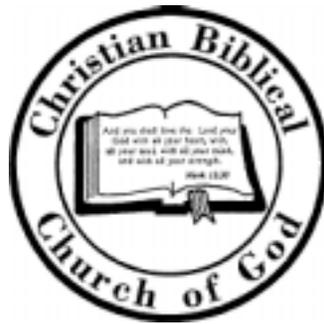




THE CHRISTIAN PASSOVER CEREMONY



Published by the Christian Biblical Church of God as a service of love for the brethren of Jesus Christ and God the Father for the observance of the Christian Passover Ceremony. The Christian Passover is a renewal of the New Covenant of eternal life through Jesus Christ Our Lord and Savior. The translation of the Scriptures for reading was done by Fred R. Coulter. Permission is hereby given to duplicate and/or copy this booklet, in part or in whole, for the purpose of observing the Christian Passover.

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About This Booklet

This booklet was written as a guide for those who desire to observe the New Covenant Passover—the *Christian Passover*. It provides basic instructions for conducting the Passover ceremony, as well as appropriate Scriptures to read for the service. The arrangement of the Scriptures conforms to the sequence of events at Jesus' last Passover, when He instituted the New Covenant Passover on the night before His crucifixion and death. The author has translated these Scriptures in a manner that is easy to read yet accurately conveys the literal meaning of the New Testament Greek text.

The author's translation of these Scriptures for the Christian Passover ceremony is based on the Greek text of Stephens of 1550. This was the Greek text used by the translators of the King James Version. The author has chosen an exacting and literal translation of the Greek text that is designed to express the power and love of our Savior Jesus Christ.

In this translation, the true Scriptural understanding of the Holy Spirit is presented. The true New Testament teaching, as preserved in the Greek text, is that the Holy Spirit is not a person. Rather, it is the power of God which He puts within human beings to accomplish spiritual works. Luke clearly describes this function: "And the angel answered *and* said to her, '**The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow you**' " (Luke 1:35). Just before He ascended into heaven, Jesus told the apostles " 'to await the promise of the Father, which,' *He said*, 'you have heard of Me. Now then, John, on the one hand, baptized with water; on the other hand, you shall be baptized with **the Holy Spirit** after not many days....But you will receive **power** when **the Holy Spirit** comes upon you...' " (Acts 1:4-8).

Here is the author's explanation of his translation of those passages in John 14, 15 and 16 which concern "the Spirit of the Truth" and "the Comforter":

"The Spirit of the Truth," in John 14:17 comes from the Greek *to pneuma tees aleetheias*, and is another designation for "the Holy Spirit." In the New Testament Greek, "the Holy Spirit" is always a neuter noun, which truly reflects the Scriptural teaching that the Holy Spirit is the power of God and not a person. The Greek nouns for "Spirit," "the Spirit," "Holy Spirit" and "The Holy Spirit" (KJV "Holy Ghost") are as follows: *pneuma*, *to pneuma*, *pneuma hagion*, *to hagion pneuma*, *to pneuma to hagion*, and the above referenced *to pneuma tees aleetheias*. These nouns, in their various forms, are always and only neuter in gender. Likewise, the pronouns for *to pneuma to hagion* are always and only neuter in gender. Therefore, it is absolutely incorrect to translate "the Spirit," "the Holy Spirit," or "the Spirit of the Truth" and its pronouns in the masculine gender. Since the Greek text reveals that "the Spirit of the Truth" is in the neuter gender, the author has

correctly translated its pronouns as "it," "which" and "that one," as a neuter entity should properly be translated. To translate these neuter nouns and their pronouns in the masculine gender clearly violates the basic rules of translation. *Pneuma* and its various derivations are nowhere revealed in Scripture as masculine gendered nouns!

