

THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER

*A Magazine for the Exposition and Defense
of the Holy Scriptures*



Vol. 15

1st Quarter – 2005

No. 1

OUR “NEEDS BE”
2005

The **Sanctuary-Keeper** is published on a quarterly basis. The doctrinal position of this magazine is founded on the principles of Bible Truth as outlined and defined in the **Birmingham Unamended Statement of Faith** exclusive to any statements that undermine or nullify the doctrines outlined therein (e.g., the BASF or NASU).

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OUR “NEEDS BE”

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A Pictorial Overview of the Way of Salvation

DOES IT TEACH TRUTH OR ERROR?



For the past several decades this pictorial representation of God’s plan of Salvation has been used as a teaching tool throughout the Unamended community. It has not been appreciated for its artistic value but because it demonstrates in a clear and simple manner the way of Salvation. But recently the Truths that this picture demonstrate have been questioned by those who think that after baptism we bypass the walk towards the judgment (otherwise known fittingly as our “probationary” period) and that we go straight from baptism into “Eden”. It has also been recently contended that the above representation teaches “Salvation by works”. Clearly the picture teaches no such thing, but we do know that works in fact play a pivotal role in acceptable service to God in conjunction with grace, faith, and Divine law. The minimization of “works” and Divine Law is part of a growing trend within Christadelphia that bolsters the principle of “saved by grace” to the point of serious imbalance, coming closer to that which is embraced by mainline Christianity. It is our hope (God willing) to deal with these matters in future issues of this magazine.

WHY DO CHRISTADELPHIANS HAVE TROUBLE AMONG THEMSELVES?

*Thomas Williams, Christadelphian Advocate, August, 1886
Editorial*

Some ask, “Why is it that Christadelphians have trouble among themselves?” This is easily answered. Among them is a people who love the truth, and in whose “good and honest hearts” the seed of the kingdom has taken root. They will have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; they will not compromise the fundamental principles of the gospel; and so whenever there it is found that there are evil men and seducers in the camp, there is a collision – there is war, the spirit in the one, warring against the flesh in the other. This trouble could be very easily obviated if those who war for the principles and precepts of the Spirit would only surrender, and compromise – agree to disagree, but in the very nature of things this cannot be done. God has not ordered it so. He has arranged it so that His servants will “*Earnestly contend for the faith;*” that they will *not* give up their fidelity to God’s word, either in word or deed, therefore as long as there exist two conflicting forces, which will be as long as the present unbridled condition of things lasts, there will be the much tribulation through which the “few” out of the “many” who are called will, as Jehovah’s chosen ones, enter into that rest which remains for the children of God.

REMINDER

If you wish to continue to receive the Sanctuary-Keeper please fill out the enclosed subscription form and with your payment send to the requested address.

THE SANCTUARY – KEEPER

*A Magazine for the Exposition and Defense of
the Holy Scriptures*

“Ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar”

Num. 18:5

“Ye are...an holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices.”

1 Peter 2:5

“Thou hast kept My Word and hast not denied My Name”- Rev. 3:8

VOLUME 15

1st QUARTER, 2005

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OUR “NEEDS BE” - 2005

Some thirteen years have past since a periodical with the name THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER last made its appearance within the Christadelphian Community. In that relatively short time period we have seen the world continue on an ever accelerating down-hill slide into widespread moral and intellectual depravity. It is not our intent at this time to mention the shameful details of the conditions we see around us, but suffice it to say we know that such digression will not continue indefinitely as the world marches ever closer towards that appointed day promised by Yahweh; a world that is *“reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”*

Regrettably like the world, over the past 13 years we have also seen serious changes and challenges take place within the Household of Faith. In 1985, Bro. Jim Stanton revived THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER in hopes of counteracting what he saw as *“a declension of spiritual strength in the body of Christ”*. *At that time* the brotherhood was being faced with a unity effort known as the *Christadelphians For Unity* – a group that was attempting to achieve “unity” so called between the Amended and Unamended despite the existence of fundamental doctrinal differences between the two fellowships. *At that time* there were those who claimed that there were no differences between the Unamended and Amended communities. *At that time* a call for “love” was

being used (misused) by some to gloss over the differences of belief that existed between the Amended and Unamended and to justify ignoring the problems that we faced within our own community. *At that time* there was some effort to undermine the use or need for the Unamended Statement of Faith. *At that time* groups such as the Williamsburg Foundation and Operation Onesimus were actively promoting a form of professionalism and ecumenicalism that had once only been found in the churches of the world. *At that time* long held standards of fellowship were being eroded. *At that time* some were opening the doors of fellowship to the CGAF. *At that time* there was a growing lack of appreciation for the sound and steady writings of our Pioneer brethren. *And at that time* the proven Continuous Historical method of interpreting prophecy (more specifically the Apocalypse) was under attack by erroneous schemes of interpretation.

Most of what we have listed is still here with us today – the only difference being that the efforts towards unity with the Amended (that which was overwhelmingly rejected by the Unamended community at that time) lives on under the banner of what is now called the *NASU*. So what has changed in the past 13 years? We fear that the persistence and growing strength of some of the same humanistic issues and movements as well as the addition of a few others, along with the world’s ceaseless call for our attention and time continue to weaken our resolve as individuals, as ecclesias, and as the Household in general to stand firm against the influences that are not in harmony with the principles of Truth in belief and practice - principles that the Christadelphian community was founded upon. We continue to see challenges to The Truth of God’s Word, and it has always been this way for God’s people throughout the ages (1st Cor. 11:19). But, what is especially disconcerting to us is to see in these last days such troubles often ignored or downplayed and the admonition to *“earnestly contend for the faith”*, as was exemplified by faithful of old, set aside as if it were an outdated principle. There is a spreading philosophy that by standing too firm we may “push some away”. But in the effort to not “push away” it would seem that as a community we are losing our ability and desire to truly preserve the purity and vibrancy of The One Hope. It is such an attitude that may very well be of equal danger to the Household as the introduction of doctrinal error itself.

Those who continue the struggle to “hold fast” and others that have been compelled by scriptural duty to “cry aloud” and warn the brotherhood against adversarial influences have been labeled as “negative”, “extremists”, “legalists”, “Pharisees”, “unloving”, “un-Christ-like”, etc. Though such labels carry the sting of a “fiery dart” they cannot deter our resolve. As God encourages His people, *“Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the People in whose heart is My law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.”* (Is. 51:7)

Our Agenda

What is our agenda? Quoting from the September, 1985 Sanctuary Keeper: “*This magazine...hopes to help brethren of the one faith to be aware of the values of proper doctrine as well as to warn of the impediments that stand before us. Brethren of this decade, which appears to be the final decade of the sixth vial period, must fortify themselves with saving Truth, believing with all their hearts the essentials of the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ. And we must adorn our lives with proof of this belief. We are hopeful that this volume will prove beneficial to the end of supplying information and encouragement in this direction.*” It is these principles that we wish to continue to incorporate into this effort. Along with the promotion of proper doctrine, we hope to counteract the trend towards lukewarmness/apathy that is weakening the spirit of fortitude and zeal that is to characterize God’s people. Brethren, we have THE TRUTH that saves a perishing race – let us stand up and fight for it!

We claim no intellectual advantage or moral authority - we are nothing more than fellow-laborers in the Lord’s Vineyard. Neither do we hold any illusions that what we will attempt to convey in this revival of THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER will be the final solution to the various and complex problems that the Unamended community faces in these latter days. We do know that God’s Truth is made fully available to the simple as well as to those with great academic aptitude, and we know that in God’s Word we find an antidote to the complexities that the mentality of the flesh creates - so with that in mind we carry this effort forward.

