

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN MAGAZINE OF NORTH AMERICA

The  
**Christadelphian Tidings**  
of the Kingdom of God

**Editorial:  
Things  
Christadelphians  
Do Well**

**First Principles:  
Earth Destroyed**

**Bible Study:  
Romans 8**

**Letters to the Editor:  
Marijuana**

**Nehemiah:  
Attitudes on  
the Wall**

**History:  
Reunions — (2)  
The Bereans  
in 1952**

**Thoughts on the Way:  
“A Place Where  
Two Ways Meet”**

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of the Kingdom of God

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## Things Christadelphians do Well

*“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church” (Eph 5:31-32).*

### Preamble

I am afraid I am as guilty as any, in that sometimes I have been known to criticize some elements of our community. And of course if you use the social media on the Internet it is very common to read items depreciating the way we do things, sometimes (less often) our beliefs, but more often our apparent difficulty in following after the example of Christ in all we do.

Sometimes I think our relationship to our community is a little like that of a married couple, who after the initial “honeymoon period” passes begin to notice the little foibles and faults common to all mankind, with the exception of our Lord Jesus. But we do not get baptized to complain about the faults and perceived problems of our community.

But I must acknowledge we do some things well: as we strive to follow the commandments of Christ, as we attempt to mold ourselves after the example of Jesus, as we care for our fellow Brothers and Sisters, despite the faults we all share, — let us give thanks for the areas where we might at least partially succeed, acknowledging at all times we will fall short of our high calling, and it is only by the Grace of God that we have any hope of salvation.

And I must acknowledge that some of these areas were prompted by a poll in “Christadelphian Bible Discussion”, a forum on Facebook. But many of the ideas, the sequence, and related Bible passages are mine.

### Areas of achievement by Christadelphians

- 1) A lay Church, with not only no paid ministers but a tradition where all male members are expected to participate if they are in any way capable. As Jesus said, *“But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted” (Matt 23:11-12).*
- 2) Strong belief that faith should affect personal character and behavior: *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (1Pet 2:21).*
- 3) Home-based hospitality, even to people we’ve never met before: *“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares” (Heb 13:12).*
- 4) Inter-ecclesial community: Those areas with multiple ecclesias usually have many joint affairs: *“The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house” (1Cor 16:19).*

- 5) Reputation for kindness, politeness and diligence among people who come into contact with Christadelphians in daily life: *“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph 4:32).*
- 6) Doctrinal framework which has continuity with its Jewish roots: *“Is He the God of the Jews only? is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also” (Rom 3:29).*
- 7) A community that is prepared to challenge long-held Christian beliefs that aren’t supported by the Bible: *“even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction” (2Pet 3:15-16). “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me [Jesus]” (John 3:39).*
- 8) Aversion to war and a distancing from involvement in all governments: *“Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence” (John 18:36). “Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:28-29).*
- 9) Ecclesias that accommodate a wide cross-section of ages: *“Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity. Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God” (1Tim 5:1-4).*
- 10) Excellent care for the elderly (not only care homes), in a society where older people are increasingly marginalized: *“And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need” (Acts 2:44-45).*
- 11) Strong focus on the return of Christ and the future kingdom of God: *“But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night” (1Thess 5:1-2).*
- 12) Joint projects as a force for good (e.g. Meal-a-Day, CSSU etc): As Paul said, *“But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver” (2Cor 9:6-7). A sense that all members have a responsibility for the health of the ecclesia. “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot*

*shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another” (1Cor 12:12-15,25).*

- 13) Zeal for truth: *“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works” (2Tim 3:15-17).*
- 14) Sunday school system that results in good knowledge of the Bible in the average member: *“When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also” (2Tim 1:5).*
- 15) Independent thought: *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” (Rom 15:4).*
- 16) Aversion to emotional manipulation in preaching and worship: *“If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. Let all things be done decently and in order” (1Cor 14:37-38, 40).*
- 17) Congregational singing *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col 3:16).*
- 18) A tradition of sharing, where ‘what’s mine is yours’: *“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And all that believed were together, and had all things common;” (Acts 2:42,44).*
- 19) Bible schools: *“And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law. Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day was a solemn assembly, according unto the manner” (Neh 8:13,18).*
- 20) Use of Elders in helping those who stray: *“If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? (1Cor 6:4-5).*

*Peter Hemingray*

Letters to the editor can be sent to [letters@tidings.org](mailto:letters@tidings.org). Please include your name, address, e-mail, and phone. Submissions under 300 words are encouraged – the magazine reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity.

# Exhortation

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## Nehemiah: Attitudes on the Wall

### Introduction

I am hard-pressed to find a character in the Old Testament with the leadership skills of Nehemiah. His people skills, vision, integrity, drive, organization, inspiration, spiritual focus are all next to none. He was instrumental in the rebuilding the walls and the re-establishment of Jerusalem as a revived Jewish city following the Babylonian exile.

Chronologically, the wonderful account of Nehemiah is the last book of the Old Testament. It documents the third wave of exiles that returned to Jerusalem from captivity in Babylon. They are the last events penned by the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit before Christ's appearance in the New Testament, so they are doubly important because of that fact alone.

So let us take a look as to how the story evolves ...

### The story

It was a depressing situation in Jerusalem as described by those who had already returned under Ezra. Nehemiah was deeply disturbed about their well-being and the state of the city. He was a man who deeply cared about his brethren and sisters — despite being in one of the highest positions in the Persia in those days, with a cushy life as a cupbearer in the king's palace. He was a man of prayer and makes his concerns a matter of prayer, requesting permission to return and rebuild the city. By the grace of God, his request is granted, and the king sends him with letters, a small army, a timeframe, and appoints him Governor of land of Judah. Upon his arrival, contrast the attitude of some non-Jewish to the returned Jews: *"When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel" (Neh 2:10)*. Versus: *"Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work" (Neh 2:18)*.

### Our attitude

There are some divine contrasts to seriously consider here: which are we? Me?

- Nehemiah, who was deeply disturbed, cared deeply about others, wanted to make difference, and acted, made positive contributions to his ecclesia, and showed leadership
- Sanballat/Tobiah/Geshem — deeply upset, dissenters, uncomfortable, tried to block the rebuilding, armchair critics, not willing to try something new, threatened by Nehemiah's ideas
- Israelite supporters, who were positive, willing to help, build up broken walls, gates, etc. in the ecclesia, supports the Youth Circle, and other activities

## The building of the walls

When we come to Nehemiah 3, we see the project take flight. Despite the multitude of names, it's a stunning chapter, fundamental to our understanding, with every word carefully chosen. We see lists of the gates, (counter clockwise like Nehemiah's night ride), various parts of the wall, names and professions of the people involved along with the cities they were from. Also, a list of attitudes on repairing the wall, which is easy to miss! So it is a very encouraging chapter of attitudes that we can develop both in our ecclesia, and other aspects of our life. So what attitudes do we display working in our ecclesias, or communities, or our weeks together? So we are going to look at seven:

- 1) Half-hearted: The Tekoite nobles (leaders and upper class) show poor leadership, and examples. They are not willing to put their 'shoulders' (NKJV) to the job (KJV — necks).
- 2) Whole-hearted: but the nobles didn't represent the attitude of all the Tekoites. Other Tekoites stooped to the work, 'made repairs': threw their heart and soul into the work under a blazing Palestinian sun, hot, dusty, labor-intensive work.
- 3) Flexible: How many of you would hire a perfumer/merchant/goldsmith to build your house? What did these professions know about repairing walls? They could have said "Not my job"! and walked away, yet they actively participated!
- 4) Gender Indifference: an intriguing detail! Everyone was needed in the work on the wall, male and female. It wasn't just a man's job, everyone had skills and enthusiasm that were valuable. Some ladies are spoken of as helping towards this work, such as Shallum and his daughters, who, though not capable of personal service, yet having their portions in their own hands, or being rich widows, contributed money for buying materials and paying workmen. Repairing and working on our ecclesial walls takes everyone!!
- 5) Tireless: Did you notice where the workers lived? Zanoah, Mizpah, and Tekoah. These towns were anywhere from 1 - 8 miles away from Jerusalem. It would appear most were not living in Jerusalem at this time, as no houses were rebuilt, thus some were getting up early, doing the chores, walking long distances to work on the wall. And returning home, doing the chores and falling into bed. And doing it all again the next day. In other words, they worked tirelessly day in and day out, a total sacrifice of self, for the benefit of their fellow members in Jerusalem. Are we willing to work tirelessly to support ecclesial projects, and travel long distances, for other's projects?
- 6) Zealous: This word is used in v. 20: NKJV — carefully ... or KJV — earnestly ... or NIV — zealously, literal (Hebrew) to burn, to be kindled. Some had a burning desire to participate in this project, but Baruch, Son of Zabbai's attitude stood out among everyone. His was a fire of enthusiasm and devotion to his brethren and sisters and God's project, a wonderful attitude!
- 7) Team workers: In v. 11 we have "and": two brethren working side by side, together, as a team. Great projects are always accomplished by teams, not by individuals. Walls didn't get repaired in 52 days (6:15) by single individuals, it took teamwork, under God.

“The whole enterprise is highly organized, and the authority of Nehemiah himself seems implicit. But these things do not obtrude. The dominant impression is of each individual cheerfully accepting his role, and seeing how his work contributed to the whole! Each worked literally ‘by the side of’ the next, apparently without rivalry or envy. If there were differences of wealth and standing — and there are some hints that there were, in that some men are called ‘rulers’, and there is evidence of a burgeoning merchant class, v. 8 — they do not appear here. The only distinction recognized is that of belonging to the people of God and being engaged in his business” (J.G.McConville).

The project was not about himself, it was about the helpers, the team. Is this our attitude? About ourselves? Or the whole team? Teamwork is hard sometimes. Personalities, backgrounds, interests, skills, culture, status, all present challenges. Envy, jealousy, clashes, misunderstandings are all possibilities. Teamwork is fundamental to success in our ecclesias.

### **Key lessons**

Nehemiah 3 reveals an extraordinary feat of organization and concerted action. It has all the marks of a shared enthusiasm shown in diverse groups working side by side. Was God only concerned about the wall getting built? Finishing the project? Yes, he cared about Jerusalem being rebuilt, the place His name was to be, but this wasn't the only concern of God. He was deeply concerned about how the project was getting done, and what attitudes were being displayed and developed. Their impressively quick rebuilding was a symbol of their solidarity using God's principles. The walls and efficiency were a symbol that they were God's people.

Is this the way we approach projects in our ecclesia, community? ... when we are unifying people? Is it **just** about the project, getting it done? Or are we equally, and more, concerned about the attitudes of working with each other. Or ... are we like Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem .. where we refuse to get involved, disheartening? Is our ecclesia, our community, a symbol of our solidarity because we are following God's principles?

### **Nehemiah returns**

After the walls have been rebuilt and spiritual reforms implemented, the Governor Nehemiah heads back to Persia to resume his job as cupbearer. But after ‘certain days’, he comes back to Jerusalem to check up on how they are doing; when he returns, he finds this spiritual mess! He contends with the people, leaders, and turns them back to God, and to correct worship. What does this remind you of? Any echoes, any foreshadowing?

This episode foreshadows another Governor who will return ‘after certain days’ to see how his workers are doing. It is no coincidence that the last chapter of the Old Testament points forward to the first visit of this Governor in the New Testament.

Micah helps us identify this Governor: *“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting”* (Mic 5:2). This ruler is also translated elsewhere as governor (2Chron 23:20), and would of course be Christ.

*“But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore stay awake — for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning — lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake”* (Mark 13:32-37).

In the New Testament, Mark paints the picture of this Governor’s second visit, a parable of this same governor/Christ with a similar deep concern for his ecclesia. One who also sparked spiritual reforms, attempted to rebuild walls, and shape and chisel attitudes. A governor who endured mocking, had people deeply disturbed with his reforms, and was hated for it. Even to death so that we might have life, as we see in the emblems before us.

This same governor, in the same narrative in Mark reminds that that it was not the walls that were important ... it was the attitudes and spiritual reforms of the people!

*“And as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down”* (Mark 13:1-2).

When our governor returns a second time, what is he going to find? Our doorkeepers sleeping, us watching, praying, along with teamwork and spiritual focus? Or a house filled with his enemies, focused on our own pursuits, disregarding the integrity of the household by our marriages? What are we doing today to prepare ourselves for our Governors’ return? Are we deeply disturbed about the well-being of our members, or instead concerned about only our own affairs, and neglecting to work as a team?

*Nathan Badger (Cambridge, ON)*

# First Principles

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## Doctrines to Be Rejected (32) #29 Earth Destroyed

### DTBR #29. That the earth will be destroyed

This can be stated in a positive way: The earth has been created for the LORD's glory, and will never be destroyed.

*"But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (Psa 37:11, Matt 5:5).*

*"But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD" (Numb 14:21).*

### History

This was changed in 1886 from that which Robert Roberts wrote in 1883, which was: "That the earth will be burned up". There was no similar statement prior to that, but it was implied in Roberts' Statement of 1868, which included as XXIA: "That the righteous will not ascend to kingdoms beyond the skies at death, or at any other time, but will inherit the earth forever". Compare this with the current #10: "That the righteous will ascend to the kingdoms beyond the skies when they die". (John Thomas had a similar phrase in his "Synopsis" of 1867: "The kingdom, a state of bliss above the stars".)

### False doctrine

False doctrine defined as follows: that the future Kingdom will be in Heaven, not on earth, which will be destroyed. This is based on several passages, some indicating that the future paradise is heavenly, which was dealt with when we considered the DTBR #10: "That the righteous will ascend to the kingdoms beyond the skies when they die", where we showed the errors in the following:

- Revelation's reference to paradise is heavenly and provides no evidence that Luke 23 refers to earth.
- As the paradise of God is in heaven and Jesus specifically states that the man on the cross will be "with him" it follows that this would be in heaven.
- Jews and Muslims generally believe paradise to be heavenly.
- It is sometimes described as the abode of the righteous when they die until the end of this present world.

