

The
GOOD
CONFESSION



ROBERT
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The Good Confession

ELABORATED IN

A CONVERSATION

BETWEEN A CHRISTADELPHIAN & A BELIEVING STRANGER
DESIRING TO BE IMMERSUED INTO THE NAME OF CHRIST

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Prefaced by a few remarks in defense of the practice of

EXAMINING CANDIDATES FOR OBEDIENCE

NO one admitting that the validity of immersion depends upon a *belief of the Gospel preached by the apostles* can consistently deny the propriety and necessity of an endeavor on the part of those to whom the application for immersion may be made, to ascertain whether this pre-requisite qualification actually exists.

It is a mistake to draw a parallel between the apostolic era and our own time, as to the *particular method* of arriving at this knowledge. The circumstances are so totally different as to preclude a comparison.

The apostles came on the ground with a fresh, and (among those receiving it) uncontested doctrine concerning Christ. There was a direct issue between them and all who opposed them. The question was one upon which a wide and palpable difference existed, and in reference to which an individual's position could be defined in a word. The apostles proclaimed that *Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ*, on the strength of his having risen — of which they declared themselves the personal witnesses. The enemy contended that Jesus of Nazareth was an impostor, and that his alleged resurrection was a contrivance by which his dead body had been stolen. There was no middle ground in such a controversy.

A man was either a friend or an enemy. If he were a friend, few words were needed to define his position. The simple statement that *he believed Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God*, covered all the ground occupied by the Gospel as amplified in the apostolic definition (Acts 8:12)—

“The things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ.”

The case stands very differently now, when nominal believers associate with their historical belief doctrines subversive of the scheme of truth with which the name of Christ was—without question or the possibility of mistake—identified in apostolic days. It ceases to be sufficient for a man to say he believes in Christ, unless he is able at the same time to define what is the *truth concerning Christ*.

The simple confession of belief in Christ does not bring with it the guarantee it did in apostolic times, that the *doctrines* embodied in Christ are received. It had ceased to be sufficient so early as the close of the apostolic era, for we find John, in his old age, laying it down as a necessity to—

“*Try the spirits*, whether they are of God, because many *false prophets* are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

—and insisting upon it as a duty to receive no one in fellowship who did not bring with him the *truth involved* in the profession of faith in Christ (2 Jn. 10)—a direction which had reference to those professing a *nominal* belief in Christ.

In our day, the necessity for acting on John's principle is imperative. The apostacy has held sway for centuries, and still reigns with undiminished power. And thru its influence there exists around us a state of society in which (while so far as words go there is universal profession of belief in Christ) there is an absolute

& virulent rejection of the *truth* of which Christ is the centerpiece & embodiment.

We must, therefore, dispense with mere forms and phrases, and address ourselves to the work of gauging the actual relations of things. We must find out the truth of a man's profession when he claims fellowship with us, and the genuineness of his faith when he asks to be immersed. And this nowadays cannot be done without crucial test; for words have become so flexible, and mere phrases so current, that a form of words may be used without any conception of the idea which it originally and apostolically represented. The principal pains must, therefore, be taken to ascertain the *substance* of a man's belief, rather than to get him into a set form of expressing it.

But some hold that examination is altogether unscriptural, & that it is a practice savoring of priestly arrogance. Those who think so look at the matter from a wrong point of view. If the position taken up by the examining party implied the assumption that the efficacy of the candidate's immersion depended on the administration or sanction of the examiner, the objection would hold good; but this would never be the attitude of enlightened believers of the truth. They would say to anyone asking to be baptized—

"We are under the law of Christ. That law requires a man seeking baptism to be a believer of the Gospel; and it requires of US not to receive into our fellowship those who do not believe the truth, on the pain of being held responsible for their guilt.

"You ask us to baptize you. As a matter of allegiance to Christ, and defense of our own position, we must ascertain whether you believe the truth. We cannot be parties to your baptism if you do not receive the truth. We should be misleading you, and implicating ourselves."

We cannot impart validity to immersion by compliance, nor can we vitiate it by withholding countenance. But, as a matter of the commonest order and self-protection, we are bound to ascertain whether a man applying for immersion believes the truth of the Gospel or not.

Jesus associates baptism with belief (Mk.16:16); and it is our duty to him to see that this association exists, so far as we are called upon to sanction a profession of his name. Philip is recorded to have observed this precaution in the case of the eunuch (Acts 8:37). Paul at Ephesus re-immersed 12 men, *on putting their faith on a right footing* (Acts 19:3-5). In ALL recorded cases of baptism, BELIEF PRECEDED IT, and it is an outrage on common sense to suppose that the parties immersing took no steps to ascertain the existence of that belief. The dictates of common sense coincide with apostolic example and scriptural induction.

Pentecost (when 3000 were baptized in one day) will be instanced by the objector as a case in which the pre-immersional examination we contend for could not have taken place. It is true there was no examination on that occasion, but it was not necessary. Examination is herein contended for as a *necessity*, not as a *ceremony*. Where special circumstances rendered it superfluous, it would not be enforced by wise men.

The special circumstances in the case of Pentecost were of this character. In the first place, the 3000 were composed of—

"JEW, devout men out of every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5).

—who had come to Jerusalem to worship. They were men grounded in the elements of the Law and the Prophets, in a state of reverent appreciation to the extent of their understanding. They were, therefore, men in whom constitution & culture conspired to make them the ready & fruitful recipients of the good seed.