The name “SANCTUARY-KEEPER” unfortunately evokes in some the idea of controversy. It is not our intent to be “controversial”, but we will not shy away from addressing the fundamental challenges that we face when necessary. We know that we cannot please everyone, though we wish to offend no one. We desire to promulgate and defend the Truth of God’s Word – not water it down. We have no “new thing” or “new perspective” but we want to offer encouragement in order to “*strengthen the things that remain*” built upon the sound teachings of our early brethren.

It is our hope that we can offer a full balance in the areas commonly referred to as: DOCTRINE, PROPHECY and WALK. We will provide exposition on the “meat” of the word as well as offering special focus on the most basic aspects of our Faith – otherwise known as “the milk” of the word. It is the fundamental features of our Faith that it would seem have been seriously neglected in recent years contributing to the overall decline that we are witnessing. For any concept, skill, activity, or community the idea of continuously reinforcing what is referred to as the “fundamentals” is considered an absolute necessity in order to maintain strength and success. It has been rightly said many times that “conviction results in conduct”. Conviction can only come by the gaining of

knowledge, and by a **constant** reinforcing of what has been learned. We have to remember that Israel was destroyed “*for lack of knowledge*” (Hos. 4:6). In recent times we have seen less emphasis upon subjects such as the Abrahamic Promises and other simple but life saving Truths. When we hear such subjects mentioned do we become energized or uninterested thinking that we “already know that”? We have to remember that what we view as “simple” is far beyond the understanding and appreciation of the most “brilliant” men of this earth. In this magazine we wish to reinforce the most basic of doctrines while continuing to provide exposition and defense on all aspects of our Faith, including matters surrounding the Atonement – a vital subject which is always being challenged.

These are the principles that THE SANCTUARY KEEPER will be structured around – comprising the *things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ*, elsewhere referred to as *The Hope of Israel*. Our appeal is for the strengthening of the Unamended Christadelphian Community. This effort is not designed to be an arena for the promotion of personal crotchets or experiments with God’s Word, but as a platform for those of like precious faith to be supported by the sound and proven beliefs that our community has historically contended for. We take very seriously the words of the Spirit spoken through Jeremiah – “*Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.*” We invite the contributions (e.g., articles, etc.) of those who feel that they can support those things that we have here mentioned.

The Future of the Sanctuary-Keeper

God willing, our immediate plan is for the magazine to be offered on a quarterly basis for the first year of publication. What we are providing in this issue is only a sample copy. The continued existence of the SANCTUARY-KEEPER will completely depend on the support that we can receive from the Unamended Community through subscriptions. Following this introductory and complimentary issue this is not an effort that will be offered for free. We have neither the funds nor the desire to send something out that will only end up thrown aside. If you share the same concerns that we have, if you feel that this is an effort that you can support then please send back the subscription form that has been provided in this mailing. If there is a lack of interest for a revival of the SANCTUARY-KEEPER we will not force the matter, we will quickly return the subscription fees that we do receive, and will not continue with any further issues.

With all that said, we invite your serious consideration.

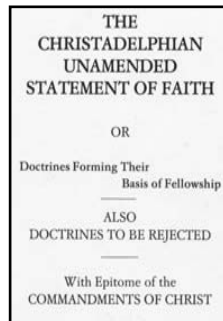
IN DEFENSE OF OUR COMMON BELIEFS

THERE are many different sections of “Christian” and “non-Christian” religious bodies in the world. Many of these have similar doctrines in common, however, there are a few that differ so much from the mainstream denominations that their separateness is very apparent to those who study religious philosophies. The Christadelphian system of beliefs is one that stands out from the religions around us. We are very blessed to be given the opportunity to gain the knowledge of the One Truth that God teaches us through his Holy Word. The book of Ephesians tells us that there is one God, one hope, one faith and one baptism. There cannot be more than one way to worship our Father in Heaven. The existence of all of the false doctrines and religious philosophies in the world must be an eternal stink in the nostrils of our God.

How does one determine the differences in these multitudes of religious bodies? It is normally through the body of beliefs that are held common between those who proclaim to be a part of the religious body. It is this common body of beliefs that serves as a bond between these members and keeps this group of individuals together.

The Christadelphians, as any other religious body, are distinguished by their unique body of beliefs. Unfortunately, there are several different groups that claim the name of the Christadelphians. Each group has a uniquely defined body of beliefs that is espoused as the Truth of the Bible. Are these systems of beliefs different from each other? Over the past 100+ years, these differences have been widely discussed and written about in many of the Christadelphian periodicals. It is not the intention of this writing to discuss the various differences in beliefs that are practiced by those that are called by the name of Christadelphian. Our purpose is to defend the Unamended Statement of Faith and applicable fellowship policies that are based on the divine and scriptural truths summarized therein against the attacks of those within the Unamended Christadelphian community.

Several questions come into our mind as we contemplate this subject. What is a Statement of Faith? What is the purpose of a Statement of Faith? Does the Unamended Statement of Faith represent the Truth of the Bible? Are there any false doctrines included in the Unamended Statement of Faith? Should the



Doctrines to be Rejected actually be accepted by the true sons and daughters of Yahweh? Should we not be obedient to the commandments of Christ? Why are we hearing from some within the Unamended Body that this is only a man-made document? Is this claim of only being a man-made document an attempt to eventually open our fellowship to others who do not hold to the doctrines of truth that are outlined in the Unamended Statement of Faith? Is the Truth exclusive or inclusive? Based on the answer to this last question, shouldn't the body of beliefs that are held in common by those who profess to have knowledge of the Truth follow the same course? - i.e., if the Truth is exclusive, then the body of beliefs held by the true believer should also be exclusive. If the Truth is inclusive, then the body of beliefs held by the true believer should also be inclusive. How is the relationship between sons and daughters of God impacted when doctrines that oppose the Truth or immoral acts are introduced within the body? How do the individual sons and daughters of God, individual Ecclesias, individual Bible Schools and the entire Body of Christ address these false doctrines and immoral actions? What does it mean when we state that we break bread under a particular Statement of Faith? Should members of an Ecclesia follow the guidelines of fellowship of the Ecclesia that they regularly attend? Should the true son or daughter of God be breaking bread under a particular Statement of Faith if they are not in agreement with the doctrines that are summarized within the Statement of Faith?

Every individual who desires to be in the Kingdom of God should be able to give a Scriptural answer for these questions concerning existing conditions within the Brotherhood. It is the objective of this writing to look at some of these questions and some possible answers.

What is a Statement of Faith?

This is the first question that must be understood in regards to the situations that exist within the Brotherhood. In answering this question, we will be quoting some comments from one of our earlier elders in the Truth, Brother James Stanton. He makes these statements in an article entitled In Defense of the Statement of Faith. “*A Statement of Faith (SOF) is an affirmation of what an individual believes regarding matters of faith. When a group of individuals hold to the same set of beliefs as defined in a SOF, they are in concord with the tenets and ideals of that Statement and with one another. Fellowship is established by their mutual profession of the defined beliefs. Thus a SOF is a definition of the beliefs held by those adopting it. It is also a negation of certain beliefs and practices.*”

Some may ask whether a group of individuals even need a document such as a SOF. They may say that the Bible is the only statement of faith that is needed. Unfortunately, this is what many other religions in the world would also say. Most “Christian” religions use the same Bible and most do not have an idea of

the Truth of the Bible. When doctrines such as the immortality of the soul, the trinity, immortal emergence, a burning hell and other false doctrines are supposedly gleaned from the Bible, it is imperative that the true sons and daughters have a system of beliefs that separate us from the world around us and their erroneous doctrines. How can this common system of beliefs between the true believers be understood by all unless it is communicated and documented so that all can affirm or deny the truths that are outlined therein?

