

May 7, 2012

To the representatives of the Unamended Ecclesias: Brethren Ron Waye, Ian McPhee, Doug Finlay.

On October 16, 2011 representatives of the Book Road and London Ecclesias were invited to hear a presentation by the above brethren who would provide the Unamended perspective on the issues pertaining to the UA08/NASU unity agreement. We are thankful for the opportunity to hear your presentation on January 25, 2012 but more importantly to gain a better insight into your position in these matters. Your document outlines in some detail the many concerns that both parties have.

It is important in responding to your presentation that we emphasize that the brethren and sisters of the Book Road and London Ecclesias desire to achieve true unity with you so that we can walk together as one body of believers as we await the Master's return.

In attempting to address the many points raised in your presentation, in as concise a manner as possible, we will address the various points under the headings identified in your presentation and where fuller explanations are necessary we will detail these in an appendix.

It is our hope and prayer that our heavenly Father may provide us guidance as we seek to achieve true unity based upon scriptural principles.

In love and seeking peace,  
The arranging brethren of the Book Road and London Ecclesias

Cc All ecclesias copied on the original email from the UA representatives

## **Concerns and Response to the Unamended Written Presentation of January 25, 2012**

Much time has been spent and material published during the present unity discussions and still little head way is being made. Our concerns are that misunderstandings could have been avoided had the opportunity for open discussion been provided instead of written presentations. Even though great care was taken at the Book Road study day to avoid misrepresentation unfortunately some attendees interpreted many of the statements according to their own point of view. Where this is evident in your presentation we will attempt to correct the matter.

Although your presentation contained a great deal of material, it did not provide clarity on the key issues that have separated our two communities. The Central community is a worldwide fellowship that has been bound together by a common understanding of the gospel, conveniently expressed in the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith (BASF); in addition it is committed to the integrity of fellowship based on this common doctrine. You should understand therefore that any attempt to modify this by having different groups, with different statements of faith, with different approaches to fellowship is very damaging and counter-productive.

It is because we believe that the Central position with respect to doctrine and fellowship is scripturally sound that we are determined to challenge any position that seeks to modify it; this is the spirit of the words of the apostle Jude in verse 3 of his epistle.

With this brief preamble we respectfully ask that you consider carefully our comments and responses to your presentation. It was noted by the Unamended observer attending the meeting on January 25<sup>th</sup> that *“the presentations, while at times very candid, were presented in a spirit of goodwill”*; we ask that where we appear equally candid you will accept our remarks in the same spirit.

### **YOUR PRESENTATION PREFACE (Page 3)**

It is unfortunate that the comments contained in the preface were not communicated at the presentation you read to us because at that time assurances and explanations could have been provided in order to alleviate the concerns you have expressed.

You appear to express concern that you *“had been given little opportunity to share perspectives with brethren involved in the PRU in the 3.5 years since the Unity Agreement 2008 (UA08) was implemented”*. It should be understood that this was not deliberate on our part, neither was it our choice. Initially our concerns were with Amended ecclesias that had entered into the agreement, then in 2009 a fellowship study was proposed following the pause of the four Toronto ecclesias. Despite numerous efforts to hold an all-inclusive ecclesial fellowship study this was turned down by the three Unamended ecclesias (minutes of Unity meeting January 23, 2010). It would appear therefore that your ecclesias were the ones that created the lack of opportunity.

It is also incorrect to suggest that the Book Road study day was scheduled after the January 25<sup>th</sup> meeting had been arranged. The date for the study day was agreed upon at a joint meeting of the five concerned ecclesias (described as the PRU ecclesias) on October 1, 2011, whereas your invitation was emailed to us on October 16, 2011. We saw no reason to cancel the study day because of a personal invitation sent to some of our brethren.

You make reference to *“serious charges concerning the integrity both of the NASU/UA08 and of brethren involved in this unity initiative”*. We believe this to be an unfair comment; at no time during the Book Road study day was there any comment directed towards the integrity of individuals. Any concerns we may have with brethren, both Amended and Unamended, results from statements that have been made privately which appear to contradict those made in public, creating an air of uncertainty. Assurances have been provided by certain Amended brethren suggesting that statements made at the January 2010 meeting in Toronto regarding the Clarifications are no longer valid yet your presentation offers little by way of confirmation. Having said this our concern is and has always been the integrity of the NASU/UA08 document in its present form, believing it to be

ambiguous concerning the doctrines that have historically divided our two communities and inadequate in establishing a clear fellowship practice. That the unity document is ambiguous is clearly evidenced by the fact that the original signatories to the UA08 agreement (the four Toronto Amended ecclesias) viewed the doctrinal content and understood the fellowship practice differently than yourselves, as you made quite clear in your January 23, 2010 presentation.

### **INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS (Pages 3-8)**

On page 6 you state *“Further we were concerned that the conclusions presented on the study of fellowship did not reflect the proper emphasis and balance that the scriptures teach on this subject”* (a reference to Class 4 of the Book Road study day). In the first talk of the Book Road study day the speaker emphasized the need to “say what we mean and mean what we say”. The 4<sup>th</sup> speaker at the Book Road study day identified Central practice as Ecclesially-based, noting that this basis was clearly outlined by the Tidings Committee in the 2008 magazine (see bullet no.9 of the speakers summary in the Book Road study notes and slide no.74 of his presentation).

Your comment raises serious concerns on our part because it challenges the scriptural basis of fellowship practiced by the Central community. It also highlights that you understand the term Ecclesially-based fellowship differently to those in the Central community even though you agreed to “respect and practice ecclesially-based fellowship” in the UA08 agreement (bullet no.6).

One of your comments which lacks clarity is, *“we wish to clearly state our belief that there are no doctrinal differences which should stand in the way of full unity and fellowship amongst all brethren in this area”* (page 6). In essence it appears that you are not claiming that differences do not exist, but rather that those that may exist are not considered by yourselves as barriers to fellowship; please be clear on this? One such issue is that of Resurrectional Responsibility as it is defined in Clause 24 of the BASF. Historically most in the Unamended community have never viewed this subject as a barrier to fellowship, but rather have supported the teaching of Thomas Williams who taught that covenant relationship makes a person responsible to the judgment seat of Christ and in addition it is God’s prerogative to raise whom He will.

On page 7, bullet 1b you quote from your presentation of January 23, 2010, which says, *“the concern being addressed apparently is related to the term or expression: ‘inherited legal condemnation’ – a term we neither use nor teach.”* While this may be true the phrase *“inherited alienation”* or *“legal defilement”*, which constitute the same idea, are terms which are used by the Unamended community<sup>1</sup> to describe the condition of the human race prior to entering into covenant relationship. These terms are used in addition to describing mankind as physically and morally defiled; for example: *“the race is in a state of alienation from Divine favor, consisting of a legal defilement as well as a physical and moral defilement (i.e. proneness to sin)”*<sup>2</sup>. It may also be true that these terms are not used or taught from your platform, nevertheless the fact remains that this view of racial alienation is not dealt with in the NASU document.

We might add that attempts have been made to argue that racial alienation is covered in the NASU document under ***Adamic Condemnation – Guilt for Personal Transgression*** however this section is concerned with personal guilt, a view which is rejected in the same Advocate Magazine article.

With regards to your comments on the subject of Resurrectional Responsibility we must once again stress that we do not question your claim that “no false doctrine has been taught from our platforms”; our concern is that the NASU document does not adequately deal with this subject. We are however pleased to see that you offer the two Final Clarifications in the Unity Agreement of 2008 as evidence of your views on this subject. Notwithstanding you will recall in your January 2010 presentation that it was clearly pointed out that the two Final Clarifications were not considered part of the doctrinal section of the document: *“the extra clarifications in the UA08, along with other practical details, such as the effective date of the agreement, the continuance of the BASF, the posting of the announcement, etc. are not “scriptural principles” per se, and are not part of the doctrinal basis of the*

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in the Advocate magazine of March 2006 in two articles entitled *Summary at a Glance* and *Adamic Condemnation*.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from *Summary at a Glance*, Advocate Magazine 2006.

UA08, but are practical considerations the three Unamended ecclesias also agree to” (Unamended presentation, January 23, 2010, page 7).

If this earlier statement is no longer applicable then it would be helpful if some form of retraction could be published making this absolutely clear because we believe that the two Final Clarifications are essential doctrinal statements which contribute towards validating the agreement.

## FELLOWSHIP (Pages 9-12)

As was correctly noted in the article on Fellowship, “*much has been written and spoken in recent years on the subject of fellowship*” (page 10); indeed much has been written by various Christadelphian fellowships, all using the same scriptures to justify a different fellowship practice. The issue therefore is one of fellowship practice, i.e. the *application* of the scriptures which is crucial to a common understanding.

The writings of Brother Collyer have been held in high esteem throughout the Central community and so we are thankful to learn of your appreciation of his words contained in his book *Principles and Proverbs* and willing to accept his words as a sound basis for understanding this vital subject. Brother Collyer however presented a balanced view of fellowship in his article which we believe was lacking in the use of the material in the presentation. The material used emphasizes the *inclusiveness* of fellowship and failed to comment on the scriptural principle of the *exclusiveness* of fellowship (presented on pages 73-75 of *Principles and Proverbs*). We believe this balanced approach was adequately covered in the fourth presentation at the Book Road Study Day.

Unfortunately throughout our discussions both parties have focused attention on the scriptural subject of withdrawal when in fact we should be emphasizing the basis upon which fellowship should be extended. The scriptures declare that basis to be *The Apostles Doctrine*; that unity with the Father and with the Son is based upon the teaching of the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ – “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me **through their word**; That they all may be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also **may be one in us**” (John 17:20-21).

In the first century there was one body, one community of believers who met together on a common basis; the first century community of believers were “together, and had **all things in common**...continuing daily **with one accord...and singleness of heart**” (Acts 2:44-46); they shared a fellowship together in the gospel which required being “**likeminded**, having the same love, being of **one accord, of the same mind**” (Philippians 1:5; 2:1-2).

We are prepared to extend fellowship to any member of the Unamended community provided they can satisfy the scriptural conditions that we can agree on regarding the fundamentals of the faith; provided we can together show that we are indeed of the same mind and same judgment. This process has always been through the acknowledging of the same scriptural truths as expressed in the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith (BASF), which is the basis upon which all Central ecclesias meet inter-ecclesially as noted in the UA08 agreement (bullet no.5). As we have previously pointed out the UA08/NASU excludes the BASF within North America.

