



# *The Sabbath Sentinel*

*March-  
April, 2017*

**Who has all of the truth?  
Does it really matter?**

**BSA—The Bible Sabbath Association**

*Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."*

# The Sabbath Sentinel March-April 2017

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## FEATURES

3 Editorial "What if you DO Have the Truth?"

by Royce Mitchell

4 The President's Corner—"The Sabbath as a Weapon ... of Spiritual Warfare"

by Kelly McDonald, Jr.

5 "Christian Educational Ministries" Ministries for Christ

by Royce Mitchell

7 "The Way"

by Bob Radcliff

12 "The Sabbath Week of Acts 20:7"

by Philip Derstine

15 "More on Ignatius and the Sabbath"

by Bob Thiel

19 "Sabbath Traditions"

by Lettie Lippincott Siddens

## DEPARTMENTS

21 Letters to the Editor

23 Advertisements

Cover artwork: *Donated anonymously by the photographer.*

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# What if you DO have the truth?

Editorial

*“I have the truth because God says that the Spirit will lead me into all truth! That means others who disagree with me must not have the truth!”*

There’s entirely too much of this kind of thinking within the Church of God, i.e., the called out ones. Is this truly what the scripture says? Does God give one specific group or organization of people complete understanding and leave everyone else in ignorance of the truth, and hence in sin?

Let’s look at the scripture in question. **Joh 16:13** states as follows: “However, when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth.”

What is important to note about that scripture is that it is out of context. However, putting that scripture into context does not deal with the problem we see in the opening statement.

Dealing with the scripture first, there is one word missing that completely changes the meaning of the scripture, and consequently shows that the opening statement is not scriptural at all. That word is “immediately.” That scripture does not say that the Spirit will lead us into all truth immediately. In fact the scripture says that the Spirit will “guide” us, but even then, the guiding is not immediately finished.

Therefore, any idea that any one of us might actually have all truth is an idea that is not supported by the scripture used by others to prove that they know and others do not know. Guiding implies that it is an ongoing process to learn the truth, not that somehow one will suddenly become imbued with all knowledge to the exclusion of others. If that had been what the Christ meant, He would have said that the Spirit would come and instill all knowledge.

Why would this be that God would not just impart all knowledge? That is a hard question to answer since God doesn’t spell out his mind on the matter on this. However, we can deduce several things from what He has led us to know.

First, we read in Jas 4:17 “Therefore to him who knows to do good, and does not do it, to him it is sin.” This implies that there are those who do not know to do good as God defines it. It necessarily implies that not doing that good is not sin. Evidently, and importantly, God seems to judge us where He has placed us, not where others whose knowledge is also imperfect think we should be.

Of course, this scripture also applies, “Study earnestly to present yourself approved to God, a workman that does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth.” 2Ti 2:15 . That word “study” in the English means to use speed or make an effort. So, we ought to be earnestly making an effort to present ourselves approved. That would necessarily learning the way to act from the scriptures.

Because we are all at different places in our growth, in our understanding, it becomes incumbent on us to diligently apply Jesus’ words: “By this all shall know that you are My disciples, if you have love toward one another.” Joh 13:35.

Moreover, in 1Co 13:4 we read that “Love has patience, is kind; love is not envious; love is not vain, is not puffed up...”

Those who proclaim that they are the “one true church,” “alone have the truth” or berate those having a different understanding of scriptures, proclaiming that others worship a different god, have a problem with the scriptures, and with love for their brethren. These same, when gathered into groups, under a guru, invariably demonstrate a lack of understanding of the basic scriptures on love, a quality which Jesus said would mark His disciples.

Our brethren who are afflicted with this lack of love need our prayers. We who love them should do so.

*Dr. Royce Mitchell, Editor*



## The Sabbath as a Weapon ... of Spiritual Warfare

It can be easy to think of the Sabbath as merely a day free from work where we attend church. While this is true, there is a much deeper, spiritual meaning behind it. Paul said that the law was spiritual (Romans 7:14). This means every act of obedience or disobedience has spiritual consequences. This means the Sabbath is actually a mighty weapon of Spiritual warfare.

In Daniel 7, God gave Daniel a revelation of four beasts which represented four kingdoms from the time of Daniel until Jesus returns. The fourth beast was terrifying and had iron teeth. Ten horns grew out of its head, but three of these horns were displaced by a smaller horn that had eyes like a man and spoke boastfully. This fourth beast represents the Roman Empire, which was displaced by ten main Germanic tribes. These tribes represent the ten horns from the vision.

Remember the small horn has eyes like a man; it is not a nation, but a man. Three of the ten Germanic tribes were displaced in Italy: the Heruli, Ostrogoths, and Lombards. This allowed Stephen III to be the first “pope-king” in 755 AD. These three of the German tribes hindered the papacy from exerting any temporal authority. In Daniel 7:25, we learn that the little horn was prophesied to: “And he shall speak great words against the most High, and **shall wear out the saints of the most High**, and think to change **times** and laws...” The Aramaic word translated as times is *zeman*, and it corresponds to the Hebrew word *moed*. *Moed* refers to the Feast Days in Leviticus 23, the very first of which is the weekly Sabbath. The Catholic Church changed Sabbath to Sunday worship. Now, let’s connect these concepts within the verse.

The verse really comes to life with this new understanding. The Sabbath is the day of physical and spiritual rest and refreshing. The little horn tries to wear out the saints by changing the weekly day of rest! To try and beat the saints out of this Sabbath rest would wear them out. But this gets deeper. The Hebrew word for Sabbath is *Shabbat*. The Assyriologist AH Sayce said that the Hebrew word *Shabbat* has a derivative meaning of two words – *sa* meaning “heart” and *bat* meaning “ceasing” (*Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, pages 73-74). This shows us that on the Sabbath, our activities should slow down the activity of the heart.

In Luke 21:35, Jesus said of the last days that men’s hearts will fail them (Luke 21:26). Later in the chapter, there is a special warning about guarding our hearts:

“And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged [weighed down] with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares....” (Luke 21:36) .

Connecting Daniel 7:25 with the verses from Luke helps us see that the enemy will send things into our lives to cause our hearts to be weighed down with worry and the cares of this life. One could easily grow weary with all of the false Biblical teachings in the world and the general moral decay of civilization. The world is becoming more wicked and lawlessness is increasing; it wears on the Saints of God.

But the Sabbath is the time when we lay burdens down to enter into rest. Recall from the book of Jeremiah how the people of Judah were not allowed to carry their burdens or loads through the gates on the Sabbath (Jer. 17:19-27). Physical work makes the heart work harder. While those verses refer to literal burdens, there are also mental and spiritual burdens – each of us has anxieties, worries, concerns, troubles, and so forth. This can be directly broadcast on us from the enemy or they can arise from within self. Jesus spoke of these in Luke 21:36.

The papacy, satan, and the world around us want to beat us out of the Sabbath so that we allow these cares to weigh down our hearts. If we allow these burdens to influence our Sabbath observance it diminishes its power to help us rest and receive strength from Heaven.

