

Taipei Christadelphian Ecclesia Timeline

*Prepared by founding members of the Taipei Ecclesia
(Brethren James Larsen and Abraham Wang) based on their
first-hand knowledge and extensive interaction with
the members of the Taipei Ecclesia.*

25 October 2016

For the consideration of all ACBM Regional Committee Members
and the Ecclesias they represent

Note: In this document the term God-directed evolution (GDE) is used to refer to "Theistic Evolution" (TE), "evolutionary creationism"(EC) and "creative evolution" (CE) and all variations of these that propose that God used a natural process of evolution over a long period of time to create human beings from animal origins.

Ephesians 4:13-16 *"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: [14] That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; [15] But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: [16] From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."*

Matthew 18:15-17 *"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. [16] But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. [17] And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."*

Matthew 23:8 *"But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."*

Roberts, R. The Ecclesial Guide (p. 10) *"One principle ought to permeate all appointments in the house of Christ, and that is the one laid down by Christ, when speaking of the exercise of authority of one Gentile over another; he said, "IT SHALL NOT BE SO AMONG YOU".*

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Foreword

The objective of this timeline is to provide an accurate and detailed record of the events and correspondence that led to the disfellowship of Bro. Jonathan Burke in December 2015 owing to his belief in God directed-evolution (GDE) which is at variance with the teachings of scripture and the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith (BASF).

In particular it focuses on events beginning from September 2015 when Bro. Jonathan attempted to force acceptance of GDE on the Taipei ecclesia by demanding they baptize one of Bro. Jonathan's converts, someone they had never met, and who believed, as Bro. Jonathan does, in GDE.

Bro. Jonathan gave the ecclesia an ultimatum, threatening to withdraw himself from them and begin a new ecclesia with his new convert if they would not baptize him. Bro. Jonathan was asking the Taipei ecclesia to set a world-wide precedent, and put itself out of fellowship with the vast majority of Christadelphians, both historically and currently. Specifically, to our knowledge this is the first time in Central Fellowship a candidate for baptism included in his personal statement of faith an open belief in GDE, and declared that he would not be baptized unless his views on this subject were accommodated.

In the events which transpired as a consequence of this crisis, Bro. Jonathan behaved in a manner that many believed was deceptive. This behaviour further complicated the matter and heightened the level of distress. Consequently, members of the ecclesia reached out and called for the assistance of other brethren including the founding members of the Taipei ecclesia, and other individuals they knew personally and who they trusted. Later they appealed to the ACBM for long term spiritual support to help rebuild and strengthen their ecclesia.

This was a time of great distress and sadness for this small group of less than 10 brethren and sisters at the Taipei ecclesia, and their distress continues throughout 2016 as accusations continue to be made that they didn't know what they were doing, and/or were influenced by outsiders who forced them to disfellowship Bro. Jonathan. Undoubtedly this was a very stressful time for Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Dianne as well. However, it is important to keep in mind that the many crises this small ecclesia encountered during 2015 were of Bro. Jonathan's making.

This document, written in response to Bro. Jonathan's understanding of how events transpired, also provides an historical context to his activities in Taiwan and his writings on the Internet to evangelize GDE among Christadelphians on a global basis. It outlines the steps taken to try and maintain Bro. Jonathan within the One Faith, while avoiding damage to the ecclesia. A timeline format is used based on eyewitness evidence and, as much as possible, on written records including emails, text messages and online group chats between ecclesial members. Key supporting evidence and official documentation is included in the appendices.

Unfortunately due to Brother Jonathan's many factual discrepancies and distortions, the distress felt by the Taipei ecclesia spread and escalated into a regional ACBM conflict, culminating in an extraordinary ACBM National Committee meeting that was held in Adelaide on the 3rd September, 2016. While Bro. Jonathan's perspective was well represented in submissions made by three Regional ACBM Committees in the lead up to this meeting, it is most unfortunate to note that these Regional Committees did not ask for input or seek to confirm matters from the Taipei ecclesia or its founding members before finalizing their submissions (as required by Matthew 18:15-17) to the National Committee. Nevertheless, at this extraordinary meeting at long last we were given an opportunity to convey before representatives of the three Regional Committees the Taipei ecclesia's perspective of the events that transpired. The circumstances were presented in the form of an early draft of this timeline.

If anyone has a problem with how a single member of an ecclesia or a whole ecclesia calls for help, or disputes certain events that led to an ecclesia withdrawing fellowship from a brother or sister, they are duty bound to follow the principles of Matthew 18:15-17 to ascertain the truth of the matter. This should be without exception – it applies to both ecclesias and individuals - as per the wise advice of the Ecclesial Guide. It is both disturbing and noteworthy that three Regional ACBM Committees tasked with preaching the gospel and the pastoral care of overseas mission areas failed to perform basic fact checking with the Taipei ecclesia before escalating this matter, based largely on inaccurate hearsay.

It is hoped that this document will be of assistance in putting to rest the distress caused and distortions of truth that Bro. Jonathan and those supporting his view have caused across the Christadelphian brotherhood.

The Taipei ecclesia remains hopeful that Bro. Jonathan will reconsider his position and return to the One Faith which he believed when he first moved to Taipei in 2004.

Summary of Key Events

- 1) **2009 to 2015:** Bro Jonathan Burke proactively promoted and vigorously debated his belief in evolution as God's method of creation (God-directed evolution: GDE) across a range of Christadelphian and non-Christadelphian online websites, forums and group-email lists. In many cases Bro. Jonathan attributes authorship of his posts to himself as a member of the Taipei ecclesia, and hence was, in effect, using the Taipei ecclesia's name to teach GDE.
- 2) **September 12, 2015:** Bro. Jonathan asked the Taipei ecclesia, a very small ecclesia of only seven regularly attending members at the time, to consider baptizing a contact by the name of James Paul Chappell whose personal statement of faith included a belief in GDE. Bro. Jonathan gave the ecclesia an ultimatum *"if James cannot be accepted by Taipei ecclesia due to his views on evolution then neither can Dee and I. We would then meet with James, and Taipei ecclesia could manage itself. If the ecclesia feels that [sic] cannot baptize him in good conscience I will do it myself... Their decision will determine what I do next, and who I'll be breaking bread with in future."*

Jonathan's ultimatum spurred the Taipei ecclesia into action. They now had to decide whether or not they would baptize someone who believed in GDE, and by so doing, put themselves in danger of being out of fellowship with the vast majority of Christadelphians, historically and currently, around the world. They would be setting a precedent in that this would be the first time an ecclesia had baptized someone whose personal statement of faith expressly included a belief in GDE, and who would not be baptized unless this belief was accommodated.

- 3) **September 27, 2015:** Bro. James Larsen corresponded with Bro. Jonathan suggesting that the Taipei ecclesia should first meet with James Paul Chappell to find out what he actually believes before baptizing him into the one faith. Bro. Jonathan responded that ***"James' [Paul Chappell's] position on evolution is the same as mine. It would have been rejected by our pioneers and is rejected by most of our community, as I have made very clear to our ecclesia more than once. It's not the same as the position Watford rejected, since brother Lovelock believed Cain married a non-human and I believe he married a human. But Watford would have rejected this position as well. There's no doubt that this is rejected by most of our community, but it is accommodated by some ecclesias in Australia as well as by Michael Newman and Steve Cox"***.
- 4) **September 27, 2015:** Members of the ecclesia with Bro. Abraham present in Taipei discussed Bro. Jonathan's request to baptize James Paul Chappell. They agreed that it would be prudent to first meet with James Paul Chappell to get to know him, and then wait until sufficient discussion had taken place with him over a period of time before deciding on whether or not to baptize him.