Under this heading we would like to address three specific points that you have raised; other points related to fellowship will be addressed when we come to the section under the heading *Questions and Concerns*.

Your presentation states: “*Our fellowship implementation uses the approach: declare what you believe to be the Apostles' doctrines and basis of fellowship and all that partake on that basis do so on their own responsibility*” (page 11). We do not subscribe to this position because in adopting this position you absolve yourselves of the scriptural responsibility to separate from error and by so doing shift the responsibility from yourselves to those in error. The instruction of the apostle Paul was that we should not be “unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness...” Indeed Paul placed the responsibility for separation upon the shoulders of the believer: “Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord...” (2Corinthians 6:14-18). In fact he goes on to advise his readers to “cleanse **ourselves** from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” (chapter 7:1). By implementing your

fellowship approach you are in effect following a conscience-based fellowship which conflicts with your agreed participation in an ecclesially-based fellowship in the UA08 agreement.

The other important observation from the above quotation is that it is only partially quoted from the pen of Brother Thomas and one that does not reflect the sense of his words. Brother Thomas wrote: “...*Declare what you as a body believe to be the apostle’s doctrines. Invite fellowship upon that basis alone. If upon that declaration, any take the bread and wine, not being offered by you, they do so upon their own responsibility, not on yours...*”

A number of points require highlighting:

1. Brother Thomas is careful to state who should do the declaring, “Declare what you **as a body** believe”; he is speaking corporately not individually (as implied in your version of the statement). The Central body of believers has done precisely that, it has declared what it believes as a body and this is recorded in the BASF. The Unamended community traces its origins to a group of brethren who could not accept the teaching of the worldwide community at that time and “they went out from us”.
2. Brother Thomas speaks of “*inviting fellowship*”; he speaks of the emblems “*not being offered by you*”. Such language places the responsibility upon the congregation of believers and not on those who would seek fellowship with us.
3. In the same article Brother Thomas also writes, “*Those who hold Paul’s doctrine, ought not to worship with a body that does not*”. This is not the language implied in your version of the quotation.

You mention that your “*four point fellowship position is set out in Exhibit 2. This has been available since the implementation of the NASU/UA08 process. This approach, based upon sound Bible principles, has worked*” (page 11). In reviewing the four points outlined on page 47 it is evident that your view of fellowship is at variance with Central fellowship practice. For example in point number four you state, “*We continue to consider members of other Unamended ecclesias to be in fellowship with us, **provided they do not declare their rejection of our ecclesial position***” (bold is our emphasis). In effect you are saying that regardless of whether individuals agree with you on doctrine or do not accept your basis of fellowship, as long as they do not **reject** your ecclesial position they are welcome. We can only conclude from this that doctrine is less important than sharing fellowship, and that you encourage a loose fellowship standard; on the other hand we believe that fellowship is predicated on a common doctrinal understanding (Acts 2:42; 1Corinthians 1:10), and those who we will share fellowship with must be consistent in their practice.

Your comment that your “*four point fellowship position...has worked*” is no doubt true within the environment of the NASU/UA08 agreement simply because there is no definitive position on fellowship and evidently doctrine is de-emphasized. This is confirmed by your reference to “*six (6) additional unamended ecclesias (one Ontario, five Mid-West) have joined in the unity process*” (page 11). What is omitted from your comment is the fact that the Mid-West Unamended ecclesias continue to share fellowship with members of the Church of the Abrahamic Covenant who have not signed onto the UA08 agreement. Surely you must recognize the confusion that has been created since the implementation of the Unity Agreement.

The third point we wish to address is your reference to “*bloc-disfellowship*”; you say, “*There are no examples in Scripture of ‘bloc-disfellowship’ of fellow ecclesias, nor of one ecclesia disfellowshipping another ecclesia*” (page 11). First of all there are clear scriptural statements that require ecclesias to withhold fellowship from those that persist in promoting another gospel (Galatians 1:8-9; 2John 9:11; 1Timothy 6:3-5; 1Timothy 1:20); from those who walk disorderly (2Thessalonians 3:6-14; 1Corinthians 5:11); from those who cause divisions (Romans 16:17; Titus 3:10); from those who refuse correction (Matthew 18:15-17; Titus 3:10). While it may be argued that all these scriptures have reference to individuals in particular ecclesias, there are absolutely no grounds for suggesting that it is permissible to withhold fellowship from one individual and not from a whole ecclesia of twenty individuals even though they are guilty of the same error; such reasoning makes no sense. Brother Roberts recognized extending this principle to the whole ecclesia in the Ecclesial Guide when discussing Ecclesial Differences in Section 37, he said, “*These are different from individual offences, and yet they stand nearly related to these, and are best dealt with by the same general rule that Christ lays down for them*”.

Your comment actually contradicts the UA08/NASU document which interestingly upholds the same principle mentioned by Brother Roberts; see NASU under the heading of Ecclesial Autonomy (page 9): “*However, when an ecclesia officially renounces any of the first principles of the One Faith and persists in teaching false doctrine, it shall by its own action separate itself from the reunited community and the community shall so regard it as outside the community. In these circumstances, it is the duty of faithful members to absent themselves from such an ecclesia.*” How do you reconcile this contradiction?

Furthermore the principle has been upheld by the three major reunions in the 1950’s.

1. **1952 Berean/Central agreement** – “If an ecclesia is known to persist in teaching false doctrines, or to retain in fellowship those who do, other ecclesias can only avoid being involved by disclaiming fellowship.”
2. **1956 UK Suffolk St agreement** – “If an ecclesia is known to persist in teaching false doctrine, it is the duty of other ecclesias to dissociate themselves from such an ecclesia.”
3. **1957 Australia agreement** – “If it is established that an ecclesia sets itself out by design to preach and propagate at large, false doctrine, then it would become necessary to disassociate from such an ecclesia.”

Your point regarding “*bloc-disfellowship*” is not valid.

### **THE INTEGRITY OF NASU (Pages 13-19)**

Throughout the presentation concerns were repeatedly expressed that we were guilty of questioning the integrity of the many brethren involved in the development of the NASU document. At no point in our discussions or presentations have we cast doubt on the integrity of those in the Unamended community who have signed onto the UA08 agreement. Neither are we suggesting that during NASU’s development was there some subversive plot to deliberately deceive. The NASU document was developed to a certain level and was removed from the unity process before it was finalized; we sincerely believe that the level at which the process was terminated was insufficient for becoming a viable unity agreement. This whole discussion is not about personalities but about the basis being promoted for unity.

Our issue is with the NASU document itself and the manner in which you understand the additional clarifications (as stated in your presentation of January 23, 2010). However it should surely be acknowledged that not all those on the original Steering Committee now believe as you do regarding NASU. This raises the question of the document’s integrity for providing a sound basis for unity.

We do not believe that it is “*possible to misinterpret or misconstrue certain words or phrases taken out of context*” (page 15), as you note in your presentation. We believe that the NASU document *is* ambiguous and does not adequately deal with some of the serious issues that have divided our two communities; this has been adequately demonstrated in the Book Road study day booklet, “*Come let us reason together*”. Neither do we consider it to be a basis upon which fellowship can be shared.

You also state, “*No human document is immune to this*” (page 15). While we can agree with you in part, we must draw your attention to the simple fact that the BASF has been around since 1898 over which period of time it has served as a defining document for the truth of the scriptures; it has been accepted by all Central ecclesias as the basis for inter-ecclesial fellowship and has formed the basis for earlier reunion activities. Many people might say that the BASF could have been written differently, and no doubt it could, but the fact remains that as a human document it has stood the test of time and has adequately served the Central community over that period. Why then introduce another document which it is claimed expresses explanations by which the BASF and BUSF can be understood? It is difficult for us to understand your reasoning in this regard; NASU is also a human document, subject to the same weaknesses shared by all human documents, yet you fiercely defend making any modifications which would satisfy the whole of the North American Amended community; why is this?

Our concerns with the NASU document are expressed in part in the document “Come Let Us Reason Together”, produced for the Book Road Study Day, but we would also submit the following concerns:

1. Where does the NASU document address Unamended teaching that “*the race is in a state of alienation from Divine favor, consisting of a legal defilement as well as a physical and moral defilement (i.e. proneness to sin)*”?
2. Where does the NASU document address JJ Andrew’s teaching that in order to be *in Christ* we must pass out of Adam – “*We are either in Adam or in Christ, there are no other alternatives?*”
3. Where does the NASU document support Central teaching that knowledge is *the* criteria for resurrectional responsibility?
4. Where in the NASU document does it clearly show that Jesus was not symbolically cleansed from his own physical defilement by baptism?

An inordinate amount of time has been wasted on discussing the results received from the NASU survey. It has been ably demonstrated that no matter how the survey results are presented the figures will be manipulated to suit one’s own position and we do not feel that much is to be gained from arguing about your interpretation of the presenters remarks in the first study of our study day. To date no one has satisfactorily addressed the fact that the NASU document has not been ratified by the Christadelphian community in North America; rather this document is being used in a way which was never communicated or ever intended to be used. The second phase was never implemented and therefore the process was never concluded.

One comment however is somewhat misleading, you noted, “*approval by a preponderant majority of Amended ecclesias of NASU as a doctrinal basis for unity in the Amended community, subject to final approval in Phase 2 once implementation details were developed and shared*” (page 15). It is the use of the phrase “*approval...as a doctrinal basis for unity*” that seems to exaggerate the purpose for the survey. The stated purpose of seeking approval from both communities was to “*determine the support for the enclosed NASU Unity **Proposal**, before asking for a final decision to proceed with implementation*” (NASU Committee 2004 – bold and underline our emphasis); later a similar communication was circulated in which it was noted that “*This vote was conducted to assess the will of the Christadelphian Amended and Unamended communities regarding the NASU Unity Proposal.*” (NASU Committee April 11, 2005). The communiqués provided no indication approval was being sought for *doctrine*.

This is a critical point. Since the NASU was clearly a *proposal* only and was never taken to the second phase level, once this point can be acknowledged we can deal with the issue that the NASU should be opened up and clarified of ambiguities. It is statements such as yours above that have added confusion to the discussions over the past three years and the sooner we can accept what was written about the purpose of the survey, the sooner we can move on to more profitable discussion.

