

Ernest Brady to A.H.Nicholls

A LETTER OF PROTEST

Dear Alfred Nicholls,

In your issue of August 1971 you published an article entitled "For Whom Christ Died" and as it was attributed to the Committee of The Christadelphian it appears it is intended to be taken as a definitive exposition of the present view of the Christadelphian Community on The Atonement. In your Editorial you say you hope that the theme will now cease to be a subject of controversy, but if your readers realise that the article contains unscriptural teaching and if they notice that there are statements made which contradict those made by your predecessor, I think your hope is a vain one. Clearly it has been most carefully worked over and polished and the majority will probably read it quite happily, but it will be surprising if it satisfies those who really think for themselves, especially the younger generation, who, whatever shortcomings they may have, are quicker to detect the fallacies and the logical flaws in what is offered to them as Religion.

I have formed the impression that the article is basically the work of A.D.Norris, because there is on page 361 the following statement about the death of Jesus:-

"He destroyed the devil through death on the Cross, when after the pattern of the serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness, he finally put away the power of sin from himself."

This passage bears too close a resemblance to that other classic blasphemous aberration which declared "When Jesus died upon the Cross, the devil hung there dead," for anyone to doubt that they come from the same source. If I am right, and he has succeeded in getting his shameful belief put forward in the name of your Committee, you are either a very naive victim of a confidence trick or you are guilty of a gross deception. Whether I am right or wrong about the authorship it is abominable and as I expect you are a member of the Committee and as you have printed it and recommended it to your readers I assume that it represents your own belief and that you accept some responsibility for what it contains. The first thing I have to say to you is this; despite the eulogy you pay to the late Editor in your July issue and your references to his profound scriptural knowledge and spiritual understanding, it has not taken you very long to start a reversal of the process of liberation from the evil dogma of sin-in-the-flesh inherited from earlier times, which he was slowly and painfully pursuing. As you wrote, the years of his editorship were not easy, but I am sure that the greatest of his worries stemmed from the battle which he fought, largely unaided, against the bigotry and blind ignorance of those brethren to whom the doctrine of Original Sin is a first principle; perhaps the realisation of the strength of the reactionaries even hastened his regrettable death.

In March 1965 he said this:-

"Human nature is not sin; human nature is not the devil; it is not human nature that was condemned, but sin, in all its manifestations and wherever it had sway."

Since he published the series of articles in which W.F. Barling had affirmed that "For Christadelphians human flesh is wholly evil" and "In that Christ possessed a nature under condemnation there was no violation of justice in his death - it was not wrong for him to die" John Carter had moved some distance in the same direction, but he did not find the courage, or perhaps never reached the clear understanding which would enable him to recognise and admit that human nature is the creation of God and neither better nor worse today than it was in the day when Adam was made. It is perhaps the highest tribute to L.G.Sargent that he did so, though I would not expect you to have mentioned this in your obituary notice.

I have never heard the inside story but it was evident that a very acrimonious controversy followed his article "That Holy Thing" and he was the obvious target of a barrage of bitter recrimination from those to whom every word of Robert Roberts was sacred and those like yourself who still believe that the sin of Adam brought about a change of nature by the implantation of the death principle, making the flesh which God had created good, very bad and sinful; so bad in fact that it was fit only for destruction. Many brethren have come to see how unfounded and foolish this theory is but it is still the basis of Christadelphianism and in spite of all your art and skill in toning it down, as in the article under discussion, it is still the only thing you are able to offer in explanation of why the death of Christ is central to the purpose of God and it is still as outrageous and horrible. At that time I was constrained to write a pamphlet called "Christadelphian Crisis," in which I included a letter written to L.G.Sargent, and although it had only a limited circulation I think it may to some extent account for the many requests you say you are receiving from various quarters for guidance on the principles which underlie The Atonement. As I cannot share your hope that those who study your Committee's article will find either that "the meaning of the death of Christ is expressed in simple language" or "that the Word has been allowed to speak for itself," I am publishing this letter to you, showing where you have gone wrong and then giving a scriptural explanation of why Christ died in the kind of simple language you dare not use for yours because its worthlessness would be exposed.

