

# Letters of brother Lemuel Edwards

1870 – Greeting From America.....	2
February 1876.....	4
December 1876 – Intelligence .....	4
January 1879 – Intelligence .....	8
March 1879 – Death of Sister Edwards .....	11
January 1880 – Suggested Article .....	15
February 1881 – “Against Great Odds” .....	16
April 1885 – On the Partial Inspirationist Heresy .....	17
1886 – Retired from the Lanesville “Church” .....	20
August 1886 – Ecclesial Problems.....	21
September 1886 – Reiteration of the Doctrines Endorsed.....	23
December 1886 – “Let him alone...” .....	25
1887 – A True Christadelphian Ecclesia .....	25
February 1888 – The Conflict at Lanesville.....	29
July 1888 – An Amiable but Vain Idea .....	31
December 1888, A Christadelphian Soliloquy.....	31
1891 – A New Version of the Question: “Who Are The Christadelphians” .....	34
June 1891 – Comments on “Who are the Christadelphians” .....	44
April 1895 – Settled Down to the Conviction that We Shall Have Troubles to the End... 46	
June 1899 – The Reflections of an Aged Brother .....	46
1899 – A Word to Fellow-Helpers .....	51
September 1901 – Finishing the Course – An Aged Brother’s Letter .....	52
1904 – Hold Fast The Name .....	54
October 1907 – The Death of Dr. Lemuel Edwards.....	57
My Last Words, though Dead.....	57
My Prayer.....	58
1913 – The Birthday of the Resurrection .....	59

Leaving brethren Bowles and Anderson in King William at our excellent brother’s, Dr. Lemuel Edwards, who is a pillar in those parts, and though “a man,” a support of the truth of acknowledged usefulness to readers of the Scriptures, I returned to Richmond. (John Thomas, *The Christadelphian*, 1870, page 301)

## 1870 – Greeting From America

*Lanesville, King William Co., Va., U.S.*

*November 18th, 1870.*

DEAR BROTHER ROBERTS.—The brethren of Christ at “Little Zion,” King William County, Va., send their Christian greeting, with the assurance that, although the fact is probably unknown to you, they highly appreciate your labours in the great work of preparing a people for the coming of the Holy and Just One, who will most assuredly fill the earth with his glory as the waters cover the sea.

The *Twelve Lectures* have all been read publicly in our little ecclesia, to the edification and comfort of the brethren, and the enlightenment, we trust, of every attentive listener. The *Christadelphian* is also frequently read — especially your “Sunday Mornings,” which we never fail to read as they appear. They contain many rich thoughts; instruction, admonitory, encouraging and edifying. So you will perceive your voice is heard, and the line gone out, in many places a great distance from Birmingham. The thought should not be without its effect to encourage and stimulate you to continued efforts, and to “strike, that every nerve and sinew may tell on ages—tell for God.” No object so commendable—no cause so glorious—no labour so ennobling; and may the Lord grant you life, health, strength, and abundance of grace, so to run that you may win the incorruptible crown!

Our beloved and venerable bro. Thomas, has been for nearly forty years, with an indomitable energy and unflagging devotion. engaged in the same glorious work; and friend nor foe can obliterate the fact, that he has accomplished a vast amount of good. He has not been turned aside from the Master’s service, by the ambitions, honours, emoluments and shining vanities of the world: these subsiding into merited oblivion as the electrical beams of the Sun of Righteousness would spring upon his vision as he steadily fixed it, through the prophetic speculum, upon the dazzling glories of the age to come. He is no patron of the Pharisaical religion of the age, nor of the canting piety which abounds most where ignorance and superstition reign. Enlightened by the truth, he is a wonderful chemist in the metals of human character, and quickly detects the base and the pure; and no mere personal friendship, based on the feelings of the flesh, can tempt him to compound or compromise the stern principles of eternal truth. For a forty years’ labour of his life, in a persistent, firm unflinching advocacy of “The things of the Spirit,” as taught by Moses and the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles, (I know not for what else,) he has brought upon himself the contempt of the world, the enmity of “brethren,” and the odium which attaches itself to the faithful witness for the testimony of God, in every age and every clime, where vice and crime have gained the ascendancy amongst men. For the greater part of this long conflict, he has had few Aarons and Hurs in America, to hold up their hands, that the Hope of Israel might triumph over the traditions of

apostate Amalek, and he would have proved a meeker and more patient man than Moses, had he not sometimes transcended the limits of the divine command, as Moses did at Horeb. The one was prophet and leader in Israel, guided directly by the divine Spirit, the responsibility of whose position required his impeachment at Pisgah, as an example to Israel, and all others, who carelessly regard the divine command. The other is an expounder of the prophetic testimonies and a teacher of the things of the Spirit, desiring to say “none other things than Moses and the prophets did say should come,” and whose responsibilities are measured by his gifts and position; and he will, doubtless, bear in mind the things “written aforetime for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” If God, in His providence, should transfer his base of operations from America to England, he will leave behind him the memory of his usefulness in many a grateful heart, and carry with him the earnest prayer that a door of utterance may be opened for him in England, that he may continue to speak forth the manifold wisdom of God, and so finish his course that he may obtain the crown of righteousness laid up for him, as one who looks for the appearing of our blessed Lord!

We are looking with intense interest at the events now transpiring in Europe, as indicative of the near coming of our long-absent Lord. The “Roman Question” has well nigh found its solution in the events since 1866, and we see but little remaining but the complete destruction of the Man of Sin by the “brightness of the Lord’s coming.” The “Eastern Question” seems rapidly approaching its crisis. England and the lesser powers of Europe, as though the divine hand were laid upon them, seem perfectly paralysed, and, ostrich-like, are sticking their noses into the sands of neutrality, as the only place of safety, while “Gomer and his bands” are being hitched in the traces preparatory to the invasion of the Holy Land. But they will all “wake up” when the time arrives. The Frog Power has inaugurated the work, and its progress is rapid. “Proclaim ye this among the nations, prepare war, make up the mighty men; let all the men of war draw near. Beat your ploughshares into swords, your pruning-hooks into spears. Assemble yourselves, and come all ye nations, and gather yourselves *round about!* Thither; cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord! Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehosaphat, for *there* will I sit to judge all the nations *round about.* Put ye in the sickle, the harvest is ripe; get you down, for the press is full, for the *wickedness is great.* Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision, for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and earth—ecclesiastical and political—shall shake, but the Lord shall be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain.” &c.—(Joel 3:9–17.) Soon, we trust, shall this and like prophecies of Daniel, John, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, &c., find their full accomplishment. Can you tell us how the clergy of our day, who advocate sky-kingdoms and “war in heaven” above the skies understand these prophecies? I finished my letter quite abruptly for want of space. We are desirous

of giving you all the aid and encouragement possible in the glorious work in which you are engaged, but our prostration from the late war, notwithstanding our practical neutrality, has rendered us unable to do much. Brother Thomas thinks we are recovering, but many of us having lost two-thirds of our possessions, will never recover, especially under our present political *regime*. But these are small matters with us in view of two all-important considerations: the prospect of the near advent of Christ and the certainty of the shortness of life. Either brings us very shortly to the resurrection and the judgment. Death is, to an individual, a complete obliteration of time, and the soul-stirring wonders of the future are, necessarily close at hand. Let the bride make herself ready. Your brother in the faith and hope of Israel. LEMUEL EDWARDS, M.D. (*The Christadelphian*,. 1871, pages 12-14)

---

## February 1876

LANESVILLE (Va.)—Brother L. Edwards writes as follows: “I could wish I had something to write for the *Christadelphian* which would be encouraging to the brotherhood, but the great odds we have against us in the conflict for *the truth* in its *entirety and purity*, and the individual duties of every day life, in what seems unavoidable circumstances, taxes to the fullest extent the feeble talents I possess for good, and limits my labours to the narrow circle of a home vicinity.

We have in contemplation just now, the building of a Christadelphian synagogue in our little village, Lanesville, trusting it may prove, under the blessing of God, a better nucleus for the efficient exhibition of *His truth* in its doctrinal and practical purity, than any location we could select. I am working now in the hope of its accomplishment awhile, and in the meantime, should our Lord come, I know he will not despise the motive or the work.” (*The Christadelphian*, 1876, page 96).

---

## December 1876 – Intelligence

LANESVILLE (King Wm. Co., Va.)—Bro. Lemuel Edwards writes: “In the Intelligence column of the *Christadelphian* for September. Bro. J. S. Neale writes from our place giving an account of the opening of our new house of worship, and some of the circumstances connected therewith, upon which you remark as follows: ‘The church, as defined by Paul, is the pillar and ground of the truth—the thing that holds up—the thing that gives foundation to the truth. No community is entitled to this character unless it performs this function to the truth in its entirety. Dr. Edwards has a good character in this connection. It may be that the community described above shares it in fact, if not in reputation. We hope the

best, but if the doctrine of the judgment is compromised, there is a flaw in the title deed. What is implied in this criticism calls for a word of explanation. But first allow me to say that I object to our brother Neale's allusion to me as 'our own shepherd, Samuel Edwards' (Lemuel it should be). Brother Neale is young and understands perfectly what he is saying, which may excuse him, but others may not understand him, and as in our day it has a Babylonish savour, it is distasteful to me, as I have no relish for anything that has the slightest taste or odour of Babylon, and for this, and other reasons, I would prefer that brother Neale should use the language of David, Ps. 23:1: 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;' and of Eze. 34:23: 'I will set up one shepherd over them;' and of Jesus, John 10:16: 'There shall be one fold, and one shepherd.' To be one of the sheep fills up the whole measure of my ambition, and hence I respectfully protest.

"But to your remarks: 1st, The 'community' as a body, which makes up the ecclesia of which I am a member, is Christadelphian in all that is signified by the word. We accept the Christadelphian faith, defining it as the 'one' Abrahamic and apostolic faith set forth in the Old and New Testament, and so copiously elucidated in *Elpis Israel*, *Eureka*, *Twelve Lectures*, and other works by the same authors; and we would have it known from Canada to Texas, from Birmingham to Hong Kong, that this faith in its entirety is the only faith that will stand the test of the judgment, or avail us in the trying hour; and to this faith there are no 'ifs and ands,' pros and cons,' 'yeas and nays;' but 'As God is true, our word to you is not yea and nay, but yea and amen to the glory of God.'—(2 Cor. 1:18–20.)

"Of the sixty or more members which form our ecclesia, I know of none which stand in opposition to the scriptural doctrine of the judgment; yet there may be reasons which make us justly open to the suspicion implied in your remarks. There are some among us who can see no harm in casting their votes for Cæsar in a quiet way, to promote, as they say, the best interest of government and the peace of the land, seeming to be ignorant of the fact that in so doing they not only identify themselves with the 'sovereign people' who make up the kingdom of Satan, but legally and morally commit themselves to the use of the sword by which that kingdom is upheld, and constitute themselves citizens of that kingdom, in contravention of that profession which requires them to 'resist not evil, and it smitten on one cheek to turn the other,' and which transfers their citizenship to heaven and centres it in the King of Israel, who is to come again to re-establish the commonwealth of Israel (of which they are 'fellow-citizens with the saints') and fulfil to them the covenants of promise which is the foundation of their hope. He is coming to shiver all the kingdoms of Satan which 'Gentiles in the flesh' are labouring so industriously to uphold and perpetuate, and which stand in irreconcilable antagonism to the kingdom of our God and His Christ. Ye are not of the world, brethren, even as your Lord is not of the world, neither is your kingdom of this world as his kingdom is not of this world. Then 'come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and I will receive you.' These are Christadelphian doctrines which it is not safe to ignore, lest in this respect there may be a 'flaw in the title deed.'

“Now there are among us a few brethren, good and true in other respects, who say they cannot see as I see, and calmly and quietly cast their votes for Cæsar as a matter of ‘conscientious duty’ to elect the best rulers. Now, brother R., please tell me are we compromising the truth in retaining in fellowship these conscientious brethren, in the hope that their growth in grace and in the knowledge of the truth may bring them in the ways of the Lord more perfectly? I am sure that you and I will agree that we cannot see what possible good they can do by this affiliation with Cæsar, and if we warn them faithfully, as we do, that there is danger in the position, can we do more? But—

2.—I apprehend there is another ground on which you base your suspicion of defectiveness on the part of our ecclesia, found in the names of the speakers who co-operate with us in the opening of our synagogue. Brother Anderson was an old and tried friend of brother Thomas, and he has been labouring with us for years. We know his worth in many respects, and are unwilling to give him up. He is now over three score and ten, and has devoted much of his life to the advocacy of the truth. On the question of the judgment in its details, his ideas, I think, are quite indefinite. He rather avoids the discussion of it in private, and never discusses it in his public addresses. He knows our uncompromising disposition and jealousy for the truth, and as he never preaches anything, at least with us, which the most thorough Christadelphian cannot endorse, I do not think we commit an error in having his co-operation. If, however, he were to distinctly avow himself in opposition to the truth as taught by the Christadelphians, he would of course force us to a change of Christian relationship.

“Brother Weeks, of Baltimore, has been with us frequently on former occasions. He always professed himself a learner, willing to accept the truth, whenever he could see it clearly—a firm believer and an able advocate of the leading elements of the kingdom—has arrived at no definite conclusion as to the details of the judgment, and never discusses it in his public addresses.—He only gave one lecture on the occasion referred to, which was very acceptable to the ecclesia, as well as the outside hearers.

“Brother Wiley Jones, of Norfolk, if I understand him, is a Christadelphian, and an advocate of the truth in its entirety, and gave lectures nearly every night, and sometimes day, during the week, which was very acceptable. Should this meet his eye, and I do not understand him, he will please correct me.

“Brother Luxford, of Richmond, who was also with us, is a true Christadelphian, and needs no remark.

“At the close of the meeting seven persons confessed their faith and put on the sin-covering name in the ordinance of baptism. From that time to the present we have continued the meetings, my son, Dr. J. T. Edwards, and myself lecturing every Friday night, Sunday morning and Sunday night. We made our addresses as plain and forcible as possible, which seems to reach the understandings of the

people, and excite considerable interest. Eighteen more, at intervals, asked the privilege of baptism into the glorious and holy name, and we aided them as before. All calmly and quietly done without the least animal excitement, which leads us to hope that the power of truth and that alone was the impelling cause. 'The Lord gives the increase, and we bless His Holy Name.'

"With all the facts before you please tell us whether we are justly chargeable with compromising the judgment.

"Subsequent events may require different action, but one thing is certain, I shall never knowingly compromise the doctrine of the judgment, or any other vital doctrine of the gospel, and this I believe to be the unanimous sentiment of the ecclesia at Lanesville."

