

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

**Editorial:**  
**God, our Protector**

**The Napkin**

**Bible Study:**  
**All God's Children  
Have Names #4**

**History:**  
**Conscientious Objection  
WW1 in the USA**

**Being Baptized**

**The Unexpected and  
the Unanticipatable**

**A Paradigm Shift in  
Southeast Africa**

**Thoughts on the Way:**  
**What is the Best Proof  
that the Bible is Inspired?**

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## God, our Protector

*“Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone” (Psa 91:9-12).*

### Protection

Many times in the scriptures, God acts to protect His people from harm. God’s people, the nation of Israel, were “*under the cloud*”, as Paul says in 1Cor 10:1, and the cloud protected them from the Egyptians at the Exodus. Some more examples are:

- **Ebed melech, a Gentile:** *“Go, and say to Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, But I will deliver you on that day, says the LORD, and you shall not be given into the hand of the men of whom you are afraid. For I will surely save you, and you shall not fall by the sword; but you shall have your life as a prize of war, because you have put your trust in me, says the LORD” (Jer 39:16-18 RSV).*
- **Lot:** *“God delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds” (2 Pet. 2:7-8).*
- **David:** *“for thou art my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy. Let me dwell in thy tent for ever! Oh to be safe under the shelter of thy wings!” (Psa 61:3-4).*
- **Ourselves:** *“Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:6-7).*

### Our lives

There is no doubt that we have God’s protection, in that, unlike many of those around us, we have the hope of ultimate salvation when we are resurrected to God’s kingdom. But how far does this apply in our present existence? Are we protected from the physical perils of this life? When we pray, “*deliver us from evil*”, does it mean from the physical evil that surrounds us? Will it safeguard ourselves (and our children) from the mass killings that seem so much a part of our modern North American scene? Or, more statistically likely, from the carnage on our roads? Or from the ravages of disease? So, in what way are we protected? Are we entitled to expect (or even demand) God’s protection in this life, as well as His rewards?

And what is our reaction to the all too frequent episodes of mass shootings in the United States and elsewhere? Here in Pittsburgh, when the local Tree of Life synagogue experienced such a tragedy, the Pittsburgh ecclesia planted eleven

trees in Israel and a tree in a local park in memory of the victims, so in some small way we acknowledged their suffering. As John Donne said:

“No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main;... any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind. And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”

And we see tragedy strike those in the brotherhood seemingly as frequently as any others. We all know of those who were killed in car accidents, who died early of cancer, who have suffered other terrible misfortunes and tragedies in their lives. Sometimes we say, “It is God’s will”, and sometimes seeming misfortunes work out for good in the end, but only sometimes.

Sadly, in the past, some in our community have thought that God does protect them physically, and by so doing put themselves unnecessarily in harm’s way. One example was in the blitz in England in the 1940’s. There was quite a common idea that God would protect His people from the bombs, and that it lacked faith to go into bomb shelters during air raids. Sadly, such ideas proved incorrect, for many in the brotherhood died during the air campaign, and no longer do we often hear such thoughts. In a similar way, I do not believe we should knowingly put ourselves into unsafe situations in the belief that God will protect us from harm. If we go into certain areas after dark, take unnecessary physical risks, drive with reckless abandon, all in the expectation that nothing untoward will happen if we “just have faith”, it instead should remind us of Jesus being tempted to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple: *“Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Matt 7:4).*

## **The answer**

What is the answer? Should we just say it is another example of a Biblical paradox? Perhaps not. If we examine the frequent use of God’s protections in the Old Testament, it is usually clear whom the protection is from: the enemies of God’s chosen people, the Israelites. Those were the enemies who they were protected from, either physically or by metaphor.

Let us look at the New Testament. When Jesus sends out his disciples, he warns them about the opposition they would face:

*“And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.... And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt 10:23, 28).*

What sort of protection was Jesus offering in this case, to disciples trying to spread his message of salvation? It was protection from their real enemies: he and his Heavenly father would protect them from their own sin, that which, as John says, is mortal. We sin when we are tempted of our own volition:

*“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God:*

*for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:12-15).*

God’s ability to protect us from eternal judgment and eternal death is more significant than His ability to protect us from disease or death. In our prayer requests for safe travel and physical health, we try to apply to our bodies His promises of protection for our eternal salvation, and we are sometimes left disappointed. But we will continue to be disappointed in Him until our value system lines up with His, until we value our eternal life more than our physically limited lives, until we understand that God’s primary agenda is our lives in His future kingdom on earth.

In the Lord’s prayer, we ask for sustenance, but not for health. The protection we ask for is “deliver us from evil”: protect us from performing evil, from sinning, from committing those sins which will eliminate us from God’s kingdom. This is true protection, the protection we can pray for, and indeed hope for answers.

Sometimes, as many of us experience, God does help the believers. But I do not believe this lets us rely on Him for protection from all harm. Some of those who perhaps relied on Him to protect themselves from the bombs of WW2 died. We should never “Tempt the Lord our God” in deliberately putting ourselves in harm’s way, and then expecting God to protect us in those circumstances.

## **Conclusion**

*“God delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds” (2Pet 2:7-8).*

We must recognize that we cannot truly expect that God will protect us from harm, as he protected Noah and so many others. We think of those listed in Hebrews 11; they all had faith, and we are sure we will see them all in the Kingdom. Although many were protected from harm so they could help in the purpose of God, some “*were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented*” (Heb 11:36). It is their faith that ensured their future receipt of the promise of the Kingdom. Our reaction to those who were (and are) protected is to say; “God be praised.” Our prayer for protection from evil is from our own evil, that which will prevent us from inheriting our place in the Kingdom. The physical evils of this life are an inevitable result of mankind’s nature, which, along with our mortality, we inherit from Adam.

*Peter Hemingray*

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## The Napkin

Even in the heat of summer, there are outdoor tasks that still need to be done: gardening, mowing the lawn, sweeping, etc. They do not stop just because the temperature rises. And with the heat and work comes sweat. Often times you can judge a person's efforts outside, whether work or play, by how sweaty they look.

But that situation is in our everyday, mundane lives. What about in the ecclesia? What about in the house of God? What does the Bible have to say about sweat and our service to God? For our thoughts here together this morning we'd like to focus in on just that, and one small item in particular, and hope that it can encourage us all as we start this new week awaiting our Lord's return.

### Paul's third missionary journey

Of all the Apostles, Paul was perhaps the most active. He travelled for decades, preaching the gospel abroad. We read that *"all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks"* (Acts 19:10). He was *"a light of the Gentiles"* (Acts 13:47, citing Isa. 49), and shone for all to see the hope of the gospel. And when Paul was not preaching, he was making tents, that he might not be a burden to any with whom he stayed. Paul truly labored tirelessly.

*"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them"* Acts 19:11-12

Now, foremost, what we have here is not some magical object or relic that could save. These were not pieces of holy cloth worthy of veneration. Rather, this was the work of the Holy Spirit given to Paul, being made manifest in these wonderful miracles. When the sick touched these handkerchiefs, they were made whole by their faith and the workings of the Holy Spirit of God.

For context, this was no new thing, for earlier in Acts we read: *"... they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them"* (Acts 5:15). Christ also healed the woman of her infirmity that plagued her for 12 years just through contact with his garment (Matt 9:18-22). Even in the Old Testament, we recall that a man was buried upon the bones of the prophet Elisha and was resurrected to life (2Kgs 13:21).

Yet still, this event of Paul was utterly remarkable. The scripture even makes this blatantly clear saying *"God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul"* (Acts 19:11). If there is ever a time to pay extra close attention to the words of scripture, it would be when we are plainly told that what was occurring was special! If we were to read this verse from the Young's Literal Translation, we would see the emphasis that these were not the works of Paul: *"mighty works also — not common — was God working through the hands of Paul"* (YLT).

These acts were not merely the workings of Paul's hands, but a manifestation of the power of the Almighty. Let us consider this miracle more closely.

## Soudarion

In Acts 19:11-12 we have two separate objects brought unto Paul that would be taken to the sick: aprons and handkerchiefs. The former denotes exactly what we read in the KJV; this was a partial garment that would cover the front half of the body, something that would not seem out of place in a market, or upon a servant as they worked in the household. Such a garment would be possessed by many of the poor who turned unto the hope of the gospel. The latter object that was brought to Paul was a handkerchief. In the Greek this was a "*soudarion*", a word of Latin origin. Strong's gives us the definition of a "sweat-cloth, more properly a towel, whether for wiping perspiration from the face or for covering the body of a corpse." While the Greek word for apron occurs only here, this word for handkerchief, *soudarion*, appears three other times in the New Testament, each reference filling out a most beautiful picture.

The first reference of *soudarion* is found where we have the record of the resurrection of Lazarus, an event only recorded in the gospel of John.

*"And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:43-44.)*

Verse 44 reads that Lazarus "*came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes*". Yet it makes the careful distinction to tell us that his face, his head, was bound in something altogether different. The Greek word for grave clothes denotes a winding sheet, used for binding up a corpse. Lazarus' face though, was "*bound about with a napkin*": a *soudarion*! Now remember that the Greek word meant either a sweat cloth, or a cloth for binding the dead. But how do these two ideas unite?

Where in scripture do we first come across the idea of sweating? Well, like all good threads in scripture, we must go to the book of Genesis to find an answer. After Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, God speaks to Adam:

*"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3:17-19.)*

Through the sin of Adam, he subjected himself and his seed to a life of toil and suffering, a life that would produce sweat, day in and day out. This same life are we subjected too! For "*in Adam all die*" (1Cor 15:22). And thus, we see the two aspects of mortality in this one object. Day to day, we can wipe our brow with the napkin, and when we can do this no longer, it will wrap our bodies in the grave.

It is a grim notion, but without Christ in our lives, it is the life we live. When we toil and work in life, we sweat, our perspiration depicting the degree to which we are exerting ourselves. Thus, it is quite fitting that Lazarus would be raised with this napkin still upon him; for we know that he was raised again to a mortal existence, alive again, yet for only a short while. He would still need to sweat and perspire in his life, just as we do each day.

Our next reference is to this *soudarion* is found in the gospel of Luke, in the 19th chapter. Here we have the Parable of the Pounds.

*“He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds,<sup>1</sup> and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading” (Luke 19:12-15).*

And we know, from familiarity with this passage, that the first faithful was to have authority over ten cities, and the second faithful, five cities. And then we come to the last of the three.

*“And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?” (Luke 19:20-23).*

In contrast to the faithful first two citizens, we have this third, and to him was also given one pound. As we read through the parable, we would expect this final man to have gained at least another pound unto his initial pound, and thus to receive cities as a reward for such faithful service, but that is not the case. You see, this man decided that he would keep his pound “laid up in a napkin”, a *soudarion*! This man chose rather than to sweat and to toil to increase his pound, that he would bind it within a sweat cloth! The irony and complete abstention from labor that this man showed gives us light as to the harsh sentence that the nobleman imposes.

Perhaps most frightening is that this man knew exactly what the nobleman was like!

*“For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow” (Luke 19:21-22).*



If we can read through a passage of scripture such as this, and not have a chill run down our spine... If we can hear these words and still sit tall in our seats, then we are either very sure of our dedication and commitment to our God and His work, to our toil and sweating for the ecclesia, or we have convinced ourselves that through baptism alone we are entitled to a blessing and ruler-ship over cities. This parable tells us plainly that merely coasting through our life, even within the Truth, is not enough. This third citizen was not given his pound that he might wrap it in a napkin, but that he might work and sweat to increase his pound, using his napkin to wipe the perspiration off his brow. He was expected to sweat to increase! And brothers and sisters, so are we.

Paul says to the Corinthians that *“every man shall receive his own reward according to his labor”* (1Cor. 3:8) and the Psalmist that *“unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work”* (Psa 62:12).

You see, what the gospels are telling us; what Paul is telling us; what David, the Psalmist here, is telling us; what God through His holy scriptures is telling us, is that we must labor in His ecclesia. And this parable expounds on that principle, by telling us that we must all labor to the fullness of our ability, whatever that may be!

As we gather our thoughts together this morning to the emblems, we have come together to remember one who daily toiled for the work of the Truth. He had not a moment’s relief, and was constantly in a struggle to overcome the flesh that we, by Adam, also bear.

Our final reference of the Greek *soudarion* is in John 20, where we have the record of the events on the day of resurrection

*“Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself”*  
(John 20:6-7).

Like the record of Lazarus in the gospel of Luke, we are given two details of the clothing of our risen Lord. Firstly, there were the linen clothes lying on the ground. Rotherham translates these as “linen bandages”, similar to wrappings that encompassed Lazarus on his feet and hands. Secondly, there was the napkin, the napkin that was about his head as he was buried. This was the *soudarion*. But here we have a distinct difference. While Lazarus was raised with his *soudarion* upon his head, that which covered Christ’s head was, as scripture carefully notes, *“not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.”* (v.7).

While Lazarus was raised to serve again in mortal aspects, Christ had completed his work, even the work set before him. He had borne the cross; he had been beaten and treated brutally at the hands of God’s people; he had stood against those who were supposed to be laboring for the ecclesia and showed them as hypocrites of the worst type; he had overcome! In his death, and subsequent resurrection, he was able to put aside the *soudarion*.

