

Set thee up waymarks, make thee high heaps, set thine heart  
Toward the highway, even the way which thou wentest (Jer 31:21)

# THE CHRISTADELPHIAN WAYMARK

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Devoted to the Defence and Proclamation of the Way of Life  
in Opposition to the Dogmas of Papal and Protestant Christendom

*SPECIAL ISSUE-*

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*"I saw, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer" (Rev 6:2)*

*"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable ... " (Jas 3:17)*  
*"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3)*

## RETURNING TO THE FORMER WAYS

It has often been observed by those travellers who have remained on the Way of Life for some duration, that the influences, philosophies, and ideals prevalent in the world at large will sooner or later be found, in some form, within the body of those professing to be the brethren of Christ. Indeed, it must be so, for although the constituents of Christ's body has submitted to his call by lying themselves in watery grave of baptism, and have risen again to a new life devoted to him; there remains a common denominator between them and the world. The presence of the *Diabolos*, or Sin in the flesh remains, though suppressed to a greater or lesser degree within their members. In the world, its path is unhindered as it progresses towards greater extremities of evil; being carried forward by men who readily submit to the dictates of its lusts and desires. And in the ecclesia, whilst there are those who devote themselves to the Word and to the Doctrine as taught by the Apostles, so forming a shield and defence against the wiles of the *Diabolos*, there are others who do not do so as they ought. The Old Man is permitted to remain, rather than to be crucified daily. And so the ideals generated and evolved by the unrestrained influence of the *Diabolos* in the world find a natural appeal to, yea even an affinity with, those minds not sufficiently cleansed by the washing of the Word, who have not been sufficiently emancipated from the dogmas of the society they ought to have left behind. Those worldly ideals find a lodgement within such minds, and become an influence for evil, defiling the body, and seducing the unwary into the ditch.

This generation and evolution of new ideas, is styled by the World, "Progress". Progress is seen operative in all things; whether it be the 'advancement' of modern medicine and technological innovations - or whether it be the development of social philosophies and values. Those who do not similarly 'progress' in their ideals and outlooks, - progressing that is, to a greater conformity with the World - are seen as stuffy, old-fashioned, unable to adapt to change, and living in the past.

But Yahweh never changes. "I change not" (Mal 3:6) is the fundamental principle of His Being, and an assurance of His faithfulness. The only advancement His Worshipers ought to be moving towards, is a growth and development into a greater conformity with His Image, as revealed in His Son, Jesus Christ (Rom 8:29). And in seeking to do this, it is they who need to change, not Yahweh. He revealed His Way many centuries ago to men and women of faith, and in order to progress towards the goal of His promised kingdom, men need to forsake the ways of the World, and turn back to His Ways: "Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Jer 6:16) is the cry of the prophets. But how can a man progress by returning to the ideals held by former generations? They can indeed, for the standards revealed in past ages are the standards to be again implemented in the future. They are the Divine standards of the Kingdom Age to come. So it is, that men who live according to the principles of Yahweh revealed in previous times, far from living in the past, live according to the ways of the future. By returning to the voices and proclamations of the past, men will 'progress' and 'advance' in ways that men of the flesh cannot, to inherit a kingdom which men of this world do not desire, one wherein righteousness will dwell. This Special Issue of "Voices From the Past" is offered in the hope that it may assist some to progress away from the fleshly ways of men, pressing towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

*Bro Chris Maddocks*

## **READING OF THE SCRIPTURES**

There is an unexplored depth of reality in the saying, “Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning.” All consent to the saying as a true one, but only a few go far enough in the process of “learning” from what has been written. Even these will never get to the end of the process while in the flesh. They will always be discovering some new force in exhortations they have been familiar with from infancy. Our progress in this respect, however, will depend entirely on our compliance with the Divine exhortation to seek wisdom as for hid treasure. In many respects, the wisdom of God that is communicated in His word is hidden. It is accessible only to those who dig, and this digging to be serviceable must be a continuous process. It must not be done in fits and starts. It must be constant, patient, and reverential, a daily feeding on the manna from heaven. The systematic and painful efforts of mere scholarship – the spasmodic attempts of what is generally understood by the term “study” – may be to the real work of upbuilding in the word what the chemist’s analysis of flour is to the process of nutrition – clever but useless. Such a mode of treating the word of God will leave a man unacquainted with nearly all the riches it contains. A daily, habitual, thankful, reverential, prayerful, and orderly converse with the holy oracles will uncover to the mind irresistible, almost inexpressible, evidences of the truth, and a fund of significance that will remain utterly unknown to the careless, irregular, spasmodic, or merely scholarly reader.

### ***THE MOTIVES OF A FAITHFUL BIBLE STUDENT***

But to accomplish and continue in this mode of intercourse, requires a species of motive to which the mere scholar is a stranger. A man must fear God and realize his own insignificance and dependence. He must feel hungry before he will desire to feed on the word in this unremitting manner. He must be non-content with himself and things as they are. His affections must be operative on heavenly, and not on earthly, things. He must, in fact, have made considerable attainments in the kind of spiritual education which is implied in saintship. The Gospel, as seed to the soil, must have germinated and sprung before it can bring forth this excellent fruit of the Spirit – this continual delight in the statutes, commandments and word of the living God – the yearning thirst for communion expressed by David, when he said, “My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.” What does this mean but that a man must not only know that there is a God, but must love Him and be filled with admiration of His infallible and eternal excellencies; that he must not only know that he himself is a mortal, but must have such a living sense of the fact, as to be in a constant

temper of modesty and extreme reverence towards God, trembling at His word: that he must not only be aware that there has been a Christ in the world, but realize that there is a Christ now, and that we, having yielded ourselves to his purchase, are no longer our own, but his who lived and died for us? Only this rich indwelling of the word of Christ will enable a man to perseveringly discern the excellence of the Word of God, and the absolute insignificance of all present things, though they be very importunate of our attention and striking in their impressions upon the senses. Only such will be found, day and night, giving the word of God that place in the economy of life which it ought to have.

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The reading of the Bible and the appreciation of it will react productively one upon the other. Read the word and you will appreciate it; appreciate it and you will desire it, and seek the comfort that is to be found in reading it. And thus, as in every vital process, there will be a dual action which will preserve life.

### ***THE NAME AND HONOUR OF THE DEITY***

But there is a view of the matter outside of the word and outside of man, because there is a God outside the word and outside of man. The word is the only form in which the name and honour of God have a visible place among men at this present time. His temple is in the dust, His nation scattered, His kingdom destroyed. His word remains, and He hath magnified it above all His name. It is in the hands of the nations. It is the principal and most numerously multiplied book in the world. It is everywhere His representative. The Bible in the house is God in the house. The Bible in a man's life is God in a man's life. Where people place the Bible, they place God. The place it demands is the heart – the throne. With nothing less will God be satisfied. Do you neglect it? You neglect God. Do you allow the affairs of house, or business, or friends to ride over it, to displace it from the first position, to put it in the corner, to keep it hidden, neglected, disregarded? Then is God cast behind your back, and great is your danger. A voice of thunder would not be too loud to rouse you from your folly. You say you have no time to read. The plea is absolutely inadmissible. You take time to eat and drink, and this is the most important kind of eating and drinking. You will have to take time to be ill some of these days. Death will rap at the door, and he won't ask you if you have time to attend to him. Christ will stand in the earth one of these days, and what about your family, your house, your business then? You will want to turn to wisdom in a hurry, but wisdom will fly far from you. You will want to seek God with you whole heart, but He will not be

***Don't let us sit down to the Bible when nature is exhausted, and sleep hovers on the eyelids. Let us give the best time of the day. It is a matter of contrivance. There are difficulties, but difficulties can be overcome.***

found of you. So has God arranged things, that He will cause everyone to find the fruit of his ways. "Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets ... how long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof. Behold I will pour out my spirit upon you. I will make known my words unto you ... Blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul. All they that hate me, love death."

But if ye heed not her gentle entreaties – if ye persist in putting her off, that ye may attend to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, hoping dimly and indefinitely that some day all will be well – hear ye your own doom declared beforehand by the same gentle voice: "Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. I also will laugh at your calamity. I will mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me and I will not answer. They shall seek me early but shall not find me. For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord. They would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices."