There have been some recent accusations from some in the Brotherhood that our SOF is only a “man made” document. True, the listing of doctrines that are included in our Statement of Faith were summarized, printed and distributed by man. However, these individuals seem to be setting aside the most important objective of the SOF. A SOF is a public declaration of the common thread of hope and faith that binds the believers together. Does our SOF contain any false doctrines? If not, then the content of this small pamphlet that we use for our SOF is an adequate statement of the basic truths of the Bible that are needed to be understood by all those in this age who desire to enter into the everlasting covenant with God. This is a black and white issue. Are the doctrines in the BUSF representative of the Truth or representative of false doctrines? Are the Scriptures that are listed to support every doctrine in the BUSF adequate to describe and support the doctrine that is listed? Those that are making these accusations that this is only a man-made document should clearly state the doctrines that they think should not be part of the one Truth that is necessary to be understood to enter into the everlasting covenant. These individuals should also clearly indicate any other doctrines that they think should be included in the SOF. How would they define the first principles of saving Truth?

We are commanded to always be ready to give an answer for the hope that lies within us. As soon as we make a public declaration of our wonderful hope, we are communicating a man-made definition of the Gospel and God’s salvation. Are these individuals suggesting that we should never communicate the truth to others? This is where this accusation of using a man-made document to express our Hope could lead us.

There have also been some in the Brotherhood that have indicated that brothers and sisters support the BUSF out of a “party” spirit of allegiance to the Unamended Body. This is a strong accusation about the lack of faith of many of our brethren. Many stalwart brethren adhere to the doctrines of Truth outlined in the BUSF because they are convinced that these doctrines represent the Truth of the Bible. It has nothing to do with an allegiance to a paper document, it is allegiance to the Truth that the worthies of all ages are concerned about.

Our Statement of Faith has been used by faithful brethren for over 100 years and has been adequate to describe the commonality of beliefs that exist between the

members of the Unamended Community. Why in these last days before the return of Christ are we faced with these attacks on this wonderful summary and compilation of truthful doctrines that we use as an expression of our like-mindedness and unity of belief? It is the opinion of this writer that those who are making these accusations and publicly attacking the BUSF should examine their own motives for doing so. Is it an attempt to allow individuals who believe other doctrines than those outlined in the BUSF to join our fellowship? Is it an attempt to do away with the discussions before baptism to discern if the person desiring baptism has a good understanding of the basic truths of God’s word? What exactly is the motive of these attacks?

Breaking Bread with Individuals who do not Support the Truths outlined in the BUSF

This is another issue that should be discussed within the brotherhood. Unfortunately, there seems to be unwillingness in the Brotherhood to openly discuss this issue. There are some individuals and some Ecclesias that apparently do not see a problem with knowingly and continually breaking bread with those who do not support the doctrines of Truth as outlined in the BUSF. Let us look at a few examples.

1. A brother/sister from an Unamended Ecclesia travels to another part of the country and finds that there is an Amended meeting. He/she wishes to ask the elders in the Amended meeting to participate in the fellowship around the Table of the Lord.
2. An Unamended Ecclesia/Bible School invites speakers/teachers from the Amended affiliation or individuals associated with other religious denominations to address the Ecclesia/Bible School and asks them to participate in the fellowship around the Table of the Lord.
3. A brother/sister lives in isolation and the only meeting that they can attend is one of the Amended faith and they participate in the Breaking of Bread around the Table of the Lord.

There may be other examples that may be listed. The elders of the brotherhood should be ready and able to provide sound scriptural advice to those who may face these situations. Unfortunately, for various reasons, this advice may not always be provided. What should these brothers and sisters do in these situations? I think these brothers and sisters should ask themselves these questions and try to find scriptural advice regarding their fellowship practices:

- What is the purpose of the memorial service? Of course, we remember the life, death and sacrifice of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. We are also stating by our participation that we have a like-mindedness regarding the doctrines of saving Truth with the other individuals in which we are breaking bread and remembering our Master.

- Why then do we knowingly break bread with those who do not hold, support, endorse the same doctrines of saving Truth as we do? This writer can think of only three possible answers to this question.
 - ◆ These individuals believe that the differences between the Unamended and Amended are not significant and do not impact the first principles of saving Truth.
 - ◆ These individuals believe that there are no differences between the beliefs of the Unamended and Amended fellowships.
 - ◆ These individuals believe that the participation in the breaking of bread is only an expression of the fellowship between them and God and Christ and not with the other individuals also participating in the Breaking of Bread service.

Brethren, these are serious issues that should be addressed by the individuals in this situation and also by the Brotherhood. We should always be strong and courageous and address any issue that impacts the Truth and our fellowship with each other and with God and Christ. We should always be pure in our doctrine and in our fellowship practices. We should contend for The Truth and always be steadfast and unmovable in our efforts to seek first the Kingdom of God. Separation from any brother and sister is not pleasant or something that we desire to do. However, there are times when we have to make a stand for the purity of the Truth. We have to separate from those who are living an immoral life and from those who are teaching, endorsing and supporting false doctrines that contradict the basic first principles of the Truth. During these times of separation, we should remember that we are to do so with a loving and caring manner, with the hope of showing these individuals the error of their ways. The entire Ecclesia should be concerned enough about these erring brethren and the welfare of the Ecclesia that these things are addressed as timely as possible. Our Lord's return is near; we should always be trying to strengthen the Brotherhood. Let us never forsake our responsibilities to each other and to our Father in Heaven. We have a High and Holy calling. Let our lives always reflect the divine concepts that are the foundation of this calling.

B. Henderson

The Bondage of Corruption and Deliverance

All men are in Adam naturally – held in the bondage of corruption on account of descent from a condemned progenitor – and should they die in that condition they will be for ever held in the power of the grave; death's dominion over them will be complete and unending. "They shall sleep a perpetual sleep and not awake." But should they hear the gospel of the kingdom of God and learn the

*things which tell about the Lord Jesus Christ **and thereupon be baptized**, they pass from under Adam and from the condemnation of death into Christ and become new creatures. Being made free in this manner from the law of sin and death, they become the servants of righteousness, and as such, during the remainder of their life, they are bound to serve Christ. If they are obedient servants they will, on Christ's coming again, receive eternal life, become like He is, a glorious spirit man, incorruptible and powerful, full of knowledge and beauty. If disobedient servants they will at the same time as the obedient ones receive the reward, receive the fruit of their wickedness, which is the second death or everlasting destruction – complete obliteration from the universe of God."*

J.U. Robertson, *Christadelphian Advocate* (1887): 273,274.
(emphasis added)

THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHRIST

"Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? That the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils." I Corinthians 10: 14-21

FOR the sake of giving some background we need to explain that in this passage, and in its larger context the entire chapter, the Apostle Paul is exhorting the Corinthians to flee from idolatry. And in order to not be seduced by the entrapments of idolatry he advises them to not even eat the food that is offered them if it had been dedicated to idol worship so as to not disturb their conscious or state of mind as they ate. If they were not aware of the food's source then they were to eat freely (vs. 27), taking the natural benefit from the food that it provided. In this we see that our state of mind, the workings of our conscience and intellect are of the utmost importance when approaching spiritual matters. As another scriptural passage states, "*the flesh profiteth nothing*".