## Sweat

There are only three occurrences of the word sweat in the KJV of the Bible. The first is in Gen 3:19, concerning the fate of mankind after the curse was placed upon them: *"In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread, till thou return unto the ground"* This is a sweat that we all, that even Christ, was subject unto.

The last occurrence of sweat in the Bible is concerning the torment and anguish that the Lord endured in Gethsemane: *"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."* (Luke 22:44). This is a sweat very few, if any of us are familiar with. Can you recall the last time you were so focused on God's work, on aiding the ecclesia that you brought yourself to perspire blood? This condition occurs when the capillary blood vessels which supply blood to the area of the sweat glands in our bodies rupture under tremendous pressure, causing our bodies to exude blood amongst our sweat. Christ labored so ceaselessly for the work of his Father, that at his resurrection, he put off his *soudarion*, his mortal toils finished.

As we meet around these memorial emblems, as we assess our lives unto this point, how have we treated our pound? Have we put it to good use? Have we pulled out our napkin to wipe our brows of perspiration as we serve in the house of God, or have we merely used it to cover our pound?

Just as in the parable, we know what our nobleman requires of us. We each know what talent he has given us in our pound, and we know what will be required of us. But if we chose to merely wrap our pound in a napkin, even that pound which we have been given will be lifted up from us!

We said before that the word sweat occurred three times in scriptures in the KJV. The third reference appears amongst the visions at the end of Ezekiel. It says of the priests that *"they shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; they shall not gird themselves with anything that causeth sweat"* (Ezek 44:18). In that wondrous age to come, we will have no need of a napkin. Not that we will be free from laboring, but that our labor will be in perfectness to His holy will. We will no longer be sweating the pains and sorrows of mortal life!

We cannot be recipients of such thorough grace if we do not labor now. Our God requires nothing less than the best of the flocks and fruits in service, and such He requires of us. So let us consider this lesson, from such a humble object, a napkin.

For unto the ecclesias Christ wrote and gave hope that *"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment"* (Rev 3:5).

So let us labor that we might put on that new garment, even as Christ did.

*Jamin Moore (Brant County, ON)*

### Notes:

1. Unlike in Luke, where the talent is a large sum of money, here a pound is about 3-4 months' wage for a laborer

## All God's Children Have Names #4 A Suggested Reason for Paul Writing to the Romans

Paul summarized his policy regarding preaching in Romans 15:

*"It has always been my ambition [I have strived: cp KJV] to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation" (Rom 15:20).*

Since that was his avowed intention, why did he choose to write his most comprehensive statement about the gospel to an ecclesia, which he had not yet visited?

The church at Rome contained an extremely volatile mix of members in the first century. There were Jews, some who were still quite committed to the observance of the Law of Moses. There was also a large number of Gentile converts from the gross idolatry of the Roman world. In a number of cases, such Gentiles were from influential Roman families, but considering the makeup of Rome's population at that time, many more would probably have been slaves.

Harry Whittaker describes what he calls "the strange social situation" in Rome:

"The Jewish Christians had lived all their days following the strict food laws and prohibitions which all through the centuries have done more than anything else to maintain Jewish separatism. These Jews would inevitably be infected with the spiritual snobbery, which was very much a characteristic of Jewry at that time... They knew themselves to be the chosen race, "beloved for the fathers' sakes". [To these Jews] Gentiles were mere "dogs", ignorant idolaters, steeped in all kinds of abomination. Even believing Gentiles would be seen to be religiously much inferior to themselves, and accordingly many (or most) of these Jewish believers would look down on their Gentile brethren, who had not grown up in the nurture of the Scriptures, as though they were of lower status in the Faith.

"On the other hand some of these Gentiles were from some of the highest families in the Empire. And practically all of them would be accustomed to thinking of themselves as members of the Master Race, the nation which had built the strongest Empire the world had ever known. Especially were they used to looking down their noses at Jews who [had] somehow managed to get themselves disliked by most Gentiles. Here, then, was a situation which from earliest days was fraught with difficulty. Oil and water do not mix. Then how much less the hope that Jews and Romans would join together in a fullness of fellowship so as to adorn the doctrine of Christ!" (*Bible Studies*, p. 304).

It was in this ecclesial environment that Aquila the Jew and Priscilla the Roman lived. They may have seen real evidence of the Body of Christ being split into two cliques organized according to nationality. What could be done about it? Since this married couple represented both sides of the great divide in their own marriage, and since they had been close associates and coworkers with the apostle Paul, it seems likely that they decided on a course of action designed to bring the Roman ecclesia or church closer together as One Body. They may even have requested that Paul write a letter to the Roman brethren in order to lay out the full gospel of Jesus Christ. But at the same time, his Letter to the Romans would also present that gospel in the context of *the perceived differences between the two parts of the ecclesia* (Romans 9-11), along with *strong exhortations to develop and maintain true unity in the bond of the Spirit* (Romans 12-15), despite those differences.

### **A microcosm of the Roman ecclesia**

The “mixed” marriage of devoutly Jewish Aquila and aristocratic Roman Priscilla is a microcosm of the “mixed” ecclesia in Rome. It is evident from our previous article (#3: “Priscilla and Aquila”) that this mismatched couple did remarkably well in blending their diverse backgrounds and experiences into “one body”. *“A man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and they will become **one flesh**”* (Gen 2:24; cp Matt 19:5; Mark 10:8; Eph 5:31).

This particular “one body” or “one flesh” of Aquila and Priscilla achieved extraordinary success in preaching, guiding, and caregiving — quite literally because, wherever they went throughout the Empire, they never encountered a believer or a prospective believer with whom they had nothing in common. When Paul wrote: *“Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews... to them that are without law, [I became] as without law... that I might gain them that are without law”* (1Cor 9:20-21, KJV), he could well have been describing the partnership of Aquila and Priscilla. Their respective heritages and upbringings had prepared this couple to be all things to all men and women — in one convenient package!

To develop such an effective “unity” between two very different people would not have been easy. It would have required an extended, concentrated effort — never mind a profound love for the Lord, the gospel, and one another.

However, once such a status was reached — and remembering the need to nurture and strengthen that unity — Aquila and Priscilla must have realized how much the Roman believers needed that same unity, but on a much wider scale. I think this is what they hoped the apostle Paul would help them to achieve.

As with a marriage, so with an ecclesia — whether that “ecclesia” is a single meeting, several congregations, or the broader body consisting of all individual believers who share a common faith and hope, wherever they live. One ingredient is especially necessary to bring together diverse elements, and that is the ability to overlook and then to live with the minor differences of opinion or practice which are naturally found in a community of likeminded but individual believers.

We must remember that, as believers in Christ, we are all instructed to examine the Scriptures, to think for ourselves, and to prove all things (1 Thess 5:21). If these guidelines are actually followed, then we may expect that a community based on such instructions will readily agree on the fundamentals of the faith, which by definition are supported by not one or two, but many passages. At the same time, we may also expect that its members would learn to tolerate the relatively minor differences of opinions on doubtful matters, because they have also been instructed to distinguish between what Robert Roberts called “true principles” and “uncertain details”.<sup>1</sup>

## How Paul dealt with the problem in Rome

The background of Paul’s Epistle to the Romans is suggested in his introductory statement of purpose:

*“I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: **first for the Jew, then for the Gentile**” (Rom 1:16).*

Jews and Gentiles were in the same situation regarding salvation: they were all sinners, and all in need of God’s mercy (Rom 1:18-3:20). The Jews were the “first” to believe the gospel, because the Law’s inability to save weak and sinful mankind had prepared them to accept a Savior. “Then” the Gentiles began to realize, through the preaching of Jewish converts, that they had the same need for a Messiah, as did the Jews. Given their respective circumstances, how could either group look down upon or feel superior to the other? Each needed the grace of God in equal portions.

*“Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith” (Rom 3:29-30).*

In many cases, Jewish and Gentile believers had followed very different paths to accept the same gospel. As Paul also explained, God had indeed promised that Abraham would be the spiritual father not just of Jews, but of all who had faith. In fact, he was destined to become “*the father of many nations*” (Rom 4:17) — **Gentiles** as well as **Jews**. No matter where they started, Jews and Gentiles heard the call to repent and, led by faith, they followed — until they all arrived at the same destination: the mercy seat, where salvation was found in Jesus Christ.

Going on from the earlier chapters of Romans (chapters 1-5), Paul led his readers on through baptism, the beginning of a new life, and to the great joys of belonging to the family of God in Christ (Romans 6-8). These steps were what all believers held in common with one another — no matter their ethnicity or language, social standing or background. And thus, Paul arrived at the section mentioned above (Romans 9-11), where he analyzed the respective situations of Jews and Gentiles. In doing so, Paul assured all believers that, no matter how far away any believers might think to remove themselves from the mercies of God, He is able to graft them back into His own “tree”, His own spiritual family, and include them in the One Hope again.

Then finally, Paul led the Roman believers — the formerly devout Jews as well as formerly idolatrous Gentiles — to Rom 12:3-8, and the wonderful allegory of the One Body (which he developed even further in 1 Corinthians 12). In both Romans and Corinthians, he painted the beautiful picture of disparate elements brought together, against all expectation, to create a new and glorious unity. In such a unity, all the components miraculously worked together for the benefit of the whole, and with a greater energy than the sum of the parts.

Finally, Paul brought his audience to the powerful and practical exhortations of the last major section of the letter (*Rom 12:9-15:13*). Here were exhortations about hope and love, prayer and peace, patience in affliction, decency and restraint, kindness toward all mankind, help and comfort for those whose faith was weak, respect for those with slightly different ideas and emphases, restraint in judging and criticizing others, and — no matter what — joy in sharing fellowship with one another.

It is instructive for us modern readers to see how all of Paul's exhortations in these chapters were intended to lead that odd collection of first-century Roman believers to a greater unity with one another. It was perfectly obvious that, left to themselves, they had nothing in common; they were Jews and Gentiles, poor and rich, slave and free. They had different customs, different traditions, different foods, and different perspectives on the world. Left to themselves, they were aliens to one another and — perhaps most telling of all — they simply did not like each other!

How could this be changed? What could make sworn enemies like Jewish rebels and Roman soldiers come to respect and even love one another? What could make the richest and poorest elements of Mediterranean society live together in goodwill and unity of mind? The answer, I believe, was love. One Man lived, taught, healed, and finally died, only to be raised from the dead — all to show the world what an absolute self-sacrificing love could achieve. And in doing this, he called upon all mankind to follow his example.

Is it enough, however, to study the first-century church from a safe distance? Should we not also ask ourselves: **Is there a lesson in all this for believers in modern times? And if there is a lesson for us, what does it mean in practical terms?**

Perhaps we can consider those questions in our next article.

*George Booker (Austin Leander, TX)*

#### **Notes:**

1. "True Principles and Uncertain Details; or, The Danger of Going Too Far in our Demands on Fellow-Believers" is a lengthy article written by Robert Roberts, one of the last articles he wrote before his death. It first appeared in the magazine which he edited, *The Christadelphian*, May 1898, pp. 182-189. This article has been reprinted at least twice, by later editors of the same magazine: by C.C. Walker June 1923, pp. 248-256, and by John Carter Nov 1955, pp. 414-418.

# The Joy of Sunday Schooling

## Being baptized. What life is all about!

Look around. Are people just alive, or are they really living? There is a big difference, and the Bible shows us what it is. Living life to the fullest engages all of our God-given faculties in the way that God intends for each of us. And this is what being baptized is about. It engages us in a complete life!

Here are three Sunday school activities that underscore this point.

### 1 – The Jews at Pentecost – Acts 2

Remarkable changes took place in Jerusalem after the ascension of Jesus. In Acts 2, the lives of 3,000 Jews turned completely around when they changed their minds about Jesus of Nazareth and were baptized in his name for the forgiveness of sins.

Being baptized involves every aspect of life: our knowledge, thinking, attitudes, relationship with God and Christ, relationship with others, and personal life practices. Life takes on completely new meaning.

#### ATTRIBUTES OF A COMPLETE LIFE

	Knowledge	Effective thinking	Attitudes	Relationship to God, Christ	Relationship to others	Personal life practices
Being baptized						

A careful look at the record in Acts shows that every one of these attributes changed for the men and women who were baptized in Jerusalem at the time of Pentecost.

Think it through for yourself.

### 1 - Knowledge

*“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know — this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men” (Acts 2:22-23 ESV).*

Acts 2:22-23. What does Israel know?

*“God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it” (Acts 2:24).*

Acts 2:24. What new knowledge must Israel grasp? What reasons does Israel have for believing that this is true?

See Acts 2:25-31. See Acts 2:32. See Acts 2:33.

*“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36).*

Acts 2:36. What must Israel now know?

How has Israel’s knowledge been changed by the events of Pentecost and Peter’s preaching?

## 2 - Thinking and attitudes

*“Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’” (Acts 2:37).*

Acts 2:37. What signs are there that the thinking and attitudes of some of the Jews are undergoing change?