In a prior issue of the Sabbath Sentinel, we discussed how the Heavenly Gates are open on the Sabbath. The Sabbath is called holy; God’s direct presence makes this day Holy. There is a 24-hour continuous outpouring of Holy Spirit to strengthen us on this special day. When we really set our hearts and minds to honor it, we receive tremendous spiritual benefit. Our spiritual armor (Ephesians 6:12-18) becomes strengthened.

Physical water refreshes us physically. We know that physical water can represent the Word and the Spirit (John 7:37-39, Ephesians 5:26). By worshipping God in the Spirit on the Sabbath and hearing His Word, we receive spiritual refreshing. The attacks of the enemy to encroach on Sabbath observance are to hinder this process. Let’s examine our Sabbath keeping in terms of the many Bible verses on it, including Isaiah 58:13-14. Let’s resist lawlessness and become more earnest than ever in our Sabbath observance so that we will endure until the end! (Matthew 24:12-13).

# Christian Educational Ministries



Christian Educational Ministries (CEM) is an organization founded by Ron Dart in 1995. Located in Whitehouse, Texas, it has been the vehicle by which Ron Dart and those associated with his ministry provide educational services for the various Churches of God wherever they are located.

On the CEM website, [www.borntowin.net](http://www.borntowin.net), their ministry is stated to be: "Our primary mission is carried out through the **Born to Win** radio program, literature, essays both in print and on the Internet, and published books. We also make available sermon CD's and an Adult Bible Study Course in our *CEM Bookstore*. Another major effort is the education of youth. Youth Educational Adventures is an arm of CEM created to systematically educate children and young people in God's way with a curriculum of lessons spanning 17 years of a child's life, beginning with age three to 20. CEM is here to serve the public, individual Christians of every stripe, and community based churches in every tradition. We are an independent, non-denominational ministry. Our Confession of Faith is broadly stated and not intended to be exclusionary."

According to the CEM website, 94% of the items they distribute are done so without any charge to the recipients. Among the distribution items are the CEM radio broadcasts on DVD, books by Ron Dart and others and even hymnals such as those that are used during the weekly Sabbath Service conducted at their office location in Whitehouse, Texas. CEM has also sponsored Feast of Tabernacles locations over the years.

During a recent visit with the new Vice President, David Havir III, this writer discussed CEM's direction for the future after the death of its founder in early 2016.

TSS: "Mr. Havir, tell our readers a little about yourself."

Havir: "I've been married to my lovely wife, Diana, for 13 years. We have an 11 year old daughter so I have a great deal of interest in youth ministries like the YEA (Youth Educational Adventures—Ed.). I've worked as a sort of Youth Pastor or coordinator in the past. I'm about to begin my Master's of Science in Neuro Psychology."

TSS: "That's interesting. How do you envision your education as playing into the interests of the YEA program?"

Havir: "In education today, there is possibly some conflict between it and scriptures. However, much of what is taught has value when approached from a biblical and a scientific standpoint."

TSS: "Do you consider CEA a ministry or a support organization?"

Havir: "It is definitely a ministry. We provide and support unique opportunities to preach about God's Way directly and through service to the various churches across different organizations. We even promote those materials outside of what is considered the Church of God community."

TSS: "Under your leadership, what will be the direction of CEM?"

Havir: "We will continue to utilize Mr. Dart's messages. One thing we want to improve upon is refocusing on the youth. We will do this by growing the YEA program which is important to the teaching of God's Way to the youth of the Church.

TSS: "Will there be any other things you will focus on?"

Havir: "Yes, we will seek opportunities to reach out to young adults in a ministry to implement programs that serve them."

TSS: "Will there be any changes in the direction of CEM in the future under your guidance?"

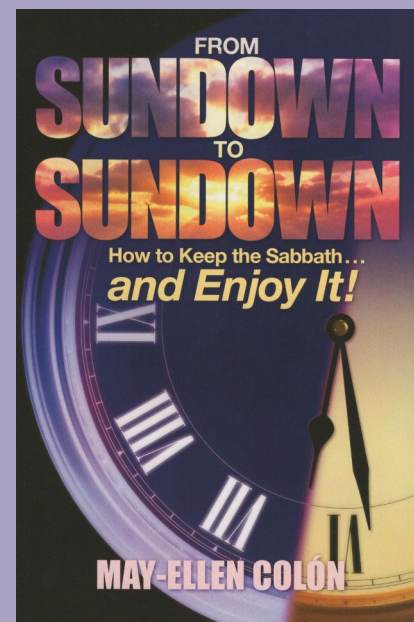
Havir: "In the past, and even now, radio has been a large focus of our efforts to teach. We will continue to do that but we need to move forward into a more advantageous media for the future, media where we will find access to the youth and the young adults to teach them about God's Way of life. What we don't want is for CEM to become the Kodak of the ministries found in the Church of God community.

TSS: "Where do you envision CEM being in 5 years?"

Havir: "One of the things I would like to see accomplished is for CEM to be a fixture in religious online media. Again, we expect to see a growth in the YEA ministry because that is a focus of ours going forward. Also, because we are focusing on this also, it is that we expect to see the establishment and growth of a ministry to serve the needs of young adults.

That concluded our interview. CEM remains a viable ministry even after the death of its founder, Mr. Dart. The addition of Mr. Havir to move the ministry forward is a very positive move by CEM. The fact that CEM reaches across congregational boundaries and reaches out to people to teach them about God's way, one of the core principles promoted by the Bible Sabbath Association, is a good reason for us to incorporate their efforts in our prayers.

—Dr. Royce Mitchell



## From Sundown to Sundown, *How to Keep the Sabbath ... and Enjoy It!*

By May-ElLEN Colon

If you need help in revitalizing your Sabbaths and understanding the principles of Sabbath-keeping, this book is for you. Dr. Colon has identified fifteen biblical principles, based on character traits of God, to guide you.

God loves you and wants to spend time with you. In fact, each Sabbath is an opportunity to take a vacation with Him and His family! Start planning now!

B247 \$15.00 suggested donation

# THE WAY

**Bob Radcliff**

When I am having a conversation with people and the discussion turns to God and the Bible, as it almost always does, I often get asked, "What denomination are you?" The answer to that question goes all the way back to the first century A.D. and the very beginning of Christianity itself.

The puzzling thing is that the Christianity that most people practice today is very different from the Christianity Jesus taught to those first 120 people (Acts 1:15 KJV) who were lead by the 12 apostles He personally chose to establish His church. So when they hear the truths that we have learned from our own Bibles, they sound foreign to what they've heard before; it's different somehow.

