

What we do as believers matters in general. I spoke about this at length a few weeks ago. Works matter and, while it seems like a widely accepted belief today that they don't, Christianity has always valued works and understood them to demonstrate faith. Religion in general depends on works. How and when you worship identifies which God you serve.

Christianity has done a decent job with respect to general morality and being good people, effectively enforcing the last 4 commandments. Despite millions teaching that works don't matter, in practice they all know works definitely do matter. But they stop at the basic morality stuff. Today, they don't require anything with respect to worship. I've even seen incredibly tortured arguments AGAINST baptism. This blows the mind. This idea is relatively new because, from inception, Christianity has had required worship elements. Religions, by definition, must have required worship elements. Even ascetic monks, who eschew works at all, are actually working to not work, if you follow me. In Catholicism and some Christian denominations, they are called sacraments. But a religion is a set of beliefs that results in a repeatable set of actions. The crossroads are which actions are one going to take? If you believe in Islam, you have holy times. If you believe in the faith of the Bible, you have God's holy times. If you are Jewish, you have the bible's holy days plus a few more and a set of traditions that includes activities. If you are a mainstream Christian, like a Catholic, Protestant, or non-denominational today, you have a set of works that identify you which have something to do with the bible but, when it boils down to it, aren't.

The three basic worship requirements that identify a mainstream Christian are Sunday, Easter, and Christmas. We who have read the bible and a little bit of history have realized all three of these observances are contrary to the will of Yahweh. They aren't just mistakes, or made-up observances. All three trace to pagan religions as their source and then we see them merge into Christianity over a period of time. These are the works that one would do to identify oneself as a mainstream Christian. This is where people like us depart from the mistakes.

The entire message of the faith of Abraham, which runs from Genesis to Revelation, is heavily based upon not worshiping pagan gods. Abraham is the first Hebrew because he crossed over from idolatry to the worship of Yahweh. This is exactly what happened in the first century when the faith went to the gentiles (us). This is a fundamental and foundational disagreement the bible has with how the faith developed and been practiced versus what was meant to be. The correct view is that the faith is a continuous, connected path from Genesis to Revelation. The divergent view is that a new religion was started at some unspecified point in the first century.

Slide 2 For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no little business to the craftsmen; these he gathered together with the workmen of similar trades,

and said, "Men, you know that our prosperity depends upon this business. You see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people, saying that gods made with hands are no gods at all. Not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis be regarded as worthless and that she whom all of Asia and the world worship will even be dethroned from her magnificence." When they heard this and were filled with rage, they began crying out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" (Act 19:24-28)

When Paul took the gospel to the nations, he taught them the Torah. They had to get rid of the idols. They were not empowered to rename the idols into Christian saints. Oh, no, they had to stop worshiping false gods. But they didn't stop there, they had to START worshiping the true Elohim, Yahweh, in the manner Yahweh prescribes. The view that the faith is a continuous path makes sense. It permits us to pick up the bible and spiritually identify with any time period within. If it's a new faith, then those who came to the faith after the Messiah would have a completely different experience and would not be able to identify with the disciples or anyone who lived prior. Paul explained this by saying we who accept Yeshua as the Messiah are adopted children of Abraham and heirs according to the promise. We join a line that already existed. A new line was not started in the first century.

Because of this reality, I outlined what we do a couple weeks ago. Refresh. Timing, days, Leviticus 23, what happened in the Gospels, what happened in the letters/first century.

With respect to Easter, we have the evidence of the switch. We have evidence that this is a blending and a departure from the true faith. It started in the second century. A believer named Polycarp who learned under the apostle John represented those in the east who continued to observe Passover on Abib 14 into the second century. Polycarp traveled to Rome to discuss the "schism" because Rome was keeping Easter instead of Passover already.

Easter is now, and was then, celebrated on the Sunday following first Full Moon following the vernal equinox. They called it "the day of the resurrection of our Savior". There is a lot wrong with this. They tied the observance of Yeshua to the wrong day with the wrong calculation and the wrong measuring rod. They decoupled it from a calendar date to decouple it from the Old Testament. This is so different from what the bible teaches that we must take note. They went out of their way to tie the commemoration of Yeshua to a *day of the week* instead of the Hebrew calendar. Why would they do that? Most likely it's because that observance, that reckoning of time, already existed in another religion and they brought it into Christianity.

The Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, and almost every other major society either worshiped the sun, that helium plasma at the center of our universe, or incorporated its worship into their religions. Through observation alone, it makes sense. The sun brings life and takes it away. This is patterned out over time. When it's warm, things grow and you don't have to build fires to survive. When it's cold, everything dies and you must struggle to survive. So, they end up with a religious observance in the spring, on the sun-day after the equinox, to honor the s-u-n. Then they have another observance in the winter as this same life-giving force begins to come back. Rinse, repeat as necessary.