Based on what we have read in Acts 2 so far, what change in their thinking is taking place?

What change in their attitudes is taking place?

How do you think these changes are preparing them for the next step that they must take?

## 3 – A new relationship with God in Christ

Peter now tells the Jews what they must do to enter into a new, saving relationship – literally, a new covenant – with God, through the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

*“And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.’ And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, ‘Save yourselves from this crooked generation.’ So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:38-41).*

Acts 2:38-41. They must do their part in the new relationship with God, and God will do His part. Here are the details. Who does what?

<i>“Repent”</i>	Man	God
<i>“Be baptized... in the name of Jesus Christ”</i>	Man	God
<i>“Forgiveness of your sins”</i>	Man	God
<i>“The gift of the Holy Spirit”</i>	Man	God
<i>“The promise”</i>	Man	God
<i>“The Lord our God calls”</i>	Man	God
<i>“Save yourselves”</i>	Man	God
<i>“Those who received his word”</i>	Man	God



#### 4 - Attributes of a complete life

*“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42).*

**“They devoted themselves.”** What has to change in order for the Jews – or anyone – to devote themselves to a new way of life in Christ? Circle any that apply.

Knowledge	Effective thinking	Attitudes	Relationship to God, Christ	Relationship to others	Personal life practices
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**“The apostles’ teaching.”** What is changed by the apostles’ teaching? Circle one or two key things that apply.

Knowledge	Effective thinking	Attitudes	Relationship to God, Christ	Relationship to others	Personal life practices
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**“The fellowship.”** What does the fellowship relate to? Circle one or two key things that apply.

Knowledge	Effective thinking	Attitudes	Relationship to God, Christ	Relationship to others	Personal life practices
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**“The breaking of bread.”** What does the breaking of bread relate to? Circle one or two key things that apply.

Knowledge	Effective thinking	Attitudes	Relationship to God, Christ	Relationship to others	Personal life practices
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**“The prayers.”** What do the prayers relate to? Circle one or two key things that apply?

Knowledge	Effective thinking	Attitudes	Relationship to God, Christ	Relationship to others	Personal life practices
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How might the prayers relate to all the attributes of life?

#### 5 – More about the relationship with others

*“... this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men” (Acts 2:23)*

Acts 2:23. What kind of relationship did these Jews have with others before they learned the truth about Jesus?

Acts 2:44-45. How is the relationship that these Jews have with others dramatically different after they believe and are baptized?

Why such a big change? How has the conscience of these people been changed by learning the truth of Jesus Christ?

*“And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need” (Acts 2:44-45).*

## **2 – The Ethiopian Eunuch – Acts 8**

The life of a single man changed forever on “the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” The Ethiopian eunuch learned things that he did not understand before, and he immediately wanted to be baptized.

As we illustrated above, the eunuch’s baptism affected every aspect of his life. Think about each of these attributes, and how they affected his life. And also affect your life, if you are, or would be, baptized.

Read Acts 8:26-39 and think about the eunuch. Notice how the attributes of his life change and grow. What was he rejoicing about?

### **1 – Knowledge.**

What does the eunuch learn from Philip? Identify as many things as you can from the Acts passage. What reasons does the eunuch have for believing Philip?

### **2 – Effective thinking.**

How do we know that the eunuch thinks effectively about the things that Philip tells him?

### **3 – Attitudes.**

What signs are there that the eunuch has a remarkable attitude throughout his encounter with Philip? Describe his attitude.

### **4 – Relationship with God and Christ.**

What indicators are there in the Acts passage that the Ethiopian eunuch is called by God? Do you think he realizes it at the time? Why?

### **5 – Relationship with God and Christ.**

What clues are there in the Acts passage that the eunuch realizes his need for a new relationship with God through Jesus Christ? How does he enter this relationship and how does he feel about it?

### **6 – Attributes of a complete life.**

At this point, the Bible story ends abruptly. After the eunuch’s life-changing encounter with Philip, we do not know anything more about him. How do you think his relationship with others and his personal life practices might be different when he gets back to Ethiopia? Use a bit of imagination to fill out the eunuch’s life story after baptism.

### **3 – A brother or sister in your ecclesia**

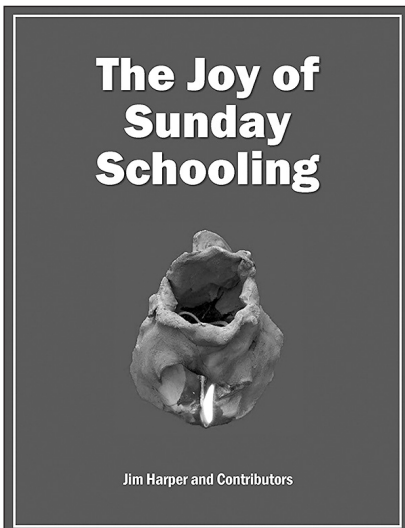
Invite one or two ecclesial members to come to your Sunday school class and talk with the students about how they came into the Truth. Think about who to invite: (1) someone who grew up in the Truth; (2) a convert from outside, and/or (3) a brother or sister who has struggled in life, even after baptism. Have a conversation with them and encourage the students to find out things like these:

- 1) How did they come to a knowledge of the Truth? What was their journey like?
- 2) Were they seeking for something better at the time, or did the Truth find them?
- 3) If they came in from the outside, how did they find out about Christadelphians?
- 4) What was the tipping point? Why did they decide to be baptized?
- 5) Did they have any reservations about being baptized, and, if so, how did they overcome them? Why are they now glad that they are baptized?
- 6) How has baptism changed their life? How are things different from before?
- 7) What struggles do they still have? What triumphs have they enjoyed?
- 8) How do they know that God was working in their life before baptism?
- 9) How is God working in their life now?
- 10) What words of wisdom would they give to anyone who is contemplating baptism into Christ?

Be sure to pray together before the conversation ends. Thank God for ecclesial members like these and their willingness to share their stories. Thank Him for His grace in the lives of all brothers and sisters and their responses that bring glory to Him.

Interviews of this kind can serve a double purpose. In addition to helping students appreciate baptism in the larger context of life, having a good conversation with older brothers and sisters helps everyone get to know each other better and bridge some of the age and personality differences that exist in the ecclesia.

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**The Joy of Sunday Schooling** is now available from The Tidings in E-book form and can be downloaded by going to [www.joyofss.org](http://www.joyofss.org).

It is designed to work on computers, tablets, and phones. The book has hundreds of active links and everything is printable.

Cost is US \$10.

## Conscientious Objection in North America Part 6 During WW1 in the USA

### Christadelphians

In World War One, in both the United States and Canada, the draft regulations made no provision for those who refused to serve in the military in any capacity: conscientious objectors had to serve in the army in non-combatant roles. So, in the US, all those drafted were forced to go to military camps, where they came under extreme pressure, both physical and mental, to serve in some capacity. Many were sentenced to camp discipline; some were deprived of food or clothing when they refused military uniforms. Two Christadelphians died, one in Leavenworth and another in camp. Few records exist of the ill-treatment, but almost all those drafted suffered some sort of abuse, either physical or psychological. Their experiences and their resolution, as well as efforts of many others, greatly influenced those who determined the treatment of conscientious objectors in WW2, which was therefore much different. For their example in enduring hardship for the sake of their conscience, we must be eternally grateful.

### Those who refused any military service

In WW1, some 64,700 men claimed conscientious objector status; local draft boards certified 57,000, of whom 30,000 passed the physical and 21,000 were inducted into the U.S. Army. About 80% of the 21,000 decided to abandon their objection and take up non-combatant service, but about 4,000 objectors initially refused to serve in any capacity. Most belonged to historically pacifist denominations, especially Quakers, Mennonites, and Moravian Brethren, as well as Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses, along with about 53 Christadelphians.

There was no provision initially for conscientious objectors who refused any form of military service. All such were assigned to military camps, where their treatment depended largely on the whims of the commanding officer. Gradually, the authorities developed regulations to cover this situation. The first was issued by President Wilson on March 20, 1918:

“All persons not accepting assignment to noncombatant service shall be segregated as far as practicable and placed under the command of a specially qualified officer of tact and judgment, who will be instructed to impose no punitive hardship of any kind upon them, but not to allow their objections to be made the basis of any favor or consideration beyond exemption from actual military service which is not extended to any other soldier in the service of the United States.”

Subsequently, the Acting Judge Advocate General on May 31, 1918, advised the Secretary of War that furloughs could be granted to conscientious objectors.

In practice, most furloughs were for farm work, but at least one, Will Brittle, was granted a furlough as a miner.

Of course, many were drafted before these regulations were in place, and suffered for it. In addition, the abuse they suffered was often in direct contradiction to the directives, and several Mennonites in particular died as a direct result of their treatment.

It is clear that the intent was to accommodate the religious scruples of those, like Christadelphians, who objected to any form of military service, or even the wearing of uniforms, but they would have to appear before a board of inquiry. Many Christadelphians are noted as appearing before such boards. However, the attitude towards them was made clear in the book as quoted below, by Major Walter Kellogg, who was chairman of the board of inquiry <sup>1</sup>

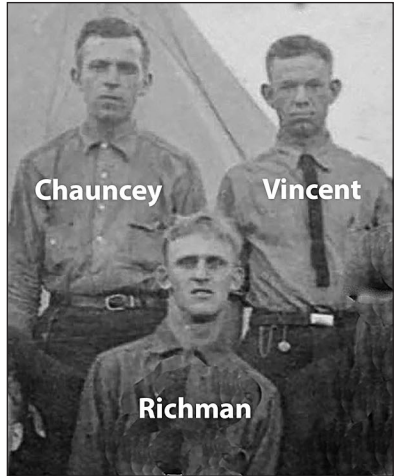
“The members of this class present characteristics in common: they (the Religious Objectors) speaking generally, are as like as two peas.

“One feels there is something radically wrong with this boy. He presents an ignorance which is astounding. He has no proper outlook upon anything. He is good and kind and, were he possessed of some social sense, he might in time have many of the attributes of a good citizen. His social instincts are limited to the bounds of his own neighborhood and many of these instincts — notably, his communistic ideas of property, only lately abandoned by the main body of the church and still retained by the Hutterites — are survivals from an older civilization than our own... In many cases he is a moron. Born into the world a mental weakling, his surroundings have cramped and confined him. His ideas of nonresistance are part and parcel of his moral fiber. Stupid and dull, his mind, such as it is, is definitely made up; he assuredly believes what he says and the dictates and the forces of government are not strong enough to tempt him to take any chances with his immortal soul. The Mennonites, The Brethren in Christ, the Dunkards, the Christadelphians, the Churches of Christ, the Assemblies of God, and the Brethren, are among the many religions, organized prior to the date of the Congressional enactment, which are well recognized and whose creeds forbid participation in war. The Friends also belong to this classification but are far more intelligent and otherwise impressed one more favorably, as has been indicated elsewhere.”

### **The Christadelphian committees help**

Before and after their failure to secure total exemption, the Exemption Committee worked mostly on helping young Christadelphians who found themselves drafted into the military. The government policy dictating noncombatant duty forced the military to deal with all objectors, a task they were initially poorly prepared to handle. As with other conscientious objectors, Christadelphians faced inconsistent and sometime brutal treatment. Some such cases will be dealt with below.

In February 1918 the War Department sent a telegram to all the camps asking for the number of objectors who could be persuaded to take noncombatant duty and those who refused. Major Pardee at Camp Devens told the objectors that no exemptions would be given and this was their last chance to accept noncombatant duty. Despite threats all objectors in the camp, including a Christadelphian, Nathaniel Mowry, refused, as discussed below. A month later, with new officers in place, the treatment of the objectors became harsher and Nathaniel was denied food for several days. The Committee went to Dr. F.D. Keppel, former dean at Columbia College and the Third Assistant Secretary under War Secretary Baker. Keppel had a real understanding of the conscientious objector in situations involving all types of objectors, so he was able to rectify many problems. On April 27 the War Department issued an order to court-martial conscientious objectors that refused to do non-combatant duty.



As a result, the situation further deteriorated and the objectors at Camp Devens were placed in the guardhouse to be court-martialed for disobeying orders. Visitors were not allowed; all their mail was opened and their food was cut while in jail. The court-martial started May 6, but was then adjourned for two weeks and ultimately was postponed indefinitely, and the objectors were also given back their privileges.



Despite the difficulties that many Christadelphian men faced in the military camps, the Exemption Committee did have a positive impact. At least 53 men were in the military camps and only one is recorded as ending up in prison at Ft. Leavenworth. In contrast, the Churches of Christ had 31 men reported in the camps and 17 men ended up at Ft. Leavenworth. The organized efforts of the Exemption Committee kept many Christadelphians out of prison. The Committee advised drafted men to take to camp all the letters used before the draft board to try to gain exemption, a copy of resolutions and petitions by the Exemption Committee, and reports from Christadelphian journals about their baptism. The Committee followed up with letters and copies of their petitions to the government and to each individual camp commander. Newton Baker and F.D. Keppel were sympathetic and helpful as various problems occurred in the camps and they took the Committee's resolutions and letters seriously. The efforts of the Christadelphians rivaled the Friends' efforts to lobby the government.