As was mentioned at the Book Rd Study Day, the character of the NASU/ UA08 agreement and the NASU/UA08 process itself is vague and unclear. You know that the NASU Steering committee could not agree on what the NASU document itself stated about the key issue of resurrectional responsibility. At the time of the vote the ecclesias did not know the Steering Committee was divided and they should have been informed. The ecclesias did not understand the terms of the vote, some thinking it was a ‘straw vote’ and some that it was a binding vote. The ecclesias can still not agree on the interpretation of the results of the vote. We were never informed that if the continental vote was not ‘preponderant’ the process would move to be resolved at the very contentious regional level. These matters are not the way of good stewardship and they have given the fruit of the UA08/NASU agreement a bitter taste and caused division.

Under the heading *NASU Mutual Assurances* (page 15) reference is made to correspondence engaged in between committee members in 2005. In reviewing your response we notice that there is no denial of the statements made, neither is there any hint of confirming that we have misunderstood what was written. We are disappointed that you spend two paragraphs addressing your statement yet provide no reasons to believe that you agree with us in your understanding of Clause 24 of the BASF. Why after all this time is this still unclear? The Amended community believe that knowledge and calling are *the* criteria for resurrectional responsibility as expressed in our

statement of faith whereas you relegate it to “a” basis – not for resurrectional responsibility, let it be noted – but for *condemnation*. We will quote the reference in full for clarity:

*“The Mutual Assurances explicitly acknowledge respect and tolerance for different viewpoints on aspects of resurrectional responsibility”*

*“We have not agreed that knowledge and calling are “the” criteria for resurrectional responsibility. We have acknowledged them as “a” basis for condemnation” and that God will raise those whom His justice demands from those who have rejected His knowledge and calling”*

*Mutual Assurance items B & C also recognize covenant in this connection, while item E acknowledges knowledge and calling as elements in covenant making (baptism) as well as in those to whom bullet #3 applies”*

There is little point trying to persuade us that “*no doctrinal differences which should stand in our way of full unity and fellowship*” when you do not speak plainly about something that has been documented as a different position of what we consider a fundamental principle. If you do not accept Clause 24 of the BASF please say so as this will at least help us to appreciate to know where we both stand on this matter.

One final comment regarding the concluding paragraph under this section; it was noted that the Central community depicts itself “*as the true Christadelphians in the unbroken line from John Thomas and Robert Roberts, while UA08 brethren are portrayed as branching off into divergent doctrine*” (page 19). It is a fact of Christadelphian history that JJ Andrew separated himself, along with others, from the Christadelphian body in London, England in 1894. His views presented in *The Blood of the Covenant* became the key focus of his little group, and the remaining body of Christadelphians under the guidance of the Birmingham Central ecclesia amended the BSF to reflect a clearer statement on resurrectional responsibility, hence the BASF. Thomas Williams supported JJ Andrew in part but could not support the position that God cannot raise those outside of covenant relationship, but concluded that God was at liberty to raise those He deems worthy. In 1909 the BUSF was created out of the BSF. From this albeit brief synopsis of early Christadelphian history we believe it is true to say that the Central community is indeed the same worldwide community that existed in Brother Roberts day and from which JJ Andrew removed himself. The Unamended community resulted from this early division following in part the views of JJ Andrew and later Thomas Williams.

## **QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS (Pages 20-35)**

### **Doctrinal Concerns**

We appreciate your frankness in recognizing that our “*perspectives are significantly different*” than yours (page 20). We too “*seek clarification, where clarity is necessary*” and because of this your presentations have raised further questions which hopefully if answered will help us to appreciate where exactly you stand on specific doctrinal matters and fellowship practice. These questions are listed at the conclusion of this paper.

Your presentation goes to great lengths to link NASU with Christadelphian writings (five pages). We have never suggested that everything contained in the NASU document is wrong, if we had thought this to be the case our ecclesias would never have presented a *Proposal to Restore Unity* in 2008 that was based upon the NASU/UA08 agreement. We concur that the scriptures reveal man as “unclean, defiled, fallen, fleshly, carnal, wretched, corrupt,” and that he operates under the constitution of sin. This is not the issue, rather we are concerned that NASU does not adequately deal with how our sinful nature affects man’s relationship to God prior to baptism; we are concerned that NASU allows for something more in the sacrifice of Christ than the scriptures teach.

The sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ is not a complicated subject; in the simplest terms the scriptures teach “that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1 Timothy 1:15). If man had not needed saving (to speak reverently) there would have been no need for the birth of Jesus Christ. It becomes complicated when we modify what has been said; when we interpret another person’s comment. For example you show a slide entitled *Concluding Thoughts* (page 21) in which the words “*Potentially inflammatory language*” are used. And yet when concluding your remarks on this section you urge us to review the many terms we have styled “*inflammatory language*” (page 25). We did not speak of inflammatory language, rather we said *potentially*. The reason for this is because some of the language used in NASU was understood differently by JJ Andrews/T



Williams and continues to be understood in the same way by many Unamended Christadelphians. We are not looking for a document that has been tailored to a specific group of Unamended ecclesias but rather one that expresses in the clearest language humanly possible what we all believe.

We will now turn our attention to the questions you presented in this section of your presentation. We will attempt to be concise in this regard however where we feel that a fuller explanation is needed in order for you to fully appreciate our concerns we have added an appendix dealing with the subject in greater detail. Before addressing the questions posed we would like to outline in simple terms our understanding of the atonement; this can be summarized as follows:

1. Death entered the world of mankind by Adam's disobedience—Romans 5:12, 15; 1 Corinthians 15:22.
2. Death came by decree extraneously to the nature bestowed upon Adam in Eden, and was not inherent in him before sentence—Genesis 1:27; 2:7; 1:31; 3:17, 19.
3. Since that time, death has been a bodily law—Romans 7:23, 24; 8:10; 1 Corinthians 15:53; 2 Corinthians 1:9; 5:4.
4. The human body is therefore a body of death requiring redemption—Romans 7:24; 8:23; Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:53.
5. The flesh resulting from the condemnation of human nature to death because of sin, has no good in itself, but requires to be illuminated from the outside—Romans 7:18, 20, 23; James 1:17; Matthew 15:19; Galatians 6:8; Ephesians 4:22.
6. God's method for the return of sinful man to favor required and appointed the putting to death of man's condemned and evil nature in a representative man of spotless character, whom He should provide, to declare and uphold the righteousness of God, as the first condition of restoration, that He might be just while justifying the unjust, who should believingly approach through him in humility, confession and reformation—1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 2:14; 4:15; John 16:33; Romans 3:25, 26; 6:6; 8:3.
7. The death of Christ was by God's own appointment, and not by human accident, brought about by human instrumentality—Romans 8:32; Acts 2:23; 4:27–28; John 10:18.
8. The death of Christ was not a mere martyrdom, but an element in the process of reconciliation—Colossians 1:21–22; Romans 5:10; Isaiah 53:5; John 10:15; Hebrews 10:19–22.
9. The shedding of his blood was essential for our salvation—Romans 5:9; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:22; Matthew 26:28; John 1:29; Revelation 1:5; 7:14.
10. Christ was himself saved in the Redemption he wrought out for us—Romans 8:17; Hebrews 5:7–9; 9:12; 13:20.
11. As the anti-typical High Priest, it was necessary that he should offer for himself as well as for those whom he represented—Hebrews 5:3; 7:27; 8:3; 9:14; 13:20; 9:23.

Nothing could be more straightforward; this is what we believe; this is what Bro. Roberts believed and as is evident from such articles as "For Whom Christ Died" and "In Adam or In Christ" published by the Christadelphian Magazine in 1971 and 1975 respectively, this is what the Central fellowship believes.

Your questions:

**1) Can you please define your specific definition of the word "Andrewism"?**

Andrewism refers to the views expressed by Brother JJ Andrew in his pamphlet *The Blood of the Covenant*. His erroneous views centred around 'Adamic Condemnation' which involved the violent death theory and racial alienation affecting all of Adam's descendents. The theory may be summarized as follows:

1. When God introduced His law in Genesis 2:17 it was God's intention, should the law be disobeyed, to execute His sentence on that very day.
2. By disobeying the Edenic law Adam would have incurred an immediate death, one which required death by slaying (a violent death).
3. In the case of Adam, this violent death was averted. God did not carry out His own law, thus leaving Adam condemned legally.

4. Believing that the violent death had yet to be administered, it was advocated that everyone born of Adam inherited his condemnation because they sinned in Adam, being in his loins. Therefore all of Adam's descendents (including Jesus Christ) are born in a state of legal condemnation which alienates them from God because of their sin-nature.
5. Under this state of legal condemnation there is a racial accountability for Adam's transgression; all deserve the same violent death, a condition which can only be removed by covenant relationship. In Adam's case the condemnation was removed by the shedding of blood when the coats of skin were provided; in our case (and the Lord Jesus Christ) it is removed by baptism.
6. All who remain outside of covenant relationship stand already condemned and will remain in the grave, God's law requires it.

This we believe is a reasonable summary of Andrewism. A more detailed coverage of this question is provided in the Appendix.

## **2) Do you believe Adam was created in a very good state and fell from their very good state when they embraced this carnal thinking and disobeyed God's law?**

We fully support your use of the quotes taken from the Christadelphian Magazine to support the scriptural truth that there was a change that took place in the constitution of Man after Adam sinned. The scriptures attest to this throughout the Word of God: "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was *only evil continually*" (Genesis 6:5). "The heart is *deceitful above all things*, and *desperately wicked*: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). "For *my thoughts* are not your thoughts..." (Isaiah 55:8). "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" Jeremiah 10:23). "Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and *full of trouble*" (Job 14:1). "And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *none is good*, save one, that is, God" (Luke 18:19). "Who can bring a clean thing out of unclean thing? not one." (Job 14:4). "As by one man's disobedience *many were made sinners*" (Romans 5:19). Paul styles this fixed principle within us as being "a law in my members" (Romans 7:23), "the law of sin" (Romans 7:25), "the law of sin and death" (Romans 8:2), "the flesh" (Romans 8:4- 9), "the carnal [or animal] mind" (Romans 8:7). This language is used by Paul to describe *the natural law of the inward mind when it works in opposition to the will of God*. In Romans 7:18-19,24 he says: "In me (that is, in my flesh,) *dwelleth no good thing*... For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do... O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death (RV: 'this body of death')?"

