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2017*

# *The Sabbath Sentinel*

*“Always giving thanks for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”*

**BSA—The Bible Sabbath Association**

*Jesus said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.”*

# The Sabbath Sentinel July-August 2017

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In the United States, we are rapidly approaching a national holiday known as "Thanksgiving Day." On this day, people in the United States are told that they should focus on being thankful for everything they have, including a free nation, the freedom to worship God as they wish, for families and pretty much every good thing that they enjoy.

However, the scriptures do not seem to limit for what we should be thankful. Indeed, even the time does not seem to be limited. We are told that we should be "always giving thanks for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of God." (Eph 5:20-21).

Have we ever considered the meaning of that small word "always" in that sentence? How about the word "all?" Even elementary students whose first language is English know that "always" does not mean "sometimes," "when we think of it," "when it is convenient," or anything other than "at all times."

The word "all" brings with it the same difficulties. "All" does not mean, "some," "most," "many" or anything other than for "every one and thing."

Within the Church of God is contained many different individual beliefs with virtually identical core beliefs. By that I mean that nearly all of the Churches of God believe that we should all keep the Commandments of God, including keeping His Sabbath Day, and that we should accept the sin-cleansing sacrifice of the Christ.

Yet, our Adversary continues to get us to focus on our differences, the minor things we understand and believe differently. Is that something for which we should be thankful? Is our focusing on our differences to create walls something that comes from God? Isn't it Satan who gets us to claim that our brethren "don't worship the same God?"

The idea of being thankful and giving thanks is mentioned nearly 40 times in the New Testament alone. Isn't it possible that the idea of being thankful is important to God?

If so, consider the many brethren who believe the same as we do on the "salvational" issues. Are we thankful for their steadfastness to the faith once delivered as they understand it?

Are we thankful for the differences between us? Shouldn't we be? After all, don't those differences give us things to review and prove long after we have passed that blush of discovery we each had when we first saw that God had called us to a truth that the world can't or refuses to grasp?

Can we thank God that He will in His own time reveal to us all truth? Can we fellowship in thankfulness to God for reserving to Himself this great fellowship which He has blessed with His understanding?

Can't we thank and bless God at all times for all this great assembly who we can call our brothers and sisters?

I think we can. I think we should. I think Daddy would find that pleasing. Let's do that!

—Ed.





# Divine Healing

## Part 2

In my last article, we discussed the power of divine healing. We reviewed that it is found throughout the Bible and was practiced by the early church. It is still available today. In this issue, we will continue to discuss divine healing and its relevance in our lives today.

In I Corinthians chapter 12, Paul wrote about nine spiritual gifts that are available to the Body of Christ. One of these gifts is healing. "To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit..." (1Cor. 12:9) Technically, the Greek language reads "gifts of healings." The Greek words gift and healing are both in the plural form. This plural form indicates that there are multiple manifestations of the healing gifting. There are also various kinds of conditions that can be healed.

Some people attribute all illness to sin. This is not a Biblical view. While some illnesses might be connected to sin, we certainly cannot say ALL illness is a sin. The disciples asked Jesus if sin had caused a man to go blind. Jesus dismissed this view. "And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:2-3). If you fall off of a ladder and break your arm, it likely had nothing to do with sin. It was an accident. After all, Solomon did say that time and chance happen to all mankind (Ecclesiastes 9:11). I would like to review for you at least five different manifestations of the gifts of healings.

1) Healing of Physical deformities and injuries – In Matthew 12:1-14, Jesus prayed for a man with a withered hand. This man was healed and his hand was completely restored. This physical deformity or

injury was healed.

2) Healing of sicknesses and diseases - In Matthew 8:1-4, Jesus prayed for a man to be healed of leprosy. Leprosy is a skin disease that afflicts your body. In Matthew 8:14-15, Jesus prayed for Peter's mother-in-law to be healed of fever. These were healings of infectious diseases.

3) The forgiveness of sins - In Matthew 9:1-6, there was a man with palsy, Jesus said 'your sins are forgiven you' and he was healed. In James 5:16, the Bible reads, "Confess your faults [or sins] one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." Confess your faults or sins one to another that you may receive healing. There are times that sin brings illness or infirmity. This is not always the case, but it does happen. When we confess the sin and forsake it, we can receive healing.

4) Casting out of Devils - Matthew 15:21-28 - Jesus cast a spirit out of a girl. When the spirit left, she was healed of her illness. This shows us that some illnesses originate from spiritual affliction.

**Divine healing is a powerful manifestation of God's love and compassion in the world today.**

5) Resurrecting the dead - In Luke 8:49-56, Jesus went to pray for a little girl who had died. In verse 50, Jesus said that the girl could be healed if they believed. He prayed and she came back from the dead. This is a gift of healing because it is reversing the processes of sickness that caused someone to

die! This restores them just as if they had never died!

One other item I think is necessary to cover is illnesses caused by emotional wounds. Over the years of praying for people, I have found that depression, anxiety, and even fibromyalgia can be caused by a wounded spirit. Sometimes joint pain or rheumatoid arthritis will be caused by this. Some people have experienced traumatic events such as abuse, neglect, broken promises, or rejection. Due to these negative experiences, they have unforgiveness, hurt, and pain inside. When these issues are not resolved inwardly, it can cause problems outwardly.

Solomon wrote, "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?" (Proverbs 18:14). The spirit of a human is the intangible part of our being that allows us contact with God. It motivates us. A person with a whole spirit who is afflicted by a physical infirmity will be motivated to continue with life. When a person's spirit is wounded, they fall apart physically. They lose all motivation and drive. Literally, their body begins to break down underneath the weight of inward distress. This is exactly what Solomon is referring to.

One detail about Isaiah 53:5 that I want to point out is in the phrase "the punishment that brought us peace was on him". The Hebrew word translated as "peace" is shalom. We typically think of the English word peace as meaning the absence of conflict. Shalom means to be whole, complete, or prosperous. Too many times people think of the term prosperity in terms of money. We need to think of this word in terms of health. When we are prosperous in our health it enables us to pursue our God-given dreams with vigor. When a person does not have prosperity in health, it hinders his or her from pursuing these things with strength. In other words, poor health can slow us down from running the race full speed.

Our health can be hindered in many different ways. When we are wounded in our spirit, it deters our confidence to receive from God. It also discourages us from pursuing the Kingdom of God in our per-



sonal lives and in ministry work.

After saying all of this, some people might say that they do not have the gifts of healings. In the New Testament, we have a further promise that anyone can pray for others to be healed. James 5:15 reads, "And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven." Jesus even said in Matthew 18:19, "Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven." As long as we have the faith to pray for others to be healed, we can access this wonderful promise from God! Moreover, Paul even said that we can earnestly desire the best gifts (I Cor. 12:31).

In conclusion, I want to emphasize the importance of love and compassion when praying for people. In the gospels we read that Jesus prayed for sick people out of compassion. "And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick" (Matthew 14:14). We must have a heart that breaks at the sight of people who are hurting and disadvantaged. Out of this Godly compassion, healing virtue will flow. When compassion arises in us at the sight of sick people, it is a sign that the heart of God is active and alive in us.