The difficult situation for many objectors began to be ameliorated when the farm furlough program was put into place on May 31, 1918. In September, three Christadelphians had been placed on farms and at least 8 were also offered or accepted this. On November 29, after armistice, the orders came from Washington to discharge objectors who had clear records. Those on farm furloughs were called back from the farms, paid and discharged. By January 1919, the Exemption Committee reported that most of the Christadelphian objectors were home “and most of the balance will be before the month runs out.” All in all the Christadelphians had a remarkable record for such a small group. A.H. Mowry concluded:

“Although there are scores of Conscientious Objectors at Leavenworth Prison serving long sentences, the case of the Christadelphian was made so clear and plain no (sic) brother had any difficulty in the last few months of the war establishing the fact that he was sincere and honest in his objections.... [W]e seemed to obtain a recognition that other religious societies of larger number failed to receive.”

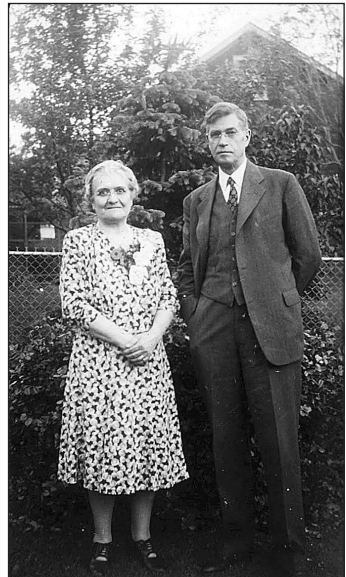
I have identified 53 Christadelphians as being drafted into the army, but there could well have been more. There were about 3,000 Christadelphians in the United States in 1916, according to the US census, so only about 2% were conscripted; this compares with 3% in Canada and 13% in Great Britain. I will give a few accounts: I only wish I had more, but no (or scant) Military Service records of the committees appear to survive.

### The accounts

Most of the information I cite is readily accessible in *The Advocate* for 1917 and 1918, under “Exemption” and then “Conscription”. (An archive DVD is available from the Advocate book supply, covering 1885-2017).

#### Nathaniel Mowry (1886-1953)<sup>2</sup>

Born in 1886, he was baptized October 11, 1911. He was brother to Allen Mowry, secretary to the Unamended Military Service Committee. He was inducted on June 5, 1917, the first Christadelphian drafted. As an objector, he was marched through the streets of Worcester in manacles as a prisoner among the drafted soldiers. After Mowry arrived at Camp Devens in October 1917, he asked to be transferred to the segregated conscientious objectors squad, which was the stated policy for objectors. During the ten days it took for his transfer, he refused to put on a uniform or sign any papers, which put him in danger of a court-martial.



Nathaniel Mowry and wife.

After his placement, the other objectors agreed to hospital work but Mowry repeatedly refused, wanting total exemption. On November 2 1917 doctors at the “psychopathic ward” examined and deemed him a sincere conscientious objector. The New England ecclesia sent the Camp Devens commander a petition stating the Christadelphians’ beliefs, and asked for Mowry’s release. On November 5 Mowry appeared before the entire camp hospital staff of 40 to 50 doctors. Major Pardee introduced Mowry: “Here is a man, a Christadelphian; he will not fight. He will not put on a uniform. He will not salute an officer. He will not take care of the wounded. He would not give a sick soldier a cup of water to keep him from dying. He is willing to take a life in that way by allowing him to die.” Mowry was allowed to state his reasons for declining noncombatant duty, and as he did so one of the doctors became angry and hurled threats at Mowry. On December 1, the nine objectors in the camp were ordered not to receive any food until they agreed to perform some military duties. Mowry was able to send a telegram and a special delivery letter about this to the Exemption Committee. On Monday December 3 1917, the Committee visited the War Department. Along with complaints by the Quakers over the same incident, the War Department telegraphed the camp and food was given to the objectors on Tuesday evening. For several months, they were treated well, but on May 7, 1918, he along with 19 other objectors, was subject to the court martial at Camp Devers, as discussed above. Finally, on August 1, 1918, he was given a farm furlough to a state hospital in Concord, NH, where he stayed until released early in January, 1919.

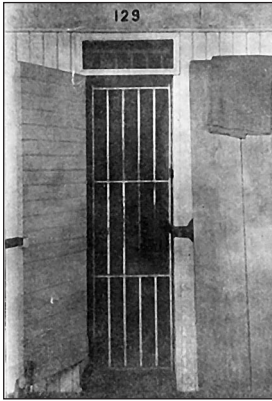
**(Ernest) Packie Wells (1891-1918)**

(Ernest) Packie Wells of the Berea Ecclesia, Mecklenburg, Virginia was the only Christadelphian I know who was sent to the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks at Ft. Leavenworth during the war. Wells was ordered to camp by his draft board in November 1917, although his draft card is dated June 5. He married Lula May Moore on November 24, 1917, and refused to go voluntarily. He was arrested on January 15, 1918 and taken to Camp Lee. I do not know why he acted this way: as far as I can tell, all others who were drafted surrendered and went to camp without demur. In the event, he refused to sign any papers, and was placed in the guardhouse and given only bread and water for two days. He was charged with being a deserter and kept in the guardhouse until he was court-martialed on February 11, when he was sentenced to twenty years hard labor, later reduced to ten years. The Exemption Committee went to Secretary Baker and personally protested his treatment. Baker said Wells had to go to Leavenworth, but that he would handle and settle his case and others like it soon. On March 27, 1918 Packie Wells was taken to Fort Jay, Governor’s Island, New York and then



Packie Wells’ tombstone.





Leavenworth cell.

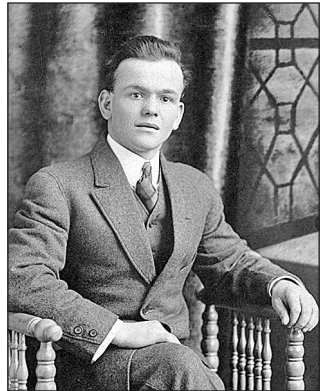
transferred to Ft. Leavenworth. A.H. Zilmer, editor of *The Faith* and part of the Exemption Committee, was able to visit Wells in April 1918. Unfortunately Wells died at Leavenworth, October 18, 1918. According to a little note in *The Faith* for December 1918, he died of pneumonia, probably due to the appalling conditions in the prison. You can still see his gravestone, in the cemetery of the Berea Christadelphian Chapel, South Hill, VA. The inscription is faded, but reads: “I have fought the good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day”. It is interesting he is recorded as dying for his beliefs in “American Political Prisoners” by Alfred Kohn, but there was

no memory of him or his family in the South Hill (Berea) ecclesia when I enquired some years ago. His wife remarried some years later, and died in 1990 at the age of 90.

### William E. Jones (1888-1957) <sup>3</sup>

I record this account, partially because his name is nowhere to be found as having been drafted in the Christadelphian records at the time, but if you look at his draft card, it clearly says “Christadelphian”. He is recorded in *The Christadelphian* as being baptized on April 22 1917, and marrying Sister Eliz. Switzer of the Hawley, PA ecclesia on April 22 1919. His records have been passed down through those of his descendants who are still Christadelphian. Born in Wales, he was a Black Powder Mill operator when drafted. The records show he was inducted May 29 1918, and discharged February 5, 1919. He was given a complementary letter on discharge as follows:

“At the request of Conscientious Objector William E. Jones, today discharged as a Private from the United States Army, I am writing relative to his conduct while in my Company. When I took command of Company C on the 20th of August, 1918, I interviewed Private Jones. He stated his case to me in a most respectful manner and in every way conducted himself as a gentleman.



William Jones.

Form 1		528 REGISTRATION CARD	No. 3
1	Name in full	William Elias Jones	April 28, 1888
2	Home address	Shin Dale, Ayrshire, W. Va.	
3	Date of birth	Oct 24 / 1888	
4	Are you (1) a natural born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien, (4) or have you declared your intention (specify which)?	Naturalized	
5	Where born	Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales	
6	If not a citizen, of what country are you a citizen or subject?		
7	What is your present trade, occupation, or office?	Prophet Mills	
8	By whom employed?	E. J. Dupont	
9	Where employed?	Behm Mills, Monroeville	
9	Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 18, or a sister or brother under 18, solely dependent on you for support (specify which)?		
10	Married or single (specify)?	Single	
11	What military service have you had? Rank		
12	Do you object to military service (specify)?	My Religion	Christadelphian
I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true!			
Signature of registrant		William E. Jones	

WW1 Draft Card of William Jones.

Since he persisted in not wearing the uniform, I assigned him for duty in the kitchen, where fatigue clothes are worn at all times and it is not necessary that he be in uniform.

“While the Commanding Officer of the Post, myself, and members of his Company do not in any way agree with the views of Private Jones and feel that he should wear his Country’s uniform, we have all admired the consistency of his conduct. He has been a hard and faithful worker. He has never shirked his work in any way and has put himself out numerous times for his fellow soldiers. Since he was transferred to the Headquarters Detachment, of which I am also in charge, I have had occasion to know him even better, and it is with regret that we are losing him as a member of this Detachment. In accordance with orders, we are not giving Private Jones an honorable discharge from the Army, since he refused to wear the uniform. He is being given, however the highest character rating which it is in our power to give him; namely, excellent.

“As above stated, the writer does not in any way agree with the views of those who will not wear the uniform nor fight for their Country. However, if such beliefs are to exist and can be justified he wishes to commend the example of Private Jones to all such.

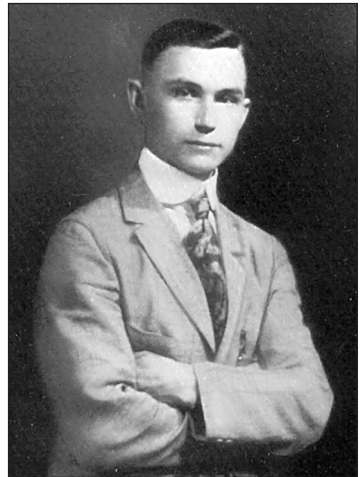
“Yours truly, WM. F. MILBURN 1st Lt., Ord. Dept., U.S.A.”

### **Thomas Cordle (1893 – 1959)**

This faithful brother was most reluctant to talk about his experiences in camp. However, according to his daughter, Sis. Eileen Harris, he endured terrible abuse at his army camp.

“He was stationed at Camp Lee (now Fort Lee) in Virginia but refused to wear the army uniform or to participate in training or drills. I am sure there were multiple punishments for this behavior, but the one that I heard about was that he was tied behind a horse-drawn wagon. The horse(s) was/were started, and he ran behind the wagon as long as he was able. When he fell in exhaustion, he was dragged down the road. I am told that he was never the same after that experience.”

Baptized in 1901, he was inducted in June of 1916. He survived his ordeals, although much altered by them. He was furloughed to farm work near Williamsburg, VA, in July 1918. This faithful brother died on Feb 6, 1969, to be followed in death a day later by his wife of 37 years, Janie (Bowles).

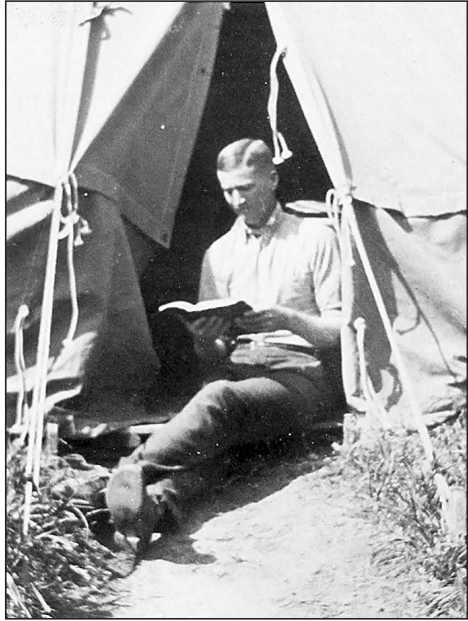


**Thomas Cordle,  
the night before induction.**

## Statistics

For the 52 names available to me, I have found draft cards of all but two, so I can, in 50 cases, establish quite an amount of information. I can summarize the data as below: a spreadsheet is available which includes much more information.

- Two died: Packie Wells, as above, and John Washicheck, who died of influenza.
- Of the 50 who I can identify, at least 31 had some presence in the magazines after the war.
- Only three appear to have joined the army: in only one case is this certain. Several appeared to have accepted some sort of menial work while in barracks, at least one in the ambulance corps, but the vast majority maintained their stance of no military service.



Herbert Gregory reading the Bible.

- I am not sure how many absolutely refused to wear the uniform; of the only five I have pictures of while in camp, three appear to wear some sort of uniform.
- The most notable set of names come from Henderson, KY. Five, all surnamed “Gregory”, who all seemed to be farmers, and many were soon furloughed to work on farms. Bro. Herbert is pictured above.
- Many suffered hardships, similar to that experienced by Nathaniel above: imprisonment, starvation, beatings, and general mistreatment. However, few records of this survive, and all, or almost all, appear to have been resolute in their striving for absolute exemption.

