

Glad Tidings

Of The Kingdom Of God



Featured **Articles**

Life With God (p. 3)

I Knew a Man in Christ (p. 5)

Why I Became a Christian (p. 8)

A monthly magazine written and published by the Christadelphians (brothers and sisters in Christ) and available throughout the world.

Its objectives are to encourage the study of the Bible as God's inspired message to humankind; to call attention to the divine offer of forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ; and to warn people that soon Christ will return to earth as judge and ruler of God's worldwide Kingdom.

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Publisher
The Glad Tidings Publishing Association
A registered charity—Number 248352

Life With God

BACK AT THE BEGINNING, in the Garden of Eden, our ancestor Eve was deceived by the serpent and ate the forbidden fruit. The account is in Genesis chapter 3. The fruit had three qualities: *'The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise' (verse 6).*



The account goes on to relate how Eve, and her husband Adam who was complicit in her disobedience, were cursed. That's how sin and death came into the world. Their descendants inherit their mortality and their propensity to sin. They were ejected from the garden, and God set about the long and painful process of choosing from their descendants people who would succeed where they failed. That's you and me, if we want it. People who believe and obey Him, where Adam and Eve disbelieved and disobeyed Him. People who will be given eternal life, when the curse is finally undone in the Kingdom of God. A process which is centred on God's gift to the world of His Son, Jesus Christ:

For as by the one man's disobedience [Adam] the many were made sinners, so by the one

man's obedience [Christ] the many will be made righteous (Romans 5:19).

Love of the World

Our world, generally speaking, does not want to know God. True to the pattern set by Adam and Eve, most people would rather approach life on their own terms. The Bible often uses the term 'the world' to describe the vast majority of humanity, who would rather follow their own way than God's. For example, the Apostle John urges his readers:

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides for ever (1 John 2:15–17).

Did you notice how he summarises 'all that is in the world'? He's referring back to the Garden of Eden. The fruit of the tree was good for food (desires of the flesh); a delight to the eyes (desires of the eyes); and to be desired to make one wise (the ESV which we're using translates John's words as 'pride in possessions', other versions translate them more accurately as 'pride of life').

What John is saying is that life in 'the world' without God is basically motivated by

three factors—satisfying sensual urges (for example for food or sex); the acquisition of stuff (for example goods or property); and the promotion of self.



Of course, there is altruism. The world is not filled with selfishness, it's lit up by small and large acts of kindness by all kinds of people, and it's all the better for it. We'd expect this from creatures that are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). But look at people around you, look at your own motivations—don't you recognise John's analysis of our human nature?

The Example of Jesus

As he prepared to die, Jesus Christ said 'I have overcome the world' (John 16:33). He had lived his entire life resisting the selfish urges of his human nature, he had submitted his will entirely to that of God his Father, and he was about to perform the ultimate act of obedience by laying down his life (John 15:13).

The life of Jesus, as it's presented in the Gospels, is an example for us in every respect. There is an episode at the beginning of his ministry where he demonstrates how to overcome the world. At the beginning of Luke 4 he has just

been baptised; the power of God is at his disposal, and in an echo of Eve's temptation in the Garden, he is led into the wilderness to be tested. Not by a serpent, but by 'the devil'—his sin-prone human nature. First, he is tempted to satisfy the desire of his flesh by turning stones into bread (vs. 3–4). Then he is tempted to seize the world and all its glory (vs. 5–8). Then, to show off his power by throwing himself off the temple wall (vs. 9–12). Each an echo of Eve's temptation, and John's diagnosis of 'the world'. And if you read the account you'll see how he countered each temptation: 'It is written...' His mind was full of God's Word, and he was so attuned to God's will that he could recognise and dismiss each temptation as it appeared.

This is how to overcome the world. It's not a struggle against an external opponent, it's about overcoming our own innate impulses to disobey God. We do this by attuning our will to God's will, and do that by absorbing His Word:

With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. Blessed are you, O LORD; teach me your statutes! (Psalm 119:10–12).

Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and brought tragedy upon the world. Jesus Christ obeyed Him, and brought salvation. Remember John's words: 'The world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides for ever' (1 John 2:17).

There's a simple choice facing each of us. To follow the way of the world, or to do the will of God.

