

Immortalization Address No. 8

In this commentary we will start by examining how the The Greatest Commandment blends perfectly with the understanding that the Nature of Salvation should be understood as a complete enclosure... as we considered in our previous class, when we examined the 3 progressive salvation arks designed presented by Yahweh in the first 3 Ages.

Secondly, we will also pursue the progressive historic testimony of our community leaders through the 19th and 20th century, concerning the issues related to immortalization, such as atonement sin and the sacrificial death of our Messiah. We do need to return to that consideration of our enlightened community's historic position on the issues involved in this theme of immortalization and how our pioneers defended the understandings of divine principles shared by the original Christadelphian community. These understandings should serve as a recalibrating standard so that we might avoid the natural, heart generated distortions that have been historically proven to be inevitable within the body of the enlightened. We have considered a number of the the original expressions Dr Thomas offered in Elpis Israel. Now we'll see how Bro Robert Roberts, Bro CC Walker and Bro HP Mansfield expressed and defended these same divine principles that were being attacked from within the Brotherhood during the 19th and 20th centuries in somewhat similar fashion to how they are being attacked from within the brotherhood currently in the early 21st century. It is interesting to observe how the same issues have to be defended over and over again in generation after generation where the same challenges are being presented with slightly different packaging each time.

However, first we will review how another highly recognizable aspect of scripture blends with perfect compliance into this entire line of reasoning... this theme of salvation being an enclosure, which is an extension of the principle of God manifestation... that multitudinous singularity where many separate components all blend together harmoniously into a single perfect unity. This highly recognizable part of scripture would be the first and greatest commandment. Despite not being divinely handwritten on the covenant stones and placed into the golden ark of the covenant, Jesus identifies Deut 6: verses 4+5 as the greatest of all divine commandments. Sadly, most Bible students – Christadelphian or otherwise – do not offer the same full quote as Jesus for that greatest of all commandments. Like many other issues in scripture this

commandment is frequently inappropriately abbreviated. It is oversimplified. It is minimized... and therefore the full value in this commandment is lost in the darkness of the heart's manipulations of divine expressions. When Jesus is asked what the first and greatest commandment might be here is how **he** answers.

Mark 12:29–30 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: ³⁰ And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

We should ask why... why would Jesus quote that first sentence as part of what we should understand as the greatest of all commandments? ... that 1st sentence being "Hear O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD". Isn't the actual **command** part the instruction to love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. So, on what basis does Jesus require us to understand the prefacing statement declaring the singularity of Christ's father to be a component of the greatest of all commandments. It would be quite a dangerous error to suggest that Jesus made a mistake, or that this part of his answer is somehow inconsequential. So **why** .. why does Jesus consider it so important to understand that first prefacing declaration as a necessary part of the greatest of all commandments... Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord ? Jesus quotes this from Deut 6:4–5. If we simply read the title and name of God in this declaration as they were intended to be read and understood, the purpose starts to come into focus.

Hear O Israel, Yahweh our Elohim is one Yahweh.

I would think any Christadelphian would know that Yahweh means *He Who Shall Be* and that Elohim means *Mighty Ones*. Therefore what we are actually reading is:

Hear O Israel, He Who Shall Be our Mighty Ones ... is He Who Shall Be ... one.

Listen to this Israel... he who is going to become our mighty ones is also he will be one

One... who becomes many... who are all one... this is the very definition of God manifestation, and perfectly expresses the very motivation for the entire creation project... That our Creator may become many who will all be one **in**

Him. This is multitudinous singularity... this concept is projected in the design of the human body... a multitudinous singularity with many different components working in complete harmony –the heart, lungs, digestive tract, nerves, limbs, eyes, ears, teeth.... But with all these separate but interdependent components following the direction of the head, the conscious self-aware intelligence of the human mind. Another example of a multitudinous singularity would be the interdependent one-ness in the balance of our ecological design – all of creation where everything affects everything else. A single ecological unity made up of countless interconnected and interdependent components where everything affects everything else. This concept of multitudinous singularity –which is just another way of saying God manifestation – this is also defined by the divine institution of the family... a single family where everyone takes the name of the father... both wife and children and although they are several, or many, they are all one, a single family... an interdependent group defined within a single bordered expression.... Family.