### ***THE DEMANDS OF A KING***

God has declared, "I am a great King" (Mal 1:14). He demands on this ground to be honoured, and to have the first place in the heart, and the best of all we have to offer. All the ceremonial appointments of the law were intended to teach this lesson. No one was allowed to approach the sanctuary except those appointed, and those only in the appointed way, on pain of death. No offering was accepted with a blemish, or hurt, or imperfection. All uncleanness required purgation by sacrifice. Holiness and majesty were continually impressed on Israel as appertaining to him in the highest degree. The lesson in its individual application is unmistakable. Jesus brings it home in the words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy strength, and all thy mind." His own demand is "My son, give Me thine heart." He demands the highest place in all our affairs, which is His reasonable place. Let us

render the service He requires. His word is in our houses. Don't let us insult Him by giving our feeblest moments to the reading of it. Don't let us wait till all our energies are worn out, and our faculties impaired in attending upon the affairs of the natural man. Don't let us sit down to the Bible when nature is exhausted, and sleep hovers on the eyelids. Let us give the best time of the day. It is a matter of contrivance. There are difficulties, but difficulties can be overcome. Where there is a will, there is a way. Besides, who knows but our difficulties are God's tests. He may want to prove us – to see and let us see whether or not we will honour Him or not. It is no new thing for God to leave a man that He may see all that is in his heart. Therefore, our increasing business – our growing affairs – may be a part of the machinery by which our probation is accomplished. If we resist the clamours of the flesh – if, notwithstanding the pressure of worldly affairs, we turn aside in reading, prayer and meditation, we overcome; but if, on the contrary, we are carried before the stream, and leave God behind, we are overcome, and will awake sooner or later to a sense of our great folly.

### *THE CONSEQUENCE OF NEGLIGENCE*

If we do our duty in this matter, we shall be assisted. This is a matter of promise. If we are attentive to God, He will be attentive to us. “Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.” The converse is true. Neglect God and He will allow you to fall. There have been many illustrations of this in history. One of them is mentioned in the chapter read this morning (Rom 1:28). “Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, *God gave them over to a reprobate mind.*” All nations were related, in the first instance, to the fountain of Divine knowledge through Noah, but they slighted God, honouring themselves, each other, and their own affairs, like the multitudes of our own day, and God departed from them, and gave them over to the reprobateness of mind which is manifest in all the sculptures of antiquity and the state of man universally.

The Jews were favoured as no nation ever was. Jehovah says, “As a girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man, so have I caused to cleave unto Me the whole house of Judah, saith the Lord, that they might be unto Me for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory, *but they would not hear.*” What was the consequence? “Behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David's throne, and the priests and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, *with drunkenness* (that is, mental confusion; the result of the wine of His wrath). And I will dash one against another, even the father and the sons together, saith the Lord; I will not pity nor spare, nor have mercy, but destroy them” (Jer 13:14). “Make the heart of this people fat and make

their ears heavy and shut their eyes” (Is 6:10). This was Israel’s punishment for neglecting God. When Christ came, he cloaked his wisdom in parables, that they might remain in their ignorance, and become subject to the judgement of God. Yet even then, his teaching was plain enough to be understood by those who gave close attention, and gave that respect to God which is his due. And he made them understand that the principle exemplified in the national blindness would operate in individual cases. He said (Mark 4:24): “To you that hear shall more be given, and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.” So that anyone earnestly attending to what Christ taught, would be helped to understand; while those who stood contemptuously and self-sufficiently apart, doing dishonour to God, would be deprived of what wisdom they had, in being left to their evil ways.

The lesson is, that those who neglect or hold loosely what they have, are in danger of being deserted by God, and led into ways that shall be for hurt. The principle was again exemplified in the first generation of Gospel believers. These were greatly privileged in having the teaching of the Spirit visibly in their midst; but like the Israelites who came out of Egypt under Moses, they grew accustomed to marvels, and conceived the idea that these things were in some way their right; that the apostles were only fellow-partakers of a common benefit, and had no more superiority among men than themselves. Hence arose false apostles. Many false brethren crept in, to whom the others listened. Many followed their pernicious ways. They dabbled in doctrines and disputed greatly about them, but it was the perverse disputing of men of corrupt minds. What was the consequence? Jesus hinted at this in his message to the seven churches, that he would remove the candlestick out of its place. Paul’s forcible declaration is: “*for this cause* God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie”.

As He had done with Israel, so He would do with the highly privileged communities founded by the apostles; because they departed from the reverential heedfulness that God demands, and began to honour and please themselves. He would fill them with drunkenness, that is, with the mental confusion resulting from imbibing the false principles that He caused to be diffused through the instrumentality of evil men and seducers. And so it has come to pass, and the Christendom of today is the standing monument of the faithlessness of the first century, and the living illustration of the fact, that if men disregard him, He will leave them to ways of folly and death; even to ways that they may imagine right; for, as Solomon says, “There is a way that seemeth right to a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

Now we stand related to the same principle, for God is the same for

evermore. Do not let us imagine that when the nations of antiquity, and the Jewish race, and the first generation of believers were given over to reprobation because they dishonoured God by a lukewarm and half-hearted attendance upon His word, that we shall fare any better if we offer him a like insult. God is great and we are small. God is eternal and we are of yesterday; God upholdeth all things, and we uphold nothing, but are ourselves upholden by Him every moment.

Most reasonable therefore it is that we choose His honour and His fear as the mainspring of our life. If we commit our way to Him, magnifying His word as He has magnified it, giving it first place in the economy of our lives, He will guide our steps to a greater enlargement of spiritual attainments, strengthening us with all might in the inner man, and filling us with the knowledge of His will. But if we hold the treasure of His wisdom with a loose hand, He will forsake us and leave us exposed to influences and circumstances that will be to our destruction. We are not without illustration of this in our own day. We have seen many who, though they knew the truth, were not walking in the love of it, but in the love of themselves and the things connected with the present life – we have seen them swept from their moorings by a wind of doctrine which has been permitted to blow upon them to their destruction. “Who is wise and he shall understand these things? Prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them, but the transgressors shall fall therein.”

*Bro Robert Roberts, 1879*

### ***KEEPING GOOD COMPANY***

*“We always speak like the company we keep. If we are all the while among the foul-mouthed gabblers of the flesh, we cannot expect to be free of their Sodomite brogue. If we read nothing but the literature of Atheistical refinement, we shall never rise above that thin, proper, superficial, cold style of talk, in which a practically godless state of mind expresses itself. Give us the atmosphere of the Spirit and the company of the Spirit’s watchmen in the Word, and we are altogether in a healthier land. “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth He meditate day and night.”*

*(RR)*

## REFLECTIONS ON THE TRUTH

A state of things never dreamed of by Statesmen is seen by one who is able to take in the whole picture of unrest throughout civilisation at the present time. Especially is this true in the United States of America. Never before has there been such turmoil and uneasiness among the masses. The human sea is becoming angry; its waves are lashing each other into fury; mire and dirt are being cast up; and all the great, the mighty, the rich are gazing upon the spectacle with fear and trembling. earth in "the war of the great day of God Almighty". Could the blind leaders of the people but see they would know that the present troubles are but the prelude to yet greater troubles to come. They would see that human government is drawing near it's close; that men are about giving to each other the last touches in the demonstration of their inability to govern wisely, and to demonstrate it amid such distress, disasters, fears and tremblings as the world has never before witnessed, nor will ever witness again.

It is not one thing that is causing fear, but the disturbing factors may be counted by the hundreds. There is nothing that so fitly represents the situation as that of "the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." A year ago it was a small matter, causing but little uneasiness among the rulers and the rich, but now it is a mountain in magnitude. Then, men in power laughed at the folly of a few fanatics; but not they realise a deep-seated unrest and anger springing from a thousand centres and in almost as many forms, and their laughter has been turned into the tremblings of fear, each asking the others, "What is the end to be?"

The Bible answers the question for them, not only of what the end is to be, but of the still greater troubles to come upon all the nations ere the Lord's judgments are abroad in the

The end of the kingdoms of this world is at hand, and that end is being and will continue to be ushered in and carried to its full consummation by the most fearful unrest, and fears and tremblings, and wrecks of human glory, and power and riches that the human mind can conceive of. Woe, woe, woe is the future food of the nations till the shower of blessings descend upon the escaped of the nations through Abraham and his seed in the full-established Kingdom of God!

Thicker and thicker grow the signs of the coming of Israel's King. "Behold, I come as a thief!" "The nations were angry and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward to Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them that destroy

*Woe, woe,  
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his seed in the  
full-  
established  
Kingdom of  
God!*

the earth.”  
“Jerusalem shall be  
trodden down of the  
Gentiles until the  
times of the Gentiles  
be fulfilled.” Then  
what? Just the things  
we now see coming  
thick and fast; signs  
in the political  
heavens, or kingdom  
of men, in the sun  
and moon and stars  
of those heavens.

Are these signs not  
present with the  
ruling powers, and

are they not, day by day, becoming  
more ominous of a mighty storm in  
those heavens? Who so blind that  
he cannot see it? Look ahead as  
hopefully as the rulers may, and  
there is no ray of light, no haven of  
safety to human rule, nothing but  
upheavals of kingdoms and the  
thunders and lightnings of war and  
destruction.