In addition, both the Old and New Testaments might seem to indicate that the earth will end, which is the basis of the false doctrine covered here:

*"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (2Pet 3:10).*

*“Ofold hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed” (Psa 102:25-26).*



*“Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished” (Isa 51:6).*

*“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matt 24:35).*

*“And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment” (Heb 1:10-12).*

## **The truth**

It is crystal clear from countless passages that the Lord Jesus, when he returns, will rule over the nations on earth, which will be restored. This restoration will require changes, so it is not surprising that in some sense the “earth” will be destroyed, just as it was symbolically by the flood, as Peter says: *“Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished” (2Pet 3:6, and see Gen 6:13).* In addition:

- 1) The literal earth will not be destroyed. This is shown by Isaiah 65, which Peter quotes from: *“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind... And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them” (Isa 65:17, 21).* The continued existence of the earth is required to fulfill this prophecy.
- 2) Three “destructions” of the earth are described in the Bible: One past, and two yet to come. The first destruction came with the Flood described in Genesis: Peter described the world as perishing: *“Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished” (2Pet 3:6).*



- 3) Next, a destruction will come at the return of Christ: *“But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men”* (2Pet 3:7). As we have said, He will restore all things.
- 4) The third destruction is described in a vision seen by John: *“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea”* (Rev 21:1). This takes place at the end of the Millennium. God will be all in all.

The return of Christ is a literal event, necessary for the consummation of all things, and is foretold by Daniel: *“Behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days ... And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom ... which shall not be destroyed”* (Dan 7: 13-14). This is referred to by Jesus in the Olivet Prophecy: *“Then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory”*; and by John: *“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him”* (Rev 1:7).

### Heavens and earth

The “heavens” and “earth” (2Pet 3:10,12) is figurative for a constitution or order on the earth. This is also shown by Peter’s quotation from Isa 65:17; *“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind”*. Since the new heavens and earth is the creation of *“Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy”* in which *“they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain”* (Isa 65:18,25), the heavens and earth, which are destroyed, must be prior constitutions or orders on the earth that are removed for the establishment of the new.

In addition, the burning up of the earth is an Old Testament expression for the destruction of a wicked order, but not the literal earth. Consider the following:

- 1) *“... my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy”* (Zeph 3:8). The prophet continues, however, to tell of the day when the people would speak a pure language and *“from beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering”* (Zeph 3:9-10).
- 2) *“And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire”* (Micah 1:4). The prophet continues, however, to speak about the day when the law of the LORD would go forth from Zion and Jerusalem. (Micah 4:1,2).



And the  
mountains shall  
be molten under  
him  
Micah 1:4

*Peter Bilello (Ann Arbor, MI) and  
Peter Hemingray (Pittsburgh, PA)*

# The Joy of Sunday Schooling

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## Links and Downloadables: Part 2

Last month we looked at several links that I store in a Sunday School folder on my internet browser. The links were organized under six headings:

- Sunday School Lessons and Bible Courses
- Isolation League and Correspondence Sunday Schools
- Online Libraries
- Quizzes and Questions
- Living the Lessons
- Bible Learning Centers

Here are quite a few more, arranged under six additional headings, with a brief description of what each site has to offer. Many of the sites have materials that can be downloaded and used for free. Others have activities and games to do online. A few sell lesson books and products.

NC in front of a description means that the site is not Christadelphian.

### Object lessons

- Object Lessons:  
<http://www.meridenchristadelphians.com/Object-Lessons.html>

A collection of tried and true object lessons. Easy to do, involving the children, and always getting the Bible open.

- Free Bible Lessons: <http://freebiblelessons.net/category/object-lessons>

NC. Several ideas.

- Kids Sunday School Place:  
<https://www.kidssundayschool.com/21/preschool/object-talks.php>

NC. Several free, others for subscribers only.

- Short Talks and Object Lessons:  
<http://myweb.tiscali.co.uk/dovecot/Pages/ShortTalks.htm>

NC. Several ideas.

### Illustrations, photos and videos

- The Christadelphians (Christadelphian Auxiliary Lecturing Society)  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/TheChristadelphians/videos>

CALS offers more than twenty educational videos to view online. They range in length from less than five minutes (“Suffering”, “Peace on Earth”, a “Why I Believe the Bible” set, etc.) to twenty to forty minutes (“Life’s Big Questions”, “Humanism and Christianity”, “The Darwin Delusion”, etc.). Watch on YouTube. Lecture and news reel formats.

- Christadelphian Video:  
<https://www.youtube.com/ChristadelphianVideo>

Subscribe for free to several “Christadelphian Channels” such as “The Christadelphian Watchman,” “End Times Prophecy,” “Bible Truth,” “Keys to the Bible,” etc. Each channel offers a selection of videos of varying lengths. Watch on YouTube. Lecture and news reel formats.

- On-Demand WCF Videos (Williamsburg Christadelphian Foundation)  
<http://wcfoundation.org/resources/on-demand-wcf-videos/>

These preaching and educational videos include the entire “God’s Family Around the World” series, several short “Faith in the Face of Adversity” videos, and others. Download and watch on any device.

- A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards, Pensacola Christian College  
<http://www.abeka.com/Search.aspx#stq=Flash-A-ardandstp=1andsubject=BIBLE> (and search for flash cards)

NC. Sets of full-color picture cards are available for many Bible stories. Each set comes in a sturdy plastic case. Picture books are also available. Read product details carefully to differentiate between card sets and picture books. Ordering information on the website.

- Bible Illustrations From Sweet Publishing  
<http://pub.distantshores.org/resources/illustrations/sweet-publishing>

NC. Hundreds of free downloadable images to illustrate many Bible stories. Easy to access and preview. Illustrations are © Sweet Publishing and terms of use are specified.

- Bible Places, Satellite Bible Atlas  
<http://www.bibleplaces.com/satellite-bible-atlas-schlegel/>

NC. Bible Places offers thirteen videos that highlight different geographical regions of Israel and relate them to the Bible. These informative videos run from five to 18 minutes in length and are young people friendly. Go to the site and scroll down to Teaching Videos. The videos can be watched online.

- Bible Places, The Pictorial Library of Bible Lands  
<http://www.bibleplaces.com/details/>

NC. Bible Places offers 18-volumes of high-resolution JPEG photographs of biblical and historical sites, including descriptive information. More than 17,500 individual pictures as well as ready-to-use PowerPoint presentations on many Bible places. Samples and ordering information on the website.

- Free Bible Images: <http://www.freebibleimages.org/>

NC. Download free sets of Bible story images for teaching use in PowerPoint, PDF, Keynote or JPEG formats. Select many Bible stories from the easy-to-use drop-down menus.

## **Songs and hymns**

- Christadelphian Music: <http://christadelphianmusic.org/>

Piano accompaniment for all hymns in the 2002 Christadelphian Hymn Book. Any hymn can be easily selected and downloaded from the webpage in low

(~ 2 MB per hymn) and high (~ 6 MB per hymn) audio quality.

- CSSA Bible Songs For Young Children:

<https://www.cssa.asn.au/product/bible-songs-for-young-children-vol-1/>

Over 120 songs. Many relate to the CSSA lessons. Song book and CD available. Ordering details on the website. CSSA also offers dramatized stories for audio download for each of the five stages of lessons. Ordering details on the website.

- CSSU Sing A Bible Story Songs: <http://www.cssu.org.uk/download.htm>

Log in, click on “download,” and select any year under “for ages 3-6.” A highlighted S next to a lesson means there is a song that goes with the lesson. Click on the S to hear a MP3 recording of the song. Click on the T (teachers’ notes) and scroll down to find the words and music. More than 70 Sunday school songs available with well-known melodies. Song books and CDs can be ordered separately.

- Hoddesdon Praise The Lord Song Books

<http://www.hoddesdon.info/ptl-2/>

Praise the Lord books contain 300 songs for worship and praise. Some CDs available. Ordering information on the website.

- Wee Sing Bible Songs

<http://weesing.com/Books-Music/Wee-Sing-Bible-Songs>

NC. Listen to samples online. More than 60 Sunday school songs sung by a children’s choir. Many all-time favorites. Available in book and on CD. Download the complete album from iTunes or AmazonMP3.

## Play scripts

- ACSSU Plays: <http://acssu.org.au/plays/>

A list of several Sunday school plays. Download scripts as PDF documents. New plays are solicited.

- CSSA Plays: <https://www.cssa.asn.au/downloads/plays/>

More than 160 plays cover all five stages of the CSSA curriculum. Download scripts as Word documents. New plays are solicited.

- CSSU Play Library Index: <http://www.cssu.org.uk/>

Log in and click on “plays” to access the Play Library. Many Bible themes. Download scripts as Word documents.

- Dr. Goodword Character Plays

<http://www.meridenchristadelphians.com/Character-Plays.html>

NC. Unknown source, edited. Character plays on pride, temptation, hypocrisy, etc. Dr. Goodword guides his youthful patients toward a more Christlike way of life. Download scripts as PDF documents.

- Sunday School Resources: <http://sundayschoolresources.co.uk/plays.php>

NC. Two plays (“Joshua and the Battle of Jericho” and “Daniel and the Lions’ Den”). Download scripts as Word documents.

## Games, puzzles and word puzzles

- Bible Games: <http://www.meridenchristadelphians.com/Bible-Games.html>

Bible games make good lesson reinforcement activities. Here are several for large and small groups to play.

- Bible Mazes: <http://www.meridenchristadelphians.com/Bible-Mazes.html>

These mazes usually include one or two coloring pictures that give the maze its Bible theme. Each theme has several mazes with different solutions and levels of difficulty. Print and enjoy.

- Word Puzzle

<http://www.meridenchristadelphians.com/Word-Puzzles.html>

Crossword puzzles, cryptograms, jigsaw quotes, jumble puzzles, word searches, and more. All puzzles are keyed to clearly identified Bible lessons and Bible passages. Print and enjoy.

- Bible Puzzles: <http://biblepuzzles.com>

NC. Explore the site. Many different kinds of puzzles, some printable, some to do online. A good selection of clearly titled word searches; a smaller selection of crossword puzzles without subject titles. Bible Hangman is fun to do online. Bible Dingbats are cute. Except for word searches, most puzzles are general in nature and not easy to match with specific Sunday school lessons.

- Bible Word Games: <http://biblewordgames.com/>

NC. Explore the site. Many different kinds of puzzles, some printable, some to do online. Some online puzzles are easy to do as they are, others require Adobe Flash Player. The site sells downloadable puzzle books, but many free samples are available. It's potluck, but the puzzles are good.

- Living Water Bible Games

<http://www.livingwaterbiblegames.com/biblegames.html>

NC. The Living Water site offers Bible card games, board games, word searches, puzzles, Bible bingo games, and more. Most games can be downloaded and printed. Many can also be done online. The site is searchable. In the GAMES window, pick a Game type, enter a Keyword (e.g., books of the Bible), and click the Update bar.

## Make your own Bible puzzles

- Maze Generator: <http://www.mazegenerator.net/>
- Super Word Games Creator: <http://www.supercrosswordcreator.com/>

NC. The web address says "super crossword creator," but the site allows you to make word searches, bingo cards, flash cards, and word scrambles, in addition to crossword puzzles. Create word games and puzzles online, download, and print. The site takes a little getting used to, but after that it is user friendly. Try it for free. I have lifetime membership (\$59.95 U.S. at the time of purchase) which gives ongoing access to all the site features. In just a few minutes you can create custom-made puzzles to go with any Sunday school lesson.

## Two updates

- 1) The Christadelphian Office launched a new website on April 6th. The web address is the same (<http://www.thechristadelphian.com/>), and shopping for Birmingham Central Sunday School materials is as easy as before. Simply go to the new site and type “sunday school” in the search bar at the top.
- 2) Under “Living the Lessons,” I have bookmarked an additional site since last month’s article. It is well worth having a look at.
  - CBMA Works of Faith: <https://www.cbma.net/faith/>

“Works of Faith” are Bible Mission projects in North, Central, and South America that need support and funding. They are described as “ideal for a CYC, Sunday School, or a whole Ecclesia to adopt.” Go to the site, read about current projects, and get involved.

## And a couple of “After Words”

All the links described in the May and June articles are posted on a resource page at <http://www.meridenchristadelphians.com/Teacher-Resource-Links.html>. You can access every site from this location and bookmark any that you like. And please tell me about good Sunday school sites that you have found. Copy and paste the web addresses in an email to [sundayschool@tidings.org](mailto:sundayschool@tidings.org). I will be glad to add your links to the ones that are already posted so other Sunday schoolers can have them.

*Jim Harper [sundayschool@tidings.org](mailto:sundayschool@tidings.org) (Meriden, CT)*

# Letters

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Dear Brother Peter,

I fully agree with your identification of the need to caution our community about the use of recreational marijuana. (See *The Tidings*, March 2018 editorial). However, there is another dimension of the subject that must be mentioned. Current medical research is producing credible results for a non-psychoactive component of marijuana called CBD (cannabidiol oil). It is currently being used for side effects of chemotherapy, epilepsy, glaucoma, pain control. Use of marijuana for mind and mood altering effects should be discouraged. Even so, it is also being used as a step-down drug (go figure) to help opioid addicts with their death-threatening addictions. The rationale: better stoned than dead. It is interesting that the KJV translated the Gr word, “*pharmakia*” as “witchcraft” in Gal 5:20, psychotropic drugs probably only being used by sorcerers 400 years ago. You are correct that this is indeed a complex subject for Christadelphians!

*Melinda Flatley (Pittsburgh, PA)*

## A Detailed Study of Romans 8 (5) Present sufferings and future glory: (vv 18-20) Part 1

### Introduction

The order of Paul's presentation continues to be important. To recapitulate: First of all, he describes the gift of God: no condemnation (vv 1-4). Therefore, believers should live righteous, that is, "spirit"-directed, lives (vv 5-11).