Secondly, the only question on which their minds had to be changed was the identity of the Messiah. They looked for the Messiah, and in great part believed the truth concerning the Messiah. But they did not know the Messiah had come.

They did not believe that the Nazarene, publicly executed as a criminal some weeks before their arrival in Jerusalem, was he. Hence, the point aimed at was to convince them that Jesus was the Christ (Acts 2:36). This was successfully accom-

plished by the visible outpouring of the Holy Spirit, combined with the testimony of the apostles. And their confession of faith was limited by the circumstances of the moment, to the admission that the man whom the nation had 'crucified & slain' was 'Lord and Christ.'

Thirdly, we read that Peter with '*many words*' taught & exhorted them (Acts 2:40). His words were words of authority, and therefore the implicit reception of what he declared stood in the room of the examination which—in the absence of authority—is forced upon us in our deserted times.

These were so many circumstances which excluded the examination contended for under present conditions. They made such examination unnecessary and, indeed, highly out of place. But what was unnecessary then may be necessary now. None of the circumstances of the Pentecostal triumph attend the proclamation of the truth today. If our case had been the apostolic case, the apostolic practice would not have been the Pentecostal method. They would have advertised, and lectured, and examined. The apostles always showed a sensible regard to exigencies (Acts 6:2—appointment of deacons).

Good sense consists in the adaptation of means to ends. In the hands of good sense, methods are flexible. Pedantry adheres to forms and methods, to the sacrifice of the practical object involved. We cannot, in matters of pure expediency, imitate the apostles *without* the circumstances and gifts of the apostles.

What was the necessity then may be impracticable now, and vice versa. "All things common," for instance, was a necessity among a multitude of disciples in one city at a time of persecution; and it was practical *with inspired men at the head*. But now it is neither necessary nor practicable.

On the other hand, critical examination was not necessary in the days when the issues of truth were simple, and when the voice of authority was present to decide them. But now, with a change on both points, there is of necessity a change of attitude on the part of those contending for the Faith.

The answer given to the case of the Pentecostal believers applies to every case that may be cited. Philip taught the eunuch *minutely* (Acts 8:35), & all the eunuch had to do was to believe what was taught him, and signify his belief in an intelligible fashion, however short. 'Examination' would have been out of place. But there is no Philip now to teach with divine dogmatism, so we have to 'examine.'

The same with Cornelius. Peter was aware he and his friends *knew the truth* (Acts 10:37). All he had to do was to direct them how to do under an arrangement which—for the first time—admitted Gentiles to a covenant relation with God. And all Cornelius and his friends had to do was to obey the directions given. Examination would have been absurd. But there is no Peter now whose word will be taken with unquestioning faith. And so we have to examine, to see if people comprehend the written truth.

In apostolic days, there was divine authority present in every case to direct, and perfect submission to authority on the part of those who were obedient. This constitutes the great difference between that time and our time. And with a difference of circumstance, there is of necessity a difference of method of procedure in the matter, *but the result aimed at and secured is THE SAME*: the induction of men and women into Christ *by the belief and obedience of the truth*.

The mode in our day found effectual for ascertaining whether an applicant for immersion is qualified by a scriptural apprehension of the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ is exemplified by the following—

CONVERSATION

1. So you have come to the conclusion that the doctrines believed by the Christadelphians constitute the truth of the Gospel? I have.

2. What effect does this conviction produce in your mind? A desire to be immersed.

3. Why do you desire to be immersed?

Because Christ has commanded it.

4. But what do you think immersion will do for you? It will unite me to Christ. I believe it is the way appointed for men

to put on the name of Christ, and obtain the remission of their sins.

5. Then you do not think you have any connection with Christ at present? No. I consider I am in Adam in my present position, and therefore under condemnation to return to the dust forever.

6. Do you suppose baptism will unite an ignorant person to Christ? No; we must believe the truth.

7. Then it is not the mere act of immersion in water that does anything for us? Oh no. It is its connection with our belief in the truth.

8. But even where the truth is believed, you don't suppose there is any virtue in the water of baptism? No; I look upon it as an act of obedience which God has appointed as the ceremony by which a believer may be united to Christ. The union I believe to be one effected in the mind of Christ and of God, as the result of their recognition of the obedience rendered.

9. Do you believe union in Christ can take place in our dispensation without this ceremony? No; I believe whatever God appoints is essential.

10. The importance of such a matter you would consider to arise from the fact of God's requiring it, and not on account of any inherent quality in the process or the element employed? Precisely so. Whatever God might appoint I should consider necessary. I believe, as Paul says, He appoints foolish things in the working out of His purposes toward men. Baptism I believe to be the way He has appointed to the believer to pass out of Adam* into Christ; and it is for that reason I desire to be baptized.

11. You use the term 'believer.' What do you mean by it? I mean a person who believes the Gospel.

12. You are aware that the orthodox bodies of religious people profess to preach and believe the Gospel? Yes.

13. Do you think they do so in reality? No; I thought they did, at one time.

14. Then the question for us to consider on the present occasion will be: What is the Gospel that a man must believe to make baptism of any use to him? Certainly; that is what I desire to come to.

15. To assist you in coming to it, allow me to call your attention to the Gospel that men & women believed in apostolic times before baptism. I suppose you would admit that to be the Gospel we ought to believe in our day? Certainly.

