he makes that statement.

And that's not any different than Simon Peter saying, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. If Jesus is there, you can speak to Him. If He reveals Himself and you see His face, talk away.

But prayer is addressed to the Father. The model prayer that Jesus gave His disciples, He said, When you pray, pray thus, Our Father. He didn't say, When I have gone away, pray to Me.

He says, Our Father. We pray to the Father. It's addressed to the Father in the name of the Son by the power of the Spirit.

And all legitimate prayer is that way. And I am sure that God hears the ignorant prayers of those of us who have failed to observe that teaching of Scripture, but do not be unaware. You know how Paul used to say, I would not have you unaware, brethren.

Well, I would not have you unaware that God the Father is our God. It is Him to whom we have been brought. What did Jesus say in John 14, 6? I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No man cometh to the Father but by Me. Prayer is the same as our salvation, the same as our relationship with God. It is by Christ with the Father.

That's what it says here. Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. You would think if anyone is worthy of thanks, it's the Lord Jesus.

He came and died for us. He has done so much for us. He has united us with Himself.

We are His body, His bride, His church. He is the head of all things to the church. Wouldn't there be a passage somewhere that says, Give thanks to the Lord Jesus Christ? What does Paul say throughout his prayers? Look at the prayers of Paul every single time.

I thank the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Constantly, his prayer is to God the Father. Every place you find any mention of prayer in the New Testament is addressed to God the Father.

So hopefully we've got that squared away. Whatever you do in word or deed, do it as unto the Father. Now this is repeated further down.

After you get through the wives and husbands and children and fathers and slaves, what does it say in verse 23 of Colossians 3? Whatever you do, do your work heartily. If you have a New King James, it says, Whatever you do, do it heartily as to the Lord and not to men. One of the reasons I read this to you in the New American Standard today is, In Greek, this is, Which of

course means probably nothing to you.

Aeon is therefore. And in Greek, it doesn't come as the first word, it comes as the second. That's just the funny way Greeks talk.

So hapoete, that's whatever you do. Poieo is to make or to do. It is the standard word for work or accomplishment.

Whatever you accomplish, whatever you do, whatever you perform, therefore. Then it says, Do you recognize that word? What is that? We get the word psycho or the prefix psycho, psychology. Ology is the study or the knowledge of something.

Knowledge of the soul. Psychology claims to teach all about your human soul. All about your human thinking.

But this is, We know what ek means, right? Out from, out of, out from. So from a soul of some sort. And then we have this word, Ergozeste.

Ergozeste. And this is the word that, Ergozomai is the root of it. Ergoz, we used to have a machine at the boathouse when I was at the Naval Academy and rowing crew.

That was a giant flywheel. Great, big, heavy, I don't know if it was made of concrete or what, but a giant flywheel like a mill wheel that was mounted horizontally like a turntable underneath this machine that had a seat and had a rowing, the handle of an oar attached to it. You sit in this sliding seat.

It simulates being in a shell, a crew shell, the boat, as it were. And you've got your sliding seat and you've got this oar handle. And you row, and instead of rowing against the resistance of the water and pulling the weight of the other oarsmen and the coxswain and the boat through the water, you're rowing against this flywheel, and you're making it turn, and there is an adjustable resistance.

And it's measured in stone, kind of the old English way, 14 pounds to a stone, and so you set it to your body weight. And that machine has a counter that says, how many revolutions of this giant flywheel have you accomplished within a set period of time? It is a measure of the work that you can perform as an oarsman. What is your body conditioning? If you do a 7-minute or a 10-minute or a 14-minute session on here at your body weight or at some other designated weight, how many revolutions can you achieve pulling against that resistance? The name of the machine is an ergometer.

Ergometer. Meter means to measure. Ergos, work.

It's a work measurer. And so if you're competing for a seat in the varsity boat and all other things being equal, the coach might say, well, let's have you row an ergo. Go sit on the ergometer, and we'll set you for 10 minutes at body weight, and let's see how you do.

Let's see what your ability to exert force on the boat really is. An ergometer, a measure of work. Well, our daily life is an ergometer.

Our work is measured against the standard of the Word of God. It's not measured against the standard of human opinion. It's not measured against the standard of how good we feel when we finish.

Any more than praise and worship is measured against the standard of how good people feel when they get all finished. That's not the measure. The measure is did it reflect the glory of God? Did it acknowledge God on high and bring His glory to view in our souls? So it says, whatever you do, do it from a soul that is working as unto the Lord.

This is engaging in an activity. The lexicon will tell you *ergozomai*, engage in an activity that involves effort or work. It means to be active.