[The tone of brother Edwards' letter will commend itself to every thoroughgoing friend of Christ—and none others can hope to be "chosen" though they may have been "called." The grounds of the misgiving hinted at in the September *Christadelphian* are manifest in the letter itself. They are such, however, as appear to be diminishing with the lapse of time, by growth in the right direction. It is not a question of the "details" of the judgment, but of the fact of judgment itself. "Details" we must wait to see: but the fact that Jesus will dispense life or death to his professing friends assembled in his presence at his coming is an element of the apostolic testimony for Christ in the gospel, and, therefore, not to be compromised in a scriptural basis of fellowship with men. Objection to it, whether passive or active, is a disqualification for union on that basis—and of what value is any other basis? It is not a question of whether the objection is "conscientious." The introduction of this element only serves to embarrass the perception of and submission to the calls of duty. "Conscience" may be a dark affair, as in the case of Paul who thought he was doing God service when he persecuted the Church of God. Catholics and Protestants are many of them "conscientious" enough in their opposition to the truth. A "conscientious" objection is a more respectable sort of objection than a malicious objection, and commands more patience and consideration: but it is none the less an objection incompatible with that unity which constitutes the primary basis of fellowship in the gospel. This applies with equal force to the question of duty after the truth has been accepted. A man believing the truth, but walking contrary to the precepts of Christ in any particular is equally disqualified for fellowship with the man who denies the truth in some vital particular; for Paul commands withdrawal from such. For a man to take part in politics, is to identify himself with the present world to which Christ declared he did not belong, and to which he said his friends do not belong, and which both of them in union, will shortly proceed to destroy, root and branches. For faithful brethren, therefore, to fellowship those who do this, is to partake in their evil deeds. First purity, then peace, is the apostolic rule. Any other kind of peace is unwholesome in its effects, both on offenders and those who countenance their offence. But hasty action is never the part of wise men. Yet the ultimate action of wise men is

always in accordance with the claims of truth and duty, even it pain and sacrifice are the result.—Ed. (*The Christadelphian*, 1876, pages 575-576)

---

## January 1879 – Intelligence

LANESVILLE (Va.)—Brother L. Edwards writes: “We have had during the past year eight additions to our ecclesia, viz., three Baptists, two Campbellites, and three non-professors. The last one was on the 17th November—the WIFE of brother F. Robins, formerly Campbellite, who, comprehending clearly the nature of the change, turned away from another gospel and another Jesus which Mr. Campbell preached, and confessed the Jesus, and obeyed from the heart, the form of doctrine which Paul preached, and by baptism, as did all the others mentioned, intelligently put on the only sin-covering name. We have on several occasions visited Little Plymouth, King and Queen Co., a distance of 16 miles, where are two brethren—C. Guthrie and Robert Moore—who were baptised a year or two ago and united with our ecclesia. Bro. Moore walked twelve miles in the month of February to get our aid in burying the old man with his deeds, and the writer being sick in bed, he had to repeat the walk before the work was done. He came to his conclusions principally by reading *Elpis Israel*, and his own scriptural investigations. These two brethren are poor, but, I believe, rich in faith. They take together, I think, a copy if the *Christadelphian* now mailed to C. C. Guthrie. They form a nucleus, and are working hard to organise an ecclesia in their neighbourhood. The opposition is very strong, but we trust they have some prospect of enlisting a few recruits. Our lectures there are well attended, though we are subjected to the inconvenience of a small school house, not being allowed to occupy any of the churches in the vicinity. How often is it that men are blind to their own interest! and this species of blindness, if they did but know it, is more fatal and terrible in its consequences than any known to human thoughts. We number now about 60 members in our ecclesia.” (*The Christadelphian*, 1879, page 47)

Bro. LEMUEL EDWARDS, M. D. Lanesville, Va., U.S.A.—“I would affectionately urge the brethren in Christ in the United States and everywhere else, to subscribe for the *Christadelphian* for their own good. If they would take it and read every article in it attentively and regularly, I am satisfied they would be greatly strengthened, and aided in the terrible conflict which every valiant soldier of the cross must necessarily have with the deadly foe before his final triumph over the world, the flesh and the devil. . . .



“I am at a loss to know how an annual investment of three dollars could be more profitably made. Not, I am sure, in the running to and fro in quest of the pleasures of this life; not in the ornamental frippery and finery of fashionable dress; not in the doubtful luxuries of eating and drinking and chewing; not even in those extra comforts of home so eagerly sought for and so energetically wrought for by many brethren, as well as the world at large; for all these things inevitably end in dust, with nothing beyond but the terrible atter-clap of judgment, which will surely recall that premonitory fiat which reads: ‘He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption.’ No, the only wise and safe investment of the talents, one or ten—‘our Lord’s money’—committed to our trust, is that which is made in the interest of the Spirit; and if we would reap bountifully of the rich harvests of life and immortality, of fulness of joy and pleasures evermore, we should see to it that we do not sow sparingly. We have in our ecclesia fair numbers, not all of whom I could get to subscribe for the *Christadelphian*. Selections are frequently read in our meetings, and I have yet to find one who shews any material opposition to the doctrine of the truth so faithfully set forth in its pages. I conclude, therefore, that this is an endorsement by the whole ecclesia, and I am only surprised that it is not shown in a more practical way. Our brethren say they are poor in this world’s goods: this I know to be the fact with nearly, if not all, of them. This may be bad, but it is much worse to be poor in faith. If rich in faith, God ‘hath chosen them heirs of the kingdom. It poor in both particulars, they are poor indeed and need commiseration. ‘I counsel thee,’ saith the Spirit, ‘to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve that thou mayest see.’ The Spirit sells these enduring riches cheap, very cheap. The smallest means will often buy a large supply, but he makes it incumbent on us to buy; but we, in common with the world, place no value on that which is valuable beyond human calculation. If it be a great sacrifice to invest a little in the interests of the truth, so much the better. The greater the effort the greater the profit. Speaking individually, the teachings of the *Christadelphian* are in perfect harmony with my own convictions, with perhaps one or two questionable exceptions. 1st.—The degree of perfection in knowledge necessary to fellowship. 2nd.—The rigid discipline of the ecclesia. These are true and proper in the general, but need modification in many cases of the weak and ignorant, who are out of the way, and on whom our merciful Lord is always ready to have compassion.—(Heb. 5:2.) Many understand and wish to obey the gospel of the kingdom who cannot give an intelligent and correct response to the questions relating to the nature of the Christ, the resurrection and judgment, &c. They are not opposers, but willing to learn, being babes and not full-grown men. ‘He that is not against us is on our part.’ Allow me to give an example: brother Thomas preached the gospel of the kingdom some twelve years before he perceived he had not obeyed it; and though

alluding to the doctrine of the resurrection and judgment he did not fully understand it when he wrote the first vol. of *Eureka*—not, perhaps, until he wrote *Anastasis*. If then, brother T.'s intellect and studious habit was so slow in reaching his conclusions, what may we expect of the weak and the ignorant, who have grown up from infancy in the labyrinths of error and have so little power to extricate themselves? Surely we should be satisfied with the acceptance of first principles, and a willingness to grow in grace and knowledge. 2.—An example of rigid discipline may be given from 'Fellow-Watcher's' excellent article on 'Marriage with the Alien,' which is received without remark by the Editor, and, therefore, supposed to be endorsed, namely: 'We deem marriage with the alien to be an offence against Christ: and that any brother or sister so offending or denying the truth in relation thereto is, in our judgment, unworthy of fellowship.' Though duly qualified by law to perform the ceremony of marriage, I have for years practically published my convictions by persistently refusing to unite the believer with the unbeliever. Still, we have had in our ecclesia, since organised, twelve instances of marriage with the alien—eleven brethren and one sister. By constant contact with the truth, yet strong resistance on the part of some, eight of the former have lovingly accepted the truth, and have become active and efficient members of the body, while the others remain, with some prospect of recovery of at least three. These facts are, by the brethren, a plea in abatement, if not in justification, of the practice, which is, in my judgment, in opposition to the teaching of the Scriptures. It is very true that we are not authorised to do evil that good may come; but in view of the many difficulties, and the gradual steps necessary in our time to recover the ancient paths, is it not best to avoid a rigid discipline, at the same time faithfully setting forth the truth on this and all other subjects which tend to make the Bride a chaste and spotless virgin, ready for the Bridegroom at his coming? The gospel net cast into the sea gathers of every kind. In the end of the age the angels will come and gather the good and cast the bad away.—(Matt. 13:47.) We are not now so well qualified to perform this task. We trust this and other subjects of vital interest will continue to be discussed in the *Christadelphian*, that, if possible, we may learn the whole duty. There is no real lover of the truth who would not gladly learn his duty, and try to do it, and who does not feel grateful for light reflected. Of course I dare not blame the *Christadelphian* for its efforts to raise the truth to its proper standard. What I ask is a judicious forbearance toward the weak and uneducated, who fall short in knowledge of the high standard to which it is always desirable to attain, believing that this can be done without a compromise of truth. . . In conclusion permit me to take off my hat, and cordially shake hands with the beloved brethren and sisters who meet together in the *Christadelphian*. Brethren Thomas (who, though dead yet speaketh), Roberts, Ashcroft, Shuttleworth, Andrew, &c. Though a stranger to most of them, I feel as though I am keeping company with them in the narrow way; fighting the battles of the faith at another end of the line, struggling hourly

for life, life, life, eternal life; for which a man would give all else in exchange, and for which we would gladly exchange the pleasures, the ambitions, the riches, the pride, the pomp, the honour, the glory of this mortal life, which inevitably ends in dust as soon as the last breath departs. Persevere, dear brethren, be faithful unto death, and you shall receive the crown of life. And for lack of something more substantial, please accept this cup of cold water in the name of a disciple from your fellow-servant and companion in trial and labour for the patience and kingdom of Jesus Christ.”

[As this communication, the emanation of a gentle heart of faithfulness, corrects itself, we allow its suggestions to pass unchallenged with the simple observation that the course pursued by Dr. Thomas in times of discovery, and therefore of imperfect information, is not necessarily a guide for action to those who may have attained to an acquaintance with the whole counsel of God; and further that no one was more ready than Dr. Thomas in his later days to countenance and inculcate the policy gently rebuked in the foregoing interesting address.—EDITOR.] (*The Christadelphian*, 1879, pages 39-41)

---

## March 1879 – Death of Sister Edwards

BROTHER Dr. L. Edwards, Lanesville, Va., U.S.A., writing to brother Boshier, says: “I have been, for two months past, in deep distress from the loss of my darling sister wife, who died on Sunday, 1st day of Dec. last, in her fifty-sixth year, after an illness of over two months with typhoid pneumonia. At 12.30 p.m. she took the bread and wine in memory of our absent Lord, in association with a few beloved brethren and sisters at her bedside, and calmly and quietly fell asleep in Jesus at 5.30 p.m. So calmly did she breathe her last, that it could scarcely be distinguished from a gentle sleep from which we soon awake. And, dear brother, though she was a devoted lover of the truth in its purity, conscientious, prayerful and devotional as mortals well may be, yet with all the Christian philosophy I could summon, and all the assurance that our Heavenly Father never errs in His chastisements or providences, my grief was, and still continues to be indescribably intense. Our Father has ordained that our human instincts should be stronger, in such cases, than our Christian philosophy, however wise and well-armed it may be, else the keen edge of His chastisements, of which all His dear children are partakers, might be so blunted that it might fail of its wholesome and necessary purpose. I trust I can truly say I have no feeling of rebellion against His stern decree, but am ever ready to say ‘Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him,’ and though poor human nature quails under the terrific blows of the Angel of Death, there is comfort in Him who says, ‘See now, that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me, I *kill* and I *make alive*; I *wound* and I *heal*.’ My sister wife was reading the Bible by the *Bible Companion*; it did not occur to me to take up her reading and follow it out. I know

the chapter she would have read had she been living on that day. The 5th chapter of Job was the first in order and in it the following passages occur: 'Although affliction cometh not of the dust neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward. I would *seek unto the Lord*, and unto the Lord would I *commit my cause*.' . . . 'He sets on high those that be low, that those which mourn may be *exalted to safety*.' . . . 'Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth, therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty, for He maketh sore and bindeth up; He woundeth and His hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea in seven there shall no evil touch thee.' . . . 'So this, we have searched it, so it is, hear it and know thou it for thy good.' . . .

Abraham mourned and wept over his lost Sarah. 'Few and evil were the days of the years' of Jacob's pilgrimage. Jeremiah desired that his head were waters and his eyes a fountain of tears, to give vent to his deep distress on account of the sins of his people. Jesus, the 'man of sorrows and acquainted with grief' wept over the grave of Lazarus; over Jerusalem, and in Gethsemane's garden, and even the sons of God who shouted for joy when the foundations of the earth were laid have known the evil as well as the good.—(Genesis 3:22.) And shall we murmur? whose light afflictions are but for a season and serve to work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory! God forbid, and may His grace strengthen me for the situation, and help me to be so exercised by His chastisements that they may yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness to His honour and glory and my eternal well-being.

Pray for me, dear brother, that the desired end may be abundantly attained, and allow me to beg also the prayers of the dear brethren who are with you. When you have done with this letter, please enclose it to dear brother Roberts, that he may know of my distress and pray for me. It will save me the trouble of writing a similar one to him, and if he think the interest of the truth can be in the least degree promoted, it would gratify me if he could make an extract, with some comforting remarks for the *Christadelphian*."

[Comforting words are words of true hope, and these are only to be found in the gospel of Christ. We appreciate these in time of need as we never can at other times. In the smooth run of regular every-day blessings, the hope of the gospel does not shine in its full brightness. It may be prized enough, but its zest, its greatness, its entire suitability to our want are not felt as they are when we enter the cloud of deep personal sorrow. No sorrow can exceed the sorrow caused by the loss of a good wife. We cannot speak from experience exactly. We speak from the bright side of the subject, which enables us, however, to realise the horror of the dark side. We can imagine the desolation; the speechless grief; the loss that cannot be made up when a companion is torn away who understands, as no other friend can understand; who sympathises as the closest friend cannot sympathise; who appreciates as it is not in the power of any but Christ to appreciate, and who is a help and a support and a stay in life's troubles

as no other being on earth can be, however cordial their friendship or intimate their acquaintance. In such a bereavement, the condolences of friends are themselves a burden and almost a mockery. Yet we weep with those who weep, and remind the first and most sorely-tried weepers that this weeping endures but for a night—this present dark night, which though it seems long, is bounded at the utmost by the horizon of mortal life, and which is succeeded apparently in the twinkle of an eye, by the joy which cometh in the morning—a morning without clouds—a joy that will never pass away—a joy caused by the destruction of every enemy—yea, of death itself, and by the restoration and consummation of every sainted friendship which the sons of God have tasted in Christ.—EDITOR.]

Brother Edwards obtained insertion in a local paper of lines in which he gives vent to his sorrow. The following is an extract:—

I met her in life's budding spring time,  
I asked her heart—a modest nod  
Was all the assent given,  
But sealed the sacred pledge  
Which binds all loving hearts.

We took a cosy barque upon  
The stream of time;  
From that day forth, life  
To me, was life indeed—

A taste of life from Him  
Who offers it eternal—  
A taste of life which makes  
The longing soul to thirst for  
Its continuance, even life for ever more!  
Oh, can it be that such is now  
Within the grasp of mortals?

To-day the stream of time  
Is like a sea of glass—to-morrow  
Slightly ruffled—another day the  
Billows rise, but safely do we ride  
For days, and months and years,  
Upon its fickle tide.

But in an evil hour  
The clouds loomed up—the storm arose,  
The billows foamed,  
And on the hoary crest of *one*  
We see with awe  
The spectre of a mortal ill—  
The dire disease, the grim precursor

Of the monster death!—and on the next  
We shudder to behold  
The ghastly visage of this human foe!

The surging billows roll,  
The weak frail form, the loving wife,  
The tender mother sinks  
Beneath the cruel waves;  
And oh, my God! to tell  
The anguish of a husband's heart  
In that sad hour,  
Would bankrupt human speech.

The magic words of wife and mother!  
Who can explore the height and depth,  
The length and breadth  
Of such rich words? The title page  
Of human love, and human life!

How “fearfully and wonderfully made:”  
The human heart has chambers, four,  
When wisely furnished—the first  
Is filled with love to God,  
And all his angel hosts—  
The second with connubial  
Gems of earthly joys—  
The third with sweet and blooming  
Nursery flowers—and in the fourth  
There's room for all mankind.

The second chamber lies in ruin now;  
Death's desolating hand has left  
In solitude the single inmate,  
Bereft of that rich casket, which contains  
The gems of earthly joy,  
The price of one alone  
Transcends all rubies.—(Prov. 31)

Here the lonely mourner thirsts,  
And thirsts in vain,  
For that delicious cup from which  
He always drank the dews of love,  
Whene'er his lips were parched  
By feverish contact with the outside world.

But death has dashed this cup away;

And shall the thirsty soul  
Seek water spilt upon the ground,  
Or hope to fill an empty void with nought?  
O Thou whose providences never err,  
Who “kills and makes alive.”  
Who “maketh sore and bindeth up,”  
Who “woundeth and His hands make whole”—  
Let me in meek submission humbly bow  
To Thy decree, till in Thine own good time  
And matchless way, this stricken heart  
Chastised with grief intense  
Shall feel the magic touch  
Of Thy all-healing power!

L. EDWARDS, M.D.

(*The Christadelphian*, 1879, pages 135-137).

