

# TIDINGS

Volume 83, Number 9, October 2020

## SHOWING LOVE BY HELPING OTHERS

It is **how** we care for those most in need, those deeply bruised, that allows us to really know our love is sincere.



PHOTOGRAPH BY:  
**JEFF GELINEAU** (SIMI HILLS, CA)

*Location: Mount Ascutney, VT*

---

A beautiful hike with the entire family the day after my Dad's funeral brought an entirely new meaning to the changing colors of the trees.

THE CHRISTADELPHIAN  
**TIDINGS**  
OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

is published monthly, except bimonthly in July-August, by The Christadelphian Tidings, 567 Astorian Drive, Simi Valley, CA 93065-5941. FIRST CLASS POSTAGE PAID at Austin, TX and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Christadelphian Tidings, 567 Astorian Dr., Simi Valley, CA 93065.

**Christadelphian Tidings Publishing Committee:** Joe Hill (Chairman), John Bilello, Peter Bilello, Randy Davenport, Clive Drepaal, Kevin Flatley, Jeff Gelineau, Duncan Kenzie, William Link, Alan Markwith, Ted Sleeper, and Ken Sommerville.

**Christadelphian Tidings Editorial Committee:** Dave Jennings (Editor), Section Editors: Chuck Link (Life Application), Duncan Kenzie (Exhortation and Consolation), Kristin Atwood (Music and Praise), Richard Morgan (Exposition), Joe Hill (First Principles), Dave Jennings (Preaching and Teaching), Jan Berneau (Christadelphian Bible Mission of the Americas / Canada), George Booker, (Thoughts on the Way, Q&A), John Bilello (Letters to the Editor), Lori Cusenza (News and Notices), Jeff Gelineau (Subscriptions), Melinda Flatley (Writer Recruitment and Final Copy), and Ethel Archard (Books).

**Subscriptions: The Tidings** Magazine is provided **FREE**. The Magazine is available in PDF Format online at [tidings.org](http://tidings.org). If you would like to order a printed subscription to **The Tidings** you may do so simply by making a donation to cover the printing costs. The Suggested Donation for printing and shipping is **USD \$50.00**; we ask for a Minimum Donation which is **USD \$25.00**. If you can afford to donate more, please do so in order to help out those that cannot afford it.

All subscription information is available online at [www.tidings.org](http://www.tidings.org). You may subscribe online and make donations online or by mail to the above address. Information on how to subscribe in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa is also available online at [www.tidings.org/subscribe](http://www.tidings.org/subscribe).

**The Christadelphian Tidings** is published on the 25th of the month for the month following. Items for publication must be received by the 1st of the month. Correspondence to the editor, Dave Jennings at [editor@tidings.org](mailto:editor@tidings.org). Publication of articles does not presume editorial endorsement except on matters of fundamental doctrine as set forth in the BASF. Letters to the editor will only be accepted via e-mail to [letters@tidings.org](mailto:letters@tidings.org). Please include your name, address, e-mail address, and contact phone numbers. Submissions under 300 words are encouraged — the magazine reserves the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity.

# TIDINGS

Volume 83, Number 9 / October, 2020



## IN THIS ISSUE

<b>Editorial</b> — Sustaining the Brokenhearted. . . . .	<b>428</b>
— Water Crystals, <i>Pauline Minter</i> . . . . .	<b>431</b>
<b>Life Application</b> — The Legalism of Cannabis and the Believer, <i>Tim Jennings</i> . . . . .	<b>432</b>
— All One in Church (Part 3), <i>Carmel Page</i> . . . . .	<b>436</b>
<b>Consolation and Exhortation</b> — My Priority, <i>Joshua Budney</i> . . . . .	<b>438</b>
<b>Music and Praise</b> — Music Around the World, <i>Kristin Atwood</i> . . . . .	<b>442</b>
— Singing Praise in Mozambique, <i>Joe Vickers</i> . . . . .	<b>443</b>
<b>Exposition</b> — Questions and Proof Texting, <i>Richard Morgan</i> . . . . .	<b>445</b>
— Exodus, <i>Richard Morgan</i> . . . . .	<b>446</b>
— Grandma Grammar, <i>Melinda Flatley</i> . . . . .	<b>452</b>
— All God's Children Have Names (Part 13), <i>George Booker</i> . . . . .	<b>455</b>
<b>First Principles</b> — Jesus: God with Us (Part 3), <i>Joe Hill</i> . . . . .	<b>460</b>
<b>Take A Marginal note</b> — They are at Their Wit's End, <i>Dave Jennings</i> . . . . .	<b>466</b>
<b>Preaching and Teaching</b> — In Remembrance of Bro. Andre George, <i>Mike Leduke</i> . . . . .	<b>468</b>
<b>Ecclesial News / Letters to the Editor</b> . . . . .	<b>469</b>
<b>Thoughts on the Way</b> — A Dark Reflection, <i>George Booker</i> . . . . .	<b>474</b>



EDITORIAL

# SUSTAINING THE BROKEN- HEARTED

*By Dave Jennings*

**“I don’t know why I’m alive.”**

I doubt there is a counterpart to the helplessness one experiences with the decline of health and death of a loved one. Those who lose a spouse, lose the person who has known them as no other. They shared trust and love through all the ups and downs of life. Their spouse knew them intimately and loved them, despite their weaknesses. Their most consistent support is no longer available to them for the rest of their life. Their companion is gone.

## **A PERSONAL BEREAVEMENT**

My father endured the progression of losing my mom over a three-year battle with cancer. It took an incalculable physical and emotional toll on him. When Mom slowly slipped away in January 2013, part of him died that rainy morning. His identity changed.

The one he shared almost all his adult life with was now gone. Facing the world without her was a new and frightening experience. As a couple, they had done almost everything together for nearly 60 years. She was the social one, the one who engaged others.

I’ve grown even closer to my dad since Mom fell asleep in the Lord. We have talked about things we never discussed before. He is newly transparent about his feelings in ways I would not have predicted. So, when one day he groaned, “I don’t know why I am alive,” I felt a terrible sadness for him. What he didn’t need from me were platitudes about how thankful I am he is still here, or that he still has a lot to live for. Those empty reassurances were unwanted at that moment. Rather, I just tried to listen to him express how hollow he felt and how life had lost much of its meaning for him. When life is

irrevocably changed, our goals and expectations are dashed. We're left with a deep sense of loneliness. It manifests as a silence we may have never known before.

As time has gone on, the answer to my dad's question has become clearer. Our merciful God had a plan and purpose for him he could not have known previously. As his son, I treasure the time with my dad, who turned 92 last month. He is a connection to my past and a constant reminder of the husband and brother in Christ I aspire to be. I love him, his companionship, and his humor.

## A COMMON PLIGHT

My dad's story is far from unique. Across our community, there are so many who have lost spouses. The person God gave them, the one Divinely matched for their unique needs, is now gone.

James wrote, *"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."* (Jas 1:27). What is it about the needs of the fatherless and widows that is so important to God? How does this, along with keeping ourselves unspotted from the world, provoke us to a pure religion? There are so many other things we might have listed well before the needs of the fatherless and widows to describe our religion. But it is how we care for those most in need, those deeply bruised, that allows us to really know our love is sincere. If our love is not "pure," the awkwardness and emotion of caring for those who have lost a spouse will overcome us.

When one loses their spouse, it is probably the most destitute time in life. Each story is different, and the pain and shock vary. There is an intense need for loving and accepting people to share time with and care about them. This is where a devoted community of believers comes in. While others may treat you differently and some may even forsake you, your brothers and sisters will not. We are the ones, of all those in the world, who will love you throughout your entire life, in your best times, and in your darkest.

## A DO AND DON'T LIST

Widows and widowers are generally not looking for anyone to solve their problems or perform the impossible. In fact, sometimes attempts to do so can be unhelpful. What is most appreciated is when someone gives them undivided attention and allows them to express just how sad they are feeling. From the bottom of my heart I thank the brothers and sisters who sat with my father and permitted him to have a heart-to-heart chat. While there is only one who can change lives, and that is our Lord, our role is to support one another, to love, and to listen.

A dear sister shared a few thoughts with me about how to support those who have lost a spouse, she having being widowed at a young age. Soon after the loss occurs, instead of saying, "Call me if you need something," she recommended you plan to call the person yourself. The conversation might just be for a few minutes, once a week or so. Focus on practical issues, such as shopping for food or supplies. If the issues being faced are too significant

for you to deal with individually, reach out to others or your ecclesia. Do not quote platitudes like “We don’t sorrow as others sorrow.” They know these passages well and it leaves them feeling guilty for being sad—an emotion they do not need. If you don’t know what to say or feel self-conscious, just say so. They will understand. Remember, listening is much more important than what you say. American poet Maya Angelou once wrote, “People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” Help them to feel loved. Help them to not feel alone. Pray for them and with them.

As time passes, how can we meet the needs of widows and widowers within the ecclesia? There are some simple actions. Notice them when they come into the room. Greet them with a kind smile and warm embrace. Arrange to bring them along with you if they are willing, whether sitting in the ecclesial hall, during a potluck, or other social events. If you are a married couple, both should express how welcome they are.

### **A MUTUAL BENEFIT**

This is an “equal opportunity” service for each of us, old and young. We need to close any divisive age gaps in our ecclesias. Young people who genuinely care for their seniors and take the time to visit and speak with them will seldom be disappointed. When I was 18 years old, I often visited a sister in a convalescent home near our ecclesial hall. At first, I hated it. I disliked the strong smells of rubbing alcohol (or worse), and I did not know what I would talk about with this widowed sister, in her 90s. But good mentors I had in the Truth encouraged me to

go. Once I started doing the readings with her, I could hear her quoting the verses from memory right along with me. It struck me about the value of a life-long habit of regularly reading and memorizing the Scriptures. This she had done for decades with her late husband. She talked about what I just read to her, and she asked me insightful questions. Eventually, I learned how she had come to America and some of the details of her life. I suppose it must have been helpful for her to have company from a young person, but I know the benefit was all mine.

### **A TIME OF NEED**

Life does not follow the script we would always like. We are all such fragile creatures, and we need to appreciate every day we have with our God-given spouses. Those who have lost spouses will remind us of that. When we engage in care for those in need, it invokes an important perspective we always need set before our eyes. We are reminded that everything we have (and often take for granted), is only temporary. Our marriage, our health, and eventually our life, is all like the grass that withers and blows away. It also can remind us how the expectations we have in this life can be shattered in a moment. The only sure thing is our God. While we may be the servant today to our brother or sister, there is a time coming when we will be the one bruised, and we too will be able to lean on the love of our brothers and sisters.

Upon reflection, I think my dad’s question is probably pertinent many times throughout our lives. What now? What does the Lord want me to do? The wonder of our God is that He makes all things plain in His time. None of

us have empty or pointless lives. Each of us has been specially redeemed and earmarked for work to be done (Eph 2:10). God always has a purpose for us.

### A LOVING GOD

Our God is such a loving God. His eyes never turn away from those in need. He is the defender of the widows (Psa 68:5 NIV). He relieves the widow (Psa 146:9). He commands us to plead the cause of the widows (Isa 1:17). We have been given a noble and glorious opportunity to care for those who are sad and lonely, those who most need our reassurance. It also applies to any of our brothers and sisters who have

suffered the loss of a family member. When nothing else may make sense, it is the love of the brethren that will serve as a warm blanket on a chilly day. Our religion and our community are inextricably tied to how we treat each other, especially those in greatest need. Ultimately, it is our opportunity to serve alongside our Lord, who we know will never leave us or forsake us.