This is why Jesus defines this particular commandment as the **greatest** of all commandments. That first sentence identifies the ultimate destination and the actual command in the second sentence serves as our map to that destination. The destination is harmony with our Creator. The path to that harmony is loving Him **above** anyone and anything – especially ourselves.... Loving Him far above our Ecclesial Brothers and Sisters and far far above our love for our neighbor... as the love of our neighbor only has to be equivalent to our self-love... much less than what is required for the love of our heavenly Father.

Over the last few years commentaries have been published in our community suggesting that performing what Jesus originally defined as the 2nd great commandment – at least during his ministry – actually fulfills that first and great commandment... that if we love our neighbors as ourselves that we will automatically be loving God with all our heart and mind and life and strength. That is an absolutely horrible lie, that has been published in more than one Christadelphian periodical and expressed by teachers at more than one Bible School. That suggestion promotes the idea that the standard for our love of our heavenly Father should be dramatically diminished to nothing more than the standard of our love for ourselves... which is the divinely required limit, the point of reference for when we deal with our neighbors. We are only asked by Christ to love our neighbors **as** ourselves, not **more than** ourselves. Our

standard for the love for our Creator is supposed to be far, far more extensive than just the love we have for ourselves. We even love our wives and husbands and children **more** than we love ourselves... yet we see and hear commentators in our community that actually suggest that loving our neighbor as ourselves satisfies that first and greatest commandment. That is yet another disastrous minimalization, a diminishing of the standard that is powerfully presented in scripture. Even Christ's new commandment, the commandment he defined as his own at the last supper commanded the disciples to love each other greater than they loved themselves, to be willing to set aside their own lives for the benefit of each other, what Paul refers to in Galatians 6:2 as fulfilling the law of Christ when we bear each others burdens, when Ecclesial members bear the burdens of other Ecclesial members. The divinely appointed emotion of love is not intended to be equally distributed. There is no equality in love. If we don't love our wife or husband more than our parents... our marriage will be imbalanced and we will suffer... but not as much as the wife or husband we place below our parents. We should love our children more than our nephews and nieces. If not, our children will suffer and eventually so will we. Love is not supposed to be equal. The love we are supposed to have for He Who Shall Be our Mighty Ones is supposed to be the greatest love of all... that is **how** we can reach the destination of complete harmony with our Creator. We have to be 'in' Yahweh, within, inside... He Who Shall Be our Mighty Ones. We have to be 'in' Jesus. Salvation is constantly expressed all throughout scripture as an enclosure, a sealing in, a separation to and a separation from, a complete covering, therefore... an atonement. Salvation – atonement – immortalization... is about more than simply forgiveness. That misconception is a dramatic and potentially very dangerous minimalization of divine principles.

The point of this exercise in this specific presentation on the theme of immortalization was to witness just some of the validating depth of the principles involved in our salvation, our atonement. One of our foundational precedents was that when something is true we will be able to validate those divine truths in countless ways and should never be dependent on a single verse or just some word definitions and lexicon considerations which can be so easily manipulated. Salvation should be understood as an enclosure a covering, being inside, within... this understanding fits perfectly into the framework of the foundational principle of God manifestation... that everything outside the state of harmony with Yahweh Elohim will have to be completely eliminated...

just as the Israelites were commanded upon entering the promised land under Joshua to drive out or annihilate every man, woman and child of the Canaanites inhabiting the land that the Creator had every right to give the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We have to be within the salvation enclosure, in complete harmony with our Creator in order to avoid participating in that complete elimination of everything else following that 3rd immortalization event in the divine plan at that transition into 8th millennium when all that is simply flesh will be cut off, as projected by the ritual of circumcision. Harmony with Yahweh requires the elimination of all that is diverse from Him.

Ok, we need to return to our consideration of our historic position on the issues involved in this theme of immortalization and how our pioneers defended the understandings of divine principles shared by the original Christadelphian community, founded on the teachings rediscovered by Dr Thomas. These understandings should serve as a recalibrating standard so that we might avoid the natural, heart generated distortions that have been historically proven to be inevitable in the body of the enlightened. We have considered a number of the original expressions Dr Thomas offered in *Elpis Israel*. Now let's see how Bro Roberts defended these same divine principles that were being attacked from within the Brotherhood late in the 19th century in somewhat similar fashion to how they are being attacked from within the brotherhood currently in the early 21st century. It is interesting to observe how the same issues have to be defended over and over again in generation after generation where the same challenges are being presented, but with slightly different packaging each time.

