

May 2012

Dear Brethren and Church of the Firstborn:

The Day of Pentecost is almost upon us, which pictures a firstfruit harvest at the end of the age, when Christ returns to gather up God's Firstborn Sons. In this *Monthly Letter* I would like to explore the benefits of the firstborn and also discuss why many of the firstborn or begotten of God's Spirit will not be chosen; for many are called but few are chosen (Matthew 20:16).

Most of you know that I am a twin, but did you know that I was the firstborn? I was born some twenty minutes before my brother, Robert. Of course today, in this society, being the firstborn means very little. The firstborn is not recognized as being important to God today, and that is the way Satan likes it. But there was a time when the firstborn counted for a great deal in Israel and still does, but the world has forgotten.

Once, a long time ago in 1948, I received a whole dollar for being the firstborn and for being named after my grandfather. I felt very special at that time because a dollar was a lot of money in those days. My brother, Robert, does not remember, but I will never forget it because my mother made me split the dollar with him, which made him very happy.

The rights of the firstborn are found in Deuteronomy 21:15–17, which we will cover later, but it states that even if the firstborn son was not popular or loved as much as his other brothers, he could not be passed over. Why? Because the firstborn was the beginning of his father's strength.

This scripture also applies to us in the sense that as the first-called of God, we are also the beginning of our Father's strength. We cannot be bypassed when it comes to receiving the blessing of the firstborn, even if we are not loved by the world because we are not of the world (John 17:14).

These verses in Deuteronomy 21 do not prove that God ever approved of bigamy, but simply that He guarded the right of the firstborn even in the case of multiple marriages. Yet, sometimes in the course of events, God made exceptions by setting aside the firstborn of a family to bless the younger son who would better fulfill His will. Some examples of this are Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob and even Ephraim and Manasseh. These were exceptions based on the selective choice of God and not the rule, which is stated here in Deuteronomy 21:15–17. In every exception, God chose the younger in preference to the firstborn to teach us a valuable lesson. God, in His infinite wisdom, knew who would and who would not fulfill His will. Let us understand why these exceptions were made by God by starting with the story of Cain and Abel found in Genesis 4:1–25.

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the LORD." [Eve probably thought this was to be the Savior or the Messiah who would save the world. Cain was the firstborn, but also the first murderer when he rose up and killed his brother Abel.] Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in the process of time [it may have been many years] it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat (Genesis 4:1–4, *New King James Version* throughout unless stated otherwise).

Both men presented an offering to the Lord; Cain brought of the fruit of the ground and Abel brought of the firstlings, the best quality of his flock. This would seem to indicate that these were firstfruit offerings, not sin offerings, which would require the shedding of blood; for without the shedding of blood there is no remission or forgiveness of sin (Hebrews 9:22). Also, the firstfruits were not to be burned on the altar.

As for the offering of the firstfruits, you shall offer them to the LORD, but they shall not be burned on the altar for a sweet aroma (Leviticus 2:12).

Only a handful, or a memorial portion, was to be burned; the rest was to be food for the priesthood (Leviticus 2:1–16).

[B]ut He [God] did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell (Genesis 4:5).

Why did not God respect Cain's offering of firstfruits? In a way, Cain was symbolic of the Firstfruits, because he was the firstborn. Hebrews 11:4 and 6 give us the answer.

By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. . . . But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Cain's offering as the firstborn of Adam and Eve was not received by God because of sin (Genesis 4:7), of which Cain did not repent in order to have his offering received. The proof of Cain's wrong standing before God is seen by his impulse to kill his brother, Abel, when his own offering was rejected.

God did not receive Cain's offering with respect because Cain did not show faith to believe or respect God as the only true God, who is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. He needed to repent of his anger and jealousy toward his righteous brother, Abel.

. . . not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous (1 John 3:12).

Also, Jude warns the righteous to beware of those who have "gone in the way of Cain" by serving only themselves (Jude 11–12). Cain, as firstborn, did not serve his righteous brethren; his only concern was for himself to be served, not to serve.

Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous [or a torrent of ill will]; but who is able to stand before envy [or jealousy]? (Proverbs 27:4, *King James Version*)

The implied answer is no one. That is why Cain rose up and killed his brother, because Abel's deeds were righteous before God and his were not. Cain reasoned that because he was the firstborn he had the right of the firstborn to rule over his brother, and if he would not receive him as the firstborn, he would rule over him by killing him. This, he thought, would remove forever the threat of his brother being able to wrest the position of the firstborn from him. Many leaders and rulers have done this to ensure their position, especially when they felt threatened. A good example of that is found in 2 Chronicles 21:4, where Jehoram, the firstborn of Jehoshaphat, killed all his brothers to secure his position as the fifth king of Judah.

This same wrath, anger and jealousy exist in the Muslim brotherhood today! "Accept us as the firstborn of Abraham by Ishmael and receive mercy, or reject us as firstborn and die in a holy war," they teach.

Note in Genesis 4:7 a scripture misunderstood by many today, but which stands as a prophecy or warning of what would transpire between righteous Abel's descendants and unrighteous Cain's descendants. The unrighteous would rule over the righteous until Christ would come to put a stop to it. The Lord speaking to Cain: "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door." What was the sin Cain needed to overcome? The anger and jealousy he had for his righteous brother, Abel, whose offering was accepted by God. "And *its* [sin's] desire is for you, but you should rule over *it*" [emphasis mine]." Cain needed to overcome this sin by repenting of his anger toward his brother who was righteous before God.

This interpretation has been taught by Mr. Cole, Mr. Brisby and even by myself in the past; an interpretation which I feel has much merit, but for this letter I would like us to consider another interpretation.

The *King James* translation of Genesis 4:7 I believe is better, which says: "If thou doest well [meaning if you would repent of your sin], shalt thou not be accepted? [or as my center margin reads, have the excellency of the first born to rule over his brother, Abel, with loving kindness] and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."

It goes on to say: "And unto thee [Cain] shall be *his* [Abel's] desire, and thou shalt rule over him." Abel's desire was that Cain should rule over him as the firstborn until God refused Cain's firstfruit offering (symbolic of himself). Did this stop Cain from ruling over his brother Abel? No.

Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass [over a period of time] when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him (Genesis 4:8).

He did not have to continue being angry with his brother. He could have done what Jesus told His disciples to do in Matthew 5:21–24:

You have heard that it was said to those of old, "You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment." But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, "Raca!" shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, "You fool!" shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

Christ was telling His disciples that they needed to reconcile any anger they might have toward a brother (especially those in the faith) before bringing a gift or offering to the altar, something that Cain was not willing to do.

There is a lesson for us today. If you have a brother in the faith with whom you are not getting along, or he/she has something against you, please try to work it out before bringing a gift or offering to God. We, as the Firstfruits of God, could be rejected if we harbor any ill will toward the brethren.

If Cain had repented, he would have been able to free himself of the anger and jealousy he felt for Abel when he brought his firstfruit offering to God, and it would have been accepted. But it says that God did not respect Cain's offering. Cain, because of jealousy toward his brother, and to defend his physical right as firstborn son, in time rose up and killed Abel, who was righteous before God.

Abel's shed blood cried from the ground to God for vengeance. That vengeance meant life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, burn for burn, wound for wound and stripe for stripe, and was the verdict to be carried out (Deuteronomy 19:19–21). This was the law of the old covenant, but Christ came with a new covenant (Hebrews 12:24) which showed mercy and forgiveness if a person repented of sin. But Christ had not yet come with this new covenant, so God placed a mark upon Cain.

". . . And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him" (Genesis 4:15). This mark would make Cain immune to any reprisals that might come against him until he learned some lessons that God wanted him to learn. Thus Cain would remain a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and also the ground would not yield its strength to him because his firstfruit offering (which Cain represented as the firstborn) was not respected by God.

Cain's problem, or the sin that lay at his door, was the way of the flesh, or Satan's way. Abel, on the other hand, represented the way of the Spirit, which leads to life, even though he was killed physically by his unrighteous brother. But God already had a replacement in mind.

And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, "For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed." And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then men began to call on the name of the LORD (Genesis 4:25–26).

Seth was born to replace Abel of the righteous line while Cain was allowed to continue living to bring up an unrighteous line of descendants that would continually be waging war against the righteous descendants of Seth. This is why we will never have peace on the earth until Christ returns with the righteous Firstfruits, who then will be given the power to rule this earth. Until then, the descendants of Cain will always be the enemies of God, and they will actually fight against Him when He returns to rule all nations.