Divine healing is a powerful manifestation of God's love and compassion in the world today. We are the hands and feet of Christ on earth. I encourage you today to seek healing in your life and pray for others to receive this powerful promise from God.

# 7 PILLARS OF WISDOM

## PART 2

*Michael Suned*

### The First Pillar of Wisdom—“Fear of God”

Most people, both religious and non-religious, seek to become “smart” or “wise.” Once “wise” they take advantage of their acquired wisdom through some competition or “setting up” of others using their self-acquired level of wisdom. When life and death situations arise, these allegedly smart or wise adults sometimes show less wisdom than little children. We don’t need an investigation by one of the great research facilities to confirm this fact.

We have heard of stories about children who have acted beyond their years to avoid disaster for themselves or others thus proving this point. Instead of simply agreeing that a child had more or better wisdom than them at the moment of need, they attempt to direct our thoughts in a different direction by focusing on theories about what might have happened. Some even state that “those children have lived life before.” Some believe that God has provided and blessed their apparent wisdom. Whether one believes in God or not, gaining increased wisdom should be everyone’s desire and necessity.

The Fear of the Lord is the Beginning of wisdom;  
Proverbs 9:10 KJV.

The Bible states in English, “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” and we often accept those words at face value without a second thought. Would we say that the scripture is a true statement? Do we even believe it? How many agree with that statement completely, without reserve?

How do we fear the Lord? Isn’t this question alone something that causes everyone to pause for discussion? It seems there is no clear answer to the question, only situational, conditional, and comparative opinions. Some would say that the best way to come up with a correct answer is to compile every

opinion, weigh everything that was said and done and then form a conclusion based upon one’s understanding. The main point that confounds the mind is the question, “Do I really fear the Lord?” Perhaps we don’t have a clear answer for this question, but what is firmly known by this author is that I look to him, the Lord, for the answer! Do you, the reader, do the same?

A great many religious people are aware of the words “fear of the Lord” but few seek the true meaning of them. In order to make people believe that they have wisdom, they confirm outwardly that they fear the Lord and ask others “Do YOU fear the Lord?” They would be embarrassed to have others discover a different understanding about God, and the proper fear of Him, than others have. Yet, surprisingly enough, those same religious people consistently make grave mistakes in their lives while claiming that they have the wisdom that comes from the fear of the Lord. “Wisdom” is not a misinterpretation from the Bible’s many other languages even though the meaning of the some of the words found in Bibles have changed with time, oftentimes because of the interpreting biases of those same interpreters. It is not the intent of this author to judge who they were that misinterpreted any words of scripture. The intention is to learn the truth and to share the truth with the reader.

*How do we fear the Lord? Isn’t this question alone something that causes everyone to pause for discussion?*

Wisdom must be explained from a viewpoint that



even little children can understand. Carefully examining each instance of interpretation—and the history of its change—to dig out the correct meaning of the underlying original word is required. Then we must paraphrase those ancient words in today's English, or other, language to arrive at a logical and Biblical and common-sensed understanding of the term. This will help us to connect to the understanding of the intent of one of the greatly admired kings of ancient Israel, Solomon, at the moment he wrote the words and then apply them to our knowledge. Closely following the above principle, we find out that it is not that difficult for us to arrive at a more accurate translation for the word "Fear" in the English language today. The more accurate translation would be "AWE."

The word "awe" is translated thusly: "a solemn wonder" (A Student's Dictionary). It is a word that needs no inference. Just as the word "Lord" brings to mind the idea of authority, the paraphrasing and connection of these two words in the English language brings us to the realization that Solomon was actually talking about calmness and critical thinking. I have found myself wondering in the past why little children are asked to be quiet and intentionally trained to be calm under stress in almost all cultures. I understand why, now.

It has been scientifically proven that the best decisions upon which one can arrive are made while merging ideas generated within both the conscious and subconscious. That merging is explained in different terms in different fields of study with a certain amount of agreement as well as disagreement. The merging of the conscious and unconscious happens under specific conditions. It can be seen reflected in brain wave signals, although the signals may vary with each individual subject. Some say that this is the phenomenon known as "sixth sense." Some believe it to be spirit consulted or derived. Others arrive at something more personal and strange. The purpose of laying out these controversial points or beliefs is not to argue about them. It is to cause us to think beyond our paradigm, to blend into one the idea contained within the concept of fearing the Lord. This is done in or-



der to improve our limited understanding and to analyze the causation and the correlation of problems to be overcome in our lives daily.

We should now apply this pillar of wisdom to our own problems and mistakes that have caused so much chaos, confusion and suffering in our lives. We all know that if we had just made right decisions in the beginning then we wouldn't have suffered as we have in the past. When discussing making right decisions, people who are experts, i.e., professionals, professors and scholars, try to layout the problem with ideas and formulas that appear to be right to some degree, but which have not been demonstrated to be correct all of the time. One can easily single out a few "true, but not the truth" statements which have been bothersome, i.e., creating confusion in the mind of the user when the anticipated result eludes them.

It is not difficult for us to understand the basics of good underlying conditions from examination of the life and actions of successful individuals. Many great leaders made seemingly perfect decisions in

the past and if we knew how they made those decisions, then we can presumably have better outcomes as well. We know that truth never favors anyone no matter how powerful or special their position is. The truth remains as it is.

Many great leaders have used that special, but exactly the same, environment called QUIETNESS wherein they have made their right decisions. Some even exhibit that special peace while they talk and act. In that quiet moment, they connected themselves to a deep calm, calm enough to focus on the matter at hand in order to make a sound decision. Finding the best solution for the problem, the results proved that the decision was right.

On the other hand, we consistently come across others who have been afflicted with seemingly unfair or unjust results that are mostly associated with a bad decision made under poor conditions. From Herod's beheading of John the Baptist under pressure to please Herodias, to the many HIV or STD virus infection victims exposing themselves via their perceived need for risky sexual activities, to those driving under the influence of alcohol or drug impairment, there are too many examples to account for a wrong decision made under those influences. Regardless, these wrong decisions were and are all made only because those making the decision used imperfect decision-making channels. The poor conditions of those channels necessarily dictates poor results.

We all know the importance of somber quietness in the courts, and respectful quietness in conference rooms, the work place, in learning centers, libraries, laboratories, surgery rooms—anywhere that decisions are being made or the thought process requires concentration. Sometimes it is known as "Dead Quiet." One is more prone to failure when they analyze complicated situations in places that are less than ideal for forming decisions because of the noise level and distraction in which these places abound.

There are some facts which are put forth by those in

the entertainment world and its sibling industries that would challenge this and might cause some people to be confused. It is true that musicians can make good music while they are listening to something. What we don't realize is those individuals have the ability of isolating themselves from the noise to reach the required level of quietness and formation of their thoughts in those noisy places. They often do so after having some quality, time-consuming consideration in quiet mode elsewhere. In other words, unseen facts produce the illusion of making good decisions under noisy circumstances. We must admit that the ability to work in noisy environments can be a learned skill. However, those abilities can be lost due to lack of use, also.