Is that all? No, indeed! Turn the  
eyes from the ruling powers to the  
common people, to the political  
earth, and what do we see? Ah,  
there we see the very cause that  
gives to the rulers their greatest  
alarm. With the political earth (the  
masses) we behold distress, “distress  
of nations, with perplexity; the sea  
and the waves roaring; men’s hearts  
failing them for fear, and for looking  
after those things which are coming  
on the earth.” Is that all? No. What  
causes this commotion in the  
political heavens, and this distress  
and angry condition of the political

earth? Is it the rulers and the people  
themselves? No. They think so, but  
it is not so. It is the King of Israel  
who shakes these heavens of rulers  
and distresses this earth of peoples;  
“for the powers of heaven (ruling  
authority) shall be shaken (by  
Christ); and then shall they see the  
Son of Man coming in a cloud with  
power and great glory.” If the  
present commotion, alarm and  
distress among the rulers and the  
masses be but the beginning of the  
shaking of the heavens and roaring  
of the sea of peoples, what, indeed,  
will the end be? Who so blind that  
he cannot realise in the present  
signs, the low rumblings, the deep  
tremblings of an approaching  
political earthquake, even “a great  
earthquake, such as was not since  
men were upon the earth, so mighty  
an earthquake, and so great?” I  
have asked, “Who so blind that he  
cannot see all this coming as the  
ultimate of the present  
foreshadowings expressed in the  
thousand-voiced signs in the  
political heavens and earth of the  
kingdoms of this world?”

### **THE BLINDNESS OF CHRISTENDOM**

Alas, blindness in these things  
pertains throughout all of  
“Christendom!” Ignorance of the  
truth is the veil spread over the  
minds of all constituting the so-  
called Christendom of civilised  
nations, and pride and fleshly  
wisdom sit at the portals of every  
heart to chase away the sure light of  
prophetic truth when about to enter.  
To such there is no sight. Unrest

and fear of some terrible evil have seized upon them, and each turns to his neighbour for light, but they are all blind and leaders of the blind. The vision of the prophets are a sealed book to them, even as to Israel to old. Give the vision to the leaned of "Christendom" to read it to the people, and they will say, "we cannot, for it is sealed." Then deliver it to the unlearned, and they will say, "We cannot read it, for we are unlearned." Like teachers, like people! Ah, ye blind teachers and blind people, the Lord of the prophets and of the vision is about to do a work, a marvellous work among the people of "Christendom," and a work wherein "the wisdom of their wise shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent shall be hid".

### ***THE BLESSEDNESS OF THOSE WHO HEAR***

Happy is the one who knoweth the voice of the prophets, who is able to read the signs of the times, and who hath for his refuge from the impending storm the Mighty God of Jacob!

What a wonderful thing it is to meditate upon the things of the Truth, to hold up before the mind the various features of God's word, and to trace out the beautiful ramifications of a multiform but unified truth! From such a meditation upon the word of God, one arises with renewed strength of mind and a heart filled with faith and zeal and love. There is one great truth that stamps itself more

indelibly upon our minds from such meditations. It is, "that God is just and equal in all His ways."

Christendom has converted God's justice into injustice, and His equal ways into unequal ways. This is illustrated in the view taken by Christendom concerning God's condemnation of Adam's race. By that view, the race was condemned in Adam to an eternal living torment, excepting such as turned to God for salvation or died in early childhood or lived up to the light of their "ignorance" of God and his truth. According to the same view the entire Adamic race is raised from the dead for purpose of judgment. This is a very broad view in the satisfying of God's justice in relation to the human race, and outrages reason, justice, and God's word.

Again, there are those who take a very narrow and restrictive view of God's exercise of His justice, at least so far as a future judgement through a resurrection from the grave is concerned. Those who take this restrictive view do so on the strength of a mechanical working of a law originating in Eden. This law is called "the law of sin and death," under which Adam and his race was placed in consequence of his transgression. It is claimed that this law so operates as to hold every member of the race in an uninterrupted, unbroken, eternal death, unless interfered with through the operation of another law, called "The law of the spirit of life." I could understand such a

construction of the sentence, if God intended to dismiss the race from His favour without any further dealings, but I cannot understand it in view of the fact that He intends to exercise authority as to the personal conduct of its members. If He intends to exercise such authority, then we would expect Him to lay down some law, or rule, or principle, governing that authority.

### ***THE IMPORTANCE OF CORRECT INTERPRETATION***

The whole trouble arises from an interpretation that seems to keep God out of view. Adam was sentenced to death because God made death the wages of sin. God dealt with the race federally in Adam because His holiness would not permit the perpetual living of a race in sin. He therefore sentenced the nature to death.

It does not follow from this that He cannot call any member of the race from the grave to deal with him in relation to his own or personal matters where His justice and the member's deserts require it. These personal matters are such as grow out of God's after dealings with the race, and they are matters entirely apart from anything affecting the race through Adam.

Now, in this matter, it lies with Him to decide the conditions under which He will exercise His authority over the race and exercise His power over its members in relation to all acts of personal disobedience. He has said what will be the result to

the race so far as the sinful nature inherited is concerned, and He said it in Eden when he sentenced Adam to death. If He had stopped at that, then every member of the race, one after another, would have found his final, uninterrupted eternal dwelling-place in the dust. But God had a purpose to work out with the race, and all His after dealings with its members relates to that purpose. He has made known His purpose, and any future dealings he may have with members of the race will depend upon what relation they may sustain to the purpose in a personal way.

***God dealt with the race federally in Adam because His holiness would not permit the perpetual living of a race in sin. He therefore sentenced the nature to death.***

### ***TIMES OF IGNORANCE***

This after dealing is a matter entirely apart from anything inherited through Adam. For long centuries His purpose was hidden from the great mass of the human family, and but dimly seen by the most enlightened. As regards those who were in ignorance of His purpose, He did not hold them responsible to any future reckoning on account of their personal sins, but simply allowed them to go to the grave like the beasts, there to remain eternally. This is called "winking at times of ignorance."

Since then, however, God has made His purpose clear to all peoples by the coming of the Light into the

***Dr Thomas was not infallible, but he was true and honest towards God's truth***

world, and He has ceased to “wink” at ignorance. He now commands acceptance of the Light and obedience thereto. Whoever attains to an understanding of it, and refuses obedience, is held responsible to a future reckoning because he is disobedient and mocks

God in His offer of salvation. This is strict justice, and it is right that it should be so; for it all grows out of personal relations to God and His purpose being entirely apart from any relation Adamically created. To say that relations Adamically created hold as a barrier to any relation that may be created personally by any member of his race in connection with God's dealings with the race, is, to my mind, to say the least, a strange teaching in the light of God's revealed will.

### ***TIMES OF GREAT PERIL***

These are times of great peril to the household of faith. Bold and reckless claims are abroad, and the very pillars of our faith are threatened. Old and thoroughly established landmarks of the truth are threatened, and carefully-reasoned-out and long held interpretations of the scriptures are called in question. Yea, brethren, let me sound in your ears this warning with all the energy I possess: “It is dangerous work, perilous to the household of faith and to the truth,

to listen to those teachings that depart from the foundation of scripture interpretation laid down by Dr Thomas as the result of years of study and careful weighing of scripture testimony by comparing scripture with scripture.” Before you cut loose from the old foundation to accept the new, let me ask you to weigh again carefully, thoughtfully and conscientiously the testimony establishing the old and loved and soul-cheering foundation laid by Dr Thomas as the honest result of years of deepest, most earnest, and conscientious study of the word of God ever made since the days of the Apostles.

### ***A FOUNDATION OF SCRIPTURE***

Brethren, Dr Thomas was not infallible, but he was true and honest towards God's truth, and in matters of detail there may be room for difference of views by those who have built upon the same foundation; but on those great truths themselves there is no room for divergence of belief, seeing that they are so effectually hedged with the concurrent testimony of infallible scripture. A strong foundation, and a foundation buttressed upon the hole testimony of eternal truth has been laid by him. To it, through the favour of God, we have come; upon it we have rested, and built with zeal and faith our labour of love. With it, and our work of faith and love built upon it, we expect to enter the presence of the Great Judge, and hopefully trust to reap the fruit thereof in being

made "partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light".

**TROUBLES AND CHASTISEMENTS**

Brethren, we expect troubles, heart-burnings and sorrows, trials of our faith and chastisements. We were begotten to such when we obediently laid hold of the truth in Christ Jesus. From the world, and even in our own household, we expected such, and they have been upon us time and time again with all their crushing and sorrowful weight.

