

WHAT DO WE MEAN FIRSTFRUITS?

To understand what the word “firstfruits” means, who it is referring to and why it is important for all true Christians today, let’s open our Bibles, turn to the Old Testament book of Leviticus 23 and find out exactly what the Bible says about “firstfruits.”

On Sunday morning, the day after the weekly Sabbath during the days of unleavened bread, a bundle of freshly-cut stalks of barley was brought to the chief priest. He then waved the barley sheaf to be accepted by God before the spring harvest could begin (verses 10-11).

That Sunday was called wave sheaf Sunday, and it has deep, significant spiritual symbolism.

It was on this very day — wave sheaf Sunday — that Jesus Christ presented Himself to God the Father. He became the first of the firstfruits of God’s spiritual harvest (1 Corinthians 15:23).

Since Christ was the first, there had to be other firstfruits. Who then are the rest of the firstfruits?

For the answer, we need to go back to the beginning. Back to the garden of Eden.

When Adam rejected God and believed Satan instead, God closed off all access to His Holy Spirit (Genesis 3:22-24). ALL mankind was effectively cut off from God.

And a corrupt and sinful civilization started. A world influenced by Satan the devil that continues to this present day.

It was into Satan’s world that Jesus Christ came to qualify and replace Satan as ruler of the earth.

In a titanic battle for rulership over all the earth, Christ defeats Satan (Matthew 4:1-10).

Satan is now disqualified, but God allowed him to remain on that throne so that defiant mankind would learn the lesson that only God's way works and produces the most beneficial results.

So now, Jesus Christ began to build HIS church (Matthew 16:18).

He is not talking about a physical building. The word "church" in the Greek is *ekklesia*, which means "called-out ones." He is talking about the congregation. The flock.

The Church of God then is composed of those specially-selected individuals who have been called out of this world (John 6:44). They are God's little flock who have been set apart from the rest of the world for a special mission.

Initially, Jesus called twelve disciples. Disciples in the Greek means "students" or "learners."

He taught His disciples God's way of life. God's way of give and serve and help. Love for God and love for neighbor (Luke 10:27). The way that summarizes God's perfect law, His 10 Commandments.

And because they had to contend with Satan, God gave them the help they would need: His Holy Spirit of power, of love and of a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7)

On the day of Pentecost — the third step of God's plan of salvation — 120 individuals, gathered together in this room at Jerusalem, received God's Holy Spirit (Acts 1:12-14; 2:1-4).

And they became God's begotten sons and daughters. Partakers of the divine nature, by the power of His Holy Spirit (Romans 8:16-17, 23; 2 Peter 1:4).

And so, the New Testament Church of God became the firstfruits of all mankind (James 1:18).

Those in God's Church are His firstfruits who are now being trained and prepared for positions of authority and service in the government of God in the Kingdom of God.

At the return of Jesus Christ, the firstfruits will be resurrected and instantly changed from flesh to powerful, glorified, immortal spirit beings. Not just for

personal, spiritual salvation; but to teach the rest of mankind — billions of them during the Millennium and at the second resurrection — the same precious truth of God His Church is learning today. So that they, too, can become members of His Divine Family.

I would like to quote this passage Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong wrote on page 240 of his book *Mystery of the Ages*. Click on this [link](#) to access his book.

“The family of God will grow. As kings and priests, the Church in the resurrection will be co-rulers under Christ in restoring the government of God over all nations. But we shall also be, as priests, co-saviors with him in saving the world.”

That was God’s grand purpose from the very beginning.

And as God’s firstfruits, those in the Church of God have this priceless, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be a part of that unparalleled endeavor.