

# LET US STAND With The Pioneers

The Christadelphian community was founded and based upon the expositions of our pioneer brethren, who rediscovered the Truth in its entirety and established the community accordingly. Here are some of the principles they set forth on the subject of the nature and sacrifice of Christ, and which constitute the teachings of the Central Fellowship:

## From Bro. Thomas:

*Eureka*, vol 5, pp. 235-238:

"That which is out of the earth — until subjected to a further operation of Spirit, (is) unfit to enter the kingdom of the Deity. Furthermore the grave is regarded in the Divine law as an unclean place, and defiling. Under Moses' Law, if a man touched a grave or a bone — contracted a defilement — This was styled 'filth of the flesh' (1 Pet. 3:21) and typified the real nature of all bodies coming forth from the grave. — The subject of such a *nature*, however excellent a *character* he may be — **is materially defiled or** unclean. Therefore, nothing born of a woman is clean, **even though begotten — of the spirit** (Job 14:4; 25:4)."

## *Faith In the Last Days*, pp. 79-80:

"It was necessary to perfection that sin should be condemned in the flesh of the High Priest, which could not be effected by condemning sin in the flesh of the animals sacrificed under the Law. The blood required was that of the peccant [*sinning*] nature — **the human**; for it was man, and not the creatures, that had sinned. But even human blood would have been unprofitable if it were the blood of one who was himself an actual transgressor, and a victim that, even if an innocent person, had not come to life again. The blood of the Mosaic sacrifices was weak and unprofitable because it was not human; because it was not *innocent* human blood; and because it was not the blood of one innocent of the great transgression, who came to life again through the power of the Eternal Spirit."

## *The Christadelphian*, 1873, vol. 10, p. 338, on Psa. 51.

Bro. Roberts reported: "(Before the Doctor died he had planned to do a commentary on the Psalms and this was part of it, found after his death).

v5. **In sin** — i.e., he was to be born of the woman, a quality of the accidental constitution of whose nature is sin; the original constitution of human nature was sinless.

v7. **purge me with hyssop** — i.e., literally, 'Thou shalt make a sin offering for me,' as in cleansing from the typical leprosy — sin; by which he had become infected on assuming human nature; for God to purge him with hyssop, **was to purify his nature from the sin-leprosy**, by raising him from the grave to a spiritual body; and thus by the proclamation of his resurrection to notify his cure and acceptance of God to the people.

In *The Christadelphian*, 1873 on pp.364-365 appears a "CATEGORICAL ANSWERS ON THE SUBJECT A YEAR BEFORE HIS DEATH" in the form of numbered statements:

3rd — Was the flesh of Jesus from his birth by Mary *pure, holy, spotless, undefiled*? Answer: 'No'.

4th — Had he not been put to death violently, would he have lived for ever? Answer: '**No**'"

Bro. Roberts then adds: "And now we are asked to believe that in all this the Dr. was mistaken. — **We stand or fall with Thomas in the sense stated.**— Editor."

- So Bro. Roberts' comments on Bro. Thomas' last words!!!

## From Bro. Robert Roberts:

**5th Clause of the Statement of Faith** produced by R.R. (Surely he would not believe contrary to this!):

"a sentence which defiled **and became a physical law in his being** and transmitted to all his posterity."

In *The Blood of Christ* Bro. Roberts explained:

"that he might partake of the very flesh and blood of man (Heb. 2:14). It was **that nature that was to be operated upon and redeemed in him.**"

In *The Law of Moses* (4th ed.), Bro. Roberts states:

"Under apostolic guidance, we see Christ both in the bullock, in the furniture, in the veil, in the high priest, and, in brief, in all these *Mosaic* 'patterns,' which he says were 'a shadow of things to come' (Heb. 8:5; 9:23; 10:1; 3:5). All were both *atonement and atoned for* (Lev. 16:33). There is no counterpart to this if Christ is kept out of his own sacrifice, as some thoughts would do... " (pp. 181, please read this whole section). Further: "The sacrificial blood was applied to everything as well — Aaron and his sons included (Lev. 8:1 4-1 5, 23-24). An atonement had to be made by the shedding and the sprinkling of blood for and upon them all (Lev. 16:33). As Paul remarks, 'almost all things by the law are purged with blood' (Heb. 9:22). Now all these things were declared to be 'patterns of things in the heavens,' which it is admitted on all hands converge upon and

have their substance in Christ. There must, therefore, be a sense in which Christ (the antitypical Aaron, the antitypical altar, the antitypical mercy-seat, the antitypical everything), must not only have been sanctified by the action of the antitypical oil of the Holy Spirit, but purged by the antitypical blood of his own sacrifice." (p. 170; see also page 171 at length).