16. I refer to what is said of Paul when a

prisoner in Rome: that he "preached the Kingdom of God, & taught those things that concern our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ac. 28:31); &, as showing that faith in these 'things' was pre-immersional, we read (Ac. 8:12) that "WHEN the people of Samaria believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God & the Name of Jesus Christ, THEY WERE BAPTIZED BOTH MEN & WOMEN;"

Now, do you recognize the necessity for believing 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God & the Name of Jesus Christ before immersion? To follow apostolic guidance, which I believe to be the only safe guide in the present day, I am bound to say I do.

17. Then the object of our conversation will be to ascertain whether you, desiring immersion, believe these things? That is what I desire to be put to the test.

18. Do you suppose that a man can believe what he does not know? Certainly not.

19. So the enquiry tonight will necessarily be as to the state of your knowledge? I have come here tonight with that idea.

20. To proceed to this enquiry: you will have observed there are 2 classes of 'things' in the summary of the Gospel given us in the apostolic record? Yes: 'the Kingdom of God' and 'the Name of Jesus Christ.'

21. Now suppose we take these 2 departments of Gospel truth separately? I should think that would be the better plan.

22. You will observe the things concerning the Kingdom of God are put first? Yes, always.

23. What idea is represented to your mind by the phrase 'Kingdom of God'? Suppose any of your former religious associates were to ask you such a question, how would you answer?

Of course, I have been accustomed to look upon the Kingdom of God very differently from what I do now. I used to consider that it meant the reign of God in the heart, & had no reference to the state of affairs existing among mankind. If I were asked by my former religious associates what I understand by it now, I should say that I expected God to set up a Kingdom on earth, at the coming of Christ, that should destroy all other kingdoms, & last for ever.

24. You understand the Kingdom of God to mean a political institution by which all the earth will be divinely governed when it is established? Precisely: that is my idea; that it will be a real literal administration of divine authority in political affairs, &, indeed, in all matters that affect the well-being of man and the glory of God.

25. This idea you have formed from read-

*It will be noted that bro. Roberts uses expressions that later were given a different, mechanical interpretation to support an unsound theory. Bro. Roberts repudiated the incorrect meaning charged against his words, & later was careful to express himself in different words to avoid giving the appearance of supporting the new theory. (See footnote, June 1978 Berean, p. 193).

ing the Scriptures? Yes. If necessary I could refer to portions of the Scripture which plainly teach it.

26. There will be no necessity. The object of this conversation is not to try if you can demonstrate the truth, but to find out if you believe it. For once, assertion without proof will be conclusive. You may well say 'for once,' for I assure you I don't find it so among my friends, who think I have gone wrong in my head for embracing such doctrines.

27. Our next enquiry must turn upon the 'things concerning the Kingdom of God,' which of course can only mean the particulars about it, or the details that God has been pleased to disclose on the subject? Yes, I presume the 'things concerning' can have no other meaning.

28. On that presumption, let me ask to begin with: Has the Kingdom of God any relation to anything God has done in the past? Do I quite understand the question?

29. Is there any connection between what God is going to do, and what He has already done? I understand the Kingdom will be quite a new thing in the earth.

30. You will understand me better, perhaps, if I ask if God has at any time in the past, in any part of the world, interfered in the affairs of men? Do you refer to His dealings with the Jews?

31. I do. Oh yes, I believe He formed them a nation for Himself by calling Abraham & multiplying his posterity, suffering them to be enslaved in Egypt, & afterward redeeming them from the bondage of Pharaoh, & putting them thru a 40-years' discipline in the wilderness, & settling them in the Land of Promise, under laws delivered by the hand of Moses.

32. Were the Israelites obedient to the laws thus given them? For a while they were, but afterwards they were disobedient, observing the manners & customs of the heathen nations.

33. What was the consequence? God gave them over to great calamities of famine and war.

34. Did these calamities destroy them? Not all at once. They were many times delivered on becoming repentant. For 100s of years, God had patience with them, chastening and succoring them according to their condition.

35. What ultimately became of them? After the rejection of Jesus, their nation was entirely broken up by the Romans and they were scattered to every part of the globe.

36. While they occupied the land of Canaan as a nation, under the constitution of things

delivered to them by Moses, how would you describe their Kingdom? The 'Kingdom of Israel,' wasn't it?

37. I mean, would you consider it was a human kingdom? It was a Kingdom composed of human beings, but I should certainly consider it a divine Kingdom, seeing its laws, and origin, and kings, and people, were of God.

38. Then it would be a Kingdom of God on the earth? Certainly. I now see your meaning. It would be that to which Jesus refers when he said to the Pharisees, "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

39. Now my question is: Will the Kingdom of God to be set up at the coming of Christ have any connection with the Kingdom of God that has already existed? Certainly. The Kingdom of God to be set up at the coming of Christ will be the Kingdom of Israel restored. I did not at first perceive your meaning.

40. To try you a little: How can the ancient Kingdom of Israel be restored when Paul says that the First Covenant (by which of course he means the constitution of things in Israel based upon the Covenant made with them at Sinai) was to pass away as a thing that had waxed old, and for which there was no more use? There you place me in a little difficulty. Let me think a moment. The prophets plainly foretell the return of the Jews from their present captivity. It cannot be that Paul would say anything inconsistent with the prophets.