Reasonably enough, you say that understanding of the subject has often been clouded by the use of non-scriptural phrases and it is your expressed intention to avoid them. Whether you are also wise in avoiding use of the words sacrifice and atonement is another matter. It would be about as sensible to attempt to give an account of our dependence upon the Sun without a reference to light or heat. I do not see how it is possible to offer a scriptural explanation of why Christ died without using these words; unless in reality you do not accept that it was a sacrifice and an atonement. I am sorry to say that this is in fact the truth of the matter - and it is the tragedy of Christadelphianism. You only talk about it as a sacrifice; you do not and cannot believe in it truly as a sacrifice because you say that He had to suffer it for His own salvation.

You also complain about slogans and counterfeit coinage of scriptural ideas, yet the moment you (or whoever drafted it) start to expound your views you adopt jargon phrases which are so hackneyed and have become so much the base currency of Christianity that you do not even realise that you are using jargon. You are under the fond illusion that you are setting out scriptural truths in plain simple language, when in reality you are innocently parroting the oldest error in Christendom. If, as I suspect, A.D.Norris is indeed the author it is no surprise because with him it is clearly a conviction unsupported by rational thought and typical of the myopic blunders into which academics so often fall, but it puzzles me that neither you nor any other member of the Committee noticed what was happening. It only shows how by long use one can become habituated to using, reading or accepting a notion which is both meaningless and unfounded and how necessary it is to think-

Let me show you. You write:-

"The Bible is very plain. Of the nature of Adam after he fell there is no doubt."

If the Bible is so plain, and if there is no doubt, what is all the controversy about? If it so plain, why in your own admission has it been the subject of controversy and division for the whole history of the Truth and why are you even at this late stage making yet another attempt to cool it down? I can give you the answer. It is because what you think is so plain and axiomatic is a false deduction. You have swallowed the nonsense which has made institutional Christianity into a laughingstock to many intelligent people. What you think there is no doubt about, can by scriptural reasoning be shown to be quite false and when from time to time people wake up to the fact then the trouble starts. As long as everybody was prepared to accept what your Statement of Faith says about the nature of Adam after his disobedience there could be peace, but when they ask you to prove the case and they find that all you can offer is the account in Genesis 3, where no fall is mentioned, and the self-evident fact that

most people are sinful, they detect a flaw in your reasoning. People are sinful because they choose to sin.

You say there is no doubt about the nature of Adam after he fell. In the article you have cited some 60 or 70 texts and a few whole chapters. In which of these do you find the proof of the Fall of Man? The 3rd of Genesis tells us that Adam sinned and incurred death but the word fall or anything like it is not used. You yourself say that in the day he sinned he was condemned to death and from that moment he was as good as dead. I accept that, and if you had left it at that you would not be in such a state of confusion. But to say he was as good as dead is not what you imply by the term Fall, as I am going to show you. The simple truth about Adam after he sinned is that he was as good as dead in the same way as a murderer who has been condemned to be executed is as good as dead in the eyes of the Law.

Then you go on to say that as a result, the urge to sin is part and parcel of our fallen nature. In this you are adding to the Scripture something which the inspired writer did not say. But before you explode, just ask yourself this simple question; How did Adam come to sin before he had turned into the mythical fallen nature? The answer is that when he was created he had all the propensities of a normal man and could experience temptation both from within and from without just as we ourselves do. When he yielded to temptation he became a sinner, but neither his flesh nor his nature was changed. It was an apostate Church which invented the Fall of Man and as you know it is defined in the Thirty-nine Articles in these words :-

“Original Sin... is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man... whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and therefore in every person born into this world it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation, and this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated, whereby the lust of the flesh is not subject to the Law of God...etc.”

Would you say it is a mere coincidence that this doctrine of the Church and the belief of Christadelphians are identical, or do you think it possible that the one derives from the other and that both could be wrong? One thing is certain; the Fall of Man has become so much the common currency of Christian Jargon that even you, who ought to know better, use the phrase five or six times in this short article as if it represented a scriptural truth or was something which really happened when in fact it is the perfect example of what you call counterfeit coinage.

Now I want to show you by selection of one side only of the evidence you try to justify the view that man is by nature evil. You go on to say:-

“History shows it; the Fall of Adam was followed by the murder of Abel and then by the multiplication of wickedness.”