Let's set the groundwork for Brother Roberts reasoning by reconfirming the original understanding of Bro Thomas as stated very clearly in *Elpis Israel* quoting from Page 167 in his 15 point summary of principles at the conclusion of the section entitled *The Way of the Tree of Life*. We will quote items 13 & 14 from his itemized list.

13. The elementary doctrinal principles of religion are few and simple; and no other reason can be given for them than that God wills them. They may be thus stated:—

d. Sin must be condemned in sinful flesh innocent of transgression.

e. Sins must be covered by a garment derived from the purification—sacrifice made living by a resurrection.

14. To be naked is to be in an unpardoned state.

Bro Thomas states that sin must be condemned in sinful flesh that is innocent of transgression. This expression contradicts the Unammended Christadelphian position claiming that the sinful flesh of Christ was not innocent, but that Jesus inherited the guilt of Adamic sin. Bro Thomas soundly rejected the apostasy reintroduced by Bro JJ Andrews that we have to be baptized into the death & resurrection of Jesus Christ in order to remove the guilt of Adams sin or God will not raise us for judgment. We can also see that Bro Thomas completely disagrees with this renewed and developing distortion that there is no sin identification with the flesh nature, that sin should exclusively be understood as transgression-based... which always assigns guilt.

Bro Thomas also very clearly relates salvation to a covering by stating that sins must be covered and to be naked is to be in an unpardoned state. Atonement indicates a covering, just as salvation does.

OK, now Let's consider how Bro Robert Roberts understood these issues that are directly related to the principle and promise of immortalization. Bro Roberts responded to 32 questions in a tract that had been distributed to Christadelphians by Bro Edward Turney during the Clean Flesh Renunciationist challenge in the brotherhood:

Let's how he answers Question 24: In offering himself, did Christ offer for his own sins?

Answer: It depends upon what is meant. Jesus had no personal offenses to offer for. Nevertheless, as antitype of the high priest, who "offered first for his own sins, and then for the people's" (1), there must have been a sense in which he did so, even as Paul says, "This he did once, when he offered up himself" (2). The sense in which he did so is obvious in the light of the foregoing answers, that the body offered on Calvary being the nature that transgressed and was condemned in Eden; was offered under a condemnation that affected both itself and those for whom the sacrifice was made.

Therefore Bro Roberts certainly understood that some real sin was assigned to Jesus, but at his birth and not his death... the sin that he bore and condemned at his crucifixion, but he bore no guilt for that sin that was identified by his human nature... the root cause of all transgressional sin... for which we do bear guilt. Therefore Bro Roberts would completely disagree with the understanding that any understanding of sin must be limited to transgressional sin and any other sin reference that does not fit within that understanding must somehow be hammered into an understanding of fake sin, nothing but metonymously expressed sin. In Bro Roberts defense against the serpent based conclusions concerning clean flesh he defended both God's truth and Dr Thomas's position.

Bro Roberts continued to defend the truths and principles of our Creator from the apostasy being promoted by the Christadelphian renunciationists who were promoting the concept that God's paternity afforded Jesus a life free of Adamic condemnation... in other words: clean flesh. This concept is being presented again today under the disguise of suggesting there is no such thing as sinful flesh, that there is no guilt-free category of sin identified by human nature, that sin is only transgression of the law or it must be pretend, shadow or fake sin... that is metonymously expressed.

In the Christadelphian magazine volume 10 on page 472, in the section identified as Questions & Questions, which followed the reprint of the 1873 Lecture titled The Slain Lamb, Bro Roberts initiates questions to all those who respected the apostasy of the Christadelphian renunciationists... presuming Christ had clean flesh and there was nothing real about the concept of sin in the flesh... but it is only a shadow without substance. We will look particularly at questions 10 + 11 in this series of questions & questions. These questions can be again posed to those in our community today loudly promoting the same challenge to God's truth, but in slightly different words:

10. —You say that the body of Christ was not sinful flesh, but “a likeness” of it? In what did the likeness flesh consist if it was not of the same sort? It is testified that he was made in “the likeness of men.”—(Phil. 2:8.) Would you, therefore, say he was “not a man but a likeness of one?” If not—if you say he was a man, though Paul says he was made in the likeness, why not say he was sinful flesh though Paul says he was sent in the likeness of it?
11. —Paul says that God sending forth His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, “condemned sin in the flesh:” (Rom. 8:3), how could this have been done if there be no such thing as “sin in the flesh,” and if Christ was “not sinful flesh but a likeness of it?”