Again, we are no longer slaves, but now sons (vv 12-17). Therefore, we are required to endure present sufferings because of frailty, and to 'labor' as participants in the ongoing miracle of a new "birth" (vv 18-25).

The change must be followed by the challenge. Carefully, logically, Paul lays the doctrinal foundation before he makes the moral appeal. 'Here is what God has done for you; now, this is what you must do for God.' We are God's "sons" (v 14), and no longer "slaves" (v 15). We need not "fear" any more (v 15). Now we can come into God's presence through Christ, to cry "Abba, Pater" (v 15). Christ himself shares with us our sonship, our inheritance, and our future glory (v 17).

However, as Paul made clear in verse 17, this necessitates that "we share in his sufferings also". This may seem burdensome, but it is reasonable: Even as our Lord endured sufferings on his way to the glory conferred upon him by the Father, so we who profess to walk in his footsteps will do the same. Our sufferings may not be (quite likely, will not be) of the same degree as his; nevertheless, they are of a similar nature. Just as Christ's sufferings led to his glory, so our sufferings, even if slight or short-lived by comparison to his, will lead us to our ultimate glory, with him, in the Father's Kingdom.

This section (vv 18-25) concludes with two more 'with' words (cp vv 16,17), descriptive of the fellowship and sharing between Christ and those in Christ. "*Sustenazo*" (sighing together) in verse 22 anticipates the 'sighing' of Christ ("the Spirit himself") of verse 26. "*Sunodino*" (to give birth together) in verse 22 speaks of the joint efforts, in heaven and on earth, for the final 'birth' of the one new man, the redeemed body of Christ. It is a great comfort to know that in our individual travail (Rom 7:4) as well as our travail for one another (Gal 4:19), Christ sighs and groans and travails with us.

### Comment on Romans 8:18

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us: The word "sufferings" thus links together this and the preceding verse. Now Paul shows the need for suffering in the life of the believer, with a wider perspective of God's plan of redemption. In the light of eternity,

we should view the cost of suffering with Jesus Christ now (in whatever form it takes) as insignificant in view of the glory that lies ahead for us (2Cor 4:17).

Our present sufferings: Our “sharing” with Christ, as part of his Body, necessitates that take up our crosses and follow him, and that “we share in his sufferings” (vv 17,18). This is not an ‘elective’, or an option; it is a ‘required subject’. Our exalted position now requires that we faithfully endure present sufferings in preparation for future glory. Our trials enable us to know the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings (Phil 3:10), to “*complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church*” (Col 1:24, RSV), to comfort others who themselves are afflicted (2Cor 1:3-7), and to trust in God alone rather than ourselves (2Cor 1:9).

Whatever form our individual sufferings may take, they cannot be ignored. The victorious life in Christ does not rule out sufferings; rather, it necessitates them. They must be faced rationally, examined, and accepted. But no matter how severe they seem now, they are not to be compared with the future glory (Rom 8:18). Here is the key to the faithful endurance of our trials. In the same measure as our sufferings increase, our hope in the future glory must increase also. Rather than complain to God because of our trials, we must rejoice and thank Him (Rom 5:3), realizing that He is doing us a benefit. That which reminds us most firmly of our own weaknesses serves to draw us nearer to the only One Who is truly strong. Helpless children we may be, but we have a wise and loving and omnipotent Father:

*“As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust... from everlasting to everlasting the LORD’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children — with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts”*  
(Psa 103:13,14,17,18).

Glory: A glory to be shared with Christ (v 17) because we are ALL God’s dear children (v 21). That will be revealed in us: “Revealed” is “*apokalupto*”, an uncovering, as in the drawing aside of a veil. It refers often to the return of Christ (Luke 17:30; 1Cor 1:7; 2Thes 1:7; 1Pet 1:7, 13; 4:13).

The Greek for “in” (in “in us” here) is “*eis*”. It can be translated as either “in us” (KJV, NIV) or “to us” (ASV, NASB, RSV, NET), and probably includes both ideas, in view of the expansiveness of the divine glory that will cover the earth in the day of which Paul writes (Num 14:21; Hab 2:14; Isa 11:9). When the earth is filled with the glory of the LORD in the millennial age, then all the resurrected saints will have that glory revealed “to” them, before their very eyes. At the same time, because they have been raised to share in that glory, it will also be revealed “in” and through them to the rest of the world.

## **Parallels between Hebrews 2 and Romans 8**

Hebrews 2 supplies lovely parallels to Romans 8, in which the relationship between sufferings and glory — augmented by the ideas of slavery and sonship — is explored in some detail. This set of parallels can best be shown in tabular form:

Hebrews 2	Romans 8
7. "A little lower than the angels"	20. Subjected to frustration (vanity, frailty, or futility)
9. "Suffered death [leads to] crowned with glory and honor"	17,18,21. Present sufferings [lead to] future glory and freedom
10. God, "for whom and through whom everything exists"	19-23. The new creation, to be born, in the redemption of our bodies
10. "Bringing many sons unto glory"	14,16,17,30. Sons... share in glory...
13. "The children God has given me"	16,17,21. God's dear children
14. Christ shared in our humanity (partook of the same flesh and blood)	3. God sent His Son in the flesh of sin (i.e., human nature)
14. "Him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil"	2,3. The principle of sin and death... sin in the flesh
15. "Held in slavery by their fear of death"	15,21. Spirit of slavery... flesh... bondage to decay

### Comment on Romans 8:19

The creation: The Greek is "*ktisis*", which describes both the act of making (especially by God), and that which is made. It is translated "creature" (KJV), but also "creation" (NIV, RV, ASV, RSV, NET and Rotherham), and "created universe" (NEB). The word "*ktisis*" can refer to the creation of the world and everything in it (Mark 13:19; Rom 1:20, 25), or to mankind alone (Mark 16:15), or — most often in the New Testament — to the new spiritual "creation" in Christ (2Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15; Eph 2:15; 4:24; Col 1:15; 3:10).

What is the "creation" of verses 19-22, which endures present sufferings (vv 18, 22) in eager longing for future glory (vv 19, 21)? The correct answer to this question is crucial to the understanding of this section. The most common view is briefly expressed in the following quotations:

- a) "By a very striking and impressive personification, Paul in these verses represents creation as looking and waiting for the culmination of the Divine plan... There is incompleteness about man's world that cannot be the end of God's purpose with it. And just as Isaiah, in his picture of millennial peace, says that the wild creatures '*shall not hurt in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*' (Isa 11:9), so Paul attributes to creation an expectation of this time of restoration which is bound up with the manifestation of the sons of God. And as it was subjected by God to its present vanity, not of its own will or fault, but because of man's sin, so it will experience a deliverance from its bondage and share the liberty pertaining to the glory of the children of God" (Carter, p. 92).
- b) "It is the whole creation which unconsciously yearns for the manifestation of the sons of God to bring release from the present evil" (Pickering, p. 179, "Creation" in the New Testament).

However, I would strongly favor a second possible interpretation, hinted at above and outlined in the following:

- c) “Now it does not seem to me that the ‘creation’ which groans and travails is the whole earth. Redemption has never been a general thing. It has always been conditional on the acceptance of suffering and death, and those who refuse to accept this have no part in redemption. They do not travail, because they have no seed of God within them. They are never born again. It seems to me that the ‘creation’ which has groaned and travailed throughout all ages is the new creation of God which has always existed alongside the old creation, and has waited in faith, ‘earnestly expecting’ the final revelation of the resurrection birth. It contains men of faith of all ages, but none of the seed of the serpent, to whom travail means nothing” (Ray Walker, “Suffering and Glory”, *The Bible Student* vol 8, #4, p. 4).
- d) This idea has also been suggested and elaborated upon by Harry Whittaker: “It is generally agreed that the word ‘creature’ in this passage [Rom 8:19-22] should be read as ‘creation’. The interpretation commonly put upon this remarkable passage is that ‘by a very striking and impressive personification, Paul in these verses represents creation as looking and waiting for the culmination of the Divine plan’ [here he quotes from John Carter; see above]. Some commentators restrict the ‘creation’ to mean the human race, enlightened and ignorant, ‘Christian’ and pagan; but others — the majority — suggest that here Paul’s thought takes a grand poetic sweep to include everything in the universe, animate and inanimate, as though it all had a deep unexpressed longing for the grand climax of the divine purpose in Christ. This study will suggest that such a view tangles up the exegesis of Romans 8 with too many difficulties; and more positively, it will be argued that throughout this passage Paul has in view the New Creation, the church of the redeemed in Christ” (“The Groaning of Creation” in Romans 8:19-22, *Bible Studies*).

Some of Whittaker’s ideas are incorporated into the notes which follow here.

Following the lead of this second suggestion, we should allow Paul to interpret himself as to the meaning of “*ktisis*” (creation) in this passage under consideration. Putting aside Romans 8, most of the other occurrences of “*ktisis*” and its related verb (“*ktizo*”) in Paul’s writings (11 out of 18) clearly pertain to the new, or spiritual, “creation”. (And a few of the other instances, not so obviously relevant, may be better interpreted along these lines also.) And they do so in ways very much parallel to his usage in Romans 8:

- a) 2Cor 5:14-17: “*Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died... So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation [the KJV ‘new creatures’ obscures the ‘creation’ connection]; the old has gone, the new has come!*” In language reminiscent of Romans 8 Paul speaks of God in Christ reconciling unto Himself those who had been separated, and thereby beginning to bring order back to a frail, futile world. That this second “creation” is patterned

after the first is clearly shown by the larger context: *“For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” (2Cor 4:6).*

- b) *“Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation [again, ‘a new creature’: KJV]” (Gal 6:15).* This is in a context that includes ‘sowing to the flesh’ and ‘sowing to the spirit’ (v 8; cp Rom 8:5-13).
- c) Eph 2:1-10: In a passage with extended and extensive parallels to Romans 8, Paul speaks of Christ as the creator: *“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works” (v 10).* The phrase *“to do good works”* is a telling connection with our study. It defines the purpose for which we have been created. This is the correct order: salvation is not “by [‘ek’: from, or out of] works” (Eph 2:9), but it is “to do, or unto [‘epi’: for] good works” (v 10). Works are not the means of salvation, but the result of the influence of the gospel message of salvation. Thus, in Romans 8, the “no condemnation” and “liberty” (vv 1,2) logically precede the walking after the spirit (vv 5-11).
- d) Eph 4:22-24: The “old self” or “old man” (KJV), with his corrupt way of life, must be put off. We must be renewed in the spirit of our minds (Romans 8 words), so as to put on the “new self” or “the new man”, who is created (“*ktizo*”) after the image of God’s Son (Rom 8:29).
- e) Col 1:15-18: Christ is the “image” and the “firstborn” (the language of Rom 8:29) of all creation (“every creature”: KJV) (v 15), because all are created by him (v 16). This must be the “new creation”, since Christ is “before all” (v 17), and all are made out of him (v 17). These figurative expressions are explained by the more literal ones of verse 18: *“he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead.”* The broader context — “redemption and forgiveness” (v 14), “reconcile” (v 20) — also makes plain that here is a sort of creation which involves personal salvation.
- f) *“Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator [‘ktizo’]” (Col 3:9,10).*

That this interpretation fits the text of Romans 8 is self-evident. While Scriptural language can sometimes be highly figurative, there is no reason to take any given text as more figurative than necessary. To speak of all natural creation, inanimate and animate, godless as well as godly, waiting with eager longing, sighing as in childbirth, and hoping for the revelation of God’s sons, is clearly to stretch figurative speech to the breaking point.

It is, of course, not disputed that all creation will benefit from the removal of the Edenic curse. But that is a different matter.

Also, to say that inanimate creation has been subject to frailty “not willingly” (or “not by their own choice”) is a practically meaningless selection of words. And when it is realized that verses 19-22 elaborate upon verses 16-18, where the present sufferings and future glory pertain of course to God’s dear children, the case should be considered proven.

Waits: “*Apekdechomai*” occurs three times in this section (here, and vv 23, 25). It signifies eager expectation, and generally has clear reference to the return of Christ (1Cor 1:7; Gal 5:5; Heb 9:28).

In eager expectation: Greek “*apokaradokia*”, which signifies a watching with the head erect and outstretched, an earnest waiting in suspense, an eager anticipation which can scarcely contain itself. It occurs also in Phil 1:20: “*I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed.*”

For the sons of God to be revealed: The Greek “*apokalupsis*” is related to the word in verse 18. “Revealed” (NIV) is simpler and easier to understand; “manifest(ed)” or “manifestation” obscure this connection.

The “revealing” will be something of an unveiling, when those who groan and are burdened in their fleshly “tabernacle”, will find them instantaneously clothed upon with new and glorious heavenly bodies: “*What is mortal will be swallowed up in life*” (2Cor 5:1-4). Or when, as Paul expresses it again, those who have God’s Word written on the fleshly tablets of their hearts, who have the treasure of God’s glory encased in jars of clay, will find their obscuring veils removed and their old coverings shed, so that the light of God’s glory will shine out for all the world to see. Then they will, “*with unveiled faces... reflect the Lord’s glory... being transformed into his likeness*” (2Cor 3:18).

### **Comment on Romans 8:20**

For the creation with subjected to: Greek “*hupotasso*”, a military term meaning to rank under. Since the mind of the flesh is not “subject to” God’s principles (v 7), all mankind has been “subjected to” frailty.

Frustration: “*Mataiotees*” signifies ‘empty as to results’. Various possible translations are “frailty”, “vanity” (KJV), “futility” (RSV), and “frustration” (NIV), all of which have some merit. The vanity, or frailty, of mankind is the subject of Eccl 1:2,13,14, etc. Indeed, much of that Bible book is about the emptiness of human life, apart from God.