*Dave Jennings*

*With special thanks to Sis. Jane Tunnell  
(San Diego, CA) for her important  
insights into this topic.*

# Water Crystals

*Pauline M. Minter,  
(Saanich Peninsula, BC)*

A soft breeze touches my cheek  
Gentle roar of dancing water  
Flows irresistibly to the sea

The sun filters through the trees  
Turning hanging water droplets  
Into tiny glowing crystals

Two of them wondrously  
Turn to sapphires as I draw closer  
I catch an amethyst, an emerald

Then a perfect reflection of  
The golden sun in heated glow  
Reminding me of John's vision

The crystal blue around God's throne  
Only the glowing beams of the sun  
Bring these water gems to life

And the same loving Creator gives  
The water of life freely so we may

Reflect a tiny fragment of His glory

# THE LEGALISM OF CANNABIS AND THE BELIEVER

By Tim Jennings

The use of cannabis for recreational purposes has been legalized in many parts of North America. But does this legal right mean that use is appropriate for a believer?

**R**ECREATIONAL use of cannabis (marijuana) has become increasingly acceptable and legal. The Bible doesn't specifically mention cannabis, but the effects of "getting high" on cannabis are similar to drunkenness from a Biblical perspective. This article will examine relevant Scripture, and what scientific studies of the last ten years reveal about the intoxicant effects of cannabis—plus its medical usages.

Beginning with the Apostle Paul's inspired words, we are warned of the deeds of the flesh and their threat to our hope of salvation:

*"Now the **deeds of the flesh** are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry,*

*sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions envying, **drunkenness**, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that **those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God**. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, **self-control**; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (Gal 5:19-24).<sup>1</sup>*

Drunkenness is associated with the works of the flesh—a contrast to the

fruit of the Spirit. The pervasive aspect of alcohol-induced drunkenness and a cannabis-induced high is that of losing control. But the fruit of the Spirit requires maintaining self-control. The Apostle Peter warned how drunkenness and other uncontrolled behaviors were the way of the world.

*“For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, **drunkenness**, carousing, **drinking parties** and abominable idolatries. In all this, they are surprised that you do not run with them into the same excesses of dissipation, and they malign you.” (1 Pet 4:3-4).*

Furthermore, Peter remarked how God expects us to “*be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer.*” (1 Pet 4:7). Consider our preparation in presenting ourselves to God in prayer when we are sober. Are our supplications as pleasing to God when we are intoxicated by alcohol or drugs? As we will see, one’s brain undergoes negative consequences when under the influence of cannabis.

Going back to the writings of Paul, we are advised about our spiritual walk. We should be filled with the Spirit, not intoxicants. We are exhorted to be wise, making the most of our time.

*“Therefore, be **careful how you walk**, not as unwise men but as wise, **making the most of your time**, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is. And **do not get drunk with wine**, for that is dissipation, **but be***

***filled with the Spirit**, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.” (Eph 5:15-21).*

Despite warnings about drunkenness, Paul acknowledged the potential health benefits of a little wine: “*No longer drink water exclusively but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.*” (1 Tim 5:23).

Until modern water treatment was developed, wine and beer were often safer to drink than water due to bacteria and other microbes found in lakes, rivers, stagnant water sources, etc. Boiling water killed what was unsafe and the presence of alcohol allowed water to remain potable for months.

Wine has positive and neutral values throughout the Bible. In the New Testament, wine plays a central role in the first miracle of Jesus, in some of the parables, and when Jesus introduces the emblems. It is perfectly acceptable for us to drink alcohol in small quantities. But alcohol must not cause us to lose control. When we drink to excess, we lose control, allowing the flesh to take over.



So how does this apply to cannabis? To get a better understanding, let's examine what science tells us about cannabis and its effect on the human body. There are two main chemical compounds in cannabis that affect people: THC and CBD. We'll look at the positive and negative effects of each chemical.

THC (Tetrahydrocannabinol) is the main psychoactive ingredient in cannabis and has been observed to cause short and long-term effects on people. Short-term influences include intoxication. One study has shown that a small concentration of 7-10 nanograms of THC per milliliter in a serum is sufficient to produce impairment equivalent to a 0.05-percent blood alcohol content. This THC intoxication can cause dissociation (feeling disconnected from your thoughts, emotions, and surroundings), disordered thoughts, difficulty learning, and difficulty concentrating.<sup>2</sup>

Long-term consequences of THC are varied. On an emotional level, one will have increased anxiety (despite temporary early on decrease in anxiety), panic, dysphoria (a state of dissatisfaction with one's life), and psychotic symptoms.

Long-term users run the risk of bronchitis, cardiovascular disease, and certain cancers. When used in adolescence, THC has shown to result in a significant decline in neuropsychological functioning and intelligence quotient (IQ).<sup>3</sup>

There are also long-lasting changes to the brain's neural architecture. One of the most noticeable effects of THC is

how it decreases the volume in several areas of the brain, including:

1. **Hippocampus**, which plays a major role in learning and memory
2. **Orbitofrontal cortex**, which is involved in decision making
3. **Amygdala**, which has a major role in one's emotions

The more one uses cannabis regularly, the greater the reduction of volume in these three areas of the brain.<sup>4</sup>

To summarize, THC has a variety of negative effects on people who use it. While studies have shown that there are some positive outcomes, such as minimizing anxiety and fear, these positives can only be achieved over a short period with small doses. Long-term use will worsen anxiety and promote panic attacks. Cannabis has been cultivated to have higher concentrations of THC, thus providing greater highs for those who use the drug. These higher concentrations have only worsened the negative long-term effects of cannabis.<sup>5</sup>

Now let's look at the effects of CBD on the body. Research shows CBD has a much more positive impact than THC. CBD does not cause negative mood effects or psychomotor slowing. CBD is a non-psychoactive chemical, well tolerated by humans, even with large doses up to 1,500 milligrams per day taken orally.<sup>6</sup> CBD is likely to be even less harmful if used topically. Benefits of CBD include reduction of anxiety, fear, PTSD, panic, and compulsive actions.<sup>7</sup> It is also useful in treating cancer, multiple sclerosis, and seizures in children.<sup>8</sup>

How do Scriptural principles apply to cannabis containing both THC and CBD? Recreational cannabis is now being cultivated with higher levels of THC than in previous decades. This causes a more rapid intoxication and will have some short-term negative effects on the user. The inability to concentrate will make it difficult to focus on godly things while under its influence. The anxiety and panic from extended use would be detrimental to one's faith. Considering all the other long-term negative effects of THC, its clear recreational use of cannabis should be avoided.

In contrast, medical cannabis has been cultivated to have higher levels of CBD. While the FDA has only approved one CBD product for treatment of epilepsy, there are studies that show that it can be a useful drug that improves mental health, including anxiety and panic reduction, and its ability to help fight cancer and multiple sclerosis. Humans have a strong tolerance for CBD, plus it can be separated from cannabis as an oil or extract for medicinal use. In 2019, the FDA had a public hearing from industry leaders and the general public about CBD and indefinitely extended

the comment period in March 2020. Should CBD be approved for further uses, its use as a medical treatment will have no conflict with Biblical principles based on current research.

So how should a believer view cannabis and the chemicals that are in it? Recreationally, cannabis should be avoided since THC causes intoxication so quickly. Unlike alcohol, where measured amounts can be partaken as a beverage, a small amount of cannabis will cause impairment. However, taking CBD for its medicinal benefits is compatible with a believer's faith since it lacks the intoxication potential of THC. However, there are important questions to consider about CBD products that are currently available. Is it derived from marijuana or hemp? If it is derived from marijuana, what are the THC levels? Are the THC levels low enough to avoid the negative effects of THC? If the answer to these questions are acceptable based on Biblical principles, the product will prove helpful to believers who are struggling with various health issues.

*Tim Jennings  
(San Luis Obispo, CA)*

---

1 All Scripture quotations are from the New American Standard Bible (NASB).

2 "Considering Marijuana Legalization: Insights for Vermont and Other Jurisdictions," Caulkins et al., Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2015, pp. 33-40. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR864.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR864.html).

3 Ibid., pp. 34-48.

4 "Long term effects of marijuana on the brain," Filbey et al., published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 2014, p. 16913.

5 "Cannabidiol attenuates seizures and social deficits in a mouse model of Dravet syndrome," Kaplan et al., published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 2017, pp. 35-36.

6 Ibid., p. 36.

7 Ibid., p. 37.

8 Caulkins, p. 38-39.

# ALL ONE IN CHURCH

By Carmel Page

## Don't Forget that Not Everyone Can Remember

**M**ANY ecclesias have an aging congregation, so you may have people in your church with dementia. This brain disease normally starts after age 65—sometimes even earlier in the case of Alzheimer's—and is very common after 80. It affects people's ability to think and debilitates memory.

### NO LONGER THE WAY IT WAS

Do you know brothers and sisters who used to be easy to get on with who have now become problematic? Who used to be the life and soul of the party but are now quiet? Who have started to struggle with a job they used to be good at? If they are also grappling with their memory, they may have dementia.

It is challenging when long-standing workers in your meeting become unable to do their normal jobs and need looking after now. It must be especially frustrating for them at the Breaking of Bread, where we've been given the instruction: "*This do in remembrance of me.*" (1 Cor 11:24). Dementia does not mean the end of church life, but it calls us all to adapt to meet new challenges.

### HOW CAN I HELP?

An organization such as Dementia Friendly America provides support for faith communities. So, you could arrange training for the ecclesia's members. But there are many simple things which can help:

- Give everyone a warm welcome, and if someone seems confused,

gently remind them of who you are and where they are.

- Include everyone in conversations, speaking slowly and clearly.
- Never talk to others about them as if they were not there. This may be hurtful and confusing.
- People often remember music and can sing or play an instrument long after they lose the ability to converse. Hymn singing can be very comforting.
- Gentle touch may be reassuring, but be sensitive to their response.
- If someone behaves oddly during a service, don't be upset; they may have forgotten what they are meant to do.
- Avoid arguing minor points of fact, even if you know they are wrong. Change the subject and find something you agree on. Treat them with dignity and respect.
- If someone becomes anxious, ask if they need the restroom. They may have forgotten where it is.

Large signs on bathroom doors may help.

- Create a quiet place for people who feel overwhelmed. Have picture books and old photographs for them to look at.
- Be supportive of their care givers and offer to help. Looking after someone who is confused and who may be wakeful at night is exhausting.

### BEARING FRUIT

People with dementia can still live well, have a full life, and join in worship. They may yet have much to offer if they get extra time and support. While it can be frustrating to deal with people who are confused, it's also a great way to practice the fruit of the spirit: "...love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." (Gal 5:22-23). These qualities are all fruitful responses to dementia.

*Carmel Page  
(Sheffield, UK)*





EXHORTATION AND CONSOLATION

# MY PRIORITY

*By Joshua Budney*

## WHAT AM I AIMING TO ACHIEVE IN LIFE?

**T**HIS is a question I've been pondering as I enter my college years. As a 19-year-old college student, I've never faced a more pivotal time in my life. Especially now, when life has been turned upside down by the Covid-19 pandemic, I've had to take a step back and think about the direction of my life.

One thing is for certain: there can't be a gray area. My focus must be on manifesting Christ in daily life. Even during life's distractions, my actions should reflect the mindset of ultimately glorifying God and seeking his purpose on this earth.

This can seem like an impossible task! How am I to truly serve God, if I must study for finals, work 40 hours a week, or otherwise handle essential

"priorities"? Well, I recently learned something interesting! Nowadays, we misuse the word "priority".

## A SINGULAR PROSPECT

Until recently, the word priority did not have a plural form. For a long time, people used the word "priority" to mean their single focus. It's now common to pluralize it to "priorities," to organize our tasks in order of importance. I've always framed my life in terms of multiple priorities. But is our attention to God just one area of our life to receive the majority of our focus? Is our attention to God just a bullet point on a list of urgencies? It shouldn't be that way.

