

The following Scripture passages are offered to aid beginning fellowships. The readings and commentary for this week are more in line with what has become usual; for the following will most likely be familiar observations. The concept behind this Sabbath's selection is testing holy ones.

[Printable/viewable PDF format to display Greek or Hebrew characters](#)

Weekly Readings *For the Sabbath of August 10, 2013*

The person conducting the Sabbath service should open services with two or three hymns, or psalms, followed by an opening prayer acknowledging that two or three (or more) are gathered together in Christ Jesus' name, and inviting the Lord to be with them.

Make room in your hearts for us. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one. I do not say this to condemn you, for I said before that you are in our hearts, to die together and to live together. I am acting with great boldness toward you; I have great pride in you; I am filled with comfort. In all our affliction, I am overflowing with joy. For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within. But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more. *For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while.* As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter. So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but in order that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you in the sight of God. Therefore we are comforted. And besides our own comfort, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. (2 Cor 7:2–13 emphasis added)

When the Apostle Paul wrote the above thought to all of the holy ones in Achaia [Greece], the concept of a “Christian clergy” had not yet developed. There was no one person—a pastor or deacon—to whom Paul could write. Paul wrote to all of the saints, with the above portion of 2nd Corinthians probably being from a third epistle; for the tone and content of this chapter seven doesn’t match the tone and content found in chapter eleven ...

I wish you would bear with me in a little foolishness. Do bear with me! For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ. But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough. Indeed, I consider that I am not in the least inferior to these super-apostles. Even if I am unskilled in speaking, I am not so in knowledge; indeed, in every way we have made this plain to you in all things. Or did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached God's gospel to you free of charge? I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way. (2 Cor 11:1–9)

In 1st-Century Greece, then under Roman rule, returned emphasis was being placed on education, on philosophy, on oratory, on rhetoric in all its forms, with this return to learning and to speaking eloquently—to writing novels—being traditionally understood to have begun in the latter half of the century. More current research shows that this return actually began in the first half and began about when Jesus lived as if the Adversary, the present prince of this world, anticipated the rise of Christianity and did what he could to take control of the Jesus Movement before any such movement existed ... pagan Greek philosophy entered into the early Church of God via Greek converts, with those super-apostles Paul mentions having been tutored by mainly Sophist mentors.

Even casually perusing a Wiki article on Second Sophists will give the Christian a better perspective on 1st-Century Achaia than most modern Christians have.

But it is careful reading of 2nd Corinthians that reveals chapters 10 through 13 belong to a different epistle than chapters 1 through 9, that someone late in the 1st-Century combined a second and a third epistle from Paul to the holy ones at Corinth into one epistle that begins with complete and accepted reconciliation between Paul and these holy ones:

For I made up my mind not to make another painful visit to you. For if I cause you pain, who is there to make me glad but the one whom I have pained? And I wrote as I did, so that when I came I might not suffer pain from those who should have made me rejoice, for I felt sure of all of you, that my joy would be the joy of you all. For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain

but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you. Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure—not to put it too severely—to all of you. For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. For *this is why I wrote, that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything*. Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs. (2 Cor 2:1–11 emphasis added)

Compare the preceding from 2nd Corinthians 2 with,

This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that *if I come again I will not spare them—since you seek proof that Christ is speaking in me*. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful among you. For He was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we also are weak in Him, but in dealing with you we will live with Him by the power of God. ***Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?***—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test. But we pray to God that you may not do wrong—not that we may appear to have met the test, but that you may do what is right, though we may seem to have failed. For we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for the truth. For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. Your restoration is what we pray for. For this reason I write these things while I am away from you, that when I come I may not have to be severe in my use of the authority that the Lord has given me for building up and not for tearing down. Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Cor 13:1–11 emphasis and double emphasis added)

Paul wrote what he did about disfellowshipping the man who was with his father's wife to “test” the holy ones at Corinth to see if they would place keeping the statutes and rules given to Israel in the days of Moses ahead of personal friendships and loyalties, a subject to which I will shortly return.

For many centuries, 2nd Corinthians was universally accepted as received as Paul's second epistle to the saints at Corinth, but a couple centuries ago, so-called higher criticism challenged the unity of 2nd Corinthians, not its authenticity: the words were written by the Apostle Paul, but written as two epistles, the first being another corrective letter (the latter chapters) and the second as a rejoicing letter.

In the latter chapters of 2nd-Corinthians, Paul's authority as a spokesman for God was still being challenged by the holy ones at Corinth, with Paul suffering status in one-to-one comparisons to so-called super-apostles who brought to saints in Achaia a different Jesus, a different Gospel, a different Christianity than what Paul taught—this different Jesus and different concept of God and even

different history of “the churches of God in Christ Jesus that were in Judea” (this naming phrase is from 1 Thess 2:14) comes to endtime Christians in Luke’s Gospel and in the Book of Acts, written to confirm what was taught to *Theophilus*, not a Hebrew convert but a *Greek lover of God*.

