

## The Unleavened Church

By Ronald L. Dart

Once upon a time, there was a very young church. It was still unstructured, in spite of the fact that some heavy hitters had been there in its earliest days. The church was undisciplined with apparently little formal structure and no formal disciplinary methods. The church was spiritually strong, but without a clear direction. Their doctrinal structure was poorly formed. They had no body of literature to fall back on. The only literature they had was the Scriptures, and there was very little tradition as to how to interpret and apply them. So it is small wonder that they were in some degree of trouble.

The church was only five or six years old, and the Christian faith was only 25 years old, or so. The church I am talking about was in Corinth, and the reason I am drawn to them at this season, is that the first letter to the Corinthians is the only New Testament letter than can be directly tied to a holy day. We know that the letter was either written during the Days of Unleavened Bread, or delivered then. And it is shot through with allusions to the festival.

A striking example of how little they had things together is the

rebuke Paul delivers in the fifth chapter: "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife" (1 Corinthians 5:1). This is really shocking. I don't think any of our churches would tolerate that, but then we have Paul's letter to go by.

### Unleavened But Still Puffed Up

"And ye are puffed up," Paul continued, "and have not rather mourned, that he that has done this deed might be taken away from among you." "Puffed up" is a rare expression, used only by Paul in the New Testament. Six of his

seven usages of the expression are in this letter. It is suggestive that the letter is a Passover letter, and so the admonitions therein are apropos of the Days of Unleavened Bread.

"For I verily," Paul continued, "as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed." Paul instructed the church to deal with the issue firmly. It isn't clear exactly what he meant by some remarks, but one thing is clear. The miscreant was to be isolated, expelled from the church. It is at this point that Paul plainly borrows from the season: "Your glorying is not good," he wrote. "Know ye not that a little leaven leavens the whole batch? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new batch, as ye are unleavened" (vv. 6-7). At

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### Will you help spread The Word?

How can you give to God when He owns everything? Then when you make your offering to God, who is the beneficiary—God or you? God gives you the opportunity to "store up treasures in heaven" and reap eternal rewards. How awesome! Tithing is commanded of God (Malachi 3: 8-12), and the obedient Christian cheerfully obeys. But are there ways you can help spread the Gospel other than tithing your paycheck or increase? You may have stocks that have appreciated with significant advantages for you, the donor, as an income deduction in the year they are given by avoiding capital gains taxes. If you have questions about this, check with your personal tax advisor or call Larry Watkins at 1-888-BIBLE-44.

# Online Friday Night Bible Study

By Gerald Saul

Every Friday night, you are invited to join Ronald Dart as he teaches the Bible like no other. Never before have we been able to offer such an opportunity, where thousands of people can simultaneously study the same Scriptures and have their questions answered by Mr. Dart. We've set up a forum on our website for discussion of the material covered—in case your question just can't wait until the following week, or if you'd like to offer your own comments to other listeners.

This series of Bible studies began in February, but don't worry; every Bible study is available for listening or downloading at [www.borntowin.net](http://www.borntowin.net). If you want to be the first to know when new studies are ready, be sure and subscribe to our email newsletter. It's the only way.

- ▶ **What:** The Weekend Bible Study with Ronald L. Dart
- ▶ **Where:** Only on [www.borntowin.net](http://www.borntowin.net)
- ▶ **When:** Every Friday night
- ▶ **How:** We'll email our newsletter subscribers when a new study is posted. Or, you can visit the *What's New* section on our website's home page and link to the Weekend Bible Study.

The Weekend Bible Study is a new feature that has quickly become a favorite of [borntowin.net](http://borntowin.net). The Bible Study is an experimental feature until we get situated in our new office building, but we will update you as often as we can.

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## What Our Listeners Say

“I have just finished reading about worshipping on holy days and I find it so refreshing. Many times last year your Born to Win series discussed the holy days I found myself studying and believing anew. I find that in the past when I have listened to today's Christian beliefs at 'Christian Churches' I found myself dismissing these holy days as part of the 'law' which 'we are not under.' That doctrine seems to be everywhere and I am thinking that it has come about just like the Jewish oral law, by habit.