### From Bro. John Carter.

In *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (p. 81).

"That there was a sense in which he must offer for himself would appear from the fact that Aaron had so to do before he offered for the people; and Jesus is the antitype. If it should be said that this was a necessary preparation in Aaron's case, it might be asked, was there no necessary preparation in Christ's case? There was: and the scriptures give the reason. We get a clue in the words of Peter: 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree' (1 Pet. 2:24)," etc.

(From pp. 103-105): "It is important to observe that these heavenly things stood **in need of cleansing; and undoubtedly Christ is part of the heavenly things. As Robert Roberts says**: 'The phrase "heavenly things' is an expression — that it was necessary that Christ should first of all be purified with better sacrifices than the Mosaic..."

Bro. Carter then quotes repeatedly from pp. 171-173, 182 of *Law of Moses* where Bro. Roberts also adds:

**"Great difficulty is experienced by various thinkers in receiving this view. Needless so, it would seem,"** and concludes: 'Thus speaks Robert Roberts in his last work, written at the end of a life during which the subject had often been discussed in controversy, and expounded in writings free from the stress of controversy.'

**Clearly Bro. Carter saw no problem with the Law of Moses and Robert Roberts as an authority, and here he quotes him word for word!**

In *Prophets after the Exile*, pp. 283-284:

"The 'heavenly things' are a shadow of the Christ himself; and the offerings are types of his sacrifice by which he himself is cleansed. The only defilement that he knew was that which belonged to the nature of man, stricken by sin and death. But he overcame sin, though 'made sin,' and he died unto sin once. It pleased God that a condition of redemption should be the *sacrificial repudiation* of the flesh nature which is under the dominion of death... The mediator of the covenant was himself 'brought from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant'..."

### From Bro. Islip Collier

In *The Christadelphian* 1898, he answered the question:

"Was Christ's sacrifice necessary for the cleansing of his nature, as well as for others?

A. Yes, the holiest place of all could not be entered without a perfect sacrifice, and so Christ was raised to immortality 'by the blood of the everlasting covenant' — what is moral cleansing but God forgiving our sins?

**What is physical cleansing but God changing our nature? Sacrifice is necessary for both because God chose to make it so.** — Jesus had to die for himself before his nature could be cleansed, and he in that way obtained eternal redemption."

### From Bro. C. C. Walker

In *The Christadelphian*, 1931, page 415, he refused fellowship to those who **denied that "sacrifice was necessary for human nature."**

In his lecture *The Atonement*, Bro. Walker expressed:

"From these references it is obvious that we cannot rightly understand and appreciate the 'atonement' unless we rightly understand and appreciate the divine ideas underlying the typical 'atonement' of the Old Testament scriptures." (p. 11).

"The radical idea then of 'atone' in the Old Testament is **to cover**." (p. 12).

"In the divine symbolism the flesh is always regarded as unclean and defiling, and 'filthy rags' (Zech. 3:3)." (p. 14; *The Atonement* from *Logos*)

### From Bro. W. F. Barling

In *Redemption In Christ Jesus* — "Thus where moral sin did not exist, uncleanness necessitated atonement still. But 'without the shedding of blood' such 'remission' or 'purging' was not possible (verse 22). The Apostle tells us what this signified. 'It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these (blood, water, hyssop, etc., verse 19): but the heavenly things with better sacrifices than these' (verse 23). Let the parallelism be noted. [a] The pattern of things in the heavens were purified with animal blood. [b] **The heavenly things themselves had likewise to be purified, but with better sacrifices**. Such purification was not in either case a purification of moral sin, **but of the uncleanness resulting from contact with Sin**. — Without such atonement, his physical entry into God's presence (thanks to which alone 'we have access unto the Father' — Eph. 2:18) would have been impossible." (pp. 22-23).

## Other Writers

Bro. Duncan Heaster

**Bible Basics (New Revised Edition): p. 278, section 9.3; Heading: "Offering For Us and Himself"**

"The A.V. margin of Zech. 9:9 fits in perfectly: 'The King (Jesus) cometh unto thee: he is just and saving himself' (A.V. 'having salvation'). These two possible translations suggest that by **saving himself** our Lord brought salvation **to us**. Through the sacrifice on the cross Jesus **atoned for his own nature** so that he could achieve **our** redemption. It is unwise to think of his death outside the context of its purpose of saving us.