We have been discussing conditions that affect our decision making process. Certainly, it is the Fear of the Lord that is the beginning of wisdom. However, the superstitious fear, i.e., being afraid of the Lord or God, is not the first pillar of the wisdom. When a person loses his or her ability to remain calm and to think deeply, no matter how much the individual is educated, experienced or recognized, there remains mostly a scratching of heads and murmuring as the resultant.

Whoever makes the genuine decision to have the proper "fear of the Lord" will have better outcomes. That one is always respected and recognized by their communities. People acknowledge them by calling them "wise" or affirm them as "the one who has wisdom in our circle." Reaching the highest level of Awe is the first pillar of wisdom upon which five other pillars are settled. That Awe is likewise the base of and is closely connected with the seventh pillar. It forms some degree of abstract capability in our lives which then provides a realistic presence in every aspect of our daily lives for everyone who captures this understanding, regardless of the limitations of age, sex or experience.

The first pillar of wisdom is an element that highly impacts the happy, or sad, conclusion of each of our situations daily.



# The Big picture... and where do we fit?

*Aubrey Duncan*

October 31, 1517 was the date. The place was Wittenberg Castle church, Wittenberg, Germany. His name was Martin Luther. Committed to the idea that salvation could be reached through faith and by divine grace only, Luther vigorously objected to the corrupt practice of selling indulgences by the Roman church. Consequently, he defiantly nailed a copy of his 95 Theses to the door of the Wittenberg Castle church.

The 95 Theses which became the foundation of the Protestant Reformation, was quite provocative, confronting the un-Biblical teachings of the church to which he had dedicated his life, sincerely believing that it was God's church on earth. But, having found the truth and light of God's word, Luther declared, "We are of the conviction that the papacy is the seat of the true and real Antichrist...personally I declare that I owe the pope no other obedience than that of Antichrist..." (Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, Vol. 1, pg. 121, Froom). Luther's theses was the beginning of a movement that led untold millions to protest against the erroneous dogmas, doctrines, and practices of the Roman Catholic Church.

Protestantism means protesting against the un-biblical teachings of the Church of Rome. It is what gave rise to the mighty Protestant Reformation of the 15th and 16th centuries and birthed the greatest experiment in human civilization, the United States of America. Most of the Christian denominations, which came out of the Papal church in protest of its un-Biblical teachings and man made traditions, have retained many traits and characteristics of the mother church. Sunday sacredness is the most prominent. We read in the book, the Great Controversy: "It is the spirit of the papacy, the spirit of conformity to worldly customs, the veneration for human traditions above the commandments of God,

that is permeating the Protestant churches, and leading them on to do the same work of Sunday exaltation which the papacy has done before them" (GC 573).

Today, America, through self-appointed religious leaders, directs the nation back to Rome. The National Back to Church Sunday movement, a coalition of Evangelical, Catholic, and mainline Sunday-keeping churches are joining forces for the establishment of Sunday sacredness in America. The question is, where are the Protestants?

Not unlike the 95 theses of Martin Luther, nailed on the door of the Cathedral of Wittenberg on October 31, 1517, God's Sabbath Truth is destined to impact the course of Christendom.

A great drama is being played out, before our very eyes, in these the final hours of earth's history. It revolves around God's word versus the traditions of the papacy. The great Protestant Reformer, Martin Luther, along with others such as Calvin, Zwingli, Knox, Edwards, Henry, Clark, Wesley, and Spurgeon, just to name a few, identified the Roman Catholic Church as the first beast of Revelation 13 and the papacy as the anti-Christ of Bible prophecy. As a result of their courage, tens of thousands of Roman Catholics, infected with the holy boldness of those Reformers, returned to the Scriptures and discovered the truth about Jesus. The world has not been the same since. Unfortunately today, most Protestants and Evangelicals have developed a nauseating case of historical amnesia, all but forgetting the work, commitment, and sacrifice of the Reformers. They have, knowingly or unknowingly, set aside that which distinguishes them from Catholicism, instead joining with her to achieve an unachievable peace. For the most part, they are oblivious to the conflict in which they are engaged. But all must choose whose side of the controversy

they're on: the God of creation or the papacy's. There is no middle ground.

Ellen G. White, world renowned Bible commentator, alerts us, "In the movements now in progress in the United States to secure for the institutions and usages of the church the support of the state, Protestants are following in the steps of papists. Nay, more, they are opening the door for the papacy to regain in Protestant America the supremacy which she has lost in the Old World. And that which gives greater significance to this movement is the fact that the principal object contemplated is the enforcement of Sunday observance—a custom which originated with Rome, and which she claims as the sign of her authority" (Great Controversy 573).

The fact of the matter is that the God of creation has never made Sunday holy. Neither does He force anyone to accept what He offers. Further, legislation of religious dogmas always lead to tyranny and persecution of those who do not agree with the legislated dogma.

Ellen White, who the Smithsonian magazine lists as one of the ten most influential religious figures of all time, continues, "The Protestant churches are in great darkness, or they would discern the signs of the times. The Roman Church... is employing every device to extend her influence and increase her power in preparation of a fierce and determined conflict to regain control of the world, to re-establish persecution, and undo all that Protestantism has done" (Ibid 563-565). Join us in rekindling the Reformation

Christians everywhere, like the Reformers of old, need to rekindle the spirit of Protestantism and resist Rome's call for universal Sunday sacredness, a tradition contrary to God's word which she claims is her mark of authority in religious matters.

It is approaching 500 years now and some throughout Christendom are celebrating the anniversary of Luther's Protest, which has affected all of our lives. For there would have been no Protestant denomination had not the God of all creation inspired and empowered the humble, God-fearing monk named

Martin Luther. He is one of the most influential figures in Western history. His writings were responsible for fractionalizing the Catholic Church and sparking the Protestant Reformation. His central teachings, that the Bible is the central source of religious authority and that salvation is reached through faith and not deeds, shaped the core of Protestantism.

This one man's faith in God's word was displayed by this courageous act that changed the course of human history. Luther, by the direction and divine grace of Creator God, discovered that the church he so very much loved was practicing fraud, deception, and treachery beyond his wildest imaginations. It is now 500 years and not too many are celebrating the man and his work that changed the course of human history.

Ironically, it is the pope of Rome and his church that are most proactive in celebrating Luther and commemorating the Protestant Reformation which he ignited. Their celebration, however, is an overmastering deception. The reality is that they are congratulating themselves on the undeniable success of the Counter-Reformation. This is a movement spearheaded by Francis' Jesuit Order to undo all that Luther's protest has accomplished and to return his church to the rulership of the world. No one can deny their success; hence their celebration.

In the document, *From Conflict to Communion*, which solidifies the return of the Lutheran church to the Church of Rome and forms the basis for Rome's celebration, this revealing statement is found: "What happened in the past cannot be changed, but what is remembered of the past and how it is remembered can, with the passage of time, indeed change. Remembrance makes the past present. While the past itself is unalterable, the presence of the past in the present is alterable. In view of 2017, the point is not to tell a different history, but to tell that history differently the Reformation" (From *Conflict to Communion*, (Ch 2, Sec 16) .