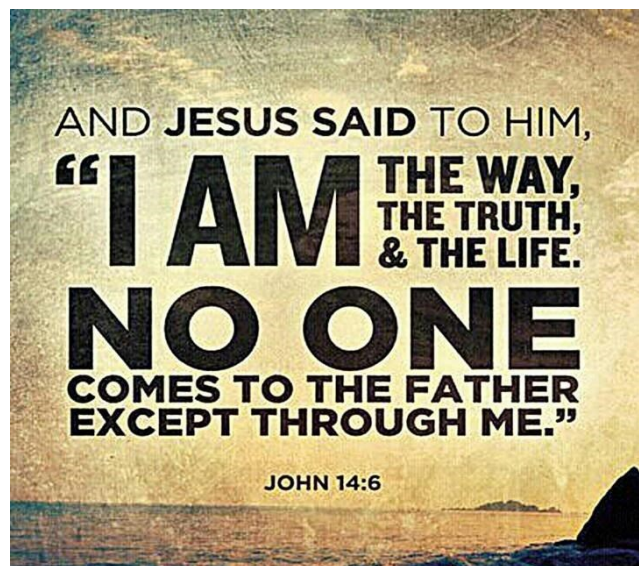
For some their question is posed as if they had encountered a strange insect on a walk in the woods searching for something familiar by which to categorize it. "What species or family of creatures is it? I've never run across anything like it before so help me to file it in the proper box in my mind." They struggle to fit the plain truth of the bible into the ideologies they have been taught by today's traditional religious leaders and though certain elements may ring true it doesn't quite fit in with what they already believe.

Occasionally though, the question, "What denomination are you?" is asked in such a way that the person is genuinely curious and interested in hearing more about the truth. They sincerely want to learn more about what's being said and are inquiring as to the source and how I came to know it. I'm still

learning how to answer gracefully, choosing my words carefully seasoned with salt to guide them into all truth. (Col 4:6 KJV)

I don't want to offend them by condemning their Sunday worship and pagan holiday keeping ways but I don't want to be overly defensive about mine either. As I've thought about it and studied it I've come to realize that this calling of ours, it's not any denomination. The very word denomination implies it's one of the Protestant branches that broke away from the Roman Church. It's not a religion either, teeming with the traditions of men. And it's not a cult. It's a way of life. It's simply a way of conducting our lives, a way to live in accordance with God's Law, a way that is pleasing in His sight. (1John 3:22 KJV)

Let's look at Matthew chapter 7 to see what it says in the Bible about this Way of life.



Matt 7:13-14 (KJV) Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, [the way of Cain] and many there be

which go in thereat: (14) Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

We have a tendency to think of the broad way, the way of Cain, (Jude 1:11 KJV) as that of a non-believer, an atheist. However, those who enter the wide gate do go in at the wide gate; they entered the gate! They believe in God or they would have stayed outside. Cain wasn't an atheist! He believed in God; he made an offering. The problem was that he wanted to decide how he worshipped God much like the mainstream Christians do today. When Christ took on the Pharisees in Matthew chapter 23, he wasn't rebuking them because they didn't believe in God. He was chastising them for the way they chose to demonstrate their belief and worship of Him. That's the reason there are so many religions and denominations today. They know there is a God but they each want to worship Him in their own way instead of by the simple instructions He gave us in the Bible.

The narrow way of life runs counter to the rest of so-called Christianity. It is not for everybody. It is not easy to find and it is not for the faint of heart. (John 16:2 KJV) It requires constant vigilance against the deceit of this world (Rev 12:9 KJV) and a constant refocusing of our attention with patience and endurance. (Col 1:10-11 KJV) It is the strait gate, the narrow path, the road less traveled, against the flow of the mainstream. We get lumped in with the rest of Christianity because we preach Christ crucified, (Col 1:23 KJV) but upon closer examination we don't quite fit in with them. And because we're in the minority, the judgment is made that this way of ours must be wrong somehow, even heretical; that our way, the narrow way through the strait gate is leading us down the path to destruction instead.

*The narrow way of life runs counter to the rest of so-called Christianity. It is not for everybody. It is not easy to find and it is not for the faint of heart.*

In Acts chapter 9, just before Paul encountered Christ on the road to Damascus, he was renowned as the hateful Saul that was actively seeking out that sect who chose to follow Christ, persecuting and slaughtering them. Fresh from the stoning of Stephen, before he left Jerusalem, he asked the high priest for letters that he could deliver to the leaders of the synagogues in Damascus. The letters were written and signed in the name and by the authority of the Sanhedrin. The high priest actually signed them as president of the Great Council. The letters instructed them to turn over any Christians they might find to him so that he could bring them back to Jerusalem to stand trial and be executed. Notice how he referred to them, those that followed Christ, that is.

Acts 9:1-2 (ESV) But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest (2) and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, [the King James says, "this way"] men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Those who followed Christ belonged to "the Way", that is, the Way of life as determined by faith in Jesus Christ, the way of the Lord, that way of life. This way of the Lord is also spoken of all throughout the Psalms and Proverbs. Let's look at Psalms 119 for



example and look at a few passages that refer to “the Way”.

Psa 119:1 (KJV) Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.

Psa 119:14 (KJV) I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches.

Psa 119:27-37 (KJV) Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works. (28) My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word. (29) Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously. (30) I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me. (31) I have stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, put me not to shame. (32) I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart. (33) Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. (34) Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. (35) Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight. (36) Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. (37) Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.

Psa 139:23-24 (KJV) Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: (24) And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Psa 143:8 (KJV) Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

The Way, who walk in the law of the Lord

The Way of thy testimonies

The Way of thy precepts

The Way of truth

The Way of thy commandments

The Way of thy statutes

Thy Way (God’s Way)

The Way everlasting

The Way wherein I should walk

In Acts 19, this Way was spoken of again specifically in reference to those who followed the Lord Jesus Christ when Paul spent 3 months speaking in the synagogues in Ephesus.

Acts 19:8-9 (NKJV) And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. (9) But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way [that way KJV] before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

And again it was referenced when those of the Way were making it difficult for Demetrius the silversmith to sell his statues of Diana.

Acts 19:23-27 (NKJV) And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way. (24) For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. (25) He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: “Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. (26) Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands. (27) So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the

world worship.”

In Acts 24, when Paul was brought before the unrighteous governor of Judea, Antonius Felix, on charges of sedition and heresy against the Jews, Paul himself referred to following Christ as the Way and that it was thought of as a heretical sect.

Acts 24:14 (NKJV) But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, [heresy KJV] so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.

Felix, the Governor of Judea also knew of it as, the Way –

Acts 24:22 (NKJV) But when Felix heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of the Way, he adjourned the proceedings and said, “When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case.”

In John 14, Christ Himself also spoke of the way. Let’s see how He described it.

John 14:1-6 (KJV) Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. (2) In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (4) And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. (5) Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? (6) Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Jesus Christ set the example! He showed us the way! That where He is, we may be also. Where is He? With the Father! (Heb 1:3 KJV) Do we want to be with the Father? Do we want to live in His pres-

ence, to be in God’s Kingdom living in the joy of our LORD? (Rev 21:3 KJV) Then He that says he abides in him ought to walk, even as he walked. (1John 2:6 KJV) God gave us His Spirit so we would know the way. (John 16:13 KJV) That still small voice leading us in the way wherein we should walk. (1Kings 19:12 KJV)

Now when anyone asks me “What denomination are you”? I reply, “I’m not of any denomination. I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. I live according to the Way, keeping the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ.” (Acts 24:14; Rev 12:17 KJV)

We need to always be mindful of this way of life; bind it for a sign upon the hand, and as frontlets between the eyes, so to speak. (Deut 6:8 KJV) We are set apart, sanctified by God (John 17:9; 1Cor 6:11 KJV) to be an example to others; to be different, (2Cor 6:17 KJV) to reveal to them the Father for His glory. It is not grievous or a burden (1John 5:3 KJV) but we delight in His Law and His Way. (Psa 1:2 KJV)

God gave us His Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us along the way. We must stir up the gift of God (2Tim 1:6 KJV) and not grieve it (Eph 4:30 KJV) nor quench it. (1Thes 5:19 KJV) We must listen for its gentle instruction in God’s way, that still small voice. (1Kings 19:12 KJV)

Isa 30:21 (KJV) And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

May we all hear that still small voice, thy loving-kindness in the morning leading us in the way, the way wherein we should walk, through the strait gate, down the narrow path which leads to life.