I Knew a Man in Christ

I RECENTLY attended a funeral. It was sad, but a time to reflect. Funerals can be profitable: *'It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for this is the end of all mankind, and the living will lay it to heart'* (Ecclesiastes 7:2).

This man was a devoted follower of Jesus Christ. The order of service gave brief details of his life. It included the dates when he:

☞ *was born into Adam;*
was baptized into Christ;
was married in the Lord; and
fell asleep in Christ. ☞

These may seem like strange phrases, but they are using Bible language and they express important Bible ideas. They were explained during the service, quoting the Apostle Paul's letter to Corinth:

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ (1 Corinthians 15:20–23).

In Adam

We are all born 'into Adam'. The first man, Adam, disobeyed God: he sinned. As a consequence, he had to die. Since then, every human being has been subject to death. As offspring of Adam, we are all like him. We too all sin, and so we have to die:

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned (Romans 5:12).

Unpleasant though it may seem, God says that people who disobey Him deserve to die. *'For the wages of sin is death' (Romans 6:23).*

There is one exception: Jesus, the son of God. He *'in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin' (Hebrews 4:15).*

Jesus was provoked in the most cruel and unfair ways, treated abominably, tortured and murdered. But throughout his life he was obedient to God. Every decision, every action, every word.

On the last evening before his death he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. Anticipating the horrors of his imminent ordeal, his sweat was like great drops of blood (Luke 22:44). He prayed, *'Father, if*



you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done' (v. 42).

And so it was. But Jesus was only in the tomb for three days. Then, *'God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it'* (Acts 2:24).



Now Jesus was not the first person to be raised from the dead. In fact, there were at least three people whom Jesus had previously resurrected (Luke 7:11–15; Luke 8:41–56; John 11:1–44). But all these other people would eventually die again. In contrast, Jesus was raised to eternal life. He is now immortal, just like God.

In his last message to his servants after his resurrection and ascension to heaven, he said of himself, *'I died, and behold I am alive for evermore'* (Revelation 1:18).

And Paul wrote, *'We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him'* (Romans 6:9).

In this way he was, and is, the *'firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep'* (1 Corinthians 15:20). As Paul continues in Romans 6: *'For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord'* (v. 23).

In Christ

Baptized followers of Christ are described as *'in Christ'* (for example Romans 8:1). When they die, they are described as being asleep. They are waiting to be woken up by Jesus when he comes back to the earth:

For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

These people who are *'in Christ'* are in a very blessed position. They are:

- no longer condemned but freed from the consequences of sin (Romans 8:1–2);
- a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17);
- alive to God (Romans 6:11);
- raised up and seated in heavenly places with Christ (Ephesians 2:6);
- sanctified (that is, they are 'saints') (1 Corinthians 1:2, Philippians 1:1, Colossians 1:2);
- blessed greatly by God (Ephesians 1:3);
- close to God (Ephesians 2:13), and guaranteed His love now (Romans 8:39).

Paul wrote of these people:

In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's

offspring, heirs according to promise' (Galatians 3:26–29).

The other expression that is used of them is that they are *'in the Lord'*. And this also describes their attitude and way of life. They preach, look after each other, and work for Jesus.

The funeral programme mentioned *'married in the Lord'*. Such is the unique mindset and identity of the follower of Christ, that it stands to reason they will want to choose a life partner who shares the same commitment. Christians are urged to marry *'only in the Lord'* (1 Corinthians 7:39).



What of Us?

So, in order to become *'in Christ'* we need to be baptized, as a sign of our faith. Jesus commanded:

Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned (Mark 16:15–16).

The same message: without believing and being baptized we die *'in Adam'*. But faith demonstrated by baptism can change this.

As we are dipped under the water, we are associated with the death and resurrection of Jesus. This way we have hope of being raised to eternal life, just like Jesus.

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life (Romans 6:3–4).

The person who is in Christ has a new, transformed life now, following Jesus. By birth we are naturally like Adam and share his fate. We belong to his family which is doomed. By rebirth in baptism we can be counted as part of Jesus' family, trying to be like him now and looking forward ultimately to being made like him, with eternal life.

This is the question: do you want to be in Adam, or in Christ?

Anna Hart

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Why I Became a Christian

LET'S START with this verse: *'By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God' (Ephesians 2:8).*

This verse is enormously significant. God's grace is fundamental. God is the Creator of everything. He is the One who created the whole world and is aware of everything. He owes nothing to us, and we owe everything to Him, and He loves us. He will never forget those who are His children, He is always watching over them and will always come to their aid.