Excepting your third reference to the Fall, this is true enough as far as it goes; but you have only quoted those facts which appear to support your theory that man’s nature was now evil. Abel was indeed murdered - a wicked deed - but Abel himself was righteous – it says so - so what did the Fall do to him? And so was Cain, righteous until his countenance fell. And although it is true that wickedness multiplied, apply your mind to men like Enoch and Elijah, Abraham and Moses, John the Baptist and Simeon. How did such men in their several ways and times manage with their supposed fallen nature to be pleasing to God? Melchisedec also, of whom no doubt you have heard, with the title "King of Righteousness," must be something of a problem, for those of you who agree with W.F. Barling that “Adam’s offence rendered his posterity inevitable sinners.”

Continuing, you say,

“Precept shows it too; the last quotation (Genesis 5:6), is almost a statement of what man’s heart is like.”

A precept is a command or a moral instruction and if the precepts of Christ show anything at all they show that if he tried hard enough a man could keep every commandment. When He said “Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,” would you say Jesus was putting up an absurd and impossible standard? So I don't know what you mean when you say precept shows it, too. Perhaps it is a misprint; perhaps just verbiage. The text cited says that the wickedness of man was great and every imagination of his heart evil continually. You are using this passage as evidence of the fallen state of man's nature - so if as you say it is a very plain statement of where sin springs from, why do you qualify it with the word “almost”? Either it is a fact of nature which applies universally or it is hyperbole. If there are exceptions, and with the word almost, even you are obliged to recognise that there are, your argument has already collapsed in ruins. In the very same context as this ‘almost’ universal denunciation, we are told that Noah was a Just man and perfect in his generation and walked with God; so once more you are selective in your evidence and only quote what fits your theory. You will of course hasten to remind me that Noah was not sinless, nor even David. True enough! Poor old Noah! He got drunk; and David got into deep trouble, but neither of them was so wicked as to lay the blame for his lapse on Adam for having sinned in the beginning or on God for having made them sinful. The fact that most men - even all men - commit sins is not proof of a fallen nature; it proves that they do not resist temptation, not that they cannot.

You quote the words of Jesus where He says that it is all those evil things, from evil thoughts and adulteries to, blasphemy, pride and foolishness, which come from within which defile a man, and your comment is “So there we have our human nature.” But this is not what Jesus says; He says that it is the evils which proceed out of a man which defile him and not that the evils proceed out of him because his nature is already defiled. Cannot you see the difference? You might be excused for misunderstanding Him here but there is no excuse if you blind yourself to His declaration that a tree is known by its fruits. “A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things; an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.” Again, only one side of the picture.

Once again you resort to the jargon founded upon the doctrine of original sin and speak for a fourth time of the Fall of Man:-

“Through no fault of our own (whose fault is it?) each one of us inherits desire contrary to the will of God. This is the law of sin, in our members. When we indulge it we actually commit sin. Our nature can only be like that of Adam after the fall.”

These are nothing more than bald unproved assertions - there is no reasoned argument and no attempt at proof. Our nature is like that of Adam both before and after what you call The Fall - for there is no difference. The law of sin only reigns in our members when by our actions we make them the servants of unrighteousness. Adam sinned with the very good nature in which he was created, so why should the fact that we ourselves sin prove that we have inherited a defective nature?

Then you come to Jesus, whose life and example prove conclusively that man is not physically incapable of overcoming the normal temptations which beset him, and again, the 4th time, commit the pitiable blunder of promoting that old wives' tale of fallen human nature into a literal reality, saying:-

“The Lord's fleshly nature was that of Adam after he fell.”

It is a certain fact that the nature of Jesus was the same as the nature of Adam, because He was a man, the son of Mary, but this is not enough for you, it must be fallen human nature and you say that the proof is seen in the fact that He offered up prayers, with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save Him from death; and was heard in that He feared. I have seen some queer bits of illogic but this takes the prize. Because He prayed, with strong crying and tears to be saved from the

death He feared you deduce that He was born with a nature prone to sin. But you say there is no need to rush to His defence as it was no discredit to Him. Fancy!

Jesus was a man like us and therefore capable of suffering and weakness and susceptible to temptation as we are, but so was Adam at his creation, otherwise temptation could not have touched him, but your deduction that Jesus was born with a nature prone to sin is a complete fallacy. If by prone to sin you meant capable of being tempted we should agree; but you mean with a bias inclining towards sin because you equate proneness to sin with what you call fallen human nature; and this is where you dishonour Christ, depreciate His sacrifice and charge God with foolishness, because you say that Jesus was only able to overcome His evil nature because He was the Son of God.