On the 500th anniversary of Luther's formidable Protestant Reformation, the church he founded, the Lutherans, have fully clasped hands with the Papal

church, effectively agreeing with the current pope that the Protestant Reformation is over. Many others have followed, and are following, suit. How grieved would Luther and the other Protestant Reformers be could they witness the current rejection of their sacrificial efforts and millions returning to the fold of the Roman church? Quite interestingly, none of the doctrines, dogmas, and practices that led to Luther's Protestant Reformation have changed. Those policies resulted in the unmerciful slaughter of tens of millions whose only crime was to choose, like Luther, that salvation is only available through Jesus.

It is indeed a great mystery that on October 31st, the followers of Jesus Christ would choose to engage in Halloween, an activity rooted in sorcery, witchcraft and necromancy rather than reflect upon the event that was the foundation for their civil and religious liberty. Why would they choose carving pumpkins pretending to be ghosts instead of praising the God of all creation for sending Luther and the other reformers, many of whom gave their lives so that we can live?

But the PROTEST is not over.

At last he beheld in the distance the seven-hilled city. With deep emotion he prostrated himself upon the earth, exclaiming: "Holy Rome, I salute thee!" — Ibid., b. 2, ch. 6. He entered the city, visited the churches, listened to the marvelous tales repeated by priests and monks, and performed all the ceremonies required. Everywhere he looked upon

scenes that filled him with astonishment and horror. He saw that iniquity existed among all classes of the clergy. He heard indecent jokes from prelates, and was filled with horror at their awful profanity, even during mass. As he mingled with the monks and citizens he met dissipation, debauchery. Turn where he would, in the place of sanctity he found profanation. "No one can imagine," he wrote, "what sins and infamous actions are committed in Rome; they must be seen and heard to be believed. Thus they are in the habit of saying, 'If there is a hell, Rome is built over it: it is an abyss whence issues every kind of sin.'" — Ibid., b. 2, ch. 6. {GC 124.3}

To a friend of the Reformation Luther wrote: "We cannot attain to the understanding of Scripture either by study or by the intellect. Your first duty is to begin by prayer. Entreat the Lord to grant you, of His great mercy, the true understanding of His word. There is no other interpreter of the word of God than the Author of this word, as He Himself has said, 'They shall be all taught of God.' Hope for nothing from your own labors, from your own understanding; trust solely in God, and in the influence of His Spirit. Believe this on the word of a man who has had experience." — Ibid., b. 3, ch. 7. Here is a lesson of vital importance to those who feel that God has called them to present to others the solemn truths for this time. These truths will stir the enmity of Satan and of men who love the fables that he has devised. In the conflict with the powers of evil there is need of something more than strength of intellect and human wisdom. {GC 132.2}.

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# ARE MEN FULFILLING THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES?

## Part 3

*Darl Arbogast*

### LOVE A SPLENDID THING

We have all heard that 'love is a many splendored' thing and it certainly does take a lot of adjectives to describe all the ways it does affect people.

Biblically speaking there are mainly three categories of love but they branch out to cover many emotions and aspects of human character plus the character of God.

In the New Testament, love is used as a verb 'agapaō' and a noun 'agapē' in Greek.

Then there is the Greek word phileo expressing "tender affection" or "brotherly love".

1 John 4:8, 16 NKJ - 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 16 And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.

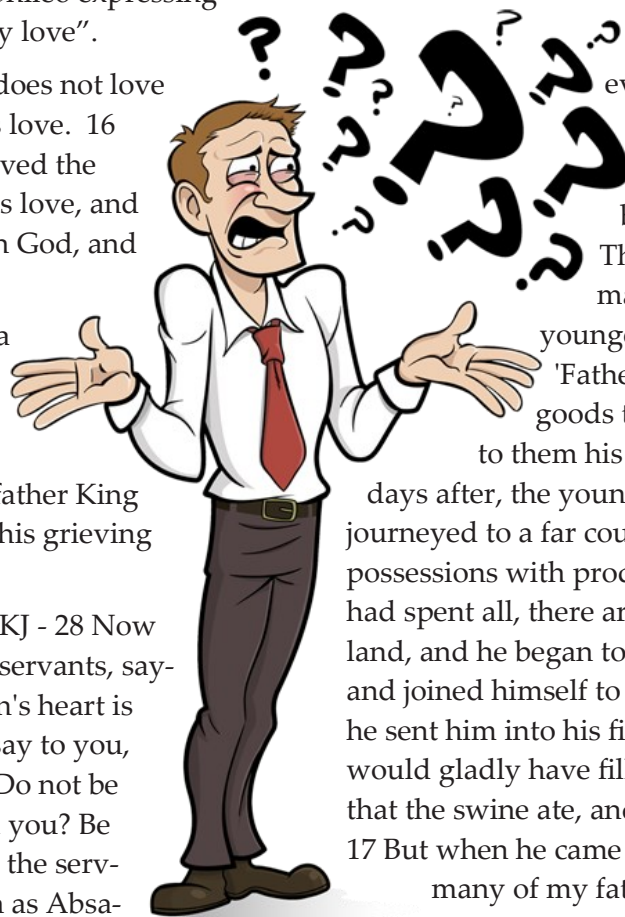
We can get a sense of the love a husband and father have for his family from biblical examples. Even though Absalom killed his brother Amnon, his father King David still had a fierce love in his grieving heart for Absalom.

2 Samuel 13:28,29,37 thru 39 NKJ - 28 Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, "Watch now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, 'Strike Amnon!' then kill him. Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded you? Be courageous and valiant." 29 So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon as Absa-

lom had commanded. Then all the king's sons arose, and each one got on his mule and fled. 37 But Absalom fled and went to Talmai the son of Ammihud, king of Geshur. And David mourned for his son every day. 38 So Absalom fled and went to Geshur, and was there three years. 39 And King David longed to go to Absalom. For he had been comforted concerning Amnon, because he was dead.

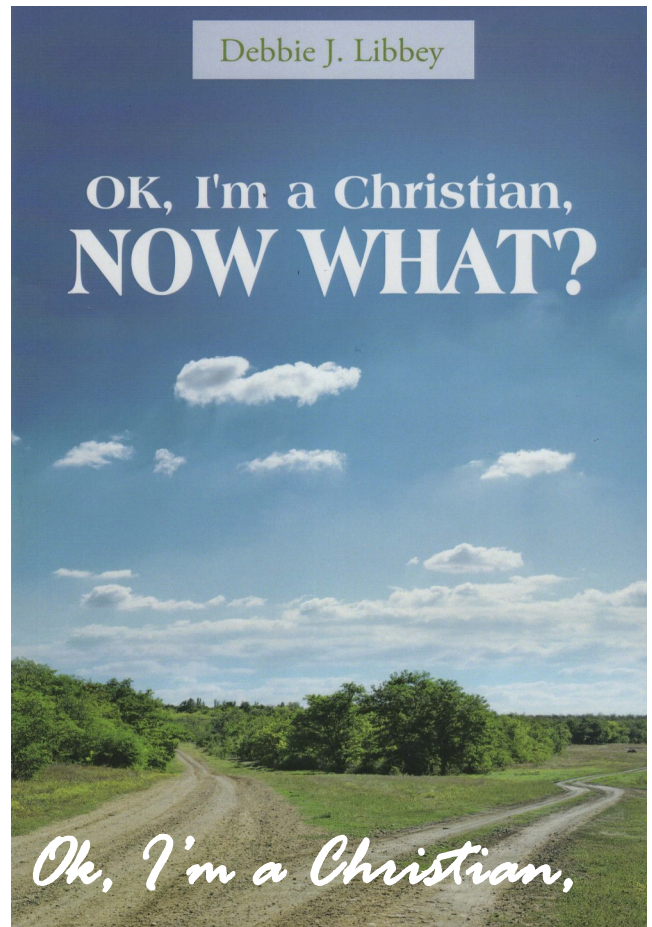
Another example of splendid love is the prodigal son who wasted his inheritance but his father gave him a job when he returned home broke and destitute, even giving him a big welcome home party.