---

## January 1880 – Suggested Article

LANESVILLE (Va).—Brother Dr. L. Edwards writes: “Sister Rosina King wishes a copy of *Seasons of Comfort*; but as books cannot be sent by mail from England, we suppose we shall have to get them from sister Thomas when they are printed. You will notice that our brother Hardin Littlepage’s name is absent from the list. He died on 2nd of Aug. last, in his 70th year. He was for nearly forty years a great lover of brother Thomas and his work, and in his later years one of the most solid and faithful Christadelphians among us. Though a poor man, he always said he could not do without the *Christadelphian*, and the instructing and comforting assistance of brother Roberts, and as long as he lived and was able to pay for it, he expected to subscribe for the *Christadelphian*. He almost always officiated at the table, in the meetings of our ecclesia, and the leading feature of his admonitions was the reading and study of God’s holy word, which he constantly commanded, with all the powers he possessed. You should know how much we miss him in our weekly gatherings, as he was a constant attendant. But leaving us strong in the faith to the last, we sorrow not as those who have no hope. We have had five additions by baptism, to our ecclesia, during the summer past, and two to our two brethren at Little Plymouth King and Queen. This seems slow progress; but if they could all walk circumspectly, redeeming the time, in these days of evil, we may consider it a great work, in view of the final result. If you, or some of your good writers in the *Christadelphian*, would publish an article on ‘The relation of the ecclesia to the world. The world: what is it? The ecclesia: what is it, and what are its duties to the world? How far it may conform to the wise, prudent, and time-honoured customs of the world’ (a quotation from one of our speakers), you would confer a favour, and help to elucidate what I regard a most important subject in our day.” (*The Christadelphian*, 1880, page 48)

---

## February 1881 – “Against Great Odds”

LANESVILLE (Va.) — Brother L. Edwards writes: Against great odds, in this time of evil, we have to fight the battles of the faith as it is in the Jesus of the Apostles, and the Christ of the Prophets. As in all parts of a battle-field, there are successes and reverses, and we cannot always make a favourable report; so now, in relation to our ecclesia, we have to report no enemy slain, none bowing down to the influences of the gospel of “Peace on earth and good-will to men,”—none willing to yield obedience to the benign sceptre of the Prince of truth, righteousness, loving kindness and tender mercies, whose precepts and example have only the tendency to elevate a sin-corrupted human being to the pure and divine nature of Him who “inhabiteth Eternity,” but who condescends to be called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the Yahweh of Israel; all seeming to prefer the present world with its perishable gods—Mammon the head—ambition, pleasure, and many minor ones, who, with all their worshippers, make their cradle in corruption and their bed in the dust. All that we can do, dear brother, is to be faithful in the advocacy of the Christadelphian doctrines, which so far as a name or word is significant, I regard as the synonym of the truth of God, and let others do as they list, I think, under the blessing of God, you may count me an ally, to the best of my ability, while life shall last, and though fully conscious of our weaknesses, and remembering that “It is of the Lord’s mercy we are not consumed,” we may safely trust in Him for the final result. Truly the “righteous shall scarcely be saved,” but “the mercy of the Lord endureth for ever.” “The mercy of the Lord is upon them that fear Him,” and *always* extended to such as keep His covenant, and remember his commandments to do them. With but little means externally, and less, perhaps, in mental force, I continue to declare the “whole counsel of God,” as I understand it, from the prophets and apostles, “Whether they will hear or whether they will forbear (Ezek. 2–5), for I earnestly desire when I shall have gone, they may remember that they had a *witness* amongst them. I am now 63 years old, and I expect to tarry but a little longer. I became acquainted with brother Thomas about 1835, and that acquaintance, until his death, was almost intimate. With very few unimportant exceptions, I have been enlightened, and have endorsed him while “he talked with us by the way, and opened to us the scriptures,” “beginning at Moses and the prophets, expounding to us the things concerning our Lord Jesus Christ.” Let the caviller or the fool deride, and say that I place Dr. Thomas in Christ’s stead; I can only pity the ignorance, Brother Roberts and his aids have fallen into line, and I have a like appreciation of their labours for the honour of Yahweh Elohim of Israel, to whom, and to his inexpressibly glorious Father, be the praise for the Aion and beyond.” (*The Christadelphian*, 1881, page 95).

---



## April 1885 – On the Partial Inspirationist Heresy

Brother Dr. L. Edwards writes:—"I have been in love with *The Bible* for over half a century, having joined the Campbellite Church at the age of 13. Had the privilege, under the providence of God, of a personal intercourse with our sleeping bro. Thomas, at intervals, from about the year 1835. Subscribed to, and read all his periodicals from 'The Apostolic Advocate' down.

"Annually, as a general rule, for some 15 or 20 years he was at my humble home, and I may say his Bible teaching gave the bend to my religious education. Every intelligent and earnest brother of Christ can therefore appreciate my love for the Bible.

"I have always believed that what we call *The Bible*—not its translations—was what holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and therefore it was a revelation, perfect and complete, of the will and purpose of God in relation to the human race—that it is the product of the mind of Deity, as the infallible textbook of divine science—that the Lord Jesus Christ is the central figure as 'God manifested in flesh,' which, in its full significance, makes up the sum of its 'human element.'

"Now, I find it declared by some that certain parts of this Bible are of human origin; and at this late hour I must tax my mental ingenuity to find out which part I can rely on as the utterances of holy men moved by the Holy Spirit, and which part the utterances of men moved by sinful flesh.

"Bro. Ashcroft says (and I believe bro. Chamberlin and others agree with him), that inspirational power applies to only such parts of the original documents as could not be otherwise produced—that we should acknowledge in the sacred writings the presence of a human as well as a divine element (of course he means authorship).

"To my mind, this not only puts a powerful weapon in the hands of the infidel, but is well calculated to weaken the reverence, of even the believer, in the Book of God.

"From a little work on '*Popular Christianity compared with the Christianity of the Bible*,' which I wrote 18 years ago, please allow the following extract:—

"We need not offer testimony to convince any reflecting mind that the Bible is the word of God. The internal and external evidences are overwhelming, yet we desire to remark that our Lord's inimitable "Sermon on the Mount" alone presents evidences of more than human wisdom sufficient to satisfy the most incredulous: nay, one passage seems quite enough to stamp the Bible with the impress of divinity. This, by way of eminence, is called the "*Golden Rule*." All the philosophy and learning of the world combined, the concentrated wisdom of the

Solons of Greece, the Ciceros of Rome, and the Statesmen of earth, could not produce a law, for the government of mankind, so plain, yet forcible, so gentle, yet powerful, so concise, yet comprehensive, so grand in its simplicity, so special, yet general in its application, so pregnant with good, so conducive to the well-being of man, as that which is embraced in the simple words: "*As you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.*" Unlike the cumbrous verbosity of human legislative enactments, a few English monosyllables here frame a law, the strict observance of which would calm the troubled sea of strife, and make the earth a semi-paradise. It would sweep anger, and malice, and hatred, and despotism, and tyranny, and oppression, and injustice, and robbery, and bloodshed, and crime, and courts of law, and criminal legislation, and jails, and penitentiaries, and prisons forever from the earth. It would save the burdensome tax of millions of treasure for the support of human government, which might be expended in nobler and better pursuits. It would turn the current of human ambition, and give that direction to labour, talent, wealth and manly effort, which would convert the earth into a delightful garden of peace, happiness, and prosperity—a state of things so glowingly set forth by the prophets as the result of the establishment of God's Kingdom, or government upon the earth. And this, we submit, is indicated by our Lord when he adds, "*for this is the law and the prophets.*"

"Now, moral philosophy teaches that there is an innate 'sense of justice in the mental constitution of man,' 'forever prompting him to do unto others as he would that others should do unto him.' I would ask brother Ashcroft whether the 'golden rule' is a divine, or human maxim?—If divine, how could he convince the learned philosopher who tells him this law can be produced without inspiration. If so, every precept in the 'sermon on the mount' is in the same category—without the seal of inspiration, though spoken by Christ himself, and where's the end?

"I think Bro. A. would 'knit his brow a little to escape the perplexity to which his view commits him.

"Bro. Ashcroft further says, *Exegetist*, p. 3, 'It is not intended that we test the soundness of every bolt and link in the chain which supports the bridge we may wish to cross. There may be a hundred flaws in these portions of the architecture,' &c. Why, then, we might ask, does he propose to test these bolts, links, and flaws by exegesis? My own conviction is, that the Divine Architect was wise enough to build the Salvation bridge across the gulf of sin without an imperfect bolt, or link, and that neither one nor one hundred flaws can be found except, perhaps, in the imagination of the philological exegetist, and if he find them he may rest assured that they will be no encouragement to the timid and trembling sinner who wishes to cross from death to life.

"It is vain to make 'The Bible as we now have it,' in its translations, the issue in this controversy; yet, I agree with you, brother Roberts, that while copyists and translators were not inspired, the A. V. in the English language, given us in the

providence of God, is quite sufficient for all practical purposes, and I have often thought that the seeming discrepancies were allowed by a wise providence, to whet the appetite of the earnest seeker, that in his researches he might become the more familiar with the divine wisdom which stamps the Bible, as a whole, with a sacred authorship. But even in the translations, over which, doubtless, there is a divine surveillance, if I could not reconcile apparent discrepancies I would far prefer to ascribe it to my own weakness and incapacity than to attempt to pick flaws in the word and work of Deity. Take a simple example of discrepancy in the common version:—Matthew says Joseph was the son of Jacob, and Luke says he was the son of Heli. Now, the casual reader will discover, but is unable to explain, the difficulty, while the *student* easily finds the solution, and with no more ‘strain’ than that which is incident to *study*. This is very happily illustrated in the two last numbers of the *Christadelphian*.

“It grieves me to see that bro. Roberts is charged with selfish jealousy, superciliousness, unexampled arrogance, spiritual pride, and the like; and that some of his brethren, who happen to agree with him in his advocacy of Bible truth, are moved by a personal obsequious deference. Bro. Roberts knows, as well as the rest of us, that if these charges are true, he ceases to be a Christadelphian, and it would take quite an amount of credulity to enable me to believe that the author of *Seasons of Comfort* and other works of 25 years, much of which has spread to the four corners of the earth, would, at this late hour, sell his Christadelphian birthright for such a mess of pottage.

“May we not hope that our brother Ashcroft, and others, may see the way, as brother Thomas did, to retrace their steps, so that we, as brethren of Christ, may be of one mind, and speak the same things in obsequious deference to the commandments of Christ.

[Whatever unfriendly critics may think of it, those who know us truly in Christ are well aware that nothing is more truly unpalatable to us than “obsequious deference.” We rejoice in mutual deference to a common truth, clearly discerned and heartily admired: but personal deference is nothing but embarrassing and distasteful. That we should be supposed to relish it is truly a distress. It is a fable whose currency we can only account for on the principle that men explain men by themselves. Men who enjoy deference are liable to imagine that all to whom it may in any degree be shown feel about it as they feel. Dr. Thomas used to be subject to this very imputation, and suffer from this very embarrassment, which we did not understand quite so well as we do now, either as to the origin of such feelings towards a man who was so docile and simple; or as to the source of his embarrassment when he was deferentially treated in harmony with what was supposed to be acceptable. Love for the truth’s sake, springing from identical cordial convictions, he appreciated; the other was an abomination to him. His experience is repeated in us to our great distress. We can only endure it as part of the appointed trial that will not last for ever. Lord help us; and forgive these misguided brethren: for they know not what they do.—Ed.]

(*The Christadelphian*, 1885, pages 170-172).

---

## 1886 – Retired from the Lanesville “Church”

Lanesville (King Wm. Co.).—Brother L. Edwards writes: “You may, perhaps, be surprised to learn that Sister Edwards and myself retired from the Lanesville “Church” about the first of January, and have since been quietly breaking bread at our home. Like yourself, I have been under great trial in what I have hitherto regarded as our *Ecclesia*, but am now reluctantly forced to regard as a mere Gentile Protestant “*Church*.” It has been, for some time, a sad and perplexing problem to me which did not reach a full and satisfactory solution until I was present at a Call Meeting held on the 15th inst. to consider the questions profounded in the paper I herein enclose, and which will give you an idea of the trouble. Strange to say, but fraught with significance, the “Inspiration” wedge seemed to bring the hollow-hearted Christianity of the body into full view. I was prohibited from taking an active part in the proceedings, and for the most part, sat a silent observer. . . . A division, I think, is inevitable. There is some good material in the body, out of which an *ecclesia* may be formed, and, with the Lord’s help, I trust it will be done. “There must needs be heresies *among you*, that the approved may be made manifest.” The *ecclesia*, as well as the “*Churches*.” To me, it seems the greatest conflict and trial to “keep under the body, lest, while we preach to others, we ourselves may be castaways.” The *flesh* is the great enemy of the *spirit*, and here is the heat of the battle. My impression is strong that the “Exchange brethren,” and others have taken the idea that brother Roberts wishes to ‘lord it over God’s heritage.’” (The idea is a pure invention. It has been created and fostered by men whose feelings unfit them to understand our course. Men who love the truth before themselves, have no such difficulty. We exercise no lordship but the lordship of argument, and would most gladly sink even this in the presence of a pure and capable championship of the truth. Whenever we have thought we have discovered this, we have given place-with what results, now appears. ED.)—His attitude, for the last 25 years, makes him a target for their arrows of suspicion, else denying, as they do, that they believe in partial inspiration, it would be the easiest matter possible to take his position in this controversy. They should be no less jealous than he, of the purity and integrity of the Holy Scriptures, and would not suffer “The Word of God” to be touched by even the semblance of human authorship and error. This is the ground that I prefer to take, as the safest as well as the most invulnerable. I trust I shall never be in sympathy and fellowship with any one who may presume to challenge, *in the very least degree*, that Book which even all civilised nations regard as the *Word of the Living God*. (*The Christadelphian*, 1886, page 191).

---

## August 1886 – Ecclesial Problems

Lanesville (Va.)—"I have just read in the June number of the *Christadelphian* that brother Strickler, of Buffalo, N.Y., demurs to the intelligence I sent from this place. He says he knows the parties, and he considers the statements unjust in their bearings on some referred to." I knew from the first that the statement I made was a serious one, and more sad and sorrowful to me than any statement of the kind I have ever made in a life of nearly 69 years. I espoused the Christadelphian cause from its very inception, because I believed it in my heart and soul to be the cause of God, the cause of Christ, and necessarily the *cause of Truth*. God forbid that I should ever so depart from its pure and holy doctrines as to do any injustice to His human, or even brute creatures in whom he has breathed his breath of life. "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God," is a precept of the Spirit which I have tried to write with a pen of iron on my mind and heart. If I have violated these pure, holy, and everlasting first-principles of truth, may God, for Christ's sake, forgive me. "Brother Strickler says "*he knows the parties,*" but I would kindly remind him that I am one of the parties, and a personal interview of only two or three hours, with the absence of all letter correspondence, would afford a very meagre knowledge of a party whose statements he considers unjust. And I would hear say that he would have been more in harmony with the 18th of Matthew had he sent me the two letters from Bro. J. A. Robins instead of sending them to Bro. Roberts. Injustice may be done unadvisedly, or with a scanty knowledge of facts. This may be excused, but when I made an unjust statement after two years deliberation and with a full knowledge of facts, my offence is moreserious. WereBro. Strickler personally cognizant of the inside workings of an ecclesia for forty years, he might demur with some authority; but I submit that two letters from one individual, multiplied by any sum, although he might have partaken of the individuals hospitality several days, would not very much enlarge his knowledge of all parties concerned."

"I can only say now that the interests of the truth should be maintained at the expense of the downfall of every human *personal* interest under the sum. In other words, let God be true if every other man is a liar. I thank Bro. Roberts for his confidence in my integrity, and I humbly trust it never has, and never will be misplaced. It is against my judgment to blot the pages of *The Christadelphian*, even though they were freely open to me, with the details of such gospel-nullifying and soul-chilling intelligence; but convince me that the *interests of The Truth* require it, and I will engage, through Christ, who I believe will strengthen me, to publish a pamphlet in verification of what I have said in the April Number of the *Christadelphian*. No, I will rather suffer loss myself, if loss it be, than that the Truth should suffer by any personal vindication of dust and ashes. And please excuse me for saying that this lesson was taught me in a private letter sent me from Bro. Thomas nearly forty years ago, and, thank God, I have never forgotten it. It may be proper to say that the Lanesville body is now permanently divided, and so far there are 14 members in harmony with me with a good

prospect of others who seem to be standing off, awaiting further developments. One thing is certain, if they understand and believe from the heart the true apostolic and prophetic foundations upon which the Christadelphians stand, they will not be slow in placing their feet upon the Rock of Ages. If they do not understand and believe, their union would not be “unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,” but a mockery in themselves, and a gin and a snare, and an apple of discord and strife in the body, to the destruction of the weak and the distress of the strong.