Bro Roberts certainly understood the likeness of sin described in Romans 8 as being similarity based... not a distinction of difference, as some today promote. Bro Roberts obviously understood the sin Christ bore at his crucifixion to be a guilt free sin nature and not fake or shadow sin or a guilty sin as suggested by Bro JJ Andrews soon after that renunciationist challenge to these divine truths.

In 1874 in the Christadelphian Volume 11 page 9 Bro Roberts answers this question from a Bro C.F.

“What do you mean by ‘sin in the flesh,’ which some speak of as a fixed principle?”

Bro Roberts answers: Because the invisible, constitutional, physical in-working of death in us came by sin, that in-working is termed sin. It is a principle of uncleanness and corruption and weakness—the word **and** experience conjoining in this testimony. For this reason, it is morally operative: for whatever affects the physical, affects the moral. If no counterforce were brought into play, its presence would subject us to the uncontrolled dominion of disobedience, through the constitutional weakness and impulse to sin.

Bro Roberts expresses this progression being ‘from sin.... to sin’... from the sin force that dwells in human nature that prompts our sin transgressions. This human nature sin is unclean and serves as the generator of corruption and decay. He also clearly states the relationship between physical and moral... that they are not separate but bound together.

In The Blood of Christ Bro Roberts writes:

“My conception is this, that death became a physical law of Adam’s nature in consequence of Adam’s sin; that it became so by the power of the sentence of death operating physically upon him, **as** the sentence of life at the judgment seat will operate physically upon the bodies of the accepted, causing them to become incorruptible; that becoming a part of his being, it was therefore necessarily transmitted to all of Adam’s posterity who partook of that death-stricken-being by physical descent, and became in them also a tendency to moral corruption; that, therefore, as the whole mischief originated in sin, taking effect in the flesh, it could, by casual language, and on the principle of metonymy (putting cause for effect), be described as sin in the flesh: “sin that dwelleth in me.” *referring to Paul’s comment in Rom 7*

Bro Roberts did not believe that we were created in a dying, mortal state. He states very clearly that death became a physical law in Adam’s nature as a direct consequence of his sin. Decay, corruption, disease, death... all these physical principles contradicting our Creator’s standards... are the direct result of sin,... and these contradictions to our Creator’s standards could never have been part of the original completed six evening and morning creative works that our Creator declared to be “very good”. Death, disease and corruption would never fit within what Yahweh would declare to be very good. That presumption would be highly insulting to our Creator.

Bro Roberts defined that 2nd aspect of sin as flesh related... as Dr Thomas said... sin is a synonym for human nature, **in addition** to being the transgression, the contradiction of our Creator’s righteousness.

As previously noted, Bro Roberts directs a series of questions to the reunciationist Christadelphians, who were challenging our brotherhood by

promoting the distortion of clean flesh, very similar to how it is being done again today in the Christadelphian community. These questions from Bro Roberts can also be directed to the waterless wells, the fruitless trees and the Korah, Dathans and Abirams in our community today who similarly reject the scriptural and historic Christadelphian understanding of the unclean, but guilt free, sin nature assigned to Adam & Eve following their first sin ... that must be covered –atoned– with the divine spirit nature of immortality... or perish forever.

We won't look at all those questions, but let's consider a few more in the context of how we face the same false teachings challenge today but expressed in slightly different words. As we noted earlier Bro Roberts presented 85 questions in volume 10 of the Christadelphian magazine in 1873 in a section titled Questions and Questions. We should first consider Bro Roberts preface to these questions in order to understand their intended application.

*FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF ALL WHO BELIEVE THE
RENUNCIATIONIST THEORY,
AS DEFINED IN THE FOLLOWING PROPOSITION:*

That the body of Jesus did not inherit the curse of Adam, though derived from him through Mary; and was therefore not mortal; that his natural life was "free;" that in this "free" natural life, he "earned eternal life," and might, if he had so chosen, have avoided death, or even refused to die upon the cross, and entered into eternal life alone; his death being the act of his own free will, and not in any sense necessary for his own salvation; that his sacrifice consisted in the offering up of an unforfeited life, in payment of the penalty incurred by Adam and his posterity, which was eternal death; that his unforfeited life was slain in the room and stead of the forfeited lives of all believers of the races of Adam.