"It must be appreciated that all references to the shedding of blood through animal sacrifices under the law are relevant in some way to Christ's sacrifice. The **altar**, a symbol of Christ, **was atoned for** once a year by blood (Exo. 30:10), showing how Christ sanctified himself by his own offering. Indeed the whole of the tabernacle represented Christ, and had to be cleansed by blood (Heb. 9:23). The physical furniture of the tabernacle **had no sin**, although it **needed purifying** because of its very association with sin. **And so with our Lord**. The High Priest himself had to start his ministry by being sprinkled with blood, **and Christ also needed his own sacrifice to begin** his service for us **in Heaven (Lev. 8:23)**.

"That Jesus **atoned for himself** does not mean that he was personally sinful. Offering a personal sin offering does not always imply that the offerer has sinned (e.g. in Lev. 12 a woman had to do this after childbirth)."

## From the Diary of Bro. H. P. Mansfield

*America, Friday, 8th July, 1963.*

"Brother... had taken the day off in order to have a chat. He tackled me upon the sacrifice of Christ. He did so in a rather belligerent manner at first, trying to put me through my paces. He takes **the stand adopted by the late brother ... that Christ died only for himself in the sense that the sins of his fellows were imputed to him**. As I observed his belligerent manner and his desire to test me out, I thought I would do likewise to him. I told him, as is a fact, that his teaching **would be looked upon as clean-flesh in Australia**. He was shocked at this. I assured him that it was so. I then proceeded to question him as to **why the altar had to be cleansed by blood before it could be used, why the Tabernacle, and holy vessels, had so to be cleansed?** These were holy things, designed only for worship, yet accounted as unclean, and unfit for proper use until ceremoniously cleansed. He found it difficult to answer my questions, and I pointed out that these things had been made up by a sinful people, and that defilement was contagious, therefore, though having committed no actual sin, they were accounted unclean because of their contact and association with that which is unclean. **So with the Lord Jesus**. He had inherited the results of sin, though himself was innocent of sin. Those results are defiling, and from them he had to be cleansed. This could **only be done through death** — by destroying the defilement he had inherited. His resurrection was to a new way of life, free from all defilement; therefore death was absolutely necessary. **He had to die for himself, and by his own redemption, he redeemed those 'in him.'** **Only those 'in him' can be redeemed, and as we are 'in him' surely the defilement of the multitudinous Christ is very real.**"

## Bro. Roberts Explains the Atonement

The following (appeared in The Christadelphian, September, 1896, p. 339) was drawn up by Bro. Roberts while in Australia to confute the error he found being taught there that: Christ did not offer for himself; did not require a cleansing sacrifice; was not "made sin" in being born of a human mother under the present defiled, sin-nature constitution of the race; did not possess (and struggle to perfect a glorious success against) the "law of sin in the members" that afflicts all of Adam's race; and did not **actually** (but only 'ritually') condemn and destroy the sin-principle **IN** his own flesh, to the honor and justification of God by the crucifixion of the Sin-Body.

It was the same old error that has troubled (and tested the faithfulness of) the Body from the beginning. In introducing this article Bro. Roberts describes the above teachings as "The Roman Catholic view in a modified form (which) revolts at the very idea of Jesus having been in any way related to sin. This is a zealous antipathy not inspired by knowledge."

### 1. **That death entered the world of mankind by Adam's disobedience.**

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin' (Rom. 5:12), "In (by or through) Adam, all die' (1 Cor. 15:22). 'Through the offence of one, many are dead" (Rom. 5:15).

### 2. **That death came by decree, extraneous to the nature bestowed upon Adam in Eden, and was not inherent in him before sentence.**

"God made man in His own Image ... a living soul (a body of life) ... very good." "*Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife ... unto dust shall thou return*" (Gen. 3:17-19).

### 3. **Since that time, death has been a bodily law.**

'The body is dead because of sin' (Rom. 8:10). 'The law of SIN *in my members* ... the body of this death' (Rom. 7:23-24). "This mortal ... we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened' (1 Cor. 15:23; 2Cor. 5:4). "Having *the sentence of death in ourselves*, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God Who raiseth the dead" (2Cor. 1:9).

### 4. **The human body is therefore a BODY OF DEATH requiring redemption.**

"Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the *redemption of our body*" (Rom. 8:23). "He shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body' (Phil. 3:21). "Who shall deliver me from the BODY OF THIS DEATH?" (Rom. 7:24). "This mortal (body) must put on immortality" (1

Cor. 15:53).

