

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading For September 9:

Isaiah 3:1-5:30:

Today's three chapters expand upon what was read yesterday in chapters 1-2, namely, that Judah is facing God's judgment since they have ceased trusting in the LORD and have been unfaithful to Him. Chapter 3 explains what will happen to them on the Day of the LORD (the time of God's judgment). Chapter 4, in form characteristic of the biblical prophets, offers a ray of hope in the midst of all the talk of coming judgment. There will be a branch of Judah (implying Judah is like a tree that must be cut down, yet a new branch or sprout will emerge) arise which will be beautiful and glorious, in other words, a remnant of survivors and true believers. That branch or remnant will be possible only because of a branch in their midst who will be the Messiah, the specially anointed one of God (see Isaiah 11). In chapter 5 Judah is depicted as an unproductive vineyard which should be cut down. As such the LORD pronounces woe or judgment upon His people (5:8-30). Note that in 5:20-22 it is clear that they have turned justice upside down and have rejected the Law of the LORD.

Isaiah continually drives us to give up hope in ourselves and to turn to the LORD for salvation, particularly to His Messiah. Thus, this book continually calls us to look to Jesus Christ and trust in Him.

2 Corinthians 11:1-15:

In today's reading Paul gets to the heart of the issue that is between himself and the opponents (whom he calls false apostles). Namely, he is afraid they will be deceived and show themselves unfaithful to their groom, Christ, in the same way that Eve was deceived in the garden by Satan. How will this happen? By moving away from a pure devotion to Christ and to another or different gospel, one that focuses more upon man and man's abilities, rather than upon the all-sufficiency of Jesus Christ! Paul clarifies that he is not inferior to these opponents who think of themselves as super-apostles. Though his public speaking may not be all that great, his knowledge is not lacking for he has the true gospel from Christ (and that is what should matter). He calls them to remember how he sacrificed while among them and how he loves them. This should also be indication that Christ is truly in him and he is a true gospel minister. Paul does not want the Corinthians to think he is boasting about himself or other true apostles, but he continues on with his argument since he wants to make the case that he and other apostles have the true gospel over and against the false apostles who oppose him. Twice in today's reading, Paul implies that Satan stands behind the false gospel proclaimed by his opponents (11:3, 14). He has no doubt that their man-centered, Christ-devaluing message should be rejected, after all these false teachers will face God's judgment!

Christian, understand how easily and subtly the gospel can be changed into a false gospel. Preachers, teachers, and writers can still speak of the cross, of Jesus Christ, of forgiveness, salvation, and heaven, and yet give the impression that much depends upon what we do or what we bring to salvation, rather than what Christ has done and will continue to do in us. The same kinds of words can be used and yet the focus is on buildings, programs, wooing people with how cool and gifted we are. When this

happens, the focus turns to what we do and not Jesus Christ. At that point, we have turned to a different gospel and will face God's discipline and/or judgment. Pray for your pastor(s), for your church, for your teachers, that we will remain faithful to His message and keep the accent where it belongs, on pure devotion to the sovereign gracious work of God through Jesus Christ!

Psalm 53:1-6:

We are reminded in this psalm that all people are sinners. This means all are in need of God's salvation. What is more, those who do not know God and who persecute the people of God will be judged. God will one day make all things right! So, Christian, however you are being persecuted and treated poorly, take heart.

Proverbs 22:28-29:

In saying four of the collection of thirty, instruction is given not to steal land from others by moving the landmark. Additionally, saying five teaches how important it is to do our best. Often, this brings good results.