41. No: he quotes the prophets as his authority for the statement I have referred to. It is in Hebrews, is it not?

42. Yes: Heb. 8:7-13; 10:15-17. Oh, I think I see it. The first constitution of things under which the Jews existed as the Kingdom of God has been done away with, & will not be re-established. When they are restored, a New Covenant will be made with them, "not according to the covenant (as God says by Jeremiah) that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt."

43. That suggests another point on which I would ask a question or two. You are aware God made certain Promises to Abraham? Yes, I now see those Promises to be the basis of the Gospel.

44. Can you name the features or points in the Promise? That he should have all the land of Canaan for an everlasting inheritance.

45. Do you think that it is the literal land of Canaan? I do, because Paul, referring to Abraham coming into it, calls it the

'Land of Promise' (Heb.11:9), & says he should 'afterwards receive it for an inheritance.'

46. Did Abraham receive the 'Land of Promise'? No, he was a stranger in it all his days, & Stephen says (Ac.7:5) that "God gave him none inheritance in it, not so much as to set his foot on, yet He promised He would give it to him for a possession."

47. Then what would you say must happen before the Promise can be fulfilled? Abraham must rise from the dead, & inherit the Land of Promise. Then it is, I believe, that he will be seen in the position depicted by Jesus, when he speaks of many coming from the east, west, north, and south, and 'sitting down with Abraham, Isaac & Jacob in the Kingdom of God.'

48. What else was promised to Abraham? It would seem that resurrection & eternal life were in substance included in the Promise of the land.

49. Doubtless; but my present question relates to what is expressed in the Promises? That all nations should be blessed in him and his Seed.

50. You are of course aware that his Seed is conjoined with him in the promise of the Land as well? Yes, I have distinctly noticed that.

51. Whom do you understand by his 'Seed'? Well, Paul leaves me no room for a mere opinion on the subject. He says "Now to Abraham & his Seed were the Promises made. He saith not 'And to seeds' as of many, but as of one: 'and to thy Seed'—WHICH IS CHRIST." I am, therefore, bound to believe that the Promise unites Jesus with Abraham in the assurance of a future possession in the Land of Israel, & the blessing of all nations in them.

52. Have you observed the statement in the Promise, "Thy Seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" (Gen.22:17)? I have.

53. What do you understand by it? That Jesus should take forcible possession of the power of all who are opposed to him.

54. Do you see any parallel in it to the statement in Rev. 11:15: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord & of His Christ"? I do indeed. The statement in Revelation seems a very good amplification of the meaning of the pledge given Abraham that his Seed should possess the gate of his enemies.

55. Can you recall any other feature in the Promise to Abraham? I cannot.

56. Anything as to posterity? Oh yes, that his seed should become more numerous than the sand of the sea. There would seem to be an individual seed & a multitudinous seed mentioned in the Promises.

57. No doubt it is so, just as there is an individual Christ and a multitudinous Christ in the 'One Body' of his people, when perfectly made one with him at the resurrection. But I suppose that the promise that his seed should become numerous refers to the Jews in the past?

58. No doubt it includes them, in their past increase, but it also extends as far as the Promise itself is intended to reach, & we have seen that that goes into the endless future.

I can see that that must be so, so that the Jewish nation is destined to become a very numerous people.

59. When you consider the great multitude of them destined to be raised to inherit the Kingdom under Christ, and the great increase that will take place among the Jews after the flesh when their Kingdom is restored, it follows that the Promise to Abraham of an incomputable progeny will be fulfilled in the absolute sense. This will appear in a still stronger light when we come to consider what will take place beyond the Kingdom.

The immediate question I wished to bring under your notice was this: When Israel was settled in the Land of Promise as a nation, did that settlement have its basis on the Promise made to Abraham? No; I should scarcely say it had, altho God did promise that they should be released from the bondage of the Egyptians. Their settlement in the Land took place under the Law that came into force by Moses, and the stability of it was made dependent upon obedience to that Law.

When they were obedient, they prospered; when they disobeyed, they were driven out. This was the very bargain that was made between them and Moses. It seems to me that if it had taken place under the Promises to Abraham, there would have been no such conditions, & no failure in the blessings promised.

60. You reason rightly in the matter, and I should like to call your attention to the exact coincidence between your reasoning & that of Paul in Gal. 3. He says "If the inheritance be of the Law, then it is no more of promise, but God gave it to Abraham BY PROMISE." You perceive how completely this proves that the Promises to Abraham are to be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God? Of that I have not now the slightest doubt. I have noticed that Paul says the Gospel was preached unto Abraham, & I can see—with the new view I have received of the Gospel—how the Promises made to Abraham are in reality the very Gospel preached by Christ & the apostles, only in a more condensed form.

61. Before going farther, I would call your attention to another Promise—another Covenant, in fact—which has a bearing upon the Kingdom whose establishment we are considering. You have noticed in the New Testament the statement, occurring several times, that Jesus

is to sit on the throne of his father David? I have; & before I heard of the Christadelphians, I never could understand it.

62. Have you noticed any connection between this statement & any covenant that God ever made with anybody? I have noticed that Peter says God swore to David with an oath that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh He would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne (Acts 2:30).

63. Are you aware of any Covenant to that effect having been made with David? Yes, I read of it in the history of David, & several times in the Psalms.