5. **That the flesh resulting from the condemnation of human nature to death because of sin, has no good in itself, but requires to be illuminated from the outside.**  
"In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth NO GOOD THING" (Rom. 7:18). "SIN dwelleth in me" (Rom. 7:20). "The LAW OF SIN which is in my members" (Rom. 7:23). "Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights" (Ja. 1:17). "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts" (Mat. 15:19). "He that soweth to the flesh shall OF THE FLESH reap corruption" (Gal. 6:8). "Put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22).
6. **That God's method for the return of sinful man to favor required and appointed the putting to death of man's condemned and evil nature IN a representative man of spotless character, whom he should provide, to declare and uphold the righteousness of God, as the first condition of restoration, that He might be just while justifying the unjust who should believably approach through him, in humility, confession and reformation.**  
"God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14). "Who his own self bare our sins IN his own body to the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). "Our old man is crucified with him, that the BODY OF SIN might be destroyed" (Rom. 6:6). "He was tempted in ALL points like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). "Whom God that set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare His righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:25-26). "Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16:33).
7. **That the death of Christ was by God's Own appointment, and not by human accident, though brought about by human instrumentality.**  
"He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered him up for us all" (Rom. 8:32). "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). "Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done" (Acts 4:27). "No man taketh it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn. 10:18).
8. **That the death of Christ was not a mere martyrdom, but an element in the process of reconciliation.**  
"You that were sometime alienated in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death" (Col. 1:21). "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son" (Rom. 5:10). "He was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our iniquity: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5). "I lay down my life for my sheep" (Jn. 10:15). "Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the Veil, that is to say, his flesh, let us draw near" (Heb. 10:20).
9. **That the shedding of his blood was essential for our salvation.**  
"Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:9). "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14). "Without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). "This is the New Covenant in my blood, shed for the remission of sins" (Mat. 26:28). "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29). "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:5). "Having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:14).
10. **That Christ was HIMSELF SAVED in the Redemption he wrought out for us.**  
"In the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. And being MADE perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:7-9). "Joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). "BY HIS OWN BLOOD he entered once into the Holy Place, having OBTAINED eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:12). "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant" (Heb. 13:20).
11. **That as the anti-typical High Priest, it was necessary that he should OFFER FOR HIMSELF, as well as for those whom he represented.**  
"And by reason hereof, he ought, as for the people, so also for himself to offer for sins, And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a High Priest, but He that said unto him ..." (Heb. 5:5). "Wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer" (Heb. 8:3). "Through the Eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot unto God" (Heb. 9:14). "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's. For THIS he did once, when he offered up himself" (Heb. 7:27). "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens (that is, the symbols employed under the Law), should be purified with these (Mosaic

sacrifices), but the *heavenly things themselves* (that is, CHRIST, who is the *substance* prefigured in the Law), with *better sacrifices* than these (that is, the sacrifice of Christ)' (Heb. 9:23).

Brother H. P. Mansfield produced this list of *Principles of the Atonement* on a Bible insert. Many still have it in their Bibles, and believe it. He also included the following item:

**12. "As the anti-typical Altar, it was necessary for him to 'be cleansed' and 'sanctified' in order to present his offerings before God."**

"Thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it... it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy" (Exo. 29:36-37). "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle" (Heb. 13:10). 'For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the Truth' (John 17:19).

**"WE believe that this is essential scriptural Truth. But whether any accept this teaching or not, NO ONE can honestly deny one fact: that THIS is what the Christadelphian Body has believed and taught in the past, and has taken a firm fellowship stand on. Others may today sincerely believe differently from these original Christadelphian doctrines. But if they do, in honesty, and for clarity they should not claim the Christadelphian name, but should adopt a new name and sail openly under their own flag. Some accept some parts of these truths, and some accept other parts. But whoever just has a 'ritual,' shadowy picture, and does not have the basic comprehension that Christ ACTUALLY and IN REALITY 'worked out his OWN salvation' by his life-and-death, self-purifying, self-perfecting sacrifice, and AFTERWARDS incorporates his brethren into his OWN personal victory and salvation — then they do not have the true, saving Christ at all, but a mere orthodox substitutionary 'christ'." — A comment by a brother in America.**

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## **An Appeal**

**These matters are crucial to honouring Yahweh's righteousness, and our personal salvation. Let us not neglect so great a salvation, nor lead others astray, by a removal of those elements of salvation which have been clearly set forth in type and antitype by the Inspiration of the Deity.**

This document is submitted as an earnest appeal to brethren and sisters, to maintain the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, it is produced and distributed by a group of concerned brethren. Any comments or questions can be directed to:

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