However, in John 14:16, 26, and John 15:26, we do find a masculine gendered noun used in reference to the Holy Spirit, as a descriptive noun, *ho parakleetos*, which is translated in the KJV as "the Comforter." *Ho parakleetos* defines a function of "the Holy Spirit," or "the Spirit of the Truth," as "a helper," and "the helper," or as "a comforter" and "the comforter." While this masculine gendered descriptive noun is used to describe a vital function of the Holy Spirit, it does not designate "the Holy Spirit," or "the Spirit of the Truth," as a person. In I John 2:1 the masculine descriptive noun *Parakleetos* is used to describe a function of Jesus Christ as "an Advocate" for Christians.

The demonstrative pronoun of *ho parakleetos* is *ekeinos*, which means "that" or "that one." The author has accordingly translated *ekeinos* in reference to *ho parakleetos* as "that one," whereas most translations incorrectly translate *ekeinos* as "He." The use of a descriptive masculine gendered noun and its pronouns does not make the Holy Spirit a "third co-equal member of a triune godhead," a "divine being" equal with the Father and the Son. For those who know the New Testament Greek, it is evident that the theology of men, which is contrary to the inspired Greek text, has been inserted into the English translations in an attempt to give Scriptural support to the false doctrine of the Trinity.

It is the author's hope that the correct translation of the New Testament Greek text, as presented in this booklet, may give the reader a true understanding of those Scriptures which concern the Holy Spirit. These Scriptures contain the true teachings of Jesus Christ, given to His disciples when He instituted the New Covenant Passover. It is vital for every Christian to understand these verses as they are read during the Christian Passover ceremony, for these words of Jesus are the basis and foundation of the New Covenant.

May the love, grace and mercy of God the Father be with all those who observe the New Covenant Passover through Jesus Christ Our Lord and Savior—Our "Passover Lamb—the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world."

*With love in Jesus' name,
Fred R. Coulter*

WHEN SHOULD THE CHRISTIAN PASSOVER BE OBSERVED?

The Christian Passover, which renews the New Covenant relationship, should be observed only once a year on the 14th day of the 1st month, the month of Nisan, according to the calculated Hebrew calendar. Since the Bible reckons each day from sunset to sunset, the Christian Passover observance is to be held after sunset of the 13th day of the 1st month, which is actually the night of the 14th day of the 1st month. Remember that today the Jews do not keep a 14th Passover at all. The Jewish "Passover" is observed a day late and is combined with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which begins on the 15th day of the 1st month and continues for seven days. In violation to the clear Scriptural commands, the Jews have added an eighth day to their "Passover," extending it to the 22nd of the 1st month. (For a full explanation read *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter.)

In order to know when the Passover day falls according to the calculated Hebrew calendar, as synchronized with the Roman calendar, see *The Comprehensive Hebrew Calendar* by Arthur Spier. This book shows the calculated dates to the year 2100. However, for your convenience, the dates for the annual festivals of God from the years 2003 to 2010 as they occur according to the Roman calendar, is provided on page 29. The New Covenant Passover service is to be observed annually "until the Lord may come."

WHO SHOULD OBSERVE THE CHRISTIAN PASSOVER?

Who should partake of the Christian Passover? Should anyone who thinks that he or she is a Christian observe this sacred service? Or are there specific Scriptural requirements for participating in the Christian Passover? This vital question needs to be answered.

In the Old Testament, one of the ordinances for the observance of the Passover required that all male participants be circumcised in the flesh. Those who were not circumcised were forbidden to participate in the Old Testament Passover (Ex. 12:48). However, the New Testament clearly teaches that circumcision in the flesh is not a requirement for the New Covenant relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ (Gal. 5:6, Rom. 2:28-29).

Physical circumcision is not a requirement for the observance of the New Covenant Passover. However, there is a spiritual circumcision required for the New Covenant, as taught in the New Testament. As we will see, anyone, male or female, must be circumcised spiritually through Jesus Christ in order to participate in the New Covenant Passover—the Christian Passover. This spiritual circumcision is called "the circumcision of the heart, in the spirit."