John says that when our desires are used in opposition to the will of God they are 'lusts' that are 'of the world': "the lusts of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life are not of the Father *but of the world*." (1 John 2:16). Other Apostles also use similar language describing them as: '*deceitful* lusts' (Ephesians 4:22); '*foolish*' and '*hurtful* lusts' (1 Timothy 6:9); '*youthful* lusts' (2 Timothy 2:22); '*divers* lusts' (2 Timothy 3:6 / Titus 3:3); '*worldly* lusts' (Titus 2:12); '*fleshly* lusts' (1 Peter 2:11); and '*ungodly* lusts' (Jude 18).

## **3) Do you believe that Adam's descendents are born into an unclean condition?**

Mankind inherits from Adam (i) mortality and (ii) a proneness to sin (See above).

## **4) Do you believe that all mankind, including Christ shared an unclean nature?**

Christ inherited from Adam (i) mortality and (ii) a proneness to sin (See above).

## **5) Do you believe that "sin" is used to mean both the unclean (defiled) nature... with its carnal inclination and actual transgression?**

We believe that the **WORD** 'sin' is used in Scripture in its *primary sense* to describe our moral transgressions. It is also used in a derived sense, by common figures of speech such as *metonymy* and *personification*, to describe our physical mortal nature with its inherent tendencies towards sinning as 'sin', whereby, the *effect* is put for the

*cause*, or *cause* for *effect*; i.e. our nature is called ‘sin’ by a figure of speech, not because it is a ‘form’ of sin but because it is the cause of us sinning. Our mortal, sin-prone nature is also the result of Adam’s sin and, therefore, it is quite appropriate to term our flesh and blood natures as ‘sin’ by a figure of speech because our nature came about as a result of sin (Cp. 2 Cor. 5; James 1:15).

A fuller examination of this question is provided in the Appendix.

**6) Do you believe Jesus was miraculously begotten of God, yet born of a human mother “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (i.e., the same nature that was the result of Adam’s original transgression)?**

The root of the JJ Andrew/Thomas Williams error was the false teaching that the flesh was *a ‘form’ of sin*. And, thus, if *‘both forms’* of sin (moral and physical) have been justified or atoned for, then the inherited legal alienation that came upon the race can be removed. Without atonement for *both* ‘forms of sin’ inherited legal alienation cannot be removed and therefore, a man is confined to the grave without its removal. Therefore, identification with Christ’s DEATH is essential so that not only are our moral sins atoned for but physical sin (or racial, original, Adamic sin) is also atoned for as well.

This is the error that found its way into the BUSF which led to the false belief that entering into ‘covenant relationship’ through baptism is *the basis* of responsibility to resurrection and judgment. It is this error that lies at the heart of the issue.

In Central, we believe that “knowledge and calling” are *the basis* of responsibility and those who come to a “knowledge and calling” of the gospel WILL be raised to judgment, but baptism assures resurrection to judgment.

You seem to reject this understanding.

Rather, you seem to believe that coming into ‘covenant relationship’ is *the basis* of responsibility to resurrection and judgment, and that God will also raise others upon *a different basis*.

It is this belief that *responsibility* to resurrection and judgment is tied to ‘covenant relationship’ through baptism that we reject. It seems to us, that this is the doctrine of Andrewism but in a different guise.

**Other Considerations**

Before considering the questions posed under this heading we would like to consider some of the comments made in your presentation. For example on Page 26 you say, “*We have heard comments like: ‘If they (Unamended) want to join Central...’ indicating a significant misunderstanding of the NASU process. The motivation to explore what we commonly believe was not born out of a desire to change communities. The motivation was simply to seek peace, and pursue it and to work toward the ideal that Jesus so fervently expressed in one of his last prayers*”. From this comment, and from others you have made to us, you evidently do not believe that you are required, nor do you desire to become members of the Central community. We consider this to be a serious issue and one that must be resolved. In actual fact what you are seeking is not unity but periodic affiliation. As far as we are aware, it was never the understanding of the Central community that the end result of the NASU process would be the continuance of two separate communities with some ecclesias only enjoying periodic fellowship; this was never presented at any of the NASU explanatory meetings.

What this shows is that you are content to remain in a community that openly promotes the erroneous doctrine of racial alienation; you have declared that you will continue to fellowship with Unamended ecclesias on the basis that they do not reject your ecclesial position. In other words you are eager to benefit from the best of both worlds.

You also say in this connection, “*We do not feel that scriptural “fellowship” and “membership” are synonymous terms*”(page 26). We cannot agree with you on this point as we believe that the scriptures teach precisely this.

Paul reminded the Corinthians, “*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (koinonia, fellowship) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion (koinonia, fellowship) of the body of Christ?*” (1Corinthians 10:16); the Corinthians fellowshiped those in the Body of Christ; but they were also **members** of that body as pointed out in a later chapter, “*Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular*” (1Corinthians 12:27). They are synonymous terms and the Unamended community has chosen to remain outside of the fellowship that they once belonged to. During the formative years of the Christadelphian faith there were others who “went out from us”, but who later elected to return to the worldwide community under such reunion documents as the Jersey City Resolution (1952); the Suffolk St Agreement (1956); the Australian Unity Agreement (1958). Why cannot you do the same? The success of all previous reunions was achieved because all parties agreed on a common statement of faith and became members of the same community.

Until you, as members of the Unamended community, declare your intention to draw a clear line between those ecclesias that are not in fellowship and those that are, so that the practices understood by the Central Ecclesias, as expressed in the December Tidings Magazine article on Fellowship are complied with, we cannot acknowledge there being a reasonable basis for fellowship. By remaining part of the Unamended community you continue to perpetuate the division that occurred with JJ Andrew.

Another section causing concern is your statement (page 27): “*In general, our observation has been that the ecclesias that have severed fellowship with us are those ecclesias that are most often perceived (rightly or wrongly) as being associated with Andrew error. **We Don't know that they espouse error**, however, we do accept and respect their decision to withdraw from our ecclesias due to the stand we have publicly taken. We no longer consider these brethren in fellowship.*” We find this statement confusing ; it questions whether error is being promoted in the Unamended community by some ecclesias in spite of clear statements that have been made in the Advocate Magazine in 2006 on the Atonement and Resurrectional Responsibility issues.

You comment a great deal on the practice of the Central community accepting Unamended members in fellowship throughout the world (page 27-29), providing a selection of photographs to illustrate the point. We do not doubt your claims about Unamended members travelling worldwide and being accepted in Central environments; we do however question whether this is accepted Central practice. It has been an unfortunate fact of community history that not all Central members are fully aware of the differences that exist in North America nor, sadly, do some really care about community protocol; we would be naïve to say otherwise. Notwithstanding the exception does not make the rule and some of us who have also travelled widely are not aware that the Central community has changed its position over the past one hundred years.

The Christadelphian Bible Mission has stated that it maintains *a very firm policy that they only break bread on the basis of the BASF, and that they teach this as part of their routine work* (quoted from correspondence with the CBM Chairman, 2012). Because of the difficulties arising from WCF visitors in mission areas, funding is no longer accepted from the WCF. The Christadelphian Bible Mission of the Americas issued a policy statement some years ago stating its determination to continue meeting under the BASF and to discourage the involvement of individuals who were not members of the Central community. Similar examples can be provided.

Our purpose for submitting this information is not to question your word in these matters but to point out that presenting a list of areas that have accepted Unamended members does not qualify as a shift in position for the Central community and therefore cannot be used to support your own acceptance in fellowship without belonging to the Central community.

With these general comments we will now consider the questions posed in this next section.

## **7) What is your position as regards fellowshiping ecclesias that fellowship Unamended Brethren?**

The Central position is that true fellowship is predicated upon a common understanding of the “one faith” and of being of “one mind and one judgment” when it comes to fundamental first principles of Truth. We do not believe

that UA08/NASU in its present form is consistent with the first principles of truth as contained in the BASF. We have applied the principles of Matthew 18 with the Central UA08 ecclesias directly. In the meantime, we hope and pray that UA08 ecclesias (Amended and Unamended) will consider working in a collective spirit to address the doctrinal concerns that Central brethren and sisters have so that we can continue forward of “one mind and one spirit.”

We must understand that outside North America agreements have been reached with the BASF as the keystone statement of faith. The question remains; why are the UA08/NASU ecclesias able to say they meet on the BASF outside Canada but insist in Canada that they meet on the NASU? (see NASU, page 9) Please note that the 2001 NASU originally included the BASF as the touchstone for inter-ecclesial fellowship but was later excluded when the 2003 NASU was proposed.

- b) Do you apply your position consistently throughout the world as you do in North America?**
- b) Would you fellowship someone from an overseas ecclesia that fellowshiped Unamended Brethren?**
- b) Would you accept in fellowship an ecclesia (from anywhere) that fellowshiped Brethren who fellowship Unamended Brethren?**

All these sub-questions amount to the same thing. We do not believe that ecclesias should fellowship with people who have a different basis of fellowship i.e. unamended who are outside of the Central fellowship. We practice ecclesially-based fellowship. That is, we fellowship brethren and sisters who come from *ecclesias* that fellowship upon the *same basis* as us, i.e. they use the BASF as their basis of inter-ecclesial fellowship. We believe that an ecclesia that belongs to the Central fellowship has responsibilities to other ecclesias to uphold the integrity of the doctrines and precepts contained in the Statement of Faith, and that includes restricting fellowship to those ecclesias which fellowship on the same basis. This has held Central fellowship in good stead for over one hundred years and has in some measure stopped the fragmentation that has taken place in other fellowships.

In answering items ‘b’ and ‘c’ we would direct you to your quotation from Bro. C.C.Walker *The Christadelphian*, 1900, p.526 A.E.F. in your section entitled: “Meetings and Mediators” with bold highlighting **“But we have no power to deal with disputes in a far country”** (your presentation, page 32). We remain committed to the belief and practice of fellowship in the Central community is on a common doctrinal basis. We do not knowingly support cross-fellowshipping. We are aware that inconsistencies exist and that being consistent will be only more difficult with the UA08.