God should be our singular priority. Everything else in our lives needs to fall under that umbrella: education, careers, hobbies, personal goals. All these things need to be viewed under

the aegis of God's plan and purpose. But how? It's such an easy concept... but the execution is our entire struggle against the flesh. *"But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."* (Matt 6:33 ESV). This well-known verse is a beautiful depiction of how we must live our lives. In everything we do, we first seek the kingdom of God. But,... how does this work out practically? I'm actively working to implement this principle in my busy life. With a college workload, ever-increasing work hours, a need to relax, and more, how do I seek God first? It's dangerously easy to misinterpret the quest for the kingdom as an unrealistic ideal we'll never achieve—that truly seeking God is something we can do only in our minimal free time and squeeze in when we can. But of course, that notion isn't true. We must get that idea out of our heads because with such a mindset, we'll only discourage ourselves.

The first obstacle to fully understanding Matthew 6:33 is to keep two concepts separate that should not be seen as opposites: seeking God and living our secular lives.

## SERVING GOD VS LIFE'S DUTIES?

God knows we have things we **have** to do and expects us to spend time, even large amounts of our day, doing them. All the things we do—school, work, hobbies, and interests—must be wrapped together with our goal of seeking God. We seek Him as we live our lives. Our spiritual life and our natural one need to be completely intertwined. In all we do, we give glory

to God. *"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God."* (1 Cor 10:31 NET).

## DANIEL, THE PARAGON

Daniel is an amazing example of one who served God while surrounded by negative influences and holding major worldly responsibilities. The account of Daniel's life is written after Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah and brought the people to live in Babylon—lasting 70 years. Daniel was at a pivotal point in his life. He was about 17 years old—just two years younger than me—when he was thrust into this new way of life. We read:

*"Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king."* (Dan 1:3-5 ESV).

Daniel and his friends were effectively enrolled in the University of Babylon! They were surrounded by and immersed in the culture of Babylon. Those of us now going through university or in a career are in a similar situation as Daniel. We're faced with a choice: conform to the world around us

or stay true to a godly lifestyle. Amazingly, Daniel chose to reject the magnificent appeal of Babylon.

*“But Daniel **resolved that he would not defile himself** with the king’s food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore, he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself.” (Dan 1:8 ESV).*

In the NET version, “resolved” is translated “made up his mind.” Daniel **made up his mind** to shun their way of life. He committed. He made a conscious decision to stay separate.

Now, why did Daniel choose to demonstrate this commitment by eating a separate meal? I suggest he was determined to deny the influences of Babylon, even at a basic level. He didn’t compromise on a small, harmless portion of the culture, which could set the tone for every other aspect of his life. He was in Babylon, but he was not of Babylon. The Apostle Paul, later epitomized this thought:

*“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Rom 12:2 ESV).*

It’s important to note how Daniel

stayed separate. Look closely at what he said because this is crucial:

*“Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink.” (Dan 1:12 ESV).*

Daniel asked the chief of the eunuchs for only vegetables and water—a separate meal. He didn’t want the king’s food placed in front of him. He removed the temptation and the conforming attitude completely from the table. He replaced it with a separate meal, one that represented a God-fearing way of life. This distinction is important. If he’d merely gotten the usual meal, but tried to only eat the vegetables, how long would it have been before he gave in and ate the same as everyone else? He didn’t just remove the negative activities of his life, he replaced them with a God-fearing way of life.

This concept of replacement is very important. We need to be careful to not only focus on what we’re removing from our life but how we are living as well. What we fill our lives with now furthers our commitment to God as our priority.

What is our “king’s food”? What’s in our lives, especially at work or school, that we’re compromising on? —things that may seem harmless but

*What we fill our lives  
with now furthers our  
commitment to God as  
our priority*

demonstrate and allow for assimilation to the Babylon around us, such as:

- **Compromising in conversations** with those around us; laughing or making jokes at school or work we know don't represent the character we're trying to manifest.
- **Media we're taking in:** What "harmless" things are we allowing into our life?
- When considering **professional goals**, does making God our true priority shine through?

How can we replace these compromises? What can we change to re-establish our commitment to seeking first the kingdom of God?

## GOD WILL BLESS OUR EFFORTS

Here's how we can use Daniel's wonderful example of maintaining our service to God while living in the world.

- He **COMMITTED** to serving God — Dan 1:8
- He **REMOVED** negative influences — Dan 1:12-13
- He **REPLACED** those with Godly influences — Dan 1:12-13

An incredible and encouraging result for Daniel is revealed in verse 9:

*"And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs."*

I never noticed this detail until recently. Because he made an effort to remain separate from the world, God gave Daniel success in his quest to seek first the kingdom of God!

We too can have this same confidence God will help us and guide us in our determination to seek him. We know God wants us to triumph, and he wants us to be in the kingdom.

*"Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32 ESV).*

Of course, this doesn't mean our path is easy. We're not promised or guaranteed anything in this life now. Keep in mind God was working with Daniel and aiding him... All while he was in captivity in a foreign land—a hard time.

## THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER

Daniel's persistence gives us a great picture of how to approach our day-to-day life. He truly sought first the kingdom of God, while living in the heart of a sinful nation. He had temporal power, political responsibilities, demanding pressures, and strong temptations to conform. We see from his example it's possible to seek God first even among crushing provocations. And God was with him as he sought first the kingdom. He truly made God his priority.

If we follow the example of Daniel, we too can live a life devoted to making God and his plan and purpose our **PRIORITY!**

*"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels" (Heb 12:22 NKJV).*

Joshua Budney  
(Meriden, CT)

# MUSIC AROUND THE WORLD

*By Kristin Atwood*

When I was younger, I had the opportunity to travel to many countries and stay with Christadelphians along the way.

**IT** was an amazing experience to see so many people living the Truth beautifully, but very differently. No matter where you come from, there are certain Christadelphian cultural “norms” in your area. Can we be open to learning about how spiritual music is used around the brotherhood?

Over the next year, there will, Lord willing, be a variety of articles in this section from Christadelphians around the world sharing how music is used to worship God. We in North America tend to be very “comfortable” with how we live the Truth, so these articles might cause a bit of “discomfort” because of the differences. Hopefully, we can enjoy a peek at life in the Truth around the world and gain a greater love and appreciation for our worldwide fellowship. This month we

are starting with Africa, which holds a very important place in my heart. I feel very blessed to have spent a month in Africa to help with preaching when I was in my twenties. I would love to say I helped and transformed things while there, but I honestly think Africa changed me more than I could ever change it. There was a saying we used in our group: “T.I.A.,” which meant “This Is Africa.” Everything there is different, and I mean everything. At first, it was a bit frightening, but it was also incredibly refreshing.

So as you read the article below, please enjoy learning about how your brothers and sisters rejoice and praise our Heavenly Father.

*Kristin Atwood,  
(Verdugo Hills, CA)*



MUSIC AND PRAISE

# SINGING PRAISE IN MOZAMBIQUE

*By Joe Vickers*

A brother or sister visiting Mozambique cannot fail to be moved by the Christadelphian community there. One is impressed by the rapid, organic spread of the Truth through the efforts of local campaigning. There is a tremendous, genuine response whenever and wherever the Scriptures are preached. It is the living, cheerful faith of our brothers and sisters who in many cases face hardships we in the West can hardly imagine. A highlight, though, for many visiting mission workers, is the singing at ecclesial services and gatherings. Heartily, full-voiced and alive with conviction, it truly is making “a joyful noise to the Lord.” (Psa 100:1).

Christadelphian Bible Mission first became involved in Mozambique after the civil war ended in the 1990s. The first ecclesias were in the Chichewa-speaking areas close to the border

with Malawi, therefore they used the Chichewa hymn book. This book was compiled and edited by Bro. R. J. Msyamboza and first published in 1966. It is not clear whether Bro. Msyamboza wrote the hymns himself, translated them, or simply compiled a collection of existing material. The hymn books in Mozambique omit information about who wrote the hymns or when.

As the truth spread beyond the Chichewa-speaking areas, demand for new hymn books in local languages arose. Between 2016-2018, three editions of the book were produced: in Lolo, Sena, and Makhwa. All three editions were hymn-for-hymn translations of the Chichewa book, with the work undertaken by brothers and sisters conversant in both (or all three) languages. Younger generations of Mozambicans—including those in our community—are increasingly turning


to Portuguese, with the language steadily and comprehensively replacing African languages in both verbal and written communication. Just this year the brotherhood in Mozambique decided to switch to Portuguese for instruction in Sunday schools, and before long it's highly likely there will be the need for a Portuguese hymn book.

Singing is an integral part of ecclesial life in Mozambique, just as it is (or should be) in the English-speaking world. It is always unaccompanied and is invariably in rich, multi-layered harmony. At appropriate points in the service, an ecclesial elder will suggest a hymn number. Almost all hymns are sung in "call and response" style. An elder, usually the one who suggested the hymn, issues the "call" which indirectly sets the pitch and tempo of the hymn, and it is followed by the response of the congregation. Interestingly, the "call" is simply the first few syllables of the line, seemingly unrelated to the main

melody, which in any case is known by heart by the congregation. The tunes themselves are mostly traditional in origin, though there are a few recognizable melodies—mainly from American gospel and camp meeting hymns. There is no printed music, and harmonies are wonderfully improvised. The blend of voices is of course unique to each ecclesia and each occasion, meaning no hymn ever sounds quite the same way twice.

Hymn singing in Mozambique is raw and powerful. Although elders who can call songs are respected for their musical abilities, there is no sense of performance. The swirling harmonies focus the mind and the heart on the words and their meaning and, perhaps even more deeply, on the harmony that exists between us, even when we are separated from each other by language, culture, and lifestyle.

*Joe Vickers  
(Dunstable, UK)*



*Singing is an  
integral part of  
ecclesial life in  
Mozambique...*

# QUESTIONS AND PROOF TEXTING

*By Richard Morgan*

**D**OING good Bible study means asking a lot of questions. Bad Bible study is already having all the answers and finding Bible passages that fit in with your ideas, something called proof-texting.

Proof-texting means, “I do know already and will see how this passage fits in with it.” Our aim in Bible study should be to find out what the text means rather than what we **want** it to mean. It requires a humble approach to the Bible with an “I don’t know, but I hope to find out” attitude.

It’s easy to fall into the trap of proof-texting, particularly if we’re studying a first principle doctrine and trying to defend our faith. With that defensive mindset, we automatically enter the mode of finding Bible passages to match our preconceived ideas, forcing them to fit what we need them to say. We even sometimes call it looking for proof texts—and that’s all it is. Proof-texting!

A far better practice is to approach the Bible with a fresh pair of eyes, armed with questions rather than ideas.

An excellent way to remember what questions to ask is the **CoFoCoFu** method:

- **Context**—Who said it, Where, and When?
- **Form**—How did they say it?
- **Content**—What did they say?
- **Function**—Why did they say it?

The **context** and **content** provide the background for a Bible passage, but it’s when we get to the **form** and **function** that we understand its message. Asking these questions also enables us to enter the minds of Bible characters. For instance, answering the question, “Why did they say it?”, may reveal the motivation of characters in the story.

Proof-texting, where we come already armed with answers, can be like trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. Bible study should be about discovery. I liken it to an archeological dig where you brush away at the surface, slowly revealing what is underneath. It’s only when we have an inquiring mind that we find the gems in God’s word.

*Richard Morgan  
(Simi Hills, CA)*

# EXODUS

## SHEMOT (PART 1)

*By Richard Morgan*

**T**HE book of Exodus continues where Genesis left off. Genesis closes with the death of Joseph, and Exodus begins with a new Pharaoh in Egypt who does not know him. There may be a gap of 65-350 years between the records, depending on which chronology you follow. It is not the intention of this article to settle the conflicting opinions on the length of time. Suffice it to say the Israelites were in Egypt for an extended period, much of it as slaves.