However, after Bro. Abraham left, Bro. Jonathan proposed that the remaining four Taiwanese members (Bro. Joshua, Sis. Yuan, Bro. Daniel and Sis. April) vote on whether they would be prepared to baptize James Paul Chappell regardless of his views on evolution. Bro. Jonathan is of the opinion that all four members voted unanimously in favour of his proposition. However, the Taiwanese brethren and sisters thought they were just voting to confirm what that had already agreed upon earlier when Bro. Abraham was present – that they should meet with James Paul Chappell and get to know him. Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan's English is very limited, Sis. April has basic English however she can easily misunderstand. Bro. Daniel's English is better but even he remains unclear as to what exactly was voted on at the time. Certainly all four of them did not think they were voting to change the ecclesia's policy on such an important matter (i.e. the Taipei Ecclesia's baptism guidelines which are based on the ACBM baptism guidelines and refer to "the error of evolution"). What is clear is that Bro. Jonathan tried to push through ecclesial acceptance of GDE via a show of hands after Bro. Abraham left, but a major misunderstanding occurred on both sides due to a language communication problem.

- 5) **October 23 to November 5, 2015:** The Taipei ecclesia and founding members (Bro. James Larsen and Bro. Abraham Wang) prepared an 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy (Appendix 5) on evolution written in both English and Chinese. Bro. Jonathan played an integral part, helping to draft many of the points in this policy (see Appendix 6). Point 3 is the crux of the policy, and is directly copied from Clause 3.2 of the CBM baptism guidelines – *"The Bible condemns the theory that man evolved from animals by revealing that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them. See Genesis 1:27; Genesis 3:20; Matthew 19:4; Romans 5:12."*
- 6) **November 5, 2015:** Bro. Jonathan signed his agreement to all 8-points of the policy, which also noted that evolution is not to be taught in the ecclesia or to baptism candidates, and that the ecclesia would not fellowship visitors who believed in evolution. Moreover, during the preparation of this document, Bro. Jonathan told other ecclesial members that "I will tell James Chappell he can't be baptized" (see Appendix 6). The ecclesia was united and at peace (but still hoped that James Chappell would change his view on GDE and be baptized one day)

- 7) **November 6-8, 2015:** Bro. David Evans and Bro. Carl Parry arrive in Taipei at the request of Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan to provide Bible studies and encouragement to the Taipei ecclesia. They were satisfied to note that the ecclesia had resolved the matter via its 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy on evolution and at no stage during their visit or afterward did they suggest that the ecclesia needed to create another policy.
- 8) **November 7, 2015:** Bro. Jonathan first tells Bro. Carl Parry that, after all, he did not agree with the key defining point 3 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy he signed. Bro. Jonathan subsequently told all members of the ecclesia which resulted in significant turmoil and confusion, such that for the time-being members felt they could not trust **him**. Bro. Jonathan then attempted to undermine the ecclesia's 8-point policy by suggesting that only a minority of Taipei ecclesial members who signed would insist on certain points including the key defining point 3, that "the Bible condemns the theory that man evolved from animals...."
- 9) **November 29 to December 08, 2015:** In light of the confusion created by Bro. Jonathan, the members and founders of the Taipei ecclesia perceived the need to draft and sign a "Reaffirmation Statement On Creation" (Appendix 8), written in both English and Chinese. This 3-page statement re-iterated the key defining point 3 of the original 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy, and importantly added in Clauses 3,4 & 5 of the BASF. The purpose was not to replace the first document, but to "reaffirm" it in a manner that made certain all signing members were very clear that a belief in GDE conflicts with the Christadelphian basis of fellowship as per the BASF. In addition, the members selected 14 Bible verses to include which they believe make it abundantly plain that the Bible condemns the theory that man evolved from animals. Bro. Abraham Wang distributed the final signed version of the "Reaffirmation Statement On Creation" to all members including Bro. Jonathan on December 17, 2015.
- 10) **December 20-27, 2015:** Reluctantly the ecclesia decided to withdraw fellowship from Bro. Jonathan Burke in light of: (i) his persistence in teaching evolution as God's method of creation; (ii) his intention to baptize someone who believes in GDE; (iii) his subsequent rejection of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy after signing his agreement in the first place; and (iv) his own admission that a traditional reading of the BASF does not accommodate evolution and his own reinterpretation of the BASF (Appendix 3). The ecclesia drafted a short withdrawal letter via an iterative process prepared in both Chinese and English (Appendix 9). To communicate the matter adequately in English, they asked founding member Bro. James Larsen to meet with Bro. Jonathan, and plead with him again to reconsider his position, and if possible ask him to sign the ecclesia's "Reaffirmation Statement Concerning Creation" (Appendix 8) which links the ecclesia's policy with the BASF.
- 11) **December 29, 2015:** Bro. Jonathan confirmed with Bro. James Larsen that he could not agree with both the "Reaffirmation Statement on Creation", and the key defining point 3 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy on evolution. Bro. James gave Bro. Jonathan the ecclesia's letter withdrawing fellowship, and pleaded with him to reconsider his position and return to the one true faith.
- 12) **February 13, 2016:** Bro. Jonathan baptizes James Paul Chappell. The confession was heard by Bro. Steven Cox (Beijing) and Bro. Jim Cox (Leicester Westleigh). As Bro. Jonathan made it plain that James Paul Chappell believes the same as himself on GDE, in line with James Paul Chappell's personal statement of faith previously presented to the Taipei ecclesia, it follows that James Paul Chappell likewise would not accept Clause 3.2 of the CBM Baptism guidelines and would not accept the traditional understanding of the relevant Clauses in the BASF (See Appendices 3 & 4).

Timeline of the Taipei Christadelphian Ecclesia

2000

- Chingpei Chang, a Taiwanese student studying in Australia, is baptized at Chatswood ecclesia (Sydney), and returns to Taiwan.

2001

- Bro. James Larsen (Seattle ecclesia) pioneered the preaching work in Taipei when he opened a branch of his US company IWICS, in Taiwan.
- Bro. James is introduced to Abraham, a Taiwanese businessman who had not long converted to Christianity, and hires him to work in his Taiwan branch.
- Bro. James begins to attend and speak at Abraham's church.
- Bro. James' regular business trips also allow him to meet with Sis. Chingpei

2003 - September

- Bro. Jonathan Burke sends an email to Bro. James Larsen, advising of his intention to embark on mission work in Taiwan during 2004. Bro. Jonathan Burke reassured Bro. James that he was in regular contact with the ACBM Adelaide China team (especially Bro. David Evans).

2004 – January to June

- Bro. James Larsen continues Bible studies with Abraham
- Abraham invites Bro. James to preach to members of his church.
- At this church Bro. James meets Yuan for the first time. Yuan is the daughter of the resident pastor of the church, and all of her family were key members of this church.

2004 – June

- Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Dianne Burke arrive in Taipei, keen to assist with the work of the truth in Taiwan.
- Bro. Jonathan's arrival was very timely, given the recent contact Bro. James had made with Abraham, Yuan and other church members.

2004 - July to December

- Preaching continues at Abraham's church, and a mid-week Bible class is also inaugurated.
- The Christadelphians were well received by many members of the church and their friends. Their mid-week Bible classes were quite popular.
- However after about 6 months, resistance from a visiting pastor and divisions in the church made preaching more difficult.
- They were forced to leave the church in December 2004

2005

- The Christadelphians continue to preach at a venue provided by one of their long-term contacts.
- They maintain some contact with the church through Abraham and Yuan.
- Abraham is now one of their best Bible students, and has made great progress in his understanding of the gospel.

