

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 the history.

## **Weekly Readings For the Sabbath of August 29, 2009**

*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.*

*The person conducting the services should read or assign to be read Hebrews chapters 1 & 2.*

**Commentary:** Continuing what was began in last Sabbath's reading, Paul preached a sermon in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:13–40) that was very much like the sermon that Stephen preached in Jerusalem (Acts 7:2–53), in that both began their discourse by recounting Israel's history to men (and women) who well knew this history. They referenced the historical trace stretching from God choosing Abraham to Calvary, as does the writer of Hebrews, who warns Hebrew converts that “we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it” (2:1).

Disciples must pay much closer attention to what they have heard; we must pay much closer attention to Scripture, for the Christian Church drifted away from the Father and the Son in the 1<sup>st</sup>-Century and has been a corpse, the fodder of wolves and vultures, ever since. The Christian Church is not now one Body, with one spirit, with one Lord and one God. It is, rather, a putrid body that stinks up the whole world. It professes to be alive, but as a dead human being knows nothing (Eccl 9:5), this corpse has no spiritual knowledge at it broadcasts disobedience and lawlessness 24/7 from satellites higher in heaven than any of its iconic preachers will ever get.

Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matt 7:21).

How many televangelists do the will of the Father? How many even know what the will of the Father is? And if they know, why do they not preach as if they don't know? Why do they preach as servants of the devil? Are they not false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguised as apostles of Christ (2 Cor 11:13)? Certainly they do not work on the same terms as Paul worked; for Paul supported himself with his hands.

John wrote,

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he [Jesus] appeared to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him. Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. (1 John 3:4–10)

Sin is lawlessness ... actually, sin is unbelief that will always manifest itself as lawlessness; i.e., transgression of the commandments.

Does not the person who holds religious services on Sunday transgress the Sabbath commandment? The Sabbath is not the first day of the week, but the seventh day; so how does he or she not transgress the Sabbath commandment when weekly holding services on Sunday? He or she does, correct? And as such, the person makes a practice of sinning and is by John's account, a child of the devil, and according to Jesus, will be denied when judgments are revealed regardless of the mighty works done by the person in the name of Jesus (Matt 7:22–23).

Certainly many sincere "Christians" are convinced that they keep the Sabbath when they assemble on the first day of the week, but what book are they reading? They are not reading Scripture. So what are they reading?

A disciple has to feel a little sorry for the "Christian" pastor who earnestly desires to serve the Lord, but who teaches his or her parishioners to transgress the commandments of God. This pastor simply will not make it when judgments are revealed; for the pastor knows what Scripture says, but lacks the faith to truly believe Jesus. Disciples are not to be of this world even though they remain in this world (John 17:16). There is a difference between a disciple and a son of disobedience that cannot be explained to any son of disobedience.

This world's version of Christianity is the still decomposing corpse of Christ, with pieces of hanging flesh forming any number of lawless fellowships, each more worthless than the fellowship these disciples left ... perhaps following the second Passover, our "Christian" pastor will acquire the mental courage to believe Scripture, but cowardice is not suddenly overcome.

No cowards will enter the kingdom.

Yes, the person who knows what Scripture says but who is unwilling to do what he or she knows is right is a coward and is unworthy of Christ Jesus. He or she doesn't have to worry about salvation. The person has already squandered his or her calling.

Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until

all is accomplished. Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:17–19) ... all has not yet been accomplished. No disciple has yet been glorified. The fullness of the Gentiles has not yet come to Christ. The natural branches have not yet been grafted back onto the Root of Righteousness. In fact, the harvest of firstfruits has barely begun, with most of this harvest to occur in the Endurance, the last 1260 days of the seven endtime years.

What is the will of God? Is it not to have sons [heirs] to replace sons [servants] lost when iniquity was found in an anointed cherub? And if sons of God were lost when iniquity or lawlessness was found in an anointed cherub (Ezek 28:14–15) and a third of the stars were dragged down into darkness, how is it that “Christian” pastors can teach disciples to be lawless and still expect that they and their parishioners will enter the kingdom of heaven? What are they thinking? What phantoms race through their imaginations? What do they expect from the Father and the Son? That good will come from evil?