Yeshua was crucified on Abib 14 and resurrected on Abib 17. He had to die on Passover to fulfill prophecy and to be the Lamb of God. He had to be resurrected on Abib 17 to fulfill the prophecy of first fruits. Those are calendar dates which are reckoned based on barley becoming abib and a NEW moon being spotted. One thing we can be rather certain about from Polycarp and this "controversy" is the Hebrew calendar is not reckoned on the equinox and certainly not on a full moon. However, once in a while, these dates line up on both of these methods. In 2023, the day of first fruits and Easter Sunday were on April 9. Perfect alignment. You can see how this would get confusing in a hurry. This year, it's not even close. Easter is on March 31 but first fruits would be April 28 if it were possible to observe.

That's a lot of details but what they show is that the Quartodeciman controversy proves the calendar has nothing to do with the equinox. And we were not commanded to observe the resurrection in remembrance of Yeshua. We were commanded to observe the night He was betrayed while continuing to observe the Passover. He was betrayed on Abib 13 and no other date. He was crucified on Abib 14 and no other date. These two dates can fall on any day of the week.

Slide 3 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER." (Rev 19:1-2)

The great harlot. Yes, this includes sexual immorality but it is talking more about false god worship. The end time bad guy is the great harlot. That means idolatry, worshiping false gods, and taking Yahweh's Name in vain are the big sins of the end times. They were the big sins when Abraham lived, the big sins when Moses lived, the big sins when Israel got smote, Israel refused these sins after they came back from captivity, we see the Apostles going all over the earth preaching against false gods, and then the end times judgment is about false god worship. This all adds up to spiritual

harlotry, or syncretism, being a very big sin whenever you live. And provides the linear faith I described earlier. Genesis to Revelation.

Yahweh wants people to choose to follow Him. He wants people to choose to recognize that He is sovereign and gave His Son so that all who believe in Him will not perish but have everlasting life. With Israel, YHVH provided a people, a nation, that was to be pure from the defilements of the false god worship of the nations. In the New Testament we have a switch:

Slide 4 When the crowds saw what Paul had done, they raised their voice, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have become like men and have come down to us." And they began calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds. But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM. **In the generations gone by He permitted all the nations to go their own ways;** and yet He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness." Even saying these things, with difficulty they restrained the crowds from offering sacrifice to them. (Act 14:11-18)

In the generations before the gospel went for from Jerusalem, Yahweh permitted to the nations to do their own things while using Israel as the example of true worship. Israel's example was to lead the nations to adopt Yahweh's ways. The inauguration of the first temple drew people to Israel but rather than teach them Torah, Solomon allowed the nations to pollute Israel. The switch in the NT is that the gospel went (and continues to go) into the pagan world to teach people to come out of spiritual Babylon. Paul is telling them, and us, that the nations had to stop their false god nonsense once they received the knowledge of the truth. This is one of the lesser spoken of miracles of the first century – people actually changed their ways. It started with those who helped kill the Messiah publicly repenting of it in Acts 2. That was huge. Being able to admit you are wrong about something as big as murder is amazing. Being able to switch religions is just as amazing. This is the problem we have today. Mainstream Christianity is quite comfortable with the pagan-mixed observances. It's been so long that breaking from them is almost impossible in most people's minds. Switching from Catholicism to Baptist or from Lutheranism to Pentecostal isn't really that big of a switch. You keep the same false core beliefs, just join a different organization. But switching to the Messianic faith, of keeping Torah and doing what the bible actually says, that's an earthquake of a shift. Today. The people Paul preached to left ancient pagan practices and adopted the true faith,

the commandments and Yeshua as the Messiah. This is remarkable, significant, and why we do today what we do. We follow first century Christianity.

Astarte and the pagan nature of Easter. The Romans were adapting pagan practices into Christianity very early. The timing of Easter, and why it's called that, is because it was already an observance of Astarte, a pagan fertility goddess, also known as Diana of the Ephesians. Paul was almost literally preaching against Easter in Acts 19 when he started that riot. That alone shows us we should have nothing to do with Easter. But we have more.

Slide 5 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For **Messiah our Passover** also has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (1Co 5:6-8)

Paul taught the Gentiles to adopt Passover. The whole of it. ULB and all. Paul taught against Easter and in favor of Yahweh's appointed times.

What we do matters. The resurrection was not what Yeshua told us to do to remember Him. There is an observance that foreshadows and commemorates His resurrection called the Day of Firstfruits. This was already in place through Leviticus 23. But it's not a Sabbath, but a moed where work is done.

Paul taught the churches to keep literal Passover. We need to maintain the chain of events back to Abraham. This sequence of events shows Yahweh's plan of salvation.