The next firstborn son I would like to talk about is Ishmael. His story is found beginning in Genesis 16:1. Ishmael became Abraham's firstborn son by his wife's Egyptian maidservant, Hagar, because Sarai was barren at the time. Sarai told her maidservant to become a surrogate mother, and she bore to Abraham his firstborn son, Ishmael. Genesis 16:12 describes Ishmael this way: "He shall be a wild man; His hand shall be against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." This ill-will toward his brethren began when God rejected Ishmael from receiving the blessing of the firstborn (Genesis 15:4). Yet, it was Abraham's desire that Ishmael, his firstborn, be accepted by God.

And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!" Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation (Genesis 17:18–20).

That great nation became the Arabs of today, and they have always been enemies of God's people, Israel. Why? Because when Abraham made a great feast to celebrate the giving of the firstborn to God, Ishmael, who was about sixteen at the time, mocked Isaac.

So the child [Isaac] grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw the son [Ishmael] of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing [or, *mocking* (KJV), because he knew he was firstborn instead of Isaac]. Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac." And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son. But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your *seed* shall be called [meaning that Jesus Christ would come through Isaac, not Ishmael]. Yet I will also make a nation of the son of the bondwoman, because he is your seed." So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water; and putting it on her shoulder, he gave it and the boy to Hagar, and sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba. And the water in the skin was used up, and she placed the boy [sixteen years old] under one of the shrubs. Then she went and sat down across from him at a distance of about a bowshot; for she said to herself, "Let me not see the death of the boy." So she sat opposite him, and lifted her voice and wept. And God heard the voice of the lad. Then the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, "What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation." And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. So God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. He dwelt in the Wilderness of Paran; and his mother took a wife for him from the land of Egypt. [Why? Because Hagar was originally from Egypt—verse 9] (Genesis 21:8–21) [emphasis mine].

Ishmael went on to become the father of the Ishmaelites, a nomadic nation which lived in northern Arabia. Modern-day Arabs claim descent from Ishmael, saying that they are truly Abraham's firstborn. They certainly do possess the DNA physically, but because Hagar was not Abraham's true wife, God did not accept Ishmael as the seed through whom the Messiah would come. The only firstborn that God will accept today is the firstborn of the Spirit; those with the "spiritual DNA."

For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman [Hagar], the other by a freewoman [Sarah, Abraham's true wife]. But he who was of the bondwoman [Ishmael] was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman

[Isaac] through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the *two covenants*: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar—for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem [of the flesh] which now is, and is in bondage with her children—but the Jerusalem above [that of the Spirit] is free, which is the mother of us all [free from the curse of the law, which is death] (Galatians 4:22–26) [emphasis mine].

The physical covenant of the law and bondage to sin is represented by Hagar's son, Ishmael, and the spiritual covenant of faith and the Holy Spirit is represented by Isaac and the Jerusalem above which is the Church today.

For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor [Sarah]! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband." Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise. But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now. [The descendants of Ishmael would continually persecute the descendants of Isaac, represented by those born of the Holy Spirit.] Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free (Galatians 4:27–31).

Those of the freewoman (Sarah) represent a spiritual church from above, born according to the Spirit of God. These truly are the Firstborn that God will accept, but this is something the descendants of Ishmael (the Arabs and the Muslim Brotherhood) cannot understand, because they have never accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior. They feel that Isaac received the birthright unlawfully when Ishmael was bypassed in Genesis 21:10; to prove this unlawful act they would refer to the words found in our own Bible regarding the Law of Moses:

If a man has two wives [Abraham did produce children from two different women], one loved [Sarah] and the other unloved [Hagar], and they have borne him children, both the loved and the unloved, and if the firstborn son is of her who is unloved [Hagar], then it shall be, on the day he [Abraham] bequeaths his possessions to his sons, that he must not bestow firstborn status on the son of the loved wife [Sarah] in preference to the son of the unloved [Hagar], the true firstborn. But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife [Ishmael] as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his (Deuteronomy 21:15–17).

Of course, this was the law under the old covenant given to Moses by God, by which the children of Israel promised to live at Mt. Sinai. One might argue that the Mt. Sinai covenant did not exist at the time Ishmael was bypassed, when the right of the firstborn went to Isaac, which in turn was passed on to Jacob, the younger brother of Esau. This may be true, but until one accepts Christ and begins to understand spiritual things, he will cling to the physical promises and fight anyone who tries to circumvent this law of the firstborn.