*Evil* is nothing more than unbelief; i.e., not believing God. And righteousness cannot come from unbelief. Only sin comes from unbelief. So, indeed, disciples must pay much closer attention to what they have heard; they must pay attention to Scripture. And is the book of Hebrews not Scripture? Therefore, how do you read the following?

Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. As it is said,

“Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said,

“As I swore in my wrath,  
“They shall not enter my rest,””

although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works.” And again in this passage he said,

“They shall not enter my rest.”

Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

“Today, if you hear his voice,  
do not harden your hearts.”

For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. *So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.*

Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. (Heb 3:12–4:11 emphasis added)

If there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, and if disciples are to strive to enter into this Sabbath rest, and if the promise of entering only stands for a while (a certain length of time), why does Christendom, with very few exceptions, ignore the Sabbath? Are “Christians” not concerned about entering into God rest, or has the good news that came to Israel not benefited Christians as it did not benefit ancient Israel?

The question now is, what have disciples heard? Have they only heard lies told by pastors that are workers of iniquity? If they have, then who will be responsible for their condemnation if not these pastors?

Today, sincere Christian pastors hinder the children of God from coming to Christ Jesus, and it would be better for them if they had millstones around their necks and were drowned. They do great work in the name of Christ, then spiritually slay the sons of God that come to them for the milk of the word ... they don't give these spiritual infants milk; they give them poisoned sandwiches of Greek paganism spread between two slices of leavened bread.

Sincere “Christian” pastors will want mercy when their judgments are revealed, but mercy to them will be the lake of fire, which will put a quick end to their lawlessness.

It is difficult to have compassion for those teachers and pastors that by their practice of sinning identify themselves as servants of the devil. It is difficult not to condemn them because they cause infant sons of God to condemn themselves to the lake of fire; for these teachers and pastors are spiritual murderers, doing the bidding of their father, Satan the devil.

The Father has not subjected the world to come to angels, but to His heirs, each of whom will look like Christ Jesus (will be a fractal image of Christ) as one isosceles triangle with 60° angles looks like every other isosceles triangle with 60° angles, regardless of how long the two equal sides are ... Christ is the collection of firstborn sons of God as a Sierpinski triangle is a collection of isosceles triangles, all forming one isosceles triangle. So what has been written about Christ pertains to each disciple in whom Christ dwells (Rom 8:10).

We were made lower than the angels when we were born of the first Adam, and we were made a little lower than the angels when we were born of the last Adam, but when the mortal flesh puts on immortality, we will be crowned with honor and glory and will judge angels ... if we are to judge angels that left their

first estate (Jude 6), how will we judge ourselves when we return to sin after declaring ourselves “Christians” ... yes, we judge ourselves so that we will not be condemned when judgments are revealed; for in judging ourselves, we know whether we need to repent of wrongdoing. We know whether we are hypocrites, knowing to do right but not doing what we know to do. We know not to murder, not to lie, not to commit adultery; we know to give honor to parents, to have no other God but God, to keep the Sabbath holy. And again, we know whether we do what we know to do. We know whether we lie to ourselves; we fool no one but ourselves when we sin but excuse our practice of sinning by saying, *Jesus died for our sins*.

Did Jesus die for our sins so we could continue to willfully sin? Or did He die so that the righteous requirement of the law—that we die for our sins—be canceled so that we could have life and henceforth live without sin?

Every disciple knows the answer to the above question: Jesus died so we would not have to die for what we did prior to being born of God. The old nature or old self was crucified with Christ so that the record of debt that stood against every person, with its legal demands on the person’s life, would be canceled. A new nature or new self, made alive through receipt of the divine breath of the Father [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], is not born under condemnation (Rom 8:1–2), nor under sin (Rom 6:14), but is born free to keep the commandments, which was not previously possible when the person was a son of disobedience (Eph 2:2–3), consigned to disobedience (Rom 11:32) as a bondservant of sin. Thus, the person is without excuse when he or she returns to the practice of sin, making the person again the bondservant of sin (Rom 6:16), thereby removing the person from under the garment of grace.

