

Should Christians Celebrate the Feasts?

Joseph Carty / General

Covenants and Feasts / Feast Days / Leviticus 23:1–2

It wasn't until the last decade that I have heard so much discussion about celebrating the feasts. Previously, people used to tell me, I'm a New Testament Christian and would sweep away everything from the Old Testament. People have begun to realize it was a mistake but now they are quite confused about what still applies and what does not.

Reason for this Series

- What applies from OT

Previous Sermons

What has been covered in previous sermons

1 - Taken Away or Established

- History of Covenant
 - Adam

- Noah
- Abraham
 - Isaac
 - Jacob
- Moses
- Priest and Levites
- David
- Solomon
- New Testament

- God's Covenant Changed
 - covenant people changed
 - approach changed

2 - What Still Applies

- What aspects of the OT law apply to us today.

- Theological Categories
 - Moral Law- 10 Commandments
 - Types and Shadows
 - Ceremonies
 - Civil Law
 - Theocracy
 - Health Laws
 -

3 - Spring Feasts

- OT History
- Prophetic Fulfillment
- Modern Day Application

4 - Fall Feasts

- OT History
- Prophetic Fulfillment
- Modern Day Application

5 - Can God Make Void What He Proclaimed to be Everlasting

- God Proclaimed
 - OT covenant eternal
- God brought it to an end
 - It that possible?
- All Promises
 - All Covenants
 - Conditional

Obsession with Outward Feast Keeping

- Jews had become
 - Perfect Feast Day Keepers
 - Outwardly
- Legalistic expectation
 - fulfill list of
 - ceremonies

[Isaiah 58:1–10](#) (ESV)

“Cry aloud; do not hold back; lift up your voice like a trumpet; declare to my people their transgression, to the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that did righteousness and did not forsake the judgment of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments; they delight to draw near to God.

‘Why have we fasted, and you see it not? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?’ Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers.

Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to hit with a wicked fist.

Fasting like yours this day will not make your voice to be heard on high.

Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a person to humble himself? Is it to bow down his head like a reed, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the Lord?

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?

Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’

If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.

- God Hates
 - Ceremonialism...
 - Legalism
 - Outward Form Keeping

- Feast Keeping

- sin in heart
 - = hypocrisy
- OT People
 - continually
 - falling into trap
- Must perform ceremonies
 - not doing it right

[1 Samuel 15:22–23](#) (ESV)

And Samuel said, “Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams.

For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king.”

- God does not care
 - about silly ceremonies.

- He cares about the heart.
- These ceremonies
 - require
 - expected
 - specific process
- Why
 - to win the heart.
 - prepare heart

[Micah 6:6–8](#) (ESV)

“With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

- Time of Jesus
 - Jews wanted
 - ceremonies.
- Jesus was
 - bringing some to end.
- They legalistically
 - fought to keep
 - ceremonies
 - instead of Savior.

“The ordinances which God Himself had appointed were made the means of blinding the mind and hardening the heart. **God could do no more for man through these channels. The whole system must be swept away.”**

Desire of Ages, p. 36

- Today
 - see some similarities

- Men and Women say:
 - must keep feast
 - ceremonies
 - ordinances
 - shadows

- If you don't
 - you are not keeping
 - the covenant
 - the law
 - the statutes!

- I have news
 - for you today

“That whole system must be swept away.”

The Feasts Cannot Apply Today

- Faulty Reasoning

Old Covenant Still Applies

- Last Sermon
 - showed
 - Eternal not eternal
- Study Hebrews

Hebrews 10:9 ESV

then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He does away with the first in order to establish the second.

- Something is removed
 - Something replaces it...
- What is removed?

Hebrews 10:1 ESV

For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are

continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.

- What is removed?
 - law of shadows and types
- What was it replaced with?

Hebrews 10:10 ESV

And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

- What was it replaced with?
 - Sanctification through
 - the blood of Jesus

That is why EGW Said:

“Christ, the true foundation, was virtually renounced for the obsolete ceremonies of Judaism.” (Life of Paul, 190)

Law of Moses Done Away

- Paul repeatedly teaches:

Romans 7:6 ESV

But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

and

Galatians 5:18 ESV

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Old Covenant Change

- Lots of things done away:
 - circumcision
 - partition between
 - Jews and Greeks
 - Priesthood
 - Sanctuary
 - Sacrifices

- More...

Galatians 4:9–10 ESV

But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more? You observe days and months and seasons and years!

- Clearly talking about feast days
 - being done away.

Weird Arguments

Statues and Judgments

- Feast Keepers Teach
 - Word Statues = Feasts

False:

- Does not always mean feasts

Leviticus 19:19 ESV

“You shall keep my statutes. You shall not let your cattle breed with a

different kind. You shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor shall you wear a garment of cloth made of two kinds of material.

- No interbreeding Cattle
- No mixed seed sowing
- No Clothes of mixed fabric

- Statues!

