

***Intro:***

Main Point of Text: God commands His people to mark their year with three feasts that maintain His unique mark on them.

Sermon Point: *Always Give Christ Your Best.*

***Move 1: All you have every moment is a gift from God.***

“Three times a year” the emphasis (vss. 14, 17): continuous celebration of redemption/provision (Deut. 16:16):

1. Festival Of Unleavened Bread (Passover): vs. 15 (Ex. 12-13). To remember rescue from Egypt, when they first became a nation. Month of Abib (or Nissan, March). Also when planting began.
2. Festival of Harvest (Feast of Weeks/Pentecost, “Fifty Days”). First fruits of beginning of harvest: vs. 16. Anticipates giving of the Law at Sinai fifty days after Passover in Egypt (Deut. 16:1-11).
3. Festival of Ingathering (Tabernacles). First fruits of final harvest: vs. 16. 15<sup>th</sup> day of Tisri (September). Preparation of ground for next harvest. An agricultural cycle of celebration/service.

Festivals are types of/fulfilled in Christ our *Passover* (1 Cor. 5:7). Holy Spirit came down during *Pentecost* (Acts 2) to produce the first fruits of the NT Church (seven weeks after Christ’s death/resurrection during Passover). At end of the Feast of Tabernacles in John 7, He cried: *If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* (vss. 37-38) Lord’s Supper: Eucharist (thanksgiving). Celebrate frequently. *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.* (1 Cor. 11:26). Witnesses Js. 1:17.

***Move 2: Thus, always give back to God in your whole life with your whole heart.***

Point of people. Vs. 17: “appear before the Lord GOD”. Vs. 19: “bring ... into the house of the Lord thy God.” Vs. 14: “to me”. Vs. 18: “my sacrifice”, “my feast”. Worship his way: vs. 15, “appointed” feast, as all had appointed times and directions (see in Lev. 23). Wholehearted service of self. 2 Timothy 4:6-7.

***Move 3: Never give God less than your best.***

Vs. 15b: don’t come with empty hands to God. He has filled them to overflowing. Give your first fruits (vs. 16, 19; see also Ex. 22:29-30). Vs. 17: don’t send the women; the federal heads from all tribes must come themselves to honor Israel’s King. Not only first fruits: best: vs. 19, “first” is “chief”, or “best”. No mixture with worldliness (symbol of unleavened bread). Vs. 19: goat in mother’s milk was a practice of the Canaanites to seek fertile land from their false gods. Festivals principle in 1 Cor. 5:6-8.

***Conclusion:***

***Always Give Christ Your Best.***