The troubles that come from the world we can bear cheerfully, but those that arise within the household are laden with the keenest sorrow, making the heart sick unto death. They have, however, this advantage to us, that they cause us the more earnestly to long for the coming of the Lord to deliver us from our sorrows and distresses. In all that befalls us we behold the wisdom of God, for it is only in the school of sorrow, persecution and misfortune that the truth, and power, and love, and wondrous grace of God can be personally realised in the working out of our salvation.

We then behold our entire dependence upon God, our own weakness, and the strength and joy reserved in heaven for those who endure to the end. Only in such a school can flesh and blood be brought into harmony with the will

of God in the forming of a faithful and humble and lively character. Let us then bear with patience every evil circumstance that may befall us in these the sorrowful days, and trying days of our sojourning, being assured that darkness, and sorrow, and all dismal differences will give way to a restful joy for the faithful at the dawning of Messiah's day.

Only those who know and enjoy the light of truth are able to weigh correctly the past, present, and future status of Adam's race. Such only, I say, have that knowledge.

*ye children of light, just think how highly God has favoured you in bringing you to an understanding of such high and mighty knowledge!*

Did you ever pause to consider how mighty that knowledge is when weighed in the scales with the knowledge of Christendom? Only to a few is it, by the favour of God, and actual possession. Just think of it—to know—the past, present, and future status of Adam's race! Only in the Bible is that knowledge revealed. Nowhere else is it obtainable. It is there because God has spoken, and the Bible is His Message.

**THE FAVOURED FEW**

Ah, ye children of light, just think how highly God has favoured you in bringing you to an understanding of such high and mighty knowledge! But that is nothing, or but a small matter, as compared with another knowledge. That other is to know the God of Abraham, and His Son Jesus Christ. This latter knowledge

is the grandest and highest of all knowledge. How highly favoured are the children of light in being permitted to attain to it! Do we all, with heart and mind, truly appreciate this wonderful favour of Abraham's God? If we do, then we will humble ourselves, and no one will knowingly wrong his brother.

### **THE NEED FOR REVELATION**

No one by searching in his own mind, or in the minds of his neighbours, or throughout nature, can find out God. God can only be known by His revelation of Himself. He has made that revelation, yet only a few of Adam's race know Him. The world, and Christendom, too, know a God and His Son, but they know not the God of Abraham, nor do they know His Son. Since they know not the meaning of the Bible, how can they know the God of the Bible, or His Son either?

The Bible is a sealed book to them. God's purposes in relation to the earth and its race is unknown to them. The present situation of Adam's race in relation to the knowledge of God and His purpose is most graphically described by the Bible in the following language: "the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."

This language is used in connection with the light that is to come to Zion at the return of Christ, and describes the condition of all nations in relation to their knowledge of God and His purpose in the earth. It would be impossible to furnish

stronger proof of Christendom's gross ignorance of the true God and His purpose than is found in the words just quoted from Isaiah. Just think of it, reader, here is language showing that the people are grossly ignorant of God, of His Son, and of His purpose, and language used in the very face

of a so-called Christendom, or Christianity, that is co-extensive with the civilisation of Adam's race!

If the teaching of "Christendom" be true, then such language would not be found in the Bible, nor used as it is to describe the present situation of the human race. What is the explanation?

Here it is. By violence of interpretation of the prophet's language "Christendom" fails to see the gross darkness, woeful ignorance, that hangs over and envelops all nations. By that interpretation the darkness is made to relate to Paganism, and the light that was to arise and disperse the darkness is made to consist of the teaching of "Christendom's Church."

Is it any wonder then that the people are not alarmed at their condition in relation to spiritual matters? With them it is a case of darkness seeking to enlighten darkness, in which the result is necessarily "gross darkness".

<p><i>The world, and Christendom too, know a God and His Son, but they know not the God of Abraham, nor do they know His Son.</i></p>
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It is difficult to imagine a sadder picture than that furnished by the trusting followers of Christendom's teachers.

Blindness as to Christ and his message happened to Israel, but total blindness in respect to all features of the Gospel is the sorrowful lot of a Gentile Christianity. With what joy would we throw open the windows of their minds that they might behold that light of truth against which their teachers have closed every avenue of utterance! We find ourselves utterly powerless to reach their minds, for our testimony in behalf of the truth is but an idle tale, yea, worse than that, since it is characterized as teaching lies in the name of the Lord.

**GROSS DARKNESS**

Grossly dark indeed must that mind be where the truth by its own intrinsic worth and power cannot dispel the darkness and find a welcome lodgement. But such is the sad situation throughout Gentile Christianity. Therefore the prophet of the Lord hath said truly that "the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people."

It is here with us, and with us too, at the very time when Zion is about to rise out of her downtrodden condition and shine because her

light has come, because her King has returned to her with healing beams, and bearing with him all power in heaven and earth to dispel the darkness brooding over the nations, and bless a perishing people in Abraham and his seed; for, of Jerusalem, of Zion, the King hath said; "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that stonest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered by children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." This coming will be the time when Zion shall arise and shine because her light is come, and when Jerusalem shall arise from her downtreading by the Gentiles.

Our work in the days of darkness, the bearing of our feeble testimony before a world too wise to receive instruction, will soon be over, and it will be ended in rapturous delight that the God of Abraham will then make known to all His mighty approval of the faithfulness and truthfulness of our witnessing for His truth, and do it by the thunders of a judgment that will sweep away the refuge of lies in which an unbelieving and gainsaying people are resting.

*Our work in the days of darkness, the bearing of our feeble testimony before a world too wise to receive instruction, will soon be over, and it will be ended in rapturous delight that the God of Abraham will then make known to all His mighty approval of the faithfulness and truthfulness of our witnessing for His truth*

Since we cannot justify ourselves other than by the testimony we bear 'mid scoffs and jeers, let us calmly await God's mighty justification in the pouring out of the seventh vial of judgment, followed by the rainbow of glory spanning the heavens of the future age when the storm of God's fearful wrath has rolled away. We speak feebly for God now; there and then He will speak with power and authority for himself and for our justification. All nations will then know that we bore before them a true testimony, and that they are the last heirs to a succession of inherited lies coming down to them through the generations of many centuries. This is our hope and joy and confidence and patience in tribulation. We await it.

*LB Welch*

*(The Christadelphian, 1894)*

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## **THE APOSTLES JUSTIFIED BY FAITH BEFORE "THE FAITH" CAME**

The point of difficulty in a correspondent's mind is this—if the “defective faith” of the apostles did not necessitate their re-immersion, why should the defective faith of our contemporaries? In other words, if the ignorance of the apostles in regard to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, and the things founded upon these facts, did not invalidate their baptism by John, why should men's ignorance of the kingdom of God and His righteousness, make invalid the immersion to which they have been subjected? Is not their immersion the “one baptism” although their “faith” is defective of many things embraced in the “one faith” and the “one hope of the calling?”

This appears to be the difficulty for us to consider. Let us see, then, if it be real and insuperable or not.

### ***THE APOSTLES' CASE EXCEPTIONAL***

In the first place we remark that the case of the apostles is exceptional. They were Israelites under the law, which was then in full force, the Abrahamic covenant not having been confirmed by the blood of its Mediator, the Christ. They were not required to believe in the mystery of its confirmation any more than the prophets were until the confirmation was established. They were under a dispensation of “justification by faith,” not of “justification through the faith”; because when they were justified “the faith” had not come (Rom 3:30; Gal 3:24). Until the resurrection of Jesus they were “under the law” as Jesus was himself under the law, which was the schoolmaster of Israel who were “shut up to the

faith which should afterwards be revealed.” This was a position which could only be occupied by Israelites previous to the revelation of the faith. After that faith came, they were no longer “shut up.” The apostles were shut up as Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel were “shut up to the faith.” Their faith was the faith of these prophets, with the addition that they believed that Jesus was the Son of David and Son of the Deity whom He had anointed with the Holy Spirit; in other words, “the Christ the King of Israel” whom He had covenanted to Abraham and David to inherit the land and to occupy the throne.

This was their faith. They believed the things covenanted to Abraham and David, and that Jesus was the Christ; but they did not understand nor believe, though it was told them, that Jesus should be put to death and rise again; they did not know, in any sense of the word *know*, that there should be remission of sins to the prophets and themselves through the death and resurrection of Jesus; that is, through the crucificial outpouring of his soul as the blood of the Abrahamic and Davidian covenants, in the promises of which they believed. This is evident from Luke 18:32,34, where it is written that Jesus said to the twelve: “Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and they shall scourge him, and put him to death; and on the third day he shall rise again. *And they understood none of these things; and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things that were spoken*”. John tells us that their ignorance of this class of truths continued until Jesus was the spirit of truth, which guided them into all the truth: and showed them many things which in the beginning of the week of confirmation, Daniel’s seventieth week, they were not able to bear (Jno 16:4,12,13,25).

