

# THE BEREAN CHRISTADELPHIAN ECCLESIAL NEWS

A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial welfare, with the object of providing Ecclesial news, exhortations, articles and information of fraternal interest to the Brotherhood. Defending the original, foundation principles upon which the Truth was uncovered from darkness and upon which the Christadelphian movement was developed. Opposed to the dogmas of papal and protestant christendom. Upholding the Truth as Berean Christadelphians since 1923.

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God Willing, The Berean Christadelphian Ecclesial News will be published monthly as an avenue of providing information of Ecclesial interest to the Brotherhood. Ecclesial news and correspondence, Fraternal Gathering notices, special activities and upbuilding exhortations are encouraged. This is an effort to upbuild and prepare us in heart and mind for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

# Ecclesial News

## **KIMIKUNGI, Kenya**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings in the one Hope of Israel,

I am happy announce two more of Adam's race have put on Christ in Baptism. These two young brothers gave a good confession of their faith before several brethren. The Interviews were administered by Bro. Epa Wekati and Bro. John Simiyu. After the two and half hour oral interview, which followed a 70 questions written interview, the young brothers were taken to the Khalaba River and were baptised and came out of the river new born babes. At the upcoming Sunday Memorial service they will receive the right hand of Fellowship.

Their names are **Wilberforce Kuto Nyongesa**, and **Jeremiah Walunywa**. Letters and thoughts of congratulations can be sent thru Bro. Epa at epawekati@yahoo.com.

The brethren and sisters of the Kimikungi Ecclesia send their love to all the brothers and sisters throughout the Ecclesial world.

Love, Bro. Bob Bent

## **DOKOLO, Uganda**

Dear brothers and sisters, Greetings to you in the hope of Israel.

The trip of brother Bob and brother Epa were great encouragement to us and we were fully appreciated. We have four ecclesias in Uganda and we are in foundation to meet Christ. We always thank God as you remember us in your prayers. You pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly in Uganda and be honored, just as it was with you. More trips are highly welcome.

Love in Christ our hope, Bro. Dennis.

## **HENGOED, Wales**

This is just a reminder to the Berean Brotherhood that Hengoed's Ecclesial Gathering for 2012 will be held, God Willing, on the 25th to 28th of May. The Venue is the Ceridwen Centre in West Wales.

The Theme for the gathering is "Eight Lectures on the Apocalypse".

Subjects are:

- (1) An Introduction to the Apocalypse
- (2) Time Periods of the Apocalypse
- (3) The Seven Seals of the Apocalypse
- (4) The Seven Trumpets of the Apocalypse
- (5) Blessed is he that Keepeth the Sayings of this Book (Exhortation)
- (6) The Beasts of the Apocalypse Explained
- (7) The Seven Vials of the Apocalypse
- (8) The Seven Ecclesias of the Apocalypse

The gathering will formally commence on the Friday evening and will finish on the Monday evening after the Daily Readings. Prior to the  
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daily readings on Monday, we will be visiting the town of Newcastle Emlyn followed by a visit to the National Wool Museum of Wales.

#### Airports:

The nearest airports are Cardiff (approx. 45 mins. from where we live), Bristol (approx. 1hr. and 30 mins), Birmingham (approx. 2hrs. and 30 mins), Heathrow (approx. 3 hrs), Gatwick (approx. 3hrs and 30 mins) and Manchester (approx. 3 hrs and 30 mins).

#### Ports

For those planning on flying into Dublin (Ireland) and catching a Ferry across to West Wales, please be aware that the Irish Sea is notorious for being rough (not a trip for those who are prone to sea sickness!). There are two options, the first is the fast Ferry (Fast Cats) which takes approx. 2.5 hrs to complete the crossing into either Pembroke Dock or Fishguard, but the ride is bumpier than the larger ferry which takes approx. 3.5 hrs to cross.

If you would like to be collected from a Port or Airport then please let us know and we'll happily arrange for you.

As the gathering is now only a few months away, we would be grateful to all those who plan on making the trip to contact us at [malesinwales@btinternet.com](mailto:malesinwales@btinternet.com) as soon as possible so that we can make the necessary arrangements for catering and accommodation etc.

A warm welcome is extended to all. We very much look forward to meeting with our brethren and sisters around a study of God's Word on the Apocalypse of Jesus Christ. All plans are subject to our Heavenly Father's Will.

Love in Christ,  
Bro. Steve Male

### **HOUSTON, Texas**

Loving greetings to all the laborers of Yahweh's vineyard,

The Houston Berean Ecclesia would like to cordially invite everyone to attend their annual gathering to be held on April 7 & 8, 2012 at Lake Houston State Park in New Caney. Upon arrival, it would be very helpful if you sign in at the Park Office. Just let them know that you are attending the Houston Berean Gathering.

For those who wish to arrive on Friday evening (April 6, 2012), the lodges are available Friday evening through Sunday noon. The lodges are dormitory style and there is no charge for them. Just let us know if you want accommodations at the lodges. Please bring the necessary bedding and towels/washcloths. If you need any information concerning hotel rooms, etc., please contact Sis Beth Lorquet at 281-344-7453 or email her at [blorquet@consolidated.net](mailto:blorquet@consolidated.net).

The classes will begin at 11:30 am on Saturday. Please join us for refreshments on Saturday morning. Fellowship will begin at 9:00 am on Sunday. All meals are provided and there is no cost for the gathering. Please let Sis. Beth know if you will be attending.

We look forward to an uplifting time of fellowship with you all,  
God willing.

Loving thoughts in Christ's name,  
Bro. Bob Lorquet  
Houston Ecclesia

### Correspondence

A Brother has sent these thoughts this week (2004) in answer to recent ideas circulated suggesting that we consider attending with our alien friends and apparently with one another, the recent publicised worldly depiction of the crucifixion of Christ, and the surrounding events. There was a time when such an idea was so alien to the Household of Faith it would not get a mention, though some privately might have felt no harm in doing what was suggested. It is one thing to take advantage of such an event to publicise the Truth, as some Christadelphian groups are doing or will do. To suggest we should accompany our friends to such proceedings is another. It could well encourage our friends to reciprocate, believing we are at ease about attending such occasions to some other drama purportedly based on the Word of God, and would we refuse? It may also send a message that Christadelphians are relaxing their standards! For our young people in particular, and brethren and sisters generally, this may be a way of opening the flood gates to the world's entertainments, provided that there is some mention of some Bible topic, and maybe it can be anything that seems to be harmless!

Let us heed the advice of Paul, *“Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.”* —1 Corinthians 8:13.

Brethren and Sisters our Pioneers including Brother Growcott would be horrified at this trend, let us take stock and return to the old paths, the straight and narrow way. By all means publicise the Truth but don't let us lower our standards to do this.

With love in the bonds of the Truth,  
A Brother and Sister

## FRATERNAL GATHERINGS & ACTIVITIES

(To be held Yahweh Willing)

**HOUSTON FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....April 7–8, 2012

Bro Bob Lorquet, blorquet@consolidated.net

**WALES FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....May 25–27, 2012

Bro. Stephen Male, malesinwales@tiscali.co.uk

**LAMPASAS FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....June 9–10, 2012

Bro. Ricky Hurst, PO Box 1381, Goldthwaite TX, 325-451-4075

**HYE FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....July 23–29, 2012

Bro. Mark Braune, 209 Ranger Dr., Buda, TX, 78610, 512-757-3088,  
markbraune@gmail.com Study, “Ecclesiastes”

**TENNESSEE FRATERNAL GATHERING**.....Oct 6 –7, 2012

Bro. Jim Rankin, 115 Sherwood Dr., Camden, TN 38320 USA, 731-584-6039,  
email jrankin@bentoncountycable.net

## The BCAA

The Berean Christadelphian Audio Archives, or BCAA for short, has made available a large selection of talks on MP3 online. The address is [www.bcaudioarchives.blogspot.com](http://www.bcaudioarchives.blogspot.com). Please check this link often as we will be updating with new material as much as possible.

The purpose of this site is to restore and make available lectures, exhortations, and study classes. Some of these talks are decades old and have seldom been heard.

We are always looking for tapes, and if you have some talks that you would like to share, please email Bro. Craig Kiley ([craigkiley@yahoo.com](mailto:craigkiley@yahoo.com)) and we will be happy to transfer the talks to MP3 format and post them.