The apostle Paul defines spiritual circumcision in Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew *who is* one outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision which *is* external in *the* flesh; rather, he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision *is* of *the* heart, in *the* spirit *and* not in *the* letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God."

Spiritual circumcision is achieved only in this manner: The first step for each person who answers God's calling is to repent of his or her sins against God the Father and to accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. As the apostle Peter proclaimed: "Repent and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of *your* sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

After answering God's calling and repenting toward God, a person must be baptized by full immersion in water, which signifies the death and burial of the old, sinful self. The apostle Paul reveals the full meaning of baptism: "Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him by baptism into death; so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be in the likeness of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man [the old, sinful self] was crucified with *Him* [co-crucified] in order that the body of sin might be destroyed, that we should no longer be enslaved to sin; because the one who has died *to sin* has been justified from sin" (Romans 6:3-7).

The operation of baptism and receiving of the Holy Spirit from God the Father is called "the circumcision of Christ," which is the spiritual circumcision of the heart. In Paul's epistle to the Colossians we find this explanation: "And you are complete in Him, Who is the Head of all principality and power; in Whom **you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ**, having been buried with Him in baptism, by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead. For you, who were *once* dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, has He *now* made alive with Him, having forgiven all your trespasses. He has blotted out the note of debt against us, *with* the decrees *of our sins*, which was contrary to us; also He has taken it away, having nailed it to the cross" (Col. 2:10-14).

The New Testament clearly shows that no person should partake of the New Covenant Passover until he or she has been baptized and has been spiritually circumcised in heart by the receiving of the Holy Spirit of God. "But He Who establishes us with you in Christ, and Who has anointed us, *is* God, **Who has also sealed us and has given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts**" (II Cor. 1:21-22).

To partake of the New Covenant Passover worthily, a person must have been baptized and must have received the Holy Spirit from God the Father. Only those who have received the gift of the Holy Spirit from God the Father should partake of the Christian Passover, because they are the only ones who have been spiritually circumcised in heart and have truly entered into the New Covenant with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

HOW SHOULD THE CHRISTIAN PASSOVER BE OBSERVED?

At His last Passover, Jesus Christ instituted the service of footwashing and instructed His disciples to partake of the unleavened bread and wine as the symbols of His sacrifice. True Christians are commanded by Jesus Christ to observe the New Covenant Passover—the Christian Passover. However, it must be observed properly. The apostle Paul warned the Christians at Corinth of the dire consequences of eating and drinking the new symbols unworthily: “For this reason, *if* anyone shall eat this bread or shall drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, he shall be guilty of the body and *the* blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup accordingly” (I Cor. 11:27-28).

Partaking of the Passover unworthily includes the following:

- 1) An improper manner, improper symbols, and an incorrect day and time
- 2) An improper attitude of rebellion or habitual, calloused sinfulness
- 3) Not discerning the body of Jesus Christ for healing
- 4) Not discerning the blood of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins

Partaking of the Passover worthily includes the following:

- 1) The proper manner, proper symbols and the correct day and time
- 2) A humble, loving repentant, yielded attitude
- 3) Discerning the body of the Lord and trusting Him for healing
- 4) Discerning the blood of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins

The apostle Paul clearly taught the Christians at Corinth that they were not to eat a meal with the New Covenant Passover and that it should not be called “the Lord’s Supper” (I Cor. 11:20-22). A meal is not to be eaten with the New Covenant Passover because it is a solemn ceremony in remembrance of Jesus Christ’s sacrifice and death for our sins.

Paul warned, “Because the one who eats and drinks unworthily is eating and drinking judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord. For this *very* reason, many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many have fallen asleep. Now if we examined ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by *the* Lord, so that we will not be condemned with the world” (I Cor. 11:29-32).

