

1 Corinthians 5:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Analysis

Therefore let us keep the feast (ὠστε ἔορτάζωμεν)—Paul extends the Passover imagery to the Christian life as an ongoing festival. The present subjunctive heortazomen suggests continuous celebration. The entire Christian life is a feast of deliverance from sin's slavery, requiring ongoing vigilance against sin's re-entry. **Not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness**—kakia ("malice") is ill will or viciousness; poneria ("wickedness") is active evil or depravity.

But with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth—eilikrineia ("sincerity") means purity, unmixed motives, transparency that withstands scrutiny (literally "judged by sunlight"). Aletheia ("truth") is reality, genuineness, integrity. Christian celebration isn't mere ritual but life characterized by moral purity and truthfulness. The church's holiness must be internal (sincerity) and external (truth), rejecting both hidden corruption and public compromise. This is gospel-shaped living—transformed by Christ's sacrifice into communities of authentic holiness.

Historical Context

The Feast of Unleavened Bread immediately followed Passover, lasting seven days (Ex. 12:15-20). Leaven symbolized Egypt's corruption from which Israel was

delivered. For Paul, the Christian life is a perpetual feast celebrating deliverance from sin through Christ, requiring ongoing separation from moral corruption.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How can you view your entire Christian life as a celebration of deliverance, not grim duty?
2. Where do malice and wickedness still 'leaven' your attitudes or relationships?
3. What does sincerity (unmixed motives) and truth (integrity) look like practically in your daily life?

Interlinear Text

ἄστε	έορτάζωμεν	μὴ	ἐν	ζύμῃ	παλαιᾶ	μηδὲ	ἐν
Therefore	let us keep the feast	not	with	leaven	old	neither	with
G5620	G1858	G3361	G1722	G2219	G3820	G3366	G1722
ζύμῃ	κακίας	καὶ	πονηρίας	ἀλλ'	ἐν	ἀζύμοις	
leaven	of malice	and	wickedness	but	with	the unleavened	
G2219	G2549	G2532	G4189	G235	G1722	G106	
εἰλικρινείας	καὶ	ἀληθείας					
bread of sincerity	and	truth					
G1505	G2532	G225					

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 12:15 (Parallel theme): Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth

leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

Deuteronomy 16:3 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, even the bread of affliction; for thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste: that thou mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life.

Mark 8:15 (Parallel theme): And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

Matthew 16:6 (Parallel theme): Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

Luke 12:1 (Parallel theme): In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

Isaiah 25:6 (Parallel theme): And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.

Isaiah 30:29 (Parallel theme): Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD, to the mighty One of Israel.

Psalms 42:4 (Parallel theme): When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday.

Psalms 32:2 (Sin): Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

Ephesians 6:24 (Sin): Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.