In reference to this proposition Bro Roberts opposes, it should be understood that this is not exactly the challenge we face today in the Christadelphian community, but it is a variation of this same problem. Those who promote the concept of atonement being nothing but the forgiveness of sins, deny that Christ needed atonement for himself... opening the door to the idea that Jesus did not benefit from his own sacrifice... which opens the door to progressively more and more errors in understanding...as no lie can stand alone. Lies breed. It is their nature. This is why apostasy is always progressive and negatively progressive. This is why those who promote the minimalization of atonement as being nothing more than sin forgiveness are thereby forced to suggest that the understanding of sin should be limited to just transgression of the law with any other Bible reference to sin that cannot be hammered into that understanding must only be a shadow of Transgressional sin, a fake image or substance-less shadow or nothing but a metonymous expression. They completely ignore John's fully comprehensive definition of sin being the

absence of God's righteousness (1 John 5:17 All unrighteousness is sin). It is not simply overt transgressions but the mere absence of our Creator's rightness that qualifies as sin. This is far far more than simply the smaller category of just transgressions of the law. Extensions of this growing problem eventually include the suggestion that mankind was created with a dying nature and therefore mortality was not the direct result of their sin. This is the basis for the fellowship separation with the Unammended Christadelphian community, who claim that the divine death sentence was simply the threat of an immediate execution and not a change in nature. That presumption initiated a further set of falling dominoes of distortions that always have to follow incorrect understandings of divine truths and principles.

So let's listen to just a few of those 85 questions Bro Roberts asks the Renunciationists of the 1870's, applying those questions to both the Unammended community and the teachers within the Ammended community today who are currently leavening our community with similar teachings.

27. Paul says, "God hath made Jesus to be sin" (2 Cor. 5:21). How is this to be understood, if death, the wages of sin, had no hold on him? Was he not made sin in being made of a woman, who was mortal because of sin, and could only impart her own sinful flesh to a son begotten of her?

28. Paul says, (Heb. 9:28), that Christ will appear the second time without sin unto salvation. This is equivalent to saying that the first time was not without sin. In what sense did he come the first time with sin if his flesh was not sinful flesh, and the law of sin had no hereditary claim?

53. So he died for us; but did he not die for himself also? How otherwise could he have been made free from that sin which God laid upon him in sending him forth in the likeness of sinful flesh? Paul says that "he that is dead is freed from sin," and that "in that Christ died, he died unto sin once," being raised from the dead, death hath no more dominion over him (Rom. 6:7, 9, 10). Is it not clear from this that the death of Christ was necessary to purify his own nature from the sin power of death that was hereditarily in him in the days of his flesh?

54. If to this you object, let me call your attention to Paul's definition of the priesthood which Christ took not to himself, but received from the Father: "Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way, for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity, and by reason hereof, he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins" (Heb. 5:2, 3).

55. Again, if Christ's offering did not comprehend himself in the scope of it, how are we to understand the statement of Paul that he "needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins and then for the people's, for this he did once when he offered up himself?" (Heb. 7:27).

56. As Christ was the antitype of the high priest who “went alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people” (Heb. 9:7) is it not required that his sacrifice should comprehend himself as well as his people in the effect of its operation?

57. If you deny this most obvious conclusion, how do you explain the fact that the Messiah Prince in the future age, at the restored feast of the Passover, “shall prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin offering?” (Ezek. 45:22). Do you deny that the sacrifices in the future age are memorial, like the breaking of bread of what has been, in the same way as the sacrifices under Moses are typical of what was to be? Presuming you are scripturally enough informed to give the right answer to this, let me ask how the Messiah’s offering for himself as well as for the people can be a memorial offering, if Christ in dying for us did not die for himself as well?

73a. Paul says the substance of the law or things foreshadowed in it are to be found in Christ (Col. 2:17; Rom. 2:20; Heb. 9:23; 10:1). This being so, can your theory furnish the antitype to the High Priest offering for himself? (Lev. 16:6).

74. Can your theory furnish the antitype to the scarlet which entered into the composition of the veil (that is to say, his flesh?—Heb. 10:20).

