

In Adam and In Christ

The Christadelphian Advocate, August 1895

A brother writes in *The Christadelphian* that he has been pondering over the two phrases "in Adam" and "in Christ," and that he finds an amount of haze has recently been developed around them which he thinks he can dissipate by a few simple reflections. Among these haze-dissipating reflections he gives the following: "Though saints are 'in Christ' it is only in a preliminary sense. Christ is glorious nature. No one can be in Christ as he is in Adam till he is of Christ's nature. This is a self-evident truth. The inference to be drawn from it would clearly be that the phrase 'in Christ' cannot have the same import as the phrase in Adam until a future event takes place.***At present our being in Christ is, and can be, only a state or condition of relationship."

Now the question is, Where is the "haze?" It must be that it is in the brother's imagining that some claim we are now in Christ in the sense of being of His physical nature. When he says that we are in Christ in the sense of state or relation, he is saying what those he pretends to be opposing have been saying all the time. Where is the "haze?" To tell us that we are not in Christ physically is as consistent as to tell us that the moon is not made of green cheese. It is to deny what no sane man ever affirmed. Where is the "haze?" It is nowhere else but in the brother's imagination. He has persuaded himself, and is trying to persuade his readers, that those he pretends to oppose teach that we are now in Christ physically. This is purely haze of his own making; and if he succeeds in "dissipating" it he will probably cease putting his brethren in a false light. Those being opposed have said and repeated that baptism puts us into Christ in the sense of relation and that we must wait for the redemption of the body. It is "haze" that has prevented this from being admitted and caused some to say that it is a mistake to claim that baptism puts us into Christ. Now does this brother and those he is united with in "dissipating haze" admit that baptism puts us into Christ? He says: "Though saints are 'in Christ' it is *only* preliminary." What does

this mean? Does it mean that we are in Christ or that we are not in Christ? Are Paul's words to be taken as they are, or are they to be supplemented by the words "only preliminary?" He does not say "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ only preliminary have put on Christ only preliminary." The "only preliminary" is the "haze" that needs "dissipating." The phrase "in Christ" is a phrase denoting the relation we come into by baptism into the One Name; and when we thus "put on the new man" we "put off the old man;" and therefore the inference is not that the phrase "in Christ" cannot have the same import as the phrase "in Adam;" but it is that it expresses relation in both cases; "in Adam" expresses one relationship and "in Christ" expresses another. When the latter is put on the former is put off. Hence the attempt on the part of this brother to confine the phrase "in Adam" to nature and exclude relation, and to apply the phrase "in Christ" in a two-fold sense is a total failure, unless mere assumption makes it a success. "In Adam" expresses relation to a sin constitution, and "in Christ" expresses a relation to the constitution of righteousness. If for convenience you wish to apply the phrase in the two-fold sense we have no objection; but you shall not insinuate that those you oppose believe that the phrase "in Christ" means now to the baptized more than relation; at least you shall not without having your insinuations and sophistry exposed.

When this writer says "It is a serious blunder to interpret the phrase 'in Christ' otherwise than one of relationship" he insinuates that those he is opposing have made the "serious blunder." Let him or anyone else quote a sentence to justify this insinuation if they can. They cannot. He cannot. Then why put brethren in such a false light and try to make them out simpletons?

"By baptism into His name," says the writer, "we are brought into a relation of reconciliation or favor." Just so; this is what those you are opposing have said all the time. Now where is the issue? What have you been opposing? No sooner than this admission is made, however, the writer falls back into the pit he for the moment had escaped and says: "It would be wrong to interpret it ('in Christ') as expressive of present results." Here is haze that surely needs dissipating. We are first told that