It's used for working with one's hands. In 1 Corinthians 4.12, we toil working with our own hands. When reviled, we blessed, and so on.

Paul is talking about his efforts as an apostle. 1 Thessalonians 4.11 uses the same word. Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you.

Our life as believers is one of *ergozomai*. Now the o-m-a-i ending on a Greek word gives it a reflexive idea. You often find these in the middle voice.

This is in the middle voice. Active voice means I'm going to perform an action on the direct object. All of us remember English, diagramming a sentence, subject, verb, object, right? Direct object.

I hit the ball. If it's a passive construction, we can say I was hit by the ball. The subject receives the action of the verb instead of the object receiving it.

In Greek, there is a third way of constructing things. It's the middle voice. The middle voice means I do something on behalf of myself that involves some... It's in the middle between an active and a passive.

That's the easiest way I can explain it in a short amount of time. That's what we have here. So it's kind of the idea of work yourselves.

You're going to do work in an arena. You're going to perform actions, but it's *ergozomai*. You perform the work yourself.

You work yourself on behalf of this effort. So work yourself. It doesn't really say do it heartily.

It says whatever you do from a soul of working yourself. It involves effort, *ergozomai*, to work, to be busy, to do or accomplish, to carry out from a soul working as to the Lord and not to men.

What we do, we do it as unto the Lord.

What does the Lord think of my effort? What does the Lord think of my attitude? I am exerting myself. I am working, but I am doing it in the light of the Lord's observation. In 1 Samuel, we have reached the point in chapter 2 where it describes the young Samuel in Shiloh serving the Lord before Eli.

It doesn't say he's serving Eli. It says he is serving the Lord before Eli. Now who's his daily boss? Samuel, carry out these ashes.

Samuel, polish up that brass thing over there. Samuel, pick up those scraps that my big old sons left after they finished their illegal meal. Samuel, light those lamps.

Who's giving him his instructions and deciding whether or not he has adequately done it? It's Eli. But the Bible says Samuel served the Lord before Eli. Whatever we do, when it says do it heartily as unto the Lord, it says serve the Lord in what you do, with your eyes on the Lord, not on men.

Even if you have human evaluators, even if you have human oversight and human organization over you, it is to the Lord that we do each thing. You can fold the clothes as to the Lord. You can wash the dishes as unto the Lord.

You can engage in whatever daily mundane activity as unto the Lord. So when it says do it heartily, that doesn't really catch the meaning. It doesn't mean be vivacious and be energetic.

It means look at the work as something God has asked you to do in your soul, from a soul that works itself as unto the Lord. That's the best way I can translate this. Whatever you do, do it from a soul that works itself as to the Lord.

It is as though God came and asked me, would you make this sacrifice? Would you engage in this labor? Would you live through this situation? Would you put up with this circumstance? Would you forbear with this wayward child? Would you forbear with this believer who is malfunctioning? Would you follow this leaky diaper spiritual toddler around and help them, be patient with them, forbear, forgive? This is what God has asked us to do. Can we do that with a soul that works itself as unto the Lord? Now, why are we even talking about this? Return with me now to Exodus chapter 12. We have already seen the mighty hand of deliverance that God has used to bring about the removal of His people from Egypt to put their feet on the road to the promised land.

I want you to look just quickly at verse 23. There is something we want to note here with the blood of the Passover lamb. It says in verse 23, the reason you need to do this sacrifice of the Paschal lamb, the lentil, the doorposts, because the Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians.

We talked about that word strike used of God. When He sees the blood on the lentil and on the

two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your house to strike. And it's that very same word again for strike, nagaf, to strike.

But notice, who is looking at the blood? Is it the destroyer? We assume this is a destroying angel. Who evaluates the blood? That responsibility is not delegated to the destroyer. This is God Himself.

And you get the idea that God comes and looks. God decides. God judges.

And then details those who will carry out either deliverance or judgment. We talked about the fire that burns without consuming in some cases. When we looked at Acts chapter 2, the day of Pentecost, there is a fire like the fire of the burning bush we saw here in Exodus, like the fire that descends onto the heads of those at Pentecost, that burns without consuming.

It is a holy fire. It is a baptism of fire that reflects God's glory and His righteousness and His perfection and His power. And it is extraordinary because it is not a destructive fire.

But there is also a fire from God that does consume and that does destroy. God Himself is described as a consuming fire. God can come and either deliver or destroy.

God does the evaluating. This word for destruction or destroyer here is from the Hebrew word Shakat. S-H-A-C-H-A-T Now, I want to show you something.