- 8) Do you feel your fellowship practice is geographically defined? In other words, do you feel a responsibility to sever fellowship with UA08 Amended Ecclesias because they are local - in Ontario – or would you take this position if the Ecclesias were in Oregon – or Australia, etc?**

It seems that, in keeping with your presentation, you are implying that it is common practice for Central ecclesias to fellowship Unamended ecclesias; this has already been commented on in our general comments. We believe that the closer to home the greater the responsibility; we are most responsible for ourselves, our ecclesias and local ecclesias, but we have responsibility to our entire community. Out of a love for the truth and the brethren we will do our best to maintain the simplicity of the saving truth in these last days.

We would like to ask you to consider what impact your fellowship arrangement is having on the Central community and its resultant division.

## 9) Do you consider Unamended Brethren to be true Brethren of Christ?

To re-iterate the points made in the fourth study at the Book Road study day and provide further amplification to the point: no one is in a position to judge who is, or is not a true brother of Christ, this amounts to making a judgment regarding who will be in the kingdom of God (this would be presumptuous). Our judgment is confined to the area of fellowshiping those who agree on fundamental doctrine and behaviour. It is on this basis that we operate, not on a feeling of who is the one body, but rather on the basis of common doctrine and integrity of fellowship in that doctrine (i.e. those who “walk in the light” are those that “have fellowship” and we are to “not receive those that do not bring the doctrine of Christ” 1John1, 2 John). In general, the complication we see in the unamended community is that some believe the same as we do and some do not. Those that do we would like to reconcile with us, but they must be willing to join the world-wide community of believers and to separate from the identified errors.

We consider ourselves to be in fellowship with ecclesias that use *the same* doctrines and precepts as their *basis of fellowship*. At present, we believe that there are material differences between the BUSF and BASF and that the historical doctrinal differences between the two communities remain and have not been adequately clarified. Until such time that we can determine whether we have a common basis of fellowship, we do not consider ourselves to be in fellowship with Unamended ecclesias.

## 10) We have heard the explanation that Unamended Brethren may be “Brethren in error” and as such you cannot accept them in fellowship. Is this your position?

We believe that the BUSF teaches a different gospel that is inconsistent with the gospel of truth. If brethren affirm their continued support of these doctrines by using the BUSF as their basis of fellowship, without clarification of these errors (unfortunately the NASU does not provide the required clarification), in good conscience we cannot extend fellowship to Unamended ecclesias. Our basis of fellowship with other Christadelphian ecclesias in Central remains our common understanding of the same gospel as expressed in the BASF. We believe that we have a responsibility to uphold those same doctrines and precepts as the basis of our inter-ecclesial fellowship within the community to which we belong. We also believe that there is a limit to which “ecclesial autonomy” applies as expressed by the Editor of the Christadelphian Magazine:

***“Ecclesial Autonomy*** means that an ecclesia can decide how it is going to take certain decisions within its own ecclesia so long as those decisions do not disturb that basis of fellowship which they have in common with surrounding ecclesias. Within those parameters an ecclesia can do what it wants without any outside interference... ***Ecclesial Autonomy does not allow*** an ecclesia to fellowship those who deny a foundation scriptural principle contained in the Statement of Faith. It cannot do that because to do that is to step outside of the basis of fellowship that they share in common with all of the other ecclesias in the world... ***Ecclesial Autonomy*** gives great freedom but within limitations, and those limitations are set by our basis of fellowship. It does not allow an ecclesia the opportunity to extend the emblems to someone who is in a different fellowship. If there are issues of fellowship, they must be resolved. An individual must join an ecclesia in the Central fellowship in order to share the memorials... ***Ecclesial Autonomy does not allow us to step outside of that***... An ecclesia cannot comment upon the internal affairs of another ecclesia, ***so long as they do not involve First Principle matters***. If they are starting to involve First Principle matters then it is not unreasonable for an ecclesia to ask an ecclesia what they are doing. ***In fact, it would be the right thing for an ecclesia to do***... If an ecclesia departs from the One Faith then that ecclesia forfeits its place in the Central community. How that is handled is a different matter.”

CMPA Editor, Mid-Atlantic Bible School 2006, talk on Ecclesial Fellowship, Part 1 (Bibletalks4U.com)

It is erroneous to suggest that simply because someone is called “a brother” or has been baptized, they form part of the body of Christ. Who forms part of the “body of Christ” will be revealed in the Last Day. However, while we believe that we have a responsibility to restrict fellowship from those who do not believe the same things, we

also believe that we have a responsibility to extend fellowship to those who do believe the same things. In Central, it is our common understanding of the First Principles of Truth which forms the basis of our fellowship together. Our inter-ecclesial fellowship is based upon this principle and it is through the voluntary application of this principle that the integrity and harmony of the Central Christadelphian body has been maintained. We have a heartfelt desire to be able to extend to a hand of fellowship to Unamended ecclesias. Our appeal to you is that, for conscience sake, you give us peace of mind that the Unamended ecclesias that wish to fellowship with us have a common understanding of the same doctrines and precepts of the Truth that bind us together in the Central Fellowship.

**11) On a similar note, do you feel the baptisms of Unamended Brethren are legitimately in the saving name of Jesus and should be recognized?**

A valid or legitimate baptism is based upon the scriptural principle, *“he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved”* (Mark 16:16). The things believed consist of *“the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ”* (Acts 8:12), which things we believe are conveniently summarized in the BASF. When application for baptism is made an interview is arranged to determine if the candidate believes what we consider to be the truth; this would be equally true for those applying from a different fellowship. This principle is outlined in most constitutions: *“That we recognize as brethren, and welcome to our fellowship, all who have been immersed (by whomsoever) after their acceptance of the same doctrines and precepts.”* If it is determined that an individual did not believe the same truths when they were baptized then, as long as the individual can affirm their belief in the first principles of the one faith as conveniently summarized in the BASF, we would advise them of their situation and recommend rebaptism. The precedent for rebaptism is established in Acts 19:1-5 where those who had been baptized by John were required to be re-baptized because of a deficiency in understanding.

No doubt as in all things human, there are inconsistencies. However, scripturally, doctrine is the focus of our responsibility and as believers we must hold to the fundamental truth of the gospel. Doctrine is a public matter and is not an area for compromise. Whatever inconsistencies and flexibility have been shown on the baptismal front it matters not. Common doctrine is the basis of fellowship and the Unamended brethren do not share that with us. We do not know the numbers of who believes what, but we genuinely desire to reconcile with those who believe the same things as we have believed in the Central fellowship.

**12) Do you really believe these are accurate descriptions of either UA08 Amended or Unamended Brethren?**

This question is based on the incorrect conclusions stated on pages 31-32 of your presentation under the heading *Are Unamended Christadelphians Brethren?* You list nine quotations taken from Appendix F of the Book Road study day booklet (page 63, bullet no.3) then draw the conclusion that these verses were used to describe members of the Unamended community. Nothing could be further from the truth; the appendix is headed *“The Scriptural Principles, Wisdom, and Practical Outworking of the Central Fellowship Practice”* and the verses came under the sub-heading *“Wrong doctrine, arising even from within the ecclesia, jeopardizes salvation, etc.”* The verses were cited as conveying Biblical principles, not that we are suggesting that the many characteristics you listed apply to the Unamended; they are listed to demonstrate that the Scriptures clearly teach that problems left unchecked will have a leavening effect.

Based on the examples of scripture, fundamental departures in a single area of doctrine or practice are sufficient to engage in a process to recover and reconcile (this process includes in the end if unsuccessful in earlier stages, withdrawal). Consider the following:

Jesus gave up his life and he calls us to do the same – do we really do it – not even close to what he did – but in *principle* we must. Can you relate to Job? None of us have experienced the loss he has – but we relate to him even though our suffering and loss may not be comparable. Can you relate to David’s murder and adultery? We might not have sinned as he did, but we understand the *principles* of sin, lust, pride, death and forgiveness. In the

end they are the same. Can you relate to a brother like Hymenaus? Either being him or dealing with him? It might not be the specific doctrinal error that he had, but we can relate to it because it is another fundamental error.

If you cannot see this, then the scriptures will become powerless and empty page after page. While none of the characteristics listed by these verses may apply to any one of us (yet who can claim such a high standard?), nonetheless the principle stands; this is the exhortation emphasized by the apostle Paul in 1Corinthians 10 where he parallels the Corinthian ecclesia to those in the wilderness, idolaters, fornicators etc., (verses 6-10). The Corinthians may not have literally built a golden calf or danced naked; they may not have literally brought in a Midianitish woman into the ecclesia, but the principle held true and Paul extended a sober warning to the brethren and sisters. The exhortation applies equally to us all.

**13) If they do not represent an accurate description, is it appropriate use of scripture to categorize brethren this was as a means of “drawing from a principle”?**

Your comments lead us down a serious path of making the scriptures irrelevant? Do the words of scripture apply to brethren who have departed from sound doctrine or do they not? Yes, they do, otherwise they are filler on a page. No one wishes to see a brother in a negative light, but when they persist in certain behaviours and/or doctrine, these scriptures become highly relevant. They were relevant in the first century and they are now. Yes, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century there is error from within the brotherhood. We are well aware that while certain behaviour is insincere and wicked from every angle, that others may be sincerely wrong.

**14) For clarification, have the Book Road and London Ecclesias taken the official position of severing from fellowship the UA08 Amended Ecclesias? If so, was this done by a majority vote of the whole Ecclesia?**

No they have not officially severed – they have stated positively their fellowship policy which has not changed in principle from the past and have indicated to the wider community that the UA08 have departed from the fundamentals we have cherished and aim to change Central fellowship practice.

Our basis of inter-ecclesial fellowship remains the gospel of the ‘One Faith’ as conveniently summarized in the doctrines and precepts contained in the BASF. This has been our basis of fellowship for over 100 years and it remains our basis of fellowship today. We do not believe that UA08 provides an adequate basis of fellowship with Unamended Christadelphian ecclesias because we do not believe that it is consistent with the doctrines and precepts contained in the BASF.

**15) Do you agree with the Pioneer writers on this issue – that Bible Schools, and other unions larger than the ecclesia must not attempt to exercise any authority or influence over other ecclesias?**

Bible schools should be in harmony with the direction of ecclesias. The position of most Amended Bible Schools continues as they were originally established. They welcome all who meet only on the basis of the BASF. This is recognized in England and Australia which have agreements based on the BASF. The existing discord lies at the feet of those forcing a change which has and continues to cause problems in Ontario and now outside of Ontario.