75. Can your theory furnish the antitype to the uncleanness imparting bodies of those beasts burnt without the camp? (Heb. 13:11).

76. Can your theory furnish the antitype to the making atonement for the holy place? (Lev. 16:16)

77. Can your theory furnish the antitype to the atonement made for the altar? (Lev. 16:18)

78. Can your theory furnish the antitype to the atonement made for the holy sanctuary? (Lev. 16:33)

79. Can your theory furnish the antitype to the atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation wherein God dwelt? (Lev. 16:33)

Clearly... Bro Roberts understood how it was that Christ died unto sin, and that this sin was the sin producing unclean mortal nature inherited from his mother at birth, sin – for which Jesus ... nor anyone else bears any guilt whatsoever. Bro Roberts very clearly understood Jesus to have needed and participated in his own atonement... which absolutely demonstrates how Bro Roberts and the Christadelphian community of the late 19th century certainly did not limit atonement to nothing but forgiveness and sin to nothing but transgression of the law... which are two distortions that are being widely promoted in our community today.

Bro CC Walker, who replaced Bro Roberts as the editor of the Christadelphian magazine after his death, understood that salvation was projected through scripture as a covering, which is also how he presented the concept of atonement. In his published lecture entitled The Bible Doctrine of Reconciliation to God Bro Walker writes:

Hence a change of raiment and the removal of such garments is the removal of “iniquity,” the end being eternal life. Thus to the “few” in Sardis the Lord said, “They have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy”. And the explanation of the “white raiment” is immediately added: “I will not blot out his name out of the book of life” (Rev. 3:5).

Obviously Bro Walker understood the salvation process to be understood as a covering, the elimination of nakedness, the awarding of the white raiment being equivalent to having ones name included in the book of life. Atonement is about salvation, not just forgiveness. That quote is from a lecture that is part of a compilation of commentaries by Brethren entitled The Atonement: Salvation Through the Blood of Christ. Bro Walker also concludes his comments at the end of the section titled “Atonement in the Old Testament with this perfectly clear statement:

The radical idea then of “atone” in the Old Testament is *to cover*.

Bro Walker associated the white wedding garments given to the bride of that lamb to eternal life... therefore recognizing how atonement in its most comprehensive application, includes the covering of mortality with immortality, or as Paul presents it, the swallowing up of mortal life by immortal life, demonstrating a physical application to atonement and not simply moral. So we see that the understandings about atonement being a covering, salvation being a covering, the two aspects of sin being both transgression and the guilt free physical nature inherited from our parents that produces transgressional sin as well as decay and death... that these are all understandings historically expressed and promoted by our community’s leading Brethren. These are the first principles of divine truths that are under attack in the Christadelphian community today by a number of brethren that are highly respected in our community, but sadly... face very little challenge from our community.

Now let’s jump forward to the early 1970’s in our community of the enlightened, to hear how another magazine editor presents and defends these same truths. Bro HP Mansfield wrote a series of articles in the Logos magazine in the early 1970’s in relation to developing problems in our brotherhood concerning the understanding of atonement. The first article in the series was titled: What is Sin. Bro Mansfield wrote:

quote:

Paul taught as basic to the doctrine of the Atonement, that Christ “died unto sin once” (Rom. 6:10). Did he die unto “transgression of law”? If he did, then he was

a sinner; for if that interpretation were given to the word “sin” in this verse, it would teach that he actually transgressed the law and died unto this!

What he put to death was the flesh, here referred to by the synonym of “sin”. He put to death the demands of the flesh during his life, **and** in the manner of his death. What he did, we are expected to do, so that Paul states: “How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein” (Rom. 6:2).

In what sense can it be said that we are “dead to sin”? In the same sense as it is said that Christ “died unto sin,” by putting to death the flesh, or “mortifying” it (Col. 3:5).

So “sin” is clearly used for human nature; but why? Because human nature, as we know it today, came as a result of sin in the first place, and is now the main cause of sin on our part. In the Garden of Eden a serpent tempted Eve to sin; that is not needed today, for the influence of the serpent has lived on in mortal flesh, so that when the flesh dominates, the serpent speaks again.