### HEBREW BOOK TITLES

The central drama of the book of Exodus, as its name in our English Bibles suggests, concerns the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt. However, the title Exodus comes from the Septuagint (LXX). The Hebrew titles of the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament) all originate with the first word in each book as seen in the following chart:

English title (from LXX)	First word translated to English (ESV)	Hebrew title
Genesis	<i>"In the <b>beginning</b>"</i>	Bresheit
Exodus	<i>"These are the <b>names</b>"</i>	Shemot
Leviticus	<i>"The <b>LORD</b> <b>called</b>"</i>	Vayicra
Numbers	<i>"The <b>LORD</b> spoke to Moses in the <b>wilderness</b>"</i>	Bamidbar
Deuteronomy	<i>"These are the <b>words</b>"</i>	Devarim

Even more ancient titles for these books exist. For instance, initially, Exodus was called *Yes'at Misrayim*, which means “the going out from Egypt,” similar to the Greek title Exodus. However, the Jews, by giving each book a title based on first word, captured much of the essence of each book’s message.

The Hebrew title of Genesis, *Bresheit*, means “beginning,” and of course Genesis is the book of beginnings. It’s the story of Creation, God beginning His purpose and developing it through the family of Abraham. *Bresheit* would seem to be a very apt title. The book of Leviticus is about the calling, in large part, of the Levitical priests, so *Vayicra*, “called,” fits one of the book’s central themes. The same is true for *Bamidbar*, “wilderness,” since the book of Numbers is all about Israel’s experience in the wilderness. One of the key themes in Deuteronomy is hearing and doing the Word of God, so *Devarim*, “words,” is also very fitting.

So, what about *Shemot*, “names,” the Hebrew title for the book of Exodus? When you start reading Exodus, you might think it’s a bit of a stretch to say that “names” is a key theme. The first verse reads, “*These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household*,”<sup>1</sup> and then lists the sons of Jacob. What follows are the main stories of the book of Exodus—the Hebrews’ slavery, the plagues upon Egypt, Passover, and their escape from Egypt. Do the names of Jacob and his sons in the introduction of the book mean the theme of names will continue? We might want to stick with *Yes'at Misrayim* (the going out from Egypt) or just plain old Exodus.

## THE GOD OF THE LIVING

However, the idea of “names” is, in fact, absolutely fundamental to the book of *Shemot*. The Hebrew word for “name”—*shem* (from which we get the title *Shemot*) only occurs about 40 times in Exodus, not significant in itself with 800 plus other instances of the word in the Old Testament. But when we look at **how** Exodus uses “*shem*,” we see its importance to the Jews. In naming the book as they did, they truly did capture its message.

The opening words of Exodus, “These are the names...” seem redundant because they are more or less the same as *Genesis 46:8*—“*Now these are the names of the descendants of Israel, who came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons.*” What follows is the same list of Jacob’s sons. Why bother to repeat what seems to be rather mundane information?

Remember that a long time has passed since the end of Genesis and the beginning of Exodus. Jacob and all his sons have since died, something Exodus 1:6 reminds us of—“Then Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation.”<sup>2</sup> However, the death of Jacob and his sons doesn’t mean their names are forgotten. They’re repeated in the book’s introduction, probably hundreds of years after they died, and that has to mean something.

We know God hadn’t forgotten His people because when they cried out due to their slavery, “*God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.*” (*Exod 2:24*). Significantly, this verse doesn’t say “His covenant with the children of Israel.” Despite their being dead for

centuries, God remembered the **names** of the patriarchs. That principle continues into chapter 3 where God, in the context of revealing His name to Moses, says, *“Go and gather the elders of Israel together and say to them, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me.’”* (Exod 3:16).

Jesus picked up on this principle when speaking to the Sadducees about the resurrection. Quoting Exodus 3, he told them, *“But that the dead are raised, even Moses showed, in the passage about the bush, where he calls the LORD the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now he is not God of the dead, but of the living, for all live to him.”* (Luke 20:37-38).

Jesus’ point is not that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are still alive, but that God has not forgotten them, and His Son will raise them from the dead. The opening of the book of Exodus, in calling to mind the name of Jacob and his sons, teaches us God cares about His family. We can see that care, for instance, in chapter 3, where God tells Moses, *“I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings.”* (Exod 3:7).

## REPUTATION

The author of Exodus mentions other people by name, and each time no words are wasted. For instance, in chapter 1, we have the story of the midwives. The passage records their bravery in the face of the authoritarianism of Pharaoh, and we’re told their names—*“Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah”* (Exod 1:15).

The text singles out these two women

so we may appreciate a little about the importance of names in Exodus, and indeed in the rest of Scripture. When we say, somebody has “a good name” we mean they have a good **reputation**. That is true for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Their names spring out from the page because we immediately associate them with ideas like faith and the promises. Even the meanings of the names often suggest something to do with their reputation or purpose. For instance, God changed Abram’s name to “Abraham” because he would be the father of a multitude— what his name means.

The names “Shiphrah” and “Puah” may not have any significance in themselves. However, they certainly do stand out as “beautiful” (*Shiphrah*) and “glittering” (*Puah*), shining brightly amid the darkness of Pharaoh’s cruelty. More importantly, their deeds are on record and connected with God’s mentioning their names. He finds acts of faith like theirs worthy of note and remembrance.

In chapter 2, we have two more names—Moses and Gershom, his son. In each instance, meaning is attached to their names. They are more than just labels. We’re told Pharaoh’s daughter *“named him Moses, ‘Because,’ she said, ‘I drew him out of the water.’”* (Exod 2:10), and later Moses’ wife (whose name is also mentioned) *“gave birth to a son, and he called his name Gershom, for he said, ‘I have been a sojourner in a foreign land.’”* (v. 22).

## GOD’S NAME

It’s when we come to the next chapter that the importance of names in the book of Exodus takes off. It is the occasion where Moses, called to lead

## God's name is not just a label by which we identify Him and differentiate Him from the gods of Egypt; *it's a name that declares who He is and what He does.*

the Hebrews out of slavery, asks God if “they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” (Exod. 3:13). Moses wasn’t looking for a label to attach to the God who was to save His people. He wanted to know **who God is**. The famous enigmatic response came back to Moses – “You want to know who I am?” – “I AM WHO I AM.” (v. 14).

God then expands on His name by saying, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.” (v. 15). In other words, “I am the God attached to the names of your forefathers and everything connected with them.” The Hebrews are going to experience the name of God in their departure from Egypt. In the context of declaring “I AM WHO I AM,” or better, “I WILL BE WHO I WILL BE,” God had told Moses, “I will be with you” (v. 12). God’s name is not just a label by which we identify Him and differentiate Him from the gods of Egypt; it’s a name that declares who He is and what he does.

Despite these reassurances, Moses found that speaking in God’s name brought conflict. In chapter 5, Moses complained, “For since I came to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has done evil to this people, and you have not delivered your people at all.” (Exod

5:23). Names have power, especially God’s name, and Moses speaking in God’s name brought about a tidal wave of change in Egypt.

This verse also introduces another vital concept concerning names—the principle of God manifestation. Moses, by speaking in God’s name, was His representative. We are familiar with the idea when we consider the example of a salesperson who represents their company by saying something like, “Hi, this is XYZ Company calling.” If someone tells you instead, “This is John Smith calling,” no matter how great the product he is selling, it will lack impact. But if he says, “This is Nike,” and you’re into athletics, it will pique your interest. Nike’s name is famous and invokes specific attractive images in your mind. God’s intention in the book of Exodus is to make His name memorable. Moses, by speaking in God’s name, is making Yahweh known to Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

The very next event that happens in chapter 6 further highlights the power of God’s name. He tells Moses to deliver a message to the children of Israel and prefaces it with, “I am the LORD. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by my name the LORD I did not make myself known to them.” (Exod 6:2-3). Except the patriarchs **did** know the name Yahweh and even used it at times, for instance, when Abraham said to the king of

Sodom, “I have lifted my hand to the LORD.” (Gen 14:22). What this passage must be saying is that the **impact** of the name Yahweh wasn’t known before now. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob knew it was God’s name, but they hadn’t experienced its power. However, all of that was going to change. The children of Israel would soon feel the full significance of the name of God as He rescued them from slavery.

The word “shem” only occurs in one verse during the time of the plagues, but perhaps the most important one. It’s a verse quoted by Paul in Romans concerning the doctrine of election, where he brings up the topic of Pharaoh’s hard heart. God told Pharaoh, “But for this purpose I have

raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.” (Exod. 9:16).

The whole point of the plagues was to make God’s name known. By now, we understand His name to be more than just a label attached to the Hebrew deity. The Egyptians **experienced** God as the outpouring of the plagues established His reputation.

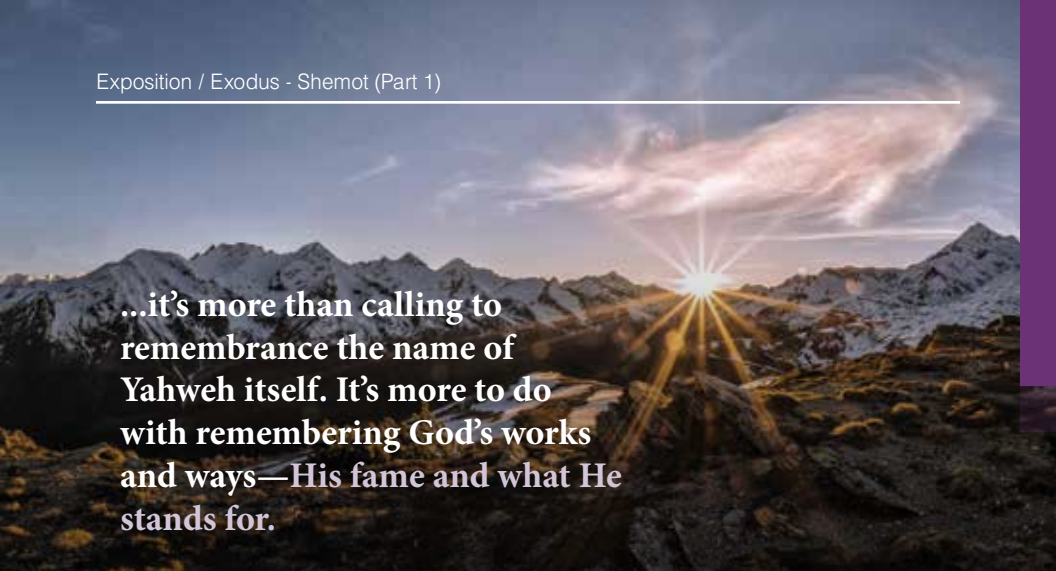
## NAMES, NAMES, NAMES

During the chapters that follow the plagues section, important things keep getting names attached to them. The next six occurrences of the word “shem” are summarized in the following table:

## SANCTITY OF GOD’S NAME

It is no wonder, therefore, that when

REFERENCE	SIGNIFICANCE
<i>“The LORD is a man of war; the LORD is his name.” (15:3).</i>	Heading for the Song of Moses describing the unleashing of God’s power
<i>“When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah.” (15:23).</i>	The first trial in the wilderness memorialized
<i>“Now the house of Israel called its name manna.” (16:31).</i>	God’s provision for His people in the wilderness
<i>“And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD...” (17:7).</i>	Israel’s failure memorialized
<i>“And Moses built an altar and called the name of it, The LORD Is My Banner...” (17:15).</i>	Israel’s first battle memorialized in an altar
<i>“The name of the one was Gershom (for he said, ‘I have been a sojourner in a foreign land’), and the name of the other, Eliezer (for he said, ‘The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh’).” (18:3-4).</i>	Moses’ sons named for what they represent



**...it's more than calling to remembrance the name of Yahweh itself. It's more to do with remembering God's works and ways—His fame and what He stands for.**

we come to the Ten Commandments, God's name becomes part of the central focus. One of the commandments is all about the sanctity of His name—*"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain..."* (Exod 20:7). Then in the second commandment the further revelation of God's name, which Moses learns several chapters later, is anticipated with the words, *"for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."* (vv. 5-6). We later learn in Exodus 34 that these characteristics are what God wants to be known for, what He wants His reputation to be.