The word “frailty” of verse 20 establishes immediate links between Romans 8 and the garden of Eden: In both there is condemnation (Rom 8:1); “subjection” of all creation, but especially of Adam and Eve (God’s ‘spiritual’ creation); and travail in childbirth (cp Gen 3:16 with Rom 8:22). Links with the Preacher’s description of the “vanity” of human life are also obvious (Eccl 1:2-14).

Not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it: Of course it is God who has subjected the new creation to vanity or frailty. It is just possible, however, that Paul may be referring to Adam, whose sin was the first cause of man’s fall and subjection. In hope...: The first words of a phrase which continues unbroken into the next verse.

*George Booker (Austin Leander, TX)*

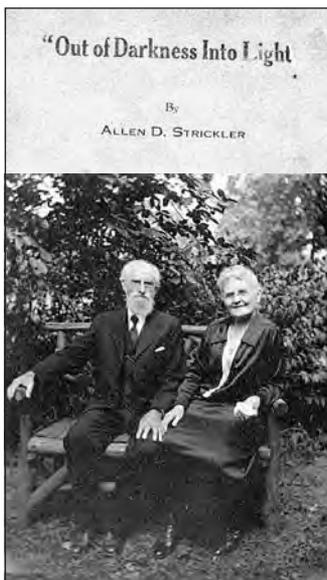
## Reunions – (2) The Bereans in 1952

### The Origins of the Bereans in North America

The origin of the Bereans is quite complex. Two quite separate strands coalesced in 1923, when in a letter, Edgar Round of Los Angeles wrote:

“The brethren and sisters of the Los Angeles Ecclesia, meeting at Benevolence Hall, Foresters’ Building, unite with the principal ecclesias of the United States and Canada in repudiating the heresies of bro. Strickler, and will not fellowship any who teach, hold, countenance, or fellowship those who hold them.”<sup>1</sup>

It contained a list of 43 ecclesias from the USA and Canada.



The Berean division in UK had started some years before, with a dissident group separating from the main Birmingham Ecclesia, and forming a new ecclesia on John Bright St. in Birmingham in April, 1919. This split was nominally over the question of Christadelphians serving as policemen, and initially the main London Ecclesia would not take sides in the dispute. I say nominally, as FG Jannaway was the main protagonist in London and, from December 1923, assistant editor of *The Berean*. He criticized CC Walker, the editor of *The Christadelphian*, for his stance on Military Service, and was the undoubted leader of the Christadelphian community in this area. After the war, he continued to criticize a long list of the actions and statements of CC Walker, and the whole subject is so rife with charges and counter-charges, that it appears at this distance to be more a struggle for control of

the community than a real doctrinal dispute. (The original situation led to the addition of the words “or as police constables” in October, 1919 to clause 35 of the “Doctrines to be Rejected”, but this did not satisfy those opposed to CC Walker.)

Meanwhile, in North America, Allen Strickler had been writing on the subject of the nature of Christ for several years before 1913, when Bro. Smallwood wrote his booklet “Bible Teaching Concerning Sin and Sacrifice” attacking his teachings. This caused no obvious major controversy at the time, but this altered when Strickler in 1920 published “Out of Darkness into Light”, a complex discussion of the Atonement. He was challenged on his views by many in North America,

but steadfastly claimed his full adherence to the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith. CC Walker was prepared to accept this but many in North America were not.<sup>2</sup> Thus scattered ecclesias announced their withdrawal: for example, Denver:

*“DENVER (Colorado).— We wish to say that the Denver ecclesia will not fellowship any who advocate or believe the erroneous doctrines as taught by brother A. D. Strickler in his ‘Out of Darkness into Light,’ as we stand upon the Birmingham Basis of fellowship.—P. DIXSON, Rec, Bro.”<sup>3</sup>*

However, no overall action was taken until the letter at the start of this article caused division. In the end, most in the UK followed the lead of CC Walker, and very few there divided over Strickler, although of course by then the community there was already divided between “Central” and “Bereans”. However, probably 2/3 of the Central (or Amended) in North America joined up with the Bereans. It was a strongly geographical division: California, the Mid-West, and Texas divided, with only remnants of Central left in most cases. Much of New England and the East Coast remained Central.

It might be helpful to include a couple of quotes from Strickler’s book:

“What Paul failed to do because of his flesh and blood nature, Christ accomplished with the same nature, because he with that nature did not serve the law of sin, but fulfilled the law of righteousness; therefore, it could not be said of him, that he had sin dwelling in him as Paul said of himself. If human nature is a synonym for sin, and sin for human nature, it must be so in the primary meaning of the word sin”. (*Out of Darkness, Into Light*, pg. 79.)

“Just before Christ was nailed to the tree, he was a clean and holy altar, but immediately when he willingly took the attitude or position of the sinner to work out a symbolism, he symbolically became unclean because of the sins which he bare as the sin offering, and whose blood was sprinkled upon the Christ altar. When he arose from the dead triumphant on the third day, he was only justified from all symbolic and figurative uncleanness; but he was the same clean and holy altar that he had been before he was crucified....” (*Out of Darkness, Into Light*, pg. 59.)

Allen Strickler died on Dec 17, 1938 at the age of 92, a well-loved but controversial figure in the brotherhood since 1869.<sup>4</sup> There is a letter extant to him from John Thomas dated April 24, 1869 and he knew and was respected by Robert Roberts.

### **The next thirty years**

There was almost no movement between the two factions for many years after the split of 1923. In fact, there was almost a total “cutting off” by the Bereans of the Amended community. For example, in WW2 the Unamended and Amended cooperated over military service in their interactions with the governments of both Canada and the USA, whereas the Bereans stood aside, which caused some confusion among the governmental organizations involved. Inevitably the members of the three Christadelphian groups came together in the work

camps, but whether the resultant discussions help or hindered the subsequent reunion efforts is hard to discern.

Meanwhile, although the Amended community was generally peaceful, turmoil continued among the Bereans in the UK (not so much in North America). Strangely enough, the next major split was precipitated by a divorce case in the Los Angeles ecclesia, which through many turns resulted in the following declaration by the leading Berean ecclesia in the UK, which was London, Clapham. They issued the following resolution on June 6 1940:

- a) Suing at law for the enforcement of any right whatsoever, including divorce, is contrary to the teaching of Christ, and is therefore to be shunned by all of His brethren and sisters.
- b) A brother or sister of Christ who, being divorced after becoming responsible to the law of Christ, takes another husband or wife during the lifetime of the former partner commits adultery; and in such circumstances no profession of repentance can be recognized whilst the sinful alliance continues.
- c) An applicant for immersion who is legally married should be accepted (notwithstanding the annulment of any previous marriage), subject to a good confession of the faith and an undertaking by the applicant thenceforward to uphold the law of Christ in this as in all other respects.
- d) The South London (Clapham) Ecclesia will not knowingly extend fellowship to any who hold views contrary to the foregoing, or who, although themselves not holding contrary views, are prepared to fellowship those who do so.

As might be expected, the clause (d) in particular required the community to choose sides, and in April 1942 the ecclesia voted to enforce this resolution:

“By a vote of 183 in favour and 2 against, it was resolved to operate clause (d) as from 1st June, 1942, in the United Kingdom and elsewhere as from 1st September, 1942.”

Slowly the Bereans divided, and the “Dawn” group emerged, as the former Bereans were known. They were the overwhelming majority in the UK, so *The Berean* magazine shifted to Canada in 1949, with the vast majority of Berean Ecclesias by then being located in North America.

### **First attempt at reunion**

With the death of Strickler in 1938, there was hope for reunion. As reported in *The Christadelphian*:<sup>5</sup>

“The Los Angeles<sup>6</sup> ecclesia sent out an appeal (in March, 1940) that in view of the articles published in *The Christadelphian*, ecclesias in America should heal the wounds of division where no grounds for it existed. They circularized the ecclesias in the USA and Canada quoting the articles in recent issues showing that the barriers to fellowship were now removed, and urging that steps be taken to close up the breaches.

“The response to this effort of the Los Angeles brethren has led them to send out a second appeal. In it they indicate the nature of the responses,

the desire on the part of most for reunion, and the doubts, sincerely held, in the minds of some whether the right conditions exist for reunion.

1. To ecclesias who separated from us in 1923, it is wisely pointed out that it would be profitless to engage in discussions on what a deceased brother may have believed and to demand a statement declaring his teaching to be erroneous, especially when some are not sure what the brother taught, but are quite clear what they themselves believe and are in absolute agreement with the Birmingham Statement of Faith. It urges that if there is doubt about the position of a neighboring ecclesia they should ask if the statements put forward in the second portion of this appeal are approved.
2. The second portion is addressed to ecclesias who have remained in fellowship with Birmingham Central ecclesia throughout the controversy. It sets out in four items the doctrines to which objection was taken in 1923:
  - 1) That the nature of Christ was not exactly like ours.
  - 2) That the offering of Christ was not for himself, and that Christ never made any offering for himself.
  - 3) That Christ's offering was for personal sins or moral impurity only. That our sins laid on Christ made him unclean and accursed of God, and that it was from this curse and this uncleanness that Christ needed cleansing.
  - 4) That Christ died as a substitute; i.e., that he was punished for the transgressions of others and that he became a bearer of sin by suffering the punishment due for sins.

“In six items the truth is set forth:

- 1) That death came into the world extraneously to the nature bestowed upon Adam in Eden, and was not inherent in him before sentence.
- 2) That the sentence defiled him (Adam) and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity.
- 3) That the word “sin” is used in two principal acceptations in the scriptures. It signifies in the first place “the transgression of law”, and in the next it represents that physical principle of the animal nature which is the cause of all its diseases, death and resolution to dust.
- 4) That Jesus possessed our nature, which was a defiled, condemned nature.
- 5) That it was therefore necessary that Jesus should offer for himself for the purging of his own nature, first, from the uncleanness of death, that having by his own blood obtained eternal redemption for himself, he might be able afterward to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him.
- 6) That the doctrine of substitution, i.e., that a righteous man can, by suffering the penalty due to the sinner, free the sinner from the

penalty of his sin, is foreign to scripture and is a dogma of heathen mythology.

“The ecclesias addressed in this portion are asked to state their assent to these statements of truth and to give assurance to ecclesias now separated, and to help reunion.”

These ten statements were agreed to by the Birmingham Central ecclesia, and became known among the Bereans as the Ten Point Statement.<sup>7</sup> However, there was no further movement towards reunion at the time, as WW2 had begun.

During the last few years of WW2, there was occasional discussions between ecclesias about re-union, but nothing of note transpired until 1947, when the Bereans were approached by the Central fellowship, and discussions took place between representatives of the Berean (Edmund St.), and Central (Midland Institute) Ecclesias in Birmingham, England. All but one point was resolved: but the Bereans insisted on the inclusion of a “Clause 5”, in fact very similar to the clause (a) of the original above from 1940, which now became:

“That the commandments of Christ prohibit a brother or sister going to law against another person for the redress of any grievance whatsoever. Our governing Apostolic principle is to ‘rather take wrong and suffer yourselves to be defrauded.’”

It seems clear the Bereans intended by that clause to prohibit seeking divorce under any circumstances, which itself was not something John Carter and the Central brethren were prepared to accept. Not only that, but it threw the net far too wide, prohibiting, to take one example, the lodging of an appeal against a local tribunal decision on exemption from military service.

There were further attempts at the time, including a Detroit conference which took place in October, 1947, with re-union proposed on the “Ten Points” listed above. Subsequently, 10 Berean Ecclesias were in favor, one against, but only two central ecclesias responded. There was no further action at the time, but in the UK these efforts at reunion caused further splintering among the Berean ecclesias: many joined Dawn, a few re-joined Central, and only a handful of Berean ecclesias were left in the UK.

## 1952 reunion

After the failure in 1947, the new Canadian editor of *The Berean*, George Gibson, was solidly against reunion. Thus there was no further comments about Reunion in *The Berean* until well into 1953, by which time the reunion of the Amended and the Berean fellowships was almost complete.

In 1952, John Carter, editor of *The Christadelphian*, came on a long-planned visit to North America, primarily to teach at the Wilbraham Bible School in New England. He left the UK on August 6, and after the Bible School went by invitation to California, to discuss the possibility of reunion. This meeting was held August 19, and before that, about April 1952, the Pomona Ecclesia (Berean)<sup>8</sup> put forward certain proposals in a resolution; and upon the basis of this resolution it was

agreed that a conference should be held, so it was decided to invite ecclesias in both the Berean and Central fellowships to attend a meeting to be held the New York area on Sept 20.

This event took place, being held at the Jersey City (Berean) hall. Carl Wolfe, editor of *The Junior Christadelphian* at the time (predecessor to the *The Tidings*), commented:

“Few of those who went to Jersey City expected success, and almost without exception any great success was greatly doubted. It is not an easy problem to unite those who have been divided for so many years, and it is quite natural that both sides were suspicious and doubtful of the other.”<sup>9</sup>

About 15 Central and 14 Berean ecclesias were represented. *The Berean* records 57 ecclesias in North America: Intelligence from about 30 Central ecclesias in North America is recorded in *The Christadelphian* for 1952.

### **Pomona Resolution**

1. That by personal contact and understanding we may both fully determine why, since both fellowships agree to said Statement of Faith, that we are not able once more to resume fellowship.
2. That by Christ-like and prayerful consideration of the issues involved, we may find out whether there is any fundamental difference in the doctrines held and to which both have given their approval.
3. That we believe that The Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith, when endorsed without reservation, is sufficiently clear on all disputed points, and that if there is agreement on the doctrines taught therein, there is no further cause for division.
4. That we recognize that unless these doctrines are made the basis and test of fellowship that this conference is valueless.

To best accomplish this very desirable result we think the following procedure is most likely to succeed.

Suggestion 1. That we do not discuss the writings of any brother that has been of a highly controversial nature, or that has caused division in the past.

Suggestion 2. That we do not discuss the past as to who was right or wrong in the controversy, and that we concentrate our discussion on what is believed and taught now.