“No man left to himself can achieve spotless righteousness.”

“Sonship of God did not make him sinless, but it did make sinlessness possible.”

“The work was a work of God, without whom sinlessness could not have been achieved.”

You say that He learned obedience by the things which He suffered, but you nullify this when you say it was the work of God. You say that He was tempted in all points like ourselves but how can you believe this honestly when you say that no man can achieve righteousness? You indeed rob Christ of the honour due to Him that He overcame sin but I am glad to see you do not go so far as A.D.Norris in his notorious Personal Confession of Faith and declare that this freedom from sin is not to be lauded as a magnificent human achievement, as though man, any man, by himself could do this thing. This is most certainly one of the worst things any Christian has ever been so misguided as to write and I am thankful that I am no longer in any way associated with people who believe it. Our Saviour is worthy to be exalted and not denigrated in this patronising fashion and those who say such things and you who condone them are enemies of the Truth. If the fact that we often do wrong proves that we are prone to sin, ought not the fact that we sometimes do right to prove that to some extent we are also prone to righteousness? If you object that we more often do wrong than right and therefore our sinfulness proves that we are prone to sin, why does not Christ's complete righteousness prove that He at least was prone to righteousness? You admit His perfect righteousness but you still maintain that He had fallen human nature and was prone to sin. Shall I tell you why? Because if you did not say that about Christ you would be unable to account for His death. It is no problem to us, because we recognise there was no cause of death in Him, as Pilate said, and that His death was for us and not in any way for Himself. He was a true substitutionary sacrifice on the scriptural principle of the Passover Lamb and He voluntarily surrendered His life, which was His own to give or to keep, as the redemptive purchase price for Adam and all of us who were federally in Adam when he forfeited his right to life by sin.

There is a double-barrelled gun aimed at the doctrine of the Fall of Man and it can be shot down dead with either the left or the right. Adam and Jesus were both men; the first was created very good but the second, so the myth says, inherited proneness to sin from the first. They are both put on probation - what happens? Adam, not prone to sin because he had not yet fallen, sinned. Jesus, prone to sin because He inherited the fallen nature, was obedient. Both cases, therefore, indicate the opposite of what your doctrine would teach if it were valid. Adam ought never to have sinned, because his nature was unfallen and he was not prone to sin. Jesus ought to have sinned because His nature was fallen and He was prone to sin. Sometimes you might devote a page or two of your magazine to the elucidation of this remarkable inversion of what your premises ought to show. If you are so disposed it would enlighten your readers to take the discussion a stage further and discover why it was that Adam, who sinned and deserved to die, actually lived his full life span of 930 years, whereas Jesus, who was righteous and did not deserve to die, suffered Himself to be put to death by evil men at the age of 33. Were you honestly to face the implications of these simple thoughts you would be on the verge of understanding why the death of Christ was a sacrifice which if we accept it as such can save us from perishing because He paid with His own life the sinner's debt. But prejudice is blind.

Still dealing with Jesus, after telling us that there was no discredit to Him in having been born with a nature prone to sin, you say:-

“Far greater was the triumph of battling against sin in a body where a fallen nature was entrenched, than would have been the case had he commenced in innocence with a human nature unspoiled by heritage from Adam.”

Is this what we are to understand by allowing the Word to speak for it self? I have never seen where the Word speaks things like this. Where does the Word tell you that a fallen nature was entrenched in the body of Jesus? Where does it tell you that He did not commence in innocence, or that His nature was spoiled by a heritage from Adam. You must have a Word of your own - perhaps the B.A.S.F. - but if you can find a passage in the Bible which states or implies that any man, even the veriest son of perdition let alone the Son of God, inherits a spoiled nature I would dearly like to see it. If Jesus was a body in which fallen nature was entrenched how could the angel Gabriel have said to His mother, “that holy thing which shall be born of thee...” Could a holy thing be a fallen nature? Could the Son of God have commenced as a babe in other than innocence? Could even a babe of the slattern in the street?