to be baptized into Christ is to be brought into "a relation of reconciliation or favor with God," and then we are told that baptism into Christ brings "no present results." Why is it these men will not see that there are present results of a character that calls for our deepest gratitude? To be in "a relation of reconciliation or favor with God" instead of being in Adam under condemnation is surely a present result of baptism. What mean these contradictory statements that we do in Christ become reconciled and yet "in Christ" expresses "no present results?" If it means that there are no present physical results then there is the same insinuation that some are stupid enough to say that there is a physical change; and to contend against such a silly thing that no sane man ever dreamed of claiming is beyond the dignity of a fair-minded man. The fact that those the brother is opposing have been placed in the false light of claiming that there are present physical results by baptism into Christ is proof that they cannot find a point to attack them on in the position they really and truthfully take. Their position is simple as the truth and it does not require minds of supposed high grade to comprehend it. They simply say that Adam's sin brought condemnation and alienation and mortality upon the whole race; that as we are born in Adam we are related only to him in alienation and under condemnation. This is our *relation*; and in addition to this we are mortal as the result of the sin that brought the relation. Then, on the other hand, they claim that when we "put off the old man and put on the new man" by baptism we pass out from the *relation* to condemnation and alienation and become related to Christ, in whom we are in a state or *relation* of reconciliation and favor - not alienation and condemnation. Then, when Christ comes, the mortality we inherit from Adam will be swallowed up of life. Surely this is easily understood, and is in perfect accord with Dr. Thomas' way of stating it in "The Revealed Mystery," which we have given several times, but which it is claimed does not mean what it says. It does mean just what it says and it is the truth; and if it were not for "haze" it would be accepted without so much "interpretation." Here it is again in the doctor's own words: "In this life, then, there are two states in relation to God and the children of Adam - the one a state of sin and the other a state of favor; the former is occupied by 'constitutional sinners' of all ages, from the babe to the old man, of every shade and variety; and by

illuminated transgressors, whose sin is not only constitutional but voluntary; and the latter state is composed of persons who were not only constituted sinners and voluntary transgressors, but who, by obedience to the laws of God and to Christ, are constituted righteous. In regard to the righteous, they are delivered from the fear of death, because, having obeyed the Truth, they have passed from death to life; but this is not the case of constituted sinners and intelligent transgressors. These are both under the sentence of death eternal."

If this is not enough to dissipate the haze from before our brother's eyes, let him ponder over the following from "Twelve Lectures," pages 95-96:

The Line Clearly Drawn.

"Abraham the idolater was his own; his own to live like the insect of the moment, his own to die and disappear in an irrevocable grave. Abraham, the called of God, was no longer his own, but bought with the price of God's promises. He entered upon a higher relation of being. He was exalted to a higher destiny, and had imposed upon him Godward obligations unknown to his former condition. Success or failure in the ordering of his life was of greater moment than before. Faith and obedience would constitute him the heir of the world and the subject of resurrection to immortality; unbelief would make him obnoxious to a severer and farther-reaching displeasure than fell upon Adam. In this respect the children of Abraham by faith - that is, those 'who walk in the steps of the faith which Abraham had, being yet uncircumcised' (Rom. 4:12), who being Christ's are Abraham's seed (Gal. 3:29), through believing the gospel and being baptized into Christ, are like their father. By nature children of wrath, even as others, they were in the days of their ignorance 'without God and without hope in the world' (Eph. 2:12), 'strangers from the covenants of promise' (ibid), 'aliens from the life of God through the ignorance that was in them' (Eph. 4:18), living without law, and destined, as the result of that condition, *to perish without law in Adam; inheriting death without resurrection - death without remedy; having neither the privileges nor the responsibilities of a Divine relationship* (italics ours). But when called from darkness to light by the preaching of the gospel they are 'not their own.' They neither live nor die to themselves as formerly. They

have passed into a special relationship to Deity - extra Adamic - in which their lives, good or evil, come under Divine supervision, *and form the basis of future accountability* (italics ours) unknown to their state of darkness at which God winked. This is neither more nor less than the responsibilities of Abraham transferred to them ON BECOMING HIS SEED BY ADOPTION (emphasis ours).

"The law of faith, established by the promises made to Abraham, constituted a center, around which responsibilities of this description developed themselves. All who acquired Abraham's faith came under Abraham's responsibilities." Here the line between "in Adam" and "in Christ" is clearly drawn, and the present results of passing from one to the other fully shown without any haze to dissipate.

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