The next firstborn son I would like to talk about is Esau. Esau was the firstborn son of Isaac and Rebecca and also the twin brother of Jacob, but Esau despised his birthright promise.

Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he was weary. And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am weary." Therefore his name was called Edom [Turkey, today]. But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day." And Esau said, "Look, I am about to die; so what is this birthright to me?" [This shows that he did not have the faith that he would live again in a resurrection to receive it.] Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. *Thus Esau despised his birthright* (Genesis 25:29–34) [emphasis mine].

It says Esau despised his birthright; in other words, he did not value it like his brother did and gave it up for immediate gratification.

Hebrews 12:16 calls Esau a profane person, meaning one who is foolish regarding the holy things of God; but the birthright had great lasting value.

We can make the same mistake by letting immediate gratifications and pleasures of this world crowd out our time for personal prayer and Bible study needed to develop the mind of Christ, thus taking lightly our birthright as God's called people.

What else did Esau lose to his brother, Jacob? The blessing of the firstborn.

And he [Jacob] came near and kissed him; and he [Isaac] smelled the smell of his clothing, and blessed him and said: "Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the LORD has blessed. Therefore may God give you Of the dew of heaven, Of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, And *let your mother's sons bow down to you*. Cursed be everyone who curses you, And blessed be those who bless you!" (Genesis 27:27–29) [emphasis mine].

Jacob deceived his blind father Isaac by disguising himself as Esau in order to receive his father's highest blessing, the blessing of the firstborn. Esau should have received this blessing, which meant that he would receive most of his father's property and succeed Isaac as the family patriarch, but because he despised his birthright, God caused it to be passed unto Jacob, his brother, who understood the value of it. When Esau heard that Jacob had received this blessing instead of himself, he cried with a bitter cry.

When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, "*Bless me—me also*, O my father!" But he said, "Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing." And Esau said, "Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times. He took away my birthright, and now look, he has taken away my blessing!" And he said, "*Have you not reserved a blessing for me?*" Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, "Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?" And Esau said to his father, "*Have you only one blessing, my father?* Bless me—me also, O my father!" And Esau lifted up his voice and wept (Genesis 27:34–38) [emphasis mine].

Did Isaac have only one blessing, or did he have a blessing for Esau also?

Then Isaac his father answered and said to him: "Behold, your dwelling shall be of the fatness of the earth [the oil fields?] And of the dew of heaven from above. By your sword you shall live, And you shall serve your brother; And it shall come to pass, when you become restless [or, *have the dominion—KJV*], That *you shall break his yoke from your neck*." So Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him, and Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then I will kill my brother Jacob" (Genesis 27:39–41).

Esau was so enraged by Jacob's actions that he determined to kill him once his father died.

Esau in many ways was more honest and dependable than his scheming brother Jacob, but he sinned by treating his birthright so casually and selling it for the gratification of the flesh. To the ancient Israelites, one's birthright actually held a spiritual value, but Esau did not have the faith and foresight to accept his privileges and responsibilities, thus the birthright passed to his younger brother Jacob, which was God's plan all along.

This caused a root of bitterness to spring up in Esau and his descendants to this day. Many have become defiled with this condition. The Apostle Paul warned us that this condition would prevail in the minds of those who would go apostate from the revealed truth of God and lose out on the blessing of the Firstborn.

Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed. Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears (Hebrews 12:12–17).

Esau found no place for repentance because of the root of bitterness he had for his brother, who received the birthright blessing. Esau had missed out because he failed to hang onto it. He had committed the unpardonable sin in type, as Mr. Armstrong called it in his booklet: *What Do You Mean the Unpardonable Sin?* Mr. Armstrong said we can commit the unpardonable sin through neglect of prayer, neglect of Bible study, and neglect of spiritual fellowship with God's people. Or by continuing too close a friendship with unconverted people—letting participation with them in material interests, pleasures, sports, and entertainment cause neglect of spiritual interests.

Our spiritual interests, of course, should be to develop the mind of Christ and to develop a close relationship with those who will qualify to be accepted as the Firstborn of God. If we miss that calling—to develop the mind of Christ by using the tools of prayer and Bible study to overcome our human nature now by the Spirit of God in us—then all the repentance later will not qualify us to become the Firstborn of God. You will have missed your opportunity to be among those firstborn at Christ's return. As Mr. Armstrong used to say: "If you don't train with the team, you don't play with the team."