Paul gives two striking examples in this passage to teach the point he was making about the issue of idolatry. On one hand the eating of meat dedicated to

idols the other is the partaking of the bread and wine that commemorate the blood and body of Christ. Though both are physical acts they both meant nothing unless accompanied by a state of mind that was sincerely appreciative and intelligently involved with what such “food” actually represented. As Paul continues to teach in the following chapter regarding the Memorial table itself, “*For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.*” The “unworthily” as explained in I Corinthians 11 was in reference to those who partook of the memorial emblems as an action of feeding the natural desire for food rather than sharing it in true remembrance of Christ’s sacrifice.

Fellowship

In I Corinthians 10 Paul repeatedly uses a couple of Greek terms that are translated by different words in the English that teach us an important lesson as it relates to either our relationship to Christ or our relationship to idolatry or sin in general. In verse 16 we see the word **communion** used twice – “*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*” The Greek word for “communion” is *koinonia*, which is often translated by the more familiar term “fellowship”. In verse 20 we read, “*I would not that ye should have fellowship (koinonia) with devils*”. The term “*koinonia*” (otherwise rendered “fellowship” or “communion”) does not merely mean just some kind of social interaction but in its fullest understanding and context designates *that which is held in common*. Strong’s indicates “a partnership”. Something has to be “held in common” in order for the term to properly apply. We will consider more on that in a moment.

Also in this passage we see the word “partake” or “partakers” used. Verse 17, regarding the body of Christ states “*for we are all partakers of that one bread*”. The priests who ate the meat of the animal sacrifices are told as being “partakers” of the altar – being that the altar represented Christ.* And further regarding this word “partake” on in verse 21 we read, “*ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils.*” The word “partakers” comes from the Greek “*metecho*” and carries the meaning of *sharing*.

* It is worth noting here that Aaron refrained from eating such meat when Nadab and Abihu were killed by God for offering strange fire. His frame of mind, being distraught at the unfolding of events, was such that he could not properly and sincerely “discern” the spiritual significance of the altar while being emotionally distracted. So it is evident that Aaron appreciated the holiness of the spiritual importance of “partaking” of such meat dedicated to God. He was not capable at that time of “discerning the Lord’s body” as it were and understood the serious ramifications of partaking if he was not mentally prepared to do so, not wanting to bring “damnation” upon himself.

So in combining the words we have considered we see the idea of a “partnership” based upon “*sharing those things we have in common*”. Such commonality can either be based upon the Truth regarding the sacrifice of Christ and all that it pertains to or it can be a unity based upon idolatry and sin, but neither of these opposing principles can be combined or compromised. They are as opposite in their identity as black and white and as far apart in their spiritual geographic location as is the literal points of north and south.

But what is this “fellowship” and “sharing” as it is taught to us regarding the sacrifice of Christ? First it needs to be understood that communion or fellowship is much more than just an association. Fellowship involves oneness of mind, the walking together of those who are united in agreement upon vital principles. Such fellowship, as Paul demonstrates to us in the passage already read, can be for good or evil. We are called to have fellowship, oneness of mind and purpose with Christ. The natural tendency of man, as was demonstrated by the Children of Israel on many an occasion, is to have fellowship with sin. In Ephesians 5: 11 we are commanded, “*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*”. So fellowship, or *koinonea*, can be for good or bad. The idea that there can be true fellowship or *koinonea* without the existence of an oneness of mind and purpose is not valid. The old proverb that “Birds of a feather flock together” is very accurate in describing such commonality – it is a natural law of nature that those with common biology, interests or objectives naturally cling together. Fellowship is not something that is forced but is a natural outgrowth of that which is much more fundamental. Holding things in common (whatever that might be) acts as a magnet in bringing together those of shared understanding. If there is commonality then there is fellowship. If there is a commonality to participate in the actions and desires of the flesh then there is fellowship with the world, **which brings many together under such terms**. If there is a commonality of faith and conviction in the Truth as it is in Jesus then there is a state of fellowship in existence under such conditions. As Paul states in verse 17 of 1st Corinthians 10, “*For we being many are one bread*”.

Though the breaking of bread is a part of such a “fellowship” (Acts 2:42), such commonality is not limited to the breaking of bread alone. Quoting from the November, 1957 Christadelphian Advocate special edition on “Unity” it is stated, “*Fellowship comprises oneness of mind, communion, the walking together of those who are in agreement on vital principles. It is a many faceted thing*”. First there must be a common understanding of the Gospel or “The Things Concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ” as a foundation. Regarding the early believers and their common faith that they had we are told that they “*continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*” Building upon this foundation there must not only be a shared understanding of the Promises made by God regarding His Plan but a shared understanding as what needs to be done

to obtain the goal – **united on not only where we are going but how and what it will take to get there**. The idea espoused by some that “we are all trying to get to the same place” is just not enough to warrant a condition of commonality. Our beliefs regarding the correct destination as well as the scriptural definition of the path (“straight and narrow”) are of equal importance. Referring back to our use of the “Birds of a feather” proverb, there are many types of bird families that migrate south during the winter months. There is a specific geographic location that each bird species will travel to every fall. But not only do they share the location as to where they go they also share the same techniques on how they get there. They do not simply take to the sky and somehow arrive at the appropriate place but they have a distinctive route that is embedded in their minds. And while they travel they have the same techniques of flight that help the flock to make the very rigorous and trying journey a success. Without getting too technical, this example demonstrates to us the vital importance as to understanding the fullest application of fellowship – **commonality of a desired goal and a shared understanding of the techniques needed to make the goal attainable**.

Regarding the fellowship that we are so concerned with, which goes beyond the act of the Memorial Service and in many ways precedes the act, the scriptures themselves speak of fellowship in broader terms. That there is “*the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord*”, “*the fellowship of the ministering of the saints*”, “*the fellowship of (Jesus’) sufferings*.” The Apostle John states, “*that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*”. He continues on to say, “*If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*” (1st John 1).

The Breaking of Bread

So as we consider the passage back in 1st Corinthians 10 that speaks of the partaking of the bread and cup of the Lord it is important for us to realize that merely partaking of emblems is not fellowship unless preceded by a **commonality** of faith and hope in God’s Truth and those things required of us. It is a **sharing** of Truth, both in belief and practice. Fellowship (having things in common) must first exist in order for the partaking of the Memorial table to carry its proper meaning and benefit. Unity with God and His Son first as well as commonality with those with whom we partake.

For those who would contend that the breaking of bread is “only between me and God” in the attempts to justify breaking bread with anyone they want the passage does much to dispel such an illogical notion. The primary use of the word “*koinonia*” (or to have things in common) shows that we must have fellowship/koinonia with Christ and not with idolatry (sin, error, etc.) in order

for us to partake of the “cup of blessing”. But not only is fellowship/koinonia with God and Christ but as is stated in verse 17, “*For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread*”. This no doubt has implications beyond just the partaking of the Bread and Wine, but the “breaking of bread” is the result of TRUE fellowship. It has been mentioned before as “the crowning act” of fellowship. It is related to fellowship as baptism is related to belief in the gospel. Baptism is the public evidence of inner conviction, and just as baptism is worthless without first understanding and believing so is the breaking of bread unacceptable to God if not preceded by fellowship – fellowship first and foremost with **God and His Son, followed by fellowship with each other**. When we partake of these emblems it is to be based upon a **common belief** of God’s Truth and an appreciation for what the bread and cup represent. When we partake we are partaking together. We not only proclaim our conviction and love for God in His providing a sacrifice for sin, and for Christ carrying out his role as the Redeemer for the race, but we demonstrate our common hope, acceptance and appreciation for one another by gathering together to jointly partake of the emblems. If such a thing is not the case then our efforts **in coming together** to partake in such an activity is without meaning and indicates a lack of respect for the institution that has been established. As has been well stated before, “*For the act of partaking of the memorials is a powerful and solemn way of giving expression to true fellowship with those with whom we partake. If it is not this it is meaningless.*” – Life and Works of Thomas Williams, p.75.

