

The Leavening of the Church

Joseph Herrin (4-19-2001)

Father continues to open my understanding to the day we live in and the condition of the church that was prophesied for this day. The mindset we have to overcome is to erroneously think that Yahweh will have many people trumpeting the truths of the Kingdom in this hour and that the message will be ubiquitous, being found in every church building in every city throughout the world. As one looks at the scriptures they will see that this has rarely ever been the case.

Consider the days of John the Baptist. I will choose him because many today are saying that Elijah will once more return to prepare again the way for the return of the Messiah Yahshua. There is actually much scriptural evidence to support this assertion. Even as John came preaching in the spirit of Elijah, so will the spirit of Elijah be loosed again to prepare for the second coming of Yahshua. So I ask you, "Where was the spirit of Elijah found in John's day?" Did Father pour out this spirit on the priests who taught in the temple and upon the scribes and pharisees who were found in all of the synagogues?

No! We know He did not. The spirit of Elijah was poured out on a single man who spent his days of preparation in the wilderness, and even when the day of his ministry arrived he did not then go to the temple and the synagogues. He continued to minister in the wilderness and the people came to him. They had to search him out. How contrary this is to the practice of the churches today. They go running after every person to try to deliver the gospel to them, and when they find a person who is not church-ed or who does not profess to be a Christian, they try to force their beliefs upon such a one, and willingly or unwillingly to lead them in a sinner's prayer.

But not John. John was filled with the Spirit from the womb and the Spirit led him to do no such thing. No, the Spirit led him to preach outside the camp, outside the temple, outside the synagogues where religious activity was centered. John's pulpit was the wilderness and he waited for the Spirit to draw men to the anointing that resided in him.

Isn't this somewhat disconcerting, however? If Father truly wanted the way to be prepared for the coming of His Son (and He did), then wouldn't He send out His message through many preachers in the places where people gathered to hear the word. Wouldn't He anoint multitudes of priests and place them in prominent positions in the religious centers of the day to proclaim His message and to make known His truths? Evidently not!

Father selected one man and He trained him in obscurity and had Him preach in desolate and isolated places where men and women had to seek him out. How awkward this seems. What a departure from sound reasoning, according to how men

would think it should be done. John was the only one preaching his message in his day. The same could be said of many saints. Noah was the only one to preach righteousness in his day. Lot was the only righteous man in the plains of Sodom and Gomorrah. Elijah felt that he alone was left of the true prophets of Yahweh in his day. Moses alone knew the ways of Yahweh in his day, all the rest of the Israelites, we are told, only saw his acts.

So, should we be surprised when we find the truths of Yahweh being proclaimed today by a relatively small number of saints, and they have no large pulpit to proclaim their message from? If these are truly the days in which the spirit of Elijah will once more be poured out to prepare for the return of Yahshua, should we be surprised that Father has once again largely bypassed the temples and synagogues of this day and He is using His servants in out of the way places to proclaim His message? I think we should not be surprised at all. Rather, we should expect it.

I say this to tell you that when you encounter a truth that is new to you, don't write it off because you have never heard it before, nor because there seem to be such a small remnant that have grasped this truth. Father has always dealt with the remnant. The true flock of Yahshua is called the little flock (Luke 12:32).

What I would speak of here in this article is the concept of the church being full of leaven, that is, she has become a mixture of holy and profane things. Sin and false doctrines have been thoroughly mixed in with righteousness and truth. She has become an unholy mixture, and the scriptures clearly tell us that this would be the case with the church for a full 2,000 years. So let us look at where we find this revelation in scripture. All three of the following parables appear one right after the other in the book of Matthew, but I will include the accounts from Luke on the last two for Luke brings out a further truth.

Matthew 13:24-30

24 He presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field.

25 "But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away.

26 "But when the wheat sprang up and bore grain, then the tares became evident also.

27 "And the slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'

28 "And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' And the slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?'

29 "But he said, 'No; lest while you are gathering up the tares, you may root up the wheat with them.

30 'Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind

them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

Luke 13:18-24

18 Therefore He was saying, "What is the kingdom of Yahweh like, and to what shall I compare it?"

19 "It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree; and the birds of the air nested in its branches."

20 And again He said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of Yahweh?"

21 "It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of meal, until it was all leavened."