*Peter Hemingray*

### Notes:

1. The Conscientious Objector, WG Kellogg, 1919.
2. This is mostly extracted from accounts in “*The Advocate*”, but a longer and interesting account, (3300 words) is available: contact the editor.
3. This information was provided by Bro. Jim Harper, of Meriden, CT.

## The Unexpected and the Unanticipatable<sup>1</sup>

### **The unexpected and the unanticipatable ways our reputations can affect situations**

There are expectable times our reputation can become a factor in our future such as when our teacher is submitting our grades for the report card. Whether or not we have a good reputation for class participation can come into play. And we can anticipate the effect our grades will have on our future hopes and educational plans. The same applies at our work-place when it is time for our employee review. The results will affect our opportunity to move up to a better paying position.

But our reputations can become factors when we least expect it, and in situations we could never anticipate. The following are some events recorded in the Bible with which we are all very familiar. But we may have never consciously thought about how vitally important the reputations of the key people involved were to the outcomes, when the unanticipatable events occurred.

### **Naaman's servant girl**

We all remember the story of Naaman:

*“Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper. And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel” (2Kgs 5:1-4).*

He was the captain of the Syrian host, but he had become a leper. He was told by the Israelite maid, that had been taken captive by his army when they had made a successful raid into Israel, that there was a prophet in Israel who could cure his leprosy. The nameless maid told her mistress, Naaman's wife, and she told her husband. In no time the king of Syria is writing the king of Israel to the effect that he is sending Naaman to Israel so that he can be cured by this prophet, Elisha.

Granted, Naaman was a desperate man, but consider for a moment the reputation this servant girl must have had in that household. She was listened to. She was not considered to be a shallow, foolish chatterbox to whom no one would pay any serious attention. She must have impressed all in Naaman's household with her integrity. And for that matter consider Naaman's reputation, both with his king and with his servant. Evidently, the maid had been treated

fairly and with respect in Naaman's household. The maid cared about his welfare. And the king thought enough of Naaman to send this expedition to Israel to save Naaman.

As the maid went about her lowly, daily chores, the last thing she could have expected would be that someday she might be in the position of being instrumental in saving her master's life. She must have acted faithfully and with integrity in all duties, most of which were probably very repetitious and mundane.

### **Esther's reputation**

There was no way that Esther, a Jewish orphan girl living with her uncle amongst their people who had been taken captive by the Babylonians, could ever foresee the events that were about to unfold around her. She did not know her future anymore than we know what will happen in our lives tomorrow. But note how her reputation affected events.

Persia had conquered the Babylonians by the time Esther comes on the scene and king Ahasuerus wants to replace his Queen Vashti. Esther is one of a number of young girls brought in to the palace who were to go through a 12 month preparation before each, in their turn, were presented to the king. Hegai, the keeper of the women, was in charge of this process. Esth 2:9 records: *"The maiden pleased him (Hegai) and she obtained kindness from him; and he speedily gave her ointments for beautification; with such things as belonged to her, and seven maidens, who were suitable to be given her, out of the king's house; and he moved her and her maids unto the best place of the house of the women."* What was there about Esther that so impressed Hegai? Clearly she had an excellent reputation with him. No doubt all the young women were on their best behavior but Esther handled herself in such a way that she stood out from all the rest of the girls.

Esther was more than just another pretty girl. When her turn came to be taken into the king *"...the king loved her above all the women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti"*

Esther's good reputation with the king and all those around her continued to grow, and when a totally unanticipatable event (a genocidal plot against all the Jews in the kingdom) unexpectedly occurred she was listened to. Esther's uncle Mordechai becomes aware of Haman's plot to commit genocide against all the Jews in the kingdom. He charges Esther with telling the king about the plot. Esther puts her life on the line and goes into the king without an invitation... and he asks her what it is that she wants. She asks the king to come to a banquet with Haman but she does not disclose her purpose and, what is particularly relevant to our subject, her reputation with the King is so good that he doesn't press her to disclose what she wants to request. And she does not present her request at the first banquet but, without any explanation invites the King and Haman to another banquet at which she promises she will make her request known. And the King readily agrees.

The moment of truth comes during the second banquet when the king again asks: *“What is thy petition Queen Esther?”* Now Esther must accuse Haman, the man who her husband just recently *“...advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes who were with him.”* Bringing an accusation of this nature forward must have tested her courage to its very limits. We know how reticent she was to go into the king unannounced when Mordechai first asked her to do so. Would she be believed, or would the king put his trust in Haman?

Esther’s reputation stood the test. She was believed. Clearly, she did not have a reputation for making petty, groundless accusations. You could trust what she said to be true. And we know how the story unfolds from that evening’s events leading to the execution of Haman and the deliverance of Esther’s people. Hopefully we will be spared being put to such a test in our lives but *“...he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.”* A reputation for telling the truth is the evidence of our integrity. And our reputation can be so easily damaged. One lie beclouds all truths. Once someone has lied to you, you are not quite sure how much credence to put in his statements going forward.

### **Nehemiah’s reputation**

Nehemiah was also living in captivity and he had a very important position. He was the cupbearer to king Artaxerxes. He had heard a very depressing report about how the Jews were faring back in the land of Israel, and it was manifested in his demeanor. But rather than expressing upset with Nehemiah, the king was concerned for Nehemiah’s wellbeing. Nehemiah tells the king the news from the report and the king’s reaction is *“...For what dost thou make request?”* Nehemiah prays to God while he is standing there, and then asks the king’s permission to return to Jerusalem and help rebuild it. The king not only grants his request, but agrees to fund the project. The king had one concern. *“For how long shall thy journey be? And when wilt thou return?”* Clearly, he valued Nehemiah very highly.

Nehemiah’s faithful discharge of his duties over the course of time had established such an excellent reputation with king Artaxerxes, that when the opportunity to play a major role in trying to restore the kingdom of Israel unexpectedly presented itself, he was able to act.

### **Job’s reputation**

Talk about the unexpected and the unanticipatable. The first verse describes Job: *“...There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil.”* Job’s excellent reputation is stated as a fact at the outset. And then, out of nowhere from Job’s perspective, his life as he has known it becomes a total disaster. This is quite a different situation from our prior examples of Naaman’s maid, Esther and Nehemiah. In each of those cases, a good reputation brought about a very good result. Naaman was cured of his leprosy, Esther saved her people, and Nehemiah was able to bring succor to the remnant back in the land. But in Job’s case it brought him personal disaster. And it caused Job to question God.

We know from reading the book of Job what was going on but Job, living through it at the time, did not know the end from the beginning anymore than we do in our lives. It does not seem right or fair to work very hard to establish a good reputation with God and man, and then be struck with disaster. Especially with disasters that are so extreme as to require a miraculous explanation. When these things happen to us, we react in different ways. When visiting a loved one who is going through extreme adversity, we are often stumbling for words, and sometimes what we say at the time reflects that we should have stumbled a little longer before we said anything. “I know how you feel” is probably the most common wrong statement. We cannot really know how the other person feels. Hopefully we do not make the mistakes Job’s “friends” did and assume we know more than we do.

It is almost as if Job’s reputation for righteousness backfired on him. Job desperately tries to understand why he is being put through this trial (no doubt he also believed the axiom that only sinners suffer), and in his desperation he questions God. He knew he had not been living a rebellious, sinful life. On top of all the things that happened to him, he had to wrestle with one of the great conundrums that cause people to question God down to this day. “How can we reconcile our belief in a God who is righteous and loving in all His ways with innocent people suffering?” He was assuming he knew what was going on, and that all that was happening related only to him. A very understandable assumption and one we can often make ourselves.

However when we read Job 1:6-12 we see the trigger event of which that Job was not aware. God was using Job’s reputation as an example to an adverse person who He was trying to get to change his ways.

*“Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan (an adverse person) came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil” Then Satan answered the LORD and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the works of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, behold, all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himself put not forth thy hand.”*

This begins the terrible trials that befell Job. No doubt Job learned from his experiences. We all learn from our own experiences and from the experiences of others. Jesus learned from His suffering: “*Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered.*” However the primary objective appears to be the salvation of satan.<sup>2</sup> God was trying to teach the adverse person (satan) that he needs to mend his ways and follow Job’s example. But the adversary

dismissed Job's reputation as a truly righteous man and accused Job of only serving God because God had blessed him so richly.

*When we get to the end of Job, after all his sufferings and all the wrong and unprofitable words of his three "friends", in spite of the questions Job has raised, it is the three friends and their judgmental assumptions that are condemned and Job's words that are commended by God. "And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath" (Job 42:7).*

Sometimes the suffering of someone else, can be for our benefit, especially how they bear up under it and remain faithful. Many of us have been impressed in positive ways by the example of others around, those who have endured difficult trials with grace, and by prayer. Jesus is the ultimate example of this, and clearly we are the intended beneficiaries. We are the ones God is trying to reach with the example of Jesus' suffering. Jesus' "reputation", his life and his teachings, his faithfulness in the face of rejection, torture and death, are set forth by God as examples of tested faithfulness to us...who are by nature "adverse" to the ways of God.

### **What kind of a reputation do we have?**

We all have one. Our reputations are the sum total of our words and actions in the minds of all around us...including God and our Lord Jesus. Others are watching us. We may be very young, but some who are younger are watching us and listening to us. The furthest thing from our mind, especially when we are a young teenager, is that anyone is looking at us as examples of conduct to be followed. But children younger than ourselves are watching. How mothers and fathers interact, how we behave in our ecclesial business meetings, how we react to awkward situations at work; they are all establishing our reputation in the minds of others. And in the mind of God and our Lord Jesus.

*"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold" (Prov 22:1).*

*Ken Sommerville (Simi Hills, CA)*

### **Notes:**

1. "Unanticipatable" does not seem to be in the dictionary, but dictionaries are always adding new words. I think this would be a good addition. Not that I really expect Webster to take my suggestion.
2. Here is another example of where the belief in Satan as a supernatural fallen angel devil becomes ludicrous. That view presents God in a contest with Satan over the "soul" of Job. The idea of an innocent person being put through incredible suffering because two supernatural beings were having an argument might fit better in Greek mythology.



# A Paradigm Shift in Southeastern Africa

## Rapid Growth

Maybe you, like me, think about the Truth somewhat incrementally. Over time, we have seen outreach produce a few baptisms, and ecclesial results are generally measured by the handful, not by the bushel. But this may be due to our own faulty thinking and limited experience, rather than how we should properly see the hand of God working in the world. The ground-breaking conversions associated with Pentecost in Acts 2 leave us all wondering if anything remotely close to this could happen during our lifetimes.

Let me share with you a few numbers that may challenge the way you look at what is possible in present days. In North America, including Canada and the US, we believe that there are between 6,000 and 7,000 baptized brothers and sisters. That number really has not changed much in my lifetime. Ecclesias grow and downsize, depending on a variety of factors. What if I were to tell you that the Christadelphian Bible Mission (CBM) reports that since beginning their work in Mozambique in 1996, the number of brothers and sisters in this country of 29 million is now over 13,000, with 404 ecclesias? This Portuguese-speaking country, which is barely familiar to most of us, now has more Christadelphians than any country in the world! Additionally, there are about 9,500 Sunday school members across Mozambique. In 2018, there were 1,000 baptisms there. The country is predominantly Roman Catholic, but its support has been waning for many years. Growth has also taken place in a whole host of minor Christian denominations.

## Mozambique

Mozambique is an East African country, named after the island of Mozambique, which is part of the country. Originally a province of Portugal, it declared independence in 1975 as a Marxist nation, but since 1993 has been at least nominally democratic, although there is still a low-level insurgency in parts of the country. The civil war prior to 1993 caused many to temporarily move to its next-door neighbor, Malawi. This country was where



much of the CBM's focus had initially started. When Bro. Ian Leask first preached there in the early 1960's, in what was then Nyasaland, he found the harvest was indeed ripe. Malawi now has over 7,000 brothers and sisters and 166 ecclesias. Combining the total population of Malawi and Mozambique, there are about 48 million residents. Of that, over 20,000 are Christadelphian brothers and sisters! Are you surprised? I know I was.

The CBM Link Brother for Mozambique is Bro. Trevor Radbourne. He described the development of the Truth in Mozambique as being initially somewhat of a surprise. The CBM first became involved in 1996 when it became apparent that there were Christadelphians in the area surrounding Malawi. A number of refugees from the Mozambique Civil War, who fled to Malawi for safety, learned the Truth there. When the war ended in 1993 and they returned home, they started preaching in their local areas. Brethren from Malawi also travelled across the border to preach, as did Tanzanian brethren. The Tanzanian brethren, who were fishermen, converted others on the border of northern Mozambique. In 1996, during a visit to Malawi, it was established that there were at least 670 members in Mozambique at that time. In 1997 a Bible School was held in Malawi where over 300 brothers and sisters from Mozambique attended. As a result, that year the CBM agreed to establish a Linkman for the country and to fund further preaching activity there.