Concluding Thoughts

The fellowship of Christ is something that we hold in common, it is our fellowship and something that is to be **carefully maintained**. We are not to have “fellowship with idols” or in other words anything that corrupts a pure conviction and worship for the One True God. When we come together to “break bread” we do so not partaking of an act that stands alone but is to be evidence of something more profound, a declaration of a preceding condition of commonality – our shared Hope.

As it involves Christ and what binds together our relationship to one another we are told in 2nd Timothy 1:10, “*But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*” It is this “light” that we are required to maintain in common understanding – A light that leads us to the ultimate fellowship which will be enjoyed by those who are found worthy to partake in the eternal blessings of the Age to Come.

A. Thomas

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the **same mind** and in the **same judgment.**” 1st Cor. 1:10

TRUTH AGAINST THE WORLD



A Call to Action from our Past

SWANSEA, South Wales, has been greatly stirred up during the month of August on account of the National Eisteddfod of Wales taking place there. The Eisteddfod is the great event of Wales, when there is an exhibition of Welsh arts, and (the principal thing) a great contest in vocal and instrumental music for prizes. Among the many odd ceremonies are some of the idolatrous exhibitions of the ancient Druids, the retention and reacting of which are no credit to a people who pretend to have great reverence for the Word of God. If we make comparisons, however, this is only one of the many memorials of idolatry in which the so-called Christian world takes great delight; and if idolatry they must have, and the pure worship of the true God they will not have, it matters not what its character is, for it is all unmistakable evidence that the sins of antediluvian times are those of our times, and thus are verified the words of our Lord, “as it was in the days of Noah so shall it be at the coming of the Son of man.”

The motto of the Eisteddfod, which is claimed to have been handed down from very ancient times, is, “Y GWIR YN ERBYN BYD”. This in English is, “Truth Against the World.” The author of this no doubt meant that his idolatrous theory was the “truth” that was “against the world”; but the sign used along with this motto consists of three lines converging at one end, which was evidently intended to represent the Trinity, three gods in one and one in three. Trinitarians can hardly feel flattered in seeing that their idol gods were those of the ancient Druids; but the three gods of the Druids and of the Romanized “Christianity” are but a reduction in numbers of the gods with which the pagans filled their imaginary heavens, Elysian Fields, happy hunting grounds, etc.

“Truth against the World” is a motto in which there is more truth than its author and those who retain it ever imagined; for truth – the Truth – has always been “against the world,” ever since the first lie was believed and obeyed. Those in our day who have come to a knowledge of the truth know from experience how uncompromisingly the truth is against the world, and how incessant the war between the truth and the world is. There is no rest for those who wage the war for the truth, and there will be none till He who is the Truth shall completely triumph.

Truth was planted in Eden, but the serpent’s lie plucked up the tender plant before it could bloom. Truth was planted again amid the thorns and thistles of sin, and the world as it grew in population grew in sinfulness till in the sight of God, who is truth in perfection, “the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”; and so in the preaching of Noah it was “Truth against the World.” The tender plant carried over the Flood was destined to be blown about and blighted by the withering winds of a world of wickedness until it was planted, watered with the dew of Heaven, and cultivated by angelic agency in the fruitful soil of one who was honored with the title of “Friend of God.” It fructified into a nation that was “against the world”; but in that very nation it was soon struggling and fighting for existence and it was again “Truth against that World,” and that world for a time conquered. As a burning shining light it shone forth in the wilderness and soon became a flame to give light to thousands of honest hearts and to shame the superstitions and wickedness of an apostate people. Leaping over the walls between which it had been long confined, it stretched far and wide in the Gentile world and seemed to have irresistibly taken the field by a marvelous victory; but again the wickedness of man became great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually; a wide and powerful world of idolatry defied the true God and worshipped one “their fathers know not,” and Truth, poor outcast Truth, a homeless wanderer, was again “Truth against the World.” Another John in another wilderness became a light-bearer and through the flashlight upon the pages of the Book of Truth which had been obscured and darkened with the blackness of darkness of the Roman night, and “Truth against the world” was in battle array again. It’s glaring light once more became “a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of” a few who became part of the “Israel of God”; and in the hands of these few it has been and still is “Truth against the World.” But here is the present and burning question: Will it hold out this time till, in the return of its Lord, it shall reach its final and everlasting triumph?

That there will be a “remnant of the woman’s seed” who will “be alive and remain to the coming of the Lord” there can be no doubt; for He is to “judge the *quick* and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom”; And we are assured that “we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed in a moment, and the twinkling of an eye.” This “remnant,” however, will consist of those who will maintain in its primitive purity the “Truth against the World,” and against some who have come out of the world. These holders aloft of Truth’s banner will be reminded by pointed fingers of scorn that they do not belong to “the general body,” that they are a despised “minority”; but their comfort and encouragement will be derived from the words of their Master, “Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.”

But is there danger of error once more creeping in? Is it needful for faithful soldiers to stand unflinchingly for truth against error? If it is, say some who almost give up in despair, hopeless, indeed, is the case. Falter, not, fellow-soldier! Rememberest thou not the rise and fall of truth in all the history of “Truth against the World”? Why should’st thou expect its latter-day destiny to be different from its past life of vicissitude? Lay not aside thine armor. While many a battle has been fought and won in this latter-day revival of “the Truth against the World,” the *war* is not over yet. Pessimistic dost thou say that I am? I wish it were so, and that the situation permitted of an optimism which would be far more congenial to a life of composure and comfort – but, there now, do not forget, that is not the life of a *soldier*.

Now tell me not that there is no danger and that we may lay aside the sword so far as evils within are concerned. Open thine eyes and behold, that some of the evil spirits that were driven out of our camp years ago in hard-fought battles have returned, and some of them have brought back others sevenfold worse than themselves; and their company is winked at lest there be a disturbance of the equilibrium of well established and orderly managed institutional ecclesias – “institutional”? perhaps political would be a better word. That evil spirit which makes the word of God of none effect in respect to resurrection and judgment known as “Immortal Emergence” is back in one of the strong parties, and its advocates boast that they have “reasoned themselves out of the mortal emergence”; still they are fellowshipped by those whose statement of faith denounces this truth-nullifying theory. That theory which reduces the sacrifice of Christ to a cold commercialism, known as “Free Life” permeates the ranks of those who outwardly pretend to be based upon sound fundamental principles, yet knowingly, so far as some leaders are concerned, it is welcomed. The “No Sin In the Flesh” claims are still made, and thus the death of Christ is represented as that which ought not to have taken place so far as He was concerned, and therefore it is reduced to a substitutionary death. A theory of partial inspiration of the original Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments was welcomed by many, and afterwards changed by some into a Divine inspiration that may have errors identical with some of those found in copies and translations – and yet there is no guiding hand to point out which is true and which is error, thus holding up the Word of God as an uncertain guide. Even the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ has in some places been fellowshipped. And last it has been welcomed and bidden Godspeed, even by the numerically strongest party, that “The sacrifice of Christ has nothing whatever to do with Adamic Condemnation.” That to teach “that Christ died to atone for sinful flesh is to represent God as unjust.” That instead of the gospel being glad tidings offering to save men out of the death under which creation groans, it leaves us all to satisfy God’s demands by dying a natural death against our will for redemption out of which no sacrifice is made; and instead of the gospel coming to save poor, perishing man out of the miserable plight he is

already in through sin, its enlightenment, pronounces and actually imposes upon him the sentence of the second death, and then, when he is baptized, this is the only sentence his baptism removes. What does this gospel-nullifying invention do but make the death of Christ a death for the purpose of removing the sentence of the second death only, and therefore a death which could not in any sense be for Himself, and therefore a substitutionary death, and therefore an unjust death – the death of one who in no sense ought to have died so far as He was concerned?