Suggestion 3. That we request Brother John Carter to state the scriptural position of clauses 4, 5, 8, 10 and 12 of ‘Truth to be received’ and the consequent errors of clauses 4, 5 and 27 of ‘Doctrines to be rejected’, as found in the statement of faith.

Suggestion 4. That each ecclesia declares, without reservation, whether or not they are in harmony with these principles, and that the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith shall form the basis of fellowship among

Christadelphian ecclesias throughout the world. In the words of the statement itself, 'That we recognize as brethren and welcome to our fellowship all who have been immersed by whomsoever, after their acceptance of the above stated doctrines and principles'.

Suggestion 5. That it be made clear that the purpose of this conference is to heal, and not to divide, and that it is not an attempt to prove any brother or any ecclesia to be wrong, but rather to find out once and for all if we are actually agreed on the first principle doctrines.<sup>10</sup>

This resolution forming the basis for discussion, and John Carter was asked to give and address on the Nature of Man and the Sacrifice of Christ. This address exists, and is an excellent introduction to the topic. It seemed to clear up most of the distrust that existed between the two groups.

It was noticeable, however, that no attempt was made to go back to the "ten points" as covered above. It is believed this was because at least two of the Central ecclesias attending were against it. So a group of 6 brethren was appointed to draw up a new statement. The six were: brethren R. W. Newth (Toronto), A. Pride (Providence), E. Hardy (Baltimore) for Central ecclesias, and brethren W. M. Biggar (Hollywood), C. Wheeler (Canton) and C. C. Macdonald (Toronto) for the Berean ecclesias. The statement was drawn up over lunch and presented in the afternoon. (One suspects that it had been discussed, at least in outline, ahead of time!)



John Carter.

### The Statement

The Statement consisted of three items to which were appended Clauses 3–12 of the Statement of Faith and 4, 5, 27 of Doctrines to be rejected. The three items are:

1. That we agree that the doctrines set forth in the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith are a true exposition of the first principles of the oracles of God as set forth in the teachings of Jesus Christ and his apostles, and that therefore these doctrines are to be believed and taught by us without reservation; the doctrine of the Scriptures on sin and its effects and God's salvation from sin and death in Christ Jesus being defined in clauses three to twelve of the Statement of Faith.
2. That we recognize as brethren and welcome to our fellowship all who have been immersed by whomsoever after their acceptance of the same doctrines and precepts, and that any brother departing from any element of the One Faith as defined in the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith is to be dealt with according to apostolic precept.
3. If an ecclesia is known to persist in teaching false doctrines, or to retain in fellowship those who do, other ecclesias can only avoid being involved by disclaiming fellowship.

After much discussion, Carl Wolfe of the Pomona Ecclesia, one of the drivers behind the conference, proposed that the Statement submitted to the meeting by the Committee should be approved by the delegates as a basis for reunion. This was put to the meeting and was carried unanimously.

The Ecclesias in Canada and U.S.A. were requested to approve by resolution the statement which the delegates agreed upon as the basis of reunion, and to communicate their decision to the following: Central Ecclesias to: bro. W. J. Ashley, Toronto: Berean Ecclesias to: bro. A. C. Johnston, Glendale, CA.

### The Aftermath

All the Central ecclesias in North America were reported as having approved the Jersey City resolution by early in 1953, 34 ecclesias in total (20 USA, 14 Canada). Of the Berean ecclesias, 20 out of 40 in the USA appear to have assented, 17 out of 20 in Canada. This number of ecclesias is based on the ecclesial directory published in *The Berean Magazine* for Jan, 1953. It must be said:

1. In several cases, although the majority joined with Central, the ecclesia split, with a minority remaining affiliated with the Berean
2. Many of the ecclesias listed in the Berean magazine were tiny, consisting of a husband and wife: the fate of these ecclesias is uncertain.
3. As far as can be determined, only one sizable Berean ecclesia stood aside as a whole at the time, that being Lampasas in Texas.

The reunion unfolded over the next eighteen months, as the replies from the former Berean ecclesias trickled in. It should be noted that, during this transition period, there was no explicit directive for the formerly Berean members to immediately “cut off” their former fellow members, and conversations with those involved confirm this. However, the whole Berean fellowship practice would not normally even consider this: note their rigidity about collaboration during WW2, so it is doubtful if this continued fellowship ever happened to any great extent.

There was some opposition, and the Newark (Berean) ecclesia circulated Central ecclesias in the UK to ask if they also support the recommendations of the Jersey City conference, a step which John Carter strongly disapproved. Apart from that, there seemed to be little open opposition, and as I have said *The Junior Christadelphian*, as well as *The Christadelphian*, strongly supported reunion.

The fundamental objection that caused many of the Bereans and some ecclesias to stand



Lampasas, Texas Berean Hall.

aside from reunion was that Central, according to their view, refused to categorically deny that Strickler’s views were heretical, despite the suggestion

(1) of the basis of the Jersey City Conference. (See reference (4) below: most who reunited were prepared to consider what was believed now, not what might have been tolerated years ago).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that ultimately about 200-300 Bereans remained, with the only ecclesias of any size being two in Texas (Houston and Lampasas), two smaller in New England (Boston and Worcester), and in Canada one in London, Ontario and one in Richard, Saskatchewan. (The Richard ecclesia rejoined the Bereans in 1962: the Berean Boston ecclesia was enlarged in 1965 by an Old Paths ecclesia).

It is interesting that, in 1965, the clause 3 of the reunion of 1952 above was attempted to be applied in the context of another potential division in the UK, and the then editor of *The Christadelphian*, L. G. Sargent, commented:

“The clause [3] in the Jersey City Resolution on the relation of ecclesias to one another, however, dealt with the situation then arising with ecclesias coming together in reunion. It is now proposed to extend it so that any ecclesia which regarded another as sheltering false teaching could “withdraw” from it. The result could only be ecclesial chaos and ultimately a new division. This was surely not the intention of the framers of the resolution”.<sup>11</sup>

### Sixty years later

Statistics and numbers are difficult to come by for the early 1950's. My best guess is that there were in North America about 1,000 - 1,500 Central Christadelphians, about twice that Bereans. Only about 200 - 300 remained Berean: so you might argue the reunion was 90% successful, despite the opposition of *The Berean*.

Sixty years on, there is still a small number of Bereans left, holding out for their purity and complaining about the laxity of Central Christadelphians. It is interesting that in most areas the number of Bereans has dwindled to a handful, with the solitary exception of Texas. This was not helped by a split in the Berean community around 1997, when a minority essentially maintained the divorce was absolutely impermissible, the cause of the Dawn division back in the 1940's.

There appears to be about 200-250<sup>12</sup> Bereans left today, most in Texas. As I have noted, the largest Berean ecclesia to stand aside was Lampasas. A sampling of three different regions showing the changes in Christadelphian numbers over the period from 1953 to 2009 was given in an article in *The Tidings*<sup>13</sup> (The three metro areas were Southern California, Detroit, and Toronto):

<b>Original Berean ecclesias</b>	<b>3 Metro areas</b>	<b>Texas</b>	<b>Totals (approx.)</b>
Original numbers	454 (100%)	92 (100%)	546 (100%)
How many joined Central?	433 (95%)	18 (20%)	451 (83%)

Central numbers after 60 years	1,273	240	1,513
Central growth or decline	194% growth	1,233% growth	235% growth
How many stayed in Bereans?	21 (5%)	74 (80%)	95 (17%)
Berean numbers after 50+ years	3	90	93
Berean growth or decline	86% decline	22% growth	2% decline

It can be seen that the only area left with significant numbers is Texas: The Bereans still hold their Texas Hye gathering at a site where such gatherings have been held since 1881 or so: the site is also used by the Unamended.

**Conclusion**

The origin of the Berean movement in North America was born out of a dispute about what an old brother did or did not believe, a matter that would almost certainly not now cause a wholesale division among Central Christadelphians. The rift was largely healed by two elements

1. The arrival of an editor of *The Christadelphian* who became determined to heal the divisions in the brotherhood among those who subscribed to the common statement of faith.
2. A strong grass-roots movement towards unity, especially in California, despite opposition from the editor of *The Berean* magazine (who, however, was largely silent during the process).

It certainly gave an enormous boost to the Central fellowship in North America, who before the reunion were in the minority. And the Bereans outside of Texas have dwindled to a community that is difficult to see as self-sustaining. The reunion was overwhelmingly successful, with amazingly little second-guessing, and the opposition that arose was rebuffed by John Carter. It also helped that one of the two “Berean” magazines being circulated, the *Junior Christadelphian*, was edited by a proponent of reunion.

*Peter Hemingray*

**Notes:**

1. This letter was dated July 1923, and written to CC Walker for publishing in *The Christadelphian*. He did not: it is found in *The Berean*, 1923, p 288.
2. CC Walker wrote “With regard, I enclose a copy of a circular that we are just issuing. With regard to (those whom we receive in fellowship): for brother Strickler, I am afraid the case is not so simple as you imagine. If these brethren “denied that Jesus Christ came in the flesh” we should be able to deal with them out of hand... brother Strickler, he affirms the very opposite. “He believes the nature of Christ was the same as ours, scripturally stated thus, ‘as concerning the flesh Christ came’ suffering with us all the disabilities of our nature from Adam because of sin.” *The Christadelphian*, 1924 p. 459.
3. *The Christadelphian*, 1921 p. 527.
4. John Carter said about Strickler: “the conclusion [was] that at the end of his life he did not accept without reserve some of the clauses in The Statement of Faith concerning the nature of man and the sacrifice of Christ”. *The Christadelphian*, 1939, p. 84.
5. *The Christadelphian*, 1940 p. 564

6. It seems as though the newly formed (October, 1939) Central ecclesia sent this letter. See *The Christadelphian*, 1940, p. 296
7. This “Ten Point” statement was criticized in *The Berean* at the time, but later became desired as part of any reunion by many in the Bereans. 50 years later some former Bereans were still regretting its lack in talking about the reunion to me.
8. There is no mention of this in *The Berean* at the time.
9. *Jr Christadelphian*, July 1953 p 4. Note the magazine was “Berean”: there were very few “Central” Christadelphians in California at the time
10. *The Christadelphian*, 1952, p. 375
11. *The Christadelphian*, 1965, p. 320
12. Wikipedia has 262 in North America, and about 150 in Africa.
13. See *The Tidings*, 2009, pages 30 and 76, by George Booker.

## Reflection

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### Hospitality and Xenophobia

*“Share with God’s people who are in need.  
Practice hospitality [‘philoxenia’]” (Rom 12:13).*

#### Hospitality

The word “*philoxenia*” is translated “hospitality” not only by the KJV, ASV and ESV but also by the NEB, NIV, NET and NRSV — in short, by the great majority of the versions that are read today.

Though translated “hospitality” by so many versions, it is worth mentioning that the Greek word itself more literally means “love for strangers”, that is, those from other locales and other races. This same word also appears in Heb 13:2:

*“Do not forget to entertain [‘phileo’: love] strangers [‘xenos’], for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it” (Heb 13:2).*

Today hospitality management is a popular subject for university study. We might know someone who tells us he or she is majoring in hospitality management at such-and-such college. This course of study can lead to various jobs in what is also called the service industry, including hotel management, event planning, theme parks, transportation, cruise lines, and other fields in the broader tourism industry. It is thought-provoking that, two thousand years ago, the apostle Paul encouraged all believers to follow this “profession” — presumably without any compensation!

#### Xenophobia

As previously mentioned, the word “hospitality” is a combination of two Greek words: “*phileo*” (love) and “*xenos*” (strangers, or more specifically foreigners and aliens — people of a different nationality or ethnicity).

The opposite of “*philoxenia*” (love for strangers) is “*xenophobia*” (fear of strangers). The whole history of mankind is filled with examples of xenophobia, the fear of strangers and those who look different or speak with a different accent. Every

country and every people, it seems, has had a natural distaste for those who are “alien” to themselves. Some social scientists go so far as to propose that this is a warning signal programmed into our genes, a sort of natural protective instinct warning against the people who don’t look like oneself and one’s family. This discomfort with strangers begets distrust; distrust begets fear; and fear can finally beget out-and-out hatred, all with very little or no provocation.

In its most extreme cases, xenophobia has led to the wholesale enslavement or slaughter of different tribes or races. In our own country we can point to examples of xenophobia, ranging from the truly horrific to the relatively mild:

- a 250-year history of African-American slavery, and 150 years of “Jim Crow” discrimination that followed;
- ethnic cleansing of native American tribes, which accompanied the settlement of our frontier;
- a general internment, or imprisonment, of Japanese-Americans during World War II;
- a pervasive generation-spanning discrimination against every new wave of immigrants; and
- the relatively harmless forms of ethnic jokes, usually culminating in pejorative descriptions of the others’ intelligence, culture, traditions or physical appearance — with no particular regard for truth,
- and, more recently in the USA, an attempt to keep away from our borders anyone who is not a white, Christian, affluent immigrant — or preferably all immigrants.

### **The history of hospitality**

In the first century, the hospitality which Paul wrote about was very necessary and helpful. Inns of the day were often fronts for prostitution or other immoral activities. Respectable travelers avoided most inns at all costs, unless there was really no other option. In addition, they were often dirty, pest-ridden and costly. Then there was the element of physical danger. Plato compared innkeepers to pirates who held their “guests” to ransom before they would allow them to escape. And the man having a meal in the tavern might very well be the robber who lay in wait for you along the road the next day.

It is understandable that, in the ancient world, a better option would evolve. A system of “guest-friendships” developed by which families in different parts of the Roman Empire undertook to provide friends, relatives and suitably recommended folks with safe accommodations when they traveled. In larger cities, an official called a “*proxenos*” (literally, “one who acts for, or represents, the stranger”) acted something like an ambassador or consul to arrange suitable lodgings for respectable travelers.