### Let Us Rise Up and Build Part 3

*“My God, think Thou upon the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets that would have put me in fear”*—Nehemiah 6:14

THEY ARE still building the wall. The enemy, who has tried ridicule and conspiracy, now tries—in order—deceit, and intimidation, and a crafty trap, and internal sedition. Well might Nehemiah exclaim—

*“O God, strengthen my hands!”*

He records (6:2)—

*“Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me saying, Come and let us meet together in one of the villages.”*

This is one of the most difficult approaches of the enemy to contend with—

*“Come and let us talk it over. Let us see what can be worked out. Perhaps we are closer together than we think. Why be narrow and exclusive?”*

The Truth IS narrow and exclusive. It demands a degree of allegiance and submission that very few are willing to give. In this dispensation it will always be small and despised. When it begins to prosper and spread out, it soon becomes contaminated and diluted. And it is not something that can be compromised. Either we accept it as a whole or we do not.

Nehemiah gave the perfect answer to all the pleasing and plausible invitations to “come out and fraternize”—

*“I am doing a great work: I cannot come down to you.”*

Of course, we *must be* doing a great work—this is not just a convenient excuse; it must be a *statement of fact*.

We have no time for other things. Living the Truth and serving God is a full time occupation, and *any who do not realize this have not properly learned the Truth*. Any who think they have time for anything but God's service have a very faulty conception of the height and depth

of the Gospel.

When this sugar-coated approach failed, the enemy tried another (v. 5)—

*“Then Sanballat sent his servant unto me with an open letter in his hand.”*

An open letter was a sign of discourtesy, and contempt, in the pattern of haughty instructions to an inferior servant.

The letter was a threat—an attempt to blackmail and intimidate. It charged Nehemiah with planning rebellion against Persia in fortifying Jerusalem, and hinted that if Nehemiah did not cooperate, the charge would be brought before the King. It ended with the same invitation—

*“Come now, therefore, and let us take counsel together.”*

A charge to the Persian King by the officials of all the surrounding territories would be serious. In dictatorships and despotisms, even the mere *suggestion of* rebellion is often sufficient for condemnation, for such rulers play safe and purges are frequent.

But Nehemiah was not intimidated. He had faith that God would see him through without recourse to seeking to appease or compromise with the enemy. The power of God was far greater and more real to him than that of Persia.

\* \* \*

THE NEXT assault is from within. An Israelite, posing as a friend and as a prophet, came to Nehemiah warning him of assassination and urging him to take refuge in the Temple. To a God-fearing man like Nehemiah, it was a subtle and plausible approach. It was designed to cater to both fear and vanity—

“You are very important to the work of God—you are justified in making an exception in your own case and using the Temple as a refuge. Remember that David ate the show-bread in a case of necessity. Why expose yourself when you can be safe? You are just being foolhardy and making a show of your faith and tempting God.”

This from an apparently sincere and godly man would be very appealing and plausible. But Nehemiah was too familiar with the mind of the Spirit to be deceived by fleshly wiles—

*“Who is there that—being as I am—would go into the Temple to save his life?”*

*“And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him, but that he prophesied this prophecy against me, for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.”*

We must examine all advice for *motive and purpose*. If it appeals to the flesh, we need to be doubly on guard. Often the only safe answer is, “Get thou behind me, Satan.”

*“My God, think Thou upon the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.”*

Think of the difficulties and hazards of Nehemiah's position, when *even reputed prophets* were secretly trying to ensnare and destroy him. How similar his position was to that of Jesus among his enemies!

But nothing stopped the work. In the midst of all this intrigue, within and without, the work continued. *This is important.*

The best way to handle and combat all disruptive and diversionary tactics is to IGNORE THEM and *keep on working at the main objective*, which at present is the *MAKING READY A PEOPLE PREPARED FOR THE LORD.*

There are lots of side issues, lots of challenges, lots of threats and hints that we may be tempted to be drawn aside into conflict with, but life is short, time is brief, and we are a very small cog in a great enterprise.

*Let us not be diverted.* Only God Himself can straighten out many things. Let us stick to the one glorious, central objective, so that we can sincerely answer to all diversionary invitations to “Come and let us take counsel,” by saying—

*“I am engaged in a great work: I cannot come down to you.”*

And so Nehemiah could record (6:15)—

“So the wall was finished in 52 days, and when our enemies heard thereof, they were cast down, for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God.”

But here is the sad and significant part. Even though they perceived this, they were not converted, but schemed harder. This is a perverse characteristic of the flesh, to rebel against the light. It is not sensible or logical, but how very human and natural!

\* \* \*

VS. 17-18 REVEAL a very disastrous condition from the point of view of the soundness and welfare of God's people—

*“Moreover in those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came to them.”*

*“For there were **many** in Judah sworn unto him because he was the son in law of Shechaniah, and his son Johanan had taken the daughter of Meshullam.”*

*Alien marriage—mixing with the world—going out to see the daughters of the land—the greatest single evil that has plagued the people of God since before the flood.*

“She is such a nice person!”—“He comes from such a nice family!”—“Perhaps it will bring them to the Truth.”

*“Shall we do evil that good may come?”* God, in His mercy, or for His own purpose, sometimes brings good out of evil, but He more often brings *evil* out of *evil*. Either way, the shame and disobedience of the original evil remains.

\* \* \*

*“The nobles of Judah sent many letters to Tobiah.”*

He does not say, *“Some of the nobles,”* but, *“The nobles,”* showing that, not just some individuals, but as *a group* they were scheming with the enemy against Nehemiah. Nehemiah was no friend of special privilege or oppression. These nobles had been living well by oppressing their poor brethren and fraternizing with the leaders *of* the outside nations around them.

They resented Nehemiah's reforms—his bothersome zeal for holiness and for the fulfilment of the law of God.

V. 19—*“Also they reported his good deeds before me.”*

This was very subtle and hypocritical. Tobiah was an enemy of God and of God's people. He was using every means he could to destroy the good Nehemiah was doing.

The issue was a clear case of allegiance to God, or to the enemy of God. There was no middle ground.

But they “reported his good deeds” before Nehemiah. *What's wrong with reporting a man's good deeds?* Is it not according to the law of God to do so? Should we not be charitable?—see the best?—think the best of any one?

Here was the subtlety and the hypocrisy of it—a vicious, malicious misapplication of a divine truth that would nullify all distinction between good and evil, faithfulness and unfaithfulness. They labored to *confuse the issue, glorify the enemy, and weaken the faithful*—all in the name of “charity” and “friendliness.”

*“And they reported my matters to Tobiah. And Tobiah sent letters to put me in fear.”*

This situation will be found in all ages of the Truth—men who *pretend* to be loyal friends of the Truth, but whose heart and sympathies and associations are in the broad way with the enemy, and who are always trying to *glorify the enemy* and weaken and belittle those who faithfully strive for the narrow way.

\* \* \*

WE BEGIN ch. 7. First Nehemiah says that when the wall was finished, he appointed its rulers. This is the next necessary step. First build up the wall safe and complete. Then set up faithful rulers in charge. His principle of choice is a very important one to follow (v. 2)—

*“He was a faithful man, and feared God above many.”*

This should be the basis of choice in all ecclesial arrangements—natural ability, personal relationship, animal friendliness—*mean NOTHING.*

*“To **this** man will I look, saith the Lord...”*

—not to the learned, or accomplished, or polished, or self-assertive, but,



*“... to him that is poor, and of a broken spirit, and that trembleth at My Word.”*

Then (v. 3) for the security of the city, the gates were only to be opened at limited times, and under careful guard, and during the night each household was to be responsible for setting a watch in its own area.

They were actually in a state of siege, where constant care and watchfulness was essential to their safety. *We are impressed in all these things with the parallel of the Household today, as sheep in the midst of wolves.*

(To be continued Lord willing next month) —Bro. G.V. Growcott

## **Matthew 27**

My dearly beloved Brethren and Sisters in Christ Jesus, once more, but yet one less time before our Master's triumphant return we meet again with our minds centered on the emblems before us. Perhaps one in many more to come; perhaps in this memorial service, we shall see our brethren and sisters, the group we meet with here today, no more under these set of circumstances.

Perhaps our Master's return will take place tomorrow, and our walk in this life will have been rewarded with those words of *“Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”* These are the words, which we all most certainly want to hear! But yet the contrary is most capable for us all with our sinful nature, *“Depart from me; I never knew you.”*

Which do we as individuals toil to hear? Which paraphrase do we keep in the back of our minds at all times in our day-to-day lives? We must set before our eyes the course, as athletes in the olympic race for a crown. So do we run a race for a different type of crown—a spiritual crown to be handed out by that righteous judge, Jesus the Anointed in that day of judgment, in the form of eternal life. We must never let our view get interfered with at any time for any cause. The consequences are just too high a penalty to pay. Nothing in this life can be of equal importance to the gift we hope to be graciously bestowed by our Master at the end of this 6000-year plan of our heavenly Father.