- Abraham and Yuan want to reform the church. They continue to attend there, and try to make reforms. It seemed like an uphill battle.
- However, towards the end of the year a number of people have left the church, and the resident pastor (Sis. Yuan's father) is no longer teaching.
- Abraham rises to the occasion, instituting changes in the worship and teaching.
- He also invites the Christadelphians to return and provide Bible classes on how congregations should be led and organized.
- Accordingly, this 'church' became the Taipei ecclesia

2005 - December

- The first baptism in Taiwan was that of Bro. Abraham Wang, on 12th December 2005, followed by Sis. Yuan on 19th December 2005.
- Based on email correspondence Bro. James Larsen was copied on, Bro. Jonathan Burke related the positive news of the pending baptisms to the Adelaide ACBM (Bro. David Evans), and in this email expressed his full confidence in following ACBM guidelines for baptismal interviews.
 - o *I wish to know if there is a standard set of ACBM guidelines for baptismal interviews, or any specific information on interviews with Asian contacts. If there is such information, and it could be sent to us via email, we would appreciate it greatly. Our interviews will be documented and described in a report to the ACBM. (4th December 2005).*

2006 – Baptisms and Visits

- **March, 2006:** Shi-ting, a long term contact from the church is baptized.
- **27 April, 2006:** Paul, another long term contact from the church, is baptized.
- **17 June, 2006:** Luke, a doctor assigned by administrative error to Sis. Yuan while she was in hospital with cancer, is finally baptized. Yuan directed him to Bible study classes, and preached to him during their medical appointments.
- **23 July, 2006:** Peng (a former agnostic), is inspired by Luke after months of our teaching is baptized.
- **8 December, 2006:** River, a long term contact of almost a year, commits to life in Christ
- Hence, the ecclesia comprised 10 members, or 11 including Bro. James when he was often there on business. Sis. Chingpei, Bro. Abraham, Sis. Yuan, Sis. Shi-ting, Bro. Paul, Bro. Luke, Bro. Peng, Bro. River, Bro. Jonathon and Sis. Dianne.
- Sis. Echo Chen (originally Manhattan ecclesia, but moved to Shanghai ecclesia), a Taiwanese sister, visits several times. She provides great support to the brethren and sisters in Taiwan, and assists the preaching work:
- Brethren and Sisters who visited and greatly assisted over 2004 to 2006 include:
 - o David and Mary Evans (Enfield)
 - o John Robinson (Hamilton)
 - o Richard and Julie Collett (Adelaide)
 - o Danielle Norris (Hall Green)
 - o Kevin Rawlings (Wasall)
 - o Peter Billelo (Anne Arbor)
 - o David Hudson (Birmingham)
 - o Kim Shead (Chatswood)
 - o Josh Wallace (Boronia)

2006 - October

Bro. Jonathan makes several postings on the Christadelphian Ecclesial-Discuss email list, reasoning that there were already many other humans in existence all over the world besides Adam and Eve, and this is where Cain obtained his wife from.

- *"Cain didn't find his wife until after he left the covenant community and settled in the land of Nod. He knew where to find other people, and there's no doubt that there was already interaction between them, but it's clear 'they' weren't 'us'."*

2007 – December

- A contact by the name of Peter Hsu requested to be accepted into fellowship, after 2 years of regular attendance at the Taipei ecclesia. However, he insisted that he did not need to be re-baptized as his understanding of the gospel was sound when he was baptized at the church by full immersion two years earlier (i.e. the Church formerly attended by Bro. Abraham and Sis. Yuan). Prior to his baptism, he was studying the Bible with Bro. Abraham for one year (although at the time Bro. Abraham was not yet baptized). Even though he was baptized by Sis. Yuan's father, he did not believe the Trinity and answered all questions based on the truth of the Bible as taught by Christadelphians (i.e. based on what Bro. Abraham taught him). Bro. Peter insisted that his baptism was valid because he knew that what Bro. Abraham was teaching him was the truth of the Bible, and anything outside of the Bible he simply will not believe. Moreover, he stated his strong belief that it was God who was calling him, not Sis. Yuan's father who baptized him.
- Bro. Jonathan sent an email on behalf of the Taipei ecclesia to brethren from surrounding ecclesias in Asia-Pacific asking for their counsel on what to do in this situation. Specifically he sent this email to Bro. Peter Heavyside (Hong Kong), Bro. Matthew Jamieson (Seoul, Sth Korea), Bro. Paul Riggio (Gifu, Japan), Bro. Steven Cox (Beijing), and Bro. Manny Schiavone (Kunming). Bro. Jonathan concluded this email with the words *"As you are our local brethren, you are immediately affected by our fellowship decisions, so we put the matter to you for your comments"*. Bro. Jonathan included Bro. James Larsen and Bro. Abraham Wang's name as signatures at the bottom of this letter, next to his own name.
- The Taipei ecclesia collated the feedback and then discussed the matter together. They decided to welcome Bro. Peter Hsu into fellowship based on a) Bro. Abraham's testimony that Bro. Peter was already convicted of the true gospel prior to his immersion; and b) members being satisfied that his doctrine was sound based on their numerous discussions with Bro. Peter over the past two years.

2007 – December – Bible School & Baptism

- First Taipei Bible School
- Bro. Daniel Lu is baptized. Bro. Daniel is Sis. Yuan's son.
- Bible Schools continued each year in December, supported by the ACBM, and visiting brethren and sisters from other countries including Hong Kong, China and South Korea.

2009

- Bro. Jonathan Burke using his internet persona of "Fortigurn" starts making numerous comments in favour of the evolutionary world view on the **www.berea-portal.com** forum, which includes many posts and comments made by Christadelphian brethren either believing in or sympathetic with TE/EC views.

2010 - August

- Bro. Jonathan first wrote and distributed *"A personal statement on Creation"* in August 2010; he subsequently distributed updated versions in 2013 and 2014 under the title of *"The Glory of God & The Honour of Kings: The work of God read in harmony with His Word"*. However, Bro. Jonathan has since withdrawn this document.
- These documents confirmed his change in belief with respect to GDE. He agreed not to teach his beliefs to the ecclesia, but this later proved to be impossible to uphold, particularly when his teaching on the internet entered the ecclesia via an interested friend applying for baptism.

2011 - August

- Last record of a Taipei ecclesial report being sent to the ACBM by Bro. Jonathan Burke.
- Up until this point, Bro. Jonathon had sent detailed reports on the activities of the Taipei ecclesia to the ACBM. Based on copies of the reports Bro. Jonathan forwarded to Bro. James Larsen, Bro. Jonathan sent reports to the ACBM on at least each of the following dates:

○ July 2004	○ February 2005	○ August 2005
○ August 2004	○ March 2005	○ September 2005
○ October 2004	○ April 2005	○ November 2005
○ November 2004	○ May 2005	○ November 2010
○ December 2004	○ June 2005	○ August 2011
○ January 2005	○ July 2005	

2011 - 2012

- A break between the Taipei ecclesia and the ACBM was mutually agreed between Bro. Jonathan and Bro. Rob Thiele (ACBM China area team secretary; former Taiwan “linkman”).
- Bro. Rob Thiele mutually agreed and informed the SA regional committee. The SA regional committee put Taiwan into “sleep mode”, with Bro. Rob remaining the notional linkman till September 2014. In October 2014 Bro. Nathan Shaw (SA regional secretary), became Taiwan contact and link while still in “sleep mode.” *[This paragraph is based on email correspondence Bro. Nathan Shaw sent to Bro. James Larsen]*
- Although financially independent, there was never any intention by most members of the Taipei ecclesia to “cut-off” the spiritual support that representatives of the ACBM had provided, and were capable of continuing to provide. Most members could not understand the reason why the brethren from the ACBM no longer visited Taipei.

2012 – Baptisms

- **December, 2012:** Bro. Joshua and Sis. April are baptized at the Ecclesial Bible School.
- Bro. Joshua is Sis. Yuan’s husband
- Sis. April was introduced to the truth via Bro. Daniel.