Now, fellow-soldier, do you think this is a time to lay aside the sword? Now, fellow-watchman, do you think we can keep silence? Is this not a time to endeavor with all the powers we possess to cry, not to Rome, nor to her daughters, but to our brethren who are in bondage to the strong parties who tolerate these errors to “Come out”? But you will be looked upon as a disturber. What of that? Do you know of any of God’s faithful children in all the vicissitudes of the Truth who have not been disturbers of strongholds? But you will not be a peace-maker, and yet you claim to be striving for peace. Striving for peace upon such unsound foundations as we have exposed? Never! The peace we are striving for is that which is based upon the old foundation that was laid when the Truth was revived in the nineteenth century. If it cannot be had upon this it will be a “peace” unworthy of the name – a peace upon a corrupt foundation and war to the end is better than a “peace” of this sort. Down with “Immortal Emergence”, with “Free Life”, with “No Sin in the Flesh,” with the death of a Christ who had no need to die for Himself, with a partial and erring Inspiration, with a gospel that imposes the second death and a baptism that does nothing but remove a death which the Gospel imposes – down with all these heresies, and cry aloud and spare not for a return to the old paths. But how unkind this will appear to the brethren concerned! Yes, it will appear so, but it will be a work of kindness in the genuine, true and real sense, because it will be inviting those we love for the truth’s sake to save themselves from an untoward generation.

But do you think that those you are identified with are free from these errors? We know they are, and we have the verdict of old and tried and intelligent brethren that the Christadelphian Advocate is the only paper now maintaining the fundamental truths of the gospel in their purity, and standing upon the old basis of fellowship upon which Dr. Thomas stood. Egotism? Call it what you like; at the risk of appearing egotistic I fearlessly say and I know and I can prove that the errors I have named are held among those represented by the two Birmingham papers – the *Christadelphian* and *Visitor*. There you have it in plain English. Let either or both of these papers deny it if they can; but if they do, then let them allow me a hearing in their halls, and I will prove what I have said, not for the sake of fighting, not angrily; but in the hope of convincing all, and if not all, then some, that a return to old paths is imperative, and a bold front

in behalf of the “Truth against the World.” Truth will, of course, ultimately prevail, but we must do our part to uphold it even if it goes down despite our efforts. Even in such a sad event we need not despair, for:

“Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,
The eternal years of God are her’s;
While error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies amid her worshippers.”

- Thomas Williams, *Christadelphian Advocate* (October 1908).

THE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY

An Introduction

AS was mentioned in the opening article, it is our hope to also deal with the subject area known as PROPHECY in the pages of the SANCTUARY-KEEPER. Most of God’s Word itself can be classified as “prophecy”. Unfortunately this exciting theme has become a hotbed of anger and confusion in recent years. Some have even downplayed its importance out of frustration or lack of interest.

It has not been intended by Yahweh to leave us prophecy as a no man’s land of speculation and “private interpretation”, but through His Word of Truth gives us the proper tools necessary to understand things already past, the times we live in as well as those things which are yet to come. The Spirit through the Apostle Peter refers to the prophetic word as “*a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts*”. Prophecy is a tool for motivating and encouraging the believer in that what God has promised will surely come to pass as evidenced through accomplished prophecy - giving us an informed, logical hope and expectation for things not yet fulfilled.

Prophecy Not Conjecture:

“Prophecy is the foretelling of future events, the declaration beforehand of “things that shall be hereafter;” not such things, however, as may be conjectured by human sagacity, or expected from the regular operations of nature, but such as may be foreseen by none but the omniscient God, and foretold by those only to whom the ‘Father of Lights’ shall reveal them. Man, by the use of history, may acquire some information respecting the things that are past; but he “knows not what shall be on the morrow.”

Prophecy draws aside the veil which hides events, and lays open the scenes of the future.”
S.B. Wickens, *Christadelphian Advocate* (October 1907).

God has not left us in darkness but provides us with a “shining light”. As the world plods on in absolute confusion as to what the future holds, we are able to make sense of what we see happening around us and patiently wait for those things leading up to, as well as the accomplishment of God’s promises. **Extraordinary** things are happening even as we speak that are confirming long held expectations, events that should awaken us out of slumber in anticipation as to the nearness of The Master’s Return. Though there exists some modern day occurrences that were not specifically expected by our earlier brethren they have not disproven the general framework of long held Christadelphian views but rather enhanced a clearer understanding of the political and social circumstances leading up to the Return of our Lord. The Continuous Historical interpretation of prophecy as used by bro. Thomas in such works as *Eureka* (and by other expositors) and the historically understood general framework of prophetic expectations is as relevant today as ever.

The modern day rise and influence of what is termed as “Militant Islam” and the place of the Arab/Middle Eastern people has been an area of hot contention among Christadelphians in recent years. Though these (as well as other developments) deserve our serious attention, consideration and discussion on how they relate to the prophetic word they are not developments that nullify the rudiments of our long held prophetic understanding regarding the role of the Papacy, Europe and Russia in latter day events as they continue to scheme and brazenly align themselves against the ever continuing miracle that is Israel. Though we may have differences in considering the exact sequence and/or number of military campaigns in relation to Christ’s return, or we vary as to the exact role that “militant Islam” will play, it is hoped that sufficient common ground still exists within our community to approach the subject of prophecy reasonably but at the same time with a sense of zeal and urgency that the issue is in fact important and worthy of our prayerful and studied consideration.

A. Thomas

EXHORT ONE ANOTHER DAILY

THE title of this article comes from the advice in Hebrews 3:13-14. We all realize that the days are quickly flying to the return of our dear Lord and Master. We look around us and see that the nations of the world are being aligned in accordance with God’s Master Plan for His creation. These should be days of excitement, joy and anticipation of that great and might day of the Almighty. Do we always feel this excitement and joy? Do we always arise with eager

anticipation that this is the day of salvation; that this is the day that the Lord hath made, and that we should rejoice and be glad in it? Unfortunately, there are so many distractions in our lives that may prevent us from reaching that level of peace, contentment and eagerness for the Kingdom Age.

When we arise every morning, our first thoughts may be thanksgiving to God for the night of rest or petitions to watch over us through the coming day. Our next thoughts may well be about the problems in our life, whether they be family, work or Ecclesial related. The most depressing of these problems may be those that arise from our families, both natural and spiritual. The manner in which we address these problems that arise from those closest to us will have the greatest impact on the life that we live in Christ. We must always remember where our trust should lie. We must always remember that God has promised that He will never leave nor forsake His children. We must always remember that God has promised that He will not put on us more than we can bear. We must realize that the worthies of old faced the same trials and tribulations that we are facing. We must realize that we have a Great High Priest that knows the feeling of our infirmities. The apostle James has given this advice to us in 4:8 – “Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you”. No matter how dark the night is, there will always be light. Let us always walk in the Light.