An Empty Life

Let's go back to a few years ago, when I was a self-indulgent and sinful man. I neither accepted God nor denied Him, I was unrestrainedly devoted to seeking pleasure, and lived an aimless and empty life. It all started when I saw an old friend on a street corner. He invited me to his house and we discussed the Bible. One particular verse stood out for me, and it

was as though a light had been ignited in the darkness of my life:

When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished", and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit (John 19:30).

Just three words, but with them his life's work was done: he took our burden upon himself, and saved us from our sins (Matthew 1:21). This verse raised many questions in my mind. Why would a man sacrifice himself for people he has never known? What kind of a man would do that? What kind of response does such a sacrifice demand, of those for whom he died? Is there something more precious than this life we're living here and now?... and many other questions.

I needed to know more, so I started to read the Bible. I came across another verse:

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things



there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires (Galatians 5:22–24).

These verses made a huge impression on me, and motivated me to study the Bible with enthusiasm. This is the Christian life, a life with purpose. It's the life of the Spirit. It's not a life we can attain to by our own efforts or our own merit—it's a way of life that develops, grows and ripens as we allow Christ to take root in our hearts. He has done all that is necessary, and his grace is all we need.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him (Colossians 3:15–17).

After studying the Bible and understanding it, I felt that I could no longer carry on with my previous life. I was ashamed, and recognised myself as an empty human

being full of sins. Another verse came to my attention:

Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

A Life With Purpose

I realized that God had extended His grace and mercy to me through His Son who died for me. He has provided the path of repentance to turn from my sins, and His loving embrace was waiting for me. I repented and was baptised; my old self died, and I was raised to 'newness of life' (Romans 6:4).

I pray every day and thank God for my salvation and the beginning of a new life, with a keen mind which is focused on the goal of God's coming Kingdom.

My life has a purpose, and I have a worldwide family to share it with. I will share the wonderful message of the Gospel of my Lord Jesus Christ with anyone who cares to listen.

Meysam Shirmohammadi



2 John

THE APOSTLE JOHN spoke of himself as a disciple *'whom Jesus loved'* (John 13:23). Now, as an 'elder' among the believers, he was keen to guide them in the way of truth and love, as taught by Jesus.

This second of John's letters is addressed to *'the elect lady and her children'* (verse 1). The 'lady' may have been a particular believer, or it may have been a congregation. The Bible speaks of the community of believers as the bride of Christ, awaiting her marriage which will happen when Christ returns to earth (for example Revelation 19:6–8). If this is the case, her 'children' will be the individual members.



John was pleased to learn that the 'children' were *'walking in the truth'* (v. 4). This is vital. If we do not *'abide in the teaching of Christ'* (v. 9), we shall not receive eternal life at his coming (v. 8).

The Antichrist

In John's day (towards the end of the First Century AD), false teaching was already

being spread within the brotherhood by *'many deceivers'*, whom John terms the *'antichrist'* (v. 7). Their false ideas were the start of an apostasy which eventually affected most of Christendom. For example, most 'Christians' fail to accept the Bible teaching that Jesus was of our nature—a nature from which temptation can arise. They think of him as 'God the Son' instead of the Son of God who *'in every respect has been tempted as we are'* (Hebrews 4:15).

John warned the believers to maintain the distinction between truth and error, and not to allow false teachers to enter their 'house' (or congregation) or to worship with them (vs. 10–11).

The community of Christ must continue to show true love, divine love, by being concerned for the eternal life of others, their fellow believers included (v. 5).

Norman Owen

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Some interesting links with other parts of the Bible:

- ◆ 2 John verse 1—see John 8:32; Galatians 1:8.
- ◆ 2 John verse 6—see John 14:15; 1 John 2:5.
- ◆ 2 John verse 7—see 2 Thessalonians 2:3–4; Acts 20:30.

The elder

To the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth, because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us for ever:

Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love.

I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father. And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.

For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward.

Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.

Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

The children of your elect sister greet you.

(2 John)

How did Daniel Know?

PART 2.

DANIEL CHAPTER 2 tells of an extraordinary dream of Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon. He saw a great image made of four metals—the head of gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and legs of iron. The prophet Daniel explained that this was a vision of Middle East history in advance (vs. 36–44).