64. What do you understand it to mean? Why, that David was to have a descendant who should be Son of God, & who should occupy David's throne for ever.

65. That descendant you understand to be Jesus Christ? Yes, it is so declared, and I believe it.

66. Then what idea is represented to your mind by the proposition that Jesus is to sit on David's throne? The idea expressed by the words. I can give you no better answer: perhaps I don't understand what you mean.

67. You are aware that orthodox teachers explain it to signify the position Christ now occupies at the right hand of God? Yes, I am aware of that; but I no longer receive that view. I understand Jesus will occupy the throne of David in a literal or political sense.

68. You don't, of course, suppose that the actual seat called a throne upon which David used to sit will be occupied by Jesus? No; I do not understand the word 'throne,' when used in a political sense, to apply to a bench or seat of any kind, but to the *royal position*. I believe, as applied to Jesus, that the phrase 'throne of David' has the same meaning that I find it has in other parts of Scripture, where it said Solomon & others 'sat on the throne of his father David.' They did not use the same seat, but they occupied the same position.

69. Then you expect Jesus to occupy the same position as David occupied? I do.

70. What position was it? King of the Jews.

71. Was he king for himself, or by his own appointing? No; he was king for God's nation, & was appointed to that position by God.

72. You are aware of the present position of the Kingdom of David? Yes, it can scarcely be said to exist. The land, of course, is there, & the nation exists in a state of dispersion, but there is no Kingdom.

73. Then what do you consider must happen before Jesus can sit on the throne of David? I consider that in the first place, Jesus must return from heaven and appear on

earth, and take possession of the power that belongs to him as a king.

Then there must be a restoration of the Jews, & a reorganization of the ancient Kingdom in the land, which we are told will be reclaimed from the desolations of many generations, & made like the garden of the Lord. Indeed I don't know that I can express it in better language than that which says (Amos 9:11)—

"I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, & close up the breaches thereof, & will build it as in days of old."

74. You consider then that the setting up of the Kingdom of God on earth, of which you spoke to commence with, will be the re-setting up of the Kingdom God had before? Precisely, that is my idea: but, of course, as you pointed out, under a new & different order of things.

75. Can there be any Kingdom of God, then, without the restoration of the Jews? It is not for me to say what God can or cannot do, but it is quite certain that the Kingdom He has promised cannot become a fact in the earth without the restoration of the Kingdom again to Israel, for that is the Kingdom promised.

76. Will Jesus be no more than David was? Well, the son, in this case, I believe, is greater than his father, as is shown by the psalm Jesus quoted to the Pharisees in which David in spirit called him Lord.

77. But I mean with regard to the office he will exercise in the Kingdom when established? Well, David was simply a king. I believe Jesus will be a Priest as well as a King: he will be at the head of the religion of the whole world, & officiate between God & the nation of Israel.

78. Will his exercise of the priestly office require the offering of sacrifice? Well, he is a Priest now, & has offered the one great sacrifice in his own death.

79. I will come to that presently: my question relates to the state of things that will exist when the Kingdom of David is restored? With regard to Israel and the nations of the earth, you mean?

80. Yes. I believe the sacrifice of animals will be re-instituted. This is plainly taught by the prophets. It seems a little incongruous with the fact that Christ has accomplished the one great sacrifice, but I have no doubt it will serve a wise end.

81. What will be the object of Christ's rule in Israel? To bless them, I suppose, in everything: to give them good laws, to enlighten them, to teach them the truth, & bring them nearer to God, and make them fit for eternal life.

82. What will be the relation between the

restored Kingdom of Israel and the other nations of the earth? I don't think I quite comprehend your meaning. As I take it, there will be no other power in the earth.

83. That was the point I wished to bring out. Do you suppose the kingdoms of the Gentiles will continue to exist after the Kingdom of Israel is restored? Oh no; I believe they will all be destroyed by Christ at his coming, & that the nations of the whole earth will be under the government of Christ.

84. Where will be the seat of this government? I believe in Jerusalem, from which we're told the law goes forth to all nations.

85. How will the world be governed by the King of the Jews? We are told that his people will reign with him. Therefore, I conclude, he will send out his people as governors in all the earth, to rule them, and judge among them, enlighten them as to his laws & the truth, & generally to bless them with the benefits of the Kingdom of God established in Palestine. In this sense I can see that the Kingdom of God will fill all the earth, while in one sense located in the Land of Promise.

86. Are you aware of any law with reference to Jerusalem that will come into force? Yes, I read that the nations will go yearly to Jerusalem to worship.

87. In what condition of nature do you suppose Christ's people will be, when thus ruling the world with him? I believe they will be in the same condition as he is: immortal.

88. Who are Christ's people? All, in every age, who believe the Promises, & are obedient to the commandments of God.

89. As the majority of them are dead, what must occur before they can be installed in the position you have described? They must be raised from the dead, & glorified.

90. What part do you hope to have in the Kingdom? I hope to be accepted by Christ as one of his people, & to share with all the rest the glory & honor of his position as King & Priest of the whole world.

91. You have rightly said the rulers of the Kingdom of God will be immortal. What will be the condition of Israel and the nations in this respect? I believe they will be mortal, & subject to death as we are now, only that life will be longer.

92. How long will this state of things continue? A thousand years.

93. Then the Kingdom of God is only to last 1000 years? It is testified that the saints will live & reign with Christ 1000 years.