. . . Publish as much of this letter as you think useful for good, and if the Lord will, I will write you again when matters settle down on a more permanent and satisfactory basis.

Trusting, dear brother, that our trials and conflicts will soon end by the coming of the Lord Jesus, the Great Deliverer,

As ever yours in the blessed hope,

L. EDWARDS.

Lanesville, King William Co., Va., U.S.A.

June 26th, 1886.

DEAR BRO. ROBERTS,—I send you enclosed a paper which you will much oblige me to place in the columns of the *Christadelphian* if you can find room for it.

In the troubles at Lanesville I am placed in a trying position. In the absence of special divine guidance in this day of evil I scarcely know how to act. I am, however, just beginning to see my error in not having followed the Apostolic precept to “know no man after the flesh,” and I trust that the mercy and providence of God will work well in due time. . . .

If I have done or said wrong, may the Lord at his judgment seat forgive me! all things are open to him, and he knows us better than we know ourselves, and though this was intended as a private letter, I know “there is nothing hid that shall not be revealed,” and you are at perfect liberty to use it as you please, because I would prefer that it come out to my shame *now*, than it should appear *then*, to my “shame and confusion of face,” and *infinitely worse*, the loss of *that life* which is the sum of all losses. You may hear from me again, but I think I hear you say “I hope not,” unless something more pleasant can be written. But evil and good are mixed—the one develop the other, and our glorious heavenly Father does all things right.

In *His love*, dear brother, believe me yours

(*The Christadelphian*, 1886, pages 383-384).

---

## September 1886 – Reiteration of the Doctrines Endorsed

Lanesville (Va.)—The following is the document which was held over from last month for want of space:—

*Reiteration of the Doctrines endorsed by the present Membership of the Lanesville Christadelphian Ecclesia since its disintegration and division, February 15th, 1886.*

*We, the undersigned*, having been mercifully called out from among the Gentiles as a people for Yahweh's Name, and having accepted the call by "obeying from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto us, being then made free from sin and become the servants of righteousness, we should have our fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life."—"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever"—and having thus purified our souls by obeying the truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren," we do most earnestly desire the loving unity and fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ, and with all, in every country, and in every place who are *one in Christ*, and "for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren," and who, in the aggregate, constitute "the ecclesia of Christ, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." These, and these alone, can take the Christadelphian name, and with these, and these alone, we desire fraternal fellowship. And, wishing to record more in detail the principles and "form of doctrines" we believe and accept, we hereby declare:—

1.—That we believe and accept the truth that all Scripture, as originally given, was given by the inspiration of God, and is consequently infallible, being profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished into all good works—that a wholly inspired and infallible Bible is the word of the living God, upon which alone our faith, hope, and love are based.

2.—To save labour in writing out in detail, we will say that we accept as the doctrines of the Bible, "The statement of the doctrines forming the Christadelphian basis of fellowship," which may be found on pages 45 to 49 of the *Ecclesial Guide*, published by Robert Roberts, Editor of the *Christadelphian*, Birmingham, England; and that we accept the *Ecclesial Guide* as a *general rule* in the conduct of the branch of the true ecclesial vine which we desire to

represent, subject, however, to such suitable modification as we may deem proper in one branch of the "True Vine."

3.—We believe and accept the teaching of Jesus that we "are not of the world" but being taken out from among the Gentiles, we are cut out of Daniel's "mountain," Jeremiah's "destroying mountain," and Zechariah's "great mountain," to form the stone kingdom, and having put off our Gentile nationality when we put off the old man and put on the new man, which is Christ, we change our nationality and citizenship each one becoming a "Hebrew of the Hebrews," no longer an "alien from the commonwealth of Israel and a stranger from the covenants of promise,"—"no more strangers and foreigners," but "fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God." *Therefore*, Christadelphians, having changed their nationality and citizenship do not register as citizens of Gentile commonwealths, nor voice their will in Gentile politics. They "are come to the ecclesia of the first born, enrolled, (or registered) in heaven," (Heb. 12.) and their citizenship, or commonwealth is in heaven out of which also they wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, (Phil. 3.)

4.—We believe and accept the truth that no true Christadelphian ecclesia can exist without the keeping of the commandments of Christ, as a rule of life, especially the two great commandments upon which hang all the law and the prophets and which embrace the love of God, the love of Christ, the love of his brethren, and the love toward your neighbour, "which is the fulfilling of the law."

5.—We believe if any man consent not to the above sound doctrine, and the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus, he cannot be a member of the ecclesia of Christ, and if already one by profession, the commandment is imperative, "From such withdraw thyself."

6.—Should there be uprising of the *flesh* in the ecclesia, such as bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking, with all malice, it must be put away at once, by withdrawal from it, for the ecclesia can have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

7.—"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if it be so, that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9).

*Festus King, J. T. Edwards, Geo. W. Hance, Deucalion Hance, Emm i C. Edwards, Rosina King, Virginia Hance, L. Edwards, Zillah Johnson, Anna Edwards, Calista Wilshen, Rose King, M. C. Tibbs, Ada B. Neale, Sallie T. Bibb, with a prospect of others when they understand fully.*

(*The Christadelphian*, 1886, pages 431-432).



---

## December 1886 – “Let him alone...”

Lanesville (Va.)—Brother L. Edwards writes: I have thought of writing a pamphlet giving a history in detail of the troubles in the Lanesville Church. Another thought of a condensed statement of facts from which the reader might fill in details, and draw his own conclusions—and yet another, that two or three columns of the *Christadelphian*, with your leave, might furnish all that is necessary to be said. The *first* I shrink from on account of the labour to me, in my old age, with necessary daily cares of a family of 8. The expense of *printing*, which in *results*, would be a waste of the Lord’s money—and the *sadness of the story*, if faithfully told. The *second* would be less labour and expense, but not so conclusive. The *third* could not be as satisfactory as desired, if undertaken at all. These drawbacks make me hesitate, but there is still another, stronger than all:—This matter is of the Lord, as a *trial or test of duty* for all concerned. That feature in David’s history in the matter of Shimei and Abishai (2. Sam 16.) is suggestive. “Let him alone; let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him.” Hezekiah spread the letter of Sennacherib before the Lord (2. Kings 19:14.) The Psalmist says:—“Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.” “Rest in the Lord, and *wait patiently* for him.” These examples have decided me to *wait*—at least for the present—wait further developments the Lord may bring to pass. With me it is the “quarrel of his covenant” and he only has the right to avenge it. (Lev. 26.) May He forbid that I should have any other quarrel or fight, but that which is in the interest of His Truth!—[The Editor has written brother Edwards recommending the last course as the best.] (*The Christadelphian*, 1886, page 572).

---

## 1887 – A True Christadelphian Ecclesia

We republish the following series of scriptural definitions from a pamphlet letter just issued by Bro. J. T. Edwards, of Lanesville, Va., U.S.A. The definitions are not his but those of his father, bro. Lemuel Edwards, M.D., who wrote them for private submission to some leading members of the Lanesville Ecclesia at a certain stage of their troubled experience. They are quoted by the writer of the pamphlet letter in his account of that experience. Readers will probably be of opinion that they are worthy of reproduction in the pages of the *Christadelphian*:—

“A TRUE CHRISTADELPHIAN ECCLESIA.”

Such an Ecclesia is based exclusively on the *Bible* and its doctrines of salvation, as enunciated, for example, in the *Apostolic Advocate*, *Herald of the Future Age*, *Herald of the Kingdom*, and *Age to Come*, *Elpis Israel*, *Eureka*, and

other works published by Dr. John Thomas, and also in the numerous works of Robert Roberts, of Birmingham, England, and especially in his Periodical called *The Christadelphian*, which he has published successively for the last 22 years, and accepted by all true Christadelphians from Hong Kong, South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia to England, Canada, and Texas as the leading organ of the Christadelphian Ecclesias. In these works may be found the Bible doctrines for the salvation of man, and among them the necessary and absolutely essential practical doctrines, without which no Christadelphian Ecclesia can exist.

Some of these I may appropriately mention as follow:—

1st. "Love."

*The Christadelphian Ecclesia must have Love.* "This is *my commandment*, " says Jesus, "that ye love one another as I have loved you." Jno. 15:12; and 14:34–5. "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. 1. Jno. 3:14, –16. "Above all things, have fervent love among yourselves, for love shall cover the multitude of sins."

1. Pet. 4:8. "Above all these things put on love which is the bond of perfectness." Col. 3:14. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not love, I am become as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. 1. Cor. 13:1. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." 1. Jno. 3:18–19.

It may be objected that we cannot *force love*, but it should be remembered that love is a spiritual principle required by the law of Christ, and it should be our pleasure to obey that law. If we cannot do this we cannot please him.

2nd. "The Spirit of Christ."

*The Christadelphian Ecclesia must have the Spirit of Christ.* "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. \* \* as many as are led by the Spirit of Christ, they are the Sons of God." Rom. 8:9–14, &c. "And because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son in to your hearts crying *Abba*. Father. " \* " "And if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." Gal. 4:6–7. "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance against which there is no law," Gal. 5:22–23.

The Spirit of Christ is a gentle Spirit, "when he was reviled he reviled not again, when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." 1. Peter. 2:23.

### 3rd. "A Living Faith."

*The Christadelphian Ecclesia must have a living faith.* "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." Jas. 2:26. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Heb. 11:6. The faith which pleases God is a faith that *works—works by love.*" Gal. 5:6.—"purifieth the heart." Act. 15:9, and "overcometh the world." 1. Jno. 5:4. It does not consist in going to church every Sunday and observing the letter ceremonial of spiritual sacrifices seeming to suffer penance listening to the reading and expounding the Scriptures for an hour.

### 4th. "Works of the Flesh not tolerated."

*The Christadelphian Ecclesia, having crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts, does not tolerate, but sincerely deprecates the works of the flesh as enumerated in Gal. 5:18–21, of which I may appropriately mention hatred, variance, emulations, strife, envyings, revellings, and such like.*" It will be observed that the Apostle says with great emphasis that "*they that do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.*"

### 5th. "Fellowship in Christ."

*The Christadelphian Ecclesia knows that "If we say we have fellowship with Christ and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another." "And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ." 1. John 1. She knows that righteousness has no fellowship with unrighteousness, no concord with Christ and Belial, no communion with light and darkness. (2 Cor. 6:14.) She knows she walks in the light by keeping the commandments of Christ, who says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things I say." "My mother and my brethren are those who hear the word of God and do it." Christ's brethren do not fellowship liars, for "lying lips are an abomination to the Lord," and no lie is of the Truth. They "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," therefore if a man calls another a liar, and still fellowships him, he is no Christadelphian. The tares and the wheat cannot grow together in *Christ*. They can, and do, in the world.*

### 6th. "A Spiritual House."

*The Christadelphian Ecclesia having a living faith is made up of "lively stones built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." It is the "Temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in it, and if any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy."*

Christadelphians are “a people taken out from the Gentiles for the name of the Lord,” knowing that being “Gentiles in the flesh they are without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” They are, therefore, “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people. That they might show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light.” Their *citizenship* or *commonwealth* (R.V.) is in Heaven, from whence also they wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.” Therefore, Christadelphians, while subject for the time being, to “the powers that be,” are not the “sovereign people” themselves, and do not cast their votes for men to represent them in Gentile govern ments. The right of franchise is spiritually denied them by virtue of their allegiance to the commonwealth of Israel.

*7th. “The Bride of Christ.”*

The *Christadelphian Ecclesia* is the Bride of Christ, and knows when her Bridegroom comes she must have on the wedding garment, if she would be presented to Him as a glorious Ecclesia, having no spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but should be holy, and without blemish. The spots and wrinkles can be obliterated by the righteousness of Christ, who is always our advocate with the Father; *provided*, we confess and forsake our sins, and pray earnestly for mercy and forgiveness.

*8th. “Her Work and Purity.”*

The *Christadelphian Ecclesia* is engaged in the work of making ready a people pre pared for the Lord, and having a glorious Hope based on great and precious promises, she will purify herself by “purging out the old leaven of malice and wickedness, and keep the feast with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

Her work is not a work of ignorance, idleness and indifference, which says “Christ fellowshipped Judas,” “Let the tares and wheat grow together,” “Every one must give an account for himself,” “I have nothing to do with what another says or does,” “Let us have peace,” “You must not judge,” &c.

And *this*, the Ecclesia, or *Body of Christ* the pillar and ground of the Truth, and the Temple of God in which His Spirit dwells!!

*9th. “Her Warfare.”*

The *Christadelphian Ecclesia* knows she has a great conflict with foes within and without—the world, the flesh and the devil—the lusts of the flesh—the lust of the eye, and pride of life; and if she can be the victor in the warfare, through Christ who strengtheneth her, she will receive an eternity of blessed life for her reward, and this the gracious gift of God through Christ. She knows the gate is

strait and the way narrow that leads to life, and though there be few who find it, she is not discouraged. She strives to the end with an honest, sincere, and pure motive, and what she lacks through the weakness of the flesh, her Redeemer, in whom she trusts, will supply by his all-prevailing righteousness to her unspeakable joy, and everlasting blessedness." (*The Christadelphian*, 1887, pages 168-170)

Brother Lemuel Edwards, M.D., of Lanesville, Va., U.S.A.

"I enjoy the *Christadelphian*, I believe, more and more as I grow older and more helpless physically. I consider it a great privilege to read it in this 'time of the end,' when we can so hopefully look up and lift up our heads as the prospect of a speedy deliverance brightens, and though we have many burdens, many cares, and many groans in this life, seeing the wisdom of their necessity for our everlasting good, Oh, how light they are, and how easy to bear! Come what will, if we are watchful at His word we are happy in our glorious hope. What a comfort! What a blessing!

---

## February 1888 – The Conflict at Lanesville

LANESVILLE, (Va.)—After particulars lengthily set forth, bro. L. EDWARDS says, "The conflict at Lanesville on our part, has been for the *Unity and Purity* of 'the Church of Christ which is his body.' (1 Cor. 5., 6.–12. and Eph 1:23; Col. 1:24, &c.) and affords a useful lesson to all in every place who read and reverence the word of God. Could we have accepted a loose fellowship, there would have been no 'troubles in the Lanesville Church,' however many *outside*. But brother Roberts tells us on inside cover of the *Christadelphian* for August, 1887, that 'There is nothing to be done in the way of successful ecclesial organization under present circumstances. It would save much disappointment if men would not look for it, but simply look round for opportunities of doing all the good they can individually. Making thus the best of the materials and the circumstances (carefully restraining the tongue concerning the evil doings of others), we may at least save ourselves from this untoward generation.' This, without modification, I am unwilling to accept. It would be a complete abrogation of the *Ecclesial Guide* but the author himself cannot set aside the scriptural doctrines of that production. No, there was an ecclesia in the wilderness in the days of Moses, and has ever been since, if not before, in some shape, form and place, more conspicuously since the utterance of Jesus 'when two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;' and further illustrated in the cause of Aquilla and Priscilla, Nymphas, &c. To set aside the facts and precepts concerning the ecclesia of Christ as the pillar and ground of the Truth, would be doing great violence to the Holy Scriptures. If there can be no 'successful ecclesial organization,' there can be none at all, *it is only because there is no*

*material to construct it.* Any two, three, or more persons of the right material can form an organization as the ecclesia of Christ, and the means of its unity and purity are neither difficult of comprehension nor doubtful in execution. If we are always 'careful to restrain the tongue concerning the evil deeds of others,' we could not 'cry aloud and spare not.' We could neither reprove nor rebuke. He that sins, we could not 'rebuke before all, that others might fear,' nor obey the command in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to 'withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly;' nor could we ever 'purge out leaven which leavens the whole lump.' All things, however, should be said and done lovingly, and judgment rendered with 'righteous judgment.' These are not so hard to do under the discipline, and in the school of Christ. 'Single file' in the work of the truth is a necessity when material cannot be found for 'two and two' to walk abroad; but it may be admitted that the jewels of Christ are so rare in latter day perilous times, that it suggests the saying, 'nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith in the earth?' Yet, it is to be hoped that in many places on this broad earth, two or three may be found walking together in the unity and purity of the Spirit, which is the narrow way that leads to life. They are ever found battling against the flesh, instead of making excuses for it. They are never found widening the narrow way with a loose fellowship to gratify their personal ambition or vanity by seeking the honours which men 'seek one of another.' They are not found compassing sea and land to make proselytes to increase the numbers of their 'ecclesial organizations,' nor add to the cargoes of their worldly craft. They know that the religious Broadway to destruction is the most dangerous because it is the most enticing, the most self-satisfying, the most popular, the most deceptive, and, therefore, the most insidious and dangerous. Enlightened by the truth, they come out from the world, and are separate, that they may be received as the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. That there are some such in many localities, who are the chosen few 'which have not defiled their garments, and shall walk with Him in white,' is the hope of your brother in Christ, L. EDWARDS.—[Brother Edwards has somewhat misapprehended the sense of the cover "note" which he quotes. It was not intended to discourage ecclesial effort. Its pith lies in the word "successful"—by which we meant successful in the fullest, the ideal, sense — the success for which a righteous man longs—in which there would be no failure, no flaw, no trouble; any man looking for and insisting on this will never do any good. The remark in this sense remains true, while not interfering or intended to interfere, with those other truths or duties to which brother Edwards refers. Brother Edwards' experience proves its truth. Universal experience does the same. Any degree of success that has been attained anywhere, has been attained by the policy indicated — a policy of reticence as to individual shortcoming, and painfully trying to make the best of a situation of which little can be made in the absence of authority, and which can only be used with any satisfaction as a probation in the sight of God for His Kingdom. Many men agree where they seem to differ.—ED.] (The Christadelphian, 1888, pages 127-128).