2011 – 2014

- Taipei ecclesia reduced in numbers
- Bro. Abraham, Bro. River and Sis. Sylvia moving to California
- Bro. John and Sis. Nanna moving to Indonesia.
- Bro. James Larsen’s time in Taipei reduced due to his business activities scaling down.
- This left a large responsibility on Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan to care for the ecclesia.

2013 – August

- Bro. Jonathan Burke, using his internet persona of “Fortigurn”, states his belief in Evolution on a public Taiwanese blog (Taiwanease.com):
 - *“The scientific evidence for evolution is overwhelming. It is substantiated by many other branches of science, and all of them would have to be wrong in order for evolution to be false.”*
- <https://taiwanease.com/en/forums/evolution-vs-creationism-t11294.html?sid=85e308ff1333da4fec9183dfeeb826c4>

2013 – November - December

- Bro. Jonathan Burke sends Bro. James Larsen his side-by-side interpretation of Clauses 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 10 of the BASF (see Appendix 3). From the outset Bro. Jonathan comments that *“the BASF was not written with the aim of accommodating evolution; it was written specifically with the understanding that all humans are descendants of Adam, and that Evolution is false. Nevertheless, as it stands the wording of the BASF does not need to be changed to accommodate evolution.”*
- However, when reading Bro. Jonathan’s side by side interpretation of these Clauses (Appendix 3), it is apparent that his interpretation significantly changes the meaning from that intended by the original authors, and his belief is a very different faith.
- 05 December: In a follow-up email to Bro. James Larsen, Bro. Jonathan Burke also comments on where he agrees and disagrees with the Cooper-Carter Addendum, and at the same time confirms that he does NOT agree with the BASF:
 - o *I have already made it totally clear that the Cooper-Carter Addendum states truth when it says Adam suffered a defiled conscience as a consequence [sic] sin, but that the Cooper-Carter Addendum states error when it says Adam suffered mortality as a consequence of sin. This is little better than the BASF, which states falsely that Adam suffered a defiled nature as a consequence of sin (an error the Cooper-Carter Addendum abandoned, substituting 'defiled conscience' instead), but does not state Adam suffered mortality as a consequence of sin. (Jonathan Burke: email to Bro. James Larsen, 05 December 2013)*
- 14 December: In a further follow-up email to Bro. James Larsen, Bro. Jonathan Burke made the following comments with respect to his understanding of the diabolos and our sin prone nature.
 - o *My definition [of Diabolos] applies to all human beings who have ever lived, regardless of whether or not they evolved. **The diabolos only appears in human beings enlightened by divine law**, as I have said more than once.” (Jonathan Burke: email to Bro. James Larsen, 14 December 2013)*
 - o *“All human beings, regardless of their origin, are 'prone to sin' insofar as they all have natural impulses which naturally come into conflict with divine law. Such a conflict does not arise until they are enlightened by divine law.” (Jonathan Burke: email to Bro. James Larsen, 14 December 2013)*
- In the following comment from the same email, Bro. Jonathan frankly admits that his view on GDE would have been rejected by brother Robert Roberts. Moreover, he is forthright in acknowledging that his views on GDE are widely published and have a strong internet presence, but somewhat incongruously he is trying to claim he was doing his best not to reveal his views to the Taipei ecclesia. For some reason Bro. Jonathan thinks that publically corresponding or publishing his views on GDE can be separated from having any impact on his brethren and sisters at his ecclesia who he shares fellowship with.
 - o ***“I am fully aware that the view of creation/evolution I hold was rejected by brother Roberts, and I have made this explicit in all my 'official' and public correspondence on the topic. I am also fully aware that people are concerned about my views on evolution being spread due to my existing credibility as a result of being widely published and having a strong internet presence. This is precisely why I have always kept my mouth shut on the subject, have refused to discuss it in public, and have refused to evangelize. Until last Wednesday, not even our own ecclesial members knew that I accepted evolution. Last Wednesday I told them at Bible class, in response to a question about evolution by sister April, which I had deliberately put off answering for nearly four weeks, but finally could not avoid any longer (I made it clear to them that our community has always rejected evolution strongly and consistently, and gave them no specific details about my personal views other than to say I believe Adam and Eve were created). The only times I have discussed evolution are when people have come to me asking about it, and the number of people doing that has increased significantly due to the Lampstand committee advertising my views.”** (Jonathan Burke: email to Bro. James Larsen, 14 December 2013)*

2014 – July

Bro. Jonathan Burke, in conjunction with Bro. Ken Gilmore (Kedron Brook Ecclesia, Queensland, Australia), launched the following public Facebook sites, promoting and defending their view of Evolutionary Creation, and publically criticising articles published in Christadelphian magazines on various subjects including those that conflict with their personal view that evolution was God's method of creation:

1. **"Science & Scripture"**

<https://www.facebook.com/Science-Scripture-1449424052004603/>

This Facebook site contains many articles promoting Evolutionary Creationism, criticising those who publically defend special creation, and frequently quotes from or links articles from Biologos.org (a major website in the US promoting Evolutionary Creationism).

2. **"The Lampstand Reviewed"**

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Lampstand-reviewed-500484383419073/>

This Facebook site contains articles specifically criticising articles in the Lampstand Magazine, including a series published in the Lampstand titled "Evolution and our Statement of Faith".

3. **"The Christadelphian Magazine Reviewed"**

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Christadelphian-Magazine-reviewed-707984089236927/>

4. **"The Testimony Magazine Reviewed"**

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Testimony-Magazine-reviewed-326477574188393/>

5. **"The Bible Magazine Reviewed"**

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Bible-Magazine-reviewed-1432035180419012/>

- All of these public Facebook sites remain active, with the "About" section on each site explaining that *"Unless otherwise noted, notes and posts are written by brother Ken Gilmore (Kedron Brook Ecclesia, Australia), and brother Jonathan Burke (Taipei Ecclesia, Taiwan)."*
- Hence at all of the above Facebook sites, Bro. Jonathan is using the Taipei Ecclesia's name to promote his views on GDE.

2015 – Update on Ecclesial Membership Status

- Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan (husband and wife)
 - Bro. Daniel Lu (Sis. Yuan's only son, from her first marriage)
 - Sis. April Kuo (dating with Bro. Daniel)
 - Sis. Lorna Kung (she is from the Philippines, married a Taiwanese man).
 - Bro. Jonathon and Sis. Dianne Burke
 - Mingming (Kevin) - consistent attendee, translator and a great helper (but not baptized yet).
 - Sis. Chingpei (who was baptized in Australia). As one of the first baptized, she was consistently a strong supporter of all Taipei ecclesial activities, but during 2015 her attendance declined. Bro. Abraham still met with her whenever he visited Taipei. (Note: From early 2016 Sis. Chingpei has resumed regular attendance).
- Bro. Peng and Bro. Peter – attendance became infrequent during 2015. Bro. Peng is Bro. Abraham's long-time friend, and Bro. Peter is Bro. Abraham's high school classmate. So Bro. Abraham still meets them individually when he visits Taipei. (Note: From late 2015 Bro. Peng's attendance became regular again, particular following the baptism of his sister – Sherry).
- Unbaptized: Sherry and her younger sister Celine (both are Bro. Peng's sisters) come regularly. Sherry was later baptized in November 2015.
 - The ecclesia is still very young and fragile.
 - Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan handle all practical ecclesia matters, from meeting announcements, setting up the meeting each Sunday, handling the finances, contacting interested friends, etc.