The image's head represented Babylon—'You are the head of gold' (v. 38). The interesting thing is that we don't have to depend on a knowledge of history to identify the other kingdoms—they are named for us later in Daniel's prophecy.

Chapter 7 tells of another dream—this time a dream Daniel himself had. Daniel saw four great beasts rising out of the Mediterranean Sea. They were all wild, aggressive, destructive animals. Beasts in Bible imagery often represent warlike nations, usually fighting against God's purpose. The fact that they came out of the Mediterranean indicates that they all had designs against the land of Israel—hence God's particular interest in them.

So, the four beasts parallel the four metals of the image. The first beast was a lion with eagle's wings; the second beast was a bear with three ribs in its teeth, which raised itself up on one side; the third beast was like a leopard, with four heads and four wings; and the

fourth indescribable beast had iron teeth and ten horns.

The first beast in Daniel 7 (which corresponds with the head of gold in Daniel 2) can be equated with Babylon, which is portrayed in the Bible as a lion: *'Israel is a hunted sheep driven away by lions. First the king of Assyria devoured him, and now at last Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has gnawed his bones' (Jeremiah 50:17)*. Interestingly, the Babylonians were fond of representing themselves with the lion symbol.

The second beast in Daniel 7 was a bear, and this represented the Medes and Persians. History shows that these two powers joined forces to conquer the Babylonian empire. As the bear raised itself up on one side, so the Persians became dominant in the alliance. The three ribs in its mouth could represent the three administrative



The four beasts of Daniel 7.

areas of the empire (see Daniel 6:2). This empire was represented by the silver chest and arms in chapter 2.

After Persia came the Greek empire, which is fittingly represented by the leopard, famed for its speed. The Greeks, led by Alexander the Great, took the world by surprise with the speed of their conquests. But Alexander died in his early 30s, and his empire was split between four of his generals—represented by the four heads and four wings. The Greeks were represented by the belly and thighs of bronze in chapter 2. As it happens, the Greeks were well known for their bronze armour.

The fourth beast was *'terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces and stamped what was left with its feet'* (Daniel 7:7). History shows that this was the Roman empire. In chapter 2 it's represented by the image's legs of iron. The Roman empire was split into east and west sections. The Romans favoured iron for their armour.



How did Daniel know all these things about the empires which would unfold in the centuries after his life?

In the next chapter, Daniel sees a vision of two more beasts. First he sees a ram rampaging over the earth; then a goat charges it and tramples it (8:1–8). Later in the chapter this vision is explained—it's the Persian empire being taken over by the Greek empire (vs. 18–26). Again, the details fit: the goat has a great horn (Alexander the Great) which is broken off and replaced by four horns (his generals), and out of one of them a little horn emerges which sets itself up against the host of heaven, takes away the burnt offering and overthrows the sanctuary (vs. 9–12). This turns out to be a description of Antiochus Epiphanes, Seleucid king in the 2nd Century BC. He arose from the empire of one of Alexander's four generals, and is famous for persecuting the Jews and desecrating the temple in Jerusalem.

If you love history, you'll be fascinated by Daniel 11, which is a detailed account (told in advance) of the struggle between the warring Greek generals leading up to and including Antiochus Epiphanes' reign. How did Daniel know all these details?

Nebuchadnezzar was under no illusions about the explanation—he recognised the power of God at work. *'The king answered and said to Daniel, "Truly, your God is God of gods and Lord of kings, and a revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery"'* (Daniel 2:47).

J Hamilton Wilson

To be continued.

Remember Me

I HAD THE DATE clearly marked on the calendar. It said, *Dentist 3:30 p.m.* I had made the appointment myself only a couple of days before because of toothache. Now it was 5:30 p.m. and I had missed it! I had become so involved in other things that the time had slipped by without my noticing until far too late—so there'd be no let up for my toothache, I'd inconvenienced the dentist and there would be a fine to pay.



I am sure many of us have done the same thing, with perhaps even far more important appointments. Sometimes it's due to genuine forgetfulness, or a distraction. Sometimes there is a certain amount of psychological avoidance—perhaps it's something we don't want to face, or we simply lack motivation.