Prior to the observance of the New Covenant Passover, each Christian should prayerfully examine himself, or herself, in order to fully realize that it is only through the love and grace of God that this gracious salvation of God the Father has been granted to each one whom God the Father calls. While Christians are commanded to do good works and keep all of God's commandments as a way of life, it can only be accomplished through faith and the love of God. The renewal of the New Covenant each year through observing the New Covenant Passover is each Christian’s solemn pledge to live and walk in the ways of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

If we truly love God with all our hearts and minds, we will desire to do what is pleasing to God the Father and Jesus Christ and we will observe the New Covenant Passover—the *Christian Passover*—exactly as Jesus Christ commanded.

The Footwashing

The footwashing service of the Passover ceremony renews one's baptism yearly. (For a full explanation of footwashing, read *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter).

Preparations should be made ahead of time for the footwashing so that this service may be conducted as smoothly as possible. A sufficient supply of warm water should be furnished, taking into consideration the number of people participating. Each participant should provide his or her own pan and towel for the footwashing service. If the number of participants permits, it is entirely proper for the men and the women to wash feet separately.

If a Christian is forced by circumstances to observe the Passover alone, then he or she will not be able to perform the footwashing service. In such cases, the individual Christian should certainly read and study the footwashing part of the Passover ceremony, and in faith before God should pray for understanding of the meaning of footwashing. This special prayer to God about the meaning of footwashing can be offered in place of the actual service of footwashing.

After the footwashing is concluded, the Passover ceremony continues with the eating of the unleavened bread.

The Unleavened Bread

For the Christian Passover, only unleavened bread is to be eaten. As the Scriptures show, all leaven was removed from houses in preparation for the Passover day, the 14th day of the 1st month, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which follows the Passover and lasts from the 15th day through the 21st day. In addition to removing all leaven, unleavened bread was baked and made ready for the Passover and the Feast. (Read *The Christian Passover* for a full explanation.) A recipe for making unleavened bread is provided on page 31.

If the New Covenant Passover—*the Christian Passover*—is to be observed in a private home, the room chosen for the ceremony should be completely unleavened prior to the Passover. If the Passover is to be observed in a rented room, those preparing the room should remove any leaven from the confines of that room prior to observing the Passover.

The unleavened bread to be used for distribution to the participants should be placed on a dish or tray and be covered with a clean white cloth. An excessive amount of bread should not be placed on the dish or tray, because this bread will be broken and blessed to represent the body of Jesus Christ. Any bread and crumbs left after the services have concluded should be burned in fire that night, in accordance with God's instructions for the remains of the lambs used for the Old Covenant Passover (Ex. 12:10).

For the Old Testament Passover, a lamb or kid goat was required to be sacrificed at the household of the participants. In the New Testament, in his epistle

to the Hebrews, the apostle Paul clearly teaches that the one perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ replaced and superseded all the animal sacrifices required under the Old Covenant (Heb. 9:12). Jesus Christ is the New Covenant Passover Lamb, the perfect sacrifice of God the Father for the remission of our sins: "For Christ OUR PASSOVER was sacrificed for us" (1 Cor. 5:7).

The Wine

Few people realize that the skins of grapes have natural yeast spores which initiate the fermentation process almost immediately after the juice has been squeezed. Before the advent of pasteurization and refrigeration, it was impossible to have grape juice year round as we do today, because there was no way to preserve the juice and prevent it from fermenting. The only time of year when grape juice could be consumed was at the time of the crushing of the grapes, which always occurred in late summer, when the grapes were harvested. Since grape juice could not be preserved, it was used to make either wine or vinegar.

The term "fruit of the vine" in Matthew 26:29, Mark 14:25 and Luke 22:18 is not referring to grape juice. In the spring, at Passover time, "the fruit of the vine" can only refer to wine. The Greek word for unfermented grape juice is *trudz* and is never used in reference to wine. The Greek word for wine is *oinos*, which always means wine fermented from the juice of grapes. In the second chapter of the Gospel of John, it is recorded that Jesus created 180 gallons of wine, or *oinos*, out of water. He did not create grape juice. Jesus drank *oinos*, or wine. Those who criticized Him called Him a "winebibber," as recorded in Matthew 11:19 and Luke 7:34. The Greek word for "winebibber" is *oinopotees* from *oinos*.