22 And He was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching, and proceeding on His way to Jerusalem.

23 And someone said to Him, "Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?" And He said to them,

24 "Strive to enter by the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able."

We see in these writings that Yahshua is giving forth parables that depict the kingdom of Yahweh, and we shall see that the kingdom He is portraying is the church age. He says clearly, "What is the kingdom of Yahweh like?" He then gives three separate parables that each proclaim the same message, but using different symbols.

In the first parable Yahshua depicts the kingdom of Yahweh as a field in which wheat is planted, but an enemy sows tares among the wheat. The tares look much like the wheat, and Yahshua indicates that this mixture must remain until the last days when the harvest occurs, when all comes to maturity. Then the wheat will be separated from the tares and the tares will be burned.

How do we know that this specifically refers to the church age? We are not left to wonder. Yahshua is quite plain about it. When He explains the parable to His disciples He gives them some keys by which we can discern that it is the church age of which this parable and the other two parables speak. In Matthew 13:39, He says, "and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels." By comparing these words to John's writing in Revelation we can see that the age spoken of was not the age of the Old Covenant that was passing away, but of the New Covenant that was approaching. John depicts the reaping that Yahshua spoke of in the following verse.

Revelation 14:15

And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, "Put in your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe."

Yahshua did speak in other places of reapers and a harvest, and He said the time of that harvest was immediate, not in the future. But in these other places His disciples are those who reap and work in the harvest fields, not the angels. So we must ascertain what harvest He was speaking of, and He was very evidently speaking of the same harvest that John wrote about, for we see the angels doing the reaping. By this we can ascertain that the kingdom age to which Yahshua's parables related was one that lay ahead, not behind. He says that this kingdom age will be marked with a great mixture of true and false members of the kingdom. They will grow up together and they will be virtually indistinguishable from one another. They will abide together until the very end of the age when the harvest takes place and all are gathered up and separated.

In the second parable He compares the kingdom to a mustard plant which grows to be one of the largest plants in the garden until the birds come and nest in its branches. The bush again represents the kingdom of Yahweh, as does the field in the previous parable. The kingdom of Yahweh is none other than what we call Christendom today. It is the amalgamation of all the individual branches of Christianity that together form the body of Christ. We see that there are birds nesting in the mustard bush, and the birds represent uncleanness, and in particular they represent demons, for Satan is the prince of the air and the birds' domain is the air. Once again we see a mixture of profane and holy in this parable.

Finally, Yahshua compares the kingdom to three pecks of meal in which leaven is hidden. The leaven becomes thoroughly mixed with the meal until all has become leavened. Leaven refers to sin and impurity once more. Yahshua at one time warned His disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. The leaven of the Pharisees represented their false teachings and traditions whereby they nullified the commands of Yahweh. It also represented their sinfulness which was seen in their pride whereby they would give their alms openly, even blowing a trumpet before themselves. It is seen in their devouring widows' households and making a pretense of praying for the widow. It is seen in their putting on mournful attire when they fasted, and in their praying long prayers on the street corners to be seen of men.

Leaven clearly represents sin, for this reason the bread eaten at Passover was to be unleavened, and the lamb that was slain was to be without blemish, for no sin was found in Yahshua whose body (bread) was given for us, and who was our sacrifice lamb. However, Yahshua told us that the leaven of impurity, false teaching, and sin would thoroughly leaven the church until all had become leavened.

We live in the last days of the church age, and the entire history of the church has been that of a leavened kingdom. In the earliest days of the church it was already a corrupt mixture. Paul warned of savage wolves coming in among the sheep. He spoke of false apostles and false brethren. He addressed areas of carnality that were

rampant in the churches. He spoke of those whose gods were their bellies and who were covetous and who served mammon.

Even in the early church there were tares among the wheat; there were birds nesting in the tree, the meal had become thoroughly leavened. It is not by chance that these parables in Luke are immediately followed by the question, "Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?" This is indeed the message of these parables. There is much mixture in the kingdom of Yahweh. Much impurity exists among the body of Christ. The kingdom has become thoroughly leavened until its corruption is everywhere. It is but a few who have kept their garments clean and unspotted, as is indicated also in Yahshua's words to the church in Sardis.

Revelation 3:3-4

3 'Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent. If therefore you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come upon you.