- Most don't keep these
- Nothing to do with feasts.

Statute Keeping

- Feast Day Keepers Say:
 - "Keep Statues"
1. Inaccurate Definition
 2. Inconsistent Application

- Keep Some
- Not Others

- Feast Keeping Arguments
 - Eat Unleavened Bread?
 - Yeast Out of House?
 - Sweep House?
 - Wave Sheaf?
 - Stay in Booth
 - (made of branches)
 -

Next Point:

Not Possible to Keep Feasts Correctly

- If OT Law Fully Applies
 - It is very specific
 - Must be done exactly

- But you can't
 - No Temple
 - Geographic Problems

Barley Harvest

- Passover
 - Feast of First Fruits
 - New Sheaf of Barley
 - Add Month
- Outside of Israel
 - Barley Ripe
 - Northern and Southern
 - Alaska
- Not for Global Economy

First New Moon After the Equinox

- No Biblical Teaching
 - still not global

Temple Required

- Offerings in Temple
 - waive sheaf
 - Lord's Goat
 - etc.

Connection to Jerusalem

- Opposite seasons in Norther and Southern Hemisphere
- Simply Not Possible
 - to keep feast days

- correctly
 - world-wide

- Did Jesus indicate
 - a coming change?

Christ was standing at the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. He, the spotless Lamb of God, was about to present Himself as a sin offering, that He would thus **bring to an end** the system of types and ceremonies that for four thousand years had pointed to His death.

As He ate the Passover with His disciples, He instituted in its place the service that was to be the memorial of His great sacrifice. **The national festival of the Jews was to pass away forever.** The service which Christ established was to be observed by His followers in all lands and through all ages. {DA 652.2}

- Jesus kept passover
 - Last Supper
 - Change over
 - to Communion

Shadows and Types

- Bible Calls
 - this stuff
 - prefigured Christ
 - done away at cross
 - “shadows and types”

Hebrews 10:1 ESV

For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.

- Law is shadow
 - good things to come.
 - Not True...

What is a shadow?

- a shadow is something that dimly reflects a greater picture later

- Points to Something Else
- Three Passages about Shadows

[Hebrews 8:1–5](#) (ESV)

Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.

For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things.

For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, “See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain.”

- In this Passage
 - what is the shadow?
 - Earthly Priests
- What is the True?
 - Jesus in heaven.

- Purpose of Shadow
 - teach dimly
 - spiritual ideas
- When real comes
 - why keep shadow

[Hebrews 10:1–4](#) (ESV)

For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.

Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

- In this passage
 - what is shadow?
 - Law... (including)
 - Sacrifices in temple...
 - etc.

- What is True
 - Jesus Blood on Cross

- Purpose of Shadow
 - to Foreshadow
 - Christ's Sacrifice

- One more

Colossians 2:16–17 ESV

Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

- What Shadow?
 - Feasts and other OT Ceremonies

- What is True
 - Plan of Salvation

- Why keep old
 - Shadow is unclear
- We have full revelation of Jesus

Some Quotes on Types and Shadows

The Faith I Live By July – The Sanctuary of God

The people were taught each day, by means of types and shadows, the great truths relative to the advent of Christ as Redeemer, Priest, and King; and once each year their minds were carried forward to the closing events of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, the final purification of the universe from sin and sinners. The sacrifices and offerings of the Mosaic ritual were ever pointing toward a better service, even a heavenly.

- Jews taught by
 - system of
 - Types and Shadows
- This included:
 - Priesthood
 - Sacrifices

- Feast Days
 - Day of Atonement
 - etc

- Question:
 - What happened to these types and Shadows?

Review and Herald (April 22, 1902: The Righteousness of Christ in the Law)

The types and shadows of the sacrificial service, with the prophecies, gave the Israelites a veiled, indistinct view of the mercy and grace to be brought to the world by the revelation of Christ. To Moses was unfolded the significance of the types and shadows pointing to Christ. He saw to the end of that which was to be done away when, at the death of Christ, type met antitype.

- Moses saw
 - types and shadows end
 - at death of Christ

Patriarchs and Prophets (Chapter 32—The Law and the Covenants)

While the Saviour's death brought to an end the law of types and shadows,

it did not in the least detract from the obligation of the moral law. On the contrary, the very fact that it was necessary for Christ to die in order to atone for the transgression of that law, proves it to be immutable. (PP, Page 365)

- Saviors Death
 - brought to end
 - law of types and shadows

Paul Kept the Feasts?

CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE

- Sailed after the fast
 - (Day of Atonment?)

1 Corinthians 16:8 ESV

But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost,

- Kept Pentecost in Ephesus?

- Wanted to be in
 - Jerusalem by Passover.
- Not try to make it
 - by Pentecost.
- [1 Cor 5](#) - incest
 - metaphor
 - Let us keep the feast

Teachings of Paul

- against circumcision
 - (sign of the covenant).
- Jerusalem Council
 - feasts not included
 - for Gentiles
- It took some time

- for people to
 - change between
 - two economies

- Temple Destroyed

- No longer able
 - to keep feast
 - correctly...