We need to remember the title words of this exhortation. One of the more difficult challenges to our walk in the Light is the responsibility of continually and consistently encouraging, exhorting and edifying one another along the path to eternal life. The key words to this last sentence are “continually” and “consistently”. Most of us don’t have the opportunity to provide formal words of exhortation to our brethren on a daily basis or even on a weekly basis. However, there is a way that we can provide daily exhortation to our brethren of like precious faith and to our families. This daily exhortation is found in our actions, in our communications, in our habits, and in those things in which we spend the most time pursuing. Every minute of our waking hours provides an opportunity to exhort one another. How are we doing, brothers and sisters? I am sure that we all have our good days and our bad days. There are days in which we are full of spiritual energy and more able to overcome the weaknesses of the flesh and thus providing a good exhortation to those around us. There are other days where we are tired and allow ourselves to be irritable, angry and irrational in our dealings with the problems that surround us. At these times, we should realize the inconsistencies of our behavior.

It is easy for us to be discouraged in these latter days of Gentile times. Many of our faithful elder brethren are no longer with us. Many of our loved ones are sick. There are a lot of Ecclesias that are addressing problems within their midst. We are constantly faced with the evils of the world. These feelings of discouragement prevent us from carrying out this responsibility of exhorting one

another on a consistent and continual basis. There are times in which we have taken a strong stand against the immorality of the world around us until that time when we may be impacted by the same situations in either our natural or spiritual families. Suddenly, we jump to the other side of the issue only because our family is now involved. Brethren, this is not consistent. Certainly, we understand the difficulties in opposing something that our own family (natural or spiritual) is involved in or immoral acts that are committed by our family members. Remember our responsibility of Exhorting One Another Daily. The correctness or incorrectness of doctrinal beliefs can only be determined from the Scriptures. Actions are only right or wrong based on the laws of God, not who is committing these acts. We have to be consistent in our exhortations to one another. We cannot let the circumstances of our daily life prevent us from consistently serving our heavenly Father. If we are inconsistent in our exhortations to our brethren, we may be harming our relationship with God and we are sure not providing spiritual edification to our brethren, who may be sorely in need of the word of edification to help them overcome their own problems. We cannot let the effects of humanism such as tolerance, indifference, lukewarmness and apathy detract us from our duty and responsibility of exhorting one another with consistent and continual obedience to the commandments of Christ.

In upcoming issues, Lord willing, we hope to continue to provide words of exhortation and edification that we pray may be uplifting and edifying in order that we may strengthen the things that remain. Some of our writings will be taken from the lives of the saints of old and some will be taken from the exhortations to the seven Ecclesias in the Apocalypse. Let us always remember the words of Hebrews 3:14. “We will be made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.”

B. Henderson

PREPARING TO PREACH – Lesson 1

DO you find yourself confused and unable to think of what to say when someone asks you what you believe? Does the term Christa-what? Cause you to break out in sweats. Do you find yourself telling people what you don't believe instead of what you do believe? All of these problems have one root cause. You're not prepared to preach, and that is what this column is designed to teach.

Lesson #1-the Elevator speech

An elevator speech is when you are making an 8 second explanation of what you believe. The purpose is to explain as much of the truth as possible, while leaving plenty of room for questions if your friend wants to continue the conversation. Most people can be expected to listen politely for several seconds, even if it's something they don't want to hear. If you hold out four fingers and count them down, they may feel comfortable knowing this conversation is going to end quickly. From there, after you have told someone the gospel of the coming kingdom of God, God grants the increase.

So, let's practice. Imagine a friend looking at you with that confused look in the eyes. "Christa-what?" he asks. "What do they believe?" Here is what you say:

1. We focus on the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
2. We believe that Jesus will return to the earth to set up a kingdom in Israel that will never end.
3. When he returns, he will resurrect everyone who was baptized (with knowledge) into his name.
4. Those who are judged worthy by Jesus will be given an immortal sinless body, and can live forever.

Questions:

Probably most people will respond "Oh" and then excuse themselves quickly, but some will be intrigued by this belief that sounds Christian, but very different from what they have heard in the past. Questions are one of your most helpful preaching tools.

If they ask for example what were the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, you might want to start them out first in Galatians 3:27, where the promises made to Abraham are so clearly tied into Jesus, and then cover both the promises that God made (Genesis 13) and the fact that those promises were not fulfilled (Hebrews 11).

Next issue we will go into depth giving bible verses for marking your bible, but I just wanted to point out the "with knowledge" on number 3. Many people think they already are baptized because they were baptized (sprinkled) as children. The "with knowledge" is meant to draw out a conversation as to what a baptism is, and show that a real baptism of repentance and faith is needed.

Lastly, I want you to practice this every time you find yourself alone and bored. Repeat it over and over again until you think you could almost say it backward if you needed to. Every time you stand in front of the mirror, practice the conversation to yourself. When you have done it long enough, you will find that it will become an automatic reaction to the "what do you believe" question.

Soon, you will start to look forward to the "Christa-what" Statement you used to dread, because you will realize that every time someone says that, it gives you an opportunity to preach the truth.

Jack Garvey
Plymouth, MA

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear"

1st Peter 3:15

MR. WISEMAN'S SEARCH FOR THE TRUTH – *Does it matter what we believe?*

Mr. Wiseman lived in the city of Prudence. He had many friends, three with whom he was particularly close, and called in council whenever it became necessary for him to decide upon a course to be pursued on any important question. These friends were Judge Reason, Governor Conscience and Professor Judgment.

There were many characteristic features in Mr. Wiseman's principles, the most prominent, however, being *honesty*. In all matters pertaining to thought, speech or action he was noted for his honest conscientiousness, and straightforwardness. He was an upright man in every sense of the word, fully verifying Pope's assertion: "*An honest man is the noblest work of God.*" At all times he seemed fully governed by natural conscience, general consequences, and revelation – at least his character was such.

Well, as I told you, when difficult questions presented themselves to Mr. Wiseman and it was necessary to make a choice of course, he called his friends in council and they were given the privilege on each occasion of bringing in any information that would bear upon the subject under consideration.

After discussing many subjects of history, science, etc., Mr. Wiseman decided to consider the "Subject of Religion". Accordingly he sent a notice to each of his close friends, telling him to meet him on a certain night at *Psyche Hall*. This they promptly did, and as a matter of privilege brought a clergyman, "Rev. Mr. Orthodoxy," with them. This was not altogether consistent with Mr. Wiseman's wish, for he intended to give the subject a thorough investigation apart from any clerical assistance – just as we all should – yet by way of courtesy he gave the clergyman a seat in the convention.

After all were seated Mr. Wiseman arose and said: "In our conversation hitherto we have investigated the fruits of human knowledge, and analyzed our own individual thoughts; but there is one subject, so far, we have failed to give

attention to – a very important subject, I think; that of Life and Immortality. So I have called you here to consider the important subject of Religion.”

“I am aware that it is a subject upon which “wise men” disagree; but I have read this statement in the Bible, ‘For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God’ (I. Cor. 3:19). And I have been thinking that perhaps the so-called wisdom of theological schools has, to a great extent, cast a veil over the pure and simple faith of the true religion laid down by Jesus Christ and the apostles. For this reason I have called you together that we may reason in the Scriptures and, if possible, arrive at the apostolic faith; for if the Bible be God’s revealed word to man, in it we can surely arrive at the truth in this matter of Religion.”

So saying Mr. Wiseman sat down, adding as he did so, that he would be pleased to hear from any one else on the subject, and that the question was open for discussion.