It is accepted that each ecclesia is independent and can make their own decisions, but not without ramifications. If it is a matter of fundamental doctrine, then the ecclesia concerned must understand that they have departed and that their straying will not be accepted by the group. It is sad that the implementation of the UA08 has resulted in members being forced to leave their ecclesias and further that ecclesias have forced their will on the larger community such as never has been seen before in this area. It is surprising that a question like this can be asked. A small number of ecclesias have banded together and have unilaterally imposed a different basis of fellowship



and a different way of practicing fellowship upon the local ecclesias and are attempting in the process to break down Central fellowship.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

It is evident that a gulf still separates us, both in doctrine and fellowship practice. We are of the firm opinion that unity can be achieved if both sides accept the BASF as the touchstone document and that a modified UA08/NASU agreement becomes recognized as an explanatory document only. This should not be difficult seeing that you have already agreed to the BASF being the basis of inter-ecclesial fellowship outside of North America. We want unity to become a reality; however, it must be on a clear, sound, scriptural basis.

Please find attached at the end a series of questions we would appreciate your answers to in order to further help our understanding of your position and beliefs.

## PART 1: Doctrinal Considerations – Supplementary comments to your questions

### 1) Can you please define your specific definition of the word “Andrewism”?

The errors that Bro. JJ Andrew taught are laid out in his pamphlet *“The Blood of the Covenant”* as well as in other writings such as *“The Sanctuary Keeper” Magazine*. These errors are summarized as follows:

(1) As a consequence of Adam sinning, his ‘sin’ or ‘offense’ was transmitted to his descendants as a physical form of sin called ‘Adamic sin’ or ‘inherited sin’ or ‘sin-in-the-flesh’. We are, therefore, “alienated” from God not only on account of “ignorance” and “wicked works” (verse), but on account of the nature that we bare.

“When Adam disobeyed, all his descendants were in his loins... They were [therefore], ‘made sinners’ (Romans 5:19) **without any exercise of will on their part**. That is to say, God, by accounting them to be in Adam when he sinned, and by defining their evil desire to be ‘sin,’ has constituted them **‘sinners by birth’**.”

“Sin-in-the-flesh’ [the evil desire of the flesh] was the result of the ‘offense’ of Adam...”

“Through the possession of ‘sin-in-the-flesh’ men bare the ‘offense’ of Adam...”

“Sin has thus **two aspects, or forms, moral and physical...**”

“A violent death is the punishment due to the one as well as to the other.”

(2) Man requires a covering, justification, reconciliation, atonement, purging, cleansing, remission, redemption, purification, and forgiveness from BOTH his *personal sins* and from *physical sin* inherited from Adam.

“**Man is a sinner by birth and by deed**, and needs sacrifice **to cover his sin...**”

“Justification from **the ‘offense’** of Adam [ie. sin-in-the-flesh] is, therefore, necessary **as well as** justification from **individual sins...**”

“Blood-shedding is needed **to cleanse from physical, as well as** from moral defilement...”

“Sacrifice is as essential **to take away sin in its physical**, as in its moral, aspect.”

(3) Christ also possessed sin physically and required justification, reconciliation, atonement, purging, cleansing, remission, redemption, purification, and forgiveness from *physical sin*

“**Christ only possessed sin physically**, not morally, but all who are sprinkled with his blood possess sin **in both forms...**”

“**He died to cleanse himself from Adamic sin**; and this is accepted by God as the means of cleansing others from Adamic sin and also from their own sins. Thus the same death takes away **personal and inherited sin**.”

(4) We receive a covering or justification for both our personal sins *and* from physical sin by Christ’s shed blood (ie. Sacrificial death);

“Justification from individual sins... **as well as** justification from the ‘offense’ of Adam... is provided for in the sacrifice of Christ...”

“Animal sacrifice, circumcision and baptism, being representations of Christ’s death, have been appointed, in conjunction with that death, as a means of **legal justification** [ie. the nullification of God’s **pronouncement** or “Divine decree” upon Adam to death].”

"The death of the animal... averted a violent death thereby prolonging his life, and giving him a second probation."

"Just as Adam's descendants were in his loins when he partook of the tree, so were they in his loins when he was judged and condemned..."

Therefore, like Adam "they deserve, whether actual transgressors or not, a violent death in the execution of the Edenic law..." and "**are liable as soon as they are born to be cut off by death.**"

"As soon as Adam was clothed with animal skins he was justified... from **the 'offense' he had committed and the 'sin-in-the-flesh'** which it had produced..."

(5) When we are baptised, we receive a covering or justification for both *moral* and *physical* sin. Consequently, the 'offense of Adam' is no longer imputed to us, the alienation that resulted from Adam's sin is removed and our legal status changes from being "in Adam" to being "in Christ" and move from being under "the Law of Sin and Death" to "the Law of the spirit of Life.", and the "righteousness of Christ is imputed to us".

Before baptism men "are still "sinners" in Adam" and "**the 'offense' of Adam... is imputed to them.**"

But when believers are baptized they have "been transferred **out of Adam into Christ...**"

They are "justified by his blood' (Romans 5:9) from 'sin in the flesh' as well as from their previous 'wicked works'..."

They are "freed from the condemnation arising out of Adam's offense..."

No longer are they "under the 'law of sin and death'" but come "under the 'law of the spirit of life'..." and "**the righteousness of Christ is imputed to them.**"

(6) Unless Christ received a covering or justification for physical sin he would have remained in the grave.

"When he came out of the grave he was 'justified from sin' though still flesh and blood..."

"Christ's resurrection was **the result of** justification from **inherited sin...**"

(7) Only those who have been baptised for *both* moral and physical sin will, therefore, be raised to judgment.

"The resurrection of his 'church' is the result of justification from **inherited sin and individual 'wicked works'** (Colossians 1. 21)."

"**Physical sin** is as powerful to keep closed the gates of the grave as is actual transgression..."

"**Christ will bestow eternal life only on those who have been 'washed' from all sin [i.e. moral and physical] by**

**'the blood of the covenant'**; and he will, in like manner raise only those who have been justified by the same blood from **inherited and committed sin** prior to probation. To extend his resurrection power outside the scope of his shed blood is to open the door for his lifegiving power to be also applied where his blood has had no efficacy."

(8) All those who reject the calling to baptism remain "children of wrath" under condemnation of "the Law of Sin and Death" and are "perishing" and will *not* be raised to Judgment.

"Having decreed that all who live under 'the law of sin and death'... '**perish**'...it necessarily follows that when they pass into the grave... they must, in the grave, remain forever..."

"The law of sin and death' contains no provision for justification from sin, and consequently no element, which counteracts the reign of death. **All under it, are by birth, "children of wrath"** (Ephesians 2:3)..."

They "die in their sins and therefore '**perish**'."

It should also be recognised that Thomas Williams (Editor of *The Advocate Magazine* in the USA) essentially shared **the same beliefs as JJ Andrew**. It was Thomas Williams who changed the BSF to create the BUSF, such changes being designed to support his theory of *Inherited Legal Alienation* and *Atonement for sin-nature*. They both believed and taught the same teachings on the nature and sacrifice of Christ and the purpose of baptism, and they both taught that the basis of resurrection to judgement was ‘covenant relationship’ through baptism. Where the two differed fundamentally was that while JJ Andrew said that God would not and could not raise those who had not been baptized, Thomas Williams said that God could, but not on the same basis as those who had been baptized. The underlying doctrine that led to the belief that baptism formed the basis of resurrection to judgment, was the false teaching in atonement for sin-nature which removed the legal alienation that came about as a result of Adam’s sin.

The following statements of Thomas Williams show how similar the teachings were with those of JJ Andrew, both of whom drew incorrect conclusions regarding the nature and sacrifice of Christ and the question of Resurrectional Responsibility:

We are said (in Rom. 5:12, see margin) to **have sinned in Adam**. Does sin need forgiveness? ANS: Yes ... **to remit that which placed us in a condition needing reconciliation is to forgive the sin.**

(Advocate, Vol. 9, p. 233)

Adam’s sin “**must be removed, remitted, pardoned**, or whatever term is thought most expressive, before reconciliation to God can be accomplished.

(Advocate, Vol. 9, p. 10)

**The grounds of guilt are first Adamic sin, and second**, an aggravation of Adamic sin by the **wickedness of his descendants**.

(Advocate, Vol. 9, p.233)

If it is this sin (that is, Adam’s) **that has placed us in alienation**, does it not follow that it (i.e. Adam’s sin) **must be removed, remitted, pardoned**, or whatever term is thought the most expressive, before reconciliation to God can be accomplished.

(Advocate, Vol. 9, p. 10)

I believe that **federally and racially we are held guilty of original sin**.

(Thomas Williams, from *Sin and Sacrifice* by W.M. Smallwood, p. 84).

Christ’s blood was shed for the remission of sins. (I John 1:7) It was shed for himself, and he being without personal sins, the **sin remitted, cleansed, pardoned, or covered must be of necessity Adamic**.

(Advocate, Vol. 10, p. 334)

An adult devoid of personal transgression would, **upon being baptized into Christ, be forgiven Adamic sin**.

(Advocate, Vol. 9, p. 9)

**That baptism is primarily for the remission, removal or pardon of Adam’s sin**, although it includes the remission of personal sins, which latter remission **is only an incident**.

(Advocate, Vol. 9, p. 9)

It is evident that if an infant could become an adult without committing a personal sin, **baptism for the remission of sin (Adamic) would be necessary**.

(Advocate, Vol. 9, p. 234)

The passing out of Adam into Christ changes our relationship, but does not change our nature. Therefore since the design of baptism is for this purpose **its root is to be found in the Adamic sentence of death and burial**; and **its effect is the removal of this** so that the sentence may be deprived of its power to hold us in death and dust, and thereby the resurrection becomes the means of final physical escape from the results of Adam’s sin”.

(Adamic Condemnation, page 14)

**The first thing for us to consider here is the discrimination between the sentence and the execution of the sentence. Why is it important to distinguish between the sentence and its execution? Because we claim that the sentence is the “condemnation”, known as “Adamic condemnation;” and the execution is the physical effect of the sentence, Here is our first issue, and it is an important one in its bearing upon the doctrine of baptism**; for if the “sentence” or “condemnation”, is not distinguished from the physical effects, the design of baptism to remove the sentence, yet leaving us to wait for the “redemption of the body”, cannot be understood.