### **Many obstacles**

As one might expect, there were many obstacles to address. Because of poor education in Mozambique, there are few Mozambique brethren who can speak English and act as translators. Similarly, there are few Mozambiquans who can speak Portuguese effectively. The situation becomes even more difficult in tribal areas. Education in Mozambique has not been a priority in these areas far from Maputo, the capital city. Few sisters can read, and only about half the older brethren can read. Primary education is free, but as there are no jobs in the countryside, many parents use children to look after animals or help in the home, so many do not benefit from education.

Because most locations are in areas where our brethren are subsistence farmers and very poor, they cannot afford to finance ecclesial halls themselves. Typically, the land is donated by the village chief, while the brethren make the bricks and build the walls. In town and city areas, however, land has usually



to be purchased. Because grass roofs are both expensive for them to provide and have only a 2- year life on average before being blown away by storms, the CBM finances the provision of tin sheets, treated timbers, roofing nails and wire attachments. CBM also finances a concrete floor, doors and window frames and finally benches table and chairs through Project Aid. Where ecclesias are on main roads or in villages signs advertising our presence have been financed. Otherwise a painted sign on the ecclesial hall walls has been sufficient to advertise our presence. Some ecclesial halls have been built on land donated by a local brother. Unfortunately, many halls are built of hand-made brick and mud and consequently suffer in bad weather.

In view of the size of the country, the CBM is progressing with plans to split the country into three areas. There are now 29 Councilors, elders, who are responsible for looking after ecclesias in their areas. They support the CBM Secretary and Treasurer by attending quarterly Councils and reporting on progress and problems.

As the Truth grows, it is spreading out into different tribal areas, and the CBM is having to translate and print hymn books, study notes and Sunday school teacher's notes into local languages. Similarly, they are buying Bibles in tribal languages, such as Lomwe, Makua, Lolo, etc. as well as Portuguese.

## **Conclusion**

One might ask what is delaying the Lord's return? If we look at this issue globally, perhaps we find an answer. Paul wrote *"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in"* (Rom 11:25). The merciful God is giving all men, in all nations, the opportunity to respond to His call. There are yet many who have hearts that are open and willing. While we pray daily for the Lord's soon return, we must acknowledge his wisdom and love of man. Each week, new men and women are being baptized into Christ and forming an ever-increasingly diverse global fellowship.

As Christadelphians living in North America, let us never conclude that the Scriptures are viewed by the world as outdated and unappealing. True, this may be our experience in our local communities today, as we often see minor interest in our outreach attempts. But a day could soon come when our own communities may experience such a shaking that they too will have a thirst for the Word of Truth. The demographics of our fellowship has been changing at a rate not seen before. "First world" citizenship is no longer representative of most Christadelphians. Those that read and write in English are no longer the majority. The gap in income between brothers and sisters in different countries has and will be broadened. Where will this all lead? I believe we can have confidence that, while not of our doing, the Lord will help us to flourish as a global lampstand in these Last Days. May we all elect to glorify him in our communities.

*David Jennings (Verdugo Hills, CA)*

## Reunion History

### Over 50 years have gone by.

It has been said that “Those who fail to learn from History are condemned to repeat it”

Sadly, as I have watched the years go by, since I first got involved in Reunion efforts in 1967 every effort almost without exception has led to failure. These attempts to create unity, by hard working dedicated brethren on both sides, have invariably stumbled over one issue – and only one issue – “**fellowship practice**”.

I have been deeply involved in every Reunion attempt in North America over the past 50 years, starting with the efforts of the Amended<sup>1</sup> and Unamended Continental Reunion Committees failing to conclude the Chicago Agreement in the early 1970s. This was followed over the next five decades by various other efforts, including the NUMA, NARP, NASU, MUA, the CL and now the FA.<sup>2</sup> With this experience in mind, I have asked myself the question: why have these previous efforts failed? Furthermore, why has the current “Final Agreement” (FA) not yet been able to have participating communities sign on and reach a timely implementation date? The scriptures make it clear that **Unity is a “First Principle”** – John 17:11, John 17:22, Psa 33:1, Eph 4:3-4, and 1Pet 3:8. What is also very evident to me is that all sides must agree that Unity is a “First Principle”, or they would have never have kept pursuing it over and over again with so much vigor.

### Both sides are correct

It is also generally believed by both sides that the current division is detrimental to the welfare of the Communities. Over the last century, the number of Christadelphians in North America has about doubled: compare to the Amish who have increased forty fold. Why then the repeated failure when time and again reunion seemed metaphorically **at the door?** Let me pose several possibilities:

- **One side is scripturally clearly right in their fellowship practices and the other side wrong.** I dismiss this possibility because if this were true it seems very unlikely that the two sides would have made so many attempts at reunion. Surely, one, or the other parties would have eventually realized it was futile by now.
- **Both sides were wrong in their approach to fellowship practice.** Again I dismiss this alternative, because if this were true I believe one, or the other sides (or both) would have not survived for a century intact.
- **Both sides are correct in their approach to fellowship practice.** This is the most intriguing possibility and after almost 50 years of involvement, I have concluded that this is the underlying cause of our failure to finalize Unity in North America! I will elaborate on this as follows.

What do I mean by both sides being right in their usual approach to fellowship practice? On the part of the (likeminded<sup>3</sup>) Unamended there is a justifiable reluctance to exclude from fellowship any Christadelphian who is in good standing, regardless of whether or not their Ecclesia has signed on to a Unity agreement. **This is a correct position** – denying the emblems to a brother/sister in good standing is not supported scripturally.

Conversely, the Amended Community in North America asserts that it is also wrong to draw no boundary line for offering fellowship once there is a community agreed upon standard for doing so. **This too, is a correct scriptural position** – there must be some definitive way of defining belief that separates us from the world. [*I have omitted scriptural references in both cases, because I am not trying to persuade either side that one or the other is the correct approach.*] **The conclusion I have come to is that both sides believe firmly that they are right and both need to accept that the other side's view is also correct.**

These two “rights” have to be reconciled. That is precisely where we are today with the FA. We need to find a new path, otherwise — as it has been said: Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results.

## **Our History**

We can gain some insight into how to reconcile two “rights” by looking at our own community history, as well as how the scriptures handled the Unity issue raised in the first century. Obviously, we are looking at Acts 15, the Jerusalem conference. The issue there was how to reconcile the Gentile converts to the Law of Moses. How did this conference proceed? We must not think that there was one meeting place for everyone in that city at that time. In fact what has been called “the Jerusalem Ecclesia” was a combined gathering of Brethren from many small meetings over the breadth of the city. Jesus made it clear that THE Ecclesia was the final authority in deciding matters that were disputed (Matthew 18:17). Furthermore, the conference issued its conclusions in a letter, i.e. *a document*, (Acts 15:30) to be distributed (and circulated) to other Ecclesial locations. That tells us that they expected the decision to be broadly adopted by the Ecclesia in the corporate sense (i.e. wherever the issue of the expectations placed on Gentile believers with respect to the Law of Moses was an issue). We also know that the Unity letter adopted by this conference was NOT accepted by 100% of the first century brethren and the Apostle Paul takes on this Judaizer faction that wanted the Gentiles to be circumcised and to obey the rituals of the Law of Moses. The Apostle styles them the *party of the circumcision*. Hence, it would be unreasonable for us to expect that we can only agree to Unity if 100% of the members on both sides of the current situation agreed to the FA. That did not happen in the first century, even though it is apparent that the outcome of the Jerusalem Conference had Holy Spirit guidance (Acts 15:28) – thus to expect 100% compliance today is most unlikely.

How should we proceed then to overcome past failures? Experienced, well-respected brethren on both sides have constructed the FA. In my mind that is equivalent to the respected 2 or 3 witnesses Jesus mentions in Matthew 18:16

(also equivalent to the Apostle Paul's expectations for Elders, even without Holy Spirit guidance, judgment was committed to them - 1Cor. 6:3). At least three generations of respected elders in both the Amended and Unamended communities have passed this down to us. The Jerusalem Conference expected wide acceptance of their fellowship policy regarding Gentiles and while some disputed it — it is clear from history that by the end of the Apostolic age the conference solution had become the accepted practice. **Lesson: It takes time for a new paradigm to take root.** The three-year interim period in the FA is precisely meant to do that — and it may take patient working together beyond that point to fully implement that agreement.

Further guidance that can help us overcome past failures at achieving Unity comes from our own history, namely the Ecclesial Guide paragraph #16, “Mutual Consent the basis of order”. The “Guide” calls for matters in the Ecclesia to be settled by the combined wisdom of the majority. Given the first century precedent, we should not consider the “Ecclesia” to mean just the local place where we happen to attend, but it also has a wider sense of the brotherhood as a whole. According to the “Guide”, once a matter is settled the minority should humbly accept it. Likewise, there should be no purging of that minority unless they go on to stir up controversy.

### **How do we proceed?**

Now how do we apply these suggestions in practice? Several things to consider:

- 1) In the past (and possibly today) some Ecclesias have been reluctant to sign on to Unity Agreements because it would split their Ecclesia. If that is the case the minority obviously is not willing to adhere to the “Guide, Paragraph # 16”. Past successful reunions have shown that if a minority walks out, invariably over the course of time almost all will eventually return. An appeal to them to respect our historical position on dealing with problems as outlined in Ecclesial Guide #16 is surely worth trying. Ask them to give Unity a chance, and observe over a reasonable period of time whether or not it is worth having. (Historically, I know of no reunion to have ever been reversed!). [Ecclesial Guide Paragraph #39 might also make useful reading.]
- 2) A second problem arises here in North America because of the vast distances between Ecclesial locations and the relatively few areas, where there is enough concentration of multiple meetings, that one can join if one's current ecclesia declines participation in the unity process. Hence, an Ecclesia that has accepted the reunion might find, on occasion, that a brother/sister with whom they have had long association shows up a meeting. Unfortunately, due to a variety of circumstances, they now live in a place where the only choice is to go to a meeting that has refused to accept the reunion. To withhold the emblems is hard to justify for most Ecclesias. Thus, exceptions may arise on occasion and that does not nullify the basic principle of Ecclesial based fellowship. Ecclesial autonomy means precisely that an Ecclesia has the right to offer fellowship to someone while another Ecclesia might not necessarily do so. [Ecclesial Guide,

Paragraph #42 is instructive in this case.] An Ecclesia ought not abuse the use of rare exceptions; otherwise that undermines the whole concept of an Ecclesial Community that must work together as a whole.

In conclusion, what has made previous reunions work (in the United Kingdom, Australia, and West Coast of North America):

- 1) First, participating Ecclesias on both sides were willing to deal with those Ecclesias, and individuals, who were not willing to agree to implement fellowship based on the Unity Documents.
- 2) Second, there was great respect for Ecclesial autonomy, and rare exceptions were not treated as contamination, nor was there any attempt to treat exceptions as a general rule.

What needs to be realized is that failure to achieve Unity in North America has had terrible consequences. It has undermined our youth, and driven many away from our community. It has also disillusioned some and prevented them from joining us. The fact that we have not even kept up with membership growth expected from normal demography is proof of that fact. Finally, our organizing ourselves together for evangelizing North America is virtually non-existent. I can only wonder how many Christadelphians there would be today in North America if the same time, energy and resources we put into Reunion Committees had been expended instead on organized efforts to teach the “Truth” to the 360 million North Americans that are not Christadelphians!

The failure to do something that we know is right is as much a sin as actually doing something wicked (James 4:17). We have been commanded to go out into the entire world and preach the gospel (Mark 16:15). Can we honestly say that our battles over reunion over the past fifty years have not interfered with us doing that effectively as a community? Too often Christadelphians are only concerned for what is good for their little meetings, and see no broader picture. That is not what was the outcome of the Jerusalem conference; they intended that their letter be circulated widely in the 1st century Christian community. The minority **party of the circumcision** eventually faded away. It set the pattern to reconcile the Gentiles converts to the Law of Moses; we should be very grateful that that result has held true to this very day!

*John Bilello (Ann Arbor, MI) (August 12, 2019)*

**Notes:**

1. I was an elected member to both the Amended Continental Reunion Committee and the Pacific Coast Amended Reunion Committees – (the latter while living in California).
2. I have not written out the full names of these attempts at reunion for the sake of brevity.
3. I use the term “likeminded” to identify that component of the Unamended community in North America that has been involved in Unity efforts. This would also include similar component of the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith.

## Mutual Improvement Day - Kingston, Jamaica

Saturday, June 15th saw the annual Mutual Improvement Day in Kingston, Jamaica. Believers from all over the island travelled by mini-bus for up to three hours to meet together in the Kingston ecclesial hall. The day was well supported, with over sixty brothers and sisters present.

After enjoying some snacks together, we heard from four young men and brothers who were tasked with giving a short talk on pre-selected topics. The theme of the day was “The Cross of Christ and Our Cross.” After each segment there was opportunity for the audience to share feedback, critique and encouragement. This attitude of growth impressed me — ‘good is good, but we want to grow and be better’.



Making new friends in Jamaica.

In the afternoon, we divided into groups to discuss topics relating to Christ, his ministry and death on the cross. We then presented a summary of our discussion. The overall message and lesson of the day was clear — Christ’s sacrifice on the cross has an incredible power. It is a call for us to change, to sacrifice and deny self, to take up our cross daily, and follow him.