4 *'But you have a few people* in Sardis who have not soiled their garments; and they will walk with Me in white; for they are worthy.

Yes, it is but a few who are clean. The rest have fallen into sin, deception, and the impurity of mixing the holy and the profane. This was clearly foretold in these parables, and in another place we see even greater light being shed on this truth of the awful corruption that would attend the church age. Much is revealed in the following account of one of Yahshua's miracles.

Matthew 8:28-33

28 And when He had come to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, two men who were demon-possessed met Him as they were coming out of the tombs; they were so exceedingly violent that no one could pass by that road.

29 And behold, they cried out, saying, "What do we have to do with You, Son of [Yahweh]? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

30 Now there was at a distance from them a herd of many swine feeding.

31 And the demons began to entreat Him, saying, "If You are going to cast us out, send us into the herd of swine."

32 And He said to them, "Begone!" And they came out, and went into the swine, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the waters.

33 And the herdsmen ran away, and went to the city, and reported everything, including the incident of the demoniacs.

(NAS)

Mark 5:13

And He gave them permission. And coming out, the unclean spirits entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea, about two thousand of them and they were drowned in the sea.
(NAS)

Let me begin by saying that no one should expect that when they read the accounts of the miracles of Yahshua that they are just being given a nice accounting of some of His actions. Yahshua spoke only to the people in parables so that seeing they might not see and that hearing they might not hear. He never spoke openly to the multitudes. His truth was presented in such a way that only those whom the Father intended to hear the truth would receive it. In the same way, every one of Yahshua's miracles recorded in scripture are a living parable. Each one has meaning and symbolism involved with it. They are given in this way so that only those with ears to hear will hear, and only those who have eyes to see will see.

This miracle is such a hidden message pertaining to the truths of the kingdom. Pigs represent uncleanness. There was not then, nor is there today, any animal that represents uncleanness more so than does the pig. The pig was an unclean animal to the Jew. Eating pork was forbidden. The herd of swine represents an unclean assembly. It typifies a gathering of unclean individuals, individuals who have mixed the clean and the impure, for the pig meets one criteria of clean animals, it has a split hoof, yet it does not meet the other, it does not chew the cud.

In a very poignant way this herd of pigs represents the church. This animal fits the same characteristics of the three parables we have just read. The pig is a mixture of holy and profane. There are animals that meet both criteria given by Yahweh to be considered clean, and there are animals that meet neither characteristic. There are also some, like the pig, that meet one, but not both criteria. It is unclean because it is a mixture. It is unclean, and it is attended by herdsmen (ministers) who run for their lives in fear when they meet with the power of Yahweh that is present in Yahshua. These same herdsmen return with the townspeople and they entreat Yahshua to remove His presence from them for they are afraid of what effect His presence will have upon them. The anointing upon Yahshua has already destroyed the means for them to get gain by shepherding unclean animals, and they are afraid that much more might result. The symbolism here should be obvious, but we are given an even greater indication of what is being revealed here.

We see that the demons, when they first encountered Yahshua, asked Him a question that the mass of Christendom has little understood. They ask, "Have you come to torment us before the time?" What are they talking about?

Satan, and those allied with him are well aware of the time schedule our Father has established to accomplish His purposes. They know that six days were allotted before

Yahshua would come and establish His kingdom in power. Six days equates to 6,000 years, for a day with Yahweh is as a thousand years (II Peter 3:8). Yahshua at this time, however, was appearing before the time to establish His kingdom and to assert His authority in the Earth. Only 4 days had passed, 4,000 years since Adam was first created. The demons understood that it was not yet time for Yahshua to establish His millennial kingdom on Earth and so they asked Him if He was going to torment them "before the time."

The demons clearly understood that His appearing was 2,000 years early. This should make it plain that there is great symbolism in the rest of this encounter. The demons entreated Yahshua to allow them to enter the herd of swine. In Mark we are told that there are 2,000 swine. This represents the 2,000 years of impurity that would remain in the kingdom of Yahweh before Yahshua returned to establish His millennial kingdom. The demons are in effect asking, "Can we enter into the impure swine kingdom of the church that will exist for the next 2,000 years? You won't consign us to torment before the full time has arrived, will you?"