Hospitality might be practiced by believers in Christ toward those who were “strangers” in the formal sense, but also and especially it was to be practiced toward other believers like themselves, who had come from a different place. Church overseers (“bishops”, KJV) were distinguished by their hospitality (1Tim 3:2),

as were elders (“deacons”, KJV) (Titus 1:8). Widows showed their good deeds in being hospitable toward others (1Tim 5:10). More than this, each believer was encouraged to show hospitality toward others: *“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling”* (1Pet 4:8,9).

### **Our unique form of xenophobia**

As Christadelphians, we can also have our own internal — if relatively mild — form of religious xenophobia. It is not programmed into our DNA, perhaps, as traditional xenophobia seems to be, but we have learned its unwritten rules. It goes something like this:

- ‘You know, they aren’t quite like us. I’ve heard that some of them don’t believe everything we do. Not sure what exactly, but better safe than sorry.’
- ‘They don’t read the same Bible version we do. I’ve heard they let anybody break bread. No, I don’t know any details, but I keep hearing it.’
- ‘Never mind how nice they seem. They come from a different background, they have different traditions, and they use different words.’
- ‘Someone told me they have prayer circles, and sing different songs. Sounds too evangelical for us.’
- ‘Those folks don’t even call themselves Christadelphians! Can you believe it? Surely they are not the same as us.’

You might think this sounds rather innocuous. You might think, perhaps, that the problem is being exaggerated. Maybe it seems unimportant to reach out to those “others”. Maybe we should just keep to our own “kind”.

But this thinking can have dangerous and long-lasting consequences. It is most definitely a variant of the broader xenophobia mentioned earlier. More to the point, it is simply wrong — as wrong as claiming, *“I am of Paul... I am of Apollos... I am of Cephas”* (1Cor 1:12).

### **Hospitality’s final victory over xenophobia**

This xenophobia seemingly goes all the way back to the Tower of Babel, where people were scattered over the face of the earth after the confusion of their languages (Gen 11:7-9). But the preaching of Peter and the apostles in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost was — or should have been — the beginning of the end of this discrimination against peoples of different regions and languages: *“Each of us hears... in his own native language... the wonders of God”* (Acts 2:8,11).

The Tower of Babel, and the resultant fear of strangers, ostensibly came to an end with the power of the Holy Spirit on display in Jerusalem that day. Thereafter, *“all the believers were together and had everything in common”, “gave to anyone as he had need”, and “ate together with glad and sincere hearts”* (Acts 2:44-46). This undoing of Babel for the believers continued as the gospel was preached even to the Gentiles (Acts 8; 10; 11; etc.). For those in Christ, a natural “fear of strangers” was to give way to a spiritual “love of strangers”, exemplified in the “hospitality” and “kindness” (1Cor 13:4; Eph 4:32) which so characterized the

first-century fellowship of believers. While such a love proved imperfect in its practice, due to our innate human inadequacies, these events foreshadowed the ultimate end of xenophobia.

More directly, Christ and his apostles explicitly exhort believers to “love aliens, or foreigners”. Although this may be very much contrary to human nature, it is commanded:

*“For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal 3:27-29).*

The final and total abolition of xenophobia is described in the Kingdom vision, where John saw “a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb” (Rev 7:9).

That final victory is a victory of hospitality over xenophobia. It is also, at its most elemental level, the final victory of love over fear — specifically, the final victory of love for strangers over fear of strangers. Why? Because, of all people we might encounter, we are the least likely to love strangers, and the most likely to fear them. But perfect love can conquer even the most powerful and pervasive of fears.

Christ’s perfect love for us, once we realize it and act upon it, means that we no longer have any reason to fear. In his life and death, Christ has rescued us from the relentless clutches of our worst enemies, Sin and Death (Heb 2:15). Thus freed, we may now serve our Lord and Master without fear (Luke 1:74), because we need never again be “slaves” to any fear. Moreover, in Christ we have become true sons and daughters of God our Father (Rom 8:15).

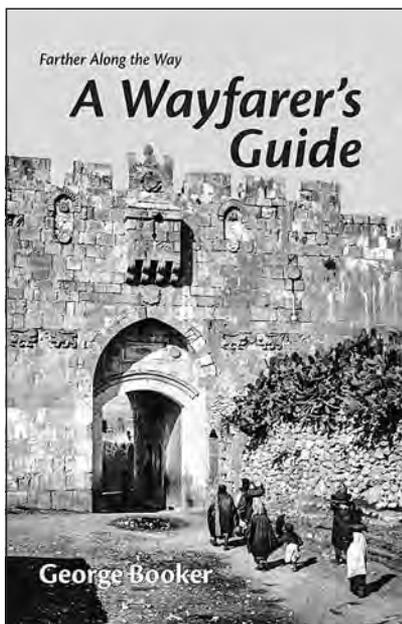
By serving others we serve Christ and his Father. Just as Christ’s love for us knows no bounds and no limits, so our loving service toward others should be boundless and limitless — extending even to the strangers whom, in the natural course of things, we might never think of loving. In this way, we plumb the depths and soar to the heights of true love, we “grasp how wide and long... is the love of Christ”, and we know personally “this love that surpasses knowledge” (Eph 3:18,19).

The apostle John, the one whom Jesus especially loved, and the one who wrote especially about love, writes to us believers: “There is no fear in love... perfect love drives out fear” (1John 4:18).

No longer are we strangers to each other, foreigners to be feared, but rather brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, in Christ. How can it be otherwise for the people who, regardless of their ethnicity, have been “purchased... from every tribe and language and people and nation” (Rev 5:9), to become themselves “God’s elect... aliens and strangers in the world” (1Pet 1:1; 2:11)? Now we are united in our common faith, by the uncommon love of Christ, through the exceptional gift of God. “Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers, even though they are strangers [xenos] to you” (3John 5).

*George Booker (Austin Leander, TX)*

## Farther Along the Way: A Wayfarer's Guide by George Booker



This is the third book in Bro George's "On the Way" series. All three are collections of essays on a variety of topics bearing on our walk in the Lord. The essays bear a strong family resemblance to George's "Thoughts on the Way" column in this magazine — no accident, as some have appeared here. Mixed in are articles that have been published in other Christadelphian magazines over the years, and others that appear for the first time.

I was encouraged to review this book, primarily because my family shares part of the focus of the Introduction, which is entitled "Hill Country Memories". It is a historical reminiscence, from the initial settling (at least by people of European ancestry) of the region of Texas called the Hill Country, continuing to the early Christadelphians in the area, down to the

role of Bro George's family. My own family comes into the story in the late 1800's and down into the twentieth century. My great-grandfather Brother A.H. Zilmer, and later my grandfather Brother Herbert Zilmer, spent a lot of time in Texas, specifically in my mother's home ecclesia in San Saba, George's hometown. This resulted in my parents meeting and ultimately marrying.

The Preface and Introduction of the book make interesting reading, certainly for those whose families are mentioned, and I think they will also be of interest to many others. The meat of the book, though, is the essays which follow. These are an assortment: some shorter and some longer, some word studies and some reflections, some inspired by a Bible passage and others by a hymn or even by a secular writer. Some are humorous, some comfort like a warm blanket, and others are distinctly less comfortable, intentionally yanking that blanket off. All are interesting and thought provoking.

My wife and I have enjoyed reading these together, one or two articles at a time. Whether we ended up agreeing (mostly) or reserving judgment (occasionally), we have been given some worthwhile thoughts to ponder "Along the Way".

*Paul Zilmer (Champaign County, IL)*

# Books from *The Christadelphian Tidings*

**\*\* NEW! \*\***

## **A Wayfarer's Guide**

*by George Booker*

A resource for fellow travelers on the Way of Life: word studies, insights into details of Scripture, perspectives on difficult questions, and analogies that relate to the spiritual life.

Published: Jan 2018 - 301 pages. \$9.00 USD (plus S&H)

### **Little Words, by John C. Billelo**

Explore the meanings of key Bible words, their subtleties of meaning and their applications to our walk in Christ. Published: May 2017 \$8.00 US (278 pages).

### **CAIN — His Life and Legacy, by Matt Harrison**

Probes the lessons of Cain and his time before the Flood and explores questions Bible students have long asked. \$5.00 US (106 pages).

### **On the Way: Bible Studies, Exhortations, Meditations and Musings, by George Booker**

Insights, reflections, practical issues, difficult passages, personal observations and more to uplift and encourage all those "on the Way". \$9.00 US (309 pages).

### **Observations along the Way, A Bible Journal, by George Booker**

A sequel to "on the Way". An album of a spiritual journey, offering encouragement and food for thought to fellow travelers along the Way to the Kingdom. \$9.00 US (305 pages).

### **The Ecclesia at Ephesus, by Ryan Mutter**

Studying the Ecclesia at Ephesus provides powerful lessons in spiritual growth relevant in today's times. \$9.00 US (soft cover, 264 pages, with color maps).

### **Bible Guidelines for a Happy Marriage, by John C. Billelo**

Sound, proactive, Biblical advice on how to build and maintain a happy marriage. \$6.00 US (soft cover, 127 pages).

### **The Creation Text: Studies in Early Genesis, by David Levin**

Forty-nine studies offer fresh insights into early Genesis by examining the text and structure of the first five chapters. \$12.00 US (364 pages).

### **Pictures of Redemption, by George Booker**

Explores parables, analogies, and figures of speech used in Scripture to illustrate the many facets of redemption. \$6.00 US (soft cover, 192 pages).

#### **HOW TO ORDER:**

- **Online** – [www.tidings.org](http://www.tidings.org) (Go to 'Books')
- **E-mail** – [books@tidings.org](mailto:books@tidings.org)
- **Telephone** – Karen Guist, 440-227-0212
- **Mail** – Tidings Books, 11659 Caves Rd., Chesterland, OH 44026

**Shipping and handling extra. Make checks payable to *The Christadelphian Tidings*.**

# Bible Mission

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## 47th Guyana Bible School 2018

### Yesteryear

Bible Schools in Guyana are a most welcome and highly anticipated feature of our annual calendar of events. They are always held over the Easter Week-end, i.e. from Good Friday to Easter Monday.



This writer well remembers the very first such occasion held in Guyana in 1969 at the Eccles Hall (just outside the capital city of Georgetown). I had recently migrated from the hinterland town of Bartica to take up a junior post at the Ministry of Finance in Georgetown. I recall being fascinated with the large crowd of brethren from the then four ecclesias that packed the relatively limited hall space over that Easter weekend to hear our brothers from the UK deliver in-depth studies from the Scriptures, while coastal Guyana revelled in its annual festive mood of kite-flying at the sea-walls.

This most worthy spiritual festival has survived and thrived over the forty-nine intervening years, bringing us unto the 21st century and eventually (may it please our Heavenly Father) the long expected return of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus the Messiah.

### Planning

There are six ecclesias in Guyana, South America, five of which take turns in hosting the Bible School. This year 2018, it was Georgetown's turn, having a membership of about 25 brethren. While planning is done at the CALSG level (Committee of joint ABs of all the ecclesias), most of the actual work preparation is done by the sisters. To say they are a hardworking, closely knit group, is an understatement!

## **Speakers**

Our choice of speakers for 2018 were Brothers John Perks of Ottawa, Canada, and Tyrone Smartt of South Ozone Park, New York City. Bro. John previously served as guest speaker for our Kilcoy Ecclesia in 2014 so was no stranger to Guyana, and this time brought his dear Sister/wife, Rachel.

Our other speaker, Brother Tyrone Smartt, is a transplanted Guyanese who left these shores more than 25 years ago and is known for the teaching and speaking skills he developed along the way, bringing his technical knowledge of the human frame to complement the spiritual lessons of the Scriptures. He too was accompanied by his dear Sister/wife Carrol, also of Guyana, and who is well liked by us all.

## **Venue and attendance**

One concern that kept gnawing at our agenda was the inadequacy of our Georgetown Hall as a venue to host the possible 100 attendants, plus children. It was recalled that the last Caribbean Triennial Youth Camp was held free of cost at the local Teachers' Training College located just outside of Georgetown. Thanks be to God, they gave permission without hesitation, again at no cost!

Indeed, the chosen venue, known as "The Cyril Potter College of Education", is the national training institution for professional teachers and carries quite a huge auditorium which can house more than 200 persons with individual chair-cum-desk, comfortably. Thankfully so... for our attendance over the four-day festival ranged between 80 and 120, the maximum being of course, at the Memorial Service on Easter Sunday.

## **Overseas visitors**

Our overseas guests for this occasion included brothers and sisters from several New York ecclesias, as well as from California, Georgia, Tobago and Ontario.

## **Theme and topics**

The overall theme chosen for this 2018 School was: "Let us build the House of God with sacrifices of thanksgiving".

Bro. John Perks comforted us with the word of exhortation at the Sunday Memorial Service as well as his classes. We were all truly grateful for this series on "Modern Day Sacrifices" because not many of us are very knowledgeable of this aspect of the Mosaic Law. Bro. John skilfully took us through the peculiar purposes of the various offerings and equipped us with a better understanding of the relevance of their spiritual parallels today.

Bro. Tyrone Smartt's classes were titled "Hidden in the House of God". He is a very forceful speaker 'a la Caribbean' and one felt compelled to ingest his every word which was liberally punctuated with real life examples taken from his professional work as well as his personal experiences. He was able to trace — at grass roots level, the essential failure of human systems to deal with the 'tricks' of the mind and how the Word of God offers the only salient solutions

to life's inescapable problems. His presentations were particularly suited to the younger generation.

### **Appreciation**

These notes would not be complete without special appreciation to those who catered to our dietary needs...and delights. The food and distribution thereof were of a very high quality and standard and quite balanced to take care of our varied tastes and preferences. Those with vehicles worked hard to ensure we arrived on time for classes in order to meet the uncompromising discipline of our dedicated presidents.