“What possible harm can be done by worshipping God and acknowledging Jesus in the fullness of these holy days? I am wondering if those who do not grow 'up' and digest the more time consuming of scriptures they cannot fully appreciate the layers of truth and the worshipping of Christ in an open manner that all men can see.

“These past 5-8 years I have dismissed several churches because of apostacy or just apathy, now with your learned patience I have grown in Christ more than I ever thought possible. These days are rich in discovery and devotion thanks to you” DH.

To learn more about the holy days of the Bible and the law that Christians are to keep, you can call 1-888-BIBLE-44 to order *The Thread, God's Appointments With History and Law & Covenant*, two books by Ronald L. Dart, in paperback or hardcover. These can also be ordered online at [www.borntowin.net](http://www.borntowin.net).

“Hi Folks, I just sent a donation to you via the internet/paypal but i either forgot to mention or didnt mention that i listen to your fine broadcasts on KARI radio. I am in Canada. We'd have given money long before this but i wasnt going to get a tax break from it so i always gave to others. Finally i have to acknowledge that it's more important to support your program than get a tax break. KARI are the guys. Thanks!” Ray

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first this sounds like double talk, that you may be unleavened as you are unleavened. But it makes perfect sense if you understand that the Corinthians were observing the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. They had thrown out the leavened bread and were thus unleavened in the physical sense. Now this church needed to learn about spiritual leaven: “For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us,” Paul went on, “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” (vv. 7-8).

**The Surprising Responsibility**

Nothing could be plainer. A new church, a Gentile church at that, is exhorted to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread and is instructed in the spiritual significance of the day. There are several important lessons to be drawn from this chapter. It is important for a church to have *a systematic approach to discipline*. There needed to be a way whereby the *entire church could take the necessary steps to discipline its members*, even to the extent of throwing someone out the door, if necessary. Mind you, this was not something to be done by a single leader or even a committee. *It was the whole church that had to take the responsibility*.

This lesson applies even now, but it is a mistake to wait until a problems arise to establish procedures for dealing with them. It will be very difficult, and

probably hurtful to attempt to establish this on the fly with a real person in the cross hairs.

The church cannot tolerate just any kind of behavior. The reputation of the church is at stake, and that was one of the issues that concerned Paul regarding the misbehaving man in Corinth. “But Christ said we should not judge one another,” someone will object. Applying that in a disciplinary situation is a misapplication of what he said. Sometimes you have to face facts, in this case, a man was having sex with his father’s wife.

There is, though, a danger of self-righteousness, of becoming puffed up. We are all sinners, and private sins are not the church’s problem. This wasn’t a private sin. As it happens, Jesus offered some detailed instructions on this sort of thing, and he started with the antidote to being puffed up. His disciples asked him, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” Jesus called a little child to him, stood him in the midst:

And he said: “I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me” (Matthew 18:3-5 NIV).

**Humility, the Starting Point for Leadership**

Thus, humility is the starting point for leadership in the church, and necessarily for any disciplinary

procedure. Jesus warned against causing little ones to stumble:

But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come! (vv. 6-7).

Jesus went on to say that whatever causes offense should be dealt with firmly even, in a figure of speech, to the point of cutting off the hand or plucking out the eye (this should never be taken literally). In this day of rampant child abuse, a church can’t be too careful in protecting children. “See that you do not look down on one of these little ones,” Jesus went on, “For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven” (v. 10).

**Steps to Take**

This forms the background of an important lesson in how the church should deal with issues as they arise. The starting point is the individual. “If your brother sins against you,” Jesus continued, “go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over” (v. 15).

That is step one. And it doesn’t work all the time. So what do you do next? “But if he will not listen,” Jesus went on, “take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.”

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But wait. What is the point of having witnesses? That will become evident in the next step, but tragically, most churches have never created a procedure for carrying this forward. I have heard many mourn, “Why don’t people follow Matthew 18?” The answer is that if you can’t carry it forward to the last step, Matthew 18 doesn’t work.

Jesus concluded: “If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector” (v. 17). It is a common error to think we must take the issue to the pastor. The pastor can serve as one of the witnesses, but *Jesus said it must be taken to the church, the assembly.* There is a strong reason for this. If the pastor expels a person for misconduct, that person may play the underdog, elicit sympathy from some, and divide the church. This doesn’t happen if an agreed upon procedure is followed involving the judgment of the assembly, not just one or two persons.