# Don't Leave home without it!

## Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups

*God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.*  
(Genesis 2:3, NKJV)

Eleventh Edition 2015

The Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups (2015 edition) gives locations and contact information for thousands of churches in North America plus these added values:

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# Luke's Historical Details in Acts 18-20...

## *and the Sabbath Week of Acts 20:7*

**Philip Derstine**

In a previous Sentinel article we saw that John Calvin understood from 1 Cor 16:2 and Acts 20:7 that Paul retained the day of worship to which the God-fearers in the synagogues were accustomed, which was the Mosaic Sabbath (Acts 13:14, 27, 42-44; 15:21; 16:13; 17:2; 18:4). By ignoring the genitive plurality of the Greek word *sabbatōn* (σαββατων) and mistranslating the phrase as “first day of the week” (*mia tōn sabbatōn*), Bible translations have effectively limited the New Testament’s use of the word “Sabbaths” (plural) to Acts 17:2 and Col 2:16. Clearly there would have been a need for the expression “one of the Sabbaths” in Acts 20:7. It will be shown that this Sabbath was “one of the Sabbaths” in the count toward Pentecost, which figures prominently in the narrative of Chapter 20 (cf. 20:16), and in the overall theme of Luke’s second historical treatise. Luke’s historical details place the end of Paul’s third missionary journey and the final trip to Jerusalem in the spring of 55 AD. After making that determination, we will see that the seventh day after Paul arrived in Troas (Acts 20:6) likely fell on a Saturday Sabbath!

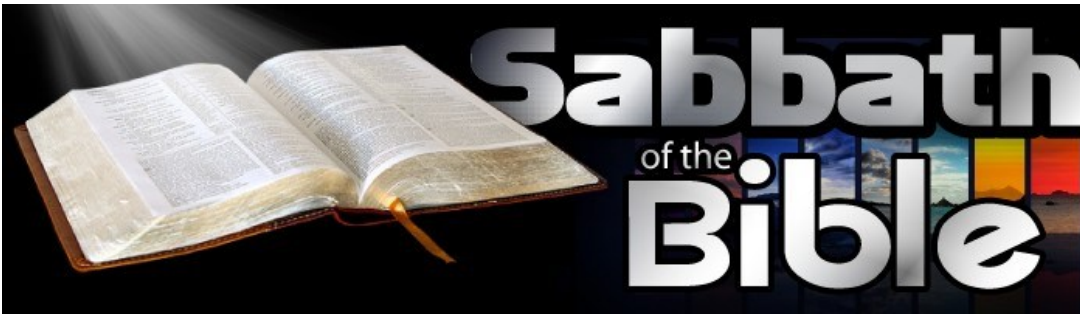
Toward at the end of his third missionary journey Luke tells us that Paul had sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread. If the year in which Paul departed from Philippi “after the days of Unleavened Bread” (Acts 20:6) on his way to Jerusalem can be determined, then the days of the week for that Mosaic festival may help us to decide whether a literal construction of *mia tōn sabbatōn* in Acts 20:7 as “one of the Sabbaths” is justifiable. Thankfully, Luke supplies his reader with abundant historical-chronological information between chapters 18 and 20 for narrowing the year of the collection trip.

Luke, a brilliant historian and Paul’s amanuensis and historiographer, was Paul’s traveling compan-

ion and fellow-prisoner from Troas to Rome, including two years Paul spent in prison in Caesarea, capital of Judea. Paul supplied the details, Luke did the historical research, and together they collaborated on the book of Acts, which classical scholar Sir William Ramsay called a very reliable historical treatise. The historical data which narrows the year of Paul’s last trip to Jerusalem indicate that *mia tōn sabbatōn* was not a figure of speech referring to Sunday.

The expulsion of Jews from Rome in the ninth year of Claudius Caesar (49 AD), resulted in the arrival of Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth a short time before Paul himself arrived there (Acts 18:1-2), late 49 AD. The ruler of the synagogue (18:11) was converted during the 18 months Paul taught in Corinth, leading to serious backlash—Jewish legal charges were brought before Gallio in May, 51 AD. The 18 months extend from ca. Dec. 49 AD to early summer, 51 AD, the time of Paul’s arraignment. After Gallio’s acquittal, Paul spent “a considerable number of days” (Acts 18:18) with the brethren in Corinth after the trial. Toward the end of summer he shaved his head to terminate a Nazarite vow. This left him with the ceremonial obligation of presenting himself before the priests in Jerusalem. No doubt Paul timed the culmination of this vow to coincide with the fall festivals in Jerusalem (18:21), allowing several weeks travel time. In AD 51, the Feast of Trumpets (Tishri 1) fell on Sept 26.

Arriving in Jerusalem, Paul no doubt reported on the success of the second missionary journey, but did not tarry there. He merely “greeted the church,” then went down to Antioch (Acts 18:22). After having spent “some time” (χρόνον τινα) at his home church (18:23)—during the fall and winter of 51/52 AD—Paul began his third missionary journey. As in the southern U.S., spring begins in mid-February throughout the Mediterranean. By springtime, 52



to the closing of the sailing season on the Mediterranean, his replacement could not have arrived before May, 55 AD. Thus the only time when multiple interim proconsuls were serving coincided with the end of Paul's third year in Ephesus, late 54 AD. Luckrock makes the following comment on Luke's plurality of consuls in Acts 19:38: "In the case of Luke we have a right to expect nothing but what is absolutely correct, because he is the chosen historian of Christ's Church at a most critical period, when every detail is of momentous interest."

AD, Paul was passing through the provinces of Galatian and Phrygia, "strengthening all the disciples" (18:23) en route to Ephesus to fulfill the promise he had made the previous summer: "I will return again to you, if God wills" (Acts 18:21).