The chapter, which introduces Yahweh's law to the people, begins and ends with the importance of God's name. In Exodus 20:24, in the section about making altars, God says, *"In*

*every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you."* By now, we should not be surprised that the worship of Yahweh includes remembrance of His name. The children of Israel witnessed an impressive object lesson teaching them about the blessing associated with God's name when He rescued them from Egypt, just as He said He would when telling them through Moses what His name stood for. If one word summarizes the principle of worship, it's the famous "Hallelujah," which means "praise Yahweh." But we learn in the book of Exodus that it's more than calling to remembrance the name of Yahweh itself. It's more to do with remembering God's works and ways—His fame and what He stands for.

*To be continued...*

*Richard Morgan  
(Simi Hills, CA)*



EXPOSITION

# GRANDMA GRAMMAR

*By Melinda Flatley*

Proper punctuation can be a matter of life and death.

**L**EST you think this is an extreme position, consider the fate of poor Grandma in this sentence: “Let’s eat Grandma!” Oh, how she might long for a comma! All of us remember our teachers drilling punctuation, spelling, and grammar rules. And why? To bring clarity and meaning to our written word, to imitate in writing what we say in speech. That’s also why it’s so important to scrutinize punctuation in our Bible study.

## JOINING DOTS

The Bible didn’t always have a system of punctuation. Early Old Testament manuscripts written in Hebrew contained no vowels or verb tenses. Determining vowel sounds and past, present, and future verb tenses required

scrutiny of context. Over time, more complex and helpful grammar rules were introduced to written Hebrew, principally by a group of scholars called the Masoretes. They invented a method of points to indicate proper choice of vowel sound and tense.

The New Testament is almost entirely written in Greek. The Greeks used no punctuation and wrote all the letters and sentences together without spaces. The reader had to overcome this challenge by carefully studying the text. In the third century BCE, the head of the famous Alexandrian Library, Aristophanes, introduced a set of primitive punctuation marks to help the reader. However, as Latin became the dominant language, Aristophanes’s system languished.

## THE CHRISTIAN PERIOD

The classical languages of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin were primarily intended to pass traditions verbally. And so, written rules weren't considered essential. But Christians preferred to spread the word of God using written gospels and letters. They emphasized Scripture study. Consequently, through the years, various systems of punctuation, often borrowed from musical notations, were employed.

And then in the fifteenth century, the printing press was invented! Almost immediately punctuation marks were frozen in time. Dashes, commas, hyphens, and periods; colons and semicolons; question, quotation, and exclamation marks joined with more obscure marks such as ampersand, manicule, octothorpe, and pilcrow, to provide a lexicon of reading cues. Of course, we also celebrate how the printing press increased the availability of Bibles to the common man.

Modern punctuation has basically remained consistent for over 500 years. However, it turns out the new era of computers, tablets, and smartphones has ushered in a constantly evolving system of punctuation—emoticons and emoji! In some sense, these marks are a contemporary version of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics.

## SOME QUESTIONABLE TRANSLATIONS

When it comes to translation from one language to another, different grammar rules pose a challenge. Considering the context is important. Indeed, in the case of all Bible versions, theological bias has crept in. For the purposes of

this article, we'll overlook semantic and cultural nuances that can affect the final translation. Let's look at only situations where punctuation mark choices can influence meaning.

- Perhaps the most famous comma in the KJV is in Luke 23:43. *“And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.”* Moving the comma to after “Today” solves a first principle doctrinal problem. There are many deep explanations of this passage, but it's at least certain Jesus did not assure the thief he would go to heaven with him on that day.
- *“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.”* (Psa 121:1) We get our help from the hills? Not true! But when punctuated *“I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills. From whence cometh my help?”* the next verse clearly indicates the source of our help. *“My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.”*
- What does this passage mean? *“If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.”* (I Cor 16:22) Anathema means “accursed,” and Maranatha means “May the Lord come.” Should the passage read: *“Let him be accursed. Let the Lord come?”* Or should it be *“Let him be accursed at the coming of the Lord?”* The addition of a period makes a big difference.
- Compare these two translations of Isa 40:3: *The voice of him that crieth in the*

# One of the tenets of our faith is to strive for accurate understanding of the Bible by **careful reading.**

*wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (KJV)*

*A voice of one calling: "In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (NIV)*

Is the voice crying in the wilderness or is the wilderness the place being prepared for the coming of the Lord? Perhaps context indicates the proper meaning because Isaiah continued in the next verses to describe how the terrain will be altered for this purpose. A new look should also be taken in the places where John the Baptist quotes this passage. (Matt 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23).

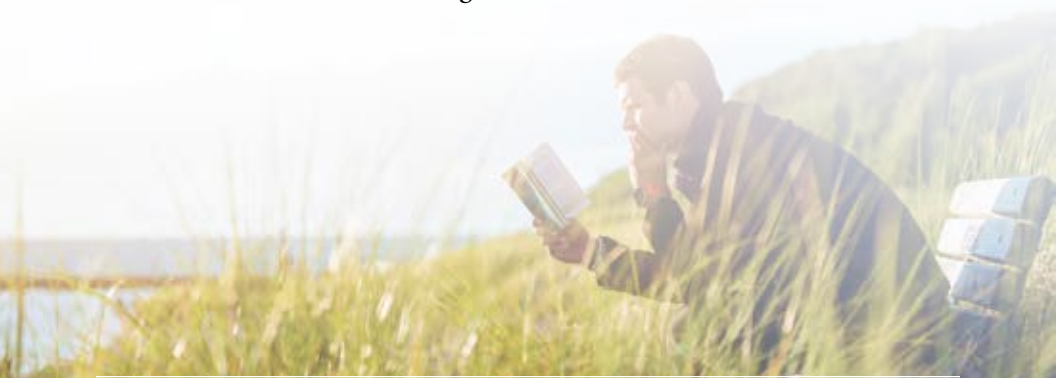
- Sometimes when we read the Bible, we ignore the punctuation altogether. For example, in the following passage, many readers ignore the comma between "take" and "eat." *"Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave*

*it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body."* (Matt 26:26). This habit imparts a Me-Tarzan-You-Jane tone to our very solemn memorial service. Both take and eat are verbs and a pause, indicated by a comma is appropriate. The real meaning of the phrase is translated thus in another version: *"Take and eat. This is my body."* (Matt 26:26 CEB).

## THE DASH TO THE END

We could go on. But these few examples illustrate the principle that punctuation in Bible study is an important consideration. One of the tenets of our faith is to strive for accurate understanding of the Bible by careful reading. Because translator bias is a real "thing," we must remember all word and grammar choices were made by knowledgeable and sincere, but also fallible, humans. Maranatha!

*Melinda Flatley  
(Pittsburgh, PA)*



# ALL GOD'S CHILDREN HAVE NAMES

## PART 13 (CONCLUSION)

*By George Booker*

### Showing Love by Helping Others

#### **“HOW DO WE LOVE THEE?”**

The poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote a sonnet to her beloved husband Robert Browning—a sonnet which blended her love for him with Biblical allusions and expressions of a more spiritual love. She began the sonnet in this way:

How do I love thee?  
Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth  
and breadth and height

My soul can reach,  
when feeling out of sight

For the ends of being and ideal grace.

I love thee to the level of every day's

Most quiet need,  
by sun and candlelight.

I love thee freely,  
as men strive for right.

I love thee purely,  
as they turn from praise.

I believe it is appropriate to use similar language to describe how the saints named in Romans 16—brothers and sisters alike—found so many ways to express their love for their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let us, then, count the ways these believers showed their love—to the depth and breadth and height their souls could reach—in their efforts, both individually and collectively, to attain the same depth and breadth and height of the love which Christ had shown for them, and to find the same fullness of grace which he found, sufficient for each day's needs (Eph 3:18,19).

They showed their love for their Lord in their loving service to the Apostle Paul and his friends. They showed their

love freely, for the Lord loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor 9:7), and purely, as the giver of such a gift does not ask for praise (Matt 6:1-4).

In doing so, they received the most wonderful reward: the great apostle to the Gentiles knew their names, Christ knew their names, and those names were written in his Book of Life, never to be blotted out.

So, we shall consider how these disciples—little known by us, but nonetheless loved by Paul and by Christ—showed such love.

## HOW CAN WE SHOW OUR LOVE FOR CHRIST?

*“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”*  
(Matt 25:40).

We might all ask ourselves the following: How can we, as brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, show our love for our Savior? His words in the Matthew 25 passage answer this question: We love Jesus by loving others, and we help Jesus by helping others, just like those who lived in Paul’s day showed their love for their Lord by helping the apostle and his companions. We can serve and help our Lord by serving and helping other believers, no matter their status. Perhaps we may look upon some of these believers as “the least” of his brethren, and—may God forgive us!—hardly worth our effort. However, as we have seen in Romans 16 if nowhere else, the least of his brethren—and the least of the help which we can offer, even a simple drink of water—is just as important as a service to Christ:

*“And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones*

*because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.”* (Matt 10:42).

Nevertheless, we need not stop here. In another place, Paul has said that doing good to other believers certainly does not preclude doing good to **all people!**:

*“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”* (Gal 6:9,10).

And in another place, our Savior has said:

*“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”* (Matt 22:37-39).

If the second greatest commandment is to love our neighbor, whoever he or she might be, then it is just as plain that we may show our love for God and His Son by acts of love toward any and all humanity—even our enemies:

*“Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.”* (Matt 5:42-45).

The closer we look at this whole question, the larger grows the field in

It is good for a believer to give a cup of water to another believer, but it should be equally obvious that believers show the same kindness to **anyone in need, no matter how close we are to them, or what their religious beliefs.**

which we can show our love for our Savior. There is no end to his love for us. He loved us when we did not even know enough to love him! So, there should be no end to the ways we can show our love for him. Everywhere we turn, everywhere we look, the opportunities are there for the taking, and our light can shine before all men:

***"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."*** (Matt 5:14-16).

It is obvious that "light" in the Bible can symbolize the preaching of the gospel to a world in darkness; there is no disputing this—Bible passages to this effect abound. But here, in his great statement about how we should live, our Lord Jesus Christ distinctly says that our "light shining before men" can also be demonstrated by our "good deeds."

## **SIMPLE ACTS OF KINDNESS**

It is good for a believer to give a cup of water to another believer, but it should be equally obvious that believers show

the same kindness to anyone in need, no matter how close we are to them, or what their religious beliefs. *"Your Father in heaven... sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous,"* Jesus says. (Matt 5:45).

He also says:

*"Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' do that... But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful... Give, and it will be given to you... For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."* (Luke 6:30-33,35-38).

## **A CUP OF WATER**

Janie Forsyth grew up on the outskirts of Anniston, Alabama, where her father owned a small grocery store. It was a time and place where the Ku Klux Klan was a powerful force. This racist

organization routinely terrorized and beat African Americans, mostly with impunity. Their stated intention was to keep them “in their place.” So, when it became known that Freedom Riders would be on an integrated Greyhound Bus traveling across segregated Alabama, there were whispers of trouble waiting for them when they passed through Anniston.

On May 14, 1961, Janie, aged 12, learned from her father that when the bus arrived in Anniston, the local chapter of the KKK would be prepared. In his words, “We will give them a little surprise.”

That day, Janie had her own surprise when the bus, riding on tires that had been slashed, was finally halted by 200 angry white men just in front of her father’s store. Hearing the uproar, she came from the back of the store and stood out front, to see what was happening. She watched as the mob surrounded the bus and the white bus

driver left the bus and walked away. Then the mob broke the back window of the bus, and someone threw an incendiary device

inside. The bus was instantly filled with black smoke. The people on the bus, 13 Freedom Riders and other unsuspecting passengers, were gagging and suffocating in the smoke. With cries of “Burn them... alive!”, parts of the mob held the bus doors shut to prevent anyone from escaping. Then the fuel tank exploded, setting the bus on fire but also forcing the mob to move back.