It appears to me that in this article you are treating your readers as if they were morons, for you tell them in one paragraph that it is unseemly and beyond the warrant of Scripture when speaking of Jesus to brandish the words defiled, cursed, or condemned, yet on the same page you have told them that He was born with a nature prone to sin. Is this a defilement or not? That a fallen nature was entrenched in His body. Is condemned a proper word to describe this state or not? That His human nature was spoiled by His heritage from Adam. Is this a curse or not? You convict yourself of the most cynical deceit in advising them in one breath that they ought not to use these terms when in the next you state exactly the same things yourself in back-handed language. You know full well that throughout Christadelphian history, from Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts down to this day in the writings of W.F. Barling, A.D.Norris, J.Wilkins and H.P.Mansfield in the Logos, Jesus is described as under the Adamic curse, defiled by nature, bearing sinful, condemned, serpent nature, but in the climate of opinion today and in the light of what your predecessor said you find it wisest now to avoid the use of those terms, but instead of honestly renouncing the false inferences which gave rise to them you have restated them in camouflage. I have no means of knowing whether there is a deliberate intention to deceive your readers into thinking that Christadelphian doctrine is no longer what it always was, or whether you have deceived yourselves into thinking that it is less obnoxious to use reversed negatives, saying that Jesus did not have an unspoiled nature and did not commence in innocence than to say that He was defiled or condemned. It is not for me to impugn your motives or your integrity but judging from your methods in this exercise I think it is right to say that you and your precious Committee appear to be nothing but a school of artistic sepulchre whiteners.

To summarise what I have written; the doctrine of the Fall of Man is an outrage against Divine wisdom and justice, a negation of what the Bible really teaches regarding our relationship with our Creator. Even to describe it as a gross distortion of the truth would be a flattery, since it bears no resemblance to the facts. By shackling yourselves to this apostate myth and persisting in it in the face of reasoned remonstrance you are guilty of five crimes: -

(1) You make God responsible for all sins except Adam’s for only God could have created man in such a way that one act of disobedience would produce a change of nature which we all inherit, to make us prone to sin. This is to charge God foolishly and if it were true make it impossible for Him to judge the world in righteousness.

(2) You deny man freewill and responsibility. “Through no fault of our own each one of us inherits desire contrary to the Will of God.” A.D.Norris said in his Confession, “I acknowledge myself to be a sinner, owing to the sin of my fleshly father Adam, a disposition which I am unable to resist or conquer.” Such belief makes true repentance and conversion impossible, since no man who

believes himself to be the helpless slave of the nature he was born with can be expected either to feel guilt himself or be blamed by a just God.

(3) You create a spurious reason for the death of Christ, making it impossible to apprehend the true principle of the Atonement. "In asking his righteous Son to die, the Father showed how the power of sin could be brought to an end... he overcame for himself the power of sin and has been granted endless life as the proper outcome... and teaches us that our old man must be crucified with him." In these sayings you effectively deny any objective value for us in His death and nullify His own claims, "I lay down my life for the sheep," and "To give his life a ransom for many." Thus to you, His self-sacrifice is no more than an example of what we have to do for ourselves to obtain salvation, and you are reduced to the vain hope of earning eternal life as the reward of good works, instead of, in the only way open to us, receiving it as a free unmerited gift as the reward of faith in what God has done for us through Christ.

(4) You rob Christ of His due honour and assign a dishonourable and unscriptural reason for the Virgin Birth. When you say, "Sonship of God made sinlessness possible," you imply that if Jesus had not been the Son of God He could not have kept the commandments, thus destroying His credibility as our example. He endured and overcame temptation in the same way as we could if we agonised as He did. He overcame sin for Himself, not by His death but by His obedient life, so that none could convict Him of sin. Thus He proved by example what man could and ought to do. When He died, He gave Himself up voluntarily to suffer what was due to sinners, so that they might escape. He was the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world in the type in Eden, when Adam himself was delivered by faith in the sacrificial principle.