### ***FAITH IN THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM***

The apostles, then, were justified by faith in the gospel of the kingdom, and in Jesus as its anointed king. This is positive. They were not justified by faith in a Christ who they believed would suffer death and rise again. This is negative. That they were justified before the death of Jesus is evident from John 15:3, where it is written, “Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.” This word which Jesus spoke to them was “the word of the kingdom,” also styled “the Gospel of the kingdom,” and “the kingdom of God” (Luke 18:17; 9:60, 2, 6; 8:1; 4:43, 18; Mat 9:35; 4:23). Faith in it and Jesus was justifying. It cleansed, or purified them from all sins, except Judas. He was excepted, and pronounced “unclean;” for he had not received “the word” into an honest and good heart.

The apostles believed all they were required to believe. They were not required to believe what was purposefully hidden from them. They had honoured God in accepting His counsel preached to them through John the baptiser. They had been baptized with “the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins”, predicated on faith in the promises covenanted to Israel’s fathers, and the approaching manifestation of the Christ. When he appeared they recognized him. He preached the same gospel as John, but amplified in detail. They believed it, and Jesus completed what John had begun in washing their feet, and without which they could have no part with him in the joy that was set before him (Jno 13:8). They had washed in John’s baptism, therefore they needed not save to have their feet washed by Jesus, who thus “shod them with the preparation of the gospel” and made them clean every whit (verse 10; Eph 6:15). Things being thus ordered, it only remained “to redeem them from the curse of the law”; to redeem them by the same act that should purchase Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and all the saints under the law, from its curse.

### ***REDEMPTION EFFECTED THROUGH CHRIST***

This redemption was effected by Jesus submitting to be made a curse for them. This was accomplished, not by his wilful violation of the law, but by his enemies nailing him to a tree, or cross; and so forcibly bringing the curse of the Mosaic law upon him, which says, “Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.” Thus the nature crucified was the nature cursed, eternally cursed; and therefore can never occupy the kingdom of God and the earth for ever. The life of the nature that transgressed in the person of the first Adam became a covering for sin in the sinless person of the second Adam. When glorified, the crucified nature was transformed into holy spirit-nature, styled by Paul, “spiritual body,” or the body consubstantial with the Father. This is the nature Jesus now possesses, and to which he attained at the price of “the crucifixion of the flesh” in every sense of the phrase.

When the redemption price was thus paid the law of Moses had no more dominion over the apostles. Its curses had become ineffectual in their case. Every whit clean by the arrangement indicated, they could stand up on Pentecost, and under inspiration of Holy Spirit, could reveal to the astonished Israelites the new doctrine of God’s system of justification in the name of Jesus, attested by the law that cursed him, and by the prophets. Being redeemed from the curse of the law they had received the adoption of sons; and because they were sons He had sent forth the spirit of His Son into their hearts; and they could stand up and proclaim without sin “justification through the faith,” independently of the sacrifices prescribed by the ritual of Moses. “The faith” had come, and they were no longer under the Mosaic schoolmaster.

### ***AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION***

The reader, then, will bear in mind the distinction subsisting between “justification by faith,” and “justification through the faith.” The apostles and prophets were justified, or cleansed from all their sins “by faith”; but since the day of Pentecost no Jew or Gentile can obtain pardon or purification by the same formula as they. To believe the word of the kingdom, and that Jesus is Son of God, will, since that notable day, save no man apart from the revealed mystery; nor would the belief that the Christ should die and be raised again, apart from the recognition of Jesus as the Christ, and the word of the kingdom, save a believer. The area of “faith” was enlarged by the apostolic proclamation into “the faith”, so that after the day of Pentecost the doctrine of the apostles presented people with more things to be believed for justification than were believed by Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, or themselves. Till the glorification of Jesus they were “fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets had spoken”; for they did not understand that the Christ ought to have suffered the things Jesus suffered, and afterwards to enter upon his glory (Luke 24:25). But when Jesus was about to be taken up and received into glory, he opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, concerning him; and said unto them, “Thus it is written, and thus it behoved the Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day; and that repentance, and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (verse 44).

***The nature crucified was the nature cursed, eternally cursed; and therefore can never occupy the kingdom of God and the earth for ever. The life of the nature that transgressed in the person of the first Adam became a covering for sin in the sinless person of the second Adam.***

Such was the case of the apostles in regard to their personal justification, which resolved itself into:

- 1—Their baptism of John’s immersion of repentance for remission of sins through the word Jesus should preach to them.
- 2—Their belief of that word of the kingdom in an honest and good heart.
- 3—their confession that he was the anointed Son of the Deity and King of Israel; and,
- 4—Their feet being washed by the personal ministry of the King himself.

Here was a work of the Spirit which occupied a much longer time to accomplish than a modern clerical religion-getting. This is the excitement of an instant which leaves the proselyte as ignorant of the truth as it found him: whereas the cleansing of the apostles every whit was, like that of

Abraham's justification, an affair of years.

The apostles were a practical illustration of the word in Daniel 9:27 concerning the transactions of the seventieth week, "He shall confirm a covenant for many one week, and in half of the week he shall cause to cease from sacrificing and offering." They belonged to the Week of Confirmation, in which the Spirit was causing to cease from sin-offerings; preparing a covering for iniquity; introducing a righteousness for the hidden periods; sealing the vision of the eight chapter, and the prophecy; and anointing the holiest of the holy ones, or saints. Their baptism of John did not cause them to cease from sacrificing and offering according to Mosaic law; nor did their feet-washing by Jesus.

Till he put away sin-offerings by the sacrifice of himself, the immersed apostles were under the dominion of the law, and bound to attend to its requirements; but when Jesus died "to redeem the transgressions under the law", their iniquity and that of all the prophets was covered; and in his resurrection their justification was complete. The righteousness they had acquired was such as the law could not give. This could only represent the taking away of sins, not actually and permanently abolish them; while the state perfected by the death and resurrection of Jesus invested them with a purification which needed not to be renewed in all subsequent time, and would be found sufficient for the Millennial Period and beyond, in other words, "for ever".

After Deity was "justified in spirit", by the perfecting of Jesus, the apostles no longer offered sacrifices and offerings. They "ceased sacrificing and offering," though sacrifices and offerings continued to be offered according to the law for nearly forty years after by all Israelites who did not submit to the Deity's system of righteousness exhibited in the gospel the apostles preached.

### ***THE BAPTISM OF JOHN***

From these premises the reader will perceive that John's baptism was altogether wrong and out of place after the resurrection of Jesus. It was quite right in its right place; but altogether wrong out of its place. A pentecostal immersion is therefore impossible; and the case of the apostles who are subjects of it, altogether irrelevant to any supposable among us. Their faith was according to the formula of the week of confirmation, which terminated with the cutting off of Messiah the prince at the crucifixion. It was not defective for "justification by faith," though it was defective for "justification though the faith," which, whoever, when they were cleansed was to them impossible, seeing that "the faith" had not then as yet come.

But “justification by faith” according to the import of the phrase under the law is as impossible to us as “justification through the faith” before the resurrection of Jesus was to them. Jesus preached the coming faith, but his hearers non of them understood it, because it was hidden from them. For this cause, it was styled “the wisdom of the Deity in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom”. Their justification was not predicated upon what was purposely hidden from them; for God is not an austere master reaping where he hath not sown, and gathering where he hath not scattered. Men’s justification, whether Jews of Gentiles, is predicated on their believe of what He hath revealed. When the hidden wisdom was revealed, then “the faith came,” and men were required to believe it *in addition to what the apostles believed* when they were “justified by faith”, before the cutting off of the Prince of the host. Our justification does not depend on our believing what will be revealed to the nations in the millennial dawn, when the law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem, as testified in Isaiah 2:3. This is to us “hidden wisdom”. Secret things belong to God, the things that are revealed to us, and to our children (Deut 29:29). This was the rule for Israel, and the rule for us who would find the “righteousness of God.”