There is additional Scriptural proof that the term "fruit of the vine" does not mean grape juice. In the Gospel of Matthew, we find Jesus' parable of the vineyard: "There was a certain man, a master of a house, who planted a **vineyard**, and put a fence around it, and dug a **winepress** in it, and built a tower, and *then* leased it to husbandmen and left the country. Now when the season of the fruits was drawing near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen **to receive his fruits**" (Mat. 21:33-34).

The specific mention of the winepress in this parable shows that the purpose of the vineyard was to produce wine. That is the "fruits" that the owner expected to receive from his vineyard. It was impossible for the owner, who was not in the country, to receive fresh grapes or fresh grape juice from the husbandmen. The only fruits he could safely receive were raisins, which are sun-dried grapes, or wine fermented from the juice of the grapes. While it is possible that some of the grapes could have been dried into raisins, the winepress in the parable indicates that most of the grapes were crushed and used to make wine. That was the "fruits" of the vineyard, or "the fruit of the vine."

At His last Passover, Jesus told the disciples, "But I say to you, from this time forward I will not drink at all of *this fruit of the vine*, until that day when I drink *it* anew with you in the kingdom of My Father" (Matt. 26:29 and Mark 14:25).

Based on the Scriptural evidence, we can conclude the following: **The fruit of the vine which Jesus and the disciples drank at Jesus' last Passover was oinos, or wine, not trudz, or grape juice.** Those who believe that grape juice should be used for the Christian Passover service are following their beliefs and their self-determined righteousness instead of following the teachings and practices of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures clearly show that "**the fruit of the vine**" is not grape juice. Therefore, the use of grape juice instead of wine is not partaking of the Passover in the manner taught by Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul as recorded in Scripture. The use of grape juice in place of wine for the Christian Passover is undoubtedly partaking of the New Covenant Passover unworthily. An exception to the Scriptural teaching could be allowed for a person who has made a solemn vow not to drink any alcoholic beverage because he or she is a recovering alcoholic. In such circumstances, God would not condemn the use of grape juice in place of wine. In all other cases, wine, and only wine, should be used for the New Covenant Passover—*the Christian Passover*.

The wine to be used for the New Covenant Passover should be a fine quality red wine, a burgundy type—unfortified, as it symbolizes the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The simplest way to gauge the quality of a wine is to check to see if the bottle has a cork. Nearly every wine which has been bottled with a whole cork is considered a good quality wine.

Before the Passover service begins, the wine should be poured into separate small glasses for the exact number of participants, and the glasses should be covered with a clean, white cloth. The wine should be poured from the bottle in a room separate from the room where the service will be conducted and the wine will be blessed. Any wine which has been blessed for use during the Passover service should not be used for other purposes. If there is some unused blessed wine remaining after the service, it should be poured on the ground, as was the blood of Jesus. The glasses used by the participants should be washed as soon as possible after the service is concluded.

After the service, the participants should return to their houses or rooms and use additional time that night for study, prayer and meditation upon the awesome meaning and significance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the Passover Lamb of God.

The entire New Covenant Passover—*The Christian Passover*, is truly an expression of God the Father's love for each person by providing the perfect sacrifice of His Only Begotten Son: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His own Son, the only begotten, so that everyone who is believing in Him may not perish, but may have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

THE CHRISTIAN PASSOVER RENEWS THE NEW COVENANT THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

In accordance to the promises that God gave Abraham, as recorded in Genesis 15:3-6 and 22:15-18, Jesus Christ began the New Covenant on the Passover day. Therefore the 14th of the 1st month, the Passover day, can rightly be called the *Covenant Day*. Jesus Himself is the One who established this day as the *Covenant Day* by His commands for this day and by His actions on this day! Jesus Himself has made the *Covenant Day*—the *Passover day*—the primary day, and the only day, for the renewal of the New Covenant relationship between each individual Christian and Himself and God the Father.