Whether this be our final gathering together as an ecclesia, or one of many of which remain, we must continuously remember never to get caught up with the dealings of this life, to forget the vital reasons and commands of why we are here to partake of the emblems which are situate before us here and now, to keep in memory the death, burial, and resurrection of our Master and Captain of salvation. And to recall to our minds what this man did for each and every one of us, how through his generous actions, though we live in a world that possesses no hope at all, yet we live with the most magnificent hope known to mankind!

In this 27th chapter of the gospel account according to Matthew, we have one of the most sorrow laden chapters in which our Master appears. It is full of gloomy feelings in more than just one way. First, one must take into consideration Christ's feelings, though we as believers and followers of Christ most certainly feel for him in the position he was placed. We must feel for the nation of Israel as well. Christ actually begged their forgiveness, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" How could a nation given as much as they had been given at certain times fall to such great depths of unawareness?

We also perceive in this chapter a couple of different types of characters or attitudes, which can certainly be most advantageous to us to take note of as servants of Christ. We must undoubtedly shun the attitude of one like Judas, who betrayed his master for a meager price of silver, which was certainly not of equivalent value to what he could have obtained through faithful actions and dedicated service, like that of the apostle Paul or Stephen. We also have the attitude of Pilate, though not with the others who were quickly committed to put him to death. Pilate did what in today's language might be called succumbing to the political pressures that encircled him in this dark moment of recorded history. Even though we know now in retrospect that whatever Pilate's actions were, God's arrangement would have been fulfilled irrespective. They were simply vessels used to carry out the plan and purpose of God. But yet, nonetheless, they are there for a particular purpose, possibly solely for us, as examples of what and what not to do in certain and peculiar situations.

We have individuals, and we have as well groups placed before us, which are used for examples. The nation of Israel were the children of God, and so are we. As we struggle to be successful individuals, let us also struggle to be a sound spiritual ecclesia, never letting our alertness slip to the depths that the nation of Israel had arrived at, near this particular point in history.

These individuals, as well as the nation, should have realized well enough even with their limited knowledge of God's Word, which He gave to them through their forefathers the prophets. They should have recognized the signs prophesied many years before of their Messiah. But once again, we in retrospect realize that this had to take place. A people, as obdurate as the nation of Israel, had to be necessary in order for us to be able to arrive in the position we currently reside today, partakers of the body and blood of Christ to strengthen us spiritually, hopefully to that desired and common goal.

We see before us in this chapter the results of these individuals, and nation as well, that did not conform their lives to the Word of the great God of Heaven and Earth. Judas was selected just as we are selected, but yet unsuccessful in his endeavor to secure a place in our Master's Kingdom, condemned to death, and sentenced with a title that holds absolutely no hope. We see the nation of Israel punished time and time

again throughout history, but yet not willing to conform to God's laws, which were given to them for their own benefit.

How much are we, Brethren and Sisters, like them? Do we look upon our chastening as beneficial? Or do we view it with anger and a more dreary outlook for what's to come? Or do we gain, and move on from that point a better soldier in Christ Jesus? Are we in our walk trying to follow that ultimate example left before us by Christ, the only begotten Son of our heavenly Father, as Brother Roberts so fittingly spoke in a recorded exhortation—

“There is not an event which can transpire in our lives, which cannot be solved and solved properly by researching what Christ would have done in a similar situation. For this purpose is one of the many that his life is recorded with such detail in the gospel books.”

He is our pattern, our template, or guide by which to regulate our conduct. And no matter how hard we strive or how successful we think we have become, let us remember that when we have arisen to the point where we imagine we have performed to a reasonable amount of our God-given talents, that at this summit, which is undoubtedly our best, we are styled as unprofitable servants.

Could we, as human beings, hold the attitude of Jesus Christ? Could we, if situations were reversed, be as patient and forgiving as he was while hanging on a cross—a most degrading death, as well as very painful? Could we like him pray for the forgiveness of a mob of individuals who were our accusers and in a sense also our executioners? How much self-control and compassion for others can one man have in his heart and mind? Certainly none other than Christ can rise to this point of forgiveness. But we, as individuals and as an ecclesia, should never stop trying to attain this status and level. It will by no means be achieved, but nonetheless this is what our sights should be set on at all times.

If we quickly review a few verses from this chapter, Matthew 27, we should have a better idea of our Master's attitude and actions. Verses 26-32—

*“Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had plaited a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.”*

Here we have painted before us a very disheartening picture. We have the Son of God—a man who lived up to every qualification that

was expected from him. We find a man of such superior caliber to us all being treated like, or better yet possibly less than, a common thief. They spit upon him; they mocked him and smote him and cheered his demise as the acclaimed King of the Jews—their long-awaited deliverer. Yet from Christ came no antagonistic remarks, no threats of punishment for their ill-fated actions. But yet these people, who did not realize what they were saying at the time it was stated, brought their own punishment on themselves. Their remarks of *“his blood be on us and our children,”* was a statement I am sure they all wish they had not spoken some 40 years later, and even after that numerous times.

And if we look further on in this same chapter, verses 39-43—

*“And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.”*

Here we see the ultimate test for any individual, remembering that Christ was human, tempted and tried in all points like as we are, but yet without sin.

“He saved others; himself he cannot save. He trusted God; let him deliver him now.” How Christ withheld from asking his Father for 12 legions of angels, which he said in another account were at his request, but he simply yielded to his Father’s will. And how our Heavenly Father stayed His hand from such a heartless mob with such obstinate actions is simply past our reasoning.

Our Master’s walk while on this earth was always one of obedience to his Father. It was filled with a zeal and joy that can be matched by none, as far as perseverance and desire to please our Maker. But yet his first advent was drawing very near to its close.

How these wretched individuals got to the point of where they were seems almost incomprehensible, but yet something we should not scoff at and declare could never happen to us. How they must have felt in their hearts, after this horrible atrocity had been completed with the events that transpired, was adequate for a Roman soldier to make the proclamation that *“Truly this was the Son of God.”* If a Roman soldier could come to this conclusion, how much more the children of Israel who were conscious of his actions and miracles for the past 3 1/2 years.

The nation of Israel collectively are most certainly set before us for a particular reason. Chosen, harbored, provided for in every sense of the imagination by our Heavenly Father, they went so very deeply astray. We, as they did, wait the arrival of our Saviour. Their knowledge and awareness had slipped to the point where they did not recognize him as the one promised, but much the opposite. They put him to death for claiming to be him for whom they had waited so long.

Could we possibly be the same, or yet could ours just come in different forms? We do not have to physically reject him such as the nation of Israel did. If we do not fulfill his commands in our dealings with those of like precious faith, if we do not adopt his concepts in dealing with individuals despite their beliefs, if we do not follow his footsteps in devout service to our Heavenly Father, this is just as good as rejecting him. It may not have the impact that Israel's rejection did, but they are still much the same. Rejection by us of what he has commanded us to do, will mean rejection by him of us when we hope to obtain life everlasting. **Nothing in this life is worth risking that opportunity.**

We make attempts to follow in his footsteps. We patiently endure, but can we ever in our wildest thoughts fully imagine the immenseness of his triumphant return! What a complete turnaround from his first advent upon earth! But in this first advent, he left us with a detailed description as to how to obtain a position by his side in this so long-looked-for triumphant return—one which will put all scoffers to rest and thoroughly reconfirm the testimony of Yahweh. By leaving examples set by himself, the true pattern, and also examples set by other men in circumstances that we may soon encounter, to see how they arose to combat and overcome troublesome situations, how they fell and stumbled at other obstacles—all for our benefit and learning.

But failure is not to be looked on as this individual is less than any other, or possibly has not exercised his talents to the point of understanding the error of his ways, but much the opposite. It is an indication to us, as brethren and sisters, to offer loving assistance in certain areas. It is also there to keep us in remembrance of how great our Master really was. That we will always be a sinful creature—a nature, which we inherit due to our ancestors' transgression—is not a hindrance that only one out of 100 possess. It is in us all—some able to subdue it slightly better than others. But nonetheless present every day of our lives in each and every one of us. Failure is unavoidable, but to be able to limit its appearance to a sparse few is what we should desperately try to achieve. We all will fall to its presence occasionally. Even one such as Peter had to be humbled by his failure, to be made a better servant. Chastening comes in many forms and for many reasons as well. We must learn from them all and go on from that point to hopefully and prayerfully be one of our Saviour's selected saints in this glorious age to come, for which we so patiently await.

Let us remember, by partaking of the bread and wine in this memorial service, what this man accomplished for us—that through these actions of love for his friends, is the only reason we live in this sin polluted world with a hope of eternal joy fastened in our hearts and minds.

Brethren and Sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, our Master will soon once again appear to all those who await his return in faith. He will return not this time as last, for now is the advent of his triumphant appearance. No more will such a statement be made as, "*The son of*

*man hath not where to lay his head.*” No more will the scoffers mock him, spit upon him, and smite him on the cheek.