2015 – Bible Teaching

- Bro. Jonathan Burke is doing most of the teaching at the Taipei Ecclesia.
- Bro. James helps whenever he visits Taipei. Bro. Abraham fills in with exhortations via skype from California, when no one else is available.
- The ecclesia became concerned at Bro. Jonathan's focus on teaching topics that relate directly to GDE, or with a peripheral link to GDE, either during formal ecclesial meetings or directly on a one-on-one basis with ecclesial members and contacts. For example, Bro. Jonathan did a study class to members and contacts teaching that parts of Genesis were written in the time of Daniel which disturbed the ecclesia.
- Also, members of the Taipei ecclesia expressed concerned that Bro. Jonathan was teaching what they summarised as "multiple Adams" (i.e. there was a created Adam, but an evolved first man, and if Adam's children married men there must have been another first man before Adam. This first man and Adam make for at least two first men. One evolved and one created. Hence, they summarized Bro. Jonathan's teaching as "multiple Adams").
- The ecclesia became concerned that Bro. Jonathan was teaching GDE online to wide audiences with his name associated with the Taipei ecclesia. For example Bro. Jonathan Burke proactively advocates Evolutionary Creation views on his own "*Science & Scripture*" public Facebook page, where he attributes authorship of his posts to himself as a member of the Taipei Ecclesia (see Appendix 1). He makes frequent posts linking articles from the Biologos (Evolutionary Creationism) website. He also frequently posts excerpts from the writings of a prominent evolutionary creationist by the name of John H Walton. As an example of Bro. Jonathan's view on sin and the nature of man, Bro. Jonathan made the following comment:
 - "*The Bible never says mortality is the result of sin. It says Adam was created mortal, and death is the wages of sin, not mortality. And that death is the second death.*" (Jonathan Burke, "*Science & Scripture*", 2 June 2015)
- Also, Bro. Jonathan commented regularly on Bro. Mike Pearson's "*Christadelphians Learning From Science*" public Facebook page, proactively advocating his EC view (see Appendix 1)
- Bro. Jonathan's teaching appeared to be influencing Sis. April and the interested friends - Sherry and her sister Celine. For example, Sis. Sherry, who was baptized at the end of November 2015, stated that she had initially learned from Bro. Jonathan that the "daughters of men" in Genesis 6 referred to other humans already existing when Adam was created.

2015 - July

- Bro. Joshua and Sis Yuan, are very concerned over Bro. Jonathan's proactive teaching of GDE and related topics. They contacted Bro. Abraham (a founding member of Taipei ecclesia, but currently living in California and a member of the San Francisco Peninsula ecclesia), seeking advice on what to do.
- Bro. Abraham then contacted Bro. Ted Sleeper at the San Francisco Peninsula ecclesia, asking for his counsel on how the Taipei ecclesia should handle the matter of Bro. Jonathan Burke teaching GDE
- 17 July: Bro. Ted Sleeper responds by email to Bro. Abraham, firstly stating that GDE is negated by what God has revealed concerning His work of creation and the subsequent events in the Garden of Eden, providing scriptural proof. Bro. Ted suggested that if Bro. Jonathan continues teaching GDE in the Taipei ecclesia, he will end up overthrowing the faith of many in the ecclesia. After quoting the examples of how the apostle Paul dealt with error (2 Tim 2:17-18; Tit. 1:10-11), Bro. Ted recommended the Taipei ecclesia should embark on the following approach:
 - a) *Ask Jonathan to immediately stop teaching on this topic and any related topic.*
 - b) *If Jonathan refuses to keep his thinking and ideas to himself, then you may have little choice but to withdraw from him. In essence, Jonathan is like those of whom Paul warns the brethren in Ephesus: "from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse (i.e. distorted) things, to draw away the disciples after themselves." (Acts 20:30) I don't know that Jonathan wants disciples for himself, but that will be the result of his continued teaching.*
 - c) *It is important to realize that withdrawal of fellowship is not a step that can be taken lightly. We are not in a position to demand Jonathan change his thinking...or else. First, someone must work with him to help him see the implications of his beliefs and the fallacies in his thinking. This might be something Bro. John Bilello could help with as he can answer his questions from a scientific point of view. But if this fails and Jonathan persists in teaching his ideas to the ecclesia, you will have no other choice but to withdraw fellowship from him.*

- 17 July: Bro. Abraham forward Bro. Ted's response to Bro. James Larsen, asking him to review Bro. Ted's email for any modifications, and then Bro. Abraham would translate it and send it back to Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan. Bro. Abraham also asked Bro. James if they should communicate with Bro. David Evans or Bro. Richard Collet and seek their advice, or perhaps contact the ACBM for their counsel.
- 17 July: Bro. James Larsen responded stating that the ACBM can be contacted for their counsel, acknowledging that the Taipei ecclesia is facing a very difficult situation.
- 18 July: Bro. Abraham responded via email requesting Bro. James Larsen to initiate the contact with the ACBM. Specifically, Bro. Abraham emphasised that it would be appropriate to contact the ACBM so they could assist in sending Christadelphian teachers to the Taipei ecclesia and ensure that the truth of the Bible is being taught.
- 18 July: In a subsequent skype conversation, Bro. James Larsen and Bro. Abraham agreed that at this point in time it would be best not to contact individuals such as Bro. David Evans or other potential candidates to come to Taipei and assist in counselling. They hoped the situation could be resolved by the Taipei ecclesia with the help and support of themselves as founding members. In the future if the matter remained unresolved, they agreed they could then invite other individuals to help, as well as then appealing to the ACBM for long term care (which they now viewed as necessary no matter what the outcome with respect to Bro. Jonathan). They also agreed that such an invitation or an appeal for help to an individual from another ecclesia would need to be initiated by members of Taipei ecclesia that were most troubled and concerned by Bro. Jonathan's teaching and these members should invite a helper they are comfortable with, preferably someone they know well. Likewise, any appeal to the ACBM for long term spiritual support would need to be an ecclesial decision.

2015 – July 30

- Bro. Jonathan Burke sends an email to the Christadelphian Ecclesial Discuss List, criticising Bro. Stephen Palmer's articles on "Creation or Evolution" published in the Christadelphian Magazine, with the following remarks:
 - o *"Evolution is not a random process and does not depend upon "natural, undirected chemical accidents by that by chance gave survival and reproductive advantage". Stephen says "The conflict between the two positions is stark and cannot be avoided", but provides no evidence for this. The argument he makes is exactly the same argument people used to make about the earth being flat, and the sun orbiting the earth, and other embarrassing mistakes about science.*

*The fact that after 150 years, even Christadelphians who don't accept evolution can't agree on how to interpret Genesis 1, is sufficient to warn us that wild speculation about the text, **completely isolated from reality and the witness of God's own handiwork**, is a futile way to approach God's Word (not to mention being grossly disrespectful). The shifting sands of Christadelphian interpretation cannot be relied on. **We must look to the record God Himself left written in the earth.**" (Jonathan Burke, email to Christadelphian E-D list, 30 July 2015)*

2015 - September 9

- Bro. Abraham returns to Taipei after receiving news that his Father had passed away.

2015 - September 12

- Bro. Jonathan Burke informs the ecclesia (including Bro. Abraham) that he wishes to baptize a friend by the name of James Paul Chappell who believes in GDE. Bro. Jonathan had been meeting with James Paul Chappell and teaching him for some time.
- James Paul Chappell prepared a personal statement of faith which included the following sections:
 - o *"The bible is inspired by God and is inerrant in purpose and meaning, but not in every last detail of superfluous matters. The ancient Near East had a large influence on the Old Testament and Second temple Judaism on the New Testament, and as such, we should take off our 21st century blinders to read either."*
 - o *"Evolution is real. Get over it. But it is not incompatible with theism, and certainly not Christianity, which shows how weak, damage (sic), messed up, and full of suffering the world is."*

2015 - September 17

- Bro. Abraham met with James Paul Chappell for the first time. Bro. Jonathan assisted to arrange this meeting in a coffee shop not far from where James Paul Chappell is residing.
- The purpose of the meeting was purely so that both parties could get to know each other. Bro. Abraham viewed this as social meeting and not in any way an interview in preparation for baptism. At the start Bro. Abraham was delayed by having to attend to matters relating to his Father's funeral.
- The discussion between James Paul Chappell and Bro. Abraham focused on how James Paul Chappell, by his own personal witness and good conduct, could make his wife more positive towards his involvement in Bible study and potential attendance at the Taipei ecclesia. The objective being that James Paul Chappell would then be able to spend time with the ecclesia following the normal established policies of the ecclesia of teaching candidate for baptism. Bro. Abraham invited James Paul Chappell to come along to the Taipei ecclesia for the purpose of getting to know everyone else.