Yahshua gives them permission to go and enter the swine, the animals that are a mixture of holy and profane things. This coincides perfectly with the three parables at which we have already looked. Yahshua had already compared the kingdom of Yahweh to a mustard tree where the birds (demons) would nest in its branches. He had compared it to a field of wheat where tares had been sown by an enemy. He had compared it to three pecks of meal that had been thoroughly leavened with sin, false teaching, pride, and the traditions of man. Now we see the demons asking permission to inhabit this impure kingdom that is tended by herdsmen who flee at the presence of Yahshua.

One further example I will give to further establish this truth is found in another quotation from Yahshua.

Matthew 7:6

"Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces."

Who has been the greatest threat to the true remnant believers throughout the years? Has it not been the established church? Was it not the Catholic church during the dark ages who reigned over the Inquisition? Has it not been the established church that has persecuted the true saints of Yahweh and who has even put many of them to death? Is it not the Christian religious system today that is responding with such animosity and anger toward the truths being revealed through Yahweh's little flock of believers? Many are being cast out and being disfellowshipped. Many are being branded as heretics, yes even in the church in America, for proclaiming truth and exposing the errors of the leavened church.

For this reason Yahshua warned His disciples against casting their pearls, their precious gems of truth, before swine. These swine are the swine of the unclean church, and they will indeed turn and rend the saint who casts their pearls of truth before them, for truth always causes a separation. It exposes darkness, and it stirs up the demonic influences that are nesting in the branches of the mustard tree of Christianity.

As I have been inundated by the impure mixture of the church at this time of year I have been prompted to write this article. If anyone does not perceive in what ways the church has become leavened with false doctrine and sin, then I encourage you to read on and examine these things with an honest appraisal.

As much of the church world is celebrating Easter I feel led of the Spirit to share some things regarding this “holy day” that I cannot shake from my mind. I recently took a job as an instructor teaching computer repair at a local technical college. A number of my students were speaking of going to passion plays and attending Easter sunrise services, and the other things that the church likes to do at this time of year. My reaction to their words was strangely different than it would have been in years past. Let me explain.

There was a time when I was very much a part of the Christian religious system of our day. I always felt like I was in parts of the body that were on the cutting edge of things, enjoying fresh praise and worship, fostering an atmosphere where the gifts of the Spirit were free to be exercised, embracing the prophetic, etc., but there was still much that was typical of what many have come to call the Christian religious system. We still had a mixture of pagan and Biblical influences. We celebrated the “christianized” pagan holidays of Easter and Christmas. We focused our calendar upon dates and holidays of pagan origin rather than on Yahweh’s appointed feast days. Basically, we conducted ourselves according to our traditions rather than by the leading of the Spirit of Yahweh and the precedence of scripture.

In those days I would have been proud to hear any of the students in college mention a religious holiday, or a church service, or the name of Yahshua. I would have felt that they were being bold in freely talking about their Christian experience and I would have been inwardly pleased by it. On this occasion, however, I felt a different emotion within myself. This emotion has resulted because Father has been separating me from much of what has passed for the things of His Kingdom, but which have actually had their origin in the will and mind of man, as well as in the mind of Satan.

As I listened to the students I thought of how sad it was that they so unknowingly mixed that which is holy with that which is profane. I thought of what a corruption the church has become as the leaven of sin and false teaching has thoroughly

leavened the body of Christ. As one student lamented that the school didn't give them an extra day off for Easter, my thought was "I guess the college doesn't place as high a value on celebrating pagan festivals as the church does."

Easter is a holiday that is never mentioned in scriptures as a day that Yahweh said we were to observe. In fact the holiday Easter is never mentioned in scriptures at all, unless you have a King James translation of scriptures, in which case the word Easter appears in Acts 12:4. This word is erroneously translated in the KJV from the word "Pascha" which clearly denotes Passover, not a pagan holiday. Even the New King James version corrected this grievous error of translation and the word is correctly rendered Passover in the NKJV.

The word Easter comes from the Germanic word Eostre, and it is the name of the pagan goddess of fertility. In other cultures this name is rendered as Ishtar, Astarte, and Ashtoreth. The goddess of fertility is venerated in many cultures, both modern and ancient, and typically in the spring there is a festival devoted to this goddess. This goddess would be honored in the spring in hopes that she would be pleased with the attention given to her and that the coming growing and birthing season would be a fruitful one. People would honor the goddess of fertility in hopes that their animals would bear many offspring, that their crops would be bountiful, that their maidens would have many children, etc..