As expressed in the words of Hymn 95—

Our Lord will come, but not the same  
As once in lonely form he came—  
A silent lamb to slaughter led,  
The bruised, the suffering, and the dead.

Our Lord will come, a dreadful form,  
With wreath of flame, and robe of storm,  
On cherub wings, and wings of wind,  
Appointed judge of human kind.

Yes, tyrants! To the rocks complain;  
Go seek the mountain-clefts in vain:  
But faith, victorious o’er the tomb,  
Shall sing for joy, “The Lord is come.”

Brethren and Sisters, let us each and every one of us at this present time, make valiant our attempt to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. So that when this appointed judge of human kind appears on earth, we may stand before him and hear his directive issued forth to all those, with whom we pray to be a part, who have made it their life’s desire to spend eternity under the shadow of his wings, fulfilling his Father’s will throughout this glorious earth, *“Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”*

These words will not be issued forth in our direction for an effort that is not in accordance with our God-given talents. Thus the words of that ancient preacher loom large even today, *“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.”* —Bro. Paul Garvey

## Psalm 32

At first glance Psalm 32 does not appear to be a Psalm of hope. But in reality is suggestive both of comfort and hope. That comfort comes from hope. We hear the cry of one who has the same nature as us, one who is beloved and accepted of God, saying, *“in bitterness my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night, thy hand was heavy upon me; my moisture is turned into the drought of summer.”* It therefore tells us that we are not to think that our case, our cause, is a hopeless one. Because we are sure in our lifetime to experience things which will cause similar feelings to well up in us. We may groan under a spiritual burden because our very nature is weak. We are not to despair. We must take courage. We must take heart

knowing that the son of the living God, a man after God's own heart, has passed through the same experiences.

What a joy to the heart to know that this man who is to be our judge knows full well our pain, our trials, and our experiences in this life. Then he had the same experiences as us. The Scriptures are full of the life, the trials and sorrows of Jesus. His great suffering is evident from the declaration, *"When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long."*

*"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."* *"Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."* What a beautiful sentiment to guide a man through life. What a comfort and hope to Christ as he walked through the lands of Israel. It is a beautiful description of this man before God. Such a man who understands the Scriptures and the belief and hope of life eternal, walking in loving obedience to his Father's commands. That blessed hope before us, that our transgressions will be forgiven, that our sins may be covered over, that we too may someday enter into the joy of our Lord.

We have the same hope that Paul declared to Felix in Acts 24:15-16 *"And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God, and toward men."* Paul worked diligently to train himself that he might have a clear conscience, that he might be inoffensive to God and man. Therein we see the exercise of faith and belief in that hope that Paul declared to Felix. At that time, at that resurrection of the dead, at that day of judgment, the just shall find mercy and be blessed.

They shall rejoice and shout for joy, *"whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."* The idea behind the Hebrew word used for covered is better said as covered over. Making the idea, *"whose sin is covered over."* Why make that distinction between covered and covered over. From the time of Adam's sin, sin has been covered over, not just covered. Being covered over harkens back to burial. Brother Thomas wrote in the second volume of Eureka, "Hence, this water burial is their investiture with Christ as with a white robe. The burial is, therefore, a clothing, or covering over by which their sin-nakedness is metaphorically concealed; and they are in that situation in which it may be said of them, in the words of the Spirit, *"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered over"*—*epekalphthesan* (Rom. 4:7)." Thayer's gives the meaning of the Greek word used by Paul to be covered over. That is in line with the meaning of the Hebrew word which in the King James' version is translated

covered but would be more correctly rendered covered over, as in “*to fill in holes.*” Which makes sense when one considers that Paul is quoting from the first verse of Psalm 32.

The fifth verse of this Psalm states, “*thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.*” ( סלה ) Selah is properly the imperative from the root *sahlah*, which signifies to *lift up*, to *raise*; hence, to *suspend* a balance, to *weigh*; and, therefore, metaphorically to *consider*. (Bro. John Thomas, M.D.<sup>1</sup>). So we are being told that we are to consider that our sins are being forgiven. Wherein consists the blessedness of forgiven sin. We are only happy if we are delivered from something that is causing stress or unpleasantness. We are not happy being delivered from something causing us joy. If it is not an unpleasant situation than being delivered from it is not an issue, not a problem. If a person is doing something they really enjoy, they are having a good time. Are they happy when someone shows up and says give me a hand, I have an unpleasant difficult job to do and I need help. That is not counted as a blessing or a good thing. It may be something that needs to be done, but it's not counted as a joy or blessedness. Obviously then we did not consider it a blessing to be taken away from an enjoyable experience, but on the other hand to be removed from an unpleasant situation, that is considered a blessing. Consider that, consider our ways, consider the words of the Bible, “*Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.*” If we love the things of this world then removing them from our live is a source of sorrow and difficulty. If we hate the things of this world removing them from our life is a source of comfort.

Our sin, our disobedience to God, can be forgiven and that is a true blessing. But sin cannot be something that is enjoyable to us. We must attain a state where sin is distressful, unpleasant to us. If sin is something we do not think about, if it does not bother us, if it is not a source of distress to us then it cannot be counted as a blessing or good to be delivered from it. It is a requirement that we attain a state of mind that disobedience to God is the source of unhappiness to us. Not only as we look upon the people of the world, but even more especially as we look upon our own selves. It must be our heart's desire to only do the things which please our heavenly Father; and to look upon all other efforts as a source of trouble and unpleasantness; so that it distresses us; so that it upsets us when we realize we have sinned. The question we must continually ask ourselves is, have we attained to the state of feeling that disobedience to God is the source of unhappiness and trouble for us?

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<sup>1</sup>The Christadelphian, Volume 11, 1874, Page 187



Psalms 32:4-5 *“For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.”* These verses turn our thoughts to Christ, his mind was always in service to God; aware of his very nature, inherited from his Adamic parent and God's preparedness to forgive through obedience. The mind of Christ was always pleasing his heavenly Father by overcoming his sin nature. The Scriptures, especially the Psalms, show how the flesh of sin troubled him and was a weariness of spirit. Each and every Sunday we come together to remember our Lord and Master and how he overcame. We remember his obedience to God, even unto the death on the cross, through the Memorials.

David by whose hand this Psalm was penned could share similar feelings because truly, his sins weighed heavily upon him. How do our sins weigh upon us? Are they a heavy burden, which saddens us? Do we find relief in the Scriptures, in the Psalms? Let us diligently use them to help us draw near to God.

Or as Paul puts it to the Hebrews (10:22-23) *“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;).”* If we look at the Greek, we find it can be stated a little better. *“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of the hope without wavering for he is faithful that promised.”* The Greek leads us to the confession of our hope, rather than the profession of our faith as a better translation. Paul had hope. He considered that the heart sprinkling body washing important. If he had not considered it important, he could've shortened this epistle to the Hebrews by several lines. He would not have mentioned it. He could've said, “let us draw near with a true heart without wavering,” but he did not. Paul did not consider true heart unsprinkled because it still had consciousness of sin for an evil conscience.

When we abstractly considered what a pure heart is we realize it is considered to be the home of the intellectual faculty and moral sentiments of our flesh. Our heart is what we are prone to do. Jesus said, (Luke 6:45) *“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.”* To put it another way, when our heart is earthy, sensual, we behave in a manner befitting the

mind of the flesh; in a manner in conformity with the world around us. To purify such a heart the mind must be enlightened by the testimony of God. The Bible must be brought to bear upon the mind. It is that testimony and only that testimony that is of such a nature that it not only enlightens, but develops a moral disposition in harmony with the mind of God. That testimony when believed in love and faith compels one to keep the mind and heart within the limits of his law. A heart such as this believes unto righteousness and expresses its convictions and confesses them unto salvation.

We look at what Moses told Pharaoh of all that was to happen to him. Yet neither he nor his servants would fear God. The only reason they complied was because circumstances were controlled to make them uncomfortable, and unpleasant. Pharaoh moved away from these unpleasant circumstances the same way a dog moves out of the way when you throw a stone at it. Evil men will move in a direction away from calamity. Criminals committing a crime run from the police. They don't stand and confront them. It is not a spirit of understanding that moves them with the desire to avoid unpleasant events that are about to unfold. It is the impulse to get out of harm's way. But it is understanding what God desires in a man; understanding of His ways and of his precepts. No man can run out of the way of calamities God has prepared for him. We cannot run out of the way of judgment. We must have the understanding that moves our heart to change to bring us unto obedience in love; because it is our heartfelt desire to please our heavenly Father. Our minds must be exercised to discern those things which are pleasing to God. Our minds are to be full of His ways, His desires, and his commands which He has left on record for us. We cannot be content just to eat, drink and be merry. If we are to be merry we should sing Psalms. We should eat and drink to the glory of God. Our mind should be centered on things above, resisting the temptation to be content with the petty things of this life; to soar above the cares and desires of this world, having our hearts and minds on higher things, the things that be of God; having a heart and our mind in a condition where it is pleasing to God.