Paul taught for three months in the synagogue of Ephesus (Acts 19:8); but when the hard-headed spoke evil of the Way, Paul took his disciples elsewhere, defending the truth in the school of Tyrannus for two years (19:9-10), i.e. through the fall of 54 AD. Paul's teaching over this period spread from Ephesus throughout the entire province of Asia, making serious inroads into the realm of idolatry; so much so that the people got together to burn their books on sorcery and magic. Paul fell into disfavor with the local craft union charged with making silver idols of Diana. The union boss aroused great fury among the citizens, who rushed into the huge amphitheater, chanting "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" By the grace of Yahweh-God, the powerful town clerk intervened with great tact and wisdom to calm the mob, who likely would have stoned Paul. He does so by the threat of Roman displeasure. Paul has not spoiled any temples, nor directly blasphemed their goddess. Finally, he then makes the point that no formal charges have been filed, for which day courts are in session (19:38). Last but not least—If they don't like the verdict of the day court, they can appeal to the proconsuls (19:38 NIV, NAS). The proconsuls (*anthupatoi*) of which the town clerk speaks, are a crucial chronological clue dating the crisis which befell Paul in Ephesus. The use of the plural is unusual, since under normal circumstances there would only be one proconsul in Asia. It just so happens that there were three deputy proconsuls in Asia by Nov. 54 AD as a result of the assassination of the Roman proconsul Silanus. Due

to the closing of the sailing season on the Mediterranean, his replacement could not have arrived before May, 55 AD. Thus the only time when multiple interim proconsuls were serving coincided with the end of Paul's third year in Ephesus, late 54 AD. Luckrock makes the following comment on Luke's plurality of consuls in Acts 19:38: "In the case of Luke we have a right to expect nothing but what is absolutely correct, because he is the chosen historian of Christ's Church at a most critical period, when every detail is of momentous interest."

The 'three months' of Acts 20:3 are synonymous with the winter Paul spent at Corinth (1 Cor 16:6), Jan-Mar 55 AD, during which the Epistle to the Romans was written. After wintering in Corinth, the Corinthians sent Paul forward with the collection to Jerusalem. Due to a Jewish assassination plot, Paul detoured through Philippi (setting sail from the port of Neapolis) on the day after Nisan 21 (the Last Day of Unleavened Bread), which was Wednesday 9 Apr 55 AD. In five days they came to Troas on Sunday at the start of a perfect seven-day week (cf. Lev 23:15) in Troas. The seventh day of that week was indeed a weekly Sabbath, *mia tōn sabbatōn*, "one of [seven] Sabbaths" as one counts to Pentecost.

The above then is an outline presenting the case for the events of Acts 20 taking place in 55 AD. After showing that Paul's Roman epistle was written from Corinth during the winter of 54/55, historian C. K. Barrett summarizes the argument for Paul's collection trip having taken place in spring, 55 AD:

Paul was brought before Gallio in or about July in A.D. 51 ...it is implied that the bulk of Paul's [18-month] stay fell before his appearance in Gallio's court...it seems probable then that Paul reached Corinth in March 50, and left in Sept. 51 (each date being very proximate). This would enable him to sail, by one of the last boats of summer, to Syria (Acts 18:21 f.)...He probably renewed his travels with the return of favourable weather in the spring

of the next year (18:23) and thru the 'upper country' (19:1) might well last most of the following summer; he would reach Ephesus (Acts 19:1) in the autumn. The length of his stay there is given by Acts 19:8 (3 months) and 19:10 (2 years); the Pentecost therefore which he was anxious to keep in Jerusalem will have been that of 55, and his three months in Greece (20:3) must have come to an end a few weeks earlier... The chronology of Paul's movements cannot be settled beyond dispute, but on the whole no view meets with fewer difficulties than that which places the 'three months' of Acts 20:3 in or about January-March 55.

It is the literal understanding of *mia tōn sabbatōn* which places the timing beyond dispute and confirms John Calvin's understanding that Paul never changed the day upon which his disciples assembled.

Footnotes:

1. W. M. Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller* (NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1896) 27.
2. There is an overwhelming consensus of historians who realize, based on Roman inscriptions, that Gallio was

*proconsul from May 51--May 52 AD. Colin Hemer, Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1989) 168-69.

3. *Shipping resumed on the Mediterranean around the 9<sup>th</sup> of February each year. Spring was reckoned as beginning six weeks before the equinox and lasting six weeks after.*

4. *The year when Junius Silanus, the proconsul at Ephesus, met his death was the year 54. Paul's residence at Ephesus was spring AD 52 to winter AD 54. George S. Duncan, St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry* (Scribner, 1930) 106.

5. *Luckrock, Footprints of the Apostles as Traced by St. Luke, II* (1897) 189.

6. C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Harper & Row, NY, 1957) 4-5.

7. *The first evening crescent of the sacred year was visible on 18 Mar 55 AD, making Passover April 1 and the Last Day of Unleavened Bread April 8, a Tuesday. To determine lunar crescent visibility, see R. Gautschy's website, "Last and First Sightings of the Lunar Crescent."*

<http://www.gautschy.ch/~rita/archast/mond/mondeng.html>.

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## Oh No, It's Sabbath Again \*

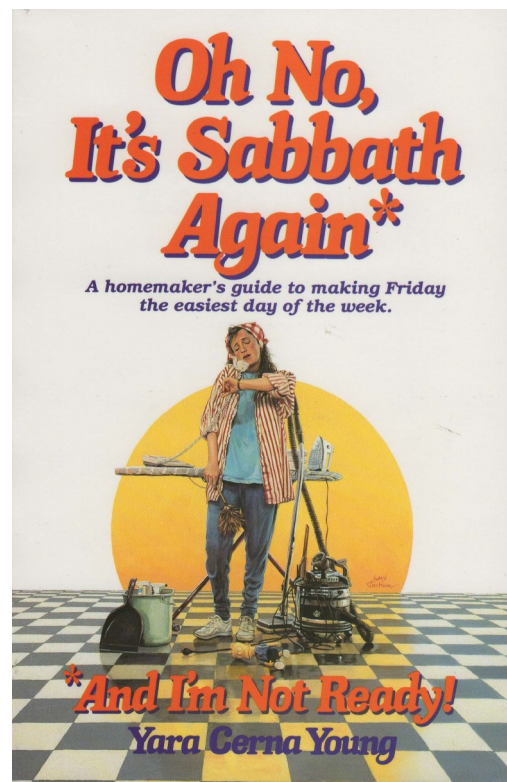
### \*And I'm Not Ready!

By Yara Young

ITEM B253

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If you're sick of the Friday "beat-the-sun" housework blues, this can help you take control of your home and schedule so that your family and the Sabbath are once more a delight. Young, an Adventist homemaker, offers practical guidelines for home maintenance and organization that actually make Friday the lightest day of the week.



# More on Ignatius and the Sabbath

By Bob Thiel, Ph.D.

*This is the third part of a multi-part series explaining why certain early documents that are claimed against the seventh-day Sabbath are misunderstood and not actually against it.*

Many on the internet and elsewhere, have pointed to some basically 19th century translations of certain ancient documents in an attempt to support their contention that Sunday was observed early on by the original Christians. But do they?

Perhaps the most commonly cited major claim in favor of early Sunday worship is from Ignatius' Letter to the Magnesians. And that was partially handled in the previous part which explained that Ignatius' writing was NOT doing away with the Sabbath, but only warning not to keep it the way that many Jews did.

How did many Jews keep it? Alfred Edersheim, a 19th century scholar, observed related to the Jewish Talmud (the Mishna and Gemara) and keeping the Sabbath:

In not less than 24 chapters, matters are seriously discussed as of vital religious importance, which one would scarcely imagine a sane intellect would seriously entertain. [1].