The Apostle Paul’s understanding of Christ Jesus and of God and of the work being done by Christ through those *in whom Christ Jesus dwelt* was challenged by the holy ones at Corinth when they sent an epistle to Paul “asking” questions about marriage and about the fleshly body ... from Paul’s answer to specific points raised in this letter, it would seem these saints were trying to instruct Paul. Nevertheless, the challenge to Paul’s authority to speak for God as encountered in 1st Corinthians (*e.g.*, 1 Cor chap 4) was still in evidence when Paul responded in the latter chapters of 2nd Corinthians; however, the early chapters of 2nd Corinthians finds Paul writing a different sort of an epistle, a letter acknowledging these holy ones’ acceptance of Paul’s authority to speak for Christ Jesus.

Backing up to begin anew: Paul wrote to “the holy” [*tois 'agiois*] at Corinth and in all Achaia [Greece] and he wrote in his first epistle answers to questions asked or raised in a letter to him, but he wrote mostly to correct an excessive application of tolerance for the intolerable as reported to him:

It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. (1 Cor 5:1–2)

The principle of accepting the sinner into the fellowship of the saints can be taken too far—and for Paul, permitting a man who had uncovered the nakedness of his father’s wife was too far, meaning that for Paul, the laws of the Torah still had Christian applications:

And [*YHWH*] spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am [*YHWH*] your God. You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. You shall follow my rules and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am [*YHWH*] your God. You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am [*YHWH*]. None of you shall approach any one of his close relatives to uncover nakedness. I am [*YHWH*]. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, which is the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is your father's nakedness. (Lev 18:1–8)

What the saints at Corinth were doing in fellowshiping with a man apparently living with his mother-in-law (for whatever reason) was an affront to the God of Israel. It was not walking in this world as Jesus walked; for Jesus kept the rules and the statutes of the God of Israel, His Father. And by keeping His Father’s statutes and rules, He would live by them and would live because of them. And if a person humanly born of Adam, not *Yah*, were to keep the God of Israel’s statutes and rules and live by them, this person would also live because of them. For Paul wrote elsewhere,

For God shows no partiality. For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus. (Rom 2:11–16)

The person who is not under the Law, who does not know the Law, who has never had any contact with the God of Israel but who through the nature of the person keeps/kept the commandments of God shall receive life when this person comes under judgment in the great White Throne Judgment. Likewise, the person not under the Law but who nevertheless transgresses the Law shall perish without the Law. Therefore, regardless of whether the man who had uncovered the nakedness of his father knew what he did and was doing was contrary to the Law or not, this man had condemned himself to death—and those saints in Achaia who tolerated, and by tolerating tacitly approved of what his man was doing, also condemned themselves to death; for the Lord in speaking to Moses, commanded Moses to speak *to the people of Israel* (to all of the people of Israel) and command them to walk in the Lord’s rules and statutes, with Paul so commanding the saints in Achaia when he wrote,

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ. (1 Cor 10:31–11:1)

In seeking to “save” many, Paul commanded the saints in Achaia to imitate him as he imitated Christ Jesus, who was without sin, who kept the rules and statutes of the God of Israel, who walked in these rules and statutes and lived, with the now living Christ Jesus being the Head of the Church, the Body of Christ, with the marriage relationship between a man and his wife being the mirror by which the relationship between the inner self and the outer self of the person can be seen, with the inner self being the head of the person as God is the Head of Christ and as Christ is the Head of the disciple truly born of God.

God the Father in Christ Jesus corresponds to Christ Jesus in the inner self of His disciple;

Christ Jesus in the inner self of His disciple corresponds to a husband in his wife;

The spirit [*pneuma*] of God penetrated (in the bodily form of a dove — Mark 1:10) the man Jesus when Jesus was raised from baptism;

The spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] penetrates the spirit [*pneuma* — 1 Cor 2:11] of a human person when a person is selected by God through being foreknown and predestined to be glorified, with this occurring while the person remains a sinner, a son of disobedience. According to Paul, Jesus will die for the

ungodly while we are still sinners, with this “dying” occurring within the person but outside of time, or space-time. For Jesus won’t be crucified many times—won’t lose His breath of life many times—but will undergo loss of breath twice, the first time figuratively in John’s baptism, and the second time fleshly in crucifixion. When the man Jesus was baptized, He had only one breath of life to lose, but upon being raised from the watery grave, a second breath of life entered into Him, the breath of God [*pneuma Theou*], thereby transforming the righteous man into the First of many sons of God (see Rom 8:29–30).