Wisdom consists of sincerely looking the facts in the face; conforming to the logic of the facts we are staring at; refusing to be confused by the many forms of unrighteousness the children of disobedience daily throw in our face; who deceive themselves with man's ideas and rejecting the wholesome righteous that be of the things of God. *"Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about. Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart."*

—Bro. Beryl Snyder

## Meekness Is Not Weakness

If you think meek is weak, try being meek for a week. True meekness is not a sign of weakness. It takes a really strong person to be truly meek.

Moses, we are told, was the meekest man on the face of the earth and he certainly was not a weak individual. To face the rigors of putting up with some two and half million people who were consistently complaining took a lot of courage as well as patience.

Unger's Bible Dictionary tells us that "meekness in the scriptural sense is an inwrought grace of the soul; and the exercises of it are first and chiefly toward God. The Greek term expresses that temper of spirit in which **we accept His dealings with us without disputing and resisting** and it is closely related to humility."

The Lord Jesus invites us to "*come unto him...and take his yoke and learn of him for he is meek and lowly in heart.*" Jesus Christ would certainly qualify as the meekest man who ever lived and yet he was also the most powerful man who ever lived.

It takes strength of character to be reviled and revile not again. Peter tells us that when Christ suffered, he threatened not; but "*committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.*"

It takes great strength to be meek, "*to resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*"

Jesus not only told us to do this. **He did it!** It is one thing to know what is right. It is quite another thing to do it.

Since we are promised that "*the meek shall inherit the earth*" we had better begin practicing meekness. The world despises the characteristics that please God. This is why the world equates meekness with weakness.

We need to understand that "*the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.*" We need to listen to Peter, who tells us that the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price."

It was Peter who also told us to "*be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt you in due time.*"

We must realize that humility and meekness are kindred spirits and the opposite of doing "What comes naturally." We should accept the challenge of being meek for a week and observe the startling change

that will take place in us. Being meek for a week will convince us that meekness is not weakness.

James asks us a question: “*Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you?*” The answer to James’ question should interest us because we ought to try to be that person who is wise and endued with knowledge. To be this person, James tells us that we should **“by our good life show our works in the meekness of wisdom.”**

Isaiah tells us that “*the meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD.*” David declares, “*The LORD taketh pleasure in his people; he will beautify the meek with salvation.*” Meekness is beautiful and salvation is the result, for truly “*the MEEK shall inherit the earth.*”

—Bro. Jerry Connolly

## Fellowship

Dear Brother\_\_\_ Loving greetings,

March 22, 1952

In considering your questions, there is one point of which we can be sure at the outset — sincerity and earnestness alone are not enough. I believe the clearest and most striking evidence of this is Paul’s statement about the Jews in Rom. 10:2-3 —

*“I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge, for they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”*

Paul himself was a perfect example of this — fanatically earnest and sincere, but still terribly astray from the Truth and misguidedly opposing and destroying God’s people and aiding their enemies.

Many of the world today, though far from the Truth, are agonizingly sincere and earnest. Jesus said, — “*The time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.*” (John 16:2).

There are many things besides earnestness and sincerity that are necessary to make a man acceptable and useful to God.

You ask: — “What is our true relation to those who use the name ‘Christadelphian’ and believe its general principles but do not recognize the need for standing aside from certain errors.”

I believe there is only one place that we can draw the line of distinction, and that is the point of fellowship. There is no other logical

stopping point or dividing line. We are either in holy communion and fellowship with another, or we are not. All distinctions outside that are secondary.

If the difference between us is such that fellowship is not possible, then the difference between us is very important, for fellowship is the most important thing in life.

We must each decide where the commands of God lead us to draw the line of fellowship. Having prayerfully and to the best of our ability determined that point, then all mankind fall into 2 classes and only 2 — those with whom we fellowship on the one hand, and all the rest of the world on the other.

This is not, of course, to say there are no distinctions in all the rest of the world, for there are secondary distinctions, but they in no way compare with this primary dividing line.

Of that large general class in the world with whom we do not fellowship, there is one particular section that has a bearing on the question. In 2 Thess. 3:14-15, Paul says, — *“If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”*

Part of the *“word by this epistle”* was to *“withdraw from those who did not walk according to the tradition”* (teaching) of Paul — see vs. 6 of the same chapter. If any refuse to withdraw when they should withdraw, they are *“not obeying our word by this epistle.”*

In these vs. 14-15, Paul introduces a class with whom we are to have no company, yet we are not to count them as enemies, but to admonish them as (erring) brethren. This is not out of harmony with Jesus' command (Matt. 18:17).

*“If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto them as a heathen man and a publican.”* To be *“as a heathen or a publican”* is the same as to have no company. (We are not to treat heathens and publicans as enemies — Jesus does not contradict Paul here — I believe he uses the terms heathen and publican to emphasize the separation, the not keeping company.)

It seems to me that these words of Jesus and Paul define our relationship to those groups that go under the general classification of Christadelphians, just about as well as possible. (I do not like to use the term “other fellowships.” because it is a self-contradiction — there can truly be only ONE Fellowship).

These other groups are “separated brethren” brethren to be kept separate from and admonished, but not to be regarded with enmity or bitterness. Our only practical problem is how to act in relation to them. Paul defines this clearly. As to how we are to abstractly consider them, or try to determine their position before God (present or ultimate), I do not regard this as a profitable consideration.

The “*body of Christ*” is, in the ultimate sense, the approved — the redeemed — the glorified. Who will ultimately constitute this Body obviously we cannot say. That is the great purpose of the judgment-seat of Christ. “*Judge nothing before the time.*”

As to the present application of this expression (Body of Christ), that at best can be but a tentative consideration. Paul says (Heb. 3:6,14) — “*Whose House (Body) are we IF we hold fast . . . we are made partakers of Christ (his Body) IF we hold steadfast.*”

At any particular time, therefore, the present constitution of the Body is but tentative and potential. So we cannot apply the term to any at present in an absolute sense. I certainly believe it would be unwise and questionable to apply this term “*Body of Christ*” to any with whom we cannot in faithfulness break bread, for the Scriptures obviously restrict the term in its true sense to the faithful, and if we consider a man to be faithful in the Scriptural sense, we have no right to stand aside from him in fellowship.

Jesus said, “*Judge not, that ye be not judged*” (Matt. 7:1). He also said, “*Judge righteous judgment*” (John 7:24). The mind of the flesh will play those 2 statements against each other; the mind of the Spirit will perceive their harmony.

We have judged to the extent of standing aside from those who do not fully accept and apply what we believe to be the first principles of fellowship. To this extent we have judged and must judge. We believe these “brethren” are in error in the position of fellowship they take, and we believe faithfulness calls for a standing aside and a testifying against their error (admonition), and an endeavor to persuade them to forsake the error. James says —

“*Brethren, if any of you do err from the Truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins*” (5:19, 20).

Beyond this, I would rather hope, and not judge. Jesus said, “*Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required*” (Luke

12:48). From this it would appear that responsibility varies according to capability and opportunity and circumstance. Paul says, — *“What have I to do to judge those that are without. Those that are without God judgeth”* (1 Cor. 5:12, 13). Once we have faithfully testified by separating in fellowship, I believe we should leave all further judging to God (though not neglecting to try to persuade them, and warn others, of the unsoundness of their position).

But our main concern and duty is with the *“things that remain.”* These we are exhorted to build up and “strengthen,” and to carry the good news of the Kingdom to the world.

Sincerely your brother,  
*G. V. Growcott*

### **Encouraging Words No. 30**

ARE we Sunday School teachers? If so, we have great scope for encouraging the young ones to engage in profitable reading. Are we, in this matter, alive to our opportunities? Of the influence which literature exercises upon the mind we are all aware. The baneful effects, or instance, of the “penny dreadful” [British penny fiction novels] upon the small boy in the street are well known. It was the lament of the Chaplain of the Borstal Institute at Aylesbury, a short time since, that the girls at that Institute inquire for two kinds of works, viz., those about love and about murder, “with a marked preference for the murder.” The feeding of the mind upon unwholesome matter, with the consequent evil results, is not restricted to this low rung of humanity’s ladder. We cannot be too deeply impressed with the fact that the world’s literature, even in its highest planes of thought, will bring the reader no nearer to salvation than the poor little devourer of the “penny dreadful” and the unfortunate girl in the Borstal Institute, whose only desire is to read of love and murder.