After sharing a delicious Jamaican spread of rice and beans, goat curry and chicken, we all gathered back in the hall for the final presentation of the day. Bro. Don Luff (Canada) who was visiting for the weekend spoke on the theme, “Ye are Bought with a Price,” from 1Cor 6:20. We were further exhorted to examine ourselves and think about the impact that Christ’s sacrifice has on our everyday life. Who is reigning in our life? Are we serving self or God? Are we moved to serve out of a deep gratitude for everything God has done for us in sending His son?



Sisters enjoying the Mutual Improvement Day.

One of the highlights of the day was the hymn singing session, for which I was pianist. We sang hymns I knew well, and some I’d rarely played. There’s nothing like



sharpening up your sight-reading skills by being put on the spot! Everyone was united in praise to our God. The words of hymn 395, sung with renewed enthusiasm, brought tears to more than one eye:

“Joy cometh! For the Lord doth come, To wake the song that now is dumb! All righteous tongues shall find employ, In songs of everlasting Joy!” (Hymn 395, v4)

It was an incredibly uplifting day of study, fellowship, praise and encouragement and really highlighted the brothers’ and sisters’ desire to unite around the one thing that is most precious in all of our lives.

### **Visit to Port Antonio**

We had an opportunity to head to the north side of the island to visit with the sisters who live there. We stayed overnight in Port Maria, before driving another hour and a half to Port Antonio, to visit with Sis. Enid Hall who is 97 years old and lives in isolation. Despite suffering with poor health and being partially blind and deaf, Sis. Enid is an incredible inspiration to us all with her love of the scriptures. Sisters Alissa, Sandra, Shauna and Pauline joined us from Port Maria for a morning of fellowship around the emblems and discussion around 2 Peter 1&2. Sis. Alissa’s daughter, Athaliah, stole everyone’s hearts with her spunkiness, despite taking a good two days to warm up to us! I was particularly impressed by Sis. Enid’s joy and her unwavering trust for God to provide all her needs, whatever her situation. I only wish we lived closer so we could visit her more often.



97 Year Old Sis. Enid Hall.

Our trip has been a whirlwind so far, but we’re slowly getting our heads around which name belongs with which face, and who goes to which ecclesia. Most ecclesias only have one or two brothers to lead, so any visitors that can give classes are very welcome. The generosity of brothers and sisters, despite their own struggles, is extremely humbling. It’s become evident to us in the little time we’ve been here that there is an incredible need for support, both ecclesially and for those living in isolation. If mission work is something that you’re considering, pop down to Jamaica, even if you can only give a week. Even a short time makes a difference, and the brothers and sisters will certainly welcome you with open arms!

*Written by Cilla Tuckson, residing in Jamaica for several months  
Submitted by Jan Berneau, CBMA/CBMC Publicity*

## Visits to Peru and Chile - Plus a Baptism in Argentina — June 2019

It was a joy to visit the brethren and sisters and friends in Lima. In the course of 3 public lectures and memorial service, we were happy to welcome 23 different adult visitors, along with 14 children and the support of 9 of the 10 baptized members. Most visitors attended for several sessions. It was a challenge to deal with the large number of kids, because their classes were held in the same room as those for the adults, and it was hard to keep the young ones' noise down



to a dull roar. Bribing them with chocolate turned out to be counter-productive, since it gave them a sugar high. But all in all, it was a very profitable visit, especially considering that none of the 450 email invitations we sent out to our students in the city actually reached them, an issue we will have to sort out before the next visit.

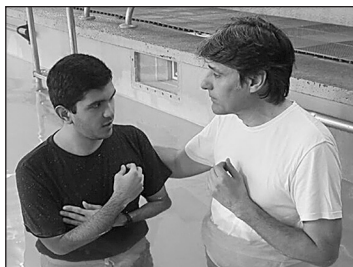
After Lima, we spent the midweek in Santiago, Chile, where the weather was even colder and wetter. We had some good Bible chats with a young Venezuelan refugee couple who have been coming to meetings with their two small children. In their country, they attended a small, non-Trinitarian church, and interestingly enough, they hadn't run across the Santiago ecclesia by chance. Their church had advised them that since they had no members in Chile, the best alternative for them was to look up the Christadelphians! It will be interesting to discover, in time, how many other Bible teachings they share with us or are amenable to considering.

From Santiago it was just an hour's flight over the Andes to Cordoba, Argentina. The next day, Lucas Genner, 24, flew in from Buenos Aires to be baptized. Lucas, who is of Jewish background, had long been searching for a church that taught the truth of the Bible. About 2 years ago, he ran across labiblia.com and sent the message: "I can't believe there is a church that teaches these things. You can't imagine how happy it makes me!" He soon began Skype classes with Bro. Andrew Yearsley, who was stationed in Santiago at the time.



Young people in Lima.

He soon began Skype classes with Bro. Andrew Yearsley, who was stationed in Santiago at the time.



**Baptism of Bro. Lucas Genner  
from Buenos Aires.**



For the baptism, Bro. Rubén Barboza had rented a rec center with a heated swimming pool. In the presence of the brethren and sisters and friends in Córdoba, Lucas was baptized and then received into fellowship during the breaking of bread which immediately followed. Afterwards, we all went out to dinner together and got to know our new brother a bit better! Lucas will be in isolation in Buenos Aires, but he will be in contact with brethren and sisters via social

media. God willing, he hopes to attend the Santiago Bible School at the end of October and meet others who share our faith. May God guide and bless Bro. Lucas in his walk to the Kingdom.

*Written by Jim and Jean  
Hunter, Link Couple  
Submitted by Jan Berneau,  
CBMA/CBMC Publicity*

## **48th Annual Guyana Christadelphian Bible School 2019**

A Bible School has been held in Guyana every year since Easter 1969, (only missing 1973 and 1974). The Kilcoy Ecclesia, the host ecclesia for this year, joined the other ecclesias in 1979, and ever since, it has been part of a 4 years rotation. This year the Bible School was held on the Easter holiday from April 19th to 22nd, 2019, on the theme: "... He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved" taken from Matt 24:13

The theme was taken from the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, words of warning to his disciples about the perils of the time of the end. Two speakers led the students in the study of the words of this theme. Bro. Martin Webster, of Ontario Canada, as well as CBM link to St. Lucia, spoke on the topic "I have provided me a king." Bro. Clive Drepaal, of the Brooklyn Ecclesia New York USA, spoke on the topic: "Facing all sorts, how can I endure."

Other activities were designed to complement the teachings by way of facilitating the assimilation and providing teaching support.

- A presentation on "The key message of the Gospel" by Bro. David Andrews intended to accommodate our invited friends (non-Christadelphians) and set the ground work for the Bible School Studies;

- A movie night where young people watched a story of a fellow young man, a “conscientious objector”, who had to endure intimidations, pain, sufferings, humiliation, and extreme pressure for the sake of his faith.
- A social event on Sunday afternoon in honor to our elderly members present at the Bible School (the three score and ten): Sis Lorraine Michelle, Sis Ester Worrell, Bro. Clive and sis. Christine DePaul, Bro. Martin and Sis. Lois Webster, Sis. Madelyn December and others. We acknowledged their example of holding fast the word of truth and years of faithful service to our Lord Jesus.
- A baptism of Bro. Joel and Sis. Deborah Tomby, a young couple in the Kilcoy area who had been taking instructional classes for many months. They had decided to follow our Lord Jesus by accepting him in their lives and committing to endure to the end. A wonderful and joyous occasion and an example to others wishing to commit to the Hope of Life.
- Daily Bible Readings: Every morning before we started our classes, we all sat and read God’s word and shared our comments to encourage one another to read the Bible daily and effectively.
- A lively session, “Joyful James,” with answers to Questions/Quiz prepared by Bro. Clive, in over a hundred folders and distributed to students prior to the commencement of his presentations. The best learners were rewarded with tokens of appreciation.



**Guyana Bible School in Kilcoy During April.**

The Bible School was well attended. The average number of participants amounted to over 100 brethren from Friday to Sunday. This Bible School was really an occasion of joy and fellowship with brothers and sisters around the word of God. We hope that each and every participant found an opportunity and strength to renew his or her commitment toward the Lord Jesus, our master. We thank our Heavenly Father for making our Bible School possible and for the precious fellowship we enjoyed in Jesus Christ as brothers and sisters.

*Written by Abedi N'djelekulu – Kilcoy Ecclesia, Guyana  
(with contributions from Martin Webster & Clive Drepaül)  
Submitted by Jan Berneau, CBMA/CBMC Publicity*

# Addresses for Bequests and 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 [jberneau@earthlink.net](mailto:jberneau@earthlink.net)

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

**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 [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 97 Twenty Place Blvd., Mount Hope, ON L0R 1W0 or via website [www.agapeinaction.com](http://www.agapeinaction.com)  
e-mail: [agapeinaction@rogers.com](mailto:agapeinaction@rogers.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: 062-692, Acc no.: 1165 7389, Acc type: Netsaver, Bank: Commonwealth Bank of Australia, 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, e-mail: [jdhunter@gte.net](mailto:jdhunter@gte.net)

# News and Notices

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

Please attach Photos wherever possible!

*The ecclesial position primarily in Ontario, and perhaps elsewhere,  
is at present confused as unity-related matters are being resolved.  
Intelligence is published for information purposes only without  
endorsement by The Christadelphian Tidings Committee.*

## **BRANTFORD, ON**

We are happy to report that Bro. Ben and Sis. Jennifer Bowen were welcomed into fellowship by way of transfer from the Mountain Grove Christadelphian Chapel (UA) on December 23, 2018. We have also welcomed our Bro. Jonathan Hodge who was commended to us from the Orangeville, ON Ecclesia as of January 6, 2019. After being with us for nearly two years, our Bro. Ethan Jones has now relocated back to British Columbia and therefore we return him to the love and care of the Okanagan, BC Ecclesia as of August 4, 2019.

Lord willing, Bro. Brian Luke (Brighton, Aust). will be speaking at our annual Thanksgiving Gathering on Saturday, October 12, 2019, in Copetown.

*Daniel Billington*

## **LARGO TAMPA BAY, FL**

The Largo Tampa Bay Ecclesia welcomed Sis. Neve Rodrigues into fellowship this spring as well as Bro. Jordan Foltz. Sis. Neve has been studying for several years and came to us through our Bro. and Sis. Castellanos. Bro. Jordan resides in the Jacksonville, FL area with his family who originally attended an ecclesia in Ohio. We pray our merciful Father blesses them in their walk in the truth.

Bro. Anthony Quindazzi and his wife, Cathy, have joined us and Bro. Anthony has already contributed to our many needs. Also Bro. Nate Daniels joined us for a time from his home ecclesia in Houston, TX; we thank him also for all his contributions while here.

We are sad to report the falling asleep in Christ of our Bro. Jimmy Mellis. He had been ill for a number of years but with the Lord's mercy and our Sis. Betty Lou Lewis' assistance, he was able to visit his birthplace in Greece one last time just before his passing. He will be missed. Sis. Lois Hulbert, a long-time and faithful member of this ecclesia also fell asleep in the Lord in August. She had moved north to be with family in her remaining years and was missed greatly. We pray their wait for our Lord Jesus will not be long.

About this time last year, we were welcoming Sis. Deborah Davis and her daughter, Sis. Jacque Hines, along with her children Myles, Jasmine and Nicholas. Well, this year we said goodbye to them as they returned to Indiana to be near family and friends. We miss them very much and wish them well as they had become an integral part of our little ecclesia and its many activities.

We thank all of our visitors and especially those who provided words of exhortation and study weekends to us. If you are planning on attending our meeting, Lord willing, we hold memorial service at 10:30 am on Sunday. Beginning September 8, 2019, Sunday school will begin at 9:15 am. We also have a pot-luck fellowship lunch following service on the first Sunday of each month. All are welcome.

We would like to again appeal to the brotherhood to ask those who may be considering relocation to think of this area. Our ecclesia has many fellowship opportunities, study weekends and impromptu get-togethers. Sunday school consists of three young people's classes and an adult class. We meet often with the other Christadelphian ecclesias in the area and provide a good environment to establish a stable life in the Lord. We have a wonderful year-round climate and beautiful beaches; employment opportunities abound. Additionally, housing is relatively inexpensive compared to other large metropolitan areas. There are many educational resources available and several professional sports teams; this area is also home to several professional baseball spring training teams. Florida is growing and, Lord willing, we would like to grow with it! We think this is a wonderful area to do just that.

Feel free to contact Bro. Walt Dodrill, Recorder, at [waltdodrill@msn.com](mailto:waltdodrill@msn.com) or call 727-410-0896.

*Walt Dodrill*

## **SUSSEX, NB**

It is with great pleasure that we are able to announce the baptisms of three young people and Sunday school students. OLIVIA BAINES, daughter of Bro. Paul and Sis. Marie Baines was baptized on August 4, 2019. MEGAN GOODWIN, daughter of Bro. Brad and Sis. Deb Goodwin, was baptized on August 11, 2019. We also had another baptism on Sept 8, 2019. BAYLEY BROWN has been searching for the Truth for some time now and recently gave a solid confession of faith. Bro. Bayley is a young man from our local town and we're all delighted he has made this commitment to Christ. It was very nice to have his family present to meet us and to witness his baptism.