The words in scripture tell it best, Luke 15:11-32 NKJ - 11 Then He (Jesus) said: "A certain man had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. 13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. 14 But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. 15 Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. 17 But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have



bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." ' 20 And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. 23 And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; 24 for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry. 25 Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 So he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. 27 And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and because he has received him safe and sound, your father has killed the fatted calf.' 28 But he was angry and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. 29 So he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. 30 But as soon as this son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, you killed the fatted calf for him.' 31 And he said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. 32 It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.' "

Don't you know when we return to our Savior He will open up His arms to us and invite us in to sup with Him. This illustrates how deeply God our Father loves us and how deeply we must love our children and our wives as well.



*Ok, I'm a Christian,  
NOW WHAT?*

By Debbie Libbey

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Becky is a new Christian looking for a home church. A church that will answer her question; What is sin? For the Bible says, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." And it says to "repent and sin no more." How can she "sin no more" if she doesn't know what sin is? She prays for guidance and is lead to a home church. A church she never thought she would end up at. So which church will she chose? The traditional main stream church or this unconventional home church?

# Two Treasures

## Sabbath and Family

*Calvin Burrell*

For Christians, Jesus is the pearl of great price! Because He has given Himself for our everlasting good, we willingly give our all to know Him and to experience the supreme value He is.

Trusting and obeying Christ according to His Word, we soon discover that He brings with Him other jewels less precious than Himself but still highly valuable. In this article we will consider two of the Lord's treasures — different in some respects, yet having so much in common. The first is the Sabbath.

### **The Sabbath rests**

This gem of our heritage in Christ rests firmly on three pillars of biblical bedrock. First, the account of a completed cosmos takes the weekly Sabbath all the way back to the beginning when God created the heavens, the earth, and all things therein (Genesis 1:1; 2:1-3). After six days of work, God rested the seventh day, making it the first holy thing in all creation. We should treasure God's Sabbath, in part, because it is as old as the universe and has the same Source.

Second, the ten words spoken by God's voice and written with His finger at Mt. Sinai place Sabbath at the heart of His spiritual law (Exodus 20:8-11). Christians are not obligated to all the Sinaitic covenant, of course; but these commands are distinguished from the balance of that covenant for some purposes and remain as the Bible's best summary of moral law prior to Christ. We may treasure the Sabbath because an unchanging God valued it

enough to speak and write it in the lofty company of the Decalogue.

The third pillar on which the Sabbath rests is the teaching and example of Jesus and His apostles in the New Testament. Jesus' own custom was to attend public worship every Sabbath day (Luke 4:16), and the apostles maintained their Master's example (Acts 13:14, 42-44; 17:2; 18:4). Jesus' saying that "the Sabbath was made for man" assigns it as a universal good under His lordship (Mark 2:27, 28). He taught the disciples to do nothing on Sabbath but what was lawful (Matthew 12:12), and He instructed them that Sabbath should be prayerfully regarded 40 years after His death (Matthew 24:20).

It is this third point with which many believers have difficulty or disagree outright. Some have decided not to "remember the Sabbath to keep it holy," because, say they, this commandment is not a part of the new covenant. Instead, they set forth a few texts as evidence against the Sabbath (Romans 14:5; Colossians 2:16) and others that suggest church meetings on another day (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2). Standing on a handful of such New Testament texts, some Christians no longer find any treasure in the Sabbath.

This evidence, however, is not very convincing in the case for abandoning the seventh-day Sabbath. A more compelling case can be made that Jesus came not to destroy the Sabbath but to fill it full of meaning by reforming it. All four Gospels tell of Jesus' opposition from the Jews in a "great Sabbath controversy" (see box) Matthew 12:1-13; Mark 2:23-3:6; Luke 6:1-11; John 5:1-18).



In these sections, Jesus confronts the Pharisees, not the Sabbath. He criticizes those who make the Sabbath “good for nothing” by their own customs, rather than use the time for deeds of mercy and truth — all lawful. In none of these polemic passages does Jesus speak of abrogating Sabbath. Rather, He rescues the Sabbath and elevates it from the misuse to which Jewish oral tradition had subjected it.

Just as one does not cleanse or refurbish any building he intends for quick destruction, so Jesus did not reform the Sabbath only to delete it by His death and resurrection. Although it was said of Him that He broke the Sabbath (John 5:18), Christ denied the charge: “I have kept my Father’s commandments” (John 15:10).

The Creation account, the moral law, and the teaching and example of Christ provide three strong witnesses: “There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of God” (Hebrews 4:9) — a treasure, indeed!

### **Likewise, the family**

A second gem in our spiritual heritage is marriage and the family. It, too, finds endorsement in the same three sections of Scripture cited thus far.

The second chapter of Genesis, which gave us the mold for the universal Sabbath, also provides the pattern for the family from Creation: one man and one woman joined in marriage, having and holding each other for dear life, unclothed and unashamed as husband and wife, being fruitful and raising children unto the Lord (Genesis 2:18-25). Like Sabbath, marriage is anchored in God’s original plan — one that, though often maligned, has never been improved. Learn to treasure your spouse and family now more than ever. It’s part of God’s first and finest plan.

And like Sabbath, the family is centered in the Decalogue, God’s great moral law for ancient Israel. As the fourth commandment (“Remember the Sabbath day”) hinges the first table of the law, so the fifth command (“Honor your father and mother”) hinges the second. Just as those who remember Sabbath are more likely to put God first, to reject idols, and

to reverence His name (commandments 1, 2, and 3), so those who honor parents have a gigantic head start in respecting the life, the purity, the property and the reputation of other people (commandments 6-10).

The fourth and the fifth are the only two of the Ten Commandments that begin any other way than “Thou shalt” or “Thou shalt not.” Centerpieces of the Decalogue, they are designed to protect and preserve society’s two best institutions: the church and the home.

Now we must examine the third pillar for our marriage-and-family treasure: the new covenant. Did Jesus and the apostles endorse the view of the home presented at Creation and in the Decalogue? Yes, of course; but not without a few difficulties.

### **Jesus: enemy of the home?**

Remember how the Sabbath skeptics argue from some problem texts in the New Testament to justify their forgetting the seventh day? We find problem texts regarding the family as well.