If we are alive to our responsibilities we shall exhort our young charges to make the attainment of salvation the object of their lives and to let this guide them in their choice of books. We shall press home the fact that salvation is a matter of information and memory in relation to one particular branch of knowledge, viz., divine knowledge, and that apart from the Scriptures there are no books that will help in the treasuring up of this knowledge as will the expository works of Dr. Thomas, bro. Roberts, and other capable brethren. Why should not the children, as they grow in stature, be taught to grow in wisdom by being encouraged to read these helpful books? Some may erroneously

consider them “too deep,” “too dry,” or “too narrow” for juvenile perusal. Let us be careful lest we class the way of salvation as “too deep,” “too dry,” and “too narrow” for the young. We have to remember that the taste for spiritual things is entirely a matter of education, and it should be our endeavour to lift up the young mind to take interest and pleasure in God’s ways and thoughts. If children are left to gratify unchecked their natural instincts by engrossing their thoughts in the lust-stimulating work of fiction, how can we expect to maintain a high tone in our Sunday Schools? How can we expect the scholars to grow up Samuel and Timothy-like, and Hannah and Mary-like? Let us, as teachers, do our part to hold back the children from settling down to a habit which not only stimulates thoughts which are antagonistic to the commandments of Christ, but interfere with duty to both self and neighbour. Where can a thorough-going schoolworker be found, who, during the school term, devotes herself to novel reading? And where can a satisfactory worker of any kind be found who yields herself to this failing? If reading of this kind interferes with the everyday duties of life, how much more must it do so as touching the fitting of the mind for service to Christ?

We know, and let us teach the children to know likewise, that faith cometh not by hearing or reading works of fiction, but by pondering the Word of God. Let us not hide from our scholars the kind of hearing which God, by express command, required of Israelitish children. Speaking of the young Israelites God said, in effect: Cause them to hear all the events in connection with the institution of the Passover (Exodus 12:26, 13:8, 14, 15), and cause them to hear all the transactions connected with the giving of the law at Sinai (Deut. 4:9, 10). As the Psalmist clearly shows “the praises,” “the strength,” and “the wonderful works of the Lord” were to be poured into the ears of Israel’s rising generations (Psalm 78:4–7). Let us reason with our scholars concerning the utility and importance of giving their minds to the subjects which God has prescribed, and thus at least make an endeavour to create in them a determination to put trashy books far from them, and to delve into the treasures of the truth’s literature for themselves.

*Sis. C.H. Jannaway—1911*

### **Meditations – Deity’s Ways No. 30**

LET us not trouble ourselves about the apparent hardness and arbitrariness of the divine conditions of salvation. God is all-wise, and therefore knows what is best. No amount of dissatisfaction on our part will cause God to alter the conditions; neither will our tampering with them change them. In dealing with this matter, we must be sensible and



honest. God would have all men to be saved, but all men will not be saved, because, for a variety of known and unknown reasons, they will not fall in with this simple and reasonable condition. Surely, it is becoming that nonbelief in God—in the Word that He has acknowledged as His own—should exclude from His favour. Surely it is both kind and becoming that the man who will neither believe nor obey—who will persist in continual enmity to Him, should be deprived of existence. If we would know what unbelief and disobedience mean, let us open our eyes to the misery and wickedness that prevail. Would any kind-hearted, thoughtful man desire that this should be everlastingly perpetuated? If few believe the truth it is not God's fault, but the devil's, who is wisely permitted to reign for a while. God's method will sift the sons of men as in a sieve. Wiseacres, simpletons, and workers of iniquity will all go through. Only one class, and that the right one, will be preserved, as time will presently show.

“How much of the truth may I give up without imperilling my situation?” Not any. The truth is our city of refuge: in it we are safe: immediately we wander outside of it our life is in danger. A few hours spent on Paul's writings, provided we are open to conviction, will assure us upon this point. Even apart from direct teaching, are we not told that the existence of false teachers caused Paul many a tear? There is no intelligible explanation of this away from the fact that he knew that error meant destruction to those who embraced it. Again we read upon the subject—”But of these who seemed to be somewhat (whatever they were it maketh no matter to me)—To whom we give place by subjection, no, not for an hour; *“that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you”* (Gal. 2:5, 6). This passage also indicates Paul's estimation of error, for he was not the man to speak without good and weighty motives. The path of error is the path of death. This may offend *“unruly and vain talkers and deceivers,”* but what of that? Because the serpent says, *“ye shall not surely die,”* we are not bound to believe it.

The human race is perishing in a heavy sea. Adam's sin has wrecked us. God, in His mercy, has thrown us a rope—the Gospel. Unless we lay hold of this, we can have no hope, and not only must we lay hold, but we must hold fast—we must grip firmly and tightly till we are saved. “Hold fast till I come,” says Christ. Paul repeatedly said the same thing—”*Hold fast the form of sound words*” (2 Tim. 1:13). “*Hold fast the traditions which ye have been taught*” (2 Thes. 2:15). “*Hold fast the profession of our faith*” (Heb. 10:23). This holding fast means endurance, effort, a determination of purpose. It is a very easy thing to let go. To apostatise from the truth is one of the easiest processes under

the sun. We have only to cease “giving earnest heed,” to give place to our own fleshly reasonings, and the truth will soon drift from us. The truth is very jealous, and will not brook the second place in our minds. The Gospel, or the truth, is the power of God unto salvation, and to retain this we must be earnest and resolute. Earnest and resolute men do not forsake the daily reading of the Word, nor the meetings. Laxity in either of these directions means that our hold is loosening.

What is growth in the truth? God has commanded us to grow in the truth (Col. 1:9, 10; Phil. 1:9; 2 Peter 1:5, 8), and it behoves us to have clear and right views in regard to growth. The growth is to be from one particular root, “*the faith*,” “*rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving*” (Col. 2:7)—“*Building up yourself on your most holy faith*” (Jude 20.)—“*Leaving first principles of the beginning of Christ let us go on into perfection*” (Heb. 6:1). Growth does not mean a continual amending of our belief. This view has been frequently taken by men who have endeavoured to thrust heresies upon the church. To grow is to develop and to augment, not to destroy and recommence. As the flower develops from the bud to the full blossom, or the man from infancy to manhood, so should we develop from the babe in Christ to the skilful workman. Growth manifests itself in a progressive application of Christ’s commands to all the varied circumstances of life; in continual expansion of vision in relation to the wondrous things of the law—such as tracing in the types the things concerning the name and the kingdom; in the elucidation of prophecy; and in learning from past events God’s principles of action. But let us remember that this is fruit that can be grown from one stock only, viz., “*The first principles of the Oracles of God.*”

Bro. A. T. Jannaway—1890

## Under Law And Under Grace

PROBABLY there is no subject which has been more completely misunderstood than the Bible doctrine of sin and forgiveness. If the expressions “*under sin*” and “*under grace*” had been left without explanation, misconception might be excusable. But they are not so left; on the contrary, the most complete exposition of the matter is accorded us, and a little careful research and adjustment of our ideas to the Scriptural testimony will reveal a complete harmony between the various expressions employed. In spite of the clearness of Bible teaching regarding this subject very extreme views have been entertained, which have brought various passages of Scripture into apparent conflict, and introduced ideas of a most extraordinary nature.

Ostensibly they have been based upon the Bible, but really they are the outcome of a false theology. Bible teaching is bent to human inclinations, and any passage which appears to in any way support the particular theory enunciated is eagerly seized without reference to its context, or the general teaching inculcated.

Because sin is defined as "*the transgression of the law,*" some have supposed that those who are not under law in a definite specific sense cannot sin. This is obviously incorrect. In the second chapter of Romans the apostle declares that those who have sinned without law shall also perish without law; while those who have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law. This passage demonstrates the fact that sin is possible apart from being in any direct way under divine law. The explanation is that in a certain sense all men are related to law. If, after Adam had sinned, God had ceased to interfere with the human race all would have been "*without understanding,*" and, consequently, "*like the beasts that perish.*" Since, however, God introduced a law for man's redemption certain commands were made to the race, and, consequently, all who do things contrary to that law may be said to have sinned; although, being without understanding, they are not held responsible.

But what is the meaning of under the law in the sense of Romans 2:12? Evidently it refers to those who are commanded by God to do anything of a definite nature, and who, by virtue of the fact that they hear and comprehend, are "*bound to obey.*" The expression "in the law" in this passage cannot be intended in the restricted sense which some would apply to it, or it would involve an assertion contrary to fact. In a certain sense all Jewish infants were "*made under the law,*" but they certainly do not all come under the scope of Romans 2:12. Many of the Jews died without having in any way comprehended the divine purpose; having wandered out of the way of understanding, will "*remain in the congregation of the dead,*" although in a technical sense they sinned under the Mosaic law. The sense which men sinned in the law becomes evident when we take all the facts into consideration. All divine commands, to whomsoever they are addressed, bring those who hear under moral obligation to obey. Thus the Ninivites, to whom God spoke through the prophet Jonah, became especially responsible to divine judgment, and they only saved themselves from overthrow by hearkening to Jonah's testimony, and turning from their evil way.