- Speaking of
 - destruction of temple

"At the time of the siege, the Jews were assembled at Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, and thus the Christians throughout the land were able to make their escape unmolested." — (Great Controversy, 30)

- What does this teach?
 - Christians were not
 - keeping that feast!!!

What Should We Do Now?

- No Feasts
- No Catholic Holidays
- NT Ceremonies
 - Communion
 - Baptism
- Camp Meetings...

Camp Meetings

In this ordinance, Christ discharged his disciples from the cares and burdens of the ancient Jewish obligations in rites and ceremonies. **These no longer possessed any virtue**; for type was meeting antitype in himself, the authority and foundation of all Jewish ordinances that pointed to him as the great and only efficacious offering for the sins of the world. {RH June 14, 1898, par. 15}

- Jesus taught
 - Jewish Ceremonies

- Don't apply

- Some say
 - Ellen White
 - teaches to
 - Keep feasts

Well would it be for the people of God at the present time to have a Feast of Tabernacles—a joyous commemoration of the blessings of God to them. As the children of Israel celebrated the deliverance that God had wrought for their fathers, and His miraculous preservation of them during their journeyings from Egypt, so should we gratefully call to mind the various ways He has devised for bringing us out from the world, and from the darkness of error, into the precious light of His grace and truth. {PP 540.6}

- Keep Feasts???

- NO
 - take time to remember

If the children of Israel needed the benefit of these holy convocations in their time, how much more do we need them in these last days of peril and conflict! And if the people of the world then needed the light which God had committed to His church, how much more do they need it now! {6T

40.2}

- Keep Feasts???

Go to the camp meeting, even though you have to make a sacrifice to do so. 6T 40

- **Convocations of Today**

The convocations of the church, as in camp-meetings, the assemblies of the home church, and all occasions where there is personal labor for souls, are God's appointed opportunities for giving the early and the latter rain." {Review and Herald, March 2, 1897 par. 6}

Are Feasts Optional?

- Paul Said,
 - Don't judge each other.

Colossians 2:16 ESV

Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.

- Remember,
 - shortly after Jesus death
 - mostly Jews

- Taught gentiles
 - against Mosaic law
 - no circumcision
 - Ritual with Timothy
 - Etc.

- We don't live in that
 - age
 - culture
 - geographic region
 - context

- Makes less sense now
 - all gentile

- no barley harvest

Gospel of Galatians

- Paul Said:

Galatians 1:6–9 *ESV*

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

- Why Accursed?
 - for what?
- Forcing aspects of
 - Jewish law
 - upon Gentiles
 - circumcision

Galatians 2:1–3 *ESV*

Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain. But even Titus, who was with me, was not forced to be circumcised, though he was a Greek.

- What was false gospel about?
 - Law of Moses
 - Including Circumcision
- Another Passage

Galatians 2:11–12 ESV

But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party.

- There was a group
 - Jewish Christians
 - wanted to force
 - law of Moses

- “Circumcision group”

- Going on:

Galatians 2:14 *ESV*

But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

- Keeps repeatedly saying:

“Not by works of the Law...”

- What law?
 - Not simply 10 Comm
 - Includes Circumcision
 - Entire Jewish Law...
 - Law of Moses

Galatians 3:10 *ESV*

For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.”

- What law?
 - book of the law
 - Law of Moses
- How does it apply today?

Galatians 3:23–25 ESV

Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian,

- Wrong to keep the law
 - for a Gentile?

Galatians 4:9–10 ESV

But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more? You observe days and months and seasons and years!

- Wrong for Gentiles
 - to observe feasts
- No just about Circumcision

Galatians 5:1–4 ESV

For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace.

- Gentiles
 - should not
 - cannot
 - keep full law of Moses.

- Gentiles should not
 - apply law of Moses!
 - no circumcision
 - no separation
 - no Jew as covenant people
 - no sacrifices
 - no priesthood
 - no feasts

- All fulfilled
 - in Christ's
 - first advent.

This ordinance [footwashing and communion] does not speak so largely to man's intellectual capacity as to his heart. His moral and spiritual nature needs it. If his disciples had not needed this, it would not have been left for them as Christ's last established ordinance in connection with, and including, the last supper. It was Christ's desire to leave to his disciples an ordinance that would do for them the very thing they needed,—that would serve to disentangle them from the rites and ceremonies which they had hitherto engaged in as essential, and which the reception of the gospel made no longer of any force. To continue these rites would be an insult to Jehovah. {RH June 14, 1898, par. 16}

- It is an insult
 - To our God
 - to keep Passover
 - other feasts...
- Why all this
 - disentangle you

- from false Gospel
- If someone says
 - keep law of Moses
 - keep feasts
 - stay away from them.
- False Gospel
 - Heresy
 - Falsehood

Summary

Appeal