This New Covenant relationship can only be entered into by the operation of the grace of God. God's grace begins with God the Father's calling. Each individual must respond to God's calling by repentance, baptism and loving obedience to the Word of God, which is the Truth. When these conditions are fulfilled, God the Father gives the Holy Spirit to each person He calls. The Holy Spirit enables each one to worship God **in spirit and in truth!** "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father is indeed seeking those who worship Him in this manner. God *is* Spirit, and **those who worship Him must** [Greek *dei*, obligated, under divine compulsion] **worship in spirit and in truth**" (John 4:23-24.)

What Jesus is revealing by these words is not a suggestion—**IT IS A COMMAND! The Greek text is most emphatic—it is an imperative command!** Jesus is revealing the ONLY WAY to enter into the New Covenant relationship with God the Father.

This New Covenant relationship is offered only to those who are *loving God the Father and keeping the commandments and words* of Jesus Christ. This is the foundation of Christian faith by God's grace under the New Covenant.

The only way to God the Father is through Jesus Christ! He Himself established the New Covenant with His own blood, and He Himself reveals the ONE TRUE WAY to enter into that special covenant relationship with the Father. He emphatically stated, "**I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me**" (John 14:6.)

God the Father's plan is revealed in the life and death of Jesus Christ—Our Passover. "But we see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than *the* angels, crowned with glory and honor on account of suffering the death, in order that **by the grace of God He Himself might taste death for everyone**" (Heb 2:9).

No human work can possibly replace or be substituted for this awesome sacrifice of Jesus Christ. His blood alone can reconcile us to God the Father. Once

we have been reconciled, it is through the risen Christ, our High Priest at the right hand of God, that we are saved by God's loving grace.

"But God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in *our* trespasses, has made *us* alive together with Christ. (**For you have been saved by grace.**) And He has raised *us* up together [through the operation of baptism] and has caused *us* to sit together in the heavenly *places* [through the begetting of God's Holy Spirit] in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages that *are* coming He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For **by grace you have been saved through faith.** and this *faith* has not [Greek *ouk*, the impossibility of *it originating*] *come* from your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, not from works, so that no one may boast. For we are His [God the Father's] workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works [of faith, love and obedience], which God ordained beforehand that we might walk in them" (Eph. 2:4-10).

True Christians are to continually worship God the Father and Jesus Christ in spirit and in truth. They are in *actual, true covenant* with God the Father and Jesus Christ! Because they worship God as He commanded, they are faithfully and lovingly keeping the Christian Passover as commanded by Jesus Christ in the New Testament. They are observing it on the correct *Covenant Day* for the annual renewing of the New Covenant. This means that they annually observe the Christian Passover on the 14th day of the 1st month, the month of Nisan (according to the calculated Hebrew calendar), at the same time of day that Jesus instituted the new symbols, and in the proper manner as He Himself commanded at His last Passover. Each year, they fulfill all three parts of the Passover exactly as Jesus commanded: 1) participating in the footwashing, 2) eating the unleavened bread, and 3) partaking of the wine.

By partaking of the Christian Passover, as Jesus Christ commanded, they are rededicating their lives to walk in His way and live their lives by Him. "The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me" (John 6:56-57).

The Christian's relationship with Jesus Christ and God the Father is renewed each year by participating in the Christian Passover. The true meaning of the Christian Passover goes far beyond understanding the correct day and correct manner for its observance. In reality, the Christian Passover is the foundation of God's plan for our lives—now and for all eternity!

God the Father gives us His magnificent love and grace through Jesus Christ our Passover! Let us partake of the symbols of the New Covenant as Jesus Christ commanded. Let us renew our covenant relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Let us rededicate our lives in the love and grace of God as we partake of the New Covenant Passover—the *Christian Passover*.

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