When Christ was told in one place that His mother and brothers had come to see Him, He replied that those who heard the word of God and did it were His true family (Luke 8:19-21). This answer, taken alone, can be seen as a statement of indifference — even abandonment — on the part of Jesus toward His earthly father, mother, and brothers.

Later, a man told Jesus he would follow Him after caring for his dying father. Jesus’ answer in this incident also appears to show small regard for earthly family ties: “Let the dead bury their dead . . .” (9:59, 60).

Again, Jesus announced that He came not to bring peace on earth but division: “For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father; daughter against mother and mother against daughter . . .” (12:51-53). Does Christ really mean to explode the relations that constitute some of our most valuable earthly treasure? His words can be read in that light.

In the strongest words of all, Jesus said, “If anyone

comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters . . . , he cannot be My disciple” (14:33).

If we’re looking for biblical reasons to separate what God has joined in marriage or to dishonor our parents in opposition to the command, we surely have found them in these texts. My point is that if we may disregard the fourth command of the Decalogue because of difficult texts in the New Testament, then we may also disregard the fifth command for the same reason.

Let’s say it again: If a few scattered texts in the New Testament (Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5; and Colossians 2:16) can be misused to erase the Sabbath, then Luke’s four sayings of Christ are surely sufficient to delete home and family. If Jesus abolished the Sabbath of Creation and of moral law, then He also destroyed the family of earliest humanity and morality!

#### **Not to destroy, but to fulfill**

The truth is that Christ came to delete neither the fourth nor the fifth commandments but to reform and magnify them both. Just as Jesus reformed the Sabbath from religious tradition (Matthew 12:1-13), so He rescued the fifth commandment from the

same fate.

While religious leaders had found a way to sidestep duty to aged parents, Jesus denounced them as hypocrites for putting “spiritual” work ahead of honoring their parents according to God’s command in the Decalogue (15:1-9). Christ finished His family reform by saying that those who “teach as doctrines the commandments of men” worship God in vain (v. 9). The implication of this is clear: Christ’s disciples will teach for doctrines the commandments of God!

It is as easy to harmonize the teaching of Jesus and the apostles with “Remember the Sabbath day” as it is to reconcile the words of Jesus with “Honor your father and mother.”

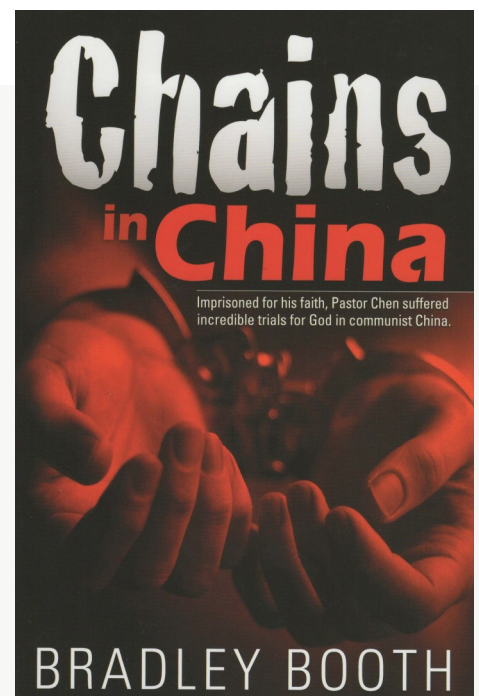
In reforming both the Sabbath and the home, Jesus exercised His role as the Word — God’s final and greatest spokesman. In Him the ancient written code comes to life in the person of the Writer, who came to give Himself for the sins of those who believe. In Christ, the truth of God’s holiness is perfectly joined with the grace of His love!

The Sabbath and our families: two of God’s commandments with their roots in Creation and two jewels of our spiritual heritage in Christ.

## **CHAINS in CHINA**

*by Bradley Booth*

In 1960, Chen, a faithful young Seventh-day Adventist, was imprisoned and thrown into “the cage” for refusing to work on the Sabbath. In spite of living in the worst kind of filth and subsisting on a starvation diet, Chen looked for every opportunity to tell his fellow prisoners and prison officials about the loving God he served. B246 \$15.00 + \$2.00 shipping



# Don't Be Numb To Numbers

*Daniel Botkin*

In English we call the fourth book of the Bible "Numbers." This is a translation of the Latin title of the book, Numeri, which is a translation of the Greek title Arithmoi.

If you read the first several chapters of the book, it's easy to see why Greek-speaking, Latin-speaking, and English-speaking people gave it a title that includes the ideas of arithmetic and numbers. The first several chapters consist primarily of long lists of numbers and mathematical calculations to record the total amounts of various countings: how many men in each of the twelve tribes; how to set up the camp according to the tribes; how many men in each of the families of the Levites; how many shekels of redemption money to collect; how many of each item that each of the tribal leaders brought as an offering, etc.

Reading all the numbers in the first several chapters of Numbers can be rather tedious. Especially chapter 7, which repeats the same long list of items twelve times in a row. Things do not start to get exciting until around chapter 11, when the Lord gets angry and starts smiting the children of Israel for their complaining and lusting after the foods which they "freely" ate in Egypt.

Even though all the numbers in Numbers make for rather boring reading, there are some practical lessons we can learn from all this numbering. When you read how all the individual people were counted, and how the tribes and the Levites were organized and assembled around the Tabernacle, you get a picture of order and harmony. Every individual knew his place. All of the people knew who they were. They all knew to which tribe they belonged and they knew where their tribe belonged. They knew who their leaders were. They knew

who had authority over whom. They knew what their duty and their tasks were. They each knew what was expected of them. They knew what they were supposed to do and how to do it. If they were unsure, they knew who to consult to ask for clarification. Each person knew where he fit in as a member of that called-out body of people known as Israel.

I think that most Messianic disciples today know that their faith in Israel's Messiah makes them a member of that called-out body of people known as Israel. However, many Messianic Israelites do not know where they belong in the Body of Messiah. They know that they are members of Messiah's Body, but they do not know where they belong or what they are supposed to be doing in that Body.

One reason that some people do not know what they are supposed to do in the universal Body of Messiah is because they are not joined to a local body of Messianic disciples. They struggle along on their own and feel like misfits who do not fit in. But the reason they do not fit in is because they refuse to get in. They make excuses and remain isolated from local congregations of believers. If you feel like a misfit, my advice is: "Git in, and you'll fit in!"

Some people want fellowship and friendship from a local community, but they will not commit themselves to a specific local community. They might attend a congregation or a weekly Bible study for a season, then disappear and start meeting with a different group, then later re-emerge at a group that they had formerly attended. They randomly wander from place to place, back and forth, like a carefree butterfly fluttering from flower to flower, and they never have any roots. They never develop any meaningful, long-term friendships with fellow believers.



There is nothing wrong with visiting various congregations and study groups. On the contrary, you can be blessed and you can be a blessing to others by visiting various groups. But a believer who just hops around from group to group, without being committed to any specific local assembly, makes himself a candidate for fruitlessness, friendlessness, frustration, and possibly even deception.

“Deception? Why do you say that?”