But Jesus wasn’t just any man; wasn’t a son of the first Adam; but was the unique Son of the Logos, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Thus, Jesus was a Son of God before the spirit of the Father entered into Him in the bodily form of a dove—and this is where Sabbatarian Christians seem to encounter difficulties comprehending the model of salvation that originates with Christ Jesus:

In the spirit of Christ [*pneuma Christou*] penetrating the spirit [*pneuma*] of the person chosen by the Father to be His disciple, Christ effectively “marries” the inner self of the person, not the fleshly body of the person;

With Christ penetrating the inner self of the person, a new inner self—a spiritually living inner self—is brought forth as a son of God that is neither male nor female but is as angels are;

However, because this son of God received heavenly life from God the Father through Christ Jesus, this son of God has heavenly life that comes from atop the mountain of God; whereas angelic sons of God have heavenly life in a differing moment, a moment that equates to the people of Israel being gathered around the base of Mount Sinai while Moses ascended into the cloud covering the summit of this mountain.

In the timeless realm that is heaven, the presence of life cannot simultaneously exist with the absence of life. The creation of angelic sons of God required the formation of another “moment” in the heavenly realm. If a second creation of angelic sons of God occurred or were to occur, then a third moment would be needed; for the angelic sons of God that didn’t have life when the initial creation of angels occurred cannot have life, cannot ever enter the moment when angels were initially created. Likewise, because God created angels, no angel can have life in the moment (in the location) where God exists. So Israel at Mount Sinai serves as an apt metaphor for the tiered reality of heaven: the people of Israel were assembled around the base of the mountain but could not touch the mountain, let alone ascend the mountain. Moses and Aaron ascended the mountain before the Law was given, but after the Law was given, Moses alone could ascend the mountain and enter into the cloud that concealed the God of Israel. Joshua [in Greek, *Iesou* — *Jesus* because Indo-European speakers cannot truly hear or utter the Hebrew *’Ayin* consonant] only went halfway up the mountain.

What the Lord told Moses when he objected to returning to Egypt enters into the above analogy:

But he [Moses] said, "Oh, my Lord, please send someone else." Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses and He said, "Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well. Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart. You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both what to do. **He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and you shall be as God to him.** And take in your hand this staff, with which you shall do the signs." (Ex 4:13–17 double emphasis added)

The relationship between Moses and Aaron was analogous to the relationship between God and His Spokesman [Logos] or Helpmate as revealed in the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* that when deconstructed by the inclusion of vowels embedded in the linguistic icon <*Adonai*> becomes <*Y^aH^{d-n}W^{ai}H*>, with there being "another such" [*d~n*] deity as *Yah* hidden in the Tetragrammaton, the deity that Jesus came to reveal to His disciples, the deity that none of Israel previously knew with the possible exception of King David. And Israel could know the Father, the God of dead ones; for Israel was spiritually dead. The spirit had not yet been given. And the dead know nothing (Eccl 9:5). The spiritually dead know nothing spiritual, with this applying to endtime Christians.

What did Paul write to the holy ones at Corinth: *Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves ...* how does a Christian test him or herself to determine if Christ Jesus dwells in the person? Does the Christian walk in this world as Jesus walked, keeping the Commandments and have love for neighbor and brother? And no Christian who attempts to enter into God's rest on the 1st-day of the week, the day after the Sabbath, walks in this world as Jesus walked; for in Sabbath observance or lack thereof Christians "classify" themselves, which isn't to say that all Sabbath-keepers are of God but is to say that if a person doesn't keep the Sabbath, the person cannot walk in this world as Jesus walked.

Jesus is today the *Head* of the Church (1 Cor 11:3), with the Church not consisting of an assembly of physical bodies but the assembly Jesus established through Him dwelling in the inner self of the person. The Christian who remains physically minded—the Christian concerned about physical things such as how do endtime biblical prophecies apply to modern nations in the Near and Middle East, when the endtime application of these prophecies pertain to demonic nations within spiritual Babylon, the single kingdom that presently reigns over all the earth through controlling mindsets and the mental topography of living entities—has not yet been born of God even if God the Father has given the person to Christ Jesus as a disciple ... the Twelve that God gave to the man Jesus were not born of spirit until after Jesus was crucified and raised from death. Ten of the Twelve received the holy spirit [*pneuma 'agion*] when the glorified Jesus "breathed" His breath on them (John 20:22) the afternoon of the Wave Sheaf Offering as Sadducees reckoned when the Wave Sheaf was to be waved. Doubting Thomas "believed" eight days later when he *felt* the wounds of Christ, but there is no record of Jesus breathing on Thomas, whose belief was based on evidence.

Christians within greater Christendom are doubters, not believing that they are to walk in this world as Jesus walked. Thus, Jesus is not their Head. They have no head but “evidence” originating in the distant past, the recent past, or the present that when coupled to their own intellect causes them to *make a decision for Christ*, or return to the faith once delivered by the clergy of orthodox Christendom in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and even 5th Centuries CE.

The Church as the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27) is to the glorified Christ as the woman is to her husband, her earthly head if she is married. And this Sabbath’s reading did not go beyond last Sabbath’s ... the journey into new territory will, however, begin shortly.

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*The person conducting the Sabbath service should
close services with two hymns, or psalms,
followed by a prayer asking God’s dismissal.*

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