Shakat is the verb. We talked about this before. I am slowly, without your knowledge, teaching you Hebrew.

Do you remember how we make a noun out of a verb in Hebrew? What is a common way that that happens? We put the letter M in front, don't we? And you have Mame is a preposition that means from. And so when you get from the action of the verb, that becomes the noun. So what do you think the word for destroyer is if destroying and corrupting and ruining is the verb Shakat? It's M-S-H-A-K-A-T.

And the interesting thing to me about this is it is a word play. Who is the Anointed One in Israel? Who is the Savior and Deliverer of Israel? The word to anoint is Mashach. And the Mashiach is the Anointed One.

You have M-S-H-C-H. Mashach. Well, on the same page of the lexicon with Mashach is Mashkit.

Formed from a different process and from a different verb, but the consonants are the same. It can either be the Mashiach or it can be the Mashkit that comes to us, either the Deliverer or the Destroyer. And I think of all of the possible words in Hebrew when God talks about the Destroyer and He uses Shakat and the noun from it, it echoes and uses, it's just a slight variation of the very same letters that make up Mashiach, the Anointed One, the Savior and Deliverer.

You either have Mashiach or you have Mashkit, which is M-A-S-H-C-H-I-T. Mashkit. I find that

quite interesting.

And you'll find this word for destroying going all the way back to chapter 6 of Genesis. You find it in the situation with Lot, not so much the word as the concept. God comes down with the two angels and visits Abraham and He says, I'm going to go see this report that has come up to me about Sodom and Gomorrah.

God comes and looks at the status of things, and then the two angels deliver Lot and his daughters and also seem to be involved in the destruction of the city. Their actions are coordinated with the fire and brimstone that destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. But you can see God doing the judging and then detailing angels who carry out the destruction.

This is true at the threshing floor of Arana. It is the destroyer, and this Mashkit word is used, of the destroying angel that was sent to destroy Jerusalem until God looked down and had compassion and said, stop. And the destroying angel, the Mashkit, has stopped over the threshing floor of Arana, or Ornan, depending on whether you read it in Chronicles or the parallel account.

So this is the idea here. There is a destroyer detailed by God, and God will not allow the destroyer to enter. When God sees the blood, what is the application for us? We go back to 1 John chapter 1, verse 7. If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship each with the other, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son keeps on cleansing us from all sin.

If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. What happens in your life and in my life if we fail to apply the blood? Discipline will follow. An unrepentant heart and a pattern of non-confession, not addressing and acknowledging and seeking to get over our failures, will result in the destroyer coming in.

This happened in Israel. There is a destroyer that comes into the camp, and they are destroyed by the destroyer. I'll just give you one quick example so that we don't run out of time.

1 Corinthians 10, verse 10. Paul is talking to the Corinthians, and remember that letter begins, I hear that there are divisions among you, it should not be so. Some say, I'm of Paul, I'm of Apollos, and so on.

Paul, talking to the Corinthians, says, These Old Testament examples are examples for us. These things became our examples, 1 Corinthians 10, verse 6, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. This reminds us of our scripture reading this morning in Colossians 3. Those examples ought to warn us and keep us from committing idolatry.

Do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, the people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play. Nor let us commit sexual immorality.

This is pornia, faithlessness. It is not limited to sexual immorality. We tend to say, oh, well, I don't have that problem, and then we dismiss the passage.

It is faithlessness. These are promise breakers, covenant breakers. When you commit fornication, you are sinning against a future potential spouse.

When you commit adultery, you are sinning against an existing spouse with whom you have a covenant, and you break that covenant. The sin is not in the physical act. It is in the violation of the trust and violation of the command of God that manifests faithlessness.

That is what pornia really is. It is promise breaking. It is covenant breaking.

Nor let us commit pornia as some of them did. In one day, 23,000 fell. These are 23,000 people who left Egypt with the blood still wet on their doorposts, aren't they? Believers can fall.

Nor let us tempt Christ as some of them also tempted and were destroyed by serpents. Nor complain as some of them also complained and were what? Destroyed by the destroyer. God sent the same destroyer that marched through Egypt on his own people.

Do not think that because we are saved, we have some magic protection, some lucky rabbit's foot that our salvation will prevent the judgment of God or the consequences of that judgment. This is why the church doesn't understand Romans chapter 2. We think, well, if any man be in Christ, all things are passed away. There is therefore now no condemnation.

There is condemnation unless you walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. We talked on the break about Romans 8, 1 and the text problem that's there. Some texts leave out that qualifying phrase.