Thanks especially to CBMC for the indispensable financial assistance rendered in making this whole venture possible from year to year. Their contribution cannot be limited to financial terms when we consider the wise and otherwise willing support received, particularly through our Link Brothers, Mark Carr, Rafeek Soolaman, and Ted Sleeper. Please accept our sincere thanks dear brothers. Thanks to everyone who assisted in one way or another to make our Bible School the success it turned out to be.

All in all, what a wonderful time we all had! We were truly filled and energised to meet the challenges that are sure to come our way in the succeeding days that lead up to our Lord's return. May the grace of our Lord and Saviour be always sufficient to combine with our efforts and help us to be overcomers as we live and labour toward that desired goal of the Kingdom of God. May it come soon!

*Written by David Andrews, Georgetown, Guyana  
Submitted by Jan Berneau, CBMA/CBMC Publicity*

## **Puerto Rico Brethren — after Hurricane Maria**

In April 2018, Sis. Kathy and I had the opportunity to return to Puerto Rico and revisit the brethren on the island. We had been meaning to go back for some time and last year's Hurricane Maria (September 2017) only made us more determined. The Category 4/5 storm was the tenth largest, recorded hurricane in the Atlantic and resulted in death and devastation in many parts of the island. Eighty percent of the electric power grid was destroyed or damaged and people were without power, communication, and even water for weeks or months. The frail and elderly in hard to get to inland areas were very vulnerable to sickness and loss of life due to poor access and lack of medical services. Truly God's "stormy wind" is nothing to be trifled with. Many on the island lost their livelihood, schools were closed and there has become a large exodus of the island's citizens to the US mainland.

We flew into the capitol city, San Juan and then took a smaller plane to Mayaguez on the west coast. The west coast wasn't as badly damaged, however, and we didn't have any trouble getting around, although we had to watch out for low hanging, high voltage lines, potholes (from the flooding) and swerving cars. However, in spite of the devastation, nature's recovery has been amazing and after six months the natural beauty of the island is starting to re-emerge.

The island may never fully recover economically, but God’s healing power reminded us how quickly the earth will be restored to its original glory in the Kingdom.



We were very pleased to find Bro. Miguel and Sis. Aida Robles unharmed and well in Ponce, and we spent a lovely Sunday with them. The Robles are aging (in their 70s) and have some health issues, but their faith is strong and we were humbled by their resilience and fortitude. They described to us their ordeal and how they hunkered down

during the storm and survived on limited food and water rations that they had stored in advance, but were without power for about two months with phones and communications unavailable longer. They never doubted that God would see them through. At our breaking of bread, we talked about God’s wind-blown spirit or ruach, the different ways in which it can manifest itself, and whether natural disasters like storms and hurricanes can turn people to God.

The Robles’ oldest son, Miguelito was also there. He looks after his mom and dad while studying for a college degree and holding down a part time job as a wedding photographer. He shared that everything on the island is getting more challenging and that the elderly struggle to get by on very small social security payments. We have some hope that he may come to the truth and realize the glory and beauty of the kingdom.

Unfortunately, at the last-minute, Bro. Edgardo Saldana, the third remaining Christadelphian on the island could not join us. We were sorry to miss him. He lives in the town of Carolina near San Juan, lost his job after the hurricane and has only recently found work employment.

Kathy and I still see opportunity for the gospel on the island, although God’s door has been slow to open. We found people open to talking about God in this time of trouble. You can get by with English, at least in the larger coastal towns, so speaking Spanish is not a necessity. Miguelito speaks good English and is happy to be a translator.

Please remember these brethren in your prayers and do consider a trip to Puerto Rico. It is not hard to make a weekend visit especially if you are traveling to the other islands. The airport was packed with travelers and tourists in route to other islands. Most services in the large towns are up and running and it is easy to book a hotel room and car. Flights are cheap too. Puerto Rico is an American Territory and no passport is needed. It is generally safe to get around and the Robles love visitors and are very hospitable.

*Written by Martin and Kathy Owen, San Diego Ecclesia  
Submitted by Jan Berneau, CBMA/CBMC, Publicity*

# Christadelphian Caribbean Youth Camp (CCYC) 2018 Jamaica — Moneague College — St. Ann August 11th to 18th, 2018

## INVITATION TO YOUTH CIRCLERS

As has been previously communicated, you are cordially invited to attend the 2018 Christadelphian Caribbean Youth Camp, which will be held in Jamaica, God willing.

### **Overall Camp Theme:**

Seize the Opportunity – Remember now the Creator in the days of the youth!

**Speaking Brothers:** Andre George (St. Lucia), Gideon Drepaul (NY, USA) and Kevin Hunter (BC, Canada).

It is very important for our planning (e.g. food, accommodations, etc...) to know exactly who is coming. There are qualifications for attending, so please review the qualifications included below. If you would like to attend, please fill out completely the Registration Form and sign the Camp Rules sheet, and return both to us by email to [ccyc2018@gmail.com](mailto:ccyc2018@gmail.com). These forms should be available from your ecclesia. Please notice that there is a camp fee for each attendee.

**Deadline** for submitting camp Registration Forms and signed Camp Rules Sheet (with payment of camp fees — in the case of the Caribbean region) is **June 1, 2018**.

\*\* For those in Jamaica and other Caribbean countries, please submit your camp fee to your local CYC leader, before Camp. (Note: this is a slight change from previous registration memo.)

\*\* For those overseas (North America and other countries), please be prepared to pay upon arrival at Camp.

### **Camp Fees, according to age as of August 11, 2018:**

Overseas Seniors (16 and over)      \$100 US

Overseas Juniors (15 and under)      \$80 US

Local Seniors (Jamaica and other Caribbean countries) (16 and over)      \$50 US

Local Juniors (Jamaica and other Caribbean countries) (15 and under)      \$30 US

We will continue to keep you updated as the camp date approaches, especially in regards to arrival and transportation details and similar important information. If you have any question regarding the camp, please contact the Jamaica Camp Committee at [ccyc2018@gmail.com](mailto:ccyc2018@gmail.com)

We look forward to an exciting time together around God's Word!

*Love in the Hope we share, Brother Keith Kinlocke,  
CBMJ chairman*

**Please note:** If you plan to arrive before and/or stay after the Camp, arrangements must be made prior to arrival — the Jamaica Camp Committee will be happy to assist with these arrangements.

## CRITERIA FOR ATTENDING YOUTH CAMP

### A) Youth Circlers:

- 1) The Youth Camp is open to all Christadelphian young people for primarily 2 age groups - Junior (15 years old and below) and Senior (16 years and over).
- 2) 75% attendance at your local CYC for the year is required for attendance at the camp. (In cases of special circumstances, your CYC leader and/or ecclesial Recording Brother must write a note explaining the circumstances.)
- 3) You must have the recommendation of your CYC leader and/or the Recording Brother of your ecclesia. (See signature places on the registration form.)

### B) Attending Adult Brothers and Sisters:

- 1) Adults must be involved in or actively supporting CYC activities in their ecclesia.
- 2) It is understood that attending adults are there in a support role for the camp and CYC youth. They may be assigned to one of the support roles of the camp which include: Dorm Chaperones, Cooks & Kitchen Support, Camp Nurses
- 3) All adults are required to pay the camp fee.

### C) Children

We understand that some parents who come to help at this camp may have no alternative but to bring their young children (ages 12 and under). Please remember that you are entirely responsible for them. We will endeavor to provide classes for this younger group, however parents and/or guardians must be present during the classes. There will not be any caretaking provisions provided for young children at the camp.

- D) **Visitors** to special activities during the camp are required to pay camp fees for the period they wish to stay, must pay upon arrival.

## News and Notices

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**Please send in news and notices by the 5th of the preceding month;  
please include full name of ecclesia and recording brother.  
Word files or e-mail in text-only format are preferred.**

*The ecclesial position primarily in Ontario, and perhaps elsewhere,  
is at present confused as unity-related matters are being resolved.*

*Intelligence is published for information purposes only without  
endorsement by The Christadelphian Tidings Committee.*

### BEDFORD, NS

Greetings to all our brothers and sisters from us here in Bedford. For health reasons, I have stepped down as recording brother of this ecclesia. Brother Steve Snobelen has kindly agreed to take over this function. His email address is snobelen@dal.ca.

*John Ching*

## **CALGARY, AB**

Bro. Benjamin Ridgway is our new recording brother. He can be contacted at 587-223-3727 or by way of the ecclesial email address of Calgarychristadelphians@gmail.com.

*Jonathan Birney*

## **SUSSEX, NB**

We just held our April Study Weekend and would like to extend a great big thank you to Brother John Mannell of the Mississauga West Ecclesia who treated us to some very informative classes that were enthusiastically presented on Numbers 1-10. We all left with something new to apply in our lives. We thank Brother John for all his hard work in preparing and studying for this Study Weekend.

It is with great sadness and heavy hearts that we report that Brother David Hinsley Green (71) of Sussex, New Brunswick Ecclesia fell asleep in the Lord at hospital while with family on March 27, 2018. Survived by his wife Sister Mary and their three daughters Sisters Marie Baines, Margaret Jones and Joy Harrington, and their families. Brother Dave played a huge part in the Ecclesia, serving in many facets from regular Exhortations, Bible Classes, and Bible Talks, to committee chair for Preaching and Outreach, Arranging Brother and looking after general technology, sound system and recordings. It has left a large hole, they are big shoes to fill. Over the years he has also been a member of the Brantford, Brampton, Church St, and Edmonton Ecclesias with responsibilities from Sunday School Teacher to Recording Brother. He will be missed by all his Brothers and Sisters. We know his suffering with acute leukemia is over now as he awaits the return of our Lord Jesus and the Resurrection.

Our small light-stand is also sad to report that Sister Linda Ikle's father also passed away in March. She is a wonderful big hearted sister that shows love and care for all those that come in contact with her. Your thoughts and prayers are welcome and very much appreciated by her at this difficult time.

*Paul Baines*

## **VANCOUVER BC**

Early in January 2018 our members, Brother Mike and Sister Stella Fahy and their young son, Isaac, moved from Bellingham, WA to Arizona, transferring their membership to the Glendale AZ Ecclesia. We miss them and commend them to the love of the Glendale brethren (and to the sun and heat of the southwest US!). Not many weeks later Brother Femi and Sister Folu Ogunji, with their daughter Amanda, arrived in Vancouver from Lagos, Nigeria. After a month living with an ecclesial family they found their own accommodation, a nearby school for Amanda and contract work for Femi — an almost unheard of pace for newcomers to the Metro area. We thank our heavenly Father for His care and for the love and fellowship mutually experienced.

We continue to enjoy the fellowship of visiting brothers and sisters, especially appreciating the spiritual blessing of exhortations and other talks by the brethren (Clyde Snobelen (Victoria, BC); Duncan Kenzie and David Snobelen (Saanich Peninsula, BC); Graeme Alexander (Seattle, WA); Andrew Bramhill (Reddich, UK); Tony Ball (Monroe, WA); and Jonathan Lawrence (Prince George, BC)).

Recently we completed a seven-week proclamation series on Wednesdays in the place of our Bible Class under the general theme: "There's more to Life than this!" Our graphics noted 'stress, financial pressures, commuting woes, family problems, etc.', and our topics featured messages from 'The Bible our Guide' to 'Become a Disciple of Christ'. While there were few visitors, we are thankful for the freedom to witness.

Our 2018 fraternal gathering will be October 6-7 lead by Brother Christian Russell, Verdugo Hills Ecclesia. Our theme: "The Journey of the Man of God."

Brother Einar Halbig is now our recording brother (einarvanrecbro@telus.net)

*Phil Snobelen*

## **NORTH AMERICAN CHRISTADELPHIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

In September 2018, God willing, the Christadelphian Sunday School Association (CSSA) in North America commences it's Sunday school programs. Sunday Schools across North America are invited to join and participate in this program. The CSSA will be studying Stage 1 of 5 which will consider the wonderful examples in the beginning of the Bible.

The CSSA provides an easy way to order lesson books, study notes, project books, worksheets and teachers resources. It is both our privilege and our responsibility to raise and to teach our children, the 'heritage of the Lord' to fear Him, to love Him, and to walk according to His ways.

For further information contact Bro. Stephen and Sis. Tanya Wilton, 1181 Foxglove Place, Mississauga, Ontario L5V 2N1, Canada. Email: [cssabooks@yahoo.ca](mailto:cssabooks@yahoo.ca), Phone 905.814.0777 (text and phone) and website: [www.cssa.asn.au](http://www.cssa.asn.au)

## **TESTIMONY PUBLICATIONS**

The books listed below are available from Testimony Publication while supplies last at the heavily discounted prices plus postage as shown below. Priced in \$US they will be invoices in local currency and be payable in either the USA or Canada. An invoice will be sent with the books.

Man and Woman	<i>Bro. Michael Lewis</i>	\$0.75
Moses, Earth's Meekest Man	<i>Bro. John Mitchell</i>	\$3.60
One Man's Pilgrimage	<i>Bro. John Mitchell</i>	\$2.85
Paul The Apostle By Grace	<i>Bro. John Mitchell</i>	\$2.85
Spirit In The New Testament	<i>Bre. Reg Carr and Edward Whittaker</i>	\$1.50
Testimony Handbook	<i>Compilation</i>	\$2.85
The Exodus – A Commentary on Exodus 1-15	<i>Bro. Mark Vincent</i>	\$1.50
The Patriarchal Family	<i>Bro. John Mitchell</i>	\$2.85
The Pen Of A Ready Writer	<i>Bro. Tony Benson</i>	\$3.60
Which Translation	<i>Compilation</i>	\$1.50

Postage costs from the US would be approximately 1 book \$6.90, 2 books \$8.40, and 3-5 books \$12.15.

Orders to: Peter and Norma Forbes, 16 Mountfields Drive, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 3JE, UK. Email: [peterlforbes@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:peterlforbes@tiscali.co.uk).

# Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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Please send in notices at least two months before the date of the event.  
Three months is preferable. Send all submissions to [kathytidings@aol.com](mailto:kathytidings@aol.com)

## JUNE, 2018

**2-3 New York Fraternal Gathering** at the South Ozone Park Hall. The speaker is Bro. Dennis Bevans (Austin Leander, TX) on “1 Peter: Love Learned by Experience”. For more information contact Bro. Ben Drepaal at [yerubbaal@yahoo.com](mailto:yerubbaal@yahoo.com) or 718-847-9638.

**15-17 New York Metropolitan Sister’s Retreat** at the Homewood Suites, Lancaster, PA. Our speaker will be Sis. Pattie Duke (Mount Grace, Tobago, WI). Her topic is “And God has a Plan”. This weekend represents a wonderful opportunity to study the word of God within a community of women who love the word of God. For registration, please contact Sis. Averil Ferguson at (718) 877-6616, or email her at [adferguson922@gmail.com](mailto:adferguson922@gmail.com).

**30-July 8 Mid-Atlantic Christadelphian Bible School** at Shippensburg University in Shippensburg, PA. The theme this year is “The Voice of the Lord” — Psalm 29. The Youth Program theme will be “Lessons in Godly Relationships”. Speakers are Bro. Frank Abel (Book Road, ON) on “Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil” (adults) and “Reasoning from the Scriptures” (teens). Bro. Jesse Adair will join Bro. Frank in teaching the teens. Bro. Andrew Bramhill (Redditch, UK) on “The Ecclesia at Ephesus” (adults) and “The Women of Matthew’s Genealogy” (teens). Bro. Matt Norton (Gosford, New South Wales, AUS) will speak on the subject “The Return of Christ”. Online registration: [www.midatlanticbibleschool.org](http://www.midatlanticbibleschool.org). E-mail: (Information only) [macbs@live.com](mailto:macbs@live.com).

## JULY, 2018

**8-14 Southwest Bible School** in Kerrville, Texas. The speakers and classes are Bro. Frank Abel on “The Fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil” (adults) and “Reasoning from the Scriptures” (teens); Bro. Simon O’Grady on “Jesus of Nazareth — The Early Years from His Birth to Ministry” (adults) and “Typology and Symbol” (teens); and Bro. Andrew Bramhill on “One Man should Die for the People” (adults) and “Questions, questions” (teens). Forms and registration information can be found at our website [swcbs.com](http://swcbs.com).

**14-21 Manitoulin Family Bible Camp.** Speakers: Bro. Bryan Styles (Livonia, MI) on “Lessons in Colossians”; and Bro. Stephen Palmer (Cardiff, UK) on “The Word of Truth”. See the camp website for full details [www.manitoulinfamilycamp.com](http://www.manitoulinfamilycamp.com).

**14-22 Midwest Bible School** at Trine University, Angola, IN. Our speakers are Bro. Simon O’Grady (Tawa, Wellington, NZ) on “Jesus of Nazareth”; Bro. Gary Cousens (Brant County, ON) on “Nehemiah” and Bro. Jim Cowie (Moreton Bay, Brisbane, AUS) on “The Foundation of the World.” Contact Bro. Mike Livermore, 44943 Yorkshire Drive, Novi, MI 48375 or (248) 462-5740; email: [mike.live@gmail.com](mailto:mike.live@gmail.com) or visit [www.midwestbibleschool.com](http://www.midwestbibleschool.com).

**22-28 Pacific Coast Bible School** at Idyllwild Pines Camp, CA. Speakers are Bro. Stephen Whitehouse (Birmingham, Hall Green, UK), David Andrews (Georgetown, Guyana), and David Wisniewski (Brant County, ON). Please visit our website for more information and registration [californiabibleschool.org](http://californiabibleschool.org).

**29-Aug 4 Rogue River Bible School.** Our speakers are Bro. Steve Hornhardt (Salisbury, AU) on the “Three Woe Trumpets of the Apocalypse — Blessed is He That Watcheth”; Bro. Stephen Bartholomew (Okanagan Central, BC) on “Jeremiah — The Man and His Message”; and Bro. Greg Robinson (Thousand Oaks, CA) on “Judges — They Ceased Not From Their

Own Doings". Contact Sis. Pat Posey at pat1posey@gmail.com or School Committee Chairman Bro. Robbie Posey at robandlizposey@gmail.com or (541) 479-2837.

**29-Aug 4 Western Bible School** at the Menucha Conference Center in Corbett, Oregon. For more information see our website [www.menuchabibleschool.org](http://www.menuchabibleschool.org). For registration, contact Sis. Mary Ellen Laird, WCBS Registrar, lairdme@web-ster.com or 503-807-7076.

## **AUGUST, 2018**

**11-18 Triennial Caribbean Youth Camp** at Montague's Teachers College, Jamaica. The speakers will be Bro. Andre George (St. Lucia, VI), Bro. Gideon Drepaul (Brooklyn, NY), and Bro. Kevin Hunter (Saanich Peninsula, BC). The topic is "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth (Eccl 12:1) — Accept the Challenge & Seize the Opportunity!" The CBMA and CBMC are accepting donations to help pay for scholarships see [cbma.net](http://cbma.net). For more information contact Bro. David Giordano, Field Worker [giordavid@gmail.com](mailto:giordavid@gmail.com) or Bro. Keith Kinlocke, CBMJ chairman, [kkinlocke@yahoo.com](mailto:kkinlocke@yahoo.com).

**20-25 Lakefield Bible School** at Lakefield College, near Peterborough, Ontario. Speakers: Bro. Mark Carr and Bro. Paul Zilmer. For information and online registration go to [www.lakefieldbibleschool.com](http://www.lakefieldbibleschool.com).

## **SEPTEMBER, 2018**

**21-22 Vancouver Island Sisters' Weekend** in Victoria, BC. Study will be lead by Sis. Jane Tunnell (San Diego, CA). Topic: TBA. Registration Fee: \$50.00. Contact Sister Rosa Bailey, 3-1431 Simon Road, Victoria, BC, V8X 3G9. or [rosabailey@shaw.ca](mailto:rosabailey@shaw.ca).

**29-30 Kouts, IN Fall Study Weekend** Time: 10 am Venue: Woodland Park Community Center, 2100 Willowcreek Road, Portage, IN 46368. Speaker: Bro. Everett Muniz (Paris Avenue, OH); theme: "Forget Not All His Benefits: Remembering God in an Age of Distraction". Please contact Bro. Joe Bennett at [jkb8275@comcast.net](mailto:jkb8275@comcast.net).

**29-30 Ontario Fall Gathering** at Maple High School, Vaughan, ON. Speaker: Bro. Tim Galbraith (Hyderabad, India) Theme: "Choose Life" For more info contact: Bro. Bruce Abel at [br71abel@gmail.com](mailto:br71abel@gmail.com) or 519-925-5297.

## **OCTOBER, 2018**

**6-7 Vancouver, BC Fraternal Gathering** will be lead by Bro. Christian Russell (Verdugo Hills, CA). Our theme: "The Journey of the Man of God".

**19-21 20th Anniversary Women at the Well** retreat in Palm Springs, California. Sis. Jane Hewitson leading classes on "Sisters Living in Harmony in the Lord". Register with \$50 deposit to Sis. Bonnie Sommerville [kenandbonnies@gmail.com](mailto:kenandbonnies@gmail.com).

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## **SPECIAL INVITATION**

For some years, unity discussions have been taking place with the Churches of God of the Abrahamic Faith. In the interest of promoting friendship and mutual understanding, we print the following invitation:

You, your family, and friends are invited to the 43rd Annual Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith Gathering at Slippery Rock University in Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania, NEW LOCATION! July 23rd to 29th, 2018. Our speakers are: Bro. Martin Webster: "I Have Provided Me a King", Bro. Brian Ross: "Faith in Action: A Study of James" and Bro. Ed Binch: "When Jesus Had Finished." Contact Bro. Brad Rek at 330-609-6957, or [brad.rek@gmail.com](mailto:brad.rek@gmail.com). Visit our website at [www.abrahamicfaithgathering.org](http://www.abrahamicfaithgathering.org) for more information.

# Thoughts on the Way

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## “A Place Where Two Ways Meet”

As he began the last week of his ministry, Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. When he and his disciples approached a village along the way, he sent two disciples ahead and gave them instructions for finding the colt (the foal of a donkey; Matt 21:2,5), which he would ride into Jerusalem:

*“Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you doing this?’ tell him, ‘The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly.’ They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway” (Mark 11:2-4).*

Instead of “*outside in the street, tied at a doorway*”, the KJV has: “*tied by the door without in a place where two ways met.*” The Greek word “*amphodon*” (“outside in the street”) describes the entrance into or the exit from a large house, or compound with several dwellings. The entrance would be a gate, or doorway, in the wall which separated the compound from the street and adjoining buildings. This entrance was at “*the place where two ways met*”.

This suggests a wealthy family with servants. Possibly some of those servants, who were also disciples of Jesus, had prepared a colt for the Master to ride. Following Jesus’ instructions, the disciples found the colt at the very “*place where two ways met*” (Mark 11:4).

Jesus was drawing ever nearer to the cross. It is fitting that he spoke of the “place” where two ways meet, because he was that “place”! One portion of the Roman cross would be upright, pointing toward heaven; the other would be horizontal, as though representing the earth. When placed together at right angles, the two pieces represented the intersection of heaven and earth. In his birth, Jesus was both son of Mary and Son of God. In his sacrifice and resurrection, he would become the true mercy-seat (or atonement cover – NIV) of God: (Heb 9:5; Rom 3:25), the “place” where God would meet with man, and the “place” where man could come to find forgiveness and mercy in time of need.

The cross on which the Savior died symbolized the meeting of two “ways”. He was the place where the Creator of the universe entered into the life of the world. The place where He set up His true tabernacle (John 1:14; Heb 8:2) among men. The place where He might be worshiped in spirit and truth, or “*a true spirit*” (John 4:23). The place where His heaven-sent grace might overflow and cleanse our earth-bound sin (Rom 5:20,21).

The cross on Golgotha became, in fact and then in memory, the meeting place and the crossing place — where sinful man might find comfort under the protecting wings of the cherubim of glory. There darkness would be swept away by light, hate overcome by love, and death swallowed up in victory:

- As the cross beckoned Jesus, one disciple came to a tragic parting of the ways with his leader (Matt 27:5), while another disciple wept tears of remorse for his denial of Jesus (Luke 22:62), and then found forgiveness and a renewed life (John 21:15-17).
- As Jesus carried his cross to the place of execution, a passing stranger was drafted, probably against his will, to bear the cross for Jesus, after which it seems that he willingly picked up his own cross and followed Jesus for the rest of his life. *“A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross” (Mark 15:21).*
- At the cross, and on the cross, a convicted criminal found faith sufficient to grasp redemption at the last possible moment: *“Lord, remember me when you come in your kingdom” (Luke 23:42).*
- At the cross, one of Israel’s leading teachers found the courage to put aside his earlier fear of even being seen with Jesus (John 3:1-8), to give openly the last tribute to a dead Savior: *“And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury” (John 19:39-40).* Thereby he was to embrace a hope which surpassed anything he had learned or taught before.
- Blinded by the light of a risen Lord Jesus, a sworn enemy of the early believers turned aside from the Damascus Road and the way of persecution, and took another way — becoming a great light to the Gentiles while preaching *“Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1Cor 2:2)*, a new gospel of freedom and peace for an enslaved and troubled world: *“Then he (Ananias) said: ‘The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard’ ” (Acts 22:14-15).*

All of us who believe have come to “a place where two ways meet”. Perhaps it happened when we quite young, and parents or Sunday school teachers pointed us toward a new and living way. Perhaps it happened later in life, when a chance conversation, pamphlet, advertisement, or website beckoned us, and whispered: *“Here is the way; walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls” (Isa 30:21; Matt 11:29).*

It has been remarked that no ordinary human being could have “invented” Jesus Christ. Only an All-Powerful, All-Wise God could have created such a Man. The sole remedy for a sinful, dying world is a perfectly righteous and ever-living Savior — one who doesn’t sit somewhere out of reach, paying no attention to mere mortals, but rather lives among us, in our hearts and minds, and is always available to hear our prayers. In him and him alone, our worldly way can join his spiritual way to become a part of “the way to the tree of life”. He is truly the “place where two ways meet”. Let us pray that those two “ways”, now united in one, may never be severed.

*George Booker*

## John Carter, the editor who united the Body

In the account of the reunion of the Bereans in North America with the Central community, the spark that initiated this happy event was John Carter, editor of *The Christadelphian* magazine from 1937 until his death in 1962. It was the first of the three successive reunions we will consider.

He was born close to Halifax, in an industrial area in the North of England. His father, Spencer, became a grocer after his birth in 1899, and John followed this occupation. His family had joined with the Fraternal Visitor fellowship upon the division

in 1885, and it was in this community that John was baptized in 1906. He quickly became well known: by 1910 he was regularly lecturing at Halifax and elsewhere. He married in 1912: it was in that same year the both his mother and his maternal grandmother died. It seems from the accounts that it was this grandmother who was the major influence in his life, for she had been baptized in 1871, and was recorded as “a remarkable woman”. By 1915 John became dissatisfied with his community and joined the Central meeting in Halifax. He owned his own grocery store, and became Recording Brother of his ecclesia in 1920, which was the same position he was in when he left Halifax in 1934 to join the staff of *The Christadelphian*.

His work for the truth is well known, and his writings, leadership, and steering of the brotherhood through WW2 and its aftermath are well documented, as was his untiring efforts to unite the community.

He remained true to his roots all his life, which was one of frugality and work. His health was deeply affected by his trip to Australia in 1956, and seizures in 1959 and 1961 affected his speech, but not his mind. He grew great satisfaction from seeing both his daughters baptized, and his eldest grandson baptized as well just before he passed away in 1953.

At his death, it was remarked that he had mellowed of late from his Northern ruggedness, “giving the final mold to a character fitted for His Eternal Glory”.