Here is something that's absolutely worth remembering. Jesus Christ gave his life so that he could save us from our sins (John 3:16–17). Because of his perfect life and sacrificial death, we can be saved from a life of hopeless uncertainty, and seize the opportunity of a lasting and meaningful relationship with the God of heaven and

earth. This brings the promise that if we're faithful to the end of our life that relationship will last for ever.

You would have thought we would remember this, especially in view of the horrendous price the Lord paid. But so many simply ignore it, attack it, despise it—put it off for another time, or let it slip their mind.

Where do you fit in with this picture?

Jesus wants to be at the top of our priorities. *'Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it'* (Matthew 10:37–39).

The Christian life begins with baptism, which is the beginning of a walk in *'newness of life'* (Romans 6:4). And there are three key elements to this new life.

1. The Word of Truth

How are we to make something like remembering the Lord at the top of our personal priorities? Firstly, he encourages us to listen to him, discover him, all his motivations, his aspirations. We do this through the pages of the Bible, the written Word of God. Jesus said to his opponents, *'You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is*

they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life' (John 5:39–40).

There can be no holding back on this—we do need to search the scriptures and with the right attitude. As Jesus puts it, we need to be willing to come to him.

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8: 31–32).

From what does the Truth set us free? Surely it's all the worldly comments of political pundits, the media hype, social media gossip, fake news and superstition. A well-founded faith in the Son of God helps us to 'see the wood for trees' in this dazzling world of human wisdom and knowledge. The Word of God gives a 'yard stick' by which we can assess all the information that is thrown at us, even the daily news—what is important and what is not, what is objective and what may be biased, what is healthy and what is unwholesome. The truth truly sets us free.



2. Prayer

In addition, the Lord Jesus has shown us how to pray. Through prayer, the follower

of Jesus can deepen their relationship with their Father in heaven, finding comfort and strength for daily life. This is the prayer he taught his disciples:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil (Matthew 6:9–13).

This rightly has been called the pattern prayer because it provides a framework for all the prayers we will ever need to offer. It is no magic incantation. Merely repeating the words will do no good, but let's consider it carefully, phrase by phrase.

- God, called by Jesus the Father, is the supreme ruler of the universe.
- We can share the same Father as Jesus the Son of God, by being adopted into His family when we are baptised.
- God has a plan—to establish His Kingdom on Earth—and He wants us to share that also. He has provided us with the opportunity of everlasting hope and ultimate fulfilment.
- In the meantime He has promised to provide for our daily needs.
- He has out of His great love provided an opportunity for us to experience full and free forgiveness, because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
- He has promised that even in the most trying circumstances of life there will always be a way out, there will always be hope.

These are wonderful things. The challenge is to carry it through and show you mean it by taking these words to heart and acting on them.



3. The Lord's Supper

Let us join the Lord and his disciples in the upper room, before he left for the garden of Gethsemane where he would be arrested, the night before his death on the cross.

And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood" (Luke 22:15–20).

True believers will keep this feast regularly. The Bible shows how the First Century church established the pattern of keeping it on the first day of the week (for example Acts 20:7).

You may notice that the original feast was a Passover meal. The Passover is a yearly feast which the Jews observe to commemorate God's deliverance of the nation from their slavery in Egypt (Exodus 12).

At that original Passover, a lamb was killed and its blood was used to protect the Israelite families from destruction. At the Last Supper Jesus brought out for us the symbolism of that ancient feast—it was pointing forward all along to his own sacrifice. He himself is presented in the Gospels as the 'lamb of God' (John 1:29).



The bread and wine were shared around all the disciples present. They were symbols which would thenceforward remind all his followers of all that Jesus has done for them. The bread speaks of his life given for their salvation, not only on the cross but every day throughout his life as he constantly fulfilled the will of God. The

wine reminds them of his blood by which their sins are forgiven.

Jesus himself was looking forward to that day in the Kingdom when he will once again celebrate this 'feast' with his disciples. This hope is what binds together all his followers.

Such a simple celebration, but packed with wonderful meanings, which his followers contemplate every time they "*do this in remembrance of me*".

Remember Him



One of the greatest helps to remembering the Lord Jesus is to be part of a group of people who do remember him all the time. That's what Christadelphians try to do. We set great store by reading the Word of God; we try to live lives of prayer; we emphasise the importance of meeting together, on the first day of the week to break bread and whenever else we are able.