Note that these are mainly restrictions that are not found in the Bible (I have read many of these restrictions in the Mishna and they do seem to be absurd). Jesus also taught that Pharisaical Jews had improper concepts about the Sabbath (e.g. Matthew 12:1-14; Luke 13:10-17).

It may also be of interest to note how the less-accepted "longer" version of Ignatius' Letter to the Magnesians was translated in the Ante-Nicene Fathers as follows:

Let us therefore no longer keep the Sabbath after the Jewish manner...[2]



Furthermore, the above version of Ignatius' letter adds:

But let every one of you keep the Sabbath after a spiritual manner, rejoicing in meditation on the law, not in relaxation of the body, admiring the workmanship of God, and not eating things prepared the day before, nor using lukewarm drinks, and walking within a prescribed space, nor finding delight in dancing and plaudits which have no sense in them. [3]

It should be obvious that Ignatius was not teaching that the Sabbath was done away and replaced by Sunday. The above version seems to be more consistent with the meaning than how most others have translated the more "accepted" version.

## **Ignatius's Other Writings**

It should be understood that Ignatius' other writings show that he did not try to do away with the sabbath commandment. Notice what else he wrote in his Letter to the Magnesians:

It is fitting, then, not only to be called Christians, but to be so in reality: as some indeed give one the title of bishop, but do all things without him. Now such persons seem to me to be not possessed of a good conscience, seeing they are not stedfastly gathered together according to the commandment. [4]

The commandment that involves meeting together is the fourth commandment. It is the commandment that says to:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy (Exodus 20:8).

Part of the way the Sabbath day is kept holy is by meeting together for church services (referred to as "an holy convocation" in Leviticus 23:1-3). There is no direct statement anywhere in the Bible requiring a weekly convocation on Sunday.

In his Letter to the Romans, Ignatius observed that true Christians kept the commandments:

I also salute in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father: to those who are united, both according to the flesh and spirit, to every one of His commandments [5].

But if any one preach the Jewish law unto you, listen not to him. For it is better to hearken to Christian doctrine from a man who has been circumcised, than to Judaism from one uncircumcised. But if either of such persons do not speak concerning Jesus Christ, they are in my judgment but as monuments and sepulchres of the dead, upon which are written only the names of men. Flee therefore the wicked devices and snares of the prince of this world, lest at any time being conquered by his artifices, ye grow weak in your love [6].

Notice that Ignatius is once again complaining about Judaic customs that are not from the Bible. How do we know that the practices that Ignatius is referring to are not from the Bible? Because Ignatius is clearly saying to avoid snares from "the prince of the world." The "prince" Ignatius is referring to is Satan (see Ephesians 2:2), and since the Sabbath did not come from Satan, as it came from God (see Gen-

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esis 2:1-3), Ignatius would not refer to something that God made as wicked.

Furthermore, notice that Ignatius mentioned about keeping "every one of His commandments," thus this is not simply an admonition to love, but to keep all the commandments.

In his Letter to the Smyrnaeans, Ignatius warned about false Christians:

But I guard you beforehand from those beasts in the shape of men, whom you must not only not receive, but, if it be possible, not even meet with; only you must pray to God for them, if by any means they may be brought to repentance, which, however, will be very difficult. Yet Jesus Christ, who is our true life, has the power of [effecting] this. But if these things were done by our Lord only in appearance, then am I also only in appearance bound. And why have I also surrendered myself to death, to fire, to the sword, to the wild beasts? But, [in fact,] he who is near to the sword is near to God; he that is among the wild beasts is in company with God; provided only he be so in the name of Jesus Christ. I undergo all these things that I may suffer together with Him,

He who became a perfect man inwardly strengthening me. Some ignorantly deny Him, or rather have been denied by Him, being the advocates of death rather than of the truth. These persons neither have the prophets persuaded, nor the law of Moses, nor the Gospel even to this day, nor the sufferings we have individually endured. For they think also the same thing regarding us [7].

Since he writes that some of the false Christians do not have "the law of Moses" it is reasonable to conclude that Ignatius believed that he did have the "law of Moses" (cf. 1 Corinthians 9:8-12) in regards to the ten commandments, including the Sabbath commandment.

The idea that those who professed Christ had a more positive, and less ceremonial attitude toward the Sabbath than did most of the Jews can also be found in an anonymous document titled the Epistle to Diognetus (probably written in the late second century). Specifically, in the following portion the writer claims that the Jews:

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by Dwight Hall

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4:3 And again to lie against God, as if He forbid us to do any good thing on the sabbath day, is not this profane? [8]

This is simply additional evidence that the way of sabbath emphasis of those who professed Christ was different from that held by many of the Jews then. True Christians understood Jesus' teachings that it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath (e.g. Matthew 12:12).

Ignatius' writings do NOT 'do away with' the Sabbath. They basically point out the Christians are to keep it as God intended, not as some Jews later decided.

### References

[1] Edersheim A. The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2. Longmans, Green, and Company, 1883, p. 775

[2] Ignatius (Pseudo). The Epistle to the Magnesians (longer recension). Excerpted from Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1. Edited by Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson. American Edition, 1885. Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody (MA), 1999 printing, p.62

[3] Ibid

[4] Ignatius. Letter to the Magnesians, Chapter III. Excerpted from Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1. Edited by Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson. American Edition, 1885. Online Edition Copyright © 2004 by K. Knight

[5] Ignatius. Letter to the Romans, Chapter I. Excerpted from Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1. Edited by Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson. American Edition, 1885. Online Edition Copyright © 2004 by K. Knight

[6] Ignatius. Letter to the Philadelphians. Chapter VI. Excerpted from Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1. Edited by Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson. American Edition, 1885. Online Edition Copyright © 2004 by K. Knight

[7] Ignatius. Letter to the Smyrnaeans, Chapters IV-V. Excerpted from Ante-Nicene Fathers, Volume 1. Edited by Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson. American Edition, 1885. Online Edition Copyright © 2004 by K. Knight

[8] The Epistle To Diognetus. Translated by J.B. Lightfoot. In Apostolic Fathers. Lightfoot & Harm-er, 1891 translation, Online version © 2001 Peter Kirby

*Dr. Thiel has been interested in the Church of God for over 40 years. He was baptized by a Worldwide Church of God minister in 1977. He writes extensively. He is currently the Overseeing Pastor of the Continuing Church of God ([www.ccog.org](http://www.ccog.org)), one of the top ten groups (in terms of membership) whose leaders were once part of the old Worldwide Church of God. Hundreds of thousands know him as "COGwriter" as he writes over 1000 news posts and articles per year at [www.cogwriter.com](http://www.cogwriter.com).*

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# Sabbath Traditions

Lettie Lippincott Siddens

I consider being born and raised in a Sabbath observing family a benefit. Although that does not mean I was a perfect child.

Most of my first seven years we lived on a large rented farm ten miles from Milan, Missouri. While living there we attended a Sabbath observing church.

When I was a preteen, my Dad, Edgar Lippincott, started preaching in various churches when not needed in the local Church. Now we lived in Milan and sometimes went to minister in other churches in the area while doing various jobs as opportunity

provided for our living.