---

## July 1888 – An Amiable but Vain Idea

AN AMIABLE IDEA BUT VAIN.—The peace party: who would object to peace? The idea is charming, but not to be realised by its mere charmingness. Peace is the result of conditions: until the conditions are secured (and the first condition the world will have none of: glory to God in the highest) the result is impossible. However, a number of amiable gentlemen, smitten with the beauty of peace, are trying to bring it about by agitation. Having formed themselves into a society, they lose no opportunity of pressing upon Governments the wisdom of submitting their differences to arbitration instead of fighting about them. Recently they got up an address to the United States Congress, signed by many members of the British Parliament. Three of the latter went over as a deputation to present the address at Washington. In connection with their visit, there was a public meeting in the hall of the House of Delegates. Brother D. L. Edwards was present, and writes:—“I was at the meeting in the Hall of the House of Delegates at the time, and heard the remarks of Messrs Cremer and Massey. Mr. Massey was once, I believe a Methodist “divine,” but laid down the honours for those he thought higher. He said that all looked forward to the day, *which would certainly come*, ‘when swords should be beaten into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks, when nation should not lift up sword against nation, nor learn war any more.’ Had this gentleman studied the prophets more, and national politics less, he might have discovered that ‘*Peace Arbitration Committees*’ were not the ‘instrumentalities’ by which the glorious end of “peace on earth, and good-will among men’ is reached. There is a glorious kingdom in the programme of which he seems ignorant, and the Gospel of which he will not hear—a kingdom which will ‘break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms’—the just and righteous judgments of which, when poured out upon this wicked and adulterous generation will bring the knowledge of righteousness and consequent peace to the inhabitants of the world.—Isa. 26:9.” (*The Christadelphian*, 1888, page 397).

---

## December 1888, A Christadelphian Soliloquy

*Written before the Lanesville Reconciliation.*

I SAY I am a Christadelphian. I revere the name because of its etymology—its significance. It is a sacred word, a covenant name. It is not a mere idle fancy, nor distinctive name. I sometimes wonder how some can take it so lightly, and bear it so carelessly. Am I of the number? Solemn question! I hope to consider it. No other name, whether Catholic, Protestant, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, nor even *Christian* (which not only embraces these, but civilised *nations* as well), bears such a significance, or carries such a responsibility in this time of the end, as the name *Christadelphian*. . . . I revere this sacred name, and am called a bigot and “a crank.” I plead for perfection in Christ, and they say, “You’ll never get it here.” (Then why should Paul “preach,”

and “warn,” and “teach,” “that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus?”) I plead for love and get reproach, I ask for kindness, and get a scowl. I plead for purity, and get contempt. I beg for unity in the church based upon purity, and I am derisively chronicled a “*Simon Pure*.” I plead for pure doctrine, pure faith, and pure fellowship in the body of Christ, and eyes are closed and ears are stopped. I seek to save myself and others, and am charged with slander. I ask the fellowship and sympathy of all true brethren of Christ, and *few*—yes, *very few*, respond.

I know it is very easy to write “good words and fair speeches,” as some others have done, and I also know it is very *unprofitable work*. But can say I feel almost alone! I am almost thoroughly discouraged. I can say with Paul, “I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ;” and but for my being so far in rear of the Apostle’s assurance of faith, I might say it is “far better.” But why should I be so far behind in assurance of faith? Have I not the same inspired and infallible Word of God by Moses and the prophets that Paul delighted to read and quote? In addition to this, have I not the record of the sayings and doings of the Son of God, and of his beloved Apostles, equally inspired by the spirit of the God of our salvation, Who sends out His light and His truth to the nations, that whosoever will may come into His holy hill, and to His tabernacles? Has there been a day, or night, or hour of my life, since I reached the years of understanding, that these Sacred Scriptures—these holy oracles, which are an unerring guide to an endless life, have been withheld from me so that I had not the privilege of *searching* them? No, no! Then why cannot I have the same assurance of faith? I, like Paul, can say, “When I would do good evil is present with me.” I strive to “keep my body under, lest while I preach to others I myself may be a castaway.” I know I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see a law in my members warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death? I thank God, “through Jesus Christ our Lord,” I can be delivered! Then why despond? If Paul was subject to just what I am, and I have the same deliverer and Saviour, why cannot I have the same assurance of faith? Only because I have not the same self-denial, devotion, and consecration to the service of God. Let this truth make a deep impression and arouse me to duty! But Paul was a chosen vessel—are not all the “seed of Abraham, the children of Jacob, his chosen ones?” But “many are called, but few are chosen.” True, straight is the gate and narrow the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it. Then should it not be rather a cause of joy than sorrow that “I feel almost alone?” At the time of the end when the Son of Man cometh shall he find the faith on the earth? As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days when the Son of Man cometh. Then why despond? Why tremble? Because I know that the 144,000 kings and priests who have the honour to reign with him for the Aion are the Royal priesthood, the holy nation, the purchased people, the spotless few, whose garments have been made white by the Blood of the Lamb, who says he is not ashamed to call them brethren, and who, in loving unity, constitute his virgin bride—chaste, pure, undefiled by the



women of the Apostacy, without spot, or wrinkle, or blemish, or any such thing; and who alone are partakers of their Altar-Christ—a community who have all, by one Spirit, been baptised into one body, and who have the same faith, the same hope, the same love, the same care one for another; who speak the same things, and speak the truth in love, “growing up into Christ who is the head, from whom the whole body, fitly framed together and compacted by that which *every joint* supplieth, by *the effectual working* in the measure of *every part*, maketh increase of the body to the edifying of itself *in love*.” Building up the body of Christ, and thus “making ready a people prepared for the Lord.” Such a people only will ascend into the hill of the Lord—that holy hill of Zion, the vision of which has but recently, in this time of the end, been opened, almost to the eye of flesh, in “*The Temple of Ezekiel’s Prophecy*” standing in the midst of a bright cloud of prophetic and apostolic witnesses, presenting a beauty, a glory, and a grandeur which makes the heart of the faithful burn with desire to be a participant. And the question at once comes up, “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in his holy place?” “He that hath *clean hands* and a *pure heart*, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness and speaketh the truth *in his heart*. He that *backbiteth not with his tongue*, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is *contemned*, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that *swaureth to his own hurt and changeth not*. He that putteth not out his money (or labour) to usury (or selfish gain), nor *taketh reward against the innocent*. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.”—but shall abide in the tabernacle of the Lord. These may seem hard, but not as hard as the agonies of the cross of Christ. *Do I believe these things?* Now I am reminded that “charity” believeth all things which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets—by his beloved Son—and by his apostles since the world began, and had I the language and eloquence of men and of angels—the gift of prophecy—the knowledge to unravel all the mysteries of the constitution of man—of the nature and atonement of Christ—of death, resurrection and judgment, of the change from the corruptible to the incorruptible—had I the faith to remove mountains, the courage to give my body a burnt sacrifice to its convictions—the benevolence to give all my goods to feed the poor—the time and the means to fill the face of the earth with books—the logical powers to confound all my enemies in debate—had I all these, without *love*, it would profit nothing. I should be but the sounding brass and tinkling cymbal, which reaps only the empty glory which the world can give—a glory circumscribed by the narrow limits of a mortal life, or which may, like a soap-bubble, float a little while over my unconscious dust. Give me then the charity which believeth all things God hath spoken, hopeth all things God hath promised, endureth all things necessary to obedience in the service of God, even to the crucifixion of the flesh with its affections and lusts, and the loss of this temporal life itself. Give me this, and I shall have, with Paul, the full assurance of of faith, that I shall “obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus” with eternal glory. With nothing less can I be satisfied until this longing heart shall cease to beat, and

these dimmed and dimming eyes shall cease to behold the wondrous things in the law of the Lord, and not then, till I awake in His likeness.

The Bible true? Yes, the citadel of truth! The Eden Book, in which we find the eternal uncreated Creator—the embodiment of spirit power; incorruptibility and life. In it we find the great problem of creation solved—the source of law, the law of right—the law of sin—the law of death—the serpent power—the flaming sword—the law of light—the healing balm, the olive branch, the tree of life; and in it we behold the beauty and glory and majesty of the Yahweh Elohim of Israel, fully to be manifested in the near and rapidly coming future, when the glory of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters fill the sea! Lord! Thou has sent “out Thy light and Thy truth. Let them lead me, let them guide me into Thy holy hill and to Thy tabernacles!”

Eternity of blessed life! The grand immeasurable thought! The purchases of a Saviour’s *Love*—LOVE! the synonym of Yahweh’s name. Merciful Creator! can it be possible that Thy creature of dust can be Thy *child*, Thy *son*—and partaker of Thy divine nature? Thou hast indeed promised! Help him! Lord, help him, through the conflicts of sin and the desperate struggles for the *life* Thou hast so mercifully and graciously offered! Give him to understand Thy word, and Thy will! Give him a pure heart and a contrite spirit! Give him the strength to crucify every sinful thought and sinful act! Give him Thy spirit of love, of purity, of holiness! Strengthen his feeble limbs to follow the pathway of Thine only begotten and well-beloved Son, our precious Saviour! Cover his transgressions and shortcomings with the mantle of the righteousness of *Thine Anointed!* Wash him clean in the blood of Thine everlasting covenant, and let him, *oh, let him be Thy son to call Thee Father!!* This, my prayer, is written. It may never be “printed in a book.” “O, that it were graven with an iron pen and lead” in my rocky heart, and embrace all the beloved brethren of Christ in this day of trial! Then I may be able to say, with Job, “I know that *my Redeemer liveth.*”

Lanesville.

L. EDWARDS.

(*The Christadelphian*, 1888, pages 727-729).

---

## **1891 – A New Version of the Question: “Who Are The Christadelphians”**

THE whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commandments (Eccl. 12.) If he refuses to understand this, he sins without excuse, and sees clearly his destiny written. The Gospel, with its adherent faith, hope, love, and obedience, constitutes the means by which man can rise to the blessings of the new

creation, and it calls him to the kingdom, glory, honour, life and incorruptibility it brings to light. It is therefore a high, holy, and heavenly calling.

Union with Christ's name, by divine decree, is the reconciliation of the Creator to His sinful creature man, or the atonement which comes by water and blood, to wash and cleanse the disobedient. The one baptism in water, with the one faith in the blood of Christ, cleanses and unites all such, to his name. Having crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts, put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man (Christ), by baptism into his name and the likeness of his death and resurrection, they rise again to walk in newness of life, as new creatures in Christ.

Thus united they are saints, not sinners, for "both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified are all of one Father, for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

Therefore they are Christadelphians, and these alone can constitute the ecclesia, which is His body, the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. In this body there are no personalities except in the person of Christ. God is no respecter of persons. The four divisions of the Corinthian Church represented by the figurative names of Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ showed that by the introduction of personalities they became carnal, and walked as men. The fourth part, who were of Christ, alone constituted the true ecclesia, and they, it seemed, were only babes in Christ. The prominent object of Paul's two letters was to warn, instruct, and admonish them, teaching the absolute necessity of preserving the purity and unity of the ecclesia, else it would cease to be such. This can only be seen by a careful reading of both. He says, 1 Cor. 12., "For as the (human) body is *one*, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body, so *also is Christ*. For by one spirit are we all baptised into one body, and have all been made to drink into one spirit." The apostle then shews how the members are adapted to each other, and how "God hath tempered the body together that there be no division in the body, but the members should have the same care one for another, and if one suffers all the members suffer with it, and if one is honoured all the members rejoice with it. *Now ye are the body of Christ*, and members in particular."

I stop a moment to ask:—Is this a pattern of the ecclesia which is to be constructed before the Judgment, or shall we look for it after, as some suppose? But to proceed:—Jesus said of the brethren (Jno. 17.), "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. For their sakes I sanctify myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth, that they *all may be one*, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us, *that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me*. And the glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and they in me, that they may be made *perfect in one*."

Many modern Christadelphians say that this perfection is not attainable until after the resurrection and judgment, and some are driven to say that there is no Church of Christ on earth, as the Bible describes it; and I have often heard the remark that it is impossible to get a perfect church in this mixed state of good and evil. (*'Tis even so, brother; else where is such a body.*—EDITOR.) If this be so, what meaning can there be in the above sayings? and why is it written in Deut. 18. "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God," and, in chap. 5., "Ye shall observe *to do* as the Lord your God has commanded you, *not turning aside to the right hand or the left?*" And why should Paul tell the Hebrews to leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection?—and the Ephesians, that Christ gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (who, though dead, yet speak) for the perfection of the saints, the work of the ministry, the building up of the body of Christ, till we all come into the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the *fulness* of Christ; that *henceforth* we be no more tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine?—and further, that speaking the truth in love we might grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the building up itself in love? (Remember that jots and tittles are important). And, in a word, why are the Scriptures given by the inspiration of God that the man of God may be perfect? (*Some will be perfected: not all.*—EDITOR.) Remember that Christ loved the ecclesia, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself and the Father as a glorious ecclesia not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish. (*So he will, but not while the unfaithful are in it.*—EDITOR.) We look for new heavens and a new earth. Behold, I make all things new! Wherefore, beloved brethren, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless (2 Peter 3.) Keep thyself pure, and be not partaker of other men's sins, is commanded every member of the body of Christ as well as Timothy. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, that thou bear not sin for him (margin) (Lev. 19.) Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, a little leaven will leaven the whole lump. Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness—light with darkness—Christ with Belial—or he that believeth with an infidel—or the Temple of God with idols, *for ye are the Temple of the living God, and He hath said I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and be their God, and they my people.* Wherefore come out from among them (the faithless and disobedient), and be ye separate, and *touch not the unclean*, and I will receive you, and be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

The yoke of Christ is an equal yoke which is easy, and its burden light, if we understand the precious treasure of righteousness and the reward it carries; but put the unrighteous or the sinner in the yoke, and it becomes unequal and galling

unto the second death, if the burden of sin is not removed. (*True, but we are not allowed to remove such, except for open disobedience. Christ reserves judgment for his own prerogative.—EDITOR.*) Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge (Prov. 4:14.)