This gave the passengers a chance to break out of the burning vehicle and find air to breathe. Now they came

Our Lord Jesus Christ distinctly says that our “light shining before men” can also be demonstrated by our “good deeds.”



*May 14, a mob of angry white segregationists blocked one of the Freedom Riders' buses, attacking it with rocks, bricks and firebombs. ©Oxford University Press*

spilling out of the bus, crawling on the ground, gasping for air, vomiting, and pleading for water, while the gang of white men went from one to another, beating them with baseball bats and pipes.

Janie, watching nearby, could think of only one thing to do. She ran to fill a clean bucket with water, grabbed some cups, and ran into the crowd. Going from one victim to another, she washed their faces and then gave each of them a cup of water. She realized she was putting herself in danger by venturing into the mob, but she hoped they wouldn't harm her because, as she put it, "I wasn't grown up yet." And she remembered what she had learned in church and Sunday school, that Jesus had said, *"Whatever you do to the least of my brothers, you do to me."* So, the 7th-grader Janie Forsyth carried on, washing faces and handing out cups of water until she had helped everyone as best she could.

She went unharmed that day, but she could not know then how close she came to suffering serious consequences for her actions. She found out later that the local KKK met to decide whether she should be punished for her act of kindness. They decided against punishing her because, as one member put it, she was *"too young and silly to know any better."*

She was never physically harmed, but other forms of suffering awaited her in the years to come. At school, she was ostracized by some of the children,

who called her ugly names. And, in her own words, "This was such a black mark on my family that nobody—not even my father—would talk about it. I was the black sheep."

It wasn't until years later, after her father had died, that Janie Forsyth (now Janie McKinney) learned the full truth. When Pearl, the beloved black housemaid who had helped raise her, lay dying, Janie visited her.

"I said, 'Pearl, Daddy never got over being mad at me about that bus, did he?' She said, 'No, child. That's not right. He told me he had never been prouder of you than he was that day.'"<sup>1</sup>

It was such a simple act that day, even if a lifetime threat hung over the head of that 12-year-old girl. A simple act of humanity—a simple **recognition** of humanity, that, for all the **perceived** differences among one people and another, we are all much more alike than we are unlike. There is a sameness in everyone and an underlying fellowship of need that should bind every human to every other human. We are all in this together! And at one time or another, we all need someone else:

*"[God] hath made of one blood all nations... For in him we live, and move, and have our being... For we are also his offspring."* (Acts 17:26,28).

George Booker  
(Austin Leander, TX)

1. "American Experience: Freedom Riders", PBS documentary, 2011.2. "A Single Act of Kindness", Cynthia Lee, UCLA Today, May 10, 2011.



FIRST PRINCIPLES

# JESUS GOD WITH US PART 3

By Joe Hill

## GOD WITH US: JESUS FORGAVE SINS

As mentioned in several of the passages quoted in the last article, the number one enemy we need saving from is sin. This is the reason given for the name Jesus: “for he shall save his people from their sins.” (Matt 1:21).

Isaiah prophesied:

*“Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.” (Isa 44:21-22).*

Jesus’ healings represented something far more profound than mere physical and mental soundness—they proved

he had been given power to forgive sins. This parallel between healing and forgiveness is described in the Old Testament:

*“The inhabitant [of Zion, Jerusalem, v20] shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.” (Isa 33:24).*

*“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies.” (Psa 103:2-4).*

**He made people whole.** Matthew frequently makes this important connection in his gospel. The Greek word (σώζω) for “save” in the announcement, “for he shall save his

people from their sins.” (Matt 1:21) is the same word translated “made whole” in the healings of Jesus (see, for example, Matt 9:20-22; 14:34-36 δῖα σώζω derived from σώζω).

**He took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.** Jesus’ healing of those who were sick is said to fulfill a prophecy of Isaiah:

*“When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” (Matt 8:16-17).*

Surprisingly, the passage clearly refers to forgiveness of sins:

*“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded **for our transgressions**, he was bruised **for our iniquities**: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him **the iniquity of us all.**” (Isa 53:4-6).*

**The Son of man has power on earth to forgive sin.** Perhaps the most impressive example is Jesus’ healing of the man with palsy.

*“And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; **thy sins***

***be forgiven thee.** And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, **Thy sins be forgiven thee**; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that **the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins**, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.” (Matt 9:2-8).*

Jesus first ‘healed’ the man by forgiving him of his sins, and then, to prove he had this power, he healed the man of his palsy. It seems Jesus might have stopped after the first step if the scribes had not challenged his authority. Forgiveness was Jesus’ priority; the physical healing was just an outward sign of the inward reality. Of course, the man benefited from both.

**The sick need a physician and sinners need to repent.**

*“And when the Pharisees saw it [Jesus eating with publicans and sinners], they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Matt 9:11-13).*

Jesus applied the parallel between healing (the sick need a physician, not those who are whole) and the forgiveness of sins. He called sinners to repentance, not the righteous.

### **Lest they convert and be healed/be forgiven.**

When asked to explain why he taught in parables, Jesus quoted the following passage from Isaiah:

*“Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be **healed**.”* (Isa 6:9-10).

The Aramaic Targum of Isaiah translates the last line, “And repent, and it be **forgiven** them.” Mark’s parallel passage cites this Targum, “*That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest haply they should turn again, and it should be **forgiven**.*” (Mark 4:12). In contrast, Matthew cites the Hebrew:

*“For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should **heal** them.”* (Matt 13:15).

Healing and forgiveness are two sides to the same coin. **Both have to do with making a person whole...**

Again, the key to clearing up the apparent inconsistency is the connection between healing and forgiveness. They are two sides to the same coin. Both have to do with making a person whole; in one case, outward wholeness and in the other, inward wholeness. Healing is a blessing and

forgiveness is an even greater blessing. As the Son of man, Jesus has the power to do both.

### **GOD WITH US: JESUS FED THE MULTITUDES, TWICE**

The blessings of the covenant include God’s provision for an abundance of food:

*“And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water.”* (Exod 23:25a).

*“Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.”* (Lev 26:4-5).

*“For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness,*

*thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.” (Deut 8:7-10).*

There are two episodes in Matthew’s gospel that describe Jesus miraculously feeding a multitude (Matt 14:13-21; 15:32-39). In each episode, Jesus was testing the disciples. Did they have faith that God would provide food? Did they believe God was with them through His son? John makes it explicit Jesus was testing the disciples:

*“When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may*

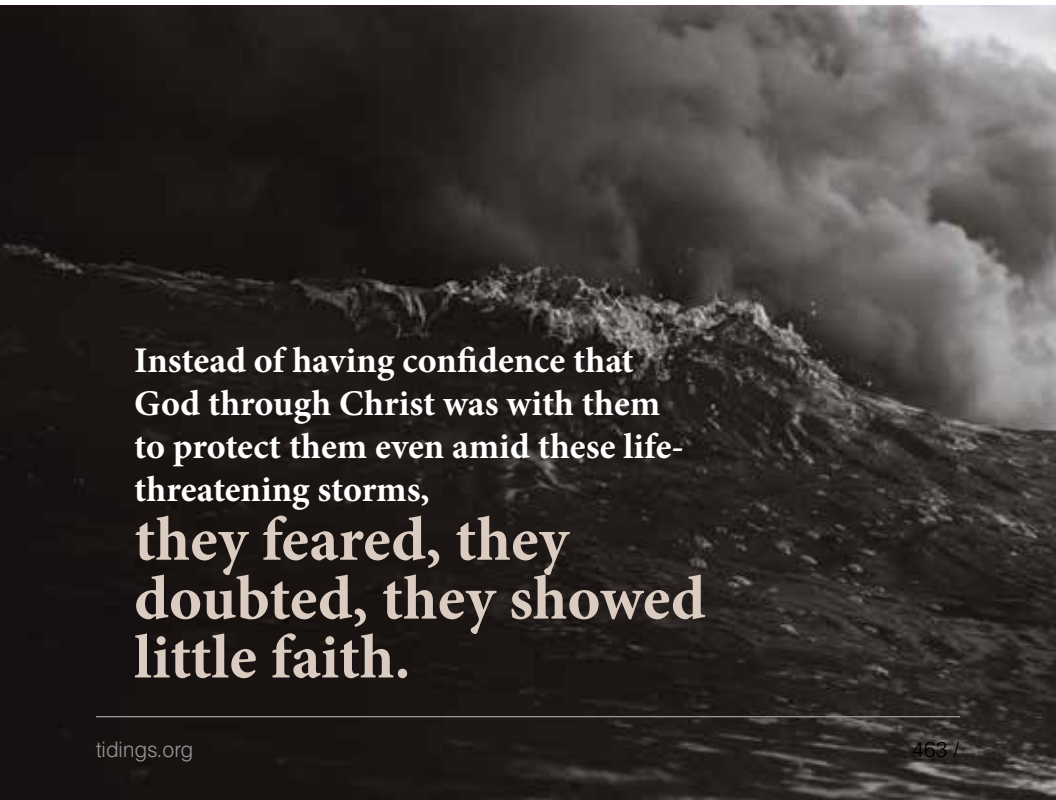
*eat? And **this he said to prove him:** for he himself knew what he would do.” (John 6:5-6; compare Deut 8:1-3; Matt 4:1-4).*

The testing aspect of these feeding episodes arises again (Matt 16:6-12), where Jesus applies Isaiah 6:9-10 to the disciples.

## **GOD WITH US: JESUS CALMED THE SEAS, TWICE**

There are two episodes where Jesus calmed storms at sea (Matt 8:23-28; 14:22-33). In both cases, the disciples feared for their lives. In the first episode, the storm caused the ship to be covered with waves, but Jesus was asleep.

*“And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, **Lord, save us: we perish.** And he saith unto them, **Why are ye fearful, O ye of little***



**Instead of having confidence that God through Christ was with them to protect them even amid these life-threatening storms, they feared, they doubted, they showed little faith.**

*faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" (Matt 8:25-27).*

In a second episode, Jesus was walking on the sea toward the disciples' ship. The disciples saw him and were troubled. Jesus told them not to be afraid. Peter went out of the ship to walk on the water to Jesus.

*"But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, **Lord, save me.** And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, **O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?** And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." (Matt 14:26-33).*

In both cases, the disciples cried out, "Lord, save us/me." And in both cases, Jesus said they are "of little faith." Like the feeding miracles, the disciples struggled with these tests. Instead of having confidence that God through

Christ was with them to protect them even amid these life-threatening storms, they feared, they doubted, they showed little faith.

## **GOD WITH US: JESUS CRUCIFIED, BURIED, RAISED FROM THE DEAD**

The vast majority of Matthew's gospel reflects the covenant blessings. There is only a brief but excruciating time that corresponds to the covenant curses (Matt 26-27; "for a little while..." Heb 2:9 NET, NIV, NRSV). Leading up to the crucifixion, Jesus explicitly told his disciples what was going to happen (Matt 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19; 26:1-2). He told the Parable of the Vineyard about how the husbandmen would kill the householder's son so they could seize his inheritance; the scribes and Pharisees knew he was referring to them (Matt 21:33-46). At the last supper, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and said, "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matt 26:28 NIV, NRSV, NTE). He came to Gethsemane, where he told his disciples, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;" (Matt 26:38). Three times he prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass

from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.” (Matt 26:39, 42, 44). Jesus was bound, led away, and delivered up so he could be put to death (Matt 27:1-2). On the cross, Jesus prayed, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matt 27:46; quoting Psa 22:1). And then he died (Matt 27:48) and was buried (Matt 27:57-66). On the third day he rose from the dead and appeared to his disciples in Galilee, just as he had told them he would (Matt 28).

*“Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame.” (Heb 12:2). By doing so, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” (Gal 3:13-14; citing Deut 21:23).*

These events, done according to the Scriptures, became an essential part of the gospel (1 Cor 15:1-4). Throughout his ministry, Jesus fulfilled the true

meaning of the phrase, “God is with us.” The miracles he performed during that brief three-and-a-half-year span were a mere foretaste of the blessings still to come when he returns to establish once again the kingdom of God in the earth.