*Nothing less than the belief of the teaching of the apostles can now justify a single son or daughter of the first Adam.*

### ***THE MYSTERY REVEALED***

The revelation of the hidden wisdom or mystery of the Deity, styled in Acts 2:11 “the wonderful works of God”, was the grand distinctive peculiarity of the apostolic preaching on Pentecost and forward. Nothing less than the belief of the teaching of the apostles can now justify a single son or daughter of the first Adam. He that hears them so as to believe and do what they taught, hears the Deity; and he that hears them not is not “taught of God,” and cannot therefore be saved, however pious he may be in his own estimation, and that of his contemporaries. This is evident from the words of Jesus, who said to the apostles, “It shall be given you what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh by you: and he that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me” (Mat 10:19,20; Luke 10:16). And speaking of those who come to him as the result of the attracting influence of the Father, Jesus said, “It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me” (Jno 6:45). To hear the apostles, then, is to hear Jesus and the Father; and consequently, to be taught of God; and all that are so taught have heard and learned of the Father, and are drawn or attracted by what they have heard and learned to Jesus.

## **THE DARKNESS OF CLERICAL THEOLOGY**

None else “come to Jesus” in the scriptural sense of the word. All who come to him are intelligent in “the faith”. There are no ignoramuses among the genuine disciples, for these are “all taught of the Deity;” and when the Deity teaches, His teaching “opens the eyes,” turns the taught “from darkness” “into the marvellous light” of the gospel of His glory (Acts 26:18; 1Pet 2:9). How different this from the result of clerical teaching, preaching, ministration, or whatever name they may designate the wordy outpourings of their cracked and truly earthen vessels! Those who “come to Jesus” in the clerical sense, are those who come to the clergy, and become members of the synagogues. They are brought to this, not by the teaching of the apostles, but by the “enticing words of man’s wisdom,” which leave them in darkness as profound as the craftiest soul-dealer could possibly wish. Any intelligent believer conversing with such can easily discern that they are not taught of God, but only of the clergy; for he will find them entirely ignorant of the first principles of the oracles of God. With the prophets they have nothing to do; for the apostles they have as little use; of the gospel of the kingdom they have never heard; and the revelation of the mystery might as well have never been revealed, for any use they have for it in their system of “getting religion”, and saving immortal souls from the death that never dies!

*There are no ignoramuses among the genuine disciples, for these are “all taught of the Deity;” and when the Deity teaches, His teaching “opens the eyes,” turns the taught “from darkness” “into the marvellous light” of the gospel of His glory”*

In such a system “marvellous light” is out of the question; for in every corner of it can be discovered only the murkiest gloom, and darkness that can be felt. The Father and Jesus are despised by the adherents of the clergy, because the apostles are not heard. The whole establishment is Laodicean, and the voice of the Deity finds no utterance within its pale. These are incontrovertible facts. The teaching and mandates of the apostles are not regarded in the kingdom of the clergy, and therefore, we know that the spirit of their establishments is not the Spirit of the Deity; but the Spirit of Error” and of “strong delusion,” which is the spirit of their revivals, and the spirit of which their “religion” comes (1Jno 4:5, 6; 2Thess 2:11,12).

The Pentecostian “truth as it is in Jesus” is “rightly divided” by the skilful workman, the apostle of the Gentiles, in Romans 16:25. In ascribing glory to the only wise Deity, he refers to the word of truth in a three-fold relation of things which may be thus stated:

- 1—"My Gospel,"
- 2—"The preaching of Jesus Christ," and
- 3—"the revelation of the mystery concealed from the times of the ages" - the times of the law and of the periods that preceded it.

1. These are the triple elements of the whole system of faith Jesus called "the gospel" and which he commanded the apostles to go forth and preach, and declared that whosoever believed it and was baptized should be saved, but whosoever believed it not should be condemned. The "one hope" of this system Paul styled "my gospel", or "the gospel of me" - the gospel preached of me, Paul. In another place he terms it "the hope of Israel", on account of which he was a prisoner in chains (Acts 28:20). Elsewhere he alludes to it as "the gospel preached to Abraham," and which announced the justification of all the nations through faith, and the blessing of them in company with faithful Abraham. It was therefore his gospel in an especial sense, because he was separated by the Deity to declare and teach it authoritatively to the Gentiles; and whosoever taught any thing perverse or subversive of it, he pronounced "accursed" (Gal 1:6-9; 3:8,9). The clergy do not preach this gospel. Indeed, how can they! For they are as ignorant of it as though it had never been apocalypted, or revealed. Paul, then, whose image they set in niches for the ornamentation of their bazaars, not we, though we approve his sentence, pronounces them "accursed". Let the reader, then, renounce these men-pleasers whom the world hears and glorifies, and study diligently Paul's gospel of the approaching government of the habitable by the resurrected and anointed King of Israel (Acts 17:31).
2. When Paul's contemporaries had come to comprehend the purpose of the Deity with respect to the nations existing in the age to come—that he intended to rule them by the Christ—he next proclaimed to them that Jesus was that Christ. This he styles "the preaching of Jesus Christ." Their belief of the gospel of the kingdom and name of Christ abstractly from Jesus, would not have justified, or saved them from their sins, and given them a right to the life of the age, after Pentecost. They were required to recognize him as the Son of David, Son of the Deity, and King of the Jews; for if they rejected, or did not accept him as Lord, and received not his words, their fate was to be "destroyed from among the people" (Jno 12:48; Acts 3:23). This arrangement has not been altered by the authority of heaven since Paul's day. The clergy have abolished or superseded it by their traditions; but God has no respect for them or their institutions. They are elements of a power "that thinks to change times and laws" (Dan 7:25), and which speaks great things, and blasphemies, and opens its mouth in blasphemy against the Deity, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle, and them

that dwell in the heaven (Rev 13:5). The influence of this clerical power in all its Laodicean developments is self-deceptive, and destructive of the people who obey its behests. In relation to them “the times and laws” are changed, and a way of salvation which, in verity, is no salvation at all, established, that makes the truth of God of no effect. But all this with God is nothing. His plan of salvation is unchanged; and if any man of this generation be saved, he can be saved only as men were saved in the days of the apostles. They must believe Paul’s gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ.

- 3 - But a man may believe the hope Paul proclaims, and that Jesus is the Christ, and yet not believe enough to save him. He must believe, in addition, the revealed mystery in its facts and doctrine. Suppose he believe that all nations shall be blessed in Abraham and his seed; that Abraham shall inherit with his seed, Jesus, and the saints, the promised land for the millennial period and beyond; that David’s throne shall be established and exist in all that period; that the twelve tribes, then an obedient and faithful nation, shall occupy the land; that Jesus and his holy brethren shall possess the government of the world, as Jehovah’s anointed kings and priests, incorruptible and deathless—suppose he believe all this, what benefit would it be to the man if he denied, or did not believe that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again - that he was delivered for the sins of his people, and raised again for their justification? These facts, and the teaching predicated upon them, are indispensable elements of “the faith” through which men are justified. It was in the preaching of Jesus Christ and the revealed mystery, that Paul’s Israelitish fellow-countrymen needed to be especially indoctrinated. The gospel preached to Abraham was well known to them, for it was “the hope of Israel,” and had been preached to them in the reading of the prophets for many centuries. Not so, however, with the Gentiles. These were ignorant of the whole subject, and had to be taught everything from the beginning.

### ***BELIEF AND BAPTISM***

The apostles, then were “justified by faith”, and preached “justification through the faith” to all who should “obey the truth”. “Ye have purified your souls”, says Peter, “in obeying the truth”. The truth cannot be obeyed unless it be believed. In other words, if a man have not the faith in his understanding and affection, he cannot yield “the obedience of faith,” or obey “the law of faith”. The burial of a true believer with Christ in immersion is the act of faith which constitutes obedience. None but a true believer can enact it. The immersion of an ignorant sinner is altogether out of the premises of the gospel. He that does it knowingly is a wilful blasphemer of the name of the Deity; and the person dipped only adds to

his sins by his presumption. The one faith and the one hope of the calling must precede the immersion to constitute the “one baptism”; if either, or both, be wanting, that immersion is invalid. Fifty immersions will not supply the want of the faith; but, on the other hand, if the subject’s faith be apostolic, one immersion is sufficient, and ought, on no account, be repeated.

*Bro John Thomas*

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## **THE DEVIL’S RELIGION**

*In the following article, Bro Thomas demonstrates the folly of Church theology as contrasted with Bible Truth. He demonstrates it to be the thinking of the flesh, or ‘diabolos’, (the Bible Devil) as distinct from the revelation of the Spirit.*

There are only two religions in the world, and only two. They are hostile religions, and as deadly in their antagonism as the Deity and the Devil; for the one is the religion of God, and the other the religion of “*the flesh*,” in which the scripture testifies “*dwelleth no good thing*.”