My favorite friend attended the Methodist Church and I often went with her. The town Ministerial Council surveyed the school children asking if they attended church and where. I checked that I attended the Methodist Church. But my conscious hurt so much I had to quit going with her. I continued to go faithfully with my parents on Sabbath.

At eleven I listened to a sermon by my Uncle L.I. Rodgers regarding the great image in Daniel and decided I should get ready for the return of Christ. My Dad baptized me in a farm pond as soon as Spring came.

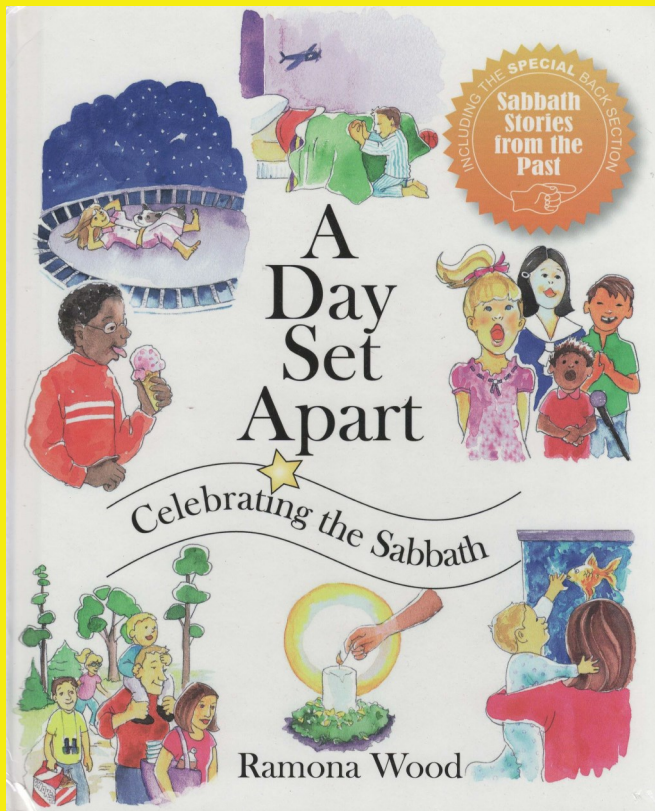
## A Day Set Apart

by Ramona Wood

"When the sun goes down at the end of the week, God's Sabbath begins." A family takes a break from their full schedules to refresh body, mind, and spirit on God's Sabbath. Included is a special back section "Sabbath Stories from the Past" showing that keepers of the seventh day are in step with both Old and New Testaments of the Bible: Jesus kept the Sabbath. The Apostle Paul did too--even as he blazed the trail for the spread of the Gospel in a brand-new era of God's Church.

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When in the seventh grade, we moved to Stanberry where my Dad became manager of the Church of God publishing house. The church there was much like the Milan church having Sabbath afternoon young peoples meeting.

We were blessed to have a piano in our home so Friday nights were usually spent with our family singing around the piano.

When it was not Dad's turn to speak there, we attended Sabbath services at Pleasant Hill, Gentry, Easton, Maryville, or Milan. The long rides were sad for me because of "car sickness" but it was a blessing to meet with young people who observed the Sabbath in other locations.

During that time, Dad was involved with the beginning of the Bible Truth Program broadcast over radio station KFNF at Shenandoah, Iowa. This program continued over various stations for fifty years.

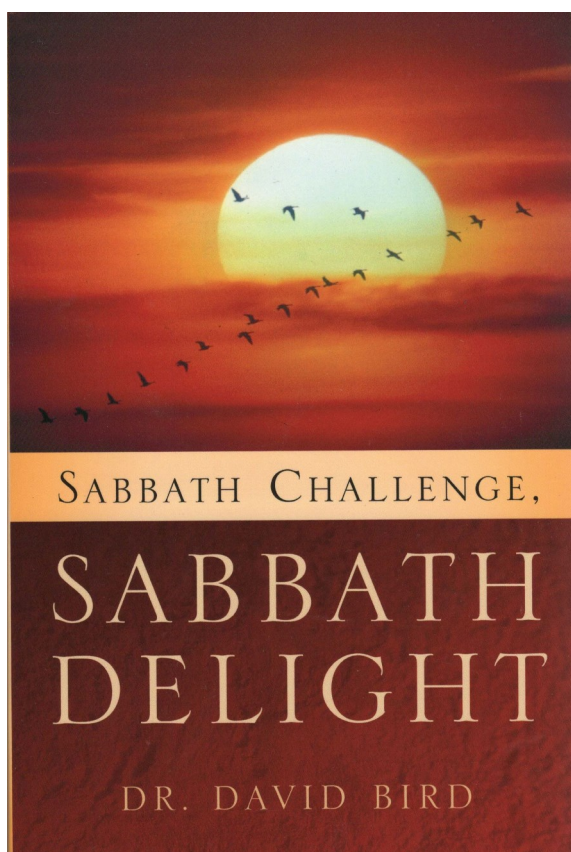
My Dad was involved in the establishment of the

Bible Sabbath Association and was an officer in the early years.

After I was married, Keith Siddens and I, although neither were accomplished musicians, used Friday evening to listen to sing along records of hymns. We also had Bible reading and prayer together with our children.

When our three children were in their preteens and we lived where there was not a Sabbath church, we found we could remember the Sabbath in other ways. Some of our activities are shared in the book, Sabbath at Sommerhase and the activity packet gives directions for corresponding activities which are available from the Bible Sabbath Association book service.

As I approach my 90<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary and look back over the years, I am thankful for the many people who assisted me in the enjoyment of Remembering the Sabbath.



# Sabbath Delight

by Dr. David Bird

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# Letters to the Editor

I really like all you're doing with the Sabbath Sentinel. I'm enclosing a research paper that I've worked on for many years that would be great information for the magazine.

Ellis Wiley

*Thank you very much for your compliment, Mr. Wiley. We at the Bible Sabbath Association are doing our best to make TSS a more relevant and encompassing magazine for everyone who keeps God's Sabbaths. Thank you also for your article. We normally only want digital copies of articles but since yours is typed we can digitize it and get it into the magazine. Since the process for doing that is a bit cumbersome, i.e., I have to carefully check the article for OCR mistranslations, I'm not sure when I can get it in.*

—Ed.

Please remember the whole verse of Leviticus 19:28. Please see Page 4 of The Sabbath Sentinel (July-August 2016-Ed). Could you please use the whole verse? Please remember "for the dead." Could you please use verses in context.

*Thank you for your letters, Ms Klaus. I do appreciate your point. That clause that you mention was not incorporated in the article. However, the reason for not using that clause is that the inclusion or exclusion of that clause would not have helped to make or negate the point being made. Also, the question arises looking at that verse as to whether God approves cutting of the flesh for any other reason in the scriptures. If there is any such scripture then I have been unable to locate such an approval by God. If God doesn't, then the only place where cutting of flesh is mentioned is disapproved, and hence should not be done, for the dead or otherwise. However, I am not your judge if you have some marking or other modification to your flesh. Beyond that, remember that if what we have done is wrong then we have a living Sav-*

*ior who died to forgive our sins. Now on to your second letter!*

May I encourage photographs to not be used in The Sabbath Sentinel out of respect for the "Ten Words?" Even if some people think it's OK to use photographs, if some brethren have convictions about not using photographs for personal pleasure, how about sacrificing?