Don’t expect your church to flourish if you aren’t willing to do the heavy lifting. Christ does not expect his church to be leavened with sin. Paul told the Corinthians, “Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?” (1 Corinthians 5:6). Just as a small lump of starter leavens a large lump of dough, so one person can come to infect an entire church. Paul had more to say to this young church during the Days of Unleavened Bread:

If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! (1 Corinthians 6:1-3 NIV).

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#### **A Procedure Must be in Place**

So what should we think? Should our churches have procedures for conflict resolution? There is no point in complaining that the procedures of Matthew 18 are not followed when there is no way to carry them through to their conclusion. The first step in the procedure will not work unless the offender can see where it will go from there.

Earlier in this letter to an unleavened church, Paul said: “I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought” (1 Corinthians 1:10 NIV).

Ouch. We are profoundly short of this goal and always have been. The Corinthian church wasn’t even close, and there was a reason for it. It isn’t immediately clear how we get there from here, but Paul gives us a clue as he continues.

My brothers, some from Chloe’s household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: One of you says, “I follow Paul”; another, “I follow Apollos”; another, “I follow Cephas”; still another, “I follow Christ.” Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? (vv. 11-13).

#### **We Can’t Unite Around a Man**

Right here, Paul puts his finger on the core of the problem. We cannot unite around a man, not even a great man like Paul. Note this well. I am not saying we should not. I am saying we cannot. It is simply not possible. All attempts to do so will end, either in a cult or in division. It is worth reading the entire chapter, as Paul addresses different aspects of the problem. Paul deliberately diminishes his own role to make the point, arguing that to preach with human wisdom and style would diminish the power

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of the Gospel of the cross of Christ. “We preach Christ crucified,” he said, “unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (vv. 23-25).

**What Follows Should Humble Us**

Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world

to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him (1 Corinthians 1:26-29 NIV).

If you will allow me a moment of personal reflection, I think it was a long familiarity with the Epistles of Paul that influenced me in 1995 when I started CEM. It was not so much that it influenced what I did, as it influenced what I did not do. I could not have started a church organization without being the defacto head of it; i.e., if I had started a church, I would have

unavoidably created division and choosing up of sides behind this or that man. Precisely what happened in Corinth. I decided to serve the churches without running any of them. And so far, God seems to have accepted that service.

There is much in this letter to the Corinthians that a local church can take to heart, think about, and apply. And there is no better time to do it than during the Days of Unleavened Bread. For Jesus wants an unleavened church. Not just people with unleavened homes.

**Notice**

The Passover will be observed this year on the evening of April 18<sup>th</sup>, and the Days of Unleavened Bread will be celebrated April 20-26.

## Where Are the Leaders?

By Lenny Cacchio

“It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes” (Psalm 118:9).

In the first volume of his World War II memoirs, Winston Churchill reports a remarkable admission by Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, who served in that office from 1935-1937. When challenged for not taking rearmament of Britain seriously in the face of growing threats from the Continent, he replied in Parliament with a remarkable admission of his true motives:

I put before the whole House my own views with an appalling frankness. . . You will remember

that at that time [the time of the election] there was probably a stronger pacifist feeling running through this country than at any time since the war. You will remember the election at Fulham in the autumn of 1933, when a seat which the National Government held was lost by about 7,000 votes on no issue but the pacifist. . . I asked myself what chance was there. . . within the next year or two of that feeling being so changed that the country would give mandate for rearmament? Supposing I had gone to the country and said that Germany was rearming, and that we must

rearm, does anybody think that this pacific democracy would have rallied to that cry at that moment? I cannot think of anything that would have made the loss of the election from my point of view more certain (*The Gathering Storm*, by Winston S. Churchill, p. 216).

As historian William Manchester notes, “Surely this admits of but one interpretation. Tory victories were more important to Baldwin than the specter of Luftwaffe bombers overhead” (*The Last Lion: Winston Spencer Churchill, Volume II*, by William Manchester, p. 218). Or, as Churchill explained

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it, "That a Prime Minister should avow that he had not done his duty in regard to national safety because he was afraid of losing an election was an incident without parallel in our parliamentary history."