2015 - September 25

- Bro. Abraham and Bro. James Larsen wrote to Bro. Jonathan Burke requesting that James Paul Chappell be given a copy of the Taipei Baptism Guidelines, and to make sure that all areas in the guidelines are discussed prior to baptism to ensure a common foundation of faith with the rest of the ecclesia. In particular, they advised Bro. Jonathan that further discussion will need to take place on what James Paul Chappell means by inspiration and evolution.
- The Taipei Baptism Guidelines, which all of the Taipei ecclesial members read in preparation for their baptism, directly addresses the matter of creation by stating:
 - o *The order of creation and length of the days. Exodus 31:17*
 - o *The error of evolution. Romans 1:22-25*
- Bro. Abraham and Bro. James Larsen suggested that before the baptism can take place the ecclesia will need to fully discuss these subjects among themselves, and then, as an ecclesia, with James Paul Chappell.
- Bro. Jonathan Burke responded by text messages to Bro. James Larsen over September 25 and 26 with the following comments.
 - o *James' [Paul Chappell's] view on inspiration is quite orthodox. He believes that when the Bible says the earth stands still and is never moved, and when it says the heart is the source of thoughts, it doesn't mean God inspired men to teach those things as fact. Rather, God accommodated their terms of reference. This is what brother Roberts and brother Walker both said, after the inspiration controversy.*
 - o ***With regard to evolution, James believes as I do that it is a process God designed and instituted to bring about His will just like the laws of physics. His understanding of evolution does not affect his understanding of the gospel, and Abraham will tell you James gives excellent witness to participatory atonement.***
 - o ***Finally, to put it simply, if James cannot be accepted by Taipei ecclesia due to his views on evolution then neither can Dee and I. We would then meet with James, and Taipei ecclesia could manage itself.***
 - o ***If the ecclesia feels that [sic] cannot baptize him in good conscience I will do it myself.***
 - o *I have two responsibilities. One is to James, who I believe has a true understanding of the gospel. I am therefore obligated to act on his request for baptism. The other is to the ecclesia, who I believe must be given the opportunity to decide if they believe they can baptize and fellowship James. **Their decision will determine what I do next, and who I'll be breaking bread with in future.***
 - o *And I'll say it again, he will state his views, everyone can decide what they think about them including me, and we can all act accordingly. It's very simple. I've spent seven years shielding our ecclesia from controversy and deliberately said nothing about evolution. Everyone in Taipei ecclesia already knows what they think about evolution and they know full well that our community has always rejected it. Some of our members have no problem with it, and a couple do. I haven't tried to change anyone's mind, so they can all have their say independently. But that means you don't get to make up their minds for them, any more than I do.*

2015 - September 26

- Bro. Jonathan Burke informed Bro. James Larsen via text message that he had received positive responses from the Hong Kong ecclesia (Bro. Michael Newman – who had only recently transferred to the Hong Kong ecclesia) and the Beijing ecclesia (Bro. Steven Cox) for the baptism of James Paul Chappell:
 - o *Since this is a matter for Taipei ecclesia, it is our responsibility to contact representatives of the two leading ecclesias in our area, Hong Kong ecclesia and Beijing ecclesia, for their guidance, comment and advice. I have already done this, and received initial thoughts from representatives of both ecclesias. We will be discussing the matter and its implications in greater detail, in the upcoming week.*
 - *"I have maintained for over 1 year now that I do not believe someone accepting God directed evolution should be a barrier to fellowship or baptism" (Michael Newman, Hong Kong)*
 - *"I will back you up." (Steve Cox, Beijing)*
 - o *They have suggested I not discuss the matter further with those outside the China/Taiwan/Hong Kong area until they've had further discussion with new [sic] and with Peter Heavyside in Hong Kong*
- However beyond these comments from Michael Newman and Steven Cox, no other responses were received. As Bro. Jonathan Burke stated, no other members of the ecclesias, including Bro. Peter Heavyside in Hong Kong, knew anything about the request from the Taipei ecclesia at this stage. Accordingly, the Taipei ecclesia remained concerned that these two responses were not official ecclesial responses.
- Moreover other ecclesias in the region were not contacted, including ecclesias in China, South Korea and Japan who have enjoyed a strong relationship with the Taipei ecclesia over the past 10 years. Compare the previous case noted in this timeline in December 2007, when Bro. Jonathan sent a letter to representatives of all of these ecclesias seeking their counsel on a particular matter.
- Bro. James Larsen then sent an email to Bro. Steven Cox, firstly stating his understanding that Bro. Steven Cox had provided Bro. Jonathan Burke with counsel regarding the matter of baptising James Paul Chappell. Secondly he asked if Steven could relate this same counsel to Bro. James and the Taipei ecclesia. Bro. James' email to Bro. Steven Cox included James Paul Chappell's faith summary, and attached to the email were three documents: 1) ACBM Baptismal Guidelines; 2) An article titled *"The First Man"* written by Bro. Robert Roberts and published in the Christadelphian magazine in 1888; and 3) Bro. Jonathan's interpretation of Clauses 3-6, 8 & 10 of the BASF, titled *"Evolution and the BASF,"* (see Appendix 3) which Bro. Jonathan had previously forwarded to Bro. James on November 2nd 2013.

2015 - September 27

- Bro. Steven Cox responded to Bro. James Larsen:
 - o Recommending that James Paul Chappell needs to expand his confession to say more about who Jesus is before he is baptized.
 - o Regarding the three documents attached to Bro. James' email, Steven stated that he: 1) prefers the more user friendly form of the UK CBM blue book rather than the "ACBM resolution"; 2) is not interested in the document by Robert Roberts; and 3) would like to know the author of the 3rd BASF interpretation document (note: although written by Bro. Jonathan Burke, the document itself has no indication of authorship, hence Bro. Steven's question)
 - o Steven stated that *"generally ecclesias don't want baptisms to become controversial issues, or have people outside the ecclesia to have too much influence - I am not a member of Taipei so there is a limited amount of counsel. But I do appreciate the two of you, and Jonno, sharing, as neighbours in "Greater China""*
- Bro. James Larsen sent a text message to Bro. Jonathan Burke emphasising that the ecclesia *"must discuss to find out what our contact believes before we baptize him in the one faith"*.
- Bro. Jonathan Burke responded in a text message to Bro. James Larsen:
 - o ***"James' [Paul Chappell's] position on evolution is the same as mine. It would have been rejected by our pioneers and is rejected by most of our community, as I have made very clear to our ecclesia more than once. It's not the same as the position Watford rejected, since brother Lovelock believed Cain married a non-human and I believe he married a human. But Watford would have rejected this position as well. There's no doubt that this is rejected by most of our community, but it is accommodated by some ecclesias in Australia as well as by Michael Newman and Steve Cox. I'm more than happy to describe to our ecclesia the fearmongering, division, strife, false accusations, and disfellowships for which people like Ron Cowie are responsible, never fear"***