(5) You mix up natural corruptibility with the wages of Sin. The last enemy often brings suffering and sorrow, but it ought not to be feared as the wrath of God against sin. Unrepentant sinners will suffer punishment after Judgment, in the second death; this is the death to be dreaded. The ignorant and irresponsible pass away like the beasts that perish. It is wrong to teach people that human life is lived under the shadow of a physical curse imposed by God because Adam sinned. No wonder they turn away from religion. The contrary is the truth - human life is lived under the promise of resurrection to an endless and better life, if only we will honour God and believe in His goodness. It is His will that we should be happy and enjoy His blessings, even under the limitations of the natural laws of this creation, but the greater blessings of the future, under the reign of Christ in the Kingdom of God, will only be attained by those who have realised, not their fallen nature but their own weakness and unworthiness, and have accepted the sacrifice of Jesus as their sin-offering and Atonement.

Recently I received a letter from one of your brethren in Sydney asking me to write a book on the Atonement. I almost tear my hair. In every pamphlet I have written over the past 27 years I have explained The Atonement. We have a Book - a better one than I can write and it simply needs that people like yourselves throw overboard your inheritance of falsehood and just accept and apply the facts of Scripture. I am not clever enough to write a book which will make you do this, but I can point out how the error you share with other sects has made it virtually impossible for you to preach the truth of Christ crucified. It does not take a book to tell why Christ died for sinners, especially if one is not afraid to use the word sacrifice, but if the response from you leaders is to scoff and ridicule and cry "too commercial," "legalistic," "clean-flesh," "the ethics of the pawn-shop," and if those you lead are content to follow your advice and consign our efforts to the waste paper basket, while accepting things like "For Whom Christ Died," they might as well be, as they now mostly are out of print. I wrote one in 1963 called "Thinking it Over" which explains it and anyone can have a copy for the asking. Earlier, in 1959 I wrote an analysis of the peculiar doctrinal position into which John Carter had argued himself with his statement, "a theory that makes the Son of God a child of wrath is self-condemned" and in that I gave an outline of The Atonement which I am told is short, simple, clear and scriptural, so I will conclude this letter to you by reproducing it under the title: -

“BEHOLD. THE LAMB OF GOD”

The rite of sacrifice introduced in Eden and expanded in the Law of Moses, calls for the exercise of that faith by which God is to be honoured. In making an offering in which the life of an animal was taken by bloodshedding, a sinner acknowledged his guilt and unfitness to live and recognised that he could only be saved by mercy. But a lamb, without blemish to typify Christ, was only a temporary expedient and could not give eternal deliverance because the life of an animal was not a true equivalent to the life of a man. The life which had been lost by sin could only be redeemed by a human life. No descendant of Adam could give his life as a ransom, since the life of every natural-born man is a part or continuation of the life which was forfeited, and thus death, as a deferred penalty or debt hangs over the human race. Therefore it is evident that man could only be saved from extinction by one whose life was not derived by natural descent, who was not a sinner and who was prepared voluntarily to sacrifice himself. Jesus was this man. As a child of Mary He was flesh and blood, related to the race and of exactly the same corruptible nature, but as Son of God His life had come to Him direct from the Source.

In His temptations and endurance, Jesus proved that human nature of itself is not in any way defective and showed by example that obedience to the commandments is in fact within the capacity of man. But our consciences convict us all as sinners, so in order that mercy might prevail and one redemptive sacrifice redeem a multitude, God regards all Adam's family as having lost their life in his and thus become alienated. This is the federal principle.

When He allowed His murderers to impale Him to the Cross, Jesus submitted to a condemnation which was utterly unjust and to a penalty He did not deserve, in order to cancel, by the surrender of His own life the debt owed by sinners. He paid on Calvary the debt incurred in Eden. Had the death penalty been inflicted on the sinner he would have perished and the human race with him. Likewise, if we had been held individually accountable we would have perished, but Jesus, free and sinless, was able to suffer death for us and not perish because sin and death had no claim on Him. He gave Himself, the just for the unjust, His life for ours, to bring us to God.

Thus, God provided in His Son, the one all-sufficient sacrifice for sin and purchased back to Himself all those who, alienated from Him by sin put on the name of Christ by faith. Jesus, the heir to all creation and the perfect example of man made in the Divine image, in carrying out His Father's plan of salvation by laying down His life as our substitute, upheld supreme law by meeting its claim and at the same time revealed the love and mercy which initiated it. To believe these things and to be immersed as a symbolic passing through the death which Jesus suffered for us literally is Christian baptism and is the condition of forgiveness of sins and the gift of everlasting life.

Ernest Brady.