There is therefore now no condemnation in Christ Jesus. If you look at a New American Standard, it takes out the rest of the verse. But it's there.

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. If you walk after the flesh, there is condemnation. And the destroyer, the mashkit, the same one that slew Pharaoh's oldest son, can come in and wreak havoc among the people of God.

All these things happened to them as examples. They were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Well, in the few minutes we have left here, I do want to get back and make my point from Exodus chapter 13.

Exodus chapter 13. It actually begins in 12.33-41, which we looked at a little bit last time. It talks about the fact that they are to leave and take their flocks and herds.

The Egyptians send them out of the land in haste. In verse 33, the people took their dough before it was leavened, and having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders. We see bread and leaven figuring in this story, don't we? What does bread symbolize? What does bread represent for us? We talked about it at the very beginning of our service this morning.

We nourish our souls on the bread of God's Word. And throughout the Bible, bread is a symbol of the nourishment of God's Word. The Lord Jesus is the Word of God incarnate.

And Jesus said, unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood, you have no part with me. You're not worthy to be my disciple. You can't follow unless you eat the flesh.

Unless you partake of God's Word is what it's talking about there. He's not saying we should be cannibals. The children of Israel did according to the Word of the Lord.

So in verses 33-41 here of Exodus 12, we have an emphasis on the plundering of the Egyptians, the gold and the silver, the assets that they obtain, and on the unleavened bread with which they leave. Right? It also tells us that it was exactly 430 years that they dwelt in Egypt. This is 430 years from the coming down of Jacob with his sons in the days of Joseph until they depart.

It doesn't necessarily mean 430 years of bondage. This is the total time. And we could go do the calculations.

You'll just have to take that by faith for now. 430 years that they dwelt in Egypt. They got 430 years of total time.

The last 215 years of that, the last half, was slavery. The Lord gave them favor in the sight of the Egyptians and they had this plunder. What is that plunder going to be used for? We'll see later on in Exodus.

It's going to be used for the work of the Lord. It's going to build the tabernacle and all of its accouterments. It's not just personal wealth.

They journeyed from Ramesses to Sukkot, the place of dwelling. Sukkot means booths. A mixed multitude went with them, flocks and herds.

Look at verse 39. They baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provision for themselves. The point here is they don't bring the leaven of Egypt with them.

They don't bring that which was fermented and that which came to completion in Egypt with them. And they start out with new bread that doesn't have... Leaven had to be left around for a while. And leaven is a representation of sin and they leave it behind.

There's a practical reason for it, but there's a symbolic reason for it. They leave it behind. They don't bring the leaven, but they do bring the treasure.

What does this tell us? There are things from the unbelieving world. There are things from our unsaved past. There are things from the human realm of our spiritual life that we bring into our spiritual existence.

And there's other things we leave behind. We have to know the difference. There are assets, there are experiences, there are pieces of knowledge that we have as believers that come from our unsaved life or come from the ways of the world.

And it is something that we can use in the service of the Lord, like the plunder of the Egyptians. There are other things that partake of sin, like the leaven, and that we leave behind, that we purge out and separate from. Does it make sense? You see them coming out of Egypt, and there's some parts of Egypt they absolutely leave behind.

That's the leaven. There are other things they bring with them that was given to them by God for a spiritual purpose, that they bring with them. That's the first point.

Then, in verses 42 through 51, we have the Passover remembrance rehearsed once again. We've already had a lot of instruction about the Passover, but now it says, at the end of the 430 years, on that very same day, it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord, the hosts of the Lord, the children of Israel, went out from the land of Egypt. It was a night of solemn observance to the Lord for bringing them out of the land of Egypt.

This is the night of the Lord, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations. They are to memorialize it. Here's a question for you that we'll try to address when we get to our Friday night class in Acts.

Why is it that the birthday of Israel, the Passover, is commemorated year by year with a ceremonial observance, with a sacrifice, and that was the beginning of their national existence, the birth of the people of God in that sense? Our birthday as the church on the day of Pentecost is not commanded to be remembered and observed. We don't have a command every Pentecost to get together and have some sort of memorial to the dispersion of the flaming tongues. I'll leave you to chew on that until we get to Friday night.

And we don't have time now to cover the rest of what I have prepared here. I will give it to you in summary, and then I'll give you a little bit more detail next time because it is important. All of what we have seen from Colossians chapter 3, from 1 Corinthians chapter 10, in terms of remembering our heavenly citizenship and remembering the purpose for which we do what we do, we do it from a soul that does its work as unto the Lord, that works itself before God and not before men.