(Adamic Condemnation, p.3)

We are not personally responsible for Adam's personal sin and are not therefore baptized for it in that sense; **but federally we are all under Adam's sin, and are baptized to remove the condemnation which came thereby**, and to place us in Christ reconciled to God. Since it is known that we believe we are baptized for our personal sins, it is needless to state it. Adamic condemnation brings a physical disability inherited from Adam, **We are freed from this federal condemnation and reconciled to God at baptism**, but we are not freed from physical disability till the change of body.

(Adamic Condemnation, pages 14, 15)

Is not the first Adam a state of sickness, sorrow, pain and death; and if a death state a condemned or alienated state? **If Jesus was included in the Adamic race then he must have been estranged from God as a mere flesh and blood being.**

(Advocate Supplement 1900).

He (Jesus) must die according to God's law. To die according to law is legal; and to die legally is to be "worthy" of death in the legal sense. He was not "worthy" of death legally for any personal sin of his own. What sin was it, then, that made the death of Christ just? **Racial sin or personal sin? Federal sin or individual sin? Racial and federal is the only answer the case will admit of**, and that is to say that **primarily Christ died to redeem himself from the sin and its effects that was committed by Adam**, "in whom all — Christ included — have sinned." When he met the demands of God's law and drank that cup that no righteous law would allow to pass from him, **he paid the demands of that law and its penalty**; and being a righteous man he was free — led captivity captive and thus purchased gifts unto men, who could not purchase them for themselves.

(Chicago Defence, p. 72)

Another man is more careful. He counts the cost and concludes the way is too straight for his weak nature; and he decides not to identify himself with the name that he fears he may disgrace and he stands back; **here is prudence. Now it does not seem right that this man should be raised from the dead to be punished at the tribunal of Christ for his prudence.**

(Advocate, Vol. 9, p. 202)

### **In summary:**

Bro. Andrew taught that there were two 'forms' or categories of 'sin': (1) sin which is *moral* – ie. disobedience or transgression, and (2) sin which is *physical* – ie. our physical flesh and blood natures. He reasoned that mankind has inherited Adam's sin in a physical 'form' (our flesh and blood natures) which he called 'Adamic Sin', 'the offense of Adam', 'inherited sin' or 'sin-in-the-flesh'. He went on to reason, that while a man is not *personally* responsible or guilty for this 'form' of sin inherited from Adam, *federally* or *racially* Man is guilty on account of the nature that he bears, since Adam was the 'federal head' of our race and all men were in Adam's loins when he sinned. Consequently, he reasoned, we are 'alienated' from God and "sinners", not just by our actions, *but by the mere fact that we are born*. In other words, Bro. Andrew taught that it is as much of a sin for us to have been born as it is to transgress God's law! He also saw the 'law of sin and death' spoken of by Paul as being the *pronouncement* or "Divine decree" of God's Law of Condemnation in the Garden of Eden, ie. "Thou shalt not eat", rather than the language of Scripture used to describe the "law within our members" which came as a result of Adam and Eve sinning. In order to be released from this Law of Condemnation, he reasoned that a man requires 'justification' from *both forms* of sin — 'moral' and 'physical'. This, he argued, was accomplished as a result of "*reconciliation, atonement, purging, cleansing, remission, redemption, purification, and forgiveness*" by *Christ's blood*. Consequently, because our moral and physical sin had been atoned for, covered, reconciled by the blood of Christ, baptism brought about a change in our *legal status* before God. No longer are we under the (legal) condemnation of the Law in the Garden of Eden (ie. liable to an immediate and, therefore, violent death). Rather, we move from being "in Adam" to being "in Christ" and our 'legal' status changes from being under 'the Law of Sin and Death' to coming under 'The Law of Spirit of Life'. Consequently, we are no longer confined to the grave, liable to "perish" but will be raised from the dead at the return of Christ.

**5) Do you believe that “sin” is used to mean both the unclean (defiled) nature... with its carnal inclination and actual transgression?**

We reject the false teaching that our nature is a ‘form’ of sin or contains “sin-in-the-flesh” and is treated by the Father in the same way as our moral sins or that it requires reconciliation, atonement, justification or a covering. We also reject the false teaching that the Lord Jesus Christ died for the purging, cleansing, remission, forgiveness or justification of ‘Adamic Sin’, or to make reconciliation or atonement for human nature. Rather, we believe that Christ condemned sin, first, by mortifying in himself those impulses within his nature that lead to sin throughout his life of faithful obedience; secondly, by the public condemnation of that nature upon the cross at his death as a demonstration that flesh and blood is rightly related to death; and, finally, on account of his subsequent resurrection and change to spirit nature when he was cleansed from the defilement of human nature.

The following expresses Central Christadelphian understanding of the principle of *metonymy* as it relates to how the word ‘sin’ is used to describe our flesh and blood natures:

Paul describes the desires of the flesh in this way, as a law dominating his members, and bringing him into captivity inasmuch as he gives way to it. ***There is no such thing as a physical substance called ‘sin’ in man, but the lusts of the flesh.*** This desire of the flesh to assert itself against the law of God is described as ‘sin’ ***which is therefore metonymical for human nature.*** The word ‘metonymy’ is used of the practice of giving a descriptive word to something: as ‘the bottle’ instead of ‘strong drink’. But in such a use of language the words must be related, as in our illustration. Why then, is human nature called ‘sin’? Because it was manifested in its present form (mortal and sinful) as the result of sin in the beginning.

*(‘Human Nature Styled Sin’ - Bro. HP Mansfield)*

***The word “sin” is here used by him metonymically for those impulses of the flesh which, obeyed, constitute sin, which is “the transgression of the law.”*** These *impulses* are referred to by Paul as “*the motions of sins*”; hence he says of himself, “I delight in the law of God after the inward man (the mind which has been renewed in knowledge is thus styled— Col. 3:10 ); but I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin ***which is in my members*** .”

*(The Christadelphian, Vol. 38, Page 325, 1901 – Bro. CC Walker)*

What is sin? We have the apostolic answers concerning transgression and knowing rebellion. But is that all? No, for ***Bible usage speaks of “sin” in other connections by metonymy, whereby the term is applied to the flesh and to objects connected with sin.*** And this must be borne in mind.

*(Christadelphian, Vol. 44, Page 124, 1907 – What is sin? – Bro. CC Walker)*

Adam was driven out of Eden because of disobedience. He was therefore thrown back upon himself, so to speak, and he soon found in himself and his progeny how weak and evil a thing the flesh is, for his first son was a murderer. And ***because*** disobedience or sin, ***was the cause*** of his expulsion, ***and that sin was the result*** of the desires of the flesh, ***and because*** all the desires that are natural to the flesh organization are because of native ignorance, in directions forbidden, there is no exaggeration, no high figure in talking of ***sin in the flesh***. It is Paul’s ***figure***. He speaks of “sin that dwelleth in *me*” and as he defines ‘me’ to be “*my flesh*”, ‘Sin that dwelleth in me’ is “sin in the flesh” — ***a metonym for those impulses which are native to the flesh***, while knowledge of God and of duty is not native to the flesh.

*(The Slain Lamb – Robert Roberts)*

But how could Paul speak of these impulses which were latent in him, which sprang to life as he said, when the commandment came? How can he speak of them as sin? ***By a well known figure of speech; the figure of speech of metonymy is that where a word which stands related to another as cause or effect, or a mere adjunct maybe, is put for that to which it stands related. And sometimes we find brethren speaking of two aspects of sin.*** It might be permissible to use the phrase, providing it is understood. But I want to enter here and now a mild caveat against the use of that phrase, ***“two aspects of sin.” There are not two aspects of sin, there are many aspects of sin.*** Sin is what? Well you have a list of the works of the flesh; Adultery and all the abominations with a list of other things such as ill-will, bitterness, wrath, anger, strife, sedition and so on. All these are aspects of sin. ***They are all aspects of something that comes within the one category.***

*(“The Atonement” – John Carter - Malvern Town Hall, Melbourne, 1958)*

His [Christ’s] flesh was crucified, so that he died. But figuratively he had crucified his flesh day after day, as he put to death its desires and refused to submit to them ( Luke 22:42 ). He taught that sin came from within ( Mark 7:21–23 ), and ***is therefore used as a metonym for the flesh***, so that it is said, “He died unto sin once” (Rom. 6:10). In that crucified body, the desires of the flesh were rendered inactive, teaching his followers what they must do figuratively: “For they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections (RV: ‘passions’) and lusts” ( Gal. 5:24 ). His blood was poured out, as a symbol of a dedicated life. The Law taught that “the life of the flesh was in the blood” (Lev. 17:11) and in sacrifice this had to be smeared upon the altar, as a token that the person’s life would be dedicated to doing God’s will.

*(Key to Understanding of the Scriptures, 1997– HP Mansfield)*

## “Sin in the flesh”

In your presentation, you make reference to the phrase “sin in the flesh” and Doctrine To Be Rejected (DTBR) Clause #27. We believe that the phrase ‘sin in the flesh’, found only once in Scripture in Romans 8:3, is indicative of the relationship between the flesh and sin and the method by which God condemned Sin and reconciled the world unto himself.

Doctrine To Be Rejected Clause 27 was added to the Birmingham Statement of Faith as a result of the “Free-Life” Controversy in the late 19th Century. Bro. David Handley, from Maldon, was a former elder of a Pentecostal sect, who held the belief that Jesus did not share the same condemned nature of Adam’s descendants because God had given him life *directly* just as He had given life to Adam. In other words, he reasoned that Jesus had the same nature as Adam did *before* he sinned, and was, therefore, free from mortality and the consequences of Adam’s sin.

He was, therefore, Bro. Handley argued, *always entitled to life*, hence the term ‘Free-life’. Bro. Handley appears to have convinced Bro. Edward Turney of Nottingham of this “Free-Life” theory, who, subsequently, ‘renounced’ his previous beliefs on the nature and sacrifice of Christ. In 1873 Bro. Turney issued an eight-page pamphlet containing “*Thirty-two Questions and Answers concerning Jesus Christ.*” He acknowledged his indebtedness for the ideas he was promoting to Bro. David Handley. The first lines of the concluding paragraph of this pamphlet read as follows:

“Brethren and friends, Whatever I have taught by mouth or pen contrary to the views of Jesus Christ herein set forth, *I now renounce.*”

Hence the terms “Renunciationist” and “Renunciationism” were born (latterly becoming known in the 20th Century as the theory of ‘Clean Flesh’.) Unfortunately the things that he “renounced” were true, and the new things that he was now teaching were false, containing the hallmark of the belief of apostate Christianity which taught that “Jesus did not come in the flesh” (Cp. 2 John 1:7).