Joy Klaus

*Thank you for this second letter. In response to your request, I direct your attention to several things. First, please read the January-February edition of this magazine where you find a Point-Counterpoint discussion of this very point. In them you can see reasonable differences respectfully discussed between two writers. One or the other of the writers could be wrong—or both! The rule is that we need to follow God as best we know how and that we are not responsible for what someone else understands.*

*Next, please remember that there are many different sects of Sabbath keeping brethren who read this magazine. It is up to me, as editor, to put together a magazine that reaches out to all of the different sects because of the goals of the Bible Sabbath Association. I can't cater to your desires lest I run the risk of alienating other readers. Many of your brethren do not see the "Ten Words" the same way that you do. It is possible that your position is correct on this matter. But, it is equally possible that you misunderstand the scripture on this point. We should give one another room to understand the scriptures as God leads us to understand them while making certain that we adhere to them as we understand them. Since this magazine has readership that does not agree with your position, I'd suggest giving your brethren the same space you desire.*

—Ed.

# More Letters to the Editor

As I was reading a book on the history of the Church of God 7th day today, a few ideas to improve the content of The Sabbath Sentinel came to my mind. It seems that the Bible Sabbath Association is having a hard time reaching to new people outside of the Church of God movement. Still, there is a growing movement of people leaving the mainstream church today to keep Shabbat. There are many leaders out there, many ministries, etc. (Jim Stanley, 119 Ministries, Torah Resources are just a few examples).

Instead of waiting for other Sabbath keeping believers to get interested in the Bible Sabbath Association and in reading The Sabbath Sentinel, wouldn't it be a good idea for the Bible Sabbath Association to show interest in what is happening in the Sabbath keeping world. This could include having interviews in our magazine from leaders of the 21st century Sabbath keeping movement. I am sure many leaders would be interested in explaining their approach to Sabbath keeping for example. They would be promoting their ministries and in the meantime, it would lead them in promoting the Bible Sabbath Association. I am sure many of those leaders are totally oblivious of the Bible Sabbath Association. They have never heard of it, neither their followers. By reaching to them, we might potentially be reaching to their followers.

Another idea would be to interview authors of books who are promoting Shabbat or any subject of interest related to the Sabbath keeping movement. It would be a platform for them and for their books but also an occasion for The Sabbath Sentinel to beef up its contents.

A book review at the end of The Sabbath Sentinel would be a good idea as well. It does not have to be a lot: two to three books reviews would be probably more than enough.

Interviews could be video recorded (using Skype

for instance) and could be posted on a YouTube channel owned by the Bible Sabbath Association. It would increase our visibility. A lot is happening on line today.

David Yvinec-Dunlop

*Thank you for your letter of encouragement, even if perhaps you didn't write it with that in mind! I hope you'll take notice that the past few issues, including this one, include interviews with various heads of ministries.*

*Thank you also for your ideas related to book reviews and publishing interviews. As we move forward to promote both TSS and the BSA we hope to be able to put more of your suggestions to work.*

*Also, please be aware that we have your other letter but there's only so much room in each edition to which we can dedicate space. It will appear in a later edition because it raises some good points.*

—Ed.

I am a Christian serving the lord in one local church in Addis Ababa, and in the rural areas of Ethiopia .

Because of the war taking place in South Sudan, each day 1000 people enter West Ethiopia at Gambela for refuge. They speak English and most of them are Christians. Our churches members want to go there and encourage them. If you have any free Spiritual Books and Bibles, please can you send us ?

Lastly, want to work with you as a partner and co-worker. So, if you are pleased to send Bibles please use our church postal address.

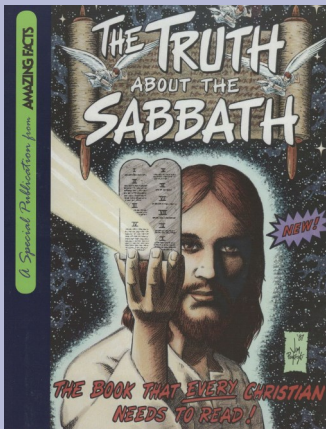
Matewos G. Desta

*We applaud your ministry of love to those fleeing the ravages of war. We live in a world where the ability to hear the Word of God is under attack, even in the nation which proclaims its trust in God.*

*However, because of the volume of fraud coming out of Africa, we would need some more information from you before we can publish your request for materials. The BSA has free, downloadable information on its website which you can have at no cost.*

—Ed.

# ADVERTISEMENTS



## *The Truth About the Sabbath*

by Jim Pinkoski

B254 \$5 + \$2 shipping

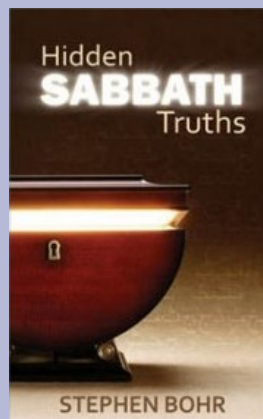
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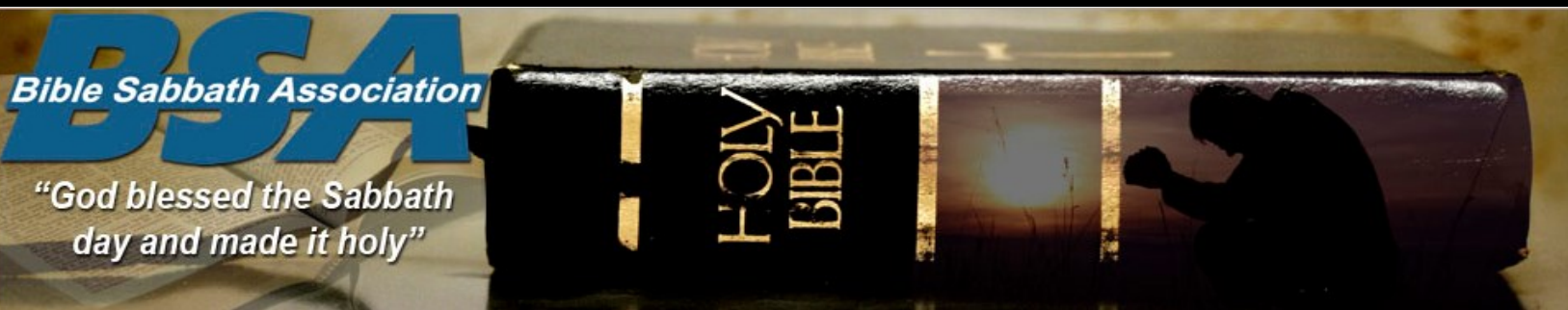
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## *Do You Want to Learn More About the Sabbath?*

### *Are You or is Someone You Know New To the Sabbath?*

The BSA now offers some free resources to help you learn about the Sabbath.

We have short, 1 or 2 minute audio clips on topics such as

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