But it may be asked, how is it possible to keep the ecclesia unspotted from the world in this mixed state of good and evil? Had it not been possible, God would never have required it. This is just the work before every individual member of the Body of Christ. (*Yes; it is the work of "individuals," but all will not do it. The bulk of the professing body will come short of what is required: hence though "many are called, few are chosen," but the two classes are appointed to be together till the Lord come, else would there be no need of the judgment.—EDITOR.*) Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, we are admonished to go on to perfection, and not lay again a foundation for repentance from dead works—*i.e.*, sin no more, for how shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein? (Ro. 6:2.) We are all babes in Christ when born again as new creatures, but we are sinless babes, if indeed we are *in him*, for in him is no sin (1 Jno. 3.). We grow in grace and the knowledge of God by daily nourishment with the sincere milk, bread, and strong meat of the word to the full stature of a man in Christ (*i.e.*, perfection). No time to be lost, but giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, *charity*, and laying aside every weight that hinders, and whatever sin which doth so easily beset us on the way, run with courage and patience the race set before us, ever looking to Jesus for help that we may win the prize through him, the author and finisher of the faith. Know you not that they which run in a race run all, but *one* receiveth the prize. This *one* is none other than the one multitudinous body of Christ. These *are all saints*, because they are born of God, and the brethren of Christ, or Christadelphians. Not *sinners*, because "we know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God, keepeth *himself*, and that wicked one toucheth him not (1 Jno. 5:18). Beloved, *now* are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we *shall be*; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; . . . and "as he is, so are we in this world." And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth *himself* even as he is pure (1 Jno. 3:4), in which we also read—"whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God." (This is the incorruptible seed of which Peter says we are born—1 Pet. 1:23). In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love; and hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. "He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

## APPLICATION

But why this lengthy collation of Bible sayings, with which most of us are familiar, in connection with the ecclesia of the Living God? This duty took root partly in the fact that the writer, comparatively recently, propounded the following question to perhaps a score of "intelligent Christadelphians," to which the following answers, substantially, were given by nine out of ten:—ARE YOU A SAINT OR A SINNER?

*Answers.*—"I am a sinner," "I am neither," "I am both," "I hope I am a saint," "I can't tell until the judgment," "That is to be determined in the future," "I am a sinner, I sin every moment of my life; I may be a saint like Cyrus" Another says (quoting John) "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;" and yet another, "When I read my Bible attentively, I am bound to conclude that so far as I can see, there is not a saint, nor a church, or body of Christ on earth, but it will be made up at the judgment."

If one half of the Christadelphians in the world were to give such answers to such an important question as this, is it not high time that the watchers on the walls of Zion—the Ezras—the Scribes instructed in the kingdom of God—and the editors, who are labouring to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, should awake from their slumbers, and teach that people that the first principles of the doctrine of Christ are merely elementary, or the foundations upon which their hope of life is to be constructed—and but the means to the end of securing the prize we set out in the race to win? That, leaving these principles behind, we should press forward, with all diligence and energy, to that degree of perfection which the Scriptures require as absolutely necessary to success? Does it encourage them in the race, to tell them that perfection is unattainable in this life, and it is folly to look for it? Would not such teaching put a brake on spiritual effort, and bring about a fatal supineness and indifference like that which leads the murderer to "hope for heaven" on the gallows, because he can say "Lord have mercy on me a sinner?" May not this very thought—that it is impossible to attain spiritual perfection, that we cannot help sin, that it is in our natures, and God has put it there, that we are helplessly under its dominion, &c.—produce the disposition in us to excuse and condone sin, because the grace of God, in His mercy, abounds, and we can sin seventy times, and all we have to do is to turn and say I repent, and you are bound to forgive? And may not this be the true cause of the lack of purity, unity, and holiness in the "Churches" of the day? (*The apparent difficulty arises from confounding the individual and corporate application of these things. The professing body of Christ has ever been a mixed body in which perfection was impossible—there was even a Judas among the twelve. But the individuals who are to compose the glorified body of Christ are always characterised by the spirit of Christ, without which they are none of his.*—EDITOR.) When the Son of Man cometh shall he find the one Faith on the earth? Faith without works is dead, especially that faith which is only a verbal acceptance of the gospel, and an immersion in water, even though you add the

compassing of sea and land to make proselytes to that extent, as though this was the chief good.

The *living faith* works by love. This is a volume in itself; but there is another, vol. ii. It *purifies the heart*, and yet another, vol. iii. It *overcomes the world*. If the mind and heart will let in the light, in its fulness of these three volumes, there may be reason to ask, when the Son man cometh, will he find this faith on the earth? And yet the answer is plain. It will be found only in the Body of Christ, which is the ecclesia of the living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth. They may be few, as in the days of Noah, but few or many, the one faith will be found only with them.

It may be said that Christadelphians teach these things. But do they urge them with the same degree of earnestness and faithfulness? They contend for fellowship in first principles in the start. (*They do so in some parts, certainly, and always have.*—EDITOR.) Is the fellowship of the doctrine of faith, hope, love, holiness, purity, and unity in the race less important than that of first principles, for which they so uncompromisingly contend in the start? (*It is impossible to judge of these things. You may know if man believe the truth, but you cannot know how much faith, hope, love, holiness, purity, &c., he has in his heart. We are forbidden to judge one another. We sympathise entirely with brother Edwards' personal applications, but think it a mistake to look for a body in which all the members will be answerable to those applications.*—EDITOR.) Does it ever occur to them that in their zeal for the latter they may not only neglect, but compromise the weightier matters of the former, by too loose a discipline and fellowship in the body of Christ? May not this account for the fact that they look in vain for a pure and spotless ecclesia on the earth? We think they will continue to look in vain if they conclude it is impossible to have one. (*Brother, there never was such. If so, when? where?*—EDITOR.) Let us suppose an interview between the Apostle John and the little children to whom he writes.

L. EDWARDS, Lanesville, Va.

(*The Christadelphian*, 1891, page 17-20).

#### INTERVIEW WITH THE APOSTLE JOHN

*Little Children.*—Beloved brother: you write us some things hard to understand, and we would like to ask you about them. Why do you call us little children, when, as you say, some of us are fathers, some strong men, and all of us are nearly grown?

*John.*—Because I heard the Master say: Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of God; and that of such is the Kingdom of Heaven; and it is to such that my letter is addressed,

to teach them their proper relationship and fellowship with the Father, and the Son, and with one another.

- L. C.—Yes, we see, we are all, old and young, the little children of God, having been born again, by baptism, into the name of His only begotten son—begotten of the Spirit Power, and born from the dead as the first fruits of the new Creation. We know we are born of God, because you say we are *now* the sons of God; and you also say, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.” We are but babes as yet, and wish to understand this.

*John.*—You remember I told you that he that loveth is born of God, and that this is the love of God, that you keep His commandments. You know it is written that the *whole duty* of man is to fear God and keep His commandments. Now, if you do your *whole duty* which you can do, if you abide in Christ, and keep His commandments, how can you sin?

- L. C.—Now we see a little better, and we do try to do our whole duty, but it seems impossible in our sinful natures.

*John.*—How hard did you try? Our wise, loving, and merciful Father never requires impossibilities of His children. Did you count the cost before attempting to build, as the Master taught you? For the joy set before *him*, he endured great contradiction of sinners against himself—despised the shame—endured the agonies of the Cross—was obedient unto death, and won the crown! Have you armed yourselves with a like mind, as Peter told you? Have you crucified the flesh, put off the old man with his sinful deeds, and sinful nature? Have you put on the new man, and taken the yoke, and borne the cross to follow Christ? Have you ever yet resisted unto blood, or unto death, in striving against sin? Have you ever presented your bodies as living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service? Have you ever spent a whole night alone in a mountain, or elsewhere, continuing in prayer to God for help and strength that you might be obedient to the commandments and will of the Father, as Christ did? I heard him say, “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, in the flesh (and, as Jude says, even the garment spotted by the flesh), yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple; and whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, he cannot be my disciple.” The disciple is not above his Master, but everyone shall be perfected as his Master (margin). Jots and tittles of his word are important; not one shall fail. He that offends in one point is guilty of the whole. Do you say these things are impossible?

- L. C.—Who then can be saved? Very few, we are sure!



*John.*—Yes, this is his word: many are called, few are chosen. Little children, will ye also go away? With men, these things seem impossible; with God's help all things are possible. *Faith* in His word, which He has magnified above all His name, is what He requires, for this is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith. God, in His wisdom, has put your faith to the test under trial, as He did that of Abraham and Christ. He knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished. Commit your way to Him, and He will bring it to pass. He will not suffer you to be tempted beyond what you are able to bear, but will, with the temptation, make a way of escape.

L. C.—This is comforting. You have told us that God is love, and how we ought to love Him, and love Christ, and love one another, and thus keep His commandments, which are not grievous; and you say, if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. What is the world?

*John.*—I have told you that the whole world lieth in wickedness. When I was in Patmos, the Lord Jesus revealed to me, by his angel, that a certain beast, of which Daniel had spoken, should have power given unto him over all kindreds and tongues and nations; and how all the world wondered after, and worshipped him; and how all that dwell upon the earth should worship him, except those whose names are written in the book of life of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. I also told you how long this power should make war with the saints and overcome them; and how this would try the patience and faith of the saints. Now, this *beast* is the symbol of the *world* in its religious, political, civil, social, and moral characteristics and constitution, and the things that are in the world, are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life, the high places, the power, the pomp, the honour and glory which men seek, one of another, instead of seeking the honour and glory which cometh from God only. These things are not of the Father, but are of the world, and some of the many inventions which men have sought out, after God made man upright (Ecc. 7.). My little children, this is what the world is, which your faith will overcome. He that overcometh shall inherit all things I have spoken of, in what I have written to the seven light stands of the ecclesia in Asia. The God of this world is *Mammon*, which it loves and worships above all other gods, because it ministers more than all others to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Be not deceived. He that sows to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption.

L. C.—But there is a good deal of “Christianity” in the world which is thought to be a redeeming element, because it is believed to be genuine.

*John.*—The “Christianity” which is in the world has not that kind of love which I have written to you so much about; and it cannot have it, because the Christianity of the world has its root in the inharmonious mixture of truth and falsehood spoken by the serpent to Eve in the garden of Eden, when he said:

“Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil.” The woman was deceived, and was first in the transgression. The serpent, the devil, tried his mixture of truth and falsehood again on Jesus, when he took him up into an exceeding high mountain and offered him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them if he would fall down and worship him. Jesus was not deceived; but repelled him with “Get thee hence, Satan, *it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.*” Because of this religious mixture of truth and falsehood, Jesus, when he was in the world, pronounced it a wicked and adulterous generation. If you understand the characteristics of the *beast*, to which I have referred, you will learn that the world is no better than when Jesus was here, and likely to remain so (or wax worse and worse, as in the days of Noah) until the Son of Man shall again appear.

- L. C.—Yes, we understand, and can see more clearly why the children of God should come out from among them and be separate, and touch not the unclean; and why the ecclesia of Christ should keep itself clean and unspotted by the world. But how can we keep it clean when we have false brethren brought in unawares (Gal. 2.) tares, bad fish in the net, foolish virgins, &c.

*John.*—The way is plain if you keep the commandments. Jesus requires you to judge those that are within, or among you, with righteous judgment, and gives you the precepts, laws and statutes, to guide you. The tares are in the field of the world, but if they, with the bad fish, foolish virgins, and the man without the wedding garment are among you, having crept in unawares, you cannot judge them until they are manifest. If you do not know them you cannot testify that they are tares, or foolish virgins. If you know the tree by its fruits, your duty is clear, to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness—purge out the old leaven—withdraw from the disorderly—avoid them—keep no company with them—put away the wicked person from among you, and unless you can win them to righteousness by a meek, kind, loving, and patient effort, let them be to you as heathen men and publicans, however painful the duty may be. The fact that they are among you unawares, does not affect the unity, purity, and perfection of the ecclesia of Christ. It is only when known, that your fellowship will be spiritual adultery. Beware of the leaven of sin, pharisaical, or any other form, much or little. A little of it will leaven the *whole*. He who offends in one point is guilty of the whole. God is dishonoured or magnified in little things as much as in great. Jots and tittles are important. The commandments are imperative, and the statute in Mat. 18:18 gives you full authority, “Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.” You judge them that are within—them that are without your jurisdiction, God judgeth. Some men’s sins go before them to judgment, others follow after.

L. C.—We believe these are the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus, and we can but consent to them, and we are determined to try *very hard* to take your advice and sin not. We see that there is no necessity for us to break one of the least of Christ's commandments; and we do not think it impossible to keep clean hands and a pure heart, if we desire to ascend into the hill of the Lord; and as we are *one* in faith, and hope, and love, we know, though babes in Christ, that we can grow up into him in *all things*; and our beloved brother Paul, also, gives us great comfort in saying we can “do *all things* through Christ, who strengtheneth us.” But you say we should love our brethren so that we ought to lay down our lives for them. This seems quite hard.

*John*.—Christ said, whatsoever you do to one of the least of these, my brethren, you do to me. So if it were necessary to lay down your life for a brother, you would lay it down for Christ. Be thou faithful unto death, and you shall receive the crown of life. If it be impossible for you to be faithful unto the laying down of this present short and sorrowful life for an eternity of life, with fulness of joy and pleasure for evermore, you are not wise, or your faith is too weak to give you the victory.

L. C.—Yes, we see. *Lord increase our faith!*

Here we close the supposed interview and remark, that if Christadelphians still think that no ecclesia, with that degree of unity, purity, and perfection which the Scriptures require can be constructed this side of the judgment, then we can find no Temple in which the Father can spiritually dwell on earth (*each true brother is a temple, however many false brethren he may meet with.*—EDITOR); and if we have no such building, it can only be because the builders are not co-workers, and do not follow the *pattern* given them of God as Moses did. They may start on the right foundation, but in their zeal, without knowledge, they may put wood, hay, and stubble, where gold, silver, and precious stones belong, and the building is therefore unfit for the in-dwelling Spirit of the Father. It is only a Temple in which the mother of harlots and her numerous liberalistic and autocratic progeny delight to dwell—a Temple in which her protean forms of idolatry may flourish like a green bay tree; but no Temple for the Holy one of Israel, nor for any one of his sons or daughters. He who is fit for the Master's use will purge himself from these (2 Tim.).

In conclusion, we will say that if the word of Christ dwell in our hearts richly by faith and we are always mindful of the words spoken by the prophets, and of the commandments of the apostles of our Lord, as Peter advises us, and be very watchful to keep our bodies (the old man) under, lest while we preach to others we may be a castaway, as Paul says, we shall not be likely to sin at any time, but if we do fall away by weakness we may at once recover, through our Advocate with the Father, provided we do not commit the sin unto death, of which John speaks, and for which, like Esau, we can find no place for repentance; or for the sin of which Paul speaks, when he says:—“It is impossible for those who were

once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they have crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame” (Heb. 6.).

“What I say unto you I say unto all—Watch.”—*Jesus*.

L. EDWARDS.  
Lanesville, Va.

(*The Christadelphian*, 1891, page 60).

---

## **June 1891 – Comments on “Who are the Christadelphians”**

“I thank you for publishing what I have written what I believe to be a true Christadelphian, and Christadelphian ecclesia. I simply wish to do my duty to the last, in employing the one talent committed to me by my absent Lord and Master. I know it is in accordance with His will that I should ask wisdom of Him to guide me in my trials, because He gives to all liberally, and does not upbraid understanding, as I think, fully, that I must seek it through His inspired Word with the diligence I would seek for hidden treasures; and not only through this, but every other channel which His providence may open; and having done this, I can but conclude that with a faith that does not stagger at His promise, I shall receive just what I ask.