One of the most striking examples of the fact that men who hear God's commands are bound to obey is to be found in the case of Cain. In a restricted and technical sense he was without law. A law had been

introduced in which human beings approached unto God on the basis of sacrifice, but Cain did not recognise this law. He ignored the necessity for sacrifice, and brought an offering of the fruit of the ground, which was not in accordance with God's injunctions. Nevertheless, when he had murdered his brother, he was called before God to answer for his crime, and was severely punished. The apostle Paul declares that where there is no law sin is not imputed, but this cannot mean that all Gentiles who refuse to obey the Gospel call are exempt from the imputation of sin. The apostle James says, "*To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*" This is a most reasonable principle, and thoroughly in harmony with all Scriptural teaching. Cain is an instance. He knew that God required animal sacrifice, but he ignored the fact. Thus, knowing to do good and doing it not, sin lay at his door, and when he had committed the crime of which he was subsequently guilty, he received a severe but just recompense.

These facts are perfectly clear and simple. All sin who do things contrary to God's law, but when it is simply in ignorance they are not held accountable. Without understanding they are simply like the beasts, and perish without law. But those who know to do good and do it not, or do evil while fully recognising what God requires, are enlightened transgressors, and may, like Cain, be called to account for their misdeeds. Undoubtedly the features which have been misunderstood the most are those regarding forgiveness under the old and new dispensations. There are some passages in the New Testament which exhibit very emphatically the fact that "*he only is righteous that doeth righteousness,*" and some Bible students have imagined that there can be no forgiveness of sin after baptism. If this view of the case were correct, it is almost certain that the way to eternal life would be not only narrow and difficult, but absolutely impossible. It is a Scriptural doctrine that "*there is no man that sinneth not.*" And the Bible exhibits Jesus as the only just one who was especially prepared by God for the work of man's redemption. The Scriptures make it perfectly clear that there is no room for human boasting, and that the production from the Adamic race of one who was completely successful in the conflict with sin was directly due to an intervention of divine power.

In view of these facts it would be obviously inconsistent to imagine that sins committed after baptism could not be covered. If the act of entering covenant relationship effected any change in human nature, the case would stand in a different light. If coming into association with the sacrifice of Christ removed that tendency towards evil which is characteristic of Adam's flesh, we should naturally suppose that

subsequent perfection would be required. Baptised men would then stand in a much more privileged position than did the first Adam, for, in addition to being “very good” physically, they would have the history of centuries of sin and misery to warn them. No diabolos within their flesh, and a most effective object lesson in the shape of the world’s history to assist them in antagonising suggestions from without.

The case, however, does not stand so. Such a change of nature indeed would destroy the principle of salvation by faith, and leave a margin for the flesh to “glory.” The only change effected by baptism is one of relationship. We still have “*this body of death*” to contend with, we still have a law of sin in our members, and men are just as prone to sin after baptism as before. Seeing then that believers often pass through a probation of greater duration than Christ’s entire mortal existence, it would be obviously inconsistent with divine principles that absolute perfection should be required. God recognises human frailty, and provides a means of forgiveness, apart from which salvation would be impossible.

The passages which have been supposed to teach that there is no remission of sin after baptism, if carefully examined, will be seen to bear no such construction. They are of great value as opposing the suggestion to continue in sin that grace might abound; but they do not place strictures [A restriction] which would render the way to eternal life quite impossible.

The apostle Paul speaks of willful sin being fatal to all hopes, and he also says that those who have tasted of the powers of the world to come, if they fall away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance, but these passages evidently refer to a deliberate renunciation of the divine principles, and not to sins of infirmity.

The Pharisees committed an unpardonable sin in attributing the miracles of Christ to Beelzebub, the imaginary prince of demons; but such an offence would be impossible now. There is no miracle-working now, nor are there any who have tasted of the powers of the world to come in the same sense as did the apostles of the first century. In short, it is perfectly evident that the whole of the New Testament teaching is in harmony with the words of John, “*There is a sin unto death, and there is a sin not unto death.*” Those who do their best to follow Christ, and keep pressing onward will be forgiven the sins which they have manifested.

It was thus in Old Testament times. Unless those under the law were in a much more privileged position than those under grace, forgiveness of sin would be no more possible then than it is now; yet, after entering covenant relationship the subsequent sacrifices offered were an indication that sin might still be covered. The Israelites did sin without exception, and yet it is clearly stated that many of them will have eternal life.

The failure to comprehend the true teaching of the Scriptures concerning this matter is due to taking passages regarding specific cases, and applying them as a general principle, to the exclusion of all other testimony. As a matter of fact the Bible, while making it abundantly clear that holiness and purity are required from God's people, nowhere affirms that sin cannot be forgiven after baptism. It is distinctly stated that if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and make God a liar, while if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive (1 John 1:8–9–10).

It is a curious fact that while some have taken the view that sin committed during probation is fatal to all future hopes, others have gone to just the opposite extreme.

Because forgiveness is offered and because baptised believers are represented as under grace and not under law, they have imagined that sin is not so heinous now as it was in the days of Moses. This is unquestionably a great mistake. There were undoubtedly some features of the Mosaic law which simply involved obedience to God without reference to permanent moral requirements. The law was a shadow of good things to come, and consequently, when the purpose of God was fully revealed, the necessity for maintaining these typical features was removed. This, however, makes no difference to those laws which were incorporated in the commandments of Christ. They are just as binding now as they were then; indeed, the apostle places an offence against the Law of Christ as worse and more to be condemned than an offence against the law of Moses (Heb. 10:28–29).

The position of those under the law was that they were "*shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.*" They were under a law of great severity, and it was obvious to all truly enlightened Israelites that the law condemned them. The position of those under grace is one of privilege in that they have had revealed to them the "*whole counsel of God.*" The faith which was previously shrouded in types and allegories has been made clear and distinct, the grace of God in all its fulness has been revealed, while the irksome and difficult

ritual of the law has been abolished. No longer are they under a law which is a ministration of death, but they know that a means of remission has been provided, and they have a faithful and immortal High Priest to intercede on their behalf.

The law still has its effect as a means of rendering visible the heinousness of sin, for the true servants of God look back upon it, and rejoice that they have been made free from such a bondage. They recognise that no flesh can glory in God's presence, and that the offer of salvation is purely an act of grace, and then, with a full grasp of the faith which has been revealed they take advantage of the means ordained for their justification, and thenceforth consider themselves dead to sin, and yield their members as "*servants to righteousness and holiness.*"

The foundation of Old Testament principles is the same as that of the New. "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself.*" On these two testimonies hang all the law and the prophets, and it is equally true that on these two testimonies hang all the teaching of Christ and the apostles. To do the will of God should be the aim of all His servants during whatever dispensations they may live, and those who think that under grace means liberty to transgress make a terrible mistake, which will merely cause them to reap the corruption which will inevitably follow sowing to the flesh.

But while the Scriptures always enforce the necessity for obedience and holiness, the principle that where much is given much is required has always operated. The full apprehension of this fact will explain many of the difficulties which some experience in reading the New Testament Scriptures.

Under the law the Israelites were in a position of peculiar privilege. God's works were visibly manifest, and conformity with his requirements ensured not only His favour regarding the future, but temporal advantage as well. God's omnipotence was constantly before them, the fact that He was with them could never be disputed, and the perplexing contention of modern days could have no place there.

Thus it was that with such advantages God's law was carried out without modification, and any direct violation of His commands was visited with the severest punishment. In the days when Christ lived on earth things had changed. The Jews were subject to the Romans, and most of their privileges had departed. There was a revival of this stringency with the access of privilege in the days of the apostles, as

instanced in the case of Ananias and Saphira, but since then the spirit has been withdrawn, the power exercised by the apostles has ceased, and the servants of God have had to contend for the Faith, opposed by the ruling powers of the world during the times of the Gentiles, without the assistance of miraculous power.

But here we are impressed by a most important consideration. If where much is given much is required, surely at the present time the greatest energy and devotion should be displayed. So much has transpired during the present century that we can see the kingdom of God approaching, and a privilege is granted us such as no other generation has enjoyed. The things which the saints of all times have longed to see are visibly before us, and all the signs which were to herald the approach of Christ are rapidly developing. Most emphatically may we say, *“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering . . . exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.”* *The Christadelphian 1896*

## Answers - Anointing the Sick

When James (5:14) recommended the brethren to anoint a sick brother with oil, and pray over him, with a view to his recovery, you must notice that he told them to *“call the elders of the church.”*

This it is impossible to do in the nineteenth century, for the simple reason that there are no elders to call. There may be official brethren, bearing the title of “elder;” but **they are not the order of men James had in his eye when he wrote the words in question.**

“The elders of the church” in James' days were not only elders in name and office, but elders, or superiors, in **power**, having the gifts of the Spirit at their disposal. They were the **divinely-appointed** and **divinely-endowed** overseers of the ecclesia (Acts 20:17, 28).