Because the Biblical norm is every individual believer being a member of a local assembly, and being accountable to the leadership there. “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Heb. 13:17).

The above verse (and all the other verses in the Bible about authority and leadership in the Body) presupposes that every individual believer will be in a local assembly and will be accountable to the leadership of the assembly. Hebrews 13:17 does not say “If you happen to be part of a local assembly, obey them that have the rule over you.” It’s a given that you will be part of a local assembly. If you are not accountable to the leadership of a local assem-

bly, then you have no way to obey this commandment, and you have no shepherd to watch for your soul. Therefore you are a candidate for possible deception by the Enemy.

“But the Lord is my shepherd,” some people object. “He watches for my soul. I don’t need any imperfect earthly shepherds when I have Yeshua, the Good Shepherd.”

The problem with this attitude is that the Good Shepherd tells you in His Word to obey them that have the rule over you, and to submit yourselves, for they watch for your soul. The perfect Good Shepherd above watches for your soul by appointing imperfect men to lead local assemblies below. He expects you to be in a local assembly and to be accountable to imperfect leaders. It is impossible to obey Hebrews 13:17, or any of the other verses that give instructions about submitting to leaders, if you are not accountable to leaders in a local assembly.

In the early chapters of the Book of Numbers, we see order and harmony. Everybody knows his place, and everybody knows who is in charge. The Levites are camped around the Tabernacle. Moses and Aaron and Aaron’s sons are camped on the east side, in front of the entrance, and the Levitical families of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari are

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camped along the sides and the rear of the Tabernacle. The Gershonites, Kohathites, and Merarites are told which items of the Tabernacle each of these families will carry.

Each of the twelve tribes is assigned their place to encamp, and each of the tribes has one man who is the head of his tribe. The twelve tribes are told the order in which they are to march. Everything is organized and orderly. All things are done decently and in order.

We see order and harmony in these early chapters of Numbers. We do not see individual Levites deciding for themselves which tasks they would like to do in the Tabernacle, or which items of the Tabernacle they would like to carry. We do not see individuals deciding for themselves which tribe they would like to join. We do not see tribes deciding for themselves where they would like to encamp, or which position they would like to be in when they march. We do not see individual Israelites deciding to usurp the authority of their tribal leader and appoint someone else to be the leader.

This is what we see in the early chapters of Numbers. Unfortunately, this order and harmony does not last very long. In chapter 11 we see the people complaining about the manna and lusting for flesh. As a result, the anger of the LORD is greatly kindled and He smites the people with a very great plague. In chapter 12 we see Miriam and Aaron criticizing Moses for marrying an Ethiopian woman. Miriam is smitten with leprosy for her murmuring. In chapter 13 we see ten of the twelve spies bringing back an evil report to discourage the people from going into the Promised Land. In chapter 14 the LORD pronounces His judgment of forty years of wandering in the wilderness because of their refusal to go into the Land. In chapter 15 we see a man picking up sticks on the Sabbath, and he is stoned to death by the express commandment of God. In chapter 16 we see Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rise up to challenge the authority of Moses and Aaron. These rebels and their families go down alive into the pit when Yahweh causes the earth to open its mouth and swallow them. As we continue to read, we see more and more examples of the children of

Israel being chastised and smitten and killed for their murmuring and their sin.

When the Apostle Paul writes about the children of Israel's wilderness wanderings and murmurings, he says that "all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. 10:11).

That means: "Don't do those foolish, dangerous things that the children of Israel did in Numbers. If you do, you'll get in trouble."

You would think that Messianic Israelites, who are usually more familiar with these stories than most mainstream Christians are, would take this to heart, but they don't. Instead of living in order and harmony, with everyone in their proper place and everyone knowing what they are supposed to do, Messianic Israelites follow the same pattern of the rebellious children of Israel. They murmur and complain and criticize leaders. Like the ten spies, they bring evil reports and discourage the people from following the leaders who want to bring the congregation into a land flowing with milk and honey. Like the man who decided to pick up sticks on the Sabbath, they decide for themselves what is right and wrong. Like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, they challenge the right of leaders to lead. They try to undermine and usurp the authority of leaders.

Most people go to congregational meetings for two primary reasons. On the vertical plane, they go to worship God as part of a community. On the horizontal plane, they go to find fellowship and friendship with believers.

Based on my many years of observation and experience, I believe that the best and the sweetest worship is expressed in a community where order and harmony are the norm, in a community where there is stable leadership, a common vision, and sincere love for the Lord and for one another. And I believe that the best fellowship and friendship can be found in congregations where brethren are loyal to one another. True friends are loyal friends. The apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus is not part of the canon of Scripture, but I love what it says about

friendship:

“A loyal friend is a powerful defence: whoever finds one has indeed found a treasure.

“A loyal friend is something beyond price, there is no measuring his worth.

“A loyal friend is the elixir of life, and those who fear the Lord will find one.

“Whoever fears the Lord makes true friends, for as a person is, so is his friend too...

“Do not desert an old friend; the new one will not be his match.

“New friend, new wine; when it grows old, you drink it with pleasure” (Ecclesiasticus 6:14-17 & 9:10).

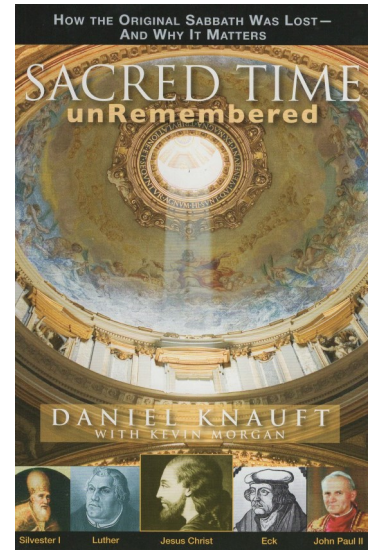
The Lord does not want you to be lonely and friendless. He wants you to have friends who are loving and loyal. When I think of friendship, I think of David and Jonathan. The Bible says that “the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (1 Sam. 18:1). The New Testament talks about the hearts of believers being “knit together in love” (Col. 2:2).

Garments can be loosely knit or tightly knit. In a world-wide, universal sense, all believers are loosely knit together with one another. As members of the universal Body of Messiah, we are all connected to all believers of every location and of every generation. But the Lord also wants you to experience tightly-knit friendships in the here and now.

Let me add to my earlier advice of “Git in, and you’ll fit in.” Now let me say unto you:

“Git in, and you’ll fit in, and you’ll become knit in.”

I know a lot of people, so I have lots of friends. But I have had only a few friendships in my adult life that I would describe as tightly-knit, like David and Jonathan’s friendship. Besides my biological brother and sister and my wife and my immediate family, I can think of only about eight men with whom my soul has been tightly knit, and two of them are now dead. Of the remaining men, there



## *Sacred Time unRemembered*

By Daniel Knauff with Kevin  
Morgan

B257 \$9 + \$2 shipping

*Traces in history the circumstances of ecclesiastical compromise, anti-Jewish sentiment, and political expediency that cost the world its magnificent treasure—sacred time.*



are two whom I still see on a regular basis.