- Bro. James Larsen responded by saying:
 - o *"Brother Jonathan the vast majority consensus in our Brotherhood is that you have a different faith and you have a different view of first principle doctrines. This is true both historically and worldwide. I feel great sadness in your departure from the faith and our fellowship. The only honest way forward is for you have a new statement of faith that is designed for evolution and have a fellowship where it can be taught openly and freely. This is not out of fear or any other motivation but telling you the truth of the situation."*
- In turn, Bro. Jonathan Burke responded with:
 - o *"I'm totally aware of what people say thanks. **I have already explained in explicit detail how the traditional reading of the BASF does not accommodate evolution**, and I've been totally open about the fact that I'm prepared for others to withdraw from me. That's their business."*

2015 - September 27 (Sunday Ecclesia Discussion)

- After the breaking of bread meeting, the discussed the baptism request of James Paul Chappell, and his personal statement of faith. Members present in this informal meeting were: Bro. Abraham, Sis. Yuan, Bro. Joshua, Bro. Daniel, Sis. April, Bro. Jonathan and Sis. Dianne.
- Bro. Joshua raised a question regarding the whole process – since the ecclesia had never met Bro. Jonathan's friend, James Paul Chappell, how it possible for the ecclesia to agree to baptize him? So the ecclesia agreed that it would be prudent to first meet with James Paul Chappell to get to know him, and then wait until sufficient discussions had taken place with him over a period of time before deciding on whether or not he can be baptized.
- The ecclesia agreed that they would be available on Wednesday night (30th) to meet with James Paul Chappell specifically for the purpose of getting to know him. Bro. Abraham then left due to ongoing family arrangements surrounding his Father's funeral, but other members stayed longer for social chatting.
- However, later that evening Bro. Jonathan Burke sent a text message to Bro. James Larsen summarizing his understanding of the ecclesia's discussion with James Paul Chappell in the following words:
 - o *"After some discussion in Chinese, the members present (Yuan, Joshua, April, ??Yuan?? [sic]), voted unanimously to baptize James if he shows a true understanding of the gospel, regardless of his views on evolution."*
- Bro. James Larsen sought confirmation from Bro. Abraham on whether or not the ecclesia did in fact vote unanimously to change its existing policy with respect to a belief in evolution (as per the ecclesia's baptism guidelines) and hence would now not make James Paul Chappell's belief in evolution a barrier to his potential baptism. Bro. Abraham confirmed that he only left to attend to family matters when he thought the meeting was winding down, and there was no indication at all that another important decision or vote was going to be taken. Brother Abraham immediately contacted Sister Yuan for clarification of what actually occurred.
- Sister Yuan confirmed that Bro. Jonathan did propose a vote after Bro. Abraham left, but explained that she understood that they were simply voting in line with what they had agreed when Bro. Abraham was present - to get to know James Paul Chappell and go through his belief as per the ecclesia's existing policy (i.e. the Taipei ecclesia baptism guidelines, which follow the ACBM baptism guidelines) in order to establish his belief in the one-true gospel. She was adamant that the ecclesia's existing policy in rejecting evolution (as per its baptism guidelines) had in no wise been changed by this vote (and this was subsequently made clear in point 2 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy on evolution that everyone including Bro. Jonathan signed on 04 November 2015).
- Sis Yuan, Brother James and Brother Abraham were very surprised to note that Bro. Jonathan thought that such a far reaching change in ecclesial policy could be achieved by a quick show of hands. Such a change in policy would have far reaching implications on the fellowship position of the ecclesia and would effectively put the ecclesia out of fellowship with the vast majority of the ecclesial world historically, currently and in the future. This would require a clear written and translated change of policy document, making sure the ecclesia was fully informed of the implications for such a decision.
- So regardless of what Bro. Jonathan may have thought this vote was all about, from the perspective of the four Taiwanese brethren and sisters left after Bro. Abraham departed, the only agreement made was to meet with James Paul Chappell and get to know him. Brother Joshua and Sis. Yuan's English is very limited, Sis. April has basic English however she can easily misunderstand, and Bro. Daniel remains unclear as to what exactly was voted on at the time. Certainly all four of them did not think they were voting to change the ecclesia's policy on such an important matter.

2015 - September 28 (Monday)

- Bro. James Larsen sent a text message to Bro. Jonathan asking “So fundamentally - what is a true understanding of the Gospel? One Gospel one faith one baptism”?
- Bro. Jonathan Burke responded in a text message to Bro. James Larsen.
 - o *“Yes, one gospel, one faith, one baptism. And Taipei ecclesia will interview James to determine whether or not he believes that one gospel, one faith, and one baptism. The decision will be made by the ecclesia.”*
- Bro. Abraham Wang sent an email to Bro. Ted Sleeper (San Francisco Peninsula ecclesia), expressing concern that a) Bro. Jonathan is pressing for the baptism of James Paul Chappell who believes in GDE as per his personal statement of faith; and b) that Bro. Jonathan thinks that the ecclesia voted in favour of baptising him if he believes the gospel regardless of his views on GDE, when all the ecclesia did was agree to meet with James Paul Chappell for further discussion (Jonathan’s confusion is likely due to a “language communication” problem). Also, Bro. Abraham asks for Bro. Ted’s opinion on whether he believes the teaching of GDE, and the baptism of someone who believes in GDE, should be considered by the Taipei ecclesia as a fellowship matter or not?

2015 - September 30

- Bro. Ted Sleeper responds to Bro. Abraham’s email:
 - a) confirming that Christadelphians world-wide do not believe GDE to be true as evolution undermines and destroys the basic fundamental teachings of the Bible;
 - b) further study needs to be done with James Paul Chappell to ensure that his faith is solidly based upon the word of God as the basis for his new life in Christ;
 - c) the Taipei ecclesia should resolve the “language communication” problem and ensure that baptism into the one faith should not be based on an ecclesial vote, but on whether the one saving Gospel is truly believed;
 - d) suggesting that Bro. Jonathan should speak with Bro. Stephen Palmer or Bro. John Bilello who will be in a good position to show him the error of evolutionary beliefs and show him the truth of God’s word; and
 - e) suggesting Bro. Jonathan should no longer teach GDE in the ecclesia, but if he does then the ecclesia may have to withdraw from him with the hope that he will return with a better sense of humility.

2015 - October

- The personal statement of faith prepared by James Paul Chappell and submitted by Bro. Jonathan Burke to the ecclesia precipitated deep concern among the members of the Taipei ecclesia.
- The Taipei ecclesia now had to decide whether or not they would baptize someone who believed in GDE, and by so doing, put themselves out of fellowship with the vast majority of Christadelphians, both historically and currently, around the world. They would be setting a precedent in that this would be the first time that an ecclesia has baptized someone whose personal statement of faith includes a belief in GDE and who would not be baptized unless this would be accommodated.
- Members of the ecclesia asked Bro. James Larsen and Bro. Abraham (both founding members of the Taipei ecclesia) to urgently come to Taiwan and help them.
- Bro. Abraham Wang was in Taipei during the month of September for his father’s funeral, but had to return to California before any resolution of the matter could be achieved.
- Bro. James Larsen initially could not come due to business commitments in the USA.
- Feeling helpless in this situation, Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan decided to send a personal letter of appeal to Bro. David and Sis. Mary Evans from the Enfield ecclesia in South Australia for help (via Bro. Abraham who translated her email). Sis Yuan remembered their care and involvement with Taipei ecclesia over the years.
- October 8: On behalf of Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan, Bro. Abraham Wang sent an email to Bro. David Evans expressing their concern that Bro. Jonathan Burke is speaking about GDE to ecclesial members in Taipei, and is asking the ecclesia to accept the baptism of James Paul Chappell who believes in Evolution. Bro. Joshua and Sis Yuan are concerned that what Bro. Jonathan is teaching is a different faith to the Christadelphian faith, and are extremely worried that the ecclesia may end up splitting. The email contains an appeal for guidance on what to do, and an appeal for their help for sound Bible teaching to help balance what Bro. Jonathan is teaching, given that the

ecclesia is so fragile and has no other Bible study leader apart from when Bro. James visits Taipei and the odd occasions when Bro. Abraham is able to teach via Skype.