This made their attendance at a sick man's bed a circumstance of some importance and efficacy. True, it was the “prayer of faith” that was to save the sick, but it was a “prayer of faith” proceeding from the elders, upon whom the Spirit abode for the purpose of imparting power. In those days, the Spirit was the common gift of the saints.

Its absence now makes a difference in the relations of the ecclesia. Acts and forms and phrases appropriate in the days of the Spirit's dispensation are now entirely out of place.

*Bro. Robert Roberts—1892*



## Answers - The Unpardonable Sin

M. S.—Many have needlessly vexed themselves on this subject. That some sin should be unpardonable is reasonable: but a man cannot be guilty of it without knowing it. A man daringly doing a thing forbidden could not expect forgiveness. It was denied him under the law of Moses, and it is denied him under the law of Christ according to Heb. 6:6, and 10:26, to which you refer. To “sin wilfully” is not simply to commit an act of conscious delinquency. All sin involves the will in the commission; but “there is a sin not unto death” (1 John 5:16). To “sin wilfully” in the sense in which Paul uses that expression, is to commit the act which in v. 29, in elaboration of v. 26, he describes as treading under foot the Son of God, counting the blood of the covenant by which we are sanctified an unholy thing, and doing despite to the Spirit of grace.” This implies an entire apostasy from the truth once believed and cherished—an open and defiant contemning of God’s arrangements of mercy in Christ such as those are guilty of who turn from the truth to atheism. Such will at the judgment-seat experience the truth of v. 31: “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

The phrase “fall away” in Heb. 6:6, is sufficiently expressive in itself. It is defined in verse 7 as a “crucifying of the Son of God afresh, and putting him to an open shame,” implying that those who fell away allied themselves with the avowed enemies of Christ. There was a special reason why such a sin should be specially heinous at the time the apostle wrote, and this brings us to your question as to what is sin against the Holy Spirit. Jesus says “*all manner of sin SHALL BE FORGIVEN unto men*” except the one which he defines to be “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.” It follows that the sin spoken of by Paul in the two places quoted above are sins against the Holy Spirit. If they were not, they would not be unforgivable.

The question is, How would a repudiation of the truth in the days of the apostles be a sin against the Holy Spirit? The history of apostolic procedure answers the question, and this history is briefly supplied in Paul’s testimony concerning himself: “And I, brethren, when I came to you came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. . . . My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but IN DEMONSTRATION OF THE SPIRIT and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of

men BUT IN THE POWER OF GOD” (1 Cor. 2:1, 4, 5). The meaning of this is apparent in his statement to the Hebrews: “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. *God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, according to his own will*” (Heb. 2:3).

The truth in apostolic days was confirmed by *the Spirit in visible and demonstrative manifestation*. Hence, to reject the truth was to reject the testimony of the Spirit, and by inference, to impute the accomplishments of the Spirit through the apostles and believers, to the mere feats of magicanship; and to do this was to do the very thing which called forth the direful remark of Christ in Matt. 22:24. In that case the leaders of the Jews ascribed the power of Christ to Baal, the reputed prince of unclean spirits — that is, to necromancy, which popular superstition, east as well as west, has always imputed to infernal potency. In this, they spoke against the Holy Spirit, the the real author of Christ’s achievements, and brought themselves under the fearful exclusion pronounced by Jesus. In the same position were all those who received the truth in the days of the Spirit’s dispensation, and then rejected it, after having, by impartation of the Spirit, “tasted of the heavenly gift and the powers of the world to come.”

A man is scarcely in a position in the present age of the world to commit this sin. The Spirit is not manifested in our midst; and there are no visible evidences of Spirit to reject. The only work of the Spirit is the word spoken through prophets and apostles, and “written for our learning.” A man rejecting this doubtless rejects the Spirit: but whether his rejection of documents depending for their claim upon our regard on evidences which can only be apprehended by process of logic, would be as heinous as his rejection of the same testimony when supported by the Spirit of God in official manifestation (Rom. 15:18–19), is open to question. It is doubtful if a man can commit a “sin unto death” in the absence of the Spirit, that is to say, a sin which once committed can never be forgiven. The *service* of sin in any form is unto death. “The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God;” but overt acts of transgression will not exclude a man from the kingdom of God if repented of and confessed. “There is a sin not unto death.” This class of sins are unpremeditated, unprompted by the defiant feeling which originates unpardonable sin. They arise from the weakness of the

flesh, and involve the delinquent in deep humiliation before God. For such there is forgiveness. It is the function of Jesus in his priestly capacity to intercede for his erring brethren and sisters. “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.” If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.” This privilege, however, is restricted to those who are Christ’s, over whom alone Christ officiates as priest. The world lies in darkness and death. God has no dealings with man except through Christ. We refer to the following testimonies in proof that forgiveness is a privilege accessible to those who repent:—Psalm 130:3, 4; Prov. 28:13; Matt. 18:21, 22, 35; Luke 11:4; 2 Cor. 2:7; 12:21; James 5:15; Rev. 2:5, 16.

*The Christadelphian 1890*

## **The Salt of The Ecclesias**

But while the Mystery of Iniquity was thus developing “after the working of the Satan” with all power, and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved “—there existed a class, who not only knew the truth, but loved it. This was “the salt” of the first three centuries, which gave savor to the pre-Constantinian Christendom. It was the redeeming and antagonizing element of the period; and was found concurrent with the tares already mentioned, in the Ephesian haters of the deeds of the Nikolaitans; in the Smyrmean rich in faith; in the Pergamian Antipas; and in the Thyatiran remnant; in the Sardian few; and in the Philadelphian faithful. Among the Laodiceans no salt is characterized. A few grains may have been found; but not sufficient to preserve it from that corruption which finally caused its ejection.

*Bro. John Thomas—Eureka Vol 1 Page 422*

## **All The Water in The World**

Be strong and of a good courage! All the water in the world cannot sink a ship, unless it gets inside of it! If we keep “Egypt” out of our hearts, and seal it out with the application of the Word, then we can access that peace which passes all understanding. —*Bro. Sid Jones*

**Berean 2011-143**

## Hints For Bible Markers

*“To speak evil of no man”* brings our minds back to the 10 Commandments given in Exodus chapter 20:16 with follow-up suggested reading in Exodus chapter 23 versus one through seven. This is one of the more difficult commands for man to do. Man loves to build himself by belittling others. To prove our worth at the expense of someone else. This phrase *“blasphēmō”* rendered in Titus, speak evil, has been translated into more than a few English words. Most often translated as some form of blaspheme. As in James 2:7 *“Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?”*

A brother of Christ is not like other men, he will not slander, revile, blaspheme, or speak evil of any man. The new man is not contentious but showing meekness, kindness, gentleness, and humbleness without respecting persons. As James tells us to be swift to hear and slow to speak. That means we have to listen to what people say and take our time, thinking about what we are going to say remembering the words of James (3:5) *“Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!”* James follows slow to wrath. This is a natural progression. Anger is an assumption that we know everything, that we are right. Brother Growcott wrote that “anger is an immature lack of self-control.”

If we are always getting angry and annoyed at things or people it follows that we are lacking the character that God requires us to develop. If we were to look at the fruit of the Spirit with an eye to our own characters becoming angry and annoyed proves that we are lacking long-suffering, kindness, and self-restraint. These shortcomings prevent us from developing a character pleasing to God for James continues on to tell us in the 20th verse (Chapter 1) *“For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.”* Is our heart one with Christ so that we can say *“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”* (Luke 23:24) God knows those that are His or they have this seal, that he is an immersed believer in the exceeding great and precious promises. For these are the obedient ones, who love the Lord enough to let the word of God dwell richly in their hearts. Striving to overcome, departing from iniquity.

bro. Beryl V. Snyder

## The Commandments of Christ

As collected and organized by bro. Roberts

### VI. CONCERNING YOUR ACTIONS

**“Speak evil of no man; be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness to all men.”**

*“To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.”* (Titus 3:2)

**“Be swift to hear; slow to speak; slow to wrath.”**

*“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”* (James 1:19)

**“Depart from all iniquity: let none of you suffer as an evil doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.”**

*“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”* (2 Timothy 2:19)

*“But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.”* (1 Peter 4:15)

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