No person can serve two masters, sin (i.e., disobedience) and righteousness (obedience), but must necessarily hold to one and forsake the other. The disciple who returns to disobedience when sin has no power over the disciple is not worthy of Christ Jesus. This person deserves condemnation, for this person doesn’t value Jesus’ life, or consider Jesus’ sacrifice worth enough to even strive to keep the precepts of the law. And far too often, this person will profess love for Jesus while mocking Jesus by how the person lives ... it is apparent in Scripture that Jesus hates being mocked; so for the person who claims to be a disciple to make Jesus’ life of no value by this person continuing to intentionally sin after being born of God is beyond belief. Paul asks the saints at Corinth, “Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he” (1 Cor 10:22). Well, are we? Are we so arrogant that we believe that Jesus has to accept our on-going practice of sinning? Or are we willing to humble ourselves and submit to the law as our disciplinarian until we have the law written on our hearts and put into our minds and do not need a schoolmaster?

Paul says, “Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ... I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. In the same way we also ,

when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world” (Gal 3:23–26, 4:1–3). Elsewhere, Paul writes, “But, I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not ready, for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way” (1 Cor 3:1–3).

The saints at Corinth were spiritual infants, children that needed to be under a disciplinarian, this guardian being the law ... yes, the problem the saints at Corinth had was their lack of faith. They were spiritual infants who considered themselves mature Christians, mature enough to tolerate sin in their midst in the matter of the man who was with his father’s wife (1 Cor chap 5). But the faith they possessed was of this world and not of God. The faith they needed to possess would have caused them to live as Judeans, imitating Paul as he imitated Jesus (1 Cor 4:16; 11:1). If they had true faith, Paul would not have had to justify himself to them. He would not have spoken of being slandered and persecuted and thought of as the scum of the earth, the refuse of all things (1 Cor 4:8–13). A person says such things when attempting to counter criticism that comes from lack of faith.

Paul links spiritual infancy with disciples still being fleshly minded—and what are Christians today if not fleshly minded, some claiming to be Catholics and some Lutherans and some Latter Day Saints and some Baptists, Methodists, Church of the Brethren, Mennonites, Adventists. The listing can go on for pages, but the reality is that all of these “Christians” are at best spiritual infants that need the tutelage of a schoolmaster. They are not yet ready to go it alone; by the criterion Paul establishes, as heirs of God, sons that will be the owners of everything, they are under a guardian whereas the saints at Galatia, like the Hebrews (Heb 5:11–14), should have been mature enough to no longer need a schoolmaster.

Paul miscalculated: the Galatians were immature, too immature to go it alone, and they listened to teachers that lacked spiritual understanding. Thus, they began to outwardly circumcise themselves—and Paul wrote to them a classic Aristotelian argument in chapters one and two of his epistle. But Paul realized that he would not persuade those who found in Scripture the need for outward circumcision that until there was again a physical sanctuary, there was no need for physical circumcision; that a spiritual sanctuary required spiritual circumcision to enter.

The flesh did not matter after Calvary, and will not matter until the Millennium. The importance of physical circumcision ended with Calvary and returns when Christ Jesus returns as the Messiah. But the Circumcision Faction, all of them, consisted of infants too immature to under spiritual matters. And so it is with today’s Christian pastors and teachers who claim to be under faith and no longer in need of a schoolmaster while they practice sin, making themselves children of the devil ... of course these Christian pastors and teachers do not want to be under a schoolmaster, but want the privileges of adulthood without the responsibilities that go with these privileges.

Do two-year-old human infants want to be disciplined? Or do they want to run free, color on walls, open cupboards, dump salt in the sugar bowl, behave like untrained beasts.

It really doesn't take much discipline to convince most two-year-olds that there is a right way and a wrong way to do things. Sometimes a few words will do; sometimes more forceful action is needed. But infants are not ready to govern themselves; they are not ready to teach others what good behavior is. They are still in need of parenting. And so it is with today's Christians who, at best, truly are spiritual infants.

As sons of God, we share common characteristics with Christ Jesus, who was the Logos [ὁ λόγος], the Creator of all things made (John 1:3), before he entered His creation as His only Son. And we as disciples will be born of God only one time, not many times.

We can recount the history of Christendom and show how it matches the history of natural Israel—and we will next Sabbath.

\*

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

\* \* \* \* \*

"Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved."

[ [Home](#) ] [ [Sabbath Readings](#) ]