The religion of the Flesh or Devil, (which ought rather to be termed superstition), is not uniform in its manifestations. It delights in diversity and oppositions; therefore it assumes the form of what its adherents style, “the names and denominations of Christendom,” or in the language of the Bible, “the harlots and abominations of the earth.” Judaism and Gentilism in all their forms, or by whatever name denominated, are but the vain imaginings of ignorant and depraved humanity - “the thinking of the flesh,” in opposition to, or in ignorance of “the thinking of the

spirit.” Thus, in regards to Judaism, which raised its audacious front in opposition to Moses and the Prophets, the spirit says by Isaiah: “My thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor my ways as your ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (*Is 5:8*). And in regard to Gentilism, it is said, that all the world wondered after the beast; and that the inhabitants of the earth, even all nations, have been made drunk with the wine of the prostitution of the Great Harlot, which reigns over the kings of the earth.” (*Rev 17:2, 18; 18:3; 14:8; 13:3*).

Now the Devil’s religion is intensely “spiritual,” for it begins in *the spirit of the flesh*, is sustained by that spirit, and when this spirit exhales in the article of death, the religion evaporates into the thinnest air. By

*the devil's religion is familiar to all, though all do not know that it is the devil's*

the spirit of the flesh we mean, *the electromagnetism generated by the decomposition of ingesta, and diffused over the brain, spinal chord and nerves, for the purposes of the animal economy.* The blood is the depot of this spirit; so

that when it's circulation is excited unduly, the electromagnetism of the blood is proportionately evolved; and if the excitation be produced by ideas appropriate to "the sentiments," which are naturally blind and impulsive, they become electromagnetically charged, according to the temperament and capacity of the individual. Some men are charged papistically, some episcopally, some presbyterially, some methodistically, some baptistically, and so on through all the shapes and diversities of diabolism.

### **CONVERSION TO DIABOLISM**

The process of charging "the sentiments" that is, the organs of veneration, conscientiousness, cautiousness, hope, marvellousness, benevolence, love of approbation, and so forth; with electromagnetism, in the technic of "*the Satan*," is termed "conversion," and "getting religion," or "experiencing a hope of pardon." Hence the "conversion" lasts as long as "the sentiments" remain charged with fluid, according to the variations of which are the elevations and depressions of the spirit, technically styled, "hopes and fears," which are

the evidences of the devil's Christianity. This is considerably depressed by a dark and cloudy day; or when bile is not duly secreted from the blood; so that it often vanishes altogether, and the devil stands confessed.

### **HEART RELIGION**

But the devil's religion is familiar to all, though all do not know that it is the devil's; we have therefore given this brief analysis of it's "spirituality" that all may know it, and, if unhappily bewitched by it, repudiate it with all possible dispatch. It is purely a religion of feeling, and not at all fit for men with heads upon their shoulders. The devil himself calls it "heart-religion," and cherishes it with great affection. He loves a religion where the heart can have free scope uncontrolled by enlightened brains. By quashing these, all sorts of troublesome doctrines are got rid of, and love, charity, and peace, the greatest of which is "peace at any price," is established and confirmed.

The religion of the world is all "heart-religion," and intensely "spiritual," its heart being in its right place, as it thinks, it does not trouble its head about religion much; only just enough to keep the vested interests in good working condition. For these it will fawn, lie, intrigue and flatter, that the temporalities being right, the heart may be in the right also. Its head often aches over the interests and prosperity of the "precious cause;" but about Moses and the prophets, and the doctrine of

the prophet like to him there might as well have been no such things, for any concern evinced by its religious heart - it has no head for such affairs.

**A PURPOSE TO RELIGION**

Religion in all its modifications is for some purpose. The highly intellectual, reasonable, and excellent religion of the Deity, has a purpose, and a noble and glorious one it is. But the religion of the Devil and Satan has likewise a purpose of its own; which is the very reverse of the purpose of God in all the details of his wisdom and excellent knowledge.

The Devil, *who is Sin's Flesh in all its lusts and pride of life*, assumes that he possesses "a soul" in some part of him; but in which, whether in his heart, lungs, liver, kidney, stomach, brains or generally in all, he is not agreed; which "soul," he says, "*shall die no death at all; lo-moth temuthon*;" Gen 3:4. It is true, that God hath said, that "the soul that sinneth shall die;" and that unredeemed, "it sees corruption, and ceaseth for ever;" but the Devil and Satan deny this, and swear until they have become as black as their religion teaches, that their soul is immortal, and cannot die. Well, they say that it is to save this undying soul from second and eternal death, that their religion was invented, and is preached. This is the spiritual purpose of the Devil's

spiritual religion, a purpose, indeed, not very intelligible as the Devil states it.

We ask his sooty Majesty, what he means by saving an *undying* soul from *eternal death*? We are so stupid that we cannot understand how an undying soul can die in any sense. The Devil is not unaware of the apparent absurdity, and has therefore summoned all his theologians, Gentile and Jewish, to put the difficulty into such a shape, that when it is seen by the sons of the Abrahamic and Davidian covenants, they may be seized with a shivering fit, and die in the collapse of a cold and freezing materialism. Nor has the Devil called in vain; for his "divines" have flocked to the windows of his cote in clouds of turtles, cooing in the softest notes of a self-complacent spirituality.

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They affirm that the Devil's proposition is perfectly correct - *that a soul that never died can die and does die, yet don't die*. None but the softest of theological brains can afford this as the result of conviction. No matter, pulpy brains suit the Devil's purpose best - brains that cannot think scripturally, and will not learn; these are the brains for "heart-religion." And well the Devil knows it; and therefore, it is only such he will allow to talk to the people about religion in the dove-cotes, and money-changing crypts of his establishment. The speculations upon the Devil's proposition that

“the soul shall die no death at all,” evince the softest of cerebral textures. In their nomenclature of “heart-religion” they tell us that “*eternal death*” means “*eternal life in torment*,” and that consequently, the “spiritual” signification of “an undying soul dying eternal death” is *an immortal soul living an eternal death in torments*. This definition we are not to dispute, but to accept it with implicit faith, in view of all the pains and penalties the Devil can inflict upon us for contumacy, and without any mitigation of torment through the intercession of his clergy, part of whose happiness it will be to behold the anguish of the damned in the dungeons of the Devil’s “Holy Office.”

### ***THE PURPOSE OF THE DEVIL’S RELIGION***

Without making formal inquisition into the soundness of the principle the Devil has affirmed, as the foundation corner of his speculations, at least in this place, we would state again with emphasis, that the professed and leading purpose of the Devil’s religion, in whatever shape it is met with, is *the salvation of the immortal soul of sin’s flesh from eternal torture in the subterranean flames of burning brimstone*.

Now of course, when this abstraction of the Devil’s metaphysics is saved from the crackling and roaring brimstone, it must be disposed of elsewhere. The Devil won’t allow it to remain on earth, because in the practice of the

clerical profession he can’t make any profitable use of souls here in the disembodied state. They must be clothed with clay to make money to pay the soul-savers their dues; for it is not to be supposed that with all their “love of precious immortal souls,” that they can work for nothing and find themselves, as the saying is.

Immortal souls when disembodied have no assets; they are emphatically “poor souls,” being utterly destitute of all the Devil and his angels style “property.” Now, as I have said, the Devil has no use for such souls upon earth; he has poor souls enough who can work; but can’t get any to do, without re-admitting to his clerical kingdom here, poor destitute saved souls who can’t work; and who, for anything he knows, would only be a burden upon this finances, which in the end might compel him to declare the real state of his spiritual exchequer, which is unquestionably bankrupt.

There is no doubt, however, but if he would patronize “spiritualism” openly and upon a large scale, he might find employment for saved ghosts, and turn them to a profitable account. He might substitute them for the clay-occupants of his pulpits, who could be made to earn an honest penny at some material handicraft, which hands and fingers of the thinnest air are capable of; and the disembodied immortals would have this advantage over the clay-faces, in that they could reveal to their flocks “the secrets of their prison-house” in very truth, “and no

mistake.” But there is a good deal of natural sagacity, or mother-wit, about the Devil, called in scripture, “the wisdom of the serpent” and “the wisdom from beneath, which is earthly, sensual and demoniac.” He has tried “spiritualism” on the clairvoyant principle in connection with the clerical mystery before. He practiced it upon the whole world for a time successfully. When Paganism in this grosser form was universal he made great use of it; but the thing was discovered to be a cheat, and he had to repudiate it.

The old mediums lost his religious favour, and he rejected them as wizards and witches; and took up with a set of new acquaintances, who presented the old spiritualism in a new form, in the form of what Paul styles, “power, and signs, and lying wonders,” worked up with Judaism, philosophy, and vain deceit, or the mystery of iniquity ministered by the clerical orders of the Christendom apostasy. Though this is nearly bankrupt, the Devil will hold on to it to the last extremity.