I once read somewhere that some of the men who fought in World War 2 said that they “missed” the war after they returned home at the end of the war. It was not the killing and the carnage of war that they missed. The thing they missed was the camaraderie, the knitting together of souls in a battle against a common enemy that needed to be defeated and destroyed. They could not find that sort of camaraderie in civilian life.

Much of the numbering in Numbers was to prepare the people for war. If you will get in fellowship and find your place in the Lord’s war against wickedness and live like a soldier of Messiah, your heart will become knit together in love with others. You will enjoy the camaraderie that only soldiers can experience by warring together against a common enemy.

If you want friends, you have to go to a place where friends can be found. If you want to enjoy good fellowship, good friendship, and good worship, don’t neglect these lessons from Numbers. Don’t be numb to Numbers.

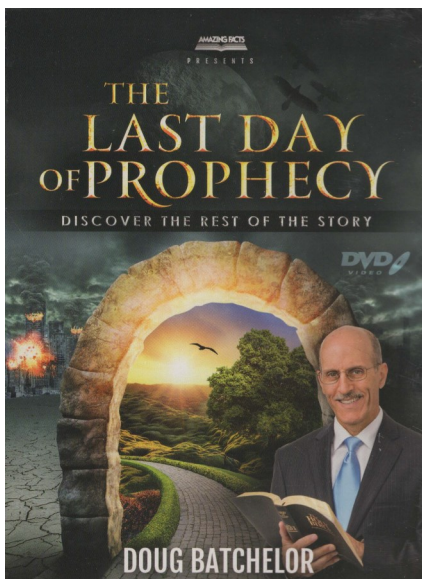
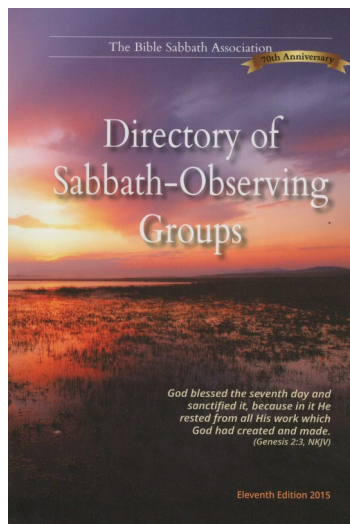
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by Doug Batchelor

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# Letters to the Editor



Just felt I needed to express my gratitude for the article, "Earth's Last Pentecost." (July 2017—Ed.). This was one of the most thought-provoking articles I have read in some time. Over the past six months, I've been looking into and studying the signs of the heavens. Sadly, most think of the zodiac as fortune-telling paganism (which the fortune-telling part absolutely is), but there is so much more to be said about the "signs in the heavens" which includes the constellations, stars, planets (which may have been viewed as stars by the prophets of old), which Mr. Prindle brings out. He puts forth a take on the 144,000 which I've never thought of or considered before. There is so much more beneath the surface of Scripture and as the time shortens, He is opening our eyes to it. I also feel this time is significant—as to what exactly occurs, we do not really know for sure. What we do know (or should) is that all should look inside themselves to "prove themselves worthy" because no one knows the day or hour when He will return. All glory and praise to our Father, Yahweh.

DJ Wellington

I enjoyed your editorial 'Which Days Are God's?' in the May-June issue of the TSS. I concur exactly as the point was well taken.

Why some Sabbatarian Churches obey God in the keeping of His Holy Days and some do not is a mystery; but God has a calling for everyone.

I Corinthians 11:19, 20 NKJ - 19 For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. 20 Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

Since the demise of WCG, my wife and I have visited the 7th Day Baptists some and the 7th Day Adventists and have always been welcomed and respected by everyone.

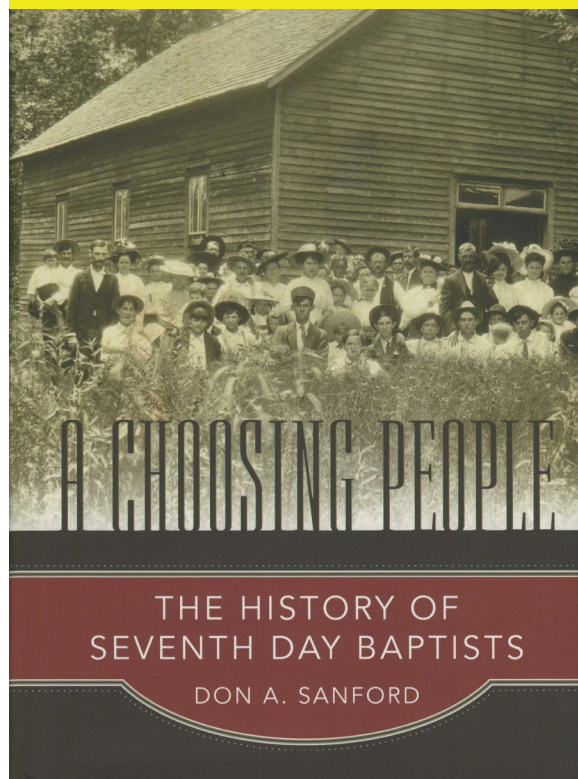
We choose to remain independent and free to visit brethren when, where and with whom during the FOT as well as other times during the year.

We can love everyone and do so without judging their methods of worship or operation.

I prefer to visit independent church groups though they may have differences of opinion.

As you say in your article most of them have attained a higher level of spiritual maturity as they have grown older.

As you have suggested we could all do well to remember 1 Corin-



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ans 11:31 NKJ - 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

One minor difference is I never refer to the Passover as the Lord's Supper as written by Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:20 NKJ - 20 Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

Darl Arbogast



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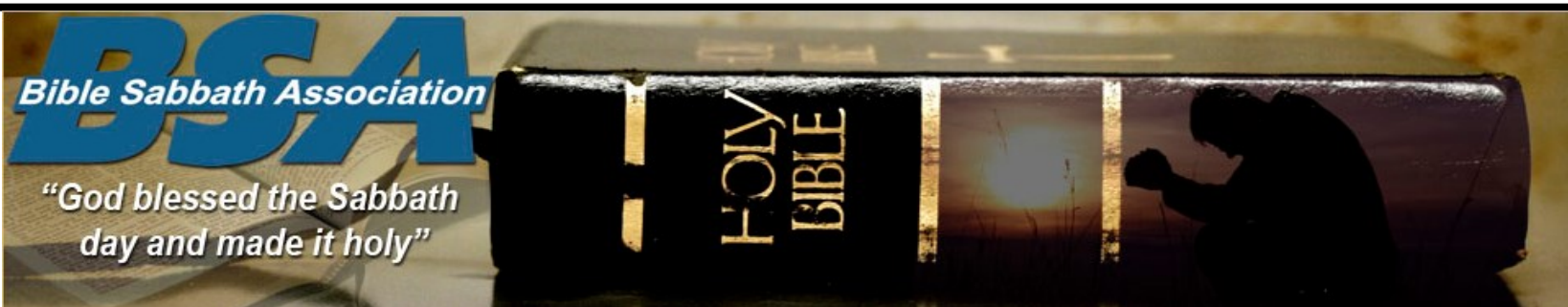
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