“With the saying of the 12th Psalm before me, that ‘The Lord will cut off all flattering lips,’ I can say that I know of no counsel outside of the inspired word that I desire more than that of brother Thomas, who, though dead, yet speaks, and brother Roberts, who is living and still speaks. The impression made here by what has been recently published, is, that brother Roberts differs from me and the Lanesville Church is encouraged. My impression is that while we *seem* to differ, when fully understood, we really agree. I believe brother Roberts and myself both long since understood and endorsed Dr. Thomas’s view of the ecclesia in its two states—the mortal and immortal—‘The Tabernacle of the Testimony,’ and the ‘Nave’ State, and the *purity* and *perfection* that pertained to each. That in the former there always has been evil, which is necessary to the conflict between flesh and spirit, and the trial of the faith and patience of the saints, and their final triumph be made manifest; and as brother Roberts says ‘it is ordained that they shall be together.’ But brother Roberts surely does not mean that they shall be together in the fellowship with the spiritual “*e pluribus unum*”—the many made *one* in the body of Christ. Nor when he says ‘we are forbidden to judge one another’ can he mean that we are forbidden to exercise a wise and discriminating judgment, that we may be able to choose the

companionship of the good and reject that of the evil? We can but agree that no man can judge *the heart* of another, which God only can do. 'Open' sins, he says, we may judge, in which I fully agree, as it is impossible for us to judge any other. Brother Roberts asks 'when, where' I can find a perfect or pure ecclesia? Of course he must mean in the 'Tabernacle of the Testimony' State, and the degree of purity and perfection thereto pertaining. Suppose I answer: From all that is 'open' to my mind, and the evidence I have, I would point him to the Birmingham ecclesia, but for his *indirect* but *substantially direct, testimony*, that there is an Achan in the camp. This testimony being true, the 7th chapter of Joshua is not only suggestive, but imperative, and finds the first duty at hand for each and every member of that spiritual corporation the Apostle calls the Body of Christ and Ecclesia of the Living God. I feel almost sure that when understood, brother Roberts and myself will agree in what we have written, and it is a pity that there should be any smoke thrown over it to make it appear otherwise.

"I have not written this for publication, unless you think *some good* could come out of it by taking notice of it in your own way. My days are few and evil. The judgment to me is close at hand. The uppermost desire of my heart is to be approved by my blessed Saviour. I wish to keep this before me in whatever I write, say, or do. Out of Christ, everything is vanity. An experience and observation of over three-score years and ten is quite enough to learn this lesson perfectly."

L. EDWARDS.

REMARKS.—We published brother Edwards' article because of its fervent endorsement and happy development of the noble principles of the Spirit of God as enunciated in the apostolic epistles: which will certainly level down all human nonconformities with unsparing hand at the judgment seat of Christ. Wherein we dissented was not as to the principles that ought to characterise every brother and company of brethren, but as to the feasibility or scripturality of withholding fellowship from every person or community that has not attained to this "perfect measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." We agree with brother Edwards that open rebellion against the law of Christ leaves a true friend of Christ no alternative but separation from every person or community guilty of it, but it is a different case when there is professed subjection to that law, and more or less of a sincere endeavour to conform, even if there is a considerable amount of shortcoming. Our conviction is that in such a case, both mercy and duty require a long-suffering fellowship.—As for the Birmingham ecclesia, the proverb holds good: "Distance lends enchantment to the view." There are many in it for whom we have true cause for thanksgiving to God because of their conformity to the mind of the Spirit: but there are others who dim down the general lustre, and give great occasion for that personal humiliation and exercise of patience which, in the arrangements of the wisdom of God, are for ever inseparable from this probation. Brother Edwards will be at home in the Kingdom of God where nothing

shall enter that defileth. We hope to rejoice with him then, as we do now in the measure possible in a sand drifting desert.

(*The Christadelphian*, 1891, page 224).

---

## **April 1895 – Settled Down to the Conviction that We Shall Have Troubles to the End**

“I sympathize with, and am near you, dear brother, in nearly, if not all you have said and done in you many conflicts for the truth of God in the several decades of the past. My judgment may be at fault—God only knows, and will determine soon. In our weakness we can but tremble in view of the unspeakably momentous consequences involved, but this should not detract an iota from that faith we have in His promises, nor that hope we have in His mercies. As to troubles I have settled down to the conviction that we shall have them to the end as one of the ways of providence to take the dross from the gold and gather His jewels. Ah, who will come out as such? The righteousness of Christ in manifestation at the judgment alone can give the answer. So let us be watchful, prayerful, and patient, watching the foundations of our hope that all will be well.” (*The Christadelphian*, 1895, page 149).

---

## **June 1899 – The Reflections of an Aged Brother**

Lanesville, King Wm. Co., Va.,  
January 17th, 1899.

DEAR BROTHER WALKER—Reviewing all the circumstances connected with the death of our dear brother Roberts, the *knowers* and *lovers* of the truth can but see the “ways of Providence” in the accomplishment of His great and glorious purposes in the creation of the beautiful planet which He has called the earth, and says He made it for an everlasting inheritance for His intelligent, wise, faithful, loyal, just and obedient creature, man, who was fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of the Elohim, with possibilities of even higher attainment.

*Loyalty and life—disloyalty and death*, was the mandate of the wise Creator to His creature man, while a free will to make his choice and fix his own destiny was plainly given; but the serpent’s lie, adopted by all his seed, “*Ye shall not surely die*,”—“There is no death”—Your God is *not* a God of truth—You can have your own way and do what the thoughts and imaginations of your hearts, however evil, may desire, for God doth know that in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt be as Gods, knowing (and practising too) both good and evil.

This insidious lie of the serpent, so greatly fostered the pride, ambition, arrogance, and libertinism of man that it grew apace throughout the Antediluvian age, even under the curse of God, and His covenanted purpose in the seed of the woman, that in the “time of the end” of that age only eight souls of the seed of the woman could be found on the face of the earth who had not corrupted the way of the Lord, and filled the earth with violence.

It is worthy of note that this “time of the end” lasted probably 120 years, during which Noah warned his contemporaries by preaching the righteousness of God’s covenanted purpose, and walking with God in *His way*, thus finding favour with God, and deliverance of his household from the awful calamity impending. “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days when the Son of Man shall be revealed.”

In Noah’s day “God looked upon the earth and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted *his way* upon the earth. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, and God said to Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence through them (the seed of the serpent); and I will destroy them from the earth.”

With such a condition, well might the vengeance and just judgments of the Great Creator of all things, be provoked to bring the terrible catastrophe of the flood to sweep from the earth every living thing that had the breath of life, save Noah and all preserved in the Ark—a divine and merciful precaution to guard His covenanted purpose, and give the race another trial; proving that “His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting on such as keep his covenant and remember his commandments to do them.”

The Antediluvian history should be a never-to-be-forgotten lesson for all subsequent generations.

Well, 4,000 years of the world’s history have passed and God’s “sundry ways and divers manners” in which He spoke to the fathers by the prophets have been recorded for our learning, and we find ourselves in the “Time of the End,” spoken of by Daniel the Prophet. We would be blind indeed, if we could not discover the hand and “*ways of Providence*” in the Mosaic Prophetic, Apostolic, and Apocalyptic records of human history which bring clearly to light the secret of God’s will in the manifestation of that “purpose in himself” in the wonderful creation of which man is the central element. The creation of *all things* is to His own glory, and the “joy unspeakable and full of glory in his presence,” and the “pleasures for ever more at his right hand” are accessible even to mortal man (made mortal by his own wilful act), on the condition required by the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, which is the “power of God for salvation” to all who believe and obey it; and who, by a patient continuance in well-doing, seek for the glory, honour, and immortality offered.

This is God's way, and having sent forth His word to accomplish His purpose, it will not return unto Him void. He has special, as well as general providences in His ways, and to go no further back than from the "cunning" artizans of the Mosaic Tabernacle in history, to the Ezekiel Temple in prophecy, we may clearly see this.

In the time of the end by His providence He raised up our brother Thomas, well suited for the work He had for him to do in a day when darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people Israel. When his work was done—a work which only the wise can truly estimate—he was allowed to sleep in Jesus as a rest from his labours, and the same kind providence had already prepared a worker, probably better suited for the kind of work to be done, requiring a younger and more vigorous physical and mental organisation than our brother Thomas, at his age, could continue to preserve.

We know that our Father doeth all things well, and should be resigned. Nevertheless when myself and sister-wife first heard of the death of brother Roberts, every human feeling of which the human heart is capable was aroused in our breast, and we felt that if we could have electric wings we would be the next moment at the side of dear sister Roberts to pour all our sympathy into her wounded heart. It might seem almost a mockery, as dear brother Roberts said to me in the 16th volume of the *Christadelphian*, when he published the death of my first sister-wife. It did not prove such in my case, and the comfort I received I hope never to forget.

I need say no more than has been said in the *Christadelphian* on the significant death and burial of our dear brother, but that we are in heart-felt sympathy with nearly every word written by our dear brethren and sisters on the subject.

And now that he has laid down his burden by the side of brother Thomas, let us rather rejoice in the truth that the Lord "giveth his beloved sleep." and that sleep is found in its greatest perfection "*in Jesus.*"

Oh, what a lesson this event, at the time of the end, for the distracted condition of the present Christadelphian world! Can we write this lesson?—Need we attempt it? Is it not plain enough in the great Book of God, magnified above all His name?—*search it.*

With all our gettings let us get wisdom—the principal thing. We know the way.

Now in this both sad and joyful event we have another significant fact. In the common run of things it is impossible to see an hour into the future. When brother Roberts laid down his armour it seems he had made every necessary preparation for brother Walker to take it up as brother Thomas did in his case. Can it be a question whether it be the work of Providence or that of man *per se*?



Nay, verily. 'Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him and he shall bring it to pass.' This is how it comes.

And now about the *Christadelphian*. Brother Walker's responsibility may seem great, but he should learn to feel that it is not a whit greater than that which is indicated by the talents of varied kinds placed in the hands of every one of the Master's servants, purchased with his life's blood to labour in his vineyard for the salvation of man. The responsibility lies in the use of the talents by each individual to whom they are given.

When the parables of the sower of the seed—the labourers in the vineyard with the time of reckoning—and the talents according to ability, one, two, five, ten, were given, the disciples of Christ were very anxious to know the *day* of his coming and the end of the age. He gave them the signs of his coming, and of the *end* he said, "He that shall endure unto the same shall be saved; and this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and *then shall the end come*" (Matt. 24:13–14).

*The Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, and *The Christadelphian*, sent as missionaries over, and around the world, with the aid of the sowers of the seed, the labourers in the vineyard, and the talent, according to ability, have given their testimony as the "witness" required, to nearly, if not all the civilised nations of the earth, but the end is not yet. There is a little time left for the foolish virgins to arouse from their slumbers and fill their lamps, keeping in memory that it is only those who endure to the end can be saved. And let us all pray continually that we may not awake from our slumbers in the one talent class; but that we may continue in the work with all diligence, as the reckoning is nigh, even at the door.

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:8).—L. EDWARDS.

And now, dear brother Walker, I will write something more private, and as I would often say to brother Roberts, if any extract of the kind will, in your better judgment, *help the truth*, its publication is not forbidden.

I am now in my eighty-second year, and very nervous and feeble, and have to write with a pencil to steady my hand. My physical (and of course mental) powers are rapidly failing, and have been in the last two years. On two occasions in the last year I thought my end had come. I have no fear of death, but I have no wish to die. The Lord's will or wish I am always ready to accept. Two physicians were sent for on the first occasion without my knowledge or consent, but it being in the night and far off, they did not reach me until I had rallied. The Lord has mercifully spared me a life beyond my deserts, and I would like to cherish the hope that He has some little further use for me in His service. But this I almost fear to do, for

reasons apparent (thinking too much of self, &c.). The cause of my illness was nervous prostration from over work and exposure in the practice of my profession.

The stringency of the times in finance matters makes it very difficult, in our section, to provide what we might call an honest living for our families; but I need not take your time to read what I might say in this line except to say that I have seen the time when *with my Master's money* I could subscribe for half a dozen copies of the *Christadelphian* for brethren who thought themselves unable to pay; when now, I cannot get the means to pay for one.

I received a long and affectionate letter from brother Roberts a short time before he left for Australia, and I was never in physical and mental condition to answer it as I wished to do until too late, which I regretted very much. I spoke of my inability to pay for the *Christadelphian*, and he kindly offered to send it without charge as long as he had the control of it. He has gone, and I cannot think of asking brother Walker to do likewise at the present time [Nor could he think of doing otherwise.—ED.] in the uncertainty which attends its continuance. I cannot consent to be a burden, instead of a help in the Master's work, however much it gives me individual pleasure. Excepting many lost by distribution, I have nearly all the works published by brethren Roberts and Thomas, including the three vols of *Eureka*, which I regard as well-nigh priceless. The brethren of our ecclesia still insist on my public services at the table every Sunday morning whenever it is possible, and I devoted the last occasion to a plea in behalf of the *Christadelphian*, on the line indicated in the letter I now write, with a *part* convenient for publication, provided that, in your judgment, it would *serve the truth*; which should be a *sine qua non* to a place in its columns.

I suggested to the brethren that if the *Christadelphian* world would learn the lesson of brother Roberts' death and burial, and fall into line with the labourers in the Lord's vineyard and work faithfully in His service, their petty strifes, fleshly and spiritual, would soon fade away as the shadows of night before the rising sun.

Sowing to the flesh with the Lord's money, and sowing to the Spirit were emphasized in the exhortation. The result, *if any*, may appear in the future.

Thank the Lord, "many winds of doctrine" have had little effect on my faith and hope for fifty years. My faith may be seen in the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, vol 7., April 1857, and my hope in vol. 9., May 1859.

I would have sent this letter sooner, but did not get the December number of the *Christadelphian*, and had to borrow brother Robins', which I could not get until a few days ago. Would like you to send it if you can.

Our united love to dear sister Roberts. We are glad she takes her *terrible trial so wisely. She knows how.*

May the Lord help you in your labours, shall be our constant prayer, dear brother—offered for the truth.—L. EDWARDS, M.D.

(*The Christadelphian*, 1899, pages 248-250).

---

## 1899 – A Word to Fellow-Helpers

Brother L. Edwards writes from Lanesville, King Wm. Co., Va., on August 8th, 1899, and acknowledging remittances, speaks of the letter of a sister, whose brother-husband “has passed the three-score-years and ten, and is very feeble.” She says, continues brother Edwards, “After reading your letter in the June *Christadelphian*, I thought here is an opportunity for helping ‘a brother in Christ,’ and it is a pleasure as well as duty for members of the one body to help one another. My husband and self are isolated members of the Christadelphian faith, and I myself quite a number of years younger, but not strong, and while having some of the afflictions, we are blessed with the comforts of this life, and hoping for the promised and better life. You may pay for the *Christadelphian*, and be relieved of the feeling that you are a burden in the Master’s work; with what remains, do as you think best.” Just at the time when your first letter reached me, I was seeking an opportunity to get from Richmond (thirty miles distant) a P.O. order to meet the privilege and duty above accorded. This was checked alone by the thought that it would not meet brother Walker’s approval. (That is so.—ED.)

Now, my dear brother, it might be asked, what does this all-round-*doing-good* mean? The members of the “one body of Christ” only, I think, can give the true answer, which would be something like this. It means that the providences and tender mercies of the Lord are over all his works, and are from everlasting to everlasting to such as fear him, keep his covenant, and remember his commandments to do them.

As for myself, I had scarcely the first conception that the publication of a brief sentence in my “more-private” letter to you, restricted alone by your own judgment, or indeed any thing I had written would ever be considered as “quite cheering” by the reader, or ever bring to me, not only a substantial offering in this life, but the grateful recognition of the truth that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and that the Lord loveth a cheerful giver; and, *better than all*—that *Christ is with all, in all, through all*; and I feel myself utterly unworthy of the “hundred-fold” which this makes it by His gracious promise in Mark. 10, &c.

But to the dear brethren, the cheerful givers in my case, I wish to say that although they have followed the alms-giving law of Christ to the letter, and I can well afford to pray for the greater blessing to the giver, I am not so sure that if

they continue to be strangers to me in this life, that the *letter* may not be a blot on the *spirit* in the life to come. As to our sister and brother in Ohio, they could not well do any better way than they did—for *Christ's sake*: with this, worth everything; without it, nothing. Would like to write more, but must stop from feebleness of body and mind. If my heart does not deceive me, it is my earnest desire to be faithful to the end, which is certainly near—to me at least, and I am ready to say with David, “Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” And, “Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. . . .” And especially for his comforting saying (Is. 55:11): “My word that goeth forth out of my mouth shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in that whereto I sent it.”

With love, dear brother—which I can better feel than express—to you, sister Roberts, and every member of the body of Christ, I am, yours in fellow-service, poor and weak as it is, in patient waiting for the realization of the glorious hope of Israel.