It is because this festival was in honor of the goddess of fertility that there are so many symbols of fertility associated with it to this day. The egg is a symbol of fertility. The bunny rabbit is another well known symbol of fertility, as are hats adorned with flowers, and even the grass that is placed in many Easter baskets. These things have nothing to do with Passover, nor is there any command given in scripture to use any such imagery in conjunction with a remembrance of our Savior's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. These things are strictly pagan in origin and are related to the goddess known to many Europeans as Eostre.

It is well established that many pagan holidays were merged with Christian beliefs and practices when Constantine declared the Roman Empire to be a Christian empire. In order to placate the masses of people who worshiped pagan deities, the leaders of the Catholic Church determined that it was expedient to maintain the same holidays already celebrated by the pagan peoples, but to incorporate symbols and doctrines of Christianity into them. Therefore the spring fertility festival was kept, but it was also declared to be a remembrance of the crucifixion, and resurrection of the Messiah. In the same way the winter festival to the god Saturn, called Saturnalia, was recast as a celebration of the birth of the Son of Yahweh.

Today we find an amalgamation of Christian and pagan beliefs and practices during these holidays. Although many churches remember the suffering and resurrection of the Savior at this time, they also equally mix in pagan elements such as Easter egg

hunts, a profusion of flowers or greenery to adorn the sanctuaries they meet in, or even the giving of Easter baskets filled with eggs, chocolate bunnies, and multi-colored grass. Even more telling of the pagan influence is the use of the name Easter to describe these celebrations and remembrances.

In the book of Acts we are told of another goddess that the citizens of the Roman Empire worshiped. This was Diana, who was also called Artemis. Diana was the goddess of wild animals and the hunt. She was also a fertility goddess and she was often depicted with having a multitude of breasts as is seen in statues found in ancient Ephesus where Paul preached. If the church today established a holiday in honor of Diana many saints would be outraged. If we established a holiday and we called it "Diana" and on this holiday we incorporated symbols that were associated with Diana such as a quiver and a bow, or a hunting horn, yet we declared that this would also be a Christian holiday and we would incorporate Christian symbols and doctrines with it, most saints would not be fooled, rather they would be appalled.

Many would say, "No way am I going to allow myself or my family to participate in a celebration to a false god or goddess. No way am I bringing pagan symbols or practices into my church gathering or into my home. No way will I have the name of the goddess Diana venerated in my home." Yet when the celebration is already established and has been in practice for hundreds of years, there is very little protest at the abomination that is taking place annually. Multitudes of saints speak the name "Easter" (Eostre, Ishtar) with great affection, and they embrace all the symbolism associated with her worship.

One friend of my wife's called and invited us to bring our children to participate in an Easter egg hunt at their church. Can you see the incongruity of this? Can you see the mixing of the holy and the profane, the things of the Kingdom of Yahweh and the things of pagan idolatry? Is Yahweh pleased with such a mixture?

The church today has basically chosen the manner in which they will worship, honor, and serve Yahweh, with little regard to what He has spoken and declared to be His will. In this regard the church has become like Vashti who is spoken of in the book of Esther. The book of Esther opens with King Ahasuerus giving a great celebration. The King had determined to display the wealth and glory of his kingdom. Towards the end of this display he gave a great banquet that lasted for seven days and he invited the great and the small to participate. There is much symbolism here regarding the seven days and what is now occurring as we enter the seventh day, or seventh millennium, since Adam.

On the seventh day of the banquet we are told that the king summoned his bride to come forth to be displayed before his nobles so that her beauty could be seen. However, an interesting thing is noted just prior to this. We are told in Esther 1:9 that Vashti was giving her own banquet and she was doing it "in the palace which

belonged to the king.” In the same way the church today has little regard for what the King of kings is doing. The church is busy with a banquet of their own devising, and they are conducting it in the habitation that belongs to the King, and with the resources that belong to the King.

You may ask, “How is the church doing this?” She is doing this by being led by tradition and by her own will, desires, programs, devices, practices, celebrations, etc., and she is doing all according to her concept of what seems right and acceptable in her own eyes. She is not walking in the fear of Yahweh, nor is she being careful to do only that which He leads her to do.