When Christ returns He will encounter many enemies. Many of them will be the descendants of the firstborn, physically, who did not qualify spiritually. Those who claim to be the physical descendants of Abraham have always been the enemies of God. In Psalm 83 we find recorded a prayer of David asking for God to frustrate a conspiracy against Israel—a confederacy of ten mostly Muslim nations who were against God; those who claimed to be descendants of Abraham but had one thing in mind, to destroy Israel—God's firstborn nation (Exodus 4:22 and Jeremiah 31:9).

Do not keep silent, O God! Do not hold Your peace, And do not be still, O God! For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; And those who hate You have lifted up their head. They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, And consulted together against Your sheltered ones. They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more." For they have consulted together with one consent; They form a confederacy against You: The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites; Moab and the

Hagrites; Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek; Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assyria also has joined with them; They have helped the children of Lot. Selah Deal with them as with Midian, As with Sisera, As with Jabin at the Brook Kishon, Who perished at En Dor, Who became as refuse on the earth. Make their nobles like Oreb and like Zeeb, Yes, all their princes like Zebah and Zalmunna, Who said, "Let us take for ourselves The pastures of God for a possession." O my God, make them like the whirling dust, Like the chaff before the wind! As the fire burns the woods, And as the flame sets the mountains on fire, So pursue them with Your tempest, And frighten them with Your storm. Fill their faces with shame, That they may seek Your name, O LORD. Let them be confounded and dismayed forever; Yes, let them be put to shame and perish, That they may know that You, whose name alone is the LORD, Are the Most High over all the earth (Psalm 83:1–18).

Also in John 8:33–44, Jesus said to those unbelieving Jews who claimed to be the physical descendants of Abraham that their real father was the Devil, and that is why they wanted to kill Him.

But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. . . . You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do (John 8:40, 44).

The scribes and Pharisees, who also claimed to be the physical descendants of Abraham, were the ones responsible for killing all the prophets of God.

. . . you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. . . . I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar (Matthew 23:31, 34–35).

This was the same Zechariah who wrote the Book of Zechariah at the end of the Old Testament, quoted many, many times in the New Testament.

It is a fact of Bible history that all those who claimed to be physical descendants of Abraham seemed to be the ones who were responsible for shedding the blood of the righteous, even Jesus Christ Himself. I believe there is a physical church today, not really inspired by the Holy Spirit, which will persecute the spiritual church in this end time, to test those who really are the Firstfruits of God.

What is in store for the Firstborn of the Holy Spirit? What is our reward if we value our Firstborn status?

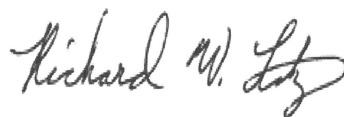
Also I will make him My firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth. My mercy I will keep for him forever, And My covenant shall stand firm with him. His seed also I will make to endure forever, And his throne as the days of heaven [eternal, everlasting] (Psalm 89:27–29).

The greatest blessing anyone can receive is the blessing of the firstborn. That is why God stresses the importance of the firstborn throughout His Word.

Brethren, we have the opportunity to become the Firstborn of God, as Spirit Beings. Even if you were born last, you now can become the Firstborn of God. Even if you are hated by the world now, you will be given all the blessings and honor of the firstborn. You can be the next royal successor to the throne and receive a double portion of God's Holy Spirit and blessing. You can reign over kings and angels and even over your brothers who have taken their birthright lightly. You will be set apart for a special purpose to reign with Christ when He returns.

Right now you have an invitation and the opportunity to become the Firstborn of God (the Firstfruits of God's harvest). Do you take your birthright lightly, as Esau did, by neglect of your spiritual responsibilities? Ever think about selling out? Quitting the church? Giving up? Or do you covet (desire) this opportunity to become the Firstborn as Jacob did; hanging onto the Lord and His revealed truth with all your might, not letting go for anything, as he did all night long so that he could receive a blessing from the Lord Himself (Genesis 32:24–30), or until the First Resurrection; to receive the greatest blessing anyone can possibly receive—the blessing of the Firstborn of God.

Love you all with the affection
and the Spirit of the firstborn,



Richard W. Litz



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