*Paul Baines*

# Coming Events (Lord Willing)

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Please send in notices at least two months before the date of the event.  
Send all submissions to [tidings.publisher@gmail.com](mailto:tidings.publisher@gmail.com)

## OCTOBER, 2019

- 12-13 Sussex, NB** Thanksgiving Gathering. Bro. Chris Sales from Collingwood, ON will be leading our studies: "Exodus — A Picture of Redemption". If you require accommodations please contact: Bro. Cliff and Sis. Julia Baines at 140 Bryant Drive, Sussex, NB E4E 5M9 or email: [christad2019@gmail.com](mailto:christad2019@gmail.com) or phone 506-512-1323.
- 12 Brantford, ON** Thanksgiving Gathering. Bro. Brian Luke from Brighton, Australia. To be held at the Copetown Community Centre, registration 12:30pm, dinner provided.
- 12-13 Vancouver, BC** Fraternal Gathering at ecclesial Hall. Speaker: Bro. Richard Morgan (Simi Hills, CA); theme: "Portrait of a Saint".
- 18-20 Women at the Well Retreat** held at Miracle Springs Resort and Spa, in Desert Hot Springs, CA. Sister Eleanor Mannell (Mississauga West, ON) will be leading classes and discussion on the theme, "Lessons from the Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength". Register with Sister Bonnie Sommerville at [kenandbonnie@simihills.org](mailto:kenandbonnie@simihills.org).
- 19 Baltimore-Washington Gathering** held at the Baltimore Hall, 6311 London Ave., Elkridge, MD. Brother Mark Vincent (Aberdeen, UK) will lead classes on the topic "Full Assurance of Faith". The event, supported by the WCF BuildUp initiative, will begin at 9 am. Lunch together will be followed by afternoon sports and an evening of music and a campfire chat, "Defending Your Faith". For more information contact Sister Anna Hewitson [anhewitson@gmail.com](mailto:anhewitson@gmail.com).
- 20 Baltimore-Washington Gathering** to be held at Howard Community College, Columbia, Maryland. Brother Mark Vincent (Aberdeen, UK) will speak on the theme, "Full Assurance of Faith". Opening class at 9:30 pm. Meeting is at 11:00 am, "Faith's Greatest Triumph". Luncheon to follow. Contact Sister Carol Link [linkgang87@gmail.com](mailto:linkgang87@gmail.com).
- 26-27 Southern California Music Weekend** to be held at Simi Hills Hall in Simi Valley, CA. Theme: Reasons for Praise. Musicians Workshop, Hymn Sing, Praise and Performance Night with special Exhortation on Sunday. Contact Levi and Jessica Gelineau for more information at: [leviandjessica@gmail.com](mailto:leviandjessica@gmail.com).

## NOVEMBER, 2019

- 8-10 Pittsburgh, PA** CYC Gathering. Bro. Ben Link (Cranston, RI) will have classes on "Fulfilling the Great Commission: Christ's Final Commandment". Traveler's lunch will be provided at noon on Saturday and classes begin at 1:00pm. Contact Bro. David Pommer at [david.pommer@verizon.net](mailto:david.pommer@verizon.net) or 724-224-7363.
- 22-24 Washington, DC** Ecclesia extends a loving invitation for all to attend our family Bible Study weekend at Camp Hashawha, Westminster, MD. Bro. Duncan Movassaghi of the Shirley, UK Ecclesia will be the teacher. The topic for the weekend is "When they were Young". Contact: Eric Kling, 240-393-1520 or e-mail Eric at [Hashawha@gmail.com](mailto:Hashawha@gmail.com).



## DECEMBER, 2019

**21-27 Ontario Winter Bible School**, The Quality Inn & Conference Center, Midland (ON).  
Speakers: Peter Owen (Mumbles, UK): “The Last Days”; Tim Badger (Brighton, South Australia): “I Will Be With You – Exhortations from the Book of Joshua”; and Frank Abel (Book Rd, ON): “The Peace of God”, and young people, “Where is your Conscience?”  
Registration information and other details are available from our website ([www.ontariowinterbibleschool.com](http://www.ontariowinterbibleschool.com)). Discount offered on registration until Oct. 31st.

## JANUARY, 2020

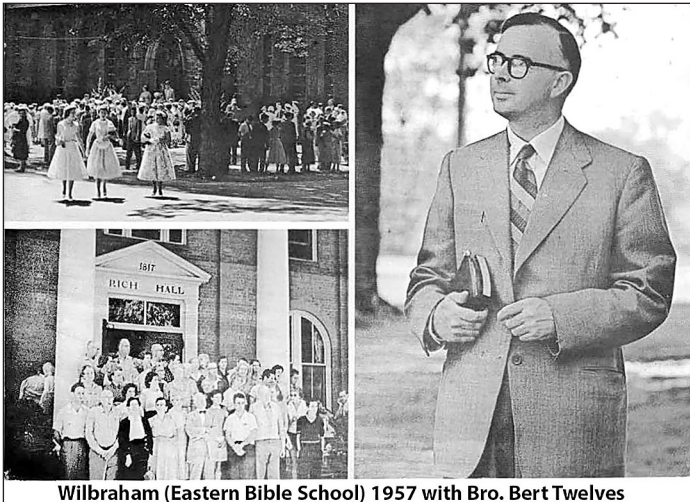
**24-26 Orlando, FL** Orlando Winter Study Day. Bro. David Styles, Shelburne, ON. Subject: “Who Is My Neighbor?” For Registration and Hotel information go to website at: [www.bit/studyday2020](http://www.bit/studyday2020) or for questions email [orlandochristadelphians@gmail.com](mailto:orlandochristadelphians@gmail.com).

## FEBRUARY, 2020

**23-28 Desert Hot Springs, CA** Palm Springs Bible School. Join Bro. Stephen Whitehouse, Hall Green UK and Bro. Duncan Kenzie, Saanich, BC at the Miracle Springs Resort for an uplifting and encouraging week of relaxation, fellowship and Bible study. Register online at: [www.californiabibleschool.org](http://www.californiabibleschool.org) or email [register@californiabibleschool.org](mailto:register@californiabibleschool.org).

## APRIL, 2020

**11-18 Australian Conference** will be held at the Westminster School, Marion, SA, AUS. Theme: “Looking Up, Looking Out, Looking Forward”. Our inspiring theme will focus on how we **look up** in faith to the Father, the Son, and the things of the Spirit, how we **look out** for each other and reach into our communities with love, and how we **look forward** to the ongoing journey of discipleship and the hope of a better world. Speakers: Bro. John Launchbury (Portland, USA), Bro. Craig Blewett (Westfield, South Africa) and Bro. Matt Norton (Gosford, Australia). Venue: Westminster School, Marion, SA, Australia Enquiries: Website: [www.adelaide2020.com.au](http://www.adelaide2020.com.au). Email: [secretary@adelaide2020.com.au](mailto:secretary@adelaide2020.com.au). Post: The Secretary, PO Box 559, Brighton, SA, 5048.



Wilbraham (Eastern Bible School) 1957 with Bro. Bert Twelves

# Thoughts on the Way

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## What is the Best Proof that the Bible is Inspired?

Dear sister,

You have asked a very good question, and I will try to give you my best answer. First of all, as you know, Christadelphians can offer a number of proofs that the Bible is true, and thus inspired — for example, the rebirth (after almost twenty centuries) of the nation of Israel, prophesied long ago by Israel's prophets. (By the way, I think that is the second best proof of all.)

However, a lot of other fulfilled prophecies are, in my opinion, not nearly as convincing, for two reasons:

- 1) They often require specialized knowledge — of ancient history, modern archaeology, science, and Bible languages.
- 2) They usually rely on particular interpretations of Bible passages, upon which other students may have different views.

However, I think the best proof of the Bible's inspiration may be summarized in one simple sentence: No man could have "invented" Jesus Christ. Only an all-powerful God could have created him. That is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the God of the Bible. Before Jesus showed himself to Israel, no one could have imagined that such a man could exist. We read the Gospels and marvel at:

- His limitless love for all people (especially the poor, the insignificant, the weak, the forgotten, the sick and the sinful);
- His flawless character — no other person could ask, "*Can anyone prove me guilty of sin?*" (*John 8:46*) without being an utter hypocrite;
- The numerous miracles which he performed; and
- His devotion to an ideal which represents the highest aspirations of all people: that we are created in the image of our Creator, and that we have a glorious future in His family if we follow His Son.

Before Jesus came on the scene, there was essentially no philanthropy, no charitable work, in the whole world! People, from the richest to the poorest, often cared for their own family, but took little notice of anyone else. So far as we can tell, no one even imagined that people would deliberately give up what they had, in order to help people they hardly knew — or didn't know at all! But when Jesus came and treated all people with the tenderest love and kindness, as though every single one of them mattered (which they do), then the world began to change. Not all at once, but like waves rippling out from a stone cast into still water, so his life changed the lives of others. In turn, their lives changed even more lives, so that the ripples never stopped. From then on, people did good toward others, not for their own gain, but purely because it was the right thing to do.

Furthermore, Jesus provided (and still provides) the perfect solution for sin, which Judaism, Islam, and the eastern religions cannot do. Jesus taught: “Follow me, and try to be like me. And do not be discouraged when you come up short — it is inevitable. I have the solution for that too, do not worry. Through me, your sins will be forgiven, a hundred times and more, if you keep trying to follow me!”

Christ’s earliest followers had seen him alive after his crucifixion, and their witness, reinforced by God-given gifts, convinced many others as well. Armed with an unshakable faith and a powerful message, they were willing to lay down their lives for him, and many did.

The contrast between true Christianity and Islam could not be more absolute. In short, men killed for Mohammed, but men and women died for Jesus! Muslims carved out parts of the world for their religion by ruthless war, demanding obedience under threat of death. The symbol of Islam is a sword — the banner of war. The symbols of Christ are a cross and an empty tomb — his true followers march under banners of unconditional love, eternal hope, and perfect peace.

Christianity, in one form or another, has gone on to change the world by offering food to the hungry, medicine to the sick, shelter to the homeless, comfort to the dying — love to replace hate, and hope to replace fear.

That is the best case I have to offer. The more anyone reads the Bible, and the Gospels especially, the more they should be convinced that Jesus is the Savior (the only Savior) of the world, and that nothing else comes remotely close to the true religion of Jesus.

For our part (those of us who already believe), I offer this suggestion: read and study the Gospels, paying close attention to the character of Jesus. Watch this man trudging down dusty roads with a small band of followers, but always ready to stop and help others. This man turned his back on a great temple, but found his heavenly Father on lonely mountains and in dark gardens. This man stood eye to eye with the power of Rome and did not waver. He had no special credentials, which the world thinks important, no possessions which the world thinks valuable. But he had every virtue which skeptics mock. He was born penniless, worked all his life, and died without a shekel to his name, while his garments and his very modesty were stripped away. But the Creator of the universe pronounced His verdict: “*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*” (Matt 3:17; 17:5; etc.).

Jesus is the best proof that the Bible is the inspired message of the one true God. This man is the proof, and this man is the message!

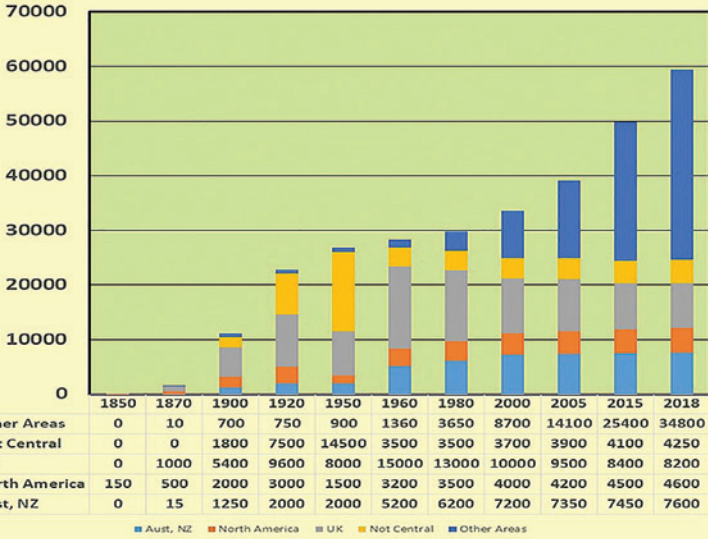
With love in our Lord Jesus Christ, George

*George Booker (Austin Leander, TX)*

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Christadelphians Worldwide



## Is Mozambique the future?

As we look at the future of our community, it helps us to look at the world-wide picture.

The chart above is illuminating: the numbers in “other areas” has grown dramatically since 1960, while in the rest of the world has actually decreased slightly.

We illustrate this with a look at the situation in Mozambique, where the number of Christadelphians has gone from essentially zero in 1996 to around 13,000 today. This makes it the country with the most Christadelphians, by both absolute number and as a percent of the population.



**The message we have is still making an impact: we pray we can replicate this elsewhere in the world.**