L. EDWARDS.

(*The Christadelphian*, 1899, page 420).

---

## September 1901 – Finishing the Course – An Aged Brother's Letter

Lanesville, King Wm. Co., Va., U.S.A.

July 17th, 1901.

MY DEAR BROTHER WALKER,—It has been some time since I have written you, and my sense of duty begins strongly to admonish me that I should give you at least some of the reasons of my seeming indifference or neglect. I might have sent you a few lines to let you know that I am, under the mercies of our Heavenly Father, still in the land of the living, and how much I appreciate and enjoy the regular visits of the *Christadelphian*.

When I had finished reading the July number, I felt like saying with your friend Mr. Brown, had it not come, “a light would have gone out here.” It is no use to specify articles nor items; but will say of your trip to Jerusalem, it made me feel that I was right along with your little company! Oh the pathos! the sadness, yet gladness, the sorrowful, yet joyful, paradoxical sensations and emotions which spring from the heart and the mind of him who loves the Holy One of Israel, and understands His glorious and wonderful purposes and ways of His providence, and seeks earnestly to know Him and find Him, if only for the present it be

“through a glass darkly.” O, how thankful the sons of Abraham, and the “daughters of Sara” should be for the dim dawn-light of the morning, when, at the time darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people of Israel, and the lesson such an opportunity, and such an experience affords!

I came into active being on October 11th, 1817, and need say nothing of the duties and cares of this probationary life, of which I have had a full experience, and for which I thank the Lord, because I can see more clearly the wisdom and necessity for such an ordeal, as the basis of that unspeakably better life of which Christ is the author by his triumph over sin, and his resurrection from the dead, the blessings of which, all his faithful brethren will certainly and surely be the joyful participants! For this Hope of Israel, our conflicts and afflictions are many; but they are comparatively light and only for a season, and work a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory to those who are wisely exercised thereby.

I have been waiting and hoping to write you a letter about the Lanesville ecclesia which could be profitably placed in your intelligence column. It is one of the oldest in America, and, as you know, was the result of the faithful efforts of our dearly beloved brother Thomas, of whom we saw much, in his greatest conflicts, inside and outside of the household of the “one faith.” “It must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.” Since the time I lived contemporary with brother Thomas in matters of truth (which was about the year 1834), these offences and conflicts have existed, and will continue to exist as a “needs be” through tribulation to the Kingdom of God.

Now, my dear brother Walker, it may or may not seem strange to you, but in my experience—much of which has been in the 19th Century, and some in the 20th—the most difficult to handle, the most insidious, the most dangerous, the most trying ordeals through which we have to pass, are the *personal* offences which arise in the household of Christ. “God is no respecter of persons;” and the apostle James says, “If ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin.” And why is this true? Because of the absolute necessity of the crucifixion of the flesh; for if this is not done, and the body is not kept under, pride is cherished and humility is lost; and with all our professions, prayers, and preachings to others, we can be but castaways. The wise Virgins understand this, and profit by it; but the foolish do not, and are lost by it.

If any ecclesia turns a deaf ear to the first chapter of Isaiah and the 18th of Matthew, it will soon cease to be such, and their names will be blotted out of the Book of Life. But we humbly trust that in the Lanesville ecclesia some names are still there and will, ere long, walk with Christ in the white garment of *his* righteousness—not their own, which is so badly spotted by the world.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century we have been making considerable efforts to improve our spiritual condition. We continue our regular meetings, renewed our Sunday School, etc., and the meetings are becoming

more interesting and profitable, having fewer jars and discords than we have had, and our speakers are using and commending the Bible from the first of Genesis to the last of the Apocalypse in its teachings, doctrinal and practical; emphasizing with great force, the absolute necessity of *doing*, as well as hearing and learning, the will of God as revealed in His wholly inspired and infallible word. Indeed, I doubt whether there is an ecclesia in America, or perhaps anywhere else, whose regular speakers urge with more earnestness the necessity of the development of such fruits by which they may be distinctly known, than the Lanesville has done in the last six months; and I might add that no ecclesia needed it more. O, if it could eliminate all its personal troubles by taking heed to the Law of the Lord *to-day*, not to-morrow, and never forget that “he who sows to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption,” what a change it would bring! Then they could joyfully say with David, “O, how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day;” and, “Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.”

Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity? . . . for there the Lord commanded the blessing, *even life for evermore!*

I need not to send my love to you and all true Christadelphians: you already have it!

L. EDWARDS, M.D.

A sketch of the Lanesville meeting place accompanies this letter. It was built in 1876, and superseded a smaller place built in the 50's. It is 30 by 40 feet, with a pulpit recess of 12 by 6 feet. Over the recess are the seven units of Paul's enumeration in Ephesians 4. inscribed large on tablets. “The idea of the tablets,” says brother Edwards, “was to keep before the eyes of the audience the seven pillars of the house of wisdom, while the speakers challenged their ears to hear the wisdom spoken from the Holy Scriptures. We have also on one side, brother Thomas' illustration of Deity manifested in the flesh, just high enough to face every standing visitor to read. On the other side, we have other designs in harmony, and seven lamp-stands for night services, &c. I wish you could some time be with us, but the sunset of my present life is so very near, dear brother, that I can only tremblingly hope that we may ere long meet in brighter days than these.”—[To which we say, “Amen.”—ED.]

(*The Christadelphian*, 1901, pages 406-407).

---

## 1904 – Hold Fast The Name

Brother Dr. L. Edwards writes as follows:—

MY DEAR BROTHER WALKER.—Brother J. O. Woodruff, of Elizabeth, New Jersey, who was born the same year as I was (1817), has been sending me much Christadelphian literature, and writes excellent letters himself, and in our correspondence the enclosed copy, in substance, is the last I wrote.

It occurred to me it would do some good, perhaps, if published, with your consent, in the *Christadelphian*. I enclose it, therefore, with what I used to say to brother Roberts—add, take from, amend, and publish or not according to your better knowledge of the interests of the truth of God. At home I am trying very hard, at my age, to do the very best I can. A prophet is not without honour, and I know where my life and hope is. Thank the Lord for the privilege, my faith and hope are strengthened every day by the gradual fulfilment of prophecy.—L. E.

LANESVILLE, KING WM. CO., VA.,

*Feb. 4th, 1904.*

MY DEAR BROTHER.—Your welcome letter of Jan. 26th came duly to hand, and although I am confined to my bed from pure weakness and many pains, I can occasionally get up and write a little at a time under the impulse that the Lord keeps me here for some purpose, and I know that “to rest is to rust.” And so long as I can do Him the least service I desire to “strain the points” while His breath is in my nostrils.

In “The Lectures at Shepherd’s Hall, Glasgow,” you sent me, I find this remark by the writer: “We call ourselves Christadelphians; in the mere name, however, we do not claim that there is any virtue.”

Now, to my mind, this is a dangerous stultification of the fact that a word is the vehicle of an idea which cannot be expressed without it. Were there no virtue in a word, it would be entirely useless. Where then, would be the voice or word of God? The writer seems to be making an effort to save others who are not Christadelphians.

In my experience I have met with many Rev. Doctors of Divinity in the Theological School who were bound to confess that unless a man was a brother of Christ, which the word Christadelphian means, he could not be saved. How is it then, that our Shepherd’s Hall writer can find no virtue in the word?

In the early centuries, of course, other words were used to convey similar ideas, such as “The Israel of God,” &c.: but in this “time of the end” no better word can be found to convey the advanced ideas of the true people of God, and with the Lord’s help I desire to stick to it.

But, my dear brother, there is another matter of fact, which, to my mind, is vitally important. That there are *true* and false brethren of Christ through whom

offence come, none can deny. That divisions exist cannot be denied. That in our day we can, and MUST, when *the light is accessible by any possible means*, determine for ourselves the false and the true, if we are to have any fellowship with either.

Now, the journal named "The Christadelphian" is the only one I have known which fully represents and conveys the doctrines of the truth as I find it in the Word of God, in theory and practice [of course, I do not live outside of my associations in this life], and which had so long been buried under the rubbish of the theological wisdom of the world in the dark ages, when war was made against the saints, and they were overcome by the Beast, the number of whose name was 666 (Rev. 13:18). But all whose names were written in the Book of Life were preserved in their fellow-companionship under the "strong tower," into which the righteous run and are safe. But "the words were closed up and sealed till the time of the end . . . none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand" (Dan. 12.).

Now, in the time of the end I have read several books by the Rev. D.D.'s on the Apocalypse, but none with so much mind-and-heartfelt-interest as the three volumes of *Eureka*, by Dr. John Thomas, and I can but believe that God, in His providence, has raised him up, and, with the aid of his fellow-companions, given him the power to produce such a wonderful book, and in the line of their writings generally, I earnestly desire companionship.

Of course, there is no infallibility here, nor in any other uninspired human flesh. In this view of the facts, our individual duty is to keep the eyes of our understanding well open, and leave the rest to the tender mercies of our Heavenly Father. We should not forget, however, that the "Rev." D.D.'s, LL.D.'s, &c., have no more Bible right to their names, than to the immortality of their souls which they claim, nor that their respective Churches, conjointly or disjunctly, is the Kingdom of God, of which the Lord speaks in his prayer. Surely they will not say that the narrow way is crowded with their hosts of converted souls.

Now what else can true Christadelphians do but hearken to the call, "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and I will receive you and be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." But do not Christadelphians have divisions? This is fully answered above, but I will add that in the "time of the end," perilous times will come and grow more and more every day. We know that comparatively recently, a branch of the true vine, which is represented by the Christadelphian "Advocate," which is a number of years younger than the "Christadelphian," which has carried its mission several times around the world, while "The Advocate," which has caused a division, and broken the *unity* which is the basis of Christadelphian fellowship, makes our perilous times more perilous.



“The Advocate” claims to be from the Bible root; but the facts in the case show that it grew from the “Christadelphian” root. To divide the Body of Christ, or “temple of God,” which temple ye are, is to destroy it. “If any man defile the temple of God him shall God destroy” (1 Cor. 3:17).

If this is not a vital question to every individual who takes the name of Christadelphian, I do not know where to find one. It has cost me recently many days and nights of Bible study, and prayerful research, and my conclusion, *which is only mine*, is decisive and definite. God’s rigid test of absolute loyalty is small pay for His gracious gift of an eternity of life and its blessings of joy which is beyond the power of all human language to express!

Affectionately yours, dear brother, only in the glorious “Hope of Israel.”??

LEMUEL EDWARDS,

(*The Christadelphian*, 1904, page 180-181)

---

## **October 1907 – The Death of Dr. Lemuel Edwards**

LANESVILLE, October 4th, 1907.

MR. J. HARDAKER.

DEAR BROTHER, —My beloved husband and brother, Dr. Lemuel Edwards, died Saturday, the 21st September, at eleven o’clock; he was born October 11th, 1817, and only lacked twenty days of being 90 years old. He was a great sufferer, as senile gangrene set in three or four days before he died. Truly God’s ways are past finding out. We laid him away on Monday awaiting the judgment. I enclose copy of hymn and prayer that he wrote himself to be used at his funeral. There was a large gathering, and our faith and hope was put before them in an earnest and forceful manner by brother Taylor. Please notify our brother Walker and sister Roberts, for he certainly loved the *Christadelphian* and all true Christadelphians. Hope to be able to send for it for next year soon, for that and my Bible are my only comfort and help. Thanking you and the dear brethren for their love and help in my time of need.—Your sister in Israel’s hope, EMMA C. EDWARDS.

### **My Last Words, though Dead**

My last will or wish—that some Christadelphian would have sung or read the following in their order:—

The angels that watched round the tomb,  
Where low the Redeemer was laid;

When deep in mortality's gloom,  
    He hid for a season his head.  
That veiled their face while he slept,  
    And ceased their sweet harps to employ—  
Have witnessed his rising—and swept  
    The chords with the triumph of joy.  
The grave in which Jesus was laid,  
    Has buried my guilt and my fears,  
And while I contemplate its shade,  
    The light of his presence appears.  
O sweet is the season of rest,  
    When life's weary journey is done,  
The blush that spreads over its west,  
    The last lingering ray of its sun.  
Though dreary the empire of night,  
    I soon shall emerge from its gloom,  
And see immortality's light  
    Arise on the shades of the tomb.  
Then welcome the last rending sighs,  
    When these aching heart-strings shall break,  
When death shall extinguish these eyes,  
    And moisten with dew the pale cheek.  
No terror the prospect begets,  
    I am not mortality's slave,  
The sunbeam of life as it sets,  
    Sheds a halo of hope o'er the grave.

### **My Prayer**

Almighty and Eternal Father of all created things, the high and Holy One of Israel who inhabiteth eternity, we bless Thee for our being; we bless Thee for life and all of its privileges and blessings; we bless Thee for Thy Holy Word, the Bible, which reveals so clearly Thy glorious purpose in creation. We deplore our transgressions of Thy righteous law, and bless Thee for Thy loving and merciful provision for our redemption through our Lord Jesus, Thy Christ, and only-begotten and well-beloved son, our precious Saviour and the resurrection and life of all who fear Thee and keep Thy commandments. We thank Thee that Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy Name. We thank Thee for its great and

precious promises; eternity of blessed life! the grand immeasurable thought! the purchase of a Saviour's love; it blossoms here, the citadel of truth, the garden of purity, the essence of love! love!! love!!! the brightness—the glory; the synonym of Yahweh, name Merciful Creator; can it be possible that Thy creature of dust can be Thy child?—Thy son? Thou hast promised: help him, Lord, help him through the conflicts of sin, and the desperate struggles for the life Thou hast so mercifully and graciously offered. Give him to understand Thy Word and Thy Will. Give him “a pure heart and contrite spirit.” Give him strength to crucify every sinful thought and sinful act. Give him Thy spirit of love, of purity, of holiness; strengthen his feeble limbs to follow the pathway of Thy beloved son, our dear Saviour, in whom Thou art well pleased. Cover his transgressions and shortcomings with the mantle of the righteousness of Thine Anointed. Wash him clean in the blood of Thine everlasting covenant and let him, oh! let him, be Thy son, to call Thee Father: “O Lord, let Thy Word be a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” “Open Thou my understanding that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.” “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven.”

**Amen**

*(The Christadelphian, 1907, page 565).*

---

## **1913 – The Birthday of the Resurrection**

MY DEAR BROTHER WALKER,

On Sunday, the greatest, if not the very greatest, birthday in creation, I spent the evening with a sufficient number of human characters representing babyhood, childhood, adolescence, maturity manhood, middle age, and dotage; and beside all these, all the active operations known to the human mind were manifest to the close observer. Mother Eve had made that greatest mistake of her life when she summoned every atom of her absolutely irresistible charms to take the place of her husband. She lost sight of herself and her God, and, by the artful subtlety of the serpent, grew ambitious, not dreaming there was the least harm in making the exchange. Still, the penalty had no mercy reserved because of her sex. On the contrary, it remains to this day, having passed through nearly 6,000 years of earth's history since. The Lord returned woman to the place He first put her by announcing the awful penalty of suffering in child-bearing, making it a means by which she could obtain an endless life, and adding to the decree, “and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee,” thus putting her back in her right place as a suitable help to rule his family; and from the lesson we have just read she can never leave it with impunity. Her sin will surely overtake her in due time!

Now, these facts are a standing witness, monument of the truth of God's holy Word, the Bible, and will be to all time! Returning to our caption, I asked a pretty young lady present, Was she aware of the fact that women ruled the world? "Oh," she replied, "I have long known that; it is no news to me." What better evidence can we have to distinguish the world from the Church, and to see the necessity of its being overcome? The world's doctrine is based on the immortality of the soul, and sustained by the man of sin, the son of perdition, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth, and, to crown the wicked power, the infallibility of the Pope, which opens a wide door to all those beautiful women who rule the world, and especially the wives who have to "confess." But the birthday of the resurrection will upset all this! Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.—L. EDWARDS, M.D.

[The writer of this letter was in his 89th year when he wrote it some seven or eight years ago. He now sleeps in the dust, waiting "the birthday of the resurrection" in the literal sense. He was a great friend of Dr. Thomas, and a warm admirer and defender of his work. We hope to meet him in peace in that day.—ED., C.]

*(The Christadelphian, 1913, page 327)*