***THE MINISTERS OF THE  
DIABOLOS***

The clergy, he thinks, have served him well and faithfully, and therefore, he will not abandon them; for, as the saying is, “the Devil loves his own.” He has long since covenanted to them the loaves and fishes of his estate, if they would fall down and worship him, which they have not been slow to do. They answer his purpose, and he answers

theirs; and having given a complementary religious exit to the dead immortals, in preaching their disembodied souls to glory, the Devil and his companion Satan, theologically forbid their return to earth, except under a very special consideration excepted, such as to search out their old mortalities at the end

*Such a heaven and hell, then, as this, is the “Hobson’s choice,” the Devil offers to the world—roasting in fire, or squeezed into nothing, called immateriality*

of all things, and to witness the “general conflagration” when he has done with the world and sublunary things upon the virtuous principle of necessity—because he can retain his hold upon them no longer.

This special exception excepted, the Devil and Satan have locked and barred the gates of this nether world against all disembodied souls destitute of goods, chattels and effects, and have despatched them off to “kingdoms beyond the skies”, upon the down of angels’ wings; and to that part of the skyeey region too, where there are neither time nor space; so that while they have sent them theologically to glory, they have logically given them a hydrostatic squeeze into absolute nothingness. This, reader, is the Devil’s “immateriality” of his “immortal soul”.

Such a heaven and hell, then, as this, is the “Hobson’s choice,” the Devil offers to the world—roasting in fire, or squeezed into nothing, called

immateriality. This is in effect the object of his religion, embraced by all who give their assent to “the sentiments of all Christendom,” and of all the Devil’s establishments beyond in Turkey, India, China or Japan.

The ostensible salvation purpose of his religion has nothing to do with terrestrial matters, beyond the working of the machinery, to feed and clothe his official friends, while they are translating the souls of their hire out of material fire into immateriality; that is, converting them with the spirit, or electro-magnetism, of the Devil, as a preparation for translation into that inconceivable somewhere, destitute of room and motion—neither time nor space.

Verily, one must become one of the Devil’s own saints, all feeling and no brains, to affirm such a thing so palpably absurd; yet such is “the wisdom” the Devil glorifies; and all the grave and dignified professors and divines of his kingdom declare, is the truth, to the confusion of all materialists and madmen, whose brains have become like two-edged swords and lances under the grindstone operation of “head religion,” which sharpens the wits, and allows the heart to rejoice in no more than is testified in black and white.

Now, reader, as you desire distinctly to comprehend what the Devil offers you in his religion, remember that its

purpose is, *the deliverance of a nonentity from endless torture in localised brimstone flames, by translating it into nowhere.* This is the Devil’s proposition into plain English.

He promises this, which amounts to nothing, if you will get his religion and become a member of one of his names and denominations; though in respect of this membership, he will grant you a dispensation, if you only repent on your death bed; or if you are about to be strung up for murder, if you will only fall down and worship him, in accepting the consolations of his religion ministered to you by one of his reverend officials, call him chaplain, parson, clergyman, or priest, the title matters not, “for a rose by any other name smells as sweet.”

*if you profess to believe that Jesus is Son of God, you may pass. The Devil has no objection to you believing this as heartily as you please; because his friends the Demons of old time believed this and trembled; yet they continued to co-operate with him to his entire satisfaction.*

### ***THE DEVIL’S LIBERALITY***

He does not require you to bother your heads at the immanent risk of your brains, with the old Jewish speculations of Moses and the prophets; nor with regard to this, if you profess to believe that Jesus is Son of God, you may pass. The Devil has no objection to you believing this as heartily as you please; because his friends the Demons of old time believed this and trembled; yet they continued to co-operate with him to his entire satisfaction.

Now, you will perceive from this how liberal the Devil is. He will not allow you to be disturbed with what he terms “speculations and untaught questions”

about immortality; the appearing of Jesus Christ in his kingdom; the gathering of the powers against Jerusalem; the fall and abolition of their governments; the reign of Jesus and the saints in their stead; the covenants with Abraham, David, and Israel; their dedication by the blood of Jesus, by which they become sanctifying to all intelligent believers, who are immersed into him, and so forth. His friend and companion, the Satan, declares that there is distraction and craze in all these things.

Some of them have looked into them, and they testify, that they found the effect of the study upon their brains, which are none of the strongest, perfectly bewildering. They therefore caution their flocks against studying the prophets, as a useless and perilous expenditure of time. "Get religion as we teach, be diligent in business, feed upon our spiritual things, and give us liberally of your temporals, and we'll take care of all the rest. Leave the prophets to madcaps and heretics; who, being reprobate to all experimental religion in the soul, plunge into endless speculations about the future of men and things, which none can tell anything about until they have come to pass." This is the practical evolved from clerical spirituality. "Christendom" has taken them at their word; and "the pious" in general, care no more for what God has spoken by the prophets and apostles than if these had never existed.

### ***A STRONG DELUSION***

Now, reader, with a religion, whose purpose is herein defined, and

ministered by such blind guides as you must know the clergy to be, if you know anything of scripture respectably, is it to be wondered at that men, religious men generally, observe so little, and care so little about "the signs of the times?" What, upon the Devil's principles, has the deliverance of a nonentity from nowhere, and its translation into nowhere, to do with the political intrigues of the Frog Power, and the unclean spirit of the Beast's Mouth, exciting to a general war among the powers? The religion of Christendom, Gentile and Jewish, is "a strong delusion" and "a lie".

The soul, the heaven and the hell, in which they believe, have no existence; and consequently, their religion which they have invented for "it's cure" and "salvation" is utterly worthless. Paul well and truly styles it, "a strong delusion," and "a lie." The religion of God is a different affair altogether—as diverse as light and darkness, flesh and spirit, truth and error; and the time is fast approaching when the reality will be made apparent. There is no affinity between the religion taught in the Bible, and that taught by the clergy and believed by the world. The clerical religion is mere gas, mere pulpit bombast, mere sound and fury, nothing else. It is the wild rant of professional imposture, become "respectable" by time, custom and prescription.

If mankind were sober and intelligent in the scriptures, and of an honest disposition, they would abolish it with indignation and contempt, in twenty-four hours or less. But the spirit testifies, that "all nations are drunk;" and that "there is a covering cast over

all people, and a vail spread over all nations.” How can drunken people with a vail over their minds be expected to speak well of “head religion?” The drunkard is all heart, and generally, most religious when drunk. Then is the time he is most solicitous for his reputation.

A papist working for me yesterday, got drunk before he had finished. I ordered him away; but he pleaded hard not to be dismissed before the day was out, “because it would injure his reputation.” So with all the intoxicated, with the popular delusion, their head being dethroned, their hearts are wild with follies of every type, which condense in clouds of noxious vapours, befogging their intellects.

The clergy are drunk, and the people led by them are drunk also. This we are certain of, if the Bible testifies the truth, and of this we have no doubt. Paul spoke because he believed; “we believe,” says he, “and therefore we speak;” we also believe, and therefore we speak. We cannot say that the clergy and people are sober, for we do not believe they are; we cannot say that the religion of Christendom is the religion of God in whole or in part; for we are certain it is not. Therefore we warn our readers to come out from the Devil’s names and denominations, and believe the gospel of the kingdom and obey it; for assuredly the time is near, when the invitation so to do will be withdrawn from this generation.

(Bro John Thomas, 1859)

### **BRO THOMAS’S AMBITION**

*“My ambition is, that when I am introduced to a personal acquaintance with Moses and the prophets, it may be said ‘here is a man who, in the days of his mortal flesh, advocated the truth ministered in your writings, in the face of universal foolishness and unbelief. He stood his ground alone for years against the bigotry, malice and stupidity of his contemporaries, until at length, he arrested the attention of many of them to a respectful and obedient consideration of the Divine Oracles you inscribed’. How much more to one’s honour will such an introduction be, than to hear it said of one ‘afar off’ beyond the gulph: ‘that man was a great champion of Protestantism, and of immersion as the only form of using water religiously. He was very successful in making proselytes, raising money for his schemes, and obtaining present consolation. But in regard to our kingdom, and your writings revealing the things concerning it, he was a bitter and inveterate scoffer ridiculing the one as an old Jewish idea new vamped; and the other as a mere almanac of Jewish affairs! His proselytes were like their leader, if anything more headstrong against the Gospel than himself; a condition of the carnal mind ever consequent upon the unreasoning and credulous assent of ignorance to the traditions of the natural man. He was ‘a great saint,’ and a persecutor. He might have been with us: but he despised your words; and you see his end! An exile from our kingdom, he is expelled from the presence of the Lord!’ Reader, think on this, and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, who said, ‘If you believe not Moses’ writings, how can ye believe my words?’”*

(From Bro Thomas’ papers, reproduced in *The Christadelphian*, 1872)

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