At least Baldwin owned up to it! Too often expediency trumps statesmanship, and goes unchallenged and certainly not admitted. Hopefully a new Churchill awaits his call. In any case our Western civilization faces a crisis of politics over leadership. Though distressing, such a state is common in the affairs of mankind. Ezekiel lamented the same faults of his day when he wrote, "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock? . . . You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost." (Ezekiel 34:2, 4 NIV).

***It is our duty as free citizens to learn as much as possible about the candidates and vote for the people whom we believe would best serve the nation's interest, even if what they must do is wholly unpopular.***

In this time of the never-ending election cycle, candidates seem to think they have a constitutional right to elevate their importance, dominate the public discourse, campaign every day of every year,

and then imply that they are the saviors of the human race. So we elect our Congress every two years and our President every four, only to be disillusioned and even angry when they fail to deliver the goods.

And that is as it should be, because these people are not our saviors, and they are not our benefactors. For the most part their interests are reelection and legacy-building, not public service and statesmanship. If we lean on the weak reed of human leadership, it will break in our hands and disappoint our hearts. Even Churchill was turned out of office immediately after the surrender of Germany. It is our duty as free citizens to learn as much as possible about the candidates and vote for the people whom we believe would best serve the nation's interest, even if what they must do is wholly unpopular. But, in the end, they are all human. The psalmist had it right: "It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes." (Psalm 118:8-9 NIV).

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### *In Memory*

CEM gratefully acknowledges the generous donation made from Richmond, Virginia in memory of Billie Fowlkes. Also, we gratefully accept the generous donation given in memory of James Martin Paolozzi who was killed by a drunk driver. Our deepest sympathy goes out to these two families in their time of terrible loss. Our heartfelt prayers are with you.

## **Seven Pitfalls for the Christian Voter in 2008**

### **FREE OFFER**

Last January, I was invited to give a speech to the Houston County Christian Coalition in Crockett, Texas. When enquiring about the organization, I learned they are a nonpartisan Christian group that encourages Christians to be involved in the political process. Their current business the night I attended was the distribution of voters' guides throughout their community.

After giving the matter some thought, I accepted the invitation, and decided on a theme that would complement their purpose for the evening. I spoke on pitfalls Christians should watch out for in the election season. Realizing that many of our listeners would be interested in what I had to say, I carried along a recorder. If you would like to receive a *FREE* CD of my speech, just check the box on the enclosed card and send it back to us.

The CD is *FREE*, but don't forget us when you plan your giving.

# CEM Memorial Day Family Retreat

By Skip Martin

Join us for the annual CEM Memorial Day Weekend Family Retreat, May 23-26, at Paris Landing State Park, Buchanan, TN on the banks of Kentucky Lake.

Sandwiches and drinks will be furnished by CEM Friday evening for Meet and Greet. The popular CEM Retreat Seminar Program will once again provide a variety of inspirational and educational choices at 9:00 and 10:00 a.m. Saturday, Sunday, and Monday. One added feature will be an interactive Bible Question and Answer session with Ron Dart.

Exciting, fun-filled YEA classes begin Saturday at 10:00 a.m. for five age groups—Beginners (3-5), Primaries (6-8), Juniors (9-11), Intermediates (12-15), and Senior Teens (16-19). Each student will receive a *FREE* full color workbook for the weekend.

Ronald L. Dart will speak at 2:00 p.m. for the Sabbath Worship Service. Ron is the voice of the international *Born to Win* radio broadcast, and has had several books published. As a conservative visionary and educator, his honest approach and rare insights into the Bible and current events allow him to reach the minds and hearts of people in a non-argumentative way.

The 2007 Bible Times Bazaar was a huge success with all ages, even though it was aimed mainly at the 12 and under crowd. A similar big event for children will be held this year in conjunction with the Saturday evening Pie and Ice Cream Social. The theme will be *Meet Me At The Fair!* and will feature music, decorations, and costumes evoking an early 1900s county fair. Fair booths will provide Bible-based crafts, games, activities, souvenirs, and lots of fun for all ages.

Fellowship will be a main ingredient in making this another wonderful Family Retreat. What better time to fellowship than over a piece of pie with a scoop of ice cream at our famous Pie and Ice Cream Social?

Sunday night brings a family dance to the Conference Center which starts at about 8:00, with refreshments to be served. We plan to start with old folks music so they/we can get to bed early and let the younger crowd dance the night away.