God gives three memorial observances to the Israelites here in this section. The first one is the Passover remembrance. We saw it all through chapter 12.

It's summarized in verses 42 through 51. It says no foreigners are to observe it. If they're uncircumcised, they can't observe the Passover.

It is only for Israel. If you want to observe the Passover, you've got to be circumcised. What does that mean? It means you have to join Israel.

You have to get yourself some citizenship in Israel to observe the Passover. It is only for the people of God. That's observance number one, memorial number one.

You partake of the covenant. The circumcision, Genesis 17, it is the sign of the covenant, right? That's memorial observance number one. Every year, year by year, observe the Passover.

Observance number two is the dedication of the firstborn. This is chapter 13, verse 1 through 10. The Passover spared the firstborn, right? The firstborn are representative of the whole household in the same way that the Lord Jesus Christ as the second Adam, the last Adam, is representative of the whole human race.

He is God's only begotten Son. He is the Son of Man. He is the firstborn of all creation.

And He stands in for all of us. The firstborn is representative, especially when there is a new thing. The firstfruits represent a new crop.

They represent a new herd. They represent a new line if you're in the agricultural or agronomic world. Chapter 13, the Lord spoke to Moses saying, Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel.

Well, what is the application? Are we supposed to pay special attention to the firstborn today? Well, what does it mean when you consecrate the firstborn? The firstborn son? That's the beginning of your family, the beginning of your next generation, isn't it? The firstborn of the flock, the firstfruits of your crops. This is the beginning of something, isn't it? And at the beginning, what do we do at the beginning of something? We sit down and try to make a plan. At least we should.

We should have a strategy. We should have priorities. We should assign values.

We estimate the worth and the way something is going to be implemented. And we decide what its purpose and its goal is. When you start an organization... I started a club one time and I had a bunch of stuff because there were people around that were involved in Amway.

And so we said, We've got all this stuff we can use for our flags and our badges and we have all this stuff that has the Amway logo. So we need to think up something. We need a name for our club where we can convert.

And so we called it the Amorphous Club. Amorphous, you know, formless, never knowing where it's going to be. It's shapeless.

And see, now we can say it's the amorphous way. It's a way that's not defined. And of course, the club never got off the ground.

You have to have a purpose. You have to have a goal. You have to have something outlined.

And when something begins, the beginning of a family, when you take the firstborn and

dedicate it to the Lord, you're saying this family, all of the family, whatever follows... Remember what he says? If the firstfruits are holy, so is the rest of it. Paul argues in Romans, he says if the firstfruits are holy, all the rest of it's holy. When you dedicate the firstborn, you're dedicating all of that thing.

When you dedicate the firstfruits, you're dedicating all of that. You're recognizing God's place. That is their second memorial.

As they leave Egypt, they are to remember how their deliverance was accomplished in the Passover. They are to remember the dedication of the firstborn, that that means they live in a new way. Every new thing that they do, every new thing that they acquire is to be dedicated to the Lord.

And then thirdly, they have the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And that's given in 13.1-10. The firstborn is rehearsed again in 13.11-16. And these are listed and given in an order. We have the Passover.

Then we have the purging of the leaven and the observance of firstfruits, purging out the leaven, a reminder of getting rid of those old things and dedication, righteousness to God. And then finally, the dedication of the firstborn, establishing our policies, our priorities, our goals, and implementing our values as dedicated to the Lord. Colossians 3.23, you can make a note in terms of the principle of dedication of the firstfruits.

Colossians 3.23, whatever you do, do it from a soul that is working itself unto God and not unto men. We have the responsibility to remind ourselves where we came from and where we are going in each new thing that we engage, each new endeavor that we undertake. We can do these same three areas of dedication.

Whatever we do, we don't wait until just one new thing begins. We don't annually observe a Passover. Why is it that we don't have something new for Pentecost or something new even for Easter alone? Every day is a day of dedication.

Every day is a day of firstfruits. Every day is a day of unleavened bread for us. Every day is a memorial and a reminder.

Whatever we do, we do it from a soul that has dedicated itself to working before God, not working for men, not working for ourselves, not indulging our lusts, not engaging in idolatry. And that should work itself out in our attitudes and our actions toward one another. We can tell ourselves we're living for God, but you will find the evidence in the way we treat each other.

That's the message of Colossians 3. Well, we must close at this point. We'll pick up our study next time in Exodus 13. Father, we thank you for the privilege of studying your Word.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these truths on our hearts. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