Unquote

Bro Mansfield explains that the sin Jesus died to could not have been transgressional sin, as that would have assigned the guilt of transgressional sin to Jesus and therefore Jesus would have been a sinner. The other definition of sin is the sin that Jesus died to, which is the flesh... that is the 2nd and separate but related definition of sin.... the flesh, human nature. Just like Bro Thomas and Bro Roberts, Bro Mansfield also expresses human nature as being a synonym for sin... not transgressional sin, but that second understanding, that second acceptance of sin... where the power of sin resides.... that power of sin that was broken in the body of Christ upon his crucifixion. Bro Thomas, Bro Roberts and Bro Mansfield each explain the reason why human nature is scripturally defined as sin... because this sin in the flesh, this human nature, became a reality on the basis of the first sin in the garden of Eden. As Bro Mansfield explains... that exterior temptation source of the serpent is now resident within us, in our nature, that serpent nature that is expressed simply as sin and also as flesh from a spiritual perspective in the Bible but as human nature from a scientific perspective.

This exercise has been a demonstration that the truths and principles being presented in this series on immortalization have been the foundational and continuing understandings of the Christadelphian community from the beginning. These foundational understandings are currently under attack, being undermined by our community’s books, articles in our magazines, presentations at our Bible Schools and our study weekends and in our adult Sunday Schools. Paul warns about the false teachers from within the brotherhood by which sound doctrine would no longer be endured. Paul calls these brethren grievous wolves when he says goodbye to the Ecclesial Elders of Ephesus. Peter and Jude refer to these respected false teachers within the brotherhood as waterless wells, fruitless trees, clouds without rain, foaming

waves, twice dead and wandering stars. Peter and Jude parallel these Christadelphian teachers and authors to the enlightened community that was destroyed by the flood and destroyed at Sodom. These Christadelphian teachers and writers teaching false doctrines about sin and atonement are associated with Baalam as well as Korah, Dathan and Abiram. Jude warns us of the timeframe for these false teachers:

in vs 17 Jude writes: *But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; ¹⁸ how that they told you there should be mockers **in the last time**,*

Well we are certainly in the last time. The previous last time in the plan of God was the last times of the Kingdom of God, when the nation of Israel –the Kingdom of God – was eliminated ... by God, but through the Romans. That was when heaven and earth (another way of referring to the Jewish nation, due to the original heaven and earth association within the promises to Abraham, Isaac & Jacob)... when heaven and earth were burned up, as Peter describes in 2 Peter 3. Those were the previous last times... when the Kingdom of God ended. Our current ‘last times’ are the last times of the Gentile dispensation, just before the restoration of the Kingdom of God... just before the political nation of Israel has the breath of God breathed into them by the four winds and the Kingdom of God is restored. Just as those previous last days suffered with false teachers calling to the itching ears within the body of the enlightened... to facilitate their own advantages, to their own social elevation, so our current “last days” are identified in exactly the same way... by the presence of Korahs, Dathans, Abirams, Baalams who with feigned words make merchandise of us and the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. Peter and Jude particularly associate these two ‘last days’ applications to the conditions within the enlightened community just before severe divine judgments are inflicted... the flood, when only 8 people were saved out of easily over a billion and who knows how many that would have qualified as Christadelphians... quite possibly hundreds of millions of people. There had to be a few hundred Christadelphians destroyed in Sodom, but only 3 people escaped that judgment. There had to be over 1,000 people in Abram’s community in order to muster those 318 trained soldiers to save Lot. If Lot’s group could somehow challenge the common resources of a local region, then there had to be a substantial number of people in Lot’s group... or there could be no resource challenge. Abram, knowing all the Christadelphians that accompanied Lot to Sodom, began asking to spare the city on the possible presence of just 50 righteous, but was confident to stop at 10. Clearly, Abram was overconfident. There was really only 1, with his daughters saved because of Lot. In every single application of a severe divine judgment against the enlightened community – the Christadelphians of each age – we always see extremely few who are spared divine rejection. Jude references the more than 600,000 Christadelphians who were saved from Egypt but were destroyed in the

wilderness before they could enter the promised land. Only two men out of those 600,000 Brethren were both 'saved out of Egypt' and 'entered the promised land'. That is a frightening parallel Jude makes to our generation in the particular last days that are presented by both Peter and Jude.

The challenges to our current community's foundational understandings of divine truths should be defended, maintained and cherished. It is the difference between life and death... for each of us.

Our next address concerning the continuing theme of immortalization will direct our attentions to some of the more subtle and often mishandled promises of immortalization.

Bro Jim Dillingham