94. Then is it so, that our salvation will only last 1000 years? Oh no: it will last for ever. The Kingdom will have no end: only the state of things you asked me about—the ruling of the mortal nations on earth—

will come to an end after a 1000 years.

95. Then what will be after the 1000 years? There will be no more death & no more curse. All things on earth will be new. Christ's mission to take away the sin of the world & its consequences, will be accomplished.

96. How will this change be brought about? I believe that at the end of the 1000 years there will be a revolt of nations, followed by another resurrection & judgment, when all who are not found worthy of eternal life will be destroyed; & all others, living & dead, will be made immortal.

97. Do you suppose the earth will then be destroyed? No, it would be strange if it were destroyed just as its redemption is complete. It may be changed in some respects to adapt its condition to the new kind of inhabitant that will hereafter occupy it, but that it will ever be destroyed I do not believe. I believe it is appointed the eternal dwelling place of the redeemed of our race.

98. These then are the THINGS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM, which, you will observe, have mainly to do with the second coming of Jesus? So I clearly perceive.

99. We have now to deal with the 2nd part of the apostolic summary of the Gospel: THE THINGS CONCERNING THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST. And these, we shall find, have mainly to do with the first coming of Christ. You have observed the statement that there is NONE OTHER NAME given under heaven among men whereby we might be saved? Yes.

100. This you believe? I do.

101. None other name than what? Jesus.

102. Then Jesus is a name given to us as a means of salvation? Obviously.

103. That is, Jesus as a person, as a reality, not as a mere word to pronounce? Quite so: the name of Jesus clearly stands for Jesus himself.

104. That is shown by the fact that what in one place is worded 'the things concerning the name of Jesus' is in another place worded 'those things that concern our Lord Jesus Christ'. So you will perceive that the things concerning the name of Christ are, in plain terms, those things that concern the Lord Jesus in his manifestation as a means of our salvation? I see that quite clearly.

105. Then the way being thus paved, let me ask: For what purpose did Christ come the first time? He came to take away sin.

106. How did there come to be sin for him to take away? Thru the disobedience of our first parents in the garden of Eden.

107. The 'things of the name,' you see, begin a long way back. So I see.

108. What was the consequence of Adam's disobedience? Death.

109. What do you understand by death? Dissolution of animate being.

110. What was the nature of Adam's being? I believe he was formed from the dust of the ground, & made alive by the breath of life that comes from God.

111. Then you don't consider he was immortal? We don't know what he might have been if he had been obedient, but after disobedience he certainly wasn't immortal, but mortal.

112. Then you no longer believe in the immortality of the soul? Certainly not. I consider that that doctrine is the root & main-spring of nearly all the error that exists.

113. You consider death destroys a man? I do: for the time being, that is, till he is raised from the dead—if he ever is raised.

114. You do not believe he is conscious in any sense in death? I do not.

115. You have discarded the idea that when a man dies he goes to heaven or hell? Quite.

116. You do not believe in the existence of a place of torment? I do not. I believe the hell of the Bible, with one or two exceptions, means the grave.

117. This mortal state, you say, came thru sin. Have you considered Paul's statement that the devil has the power of sin (Hb. 2:14). Yes.

118. And that Jesus was manifested in the flesh & blood of human nature to destroy him thru death? I have.

119. And John's statement that for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil? (1J.3:8) I have considered that also.

120. What do you think is meant by the devil in those places? It means sin in the flesh.

121. Do you believe in the existence of a personal supernatural devil? I do not.

122. You are aware that the word 'devil' is applied in a personal sense in the New Testament? I am. I have considered the matter thoroly, & am persuaded that all its uses come within my first answer, so far as the origin of the word is concerned. I believe in human devils, political devils, disease devils, but I do not believe in supernatural devils. I believe the great devil of all—the source of all other evil—is the principle of disobedience embodied in the present evil world.

I find no other devil in the Bible, & I believe in none else. This devil Jesus came to destroy. He did it, & the human race will reap the fruits by-&-by, even as Jesus himself now reaps them.

123. How do we suffer the consequences of Adam's transgression? Because that consequence was a physical one, inhering in his flesh, & we, as his descendants, necessarily inherit the qualities of his nature.

124. Are you aware of any other reason why death reigns over us? I suppose you refer to our individual sins.

125. I do. You perceive we are all transgressors from the womb? Yes, I believe all have sinned, & are therefore—as Paul would give us to understand—under the curse of death for our own sins, as well as thru connection with Adam.

126. Under these circumstances, how can we escape from death? Christ has opened a way for our deliverance, by death and resurrection.

127. That we may understand the matter, let me ask who was Christ? The Son of God.

128. What do you intend to express by that answer? I derive my idea on the subject from the words of the angel to Mary, in which his birth was announced: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Lk. 1:35).

129. Then you mean to say that Jesus was the Son of God in the sense of owing his vegetal to the operation of the power of God upon his mother Mary? That is what I mean.

130. You do not believe Joseph, Mary's husband, to have been his father? I do not.

131. You are aware of the orthodox view that he was the Son of God from all eternity, pre-existing for ever as 1 of 3 persons in 1 God? Yes, but I have come to see that that is a false view.

132. You do not believe he existed before he was begotten? I do not. I believe his existence as the Son of God dates from his birth of Mary. The passages that appear to teach his pre-existence I believe arise from the fact that the Father spoke thru him in the days of his flesh, & spoke in parable of the mystery of his origin, and the purpose of which Jesus was the Father's manifestation.