On the evening of July 28th 1873 Bro. Turney gave a lecture at Temperance Hall in Birmingham to explain his new beliefs under the Title: “*The Sacrifice of Christ*”. He set out his beliefs as follows:

The last Adam... came into the world ***as free as the first Adam, not under condemnation to death***... that (free) life was the price or ransom that had to be paid for those who had lost their’s by Adam’s transgression... 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.***

*(The Sacrifice of Christ – Edward Turney, 1873 – p.9)*

(Another man has said) that for 15 years he has not been able to understand what Dr. Thomas meant by 'sin in the flesh.' That is the fixation of sin in the flesh which he speaks of in 'Elpis Israel' pg. 126, ...and I confess to you without reserve, neither have I been able to understand it. But still I have many a time taught it. I have taken the 15th article of the book of common prayer and pulled it to pieces, and said that Christ came in flesh full of sin; for, said I to the people, what can 'sinful flesh' mean, but flesh full of sin? Well now, since my mind has been more especially directed to the study of this subject, I have arrived at this conviction that ***there is no such thing as flesh full of sin, and never was, nor can be.***

*(“Sacrifice of Christ,” – Edward Turney, 1873 – pg. 16.)*

There was ***no sin in the ‘nature’ after it had transgressed.*** There was mortality. There was man destined to die; ***but sin was not a fixed principle in man’s flesh.***



Our early brethren recognised the detrimental effect that these false teachings of Bro. Turney could have upon the brotherhood and consequently, made three changes to the *Birmingham Statement of Faith (BSF)*. All three changes were to the ‘Doctrines to be rejected’ (DTBR). The first is *Clause 4* which rejects the belief, *That Christ was born with a “free life.”* The second is *Clause 5* which rejects the false doctrine, *That Christ’s nature was immaculate.* The third is *Clause 27* which rejects the false doctrine **“That there is no sin in the flesh”** and was written in direct contrast to the following false statements made by Bro. Turney:

**“There is no such thing as flesh full of sin...”**

**“There was no sin in the ‘nature’ after it had transgressed...”**

**“Sin was not a fixed principle in man’s flesh...”**

We fully support *DTBR Clause #27* and believe that any teaching that states otherwise, that mankind or the Lord Jesus Christ himself did not inherit mortality or a sin-prone nature, is contrary to the gospel of Truth and that such teaching has no place in the ecclesias of God being in conflict with 1 John 2:7, that Jesus came in the flesh and *Clause 5* of the Statement of Faith which states that:

That Adam broke this law, and was adjudged unworthy of immortality, and sentenced to return to the ground from whence he was taken —*a sentence which defiled* and became a physical law of his being, **and was transmitted to all his posterity.**

The following explanations express Central Christadelphian understanding of Romans 8:3 and the phrase “sin in the flesh”.

#### **Bro. John Carter on the phrase “sin in the flesh” (Romans 8:3):**

“(Christ) condemned sin, *in the flesh*\*\*... Sin is condemned by God the judge, and the issue is decided in Christ. Since Christ has not yielded to sin, Sin has lost his claim in the very domain that he regarded as his own—the domain of the flesh. So Paul’s figure runs. **But the force and significance of “in the flesh” now emerges. The conflict takes place in the flesh—there Sin is overcome**, and then as the final act, the very climax of the conflict, Jesus lays down his life as a sin-offering. In this was shown the fitness of the flesh for the divinely decreed end of death, and God’s righteousness was declared; but in this very way Christ provides the conditions upon which sins are forgiven (he is the sin offering) and so Sin loses its hold on forgiven and redeemed men and women.”

*John Carter, The Christadelphian Magazine, Vol.93, 1956, pages 127-132*

#### **Bro. Ron Abel on the phrase “sin in the flesh” (Romans 8:3):**

“Now sometimes people have spoken of sin in the flesh as if it is some kind of substance... that is part of your constitution. Romans 8:3 *should not be read as a hyphenated word but rather “God condemned...” God condemned what? “God condemned SIN...” Where did he condemn sin? “God condemned sin IN THE FLESH”!* That expression becomes very obvious when you read it that way. And so you see that God condemned sin in the sacrifice of Christ where the prince of this world was cast out IN THE FLESH, the very area, the arena of sin’s domain. And so sin was dethroned in the death of Christ Jesus.”

*Audio tape by Ron Abel, The Atonement; Lavonia Online Bible Class Library*

**Bro. Ron Abel on the phrase “all men sin” (Romans 5:12):**

“Do we die only because we are personal sinners? Do we inherit in some sense the guilt of Adam’s transgression, and that is because we die? Is it simply because God considers us, on the basis of a federal principle that we are related to a constitution of sin because we are of the Adamic line? And just as Levi was in the loins of Melchizedek, we are in the loins of our father Adam and on that ground we are constituted sinners? In what way do we sin “in Adam”? ***Paul is not saying that we are guilty for Adam’s sin. Paul is dealing on the federal principle in so far as one man sinned and many died through one man’s trespass...*** ‘For by one man were many made (gk: ‘constituted’) sinners’ (v.19). How were many ‘constituted sinners’? As a result of the fall of Adam he bequeathed to all of his descendants a nature that is prone to sin, so prone to sin in effect that it rendered them ***inevitable sinners***... Paul here as he does in many other places uses ***the language of metonymy***. Instead of speaking of us having a nature that is ‘prone to sin’ Paul talks of us as being ‘sinners’ because the figure of metonymy, putting the cause for effect, or the effect for the cause.”

*Audio tape by Ron Abel, The Atonement; Lavonia Online Bible Class Library*

# Questions for the Unamended Ecclesias

*The following questions were provided by various brethren from our ecclesias:*

- 1) What is your understanding of “clean flesh”?
- 2) What is accomplished by baptism? Is baptism a covering, atonement or justification of Adamic or racial sin, or as is sometimes referred to ‘sin in the flesh’?
- 3) What do you believe is THE basis of responsibility to judgment? Is it (i) covenant relationship or (ii) knowledge and calling?
- 4) Are you prepared to withhold fellowship from ecclesias that do not subscribe to the same basis of fellowship, i.e. the same doctrines and precepts as contained in the BASF?
- 5) Do you believe that “sin” is used to mean both the unclean (defiled) nature... with its carnal inclination and actual transgression?
- 6) What do you believe are the false teachings of JJ Andrew and Thomas Williams? Can you please show in the NASU where these false teachings are clearly refuted?
- 7) Can you show us where the UA08/NASU teaches that Clause 24 of the BASF is a first principle and should be made a test of fellowship?
- 8) Please explain 1Cor.15:21-23
  - a) What does it mean “in Adam all die”?
  - b) What does it mean “in Christ shall all be made alive”?
  - c) Specifically speaking are these verses in relation to judgment or immortality?
- 9) Under the UA08/NASU, Unamended ecclesias agree to fellowship at non-UA08 Central ecclesias outside North America on the basis of the BASF (i.e. use the BASF as the basis for inter-ecclesial fellowship). What prevents the UA08/NASU Unamended ecclesias from agreeing to this basis within North America (including Ontario), since such acceptance would remove a notable stumbling block to the UA08 among Amended ecclesias.
- 10) Please explain Romans 8:1-2
  - a) What does it mean to be in Christ?
  - b) What is the condemnation spoken of here all about?
- 11) One of our concerns is that an Unamended member who agrees with Thomas Williams teachings could assent to the NASU while retaining the belief that Adam’s sin alienates all men from God at birth and that baptism removes this alienation? Can you show us in the NASU where this teaching is clearly rejected?
- 12) Please explain Genesis 2:17:
  - a) Was a literal death required within that very 24 hour period (i.e. day)?
  - b) Or is it better translated “dying thou shalt die”?

- 13) Please explain John 12:48:
- a) Is it speaking about AD70?
  - b) Is it speaking about Resurrection to the judgment seat of Christ?
- 14) The UA08/NASU places no restrictions on continued fellowship by Unamended UA08 ecclesias with the larger Unamended community. You have stated this will continue indefinitely. Is this still your position?
- 15) Your written understanding (Jan 23, 2010) of the Final Clarifications is that they are not part of the doctrinal basis of the UA08/NASU. Amended authors of the UA08/NASU said they were. Do you anticipate changing your view since such acceptance would remove a notable stumbling block to the UA08 among Amended ecclesias?
- 16) In the past you have not supported the idea of adding a third clarification stating that signatories to the UA08/NASU reject the teaching of Inherited Legal Condemnation, while at the same time stating you have the same beliefs as the Amended community. Do you anticipate accepting this additional clarification in the future since this would remove a notable stumbling block to the UA08 among Amended ecclesias?
- 17) In October, 2007 you withdrew from reunion discussions because (quoting from your Jan 23, 2010 presentation), *"We have no desire to give reason for brethren to be involved in further schism, as our desired outcome has always been, and remains unity, not further disunity. Accordingly, we feel it is no longer in the best interest of true peace and unity to continue with this process. Therefore, effective immediately we are standing down from this process and have no plans to initiate any further action."* Given these statements, what has changed in the position of your ecclesias that now allows you to not only participate in, but to promote "further disunity" within the Amended community by promoting the acceptance of the UA08/NASU, without addressing the provisions that prevent its widespread acceptance?
- 18) Why are you reluctant to join the Central community? This is fundamental to the concept of reunion and follows the pattern of the Suffolk St. reunion, involving the identical doctrinal issues in England. It helped significantly in assuring the Central community that there was a common understanding of doctrine and fellowship practice. Your refusal to join the Central community presents a major stumbling block for a successful reunion and casts aspersions on your assertion that you share the same beliefs as the Central community.
- 19) Would you accept the BASF becoming the touchstone statement of faith for both parties and the UA08/NASU (with ambiguities removed) being an explanatory document, consistent with previous reunions?
- 20) Do you now believe that the understanding of the Gospel (that level of understanding being determined by God alone) is the basis for resurrectional responsibility for all, baptised or unbaptised.
- 21) Do you reject both the teaching that our sin biased nature is a separate aspect of sin requiring atonement, and that this is the prime reason for baptism without which they will not be raised from the grave.