*Joe Hill  
(Austin Leander, TX)*

Notes:

- 1 See also, Mark 5:28, 34; 6:56; 10:52; Luke 17:19. The same word is also translated “healed” in Mark 5:23 and Luke 8:36.
- 2 L.G. Sargent writes, “Mark’s paraphrase of Isa 6:9-10 (quoted in full in Matthew) corresponds with the Targum rather than the Hebrew or Septuagint texts...,” Mark: The Gospel of the Son of God, 1983, p. 64.
- 3 For the most part, this article has not discussed the large teaching sections in Matthew’s gospel (Matt 5-7; 10; 12-13; 16; 23-25). Of course, these passages do refer to our current theme, such as the beatitudes (Matt 5:3-10), the Lord’s Prayer (Matt 6:9-12), the parables of the kingdom (Matt 13), etc.
- 4 These articles were influenced by the writings of Birger Gerhardsson: The Testing of God’s Son: (Matt 4:1-11 & PAR), An Analysis of an Early Christian Midrash, 1966, Wipf and Stock, Eugene, Oregon. The Mighty Acts of Jesus According to Matthew, 1979, Wipf and Stock, Eugene, Oregon. “Mighty Acts and the Rule of Heaven: ‘God is with us’”, To Tell the Mystery: Essays on New Testament Eschatology in Honor of Robert H. Gundry, eds. Thomas E. Schmidt and Moises Silva, Library of New Testament Studies, vol. 100, 1994, pp. 34-48.

**The miracles Jesus performed during that brief three-and-a-half-year span were a mere foretaste of the blessings still to come when he returns to establish once again the kingdom of God in the earth.**



TAKE A MARGINAL NOTE

# THEY ARE AT THEIR WIT'S END

*By Dave Jennings*

## With Jesus in the boat with us, we too will come to a safe haven and arrive at our desired destination.

**P**SALM 107 describes men who do business upon the great waters on ships. The sea is their workplace, and they have great familiarity with it. Yet, when the stormy winds rise up, their soul is melted:

*"They stagger like a drunken man,  
and are at their wit's end."  
(vv. 23-27).*

Nature can quickly strip a man's confidence and fill him with great tumult.

How well this passage fits the experience of the disciples on the Sea of Galilee (Matt 14:22-23; Mark 6:45; John 6:16-21). The Lord constrained them to get into the boat and to return to Capernaum. The crowd where they were had been clamoring to make Jesus their King. At the insistence of Jesus, they reluctantly climbed into their boats and began the journey home that evening. But, while in the middle of the sea, at the worst possible place, storms arose.

The information about the watches of the night given to us in the gospel records indicate they had averaged about a third of a mile per hour. It is likely the journey initially went smoothly, but when the storm and wind escalated, all progress ceased. These confident fishermen were in agony as they strained to row to any possible safe location. Soon, it became clear they were in serious danger, and they feared for their lives. Like the mariners of Psalm 107:26, *"their courage melted..."* (ESV).

It is likely they staggered about like drunken men, as the Psalmist wrote. Certainly, they had tried every technique they knew to fight the elements, but nothing was working. They had indeed, *"come to their wit's end."* (Psa 107:27). The Oxford KJV margin renders this in verse 27 as *"all their wisdom is swallowed up."*

How often in our lives do we find ourselves in similar situations? We can be at our wit's end trying to resolve relationship issues, navigate through financial distress, or maybe even facing a life-threatening disease? When we grapple with our weakness, our courage, once resolute, can quickly melt away. Without the Lord in the boat with us, we too can stagger about and be filled with fear. Our only assurance during these threatening times is the grace of our God.

The Lord saw the disciples struggling and he came to them. Eventually, when he was in the boat with the disciples, the wind ceased and *"immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going."* (John 6:21 ESV). In Psalm 107:29-30, we read, *"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then they are glad because they are quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven."*

With Jesus in the boat with us, we too will come to a safe haven and arrive at our desired destination.

*Dave Jennings*

# IN REMEMBRANCE - BRO. ANDRE GEORGE

*By Mike LeDuke*

**ON** July 28, we lost one of the stalwart brothers of the Castries Ecclesia in St. Lucia. Brother Andre George fell asleep in the Lord at an elder care home near Arima, Trinidad. Bro. George had been in Trinidad for appropriate care for his bile duct cancer, which was not available in St. Lucia. He had received loving care for many months by Bro. Sam and Sis. Bernadette Edwards in Trinidad. The lovingkindness of the Edwards and the brothers and sisters in Trinidad and Tobago were a powerful witness to all who came in contact with Bro. Andre in the final two years of his life.

Bro. Andre, who was baptized in St. Lucia in 2005, was a keen preacher of the gospel and a sound expositor of Bible truth. He wrote three books on first principle topics which were published and distributed to interested friends, sold at local bookstores, and displayed at government-sponsored cultural events honoring local authors. He was a respected and sought-after speaker throughout the Caribbean and spoke at ecclesias, Bible schools and youth camps in Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad, Tobago, and Barbados. During my visits to St. Lucia, I came to rely on Bro. Andre's abilities, and we became close friends. My visits to St. Lucia will not be the same without Andre there! He



was my close companion, brother, and friend, and I will miss our fellowship in the Lord's vineyard.

On August 16, a meeting of remembrance for Bro. Andre was held via Zoom. More than 70 people from the USA, Canada, the Caribbean, Guyana, and the UK were in attendance. Bro. Sam Edwards gave an eloquent eulogy followed by a PowerPoint slideshow which I put together with input from many brothers and sisters, honouring Andre's life as a brother in Christ. There was an animated conversation following the formal part of the meeting, during which Andre's relatives, who were not Christadelphians, expressed their appreciation for the loving care which Andre received and how amazed they were at the international network of close friends he developed during the 15 years of his life in the Christadelphian community.

*Mike LeDuke, St. Lucia Linkman  
Submitted by Sis. Jan Berneau,  
CBMA/C Publicity*

# NEWS & UPDATES

---

## PITTSBURGH, PA

---

We are delighted to report the baptism of NATALIE ROBINSON, daughter of Bro. Stephen and Sis. Kristy Robinson of our ecclesia, on August 5, 2020. We conducted a “virtual” baptism service with Sis. Natalie’s immediate family in attendance, but joined on line with our members, and friends and family from all over the US and Canada. It was a blessing that so many could participate in this joyous event.

The undersigned is now the Recording Brother and all correspondence should be directed to me, either at our ecclesial hall, or by email at: [kflat1@gmail.com](mailto:kflat1@gmail.com).

*Kevin Flatley*

---

## NEW ENGLAND GATHERING

---

The Annual New England Fraternal Gathering is hosted this year by the Westerly, RI Ecclesia and will be held, Yahweh willing, on Sunday October 4, 2020. The speaker for the gathering is Bro. Frank Abel (Hamilton Book Road, ON) and the theme for the gathering is, “Living at the Edge of the Kingdom”. The gathering will feature talks on the subjects of, “Overcoming the Challenges of a Godless World” and “Strengthening Those Things That Remain”. This year we face new challenges, with conditions as they are, that the in-person fraternal gathering as we have known and enjoyed it, is not to be. This year it will be a virtual event. If you wish to receive further information when it is available, please email Bro. Craig Nevers at: [craignevers@verizon.net](mailto:craignevers@verizon.net).

*Craig Nevers*

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## “THE BELIEVER & PROTEST”

I read with interest the recent article “The Believer and Protest”. It made some good points and I was delighted to see The Tidings addressing relevant current issue of great importance.

It is a fact that in the past Christadelphians have lobbied governments to gain special privileges for our own group. This is how we secured conscientious objection rights from the British government, for example. In those days, Christadelphians contacted politicians, urged them to grant our community conscientious objection status, and agreed to help the war effort in other ways instead, such as making ammunition in factories for the British Army to use.

Christadelphians both past and present have also contacted governments to stand up for members of our community who are refugees, when governments have challenged their status and attempted to detain or deport them. We have famously lobbied governments to support the Jewish people, especially the British government during the early years of the Holocaust, even before it ramped up during World War II.

So despite our public declaration of being “not of this world”, and our repeated claim that we are not politically active and do not involve ourselves in the machinery of secular government, we actually have a history of interfering directly with governments through both lobbying and protest.

The extent to which this is consistent with our stated beliefs is debatable, and to some extent a matter of personal conscience. But I would say that it is more in the spirit of Christ to lobby and protest on behalf of the oppressed, than

to do so to gain privileges for ourselves.

We already work for a better society in a range of ways, such as orphanages, retirement homes, schools, education funding, the Meal-A-Day program and similar food aid programs. Is that Humanist too? Surely not. In fact, the author says “As believers, we must address the hardships of any when we can help”. So why is it ok to actively help people suffering from evil, but not ok to protest the evil itself?

But there was persistent civil disobedience, a strategy used by many protest organizations today. Since the apostles used civil disobedience, why shouldn't we? I would also disagree that there were no “speeches of condemnation”. Christ and John the Baptist both criticized Herod openly, and Paul spoke up in protest when his civil rights were being violated.

Yet Paul repeatedly took steps to minimize danger, take himself out of danger, or avoid danger or punishment by appealing to and exercising his civil rights. Surely that wasn't Humanism? It certainly wasn't fatalism.

*“Jesus taught his disciples to “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's.” (Mark 12:17)*

The flip side of this is that we should not render to Caesar that which is not Caesar's. The apostles had the same view, saying that “We should obey God rather than men”. Again, this is explicit endorsement of civil disobedience.

It is not our government or our nation, but why should we not protest the ungodly actions of those who are oppressing the poor and marginalized? Why should we not speak out when see oppression? Should Christadelphians in brother Thomas' day have submitted to the institution of slavery and refused to

oppose it, or should they have protested it and opposed it directly and actively, just as we did with the Nazi persecution of the Jews? Should we have been involved with the Underground Railway which brought slaves to freedom, just as we were involved with the Kindertransport which took Jews to safety from Nazi Germany? Black Christadelphians are very interested in our answers to these questions. Thank you for your consideration.

*Jonathan Burke*

---

Dear Bro. Jonathan,

Let me start my response by clearly stating this is a matter of personal choice and we are dealing with principles that involve a lot of grey—implicit versus explicit. We all must be incredibly careful about this. There are some things that we can say with little doubt are commands of our Lord. There are others where Scripture allows liberty.

We are, however, expected to strive to find Scriptural guidance for the issues we are facing. In Paul's case, his decision was to appeal to Caesar, feeling he had no chance of a fair trial in Jerusalem by the Jews. That was his right as a Roman citizen. One could argue that this really did not work out for Paul, as he might have been released. We know that the Lord made the best of it and he was able to go to Rome and witness there. In the Christadelphian examples, these were not examples of civil disobedience. They were exercising the rights they had as citizens to appeal for something—exemption from conscription, tax relief, etc. If these were not granted upon appeal, brethren chose to suffer the consequences. That is far from civil disobedience.

When John the Baptist exhorted Herod it was about a moral issue, not the charge to make secular government changes. I know of none that attempted

to change the secular government that the believer lived in. This is also true in the Christadelphian examples cited.

The charitable organizations you have noted are good works of faith and very consistent with what a believer should be involved in. It is consistent with the works of Matthew 25 that Jesus uses to judge belief. Also, please note that the article does not say that a believer that would choose to participate in a protest was Humanist. What I said was that organizations that are often behind these protests have a strong Humanist agenda. There really cannot be much of a doubt here. Just look at the Black Lives Matter website and read through their beliefs. It is not that if one chooses to participate in a protest, they are a Humanist. Rather, we should be aware that the organizations which are coordinating these marches often have a Humanist platform.