133. You no longer believe in the Trinity? I do not.

134. You believe in one God? Yes, the Father, of Whom are all things.

135. And in Jesus, His Son? Yes, in whom He has manifested Himself by the Spirit.

136. And in the Spirit from whose presence we cannot flee? Yes, I believe the Spirit to be everywhere present, & that by this the Father sees, hears, & knows all things; & thru it—when He wills—impels men to speak His mind, as in the case of the prophets & apostles.

137. You do not believe the Spirit to be a separate personal God? Discarding the Trinity, I do not. I believe in only one great

Increate Personality, & that is the Eternal Father. The Spirit is His Power, & His Son is the Mediator whom He hath appointed between Himself & us.

138. Tho believing Jesus to be the Son of God, you do not deny he was a man? By no means. I believe him to have been bone of our bone & flesh of our flesh. I believe he was a partaker of flesh & blood thru Mary, that he was made in all things like to ourselves, & tempted in all points like to his brethren. I could not conceive of his being our Savior unless he had been man.

139. Why? Because he could not have suffered the condemnation due to human nature unless he had been human nature under condemnation.

140. Could we not suffer the condemnation due to ourselves, then? Yes, but in that case, being sinners, we could not have escaped it. We could not have risen again. We must have perished.

141. Then Jesus was no sinner? No, he was holy, harmless, & undefiled, separate from sinners. Tho tempted in all points like to ourselves, he was without sin. He never transgressed. Being the Son of God, he was enabled to continue from the beginning in the path of obedience.

142. And yet he died? Yes, but not for his own transgressions. He died for our sins. God 'laid upon him the iniquity of us all' (Isa. 53:6).

143. Did he continue in death? No, God raised him from the dead, because He 'could not suffer an holy one to see corruption' (Psa. 16:10).

144. Did he continue after his resurrection in the mortal nature he had before his death? No; God exalted him and glorified him, changing him from a natural body to a spiritual body, so that he became 'the Lord the Spirit.'

145. Did he remain on the earth? No, he ascended to heaven, & is now in the presence of God.

146. What is his function there? To act as High Priest and Mediator between God and man.

147. Is he a Mediator for all the world? All the world are at liberty to avail themselves of his mediatorship, but actually he is not a Priest for all the world, but only for his own people, who are styled 'his own house.'

148. Who are his own people? Those who believe the Gospel & have been baptized & who are continuing in the path of obedience to his commandments.

149. What is the object of his intercession?

That the sins of his Household may be forgiven, & their prayers may be accepted.

150. How do we get the benefit of Christ's priestly office? I understand we get it by connection with him.

151. You do not quite understand me. Suppose a believer falls into sin & repents not, & approaches not God in prayer, but abandons himself to heedlessness, do you think such a man will receive the benefits of Christ's priestly office? No.

152. What would be necessary for him to do? To confess his sin in prayer to God, and ask forgiveness thru Christ.

153. Do not all believers come short & offend more or less? Yes, I believe they do.

154. What is their resort for remedy? Prayer & confession thru Christ, whose blood cleanseth from all sin.

155. Is there no other subject of prayer? Yes, we ought to pray always, giving thanks for benefits enjoyed, making request for such things as we require, doing homage to the greatness of God, & praying for the fulfilment of His Promises.

156. Is any worship acceptable that does not come thru Christ? No, God heareth not sinners, & all are sinners that are not covered with Christ's name.

157. Are all who take on the name of Christ by belief of the truth & baptism destined to be saved? No, only those who are faithful & bring forth fruits unto eternal life. Some walk after the flesh & some after the spirit.

158. How will the 2 classes be dealt with? Those who are pronounced acceptable will receive eternal life, & be made to inherit the Kingdom of God; & those who are found unfaithful will be rejected & given over to destruction.

159. When will these decisions be enforced? At the coming of Christ. He will gather together his Household to judge them & to give to every man according to what he hath done, whether good or bad.

160. When you say that, do you mean to include the dead? Certainly: it is testified he will judge both the living & the dead.

161. Then is it your belief that all amenable to his judgment, whether faithful or unfaithful, living or dead, will stand before him for judgment at his coming? That is my belief.

162. Do you suppose anyone will receive eternal life before judgment? I do not, for that would be to supersede the judgment.

163. Then in what state do you suppose will those be who stand before him at that time? In a neutral state, I should say.

164. Mortal or immortal? Mortal, I would say, so far as you can say a person is mortal whose fate is undecided.

165. I mean what order of nature: 'natural'

or spiritual? Natural, certainly, for if they were spiritual, the rejected could not die & the accepted would already be judged.

166. Then you do not accept a common idea that the resurrected will come forth from the grave in an immortal state? I do not.

167. Coming back to the present bearing of the Christian calling, have you realized the position to which a man is introduced in baptism? In what respect?

168. As to his duty in this life? I think I have. I understand that a man who becomes Christ's ceases to be his own. He is the property of Christ, & as such is bound to give himself to his service. He is the brother of Christ (& therefore a Christadelphian), & as such is bound to place his chief affections on his Elder Brother, Lord, & Master. It is his duty to spread a knowledge of the truth by every means in his power, to regulate his life in conformity with his precepts, to obey him in all things, to do good to all, especially those of the Household of Faith.