We are ordinary people, instructed by God's Word, who conduct for ourselves a simple form of worship—no flowing robes, no crosses, no icons—nothing to get in the way of focusing upon the Lord Jesus Christ and his Father.

In fact the word 'Christadelphian' means 'brothers in Christ'. Christadelphians have decided to be separate and stand aside from all the major institutions of the world—including all forms of politics and from other churches—on the basis that it is imperative to let the life in Christ stand clear. What is really important is that emphasis is given to the principle expressed by the Apostle Peter, '*We must obey God rather than men*' (Acts 5:29).

The man who was crucified alongside the Lord Jesus had little opportunity to express his faith and conviction, but he did what he could. '*And he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom"*' (Luke 23:42).

That is a prayer which we can all echo. That man received the assurance from the Lord that his prayer will be granted. May we each look to our own lives, so that when Jesus returns in his Father's glory (Luke 9:26), he will remember us.

David Nightingale

Questions? Comments?
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SF *The Bible says, "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image" (Genesis 9:6). Is God saying that it's right to kill murderers?*

Ed This verse shows how much God hates murder. The Bible is consistent. When one of his disciples tried to defend him with violence, Jesus said 'Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword' (Matthew 26:52).

So should murderers be put to death?

The Law of Moses was the civil and religious law which God gave to His people Israel, to govern their life as His nation in the time of the Bible's Old Testament. It's recorded in the books of Exodus through to Deuteronomy. Under the Law, the penalty for murder was execution (Exodus 21:12).

We are no longer living under the Law of Moses. Christians live under the law of Christ. Christ told us to live peacefully and not to avenge ourselves. For example, 'Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also' (Matthew 5:39). As the Apostle Paul explains: 'Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honourable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with

all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good' (Romans 12:17-21).

When God told the magistrates in Israel to operate the death penalty for murder, that was what they needed to do. When He tells us not to avenge ourselves, that is what we must do.

Even in Old Testament times, God showed that He is a God of mercy. For example Cain in Genesis 4 and David in 2 Samuel 11 both committed murder. God could have imposed the death sentence, but He did not. This is a precedent we are to follow, in big matters and also in small matters: 'For judgement is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgement' (James 2:13).

Some countries operate the death penalty, and some countries don't. That is their prerogative, it's not the Christian's business.

Across

1 Daniel had a dream during the first year of this king's reign (Daniel 7:1)

4 In Daniel's dream, that of the Ancient of Days was like pure wool (Daniel 7:9)

5 God enabled Daniel to do this to Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2:47)

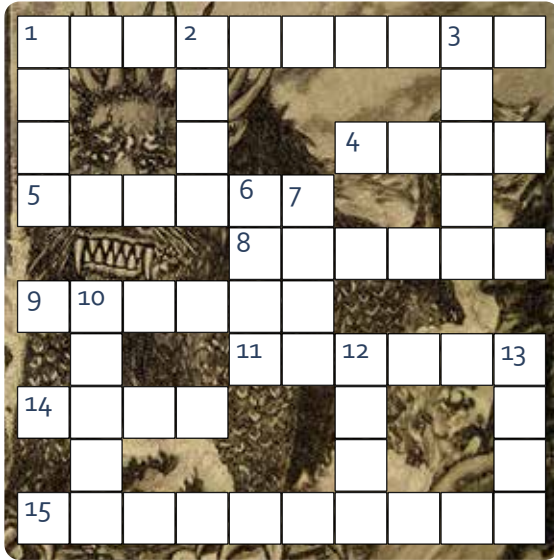
8 Named (Daniel 1:7)

9 Faithful people who inherit the Kingdom (Daniel 7:18)

11 The stone did this to the image in Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2:34)

14 In Daniel's dream, a leopard had four wings of this creature on its back (Daniel 7:6)

15 A description of the fourth beast in Daniel's dream (Daniel 7:7)



Down

1 The second beast in Daniel's dream was like this animal (Daniel 7:5)

2 The interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream was this (Daniel 2:45)

3 Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that another kingdom would do this after him (Daniel 2:39)

6 Deeds (Daniel 9:16)

7 Finally (Daniel 8:3)

10 Living (Daniel 5:19)

12 To depend with confidence (Isaiah 31:1)

13 Nebuchadnezzar's position in Babylon (Daniel 2:28)

(These clues use the English Standard Version of the Bible. If you're using another version some words may not be quite the same.)

Colin Jannaway

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