You are right that we should speak out at times that we see oppression or marginalization. Condemning racism, prejudice, oppression, and injustice is within the bounds of our moral and spiritual calling. It must not exist in our personal lives, families or ecclesias. I am convinced that what we CAN do is be a people of prayer. What if our ecclesias were to publicize prayer meetings, open to the public, to pray for victims and those who are policing and governing? This seems more consistent with who we are and what we are called to do. Someone once said to me, "I am praying for you. Let me know if there is something less important that I can do to help also."

Thank you for writing. I am pleased we can have open discussions on these matters. We must all try not to enforce our own conclusions on others but accept that there is a wonderful liberty that we have in our Lord.

*Dave Jennings*



OUR COMMUNITY

# SIMON MANOR

Victoria Christadelphian Seniors' Housing is located in Victoria, British Columbia, which has a mild climate all year and the building is behind the ecclesial hall.

There are 11 one-bedroom rental units for those ages 55 and older. Units are not furnished but have curtains, drapes, carpets, stove and fridge, and hot water is provided. Laundry facilities are also available at no cost. The tenants pay for electricity which includes heating for the units and any telephone or cable connections. Rents are low and residents must be able to care for themselves. One unit is available at present and a waiting list is kept for future vacancies.

*For information and applications please contact Bro. Bob Stodel, President, 250-384-4456, email [rwstodel@gmail.com](mailto:rwstodel@gmail.com) or write to Simon Manor, 12-1431 Simon Road, Victoria, B.C. V8X 3G9.*



# ADDRESSES FOR DONATIONS

**Christadelphian Tidings Publishing Committee** publishes this magazine and other works. 567 Astorian Drive, Simi Valley, CA 93065-5941: [www.tidings.org](http://www.tidings.org)

**Christadelphian Bible Mission of the Americas (CBMA)** supports preaching work throughout the Americas, Truth Corps, etc. Visit [www.cbma.net](http://www.cbma.net) for current activities as well as to make online donations. Donations by check should be sent to 567 Astorian Drive, Simi Valley, CA 93065-5941, or [cbma.treasurer@gmail.com](mailto:cbma.treasurer@gmail.com)

**Christadelphian Bible Mission Canada (CBMC)** supports preaching work throughout the Caribbean and bequests for similar activity. Visit [www.cbma.net](http://www.cbma.net) for an update on current activities as well as to make Canadian dollar online donations. Donations by cheque should be sent to Box 55541, Unit 119, 15280 101 Ave., Surrey, BC, V3R 0J7

**CBMA Overseas Book Service** welcomes gifts of used Bibles, reference books, and Christadelphian books. Please contact Jan Berneau, 1221 N. Whitnall Hwy., Burbank, CA 91505-2110. Phone: 818-842-2868 or [jberneau@earthlink.net](mailto:jberneau@earthlink.net)

**Christadelphian Heritage College**  
522 Book Road East, Ancaster, ON L9G 3L1, Canada

**Christadelphian Heritage School**  
Donations to: Thousand Oaks Christadelphians, c/o Aaron McDonald, 3004 Mineral Wells. Simi Valley, CA 93063

**Williamsburg Christadelphian Foundation (WCF)** helps ecclesias cultivate faith, nurtures faith in youth and creates opportunities for faithful service. c/o Virginia Brierly, PO Box 264, Villas, NJ, 08251-0264 [www.wcfoundation.org](http://www.wcfoundation.org)

**Christadelphian Tape Library** Contact Reuben E. Washington, 196 E. Stearns St., Rahway, NJ 07065-4923. Phone: 732-381-4590 Fax: 732-499-8415 or [christadelphiantapelibrary@verizon.net](mailto:christadelphiantapelibrary@verizon.net)

**Agape in Action** provides help for Christadelphian families and children living in extreme poverty. Donations may be sent to P.O. Box 146, Three Rivers, CA 93271-0146, or 70 Delevan Drive, Cambridge, ON N1S 4S3 or via website: [www.agapeinaction.com](http://www.agapeinaction.com) or [info@agapeinaction.com](mailto:info@agapeinaction.com)

**Christadelphian Save the Children Fund** provides Bible learning materials, personal items, and scholarships to needy children in mission areas: [www.christadelphianchildren.com](http://www.christadelphianchildren.com)

**Fairhaven Christadelphian Charitable Foundation** provides assistance to Canadian ecclesias dealing with the health and welfare issues of senior members. Donations can be sent c/o Jonathan Farrar, 140 Whitwell Way, Binbrook, ON L0R 1C0

**Joy Fund, Inc.** provides grants to ecclesias, individuals, and families to assist with basic needs. c/o Stan Newton, 6861 Skyview Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92647-2938

**Karolyn Andrews Memorial Fund (KAMF)** provides help in cases where brethren or families have been victims of persecution because of their faith. To donate: Acct name: Timothy Charles Galbraith, BSB: 343020, Acct #: 018016090, Bank: HSBC Eastland, Ringwood, AUS, Address: TC Galbraith, 18 Edna Str., Heathmont, Vic, 3135.

**Spanish language Literature** is available at P.O. Box 947, Monrovia, CA 91017-0947. 626-303-2222, or [jdhunter45@gmail.com](mailto:jdhunter45@gmail.com)

# Thoughts on the Way

## A Dark Reflection

**H**OW often did the first followers of Jesus misunderstand his message? How often did they not believe, even when they had good reasons to believe? Quite often, as a matter of fact:

1. At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus visited the Temple, where he cleansed its precincts of vendors—along with their tables, money, and merchandise. He told his disciples that his Father's house had become a den of thieves; and he said to the authorities, *"Destroy this temple, and I will build it again in three days."* (John 2:13-19). It was three to four years later, after his resurrection, that his disciples finally grasped his meaning: he was speaking of his own body (vv. 21,22).

2. Jesus told his friends, more than a few times, that he would suffer much from the priests and the Pharisees, that he would be killed, and that he would be raised from the dead on the third day (Matt 16:21; 17:23; Luke 9:22; 13:32; 18:33; etc.). But the gospel writers said that *"the disciples did not understand any of this. Its meaning was hidden from them, and they did not know what he was talking about."* (Luke 18:34), and also, *"they were afraid to ask him about it."* (Luke 9:45).

3. When Jesus talked about his friend Lazarus "falling asleep" his disciples interpreted that to mean natural sleep, when Lazarus had actually died (John 11).

4. When Jesus deliberately arranged to enter Jerusalem upon a donkey, his disciples were puzzled. *"Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him"* (John 12:16).

5. At the Last Supper, Jesus told his disciples that *"one of you is going to betray me."* (John 13:21). They were *"at a loss to know which of them he meant."* (v. 22). Except for the disciple whom Jesus loved, (vv. 25,26), they did not know who the traitor was until Judas arrived in Gethsemane.

6. When Jesus told them, *"In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me."* (John 16:16), his disciples asked one another, *"What does he mean by saying that?"* (v. 17).

7. On the morning of Christ's resurrection, some women went to the tomb, where an angel told them that Jesus was risen. Immediately after this encounter, the women actually met Jesus, who in turn sent them to tell his brothers to go to Galilee, where he would find them. When this happened, they worshiped him, *"but some doubted."* (Matt 28:17).

8. When Mary Magdalene first saw the open tomb, she thought that someone had taken away the body (John 20:1,2). And then, after she met the risen Jesus, she went to tell the others, but *"they did not believe it."* (Mark 16:9-11; Luke 24:11). A little later Jesus appeared to the eleven and rebuked them for their refusal to believe those who had seen him (Mark 16:14).

9. At first, when they found the tomb empty, John and Peter *"still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead."* (John 20:9).

10. Thomas did not believe in the resurrection at first because he had not seen the risen Jesus face to face (John 20:24-25); it was a week before Jesus

revealed himself to Thomas (vv. 26-29).

11. Even after the disciples had accepted the fact of Jesus' resurrection, they expected him to restore the kingdom to Israel immediately (Acts 1:6).

## HOW LITTLE THEY KNEW!

In the gospels, the disciples of Jesus confessed time after time how little they knew. This simple observation can teach us a valuable lesson. When Jesus acted, they misunderstood his actions. When he spoke, they misinterpreted his words. When they had evidence of his resurrection, they doubted. Time after time, individually and collectively, they fell far short of the rank of a believer. At times, they seemed to show themselves more unbelieving than believing.

However, Jesus did not give up on them, even when they seemed to have given up on him and to have forgotten his prophecies about himself. And his patience with them finally paid off.

The disciples did have one thing going for them, one redeeming feature, we might say. They knew they had failed to meet their Master's expectations in the category of believing. And their frank recognition of their shortcomings set them on the way to greater enlightenment. Knowing they did not know—everything, or anything remotely approaching everything—set the stage for them to learn more and more as time went by. Thankfully, Jesus gave them the time.

## HOW MUCH DO WE KNOW?

It is true. Our understanding now, looking back, surpasses their understanding then. The disciples who followed Jesus had to figure it all out as they went along, and so they often understood very little at the time. On the other hand, we have the benefit of their experiences, and the

chance to learn something from their mistakes. But we must never use their experiences to make ourselves feel superior to them.

Perhaps we should also acknowledge how little we know, even at this moment—how little we know of Jesus' preaching and message, never mind his as-yet-unfulfilled Bible prophecies. We ought to admit, with real humility, that we are very much like those first disciples, and there are many things we do not fully understand—things which, like the Apostle Paul, we only see *"through a glass, darkly..."* (1 Cor 13:12, KJV)—that is, *"a poor reflection as in a mirror."* (NIV).

If the Apostle Paul could suggest how little he knew about some matters (*"I know in part!"* (1 Cor 13:12)), then why can't we recognize our own deficiencies? We should remind ourselves that, even while we know many things about the Bible, there are many more things we do not know yet. Pride in our Bible knowledge—compared to the knowledge of others—may bring a brief moment of satisfaction, but in the long run, it can be harmful. The same pride can blind our eyes and close our minds to learning more of God's word.

While we hold faithfully to our basic beliefs, we should keep open minds about what we do not know for sure. This is how we continue to learn, by searching the Bible daily with eager minds (Acts 17:11). Even now, we may see in *"a dark reflection,"* but as the angels, we should *"long to look into these things,"* that is, *"the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow."* (1 Pet 1:11-12). There is always something more to learn.

George Booker  
(Austin Leander, TX)



The Garden hopes to inspire our North American Christadelphian community to share Christ's love through **outreach initiatives** that show compassion to our neighbors and provide assistance for their immediate needs.



## BAGS OF LOVE WINTER APPEAL

SEPTEMBER 2020 - FEBRUARY 2021

Every night in North America, **close to 235,000 people are sleeping unsheltered on the streets**. Your help is needed. We would love to send you 20 warm sleeping bags for free, or reimburse you to make up 20 care packs, to donate to your local homeless charity. **For more information on how you can participate, contact: [intiatives@thegardenoutreach.org](mailto:intiatives@thegardenoutreach.org)**

To find out more, visit our website at:  
**[thegardenoutreach.org](http://thegardenoutreach.org)**

*"Is not this the fast that I choose... to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin..."*

**Isaiah 58:6-10, NRSV**

**SPONSORED BY THE PORTLAND ECCLESIA**

**To make a donation or to subscribe, visit us at**

**[WWW.TIDINGS.ORG](http://WWW.TIDINGS.ORG)**

Stay connected and up to date. Find us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter!



The Brothers and Sisters who write for The Christadelphian Tidings do so on a voluntary basis, and the Magazine is provided FREE to any who would like to read it. The Magazine is available in a Digital Format online at [www.tidings.org](http://www.tidings.org).

If you would like to order a printed subscription to The Tidings you may do so simply by making a donation to help cover the printing costs. The Suggested Donation approximates the actual cost of printing and shipping which is US\$50.00, and Minimum Donation is US\$25.00. If you can afford to donate more, please do so in order to help out those that cannot afford to.

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

Periodicals postage paid at Austin, Texas and at additional mailing offices.

Send address corrections to: The Christadelphian Tidings • 567 Astorian Drive • Simi Valley, CA 93065-5941