More activities are in the planning stages for all ages. A softball game, and a pool party with horse-shoes, volleyball, and tennis, are planned for all. Information will be out soon.

## Preliminary Schedule

Friday night, May 23	Meet and greet with sandwiches, chips, and drinks furnished by CEM.
Saturday, May 24	Seminars from 9:00-10:00 a.m. and 10:00-11:00 a.m. YEA Classes from 10:00-11:00 a.m. Worship Service begins at 2:00 p.m. Pie and Ice Cream begins at 7:00 p.m. in conjunction with <i>Meet Me At The Fair!</i>
Sunday, May 25	Seminars from 9:00-10:00 a.m. and 10:00-11:00 a.m. YEA Classes from 10:00-11:00 a.m. Family and Youth Activities TBA
Monday, May 26	Seminars from 9:00-10:00 a.m. and 10:00-11:00 a.m. YEA Classes from 10:00-11:00 a.m. Farewell by Ron Dart at 11:30 a.m.

Find more information on the CEM's website, [www.borntowin.net](http://www.borntowin.net), as plans are updated. This is truly a wonderful opportunity for spiritual growth and relaxation, and is a time to make and renew friendships.

Join us Memorial Day Weekend for a great time. Give CEM's group number 3355 when calling 1-800-250-8614 for reservations or go to <http://tennessee.gov/environment/parks/ParisLanding>.

# YEA SUMMER CAMP

JUNE 22 -29

YEA Summer Camp is open to all teens who will be 13 and have not yet turned 19 by the June 29, 2008, regardless of their church affiliation. It will be held at Camp Wewoka Woods, near Wewoka, Oklahoma.

Activities will include water skiing and tubing, swimming, horseback riding, group initiatives, arts and crafts, volleyball, basketball, dances, the annual camp fun show, and the Wacky Olympics. To meet campers' spiritual needs, there are daily cabin Bible studies, group studies, and a huddle to close every day with fellowship and praise to God.

The tuition fee remains a real bargain at only \$260. Realizing that not everyone can afford to attend summer camp, we have established a special camp scholarship fund. Anyone who wants to sponsor a deserving young person to attend YEA Summer Camp may make a contribution to the tax deductible camp fund used exclusively for this purpose.

If you or anyone you know would enjoy camp, please ask them to call 1-888-BIBLE-44 or e-mail [ls@cemnetwork.com](mailto:ls@cemnetwork.com) for an application. An exciting 2008 summer camp awaits every young person who gets his application in early enough to hold his place. For more information see our website at <http://www.borntowin.net/newsite/Events/SummerCamp.aspx?level=1>.

## Christian Educational Ministries

Statement of Cash Flows  
For the Three Months Ended  
January 31, 2008

Receipts:	
Contributions	\$395576
CEM Bookstore	34507
Interest Income	4080
	\$434163
Expenses:	
A/V Supplies	\$ 6794
Rents	6316
Office & Adm. Expenses	4366
Mailing Expenses	3621
Postage	19459
Printing	13297
Radio Expenses	225724
Telephone & Utilities	2634
Editorial Services	3133
CEM Bookstore	9457
Foreign Operations	1492
Conference Expenses	1677
Employee Benefits	9395
Wages & Payroll Taxes	91101
Total Operating Expenses	398466
Increase in Fund Balance	\$35697

## *How Well Do Your Kids Know The Prophets?*

Did you know . . .

- Isaiah prophesied in Judah during the reigns of Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah?
- Jeremiah prophesied to Judah and was often in danger because his predictions angered the officials?
- Ezekiel spoke to the Jews who were in exile in Babylon?
- Daniel went as a captive to Babylon, where he rose to a position of power because of his God-given wisdom?
- Hosea prophesied to Israel, probably shortly before the fall of Samaria?
- Amos was a shepherd from Judah who prophesied God's coming punishment of Israel?
- Jonah was called to preach to the people of Nineveh, but he ran from God instead?
- Zephaniah ministered during the reign of Judah's King Josiah?
- Haggai and Zechariah prophesied during the time when the Temple was being rebuilt?

*These are taken from The NIV Study Bible For Kids.*

### *Christian Educational Ministries*

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*That the man of God may be proficient  
and equipped for every good work.*