At once Mr. Orthodoxy arose and said, “I think, Mr. Wiseman, that perhaps I can give you some enlightenment on the subject of Religion. There are many dark sayings in the Bible – sayings that cannot be understood. The principal thing in religion is to believe on Christ; his grace is sufficient to save. Apart from that it makes no difference, particularly, what we believe.”

To this Judge Reason replied: “It seems to me that common sense and reason teach us that it does make a difference what we believe. The Bible, so far as I have investigated, teaches that our salvation is dependent upon an acceptance of “*the gospel*”. Then if we accept some other gospel we are not accepting ‘the gospel’ and cannot, therefore, be saved. It seems to me that Paul contended quite differently from ‘Rev. Mr. Orthodoxy.’ He said to the Galatians: ‘I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto *another gospel*, which is not *another*; but there be some that trouble you and would pervert the *gospel of Christ*. But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed’ (Gal. 1:6)

“Besides, there was ‘one faith’ delivered to the saints, and we are exhorted by Jude to earnestly ‘contend’ for this faith. This ‘one faith’ or belief in the ‘one gospel’ is the ‘power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth’ (Rom.1:16) So it seems to me that the idea that one person can believe one gospel and another person can believe another gospel must be a delusion.”

As he was seated Judge Reason looked at Mr. Wiseman and the latter smiled and said: “We seem to be making fair progress, and I believe that Judge Reason is right, if the Bible is God’s revealed word, it does make a difference what we believe.” Then with an amused look of the eye he continued, “It seems to me that the clergyman must believe that himself, for he believes in sending missionaries to change the heathen – but we would like to hear from Prof. Judgment.”

In reply to this Prof. Judgment, who was a very deliberate speaking man whose chief power lay in discerning truth relations said:

“It does make a difference what we believe. There is only ‘one gospel’ that will save – the gospel that Christ commanded to be preached, and God’s condemnation is placed upon the one preaching any ‘other gospel’ (Gal. 1:6). Therefore, if a man believe any other gospel except this true gospel, he cannot be saved” (Mark 16:16).

Then Governor Conscience, who had hitherto been silent, and whose chief power lay in “warning against and condemning that which is wrong, and approving and prompting to that which is right,” said: “It is proved beyond all doubt that there is but one gospel, which is ‘the power of God unto salvation;’ therefore it becomes our duty to find this one true gospel, ‘the faith once delivered to the saints’ (Jude 3), and accept it by obeying its full requirements.”

“That is well said,” replied Mr. Wiseman, “and as a belief in the true God must be necessary to an understanding of the gospel, I now propose that we consider the nature of this Being.”

-TO BE CONTINUED-

Other passages to consider regarding this subject:

- ◆ I Samuel 12:24 – “fear the LORD, and *serve him in truth*”
 - ◆ Psalms 145:18 – “The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon Him, *To all that call upon Him in truth.*”
 - ◆ Hosea 4:6 – “My people are destroyed for *lack of knowledge*”
 - ◆ 1 Corinthians 15:1,2 – “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you...*By which also ye are saved*”.
 - ◆ Ephesians 1:13 - “the word of truth, *the gospel of your salvation*”
 - ◆ Ephesians 5:17 - “Wherefore be ye not unwise, but *understanding what the will of the Lord is.*”
 - ◆ 1 Thess. 5:21 – “Prove all things; *hold fast* that which is good.”
 - ◆ 2 Timothy 1:10 - Concerning Christ, “Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light *through the gospel.*”
 - ◆ 2 Timothy 3:15 – The Scriptures are stated as “able to make thee *wise unto salvation*”
 - ◆ Hebrews 3:6 – “But Christ as a Son over His own house; Whose house are we, *if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.*”
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Editorial Flyleaf

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This past November we all received the latest NASU Unity Proposal calling for a declaration by the ecclesias of “acceptance or rejection”. It has not been our purpose in this preliminary issue of the Sanctuary-Keeper to review the doctrinal reasons why the Unamended community should not consider the NASU proposal as basis for unity with the Amended community. This has already been extensively and well done by the Doctrinal Insight/Watchman effort and by bro. Wayne Tanner through his e-mail circulation. For those who wish to study the issue further you can access all volumes of Doctrinal Insight/Watchman at www.doctrinalinsight.com.

By the time this first issue of the Sanctuary-Keeper is mailed out most ecclesias will have made their decisions on how to handle the matter. Though there is positive indication that most Unamended Ecclesias will not accept the NASU proposal (an action taken by several ecclesias already), there seems to be diverse opinion on how exactly the document should be rejected. Some are of the opinion that a no-vote should be cast so that a clear answer is given to the NASU. Others are of the view that to cast a vote would be to give legitimacy

to a process that has never been sanctioned by the general body of the Unamended community in the first place. It is not our intent to advise anyone to vote or not to vote. These very same questions were raised back in the late 1980’s when the Body was faced with the CFU effort. However we choose to reject the NASU, a clear rejection just the same will be critical!

A warning

By certain statements found in the November “Cover Letter” and the set up of a “Phase 1” and a “Phase 2”, the NASU committee has left themselves room to continue to force the issue of “unity” on those who reject the process. As is stated on the 2nd page of the “Cover Letter” – *“If a preponderant majority of the community is able to move forward in unity after the second phase, it will be our continuing duty to reach out to any brethren who may then choose to stand apart, in the hope that they will reconsider their position and join the united Christadelphian community in peace and harmony for the glorification of our Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, and for the benefit of our ecclesias.”* However the NASU may come to the conclusion of a “preponderant majority” is a mystery at this point. (The word “preponderant” means – *“having superior weight, power, or influence”*.) What if that “majority” is made up of only a minority of

Unamendeds but when counted with the Amended votes will constitute a “majority” over the Unamended that will not go along with the NASU?– Will the true majority of the Unamended community still be pressured to acquiesce to their demands? We should realize that the numbers can be perceived and manipulated in various ways.

Will they count those ecclesias that have rejected participation in the voting process as being against the NASU? What if there are ecclesias that vote against the process by sending in a written statement rather than filling out the ballots provided? – How will they be counted? The “Cover Letter” provides this vague statement, *“It is of course possible that some ecclesias’ declarations may be incomplete, or may not be received within the time frame. In the absence of complete information, tabulations will necessarily have to be made based on the information received within the time frame.”* Will some results be considered “invalid” because they were not sent in according to NASU procedure?

It would be hoped that by early this spring that all of this will be the end of the matter but we have our doubts. We have to be prepared for the likelihood that no matter what we do, the incessant cry for “unity” with the Amended

(and in some quarters with the CGAF) will never go away. Those who are promoting the NASU are extremely determined in their efforts of persuasion. How determined are we to keep ourselves educated on the issues and to continue resisting their efforts? – A.T.

“Truth can stand any test. Truth is immortal; and fears nothing but the lukewarmness of her friends, in whose house she is more frequently wounded than in conflict her with foes” *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1851, p.96, John Thomas - editor

Be careful for nothing,
The Lord is at hand;
Remember the glory,
Remember the land.
Be fervent in spirit,
Be instant in prayer;
Work out your salvation
With trembling and fear.

Be pure in the doctrine;
Be strong in the Word;
Preserve in its brightness
The two-edged sword.
The things of the kingdom,
The things of the name,
When confessed in Yahweh,
Absolve us from shame.

Fulfill ye the joy of
The Father and Son,
By seeking the peace which
God’s counsel hath won.
Our pray’rs and our praises
His grace will command,
Remember the glory,
Remember the land!