Could the church really defend having a holiday named after a goddess of fertility, full of symbols of fertility? Can this same church declare that it is the Spirit of Yahweh that has led them to have Easter egg hunts and to mix the holy with the profane? Would the Elohim who commanded that the Israelites should not even mix two types of fabric together, for this would lead to an unholy mixture (Deuteronomy 22:11), declare that it is His will to mix the worship of a false goddess with the worship of His Son? Consider the following words from Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 22:26

Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane, and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean... and I am profaned among them.

The saints of Yahshua were never instructed to celebrate pagan holidays. The practice of the early believers was to recognize the truths symbolized in Yahweh’s festivals; Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, etc.. Passover and Pentecost have found their fulfillment, but Tabernacles yet remains to be fulfilled. We are even told that in the millennial reign to come that the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths, Sukkot) will still be observed, for the majority of people will not yet have experienced it's fulfillment in their lives.

Zechariah 14:16-19

16 Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, [Yahweh] of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths [Tabernacles].

17 And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, [Yahweh] of hosts, there will be no rain on them.

18 And if the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which [Yahweh] smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.

19 This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.
(NAS)

The church, however, has replaced the remembrance of Yahweh's feasts with pagan holidays that have been "Christianized." The church is conducting its own banquet according to its own will and desires, and it is doing so with the King's resources in the King's house (the temple made of living stones). It is little wonder that the church knows so little about responding in obedience to the King in this hour. They are like Vashti who loved the honor of being wed to the king, but she only obeyed when his desires coincided with her own. Thus we see in the book of Esther that when she was summoned before the king on the seventh day (take note of the timing) that she refused to answer his summons.

Because of her disobedience she was banned from anymore coming into his presence and her royal position was given to another who was more worthy than she. (For more on this, read the chapter "The Bride as Seen in Esther" found in the book "The Remnant Bride".)

Nowhere in scriptures are we given any indication that it is acceptable to follow Yahweh according to our desire and our methods. He calls for obedience to His expressed will and desire. When two of Aaron's sons put fire in their censers to offer incense before Yahweh, doing so in violation of the manner and practice Yahweh had given to Moses, they were instantly judged and killed. When David thought to bring the ark into Jerusalem that the presence of Yahweh might be among the people, and even when he built a brand new cart to transport it, and he and all the people were praising and worshiping Yahweh in sincerity and with great love and passion, their failure to act according to Yahweh's instructions concerning how the ark was to be transported caused His anger to break out among them and to kill Uzzah for his lack of reverence. Even when Ananias and Sapphira were giving a free gift of money to the church, laying it at the apostles' feet, their failure to do so with integrity caused their deaths. When many of the Corinthian believers were taking Yahshua's supper in an improper and irreverent manner, the anger of Yahweh burned against them and many were sick and some died because of it (I Corinthians 11:30). When several of the churches mentioned in Revelation failed to pursue Yahshua and walk before Him in a pure devotion, they were warned that they were in danger of being removed from His presence.

Yahweh does care about the manner in which we follow Him.

The kingdom of Yahweh found during the church age is now, and has been for two thousand years, a picture of an impure mixture. It seems somehow appropriate that the highest holy days celebrated by the church, Easter and Christmas, are both pagan in origin and they are a blending of the holy and the profane. In a very profound way

these holidays represent the state of the church as a whole. The false and the true, the pagan and the scriptural, the worldly and the heavenly, both light and darkness are all mixed in together. The tares are among the wheat. The birds are nesting in the mustard tree. The leaven has thoroughly been mixed with the meal. The church is an unclean creature that meets some of Yahweh's standards for holiness, while miserably failing in others.

It is for this reason that when Yahshua returns that the first priority will be to bring forth a separation. He will have to sort out the mixture and bring forth the pure unto Himself. He will cleanse His temple. He will separate the wheat from the tares.

Malachi 3:1-3

1 "Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And [Yahweh], whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming," says [Yahweh] of hosts.

2 "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap.

3 "And He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to Yahweh offerings in righteousness."

(NAS)

Yes, the impure church says that they are seeking Yahweh, and they claim to delight in Him, but do they truly anticipate His coming? He will come as a refiner. He will come to purify. He will bring forth righteousness from His people who have walked in uncleanness.

Selah! (Pause and consider)