169. Has Christ left any command for the assembly of his people? Yes, in the appointment of breaking of bread in remem-

brance of him, he has enjoined a periodical assembly of those who love him, that he may be brought to their recollection, & that they may be mutually exercised & strengthened in things pertaining to their most holy Faith.

170. How often should they meet for such a purpose? Following the example of the early Christians, I believe they ought to meet once a week, & that on the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday.

171. Should they on such or any occasion fellowship those who deny the truth in any of its material particulars, or who—professing the truth, walk disobediently in their daily life? No; I believe they should have no fellowship with those who either reject the truth, or behave in opposition to the commandments of Christ.

172. Have you counted the cost, & are you prepared to become a Christadelphian, or brother of Christ? Yes! I thank God for having learned the truth in these dark days, & I shall rejoice to offer myself a living sacrifice on its altar, that I may, peradventure, be accepted in the day of Christ, & enter into his everlasting joy.

AN EPITOME OF THE TRUTH

One God, the Eternal Father, dwelling in heaven, in light of glory inconceivable.

One universal irradiant Spirit, by which the Father fills all and knows all, and when He wills, performs all.

One Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, begotten by the Spirit, and of the Virgin Mary, put to death for sin, raised from the dead for righteousness, and exalted to the heavens as a Mediator between God and man.

Man, a creature of the earth, under sentence of death because of sin, which is his great enemy—the devil.

Deliverance from death by resurrection and bodily glorification, at the coming of Christ, and inheritance of the Kingdom of God, offered to all men on condition—

1. Of believing the glad tidings of Christ's accomplishments at his first appearing, and of his coming manifestation in the earth as the King of Israel, and Ruler of the whole earth at the setting up of the Kingdom of God.
2. Of being immersed in water for a union with his Name, and
3. Of continuing in well-doing to the end of this probationary career.

A SYNOPSIS OF THE FAITH TAUGHT BY THE APOSTLES AS PERVERTED BY THE APOSTACY

A triply-compounded God, without body and parts, defined as "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Jesus Christ, the Son, yet 'very God,' incarnated and killed to appease the wrath of that part of the triune God that remained unincarnate.

The Devil, a fallen but immortal archangel, the enemy of mankind, and great antagonist of the Deity.

Man an Immortal Soul, tabernacling in an animal body.

Face sprinkling in infancy, a means of salvation.

Infants and idiots saved, whether sprinkled or not.

THE FAITH AS PERVERTED BY THE APOSTACY (Continued)

Salvation achieved by good works.

Baptism (immersion) may be practiced, but is not essential to salvation.

The heathen will be saved without believing the Gospel.

The resurrection, a re-uniting of the body and soul, in order that the souls of the wicked may be brought up from hell, and the souls of the righteous from heaven, for judgment.

The Kingdom of God is 'the Church.'

The Kingdom is a state of bliss above the stars.

Sabbath observance required of Gentiles.

The One Faith not necessary to salvation; any faith with morality being saving.

'Conversion of the world' by the preaching of the Gospel.

The Old Testament superseded by the New Testament.

HUMAN DESTINY—

- 1. The translation of righteous immortal souls (leaving the body in the article of death) to kingdoms beyond the bounds of space.*
- 2. The descent of wicked immortal souls at the same crisis of experience, to a hell of fire and brimstone, to be tormented by devils throughout eternity.*

AS BELIEVED BY THE CHRISTADELPHIANS*

One God (personally and substantially inhabiting light unapproachable, yet everywhere present by universal spirit, irradiant from Himself) revealed to Israel and manifested in

Jesus of Nazareth, in the days of his flesh, a mortal man who was

Born of Mary by the Holy Spirit, and thus became the Word made flesh.

He was put to death as a 'sin offering,' and

Exalted to the heavens until 'the restitution of all things,' thus confirming

The Promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and

The Covenant made with David, which have realization in

The Second (personal) Coming of Jesus to the earth;

The Resurrection & Judgment of the whole Household of God (just & unjust);

The bestowal of Immortality on those who are found worthy, and their appointment as rulers of his Kingdom;

The condemnation of the unworthy to the Second Death;

The enthronement in Jerusalem of Jesus Christ as King of the Jews, and Lord of the whole earth; the establishment of

The KINGDOM OF GOD (the Kingdom of Israel) in the Holy Land, involving

The Restoration of the Jews from dispersion;

The Destruction of the Devil and his Works, scripturally understood as sin and the lust of the flesh, in every mode and manifestation, and

The Subjugation of all kingdoms and republics on earth.

The Kingdom, in its mediatorial phase, will last one thousand years, and will destroy 'all enemies,' including death itself.

The human race is essentially mortal, under the law of sin and death.

Jesus, the Christ, through death and resurrection, brought immortality to light.

Salvation is attainable only by the belief of the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ; and

Baptism (immersion) in water, for a union with that Name.

It is necessary to understand the Old Testament in order to have a correct New Testament faith.

*A name derived from the Greek words CHRISTOU ADELPHOI (brethren of Christ)—Col. 1:2; Heb. 2:11 — and adopted by those acknowledging it, to distinguish themselves from the masses of Christendom. It is true of them what the Jewish leaders in Rome said to Paul of the Christians of that time: "Concerning this SECT, we know that everywhere it is spoken against" (Acts 28:22). They repudiate all the creeds of Christendom.