- October 21: Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan send another letter of a personal appeal for help to Bro. David and Sis. Mary Evans for help (translated into English by Bro. Abraham). They made two specific requests in this email: 1) please come to Taipei and help us sort through this matter; and 2) the Taipei ecclesia remains small and weak and hence would deeply appreciate ACBM spiritual help and Bible Teaching. On the second point, Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan stated in their letter *"In the past we were receiving financial support from ACBM, and then when our ecclesia grew, then we did not want to cause any more financial burden to ACBM, so we told ACBM we were fine financially, but we never said we do not need ACBM spiritual support, and we always wanted the elder brother and sisters to come to Taipei to teach Bible and fellowship with us."*
- Bro. David Evans gave the Enfield ecclesia the correspondence he received from Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan (via Bro. Abraham), and obtained his ecclesia's approval to respond to this personal call for help. Bro. David also contacted Bro. Rob Thiele (acting ABCM "linkman" for Taiwan while in "sleep mode") and Bro. Garnet Alchin (ACBM national secretary) informing them of the appeal made by the Taipei ecclesia members to the ACBM for spiritual support. At the time he was speaking with Bro. Rob Thiele, Bro. David mentioned that Sis. Mary was not in a position to travel because of poor health. During this conversation Bro. Rob Thiele suggested Bro. David Evans to take Bro. Rob's brother-in-law, Bro. Carl Parry (Salisbury ecclesia) with him. *[This paragraph is based on email correspondence Bro. David Evans sent to Bro. James Larsen]*
- October 24: Bro. David then responded to Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan (via Bro. Abraham) that he and Bro. Carl would be in Taipei over November 6-8 to help the ecclesia.
- Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan confirmed to the ecclesia of the pending visit of Bro. David Evans and Carl Parry in two-weeks.
- However, after Bro. Jonathan heard about this, he expressed to Bro. James Larsen that he had seen correspondence from various parts of the ecclesial world claiming that brethren from Adelaide were only coming to Taipei to interfere in the ecclesia and to dis-fellowship Bro. Jonathan. Unfortunately, there was disruption, fear and pressure brought to bear on the ecclesia from outside by those trying to oppose the visit of the brethren.
- The ecclesia decided to resolve the situation in a calm manner with the founding members, before the brethren from Adelaide arrived. If Bro. Jonathan's views on GDE (as per his friend's personal baptism statement) turn out to be non-essential beliefs that do not conflict with the One Faith, then the ecclesia would continue to fellowship with him on the basis of the One Faith. Admittedly from Bro. Jonathan's perspective he was concerned about the pending visit from the brethren from Adelaide. However, this small ecclesia of less than 10 brethren and sisters was at a critical juncture and in a very fragile position due to Bro. Jonathan's ultimatum to baptize a candidate who believed that evolution was God's method of creation. The ecclesia needed counsel and comfort.

2015 - October 23

- Bro. James Larsen arrived in Taipei, and stayed until January 22nd 2016 to attend the Taipei Bible Camp.

2015 - October 29

- Bro. James Larsen and Bro. Abraham contact Bro. Steven Cox for his knowledge of CBM policy guidelines on Christadelphian baptisms worldwide.
- Bro. Steven Cox emails Bro. James Larsen, attaching a word version of the CBM Preparing for Baptism booklet, along with a Chinese translation of the same.
- Bro. Steven Cox advises that the CBM booklet is what is used to prepare candidates for Baptism in China, and specifically copies into the text of his email the following section specifically addressing the subject of Evolution:
 - o **3.2 Does the Bible support the theory that man evolved from animals?**
ANSWER:
 No. The Bible condemns this theory by revealing that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them.
 See Genesis 1:27; Genesis 3:20; Matthew 19:4; Romans 5:12.

2015 - October 23- November 5

- The 8-point "Christadelphian Taipei Ecclesia Policy" was drafted, agreed to and signed by the members and founders of the Taipei ecclesia (see Appendix 5)
- The key principle is the third point which is directly taken from Clause 3.2 of the CBM baptism guide:
 - o *"The Bible condemns the theory that man evolved from animals by revealing that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them. See Genesis 1:27; Genesis 3:20; Matthew 19:4; Romans 5:12."*
- This document addressed all-important issues of teaching, baptizing candidates and fellowshiping visitors, but was silent on personal faith. This oversight became apparent later.
- Signing participants were: Jonathan Burke, Dianne Burke, Joshua, Yuan, Daniel Lou, April, Peng, John, Abraham and James Larsen.
- No one else was involved in this decision apart from those that signed the document.
- Appendix 6 contains the transcript of the Taipei Ecclesia's discussion via an instant-messaging group chat program while they were drafting this policy. Key aspects to note include:
 - o *Members of this ecclesial group chat include Jonathan and Dianne Burke, Bro. Abraham, Bro. James Larsen, Sis. Yuan, Bro. Daniel, Bro. Peng and Sherry Peng (Bro. Peng's sister who did most of the translation and was baptized later in November).*
 - o *Bro. Jonathan accepted the insertion of Clause 3.2 of the CMB baptism guide*
 - o *Bro. Jonathan told the ecclesial group "I will tell James Chappell he can't be baptized".*
 - o *Bro. Jonathan had no problem working on the contents of this ecclesia policy with founding members James Larsen and Abraham Wang. In contrast he was insistent that other contacts (e.g. Kevin) should not be part of this ecclesial group chat as they were not baptized members of the Taipei ecclesia.*
- This is how the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy was referred to directly by Bro. Jonathan Burke in his rebuttal to his dis-fellowship notice as posted on various online forums, including the "Christadelphian Open Debate" Facebook page, and the ex-christadelphian.com website (see Appendix 11)
 - o *"2. The ecclesia formulated a policy on evolution late last year before anyone visited Taiwan. In fact I proposed at least five of the eight Clauses. With almost no exceptions, it was simply a formal re-statement of how the ecclesia had been addressing the issue for the last few years; it was not to be taught in the ecclesia, it was not to be taught to contacts, and people who accepted evolution were not baptized. We had all agreed to it and signed it."*
- Hence Bro. Jonathan was heavily involved in the formation of the document, and it confirms that it is NOT something that was sprung upon Bro. Jonathan suddenly, or that he was made to sign against his will.
- Moreover, point 6 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy states that the ecclesia's policy on evolution, and hence the reasons why it is to be rejected, is based on what the Bible says, and Bro. Jonathan agreed to and signed this (see Appendix 5).

2015 – November 2 – 4

- Bro. Steven Cox visits Taipei and discusses with ecclesial members while they were drafting their "Christadelphian Taipei Ecclesia Policy". Contrary to expressing any objection to the creation of this Ecclesia Policy at the time, Bro. Steven positively contributed by suggesting the following two points be included: 1) Clause 3.2 of the CBM Baptism guide; and 2) a point expressing that evolution should not be taught in the ecclesia.
- Bro. Steven Cox visits James Paul Chappell and meets him for the first time.

2015 - November 6 - 8

- Bro. Carl Parry and Bro. David Evans visit the Taipei ecclesia. The brethren provided counsel and Bible studies, and they were very pleased to see the 8-point “Christadelphian Taipei Ecclesia Policy”.
- 7th November - Bro. Carl met with Bro. Jonathan Burke and the subject of evolution came up. Bro. Jonathan Burke told Bro. Carl that he personally did not believe the key defining point 3 of the 8-point document that he signed, specifically:
 - o *The Bible condemns this theory (that man evolved from animals) by revealing that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them. See Genesis 1:27; Genesis 3:20; Matthew 19:4; Romans 5:12.*
- This was the first time that Bro. Jonathan Burke had stated that he did not agree with one of the main points in the Taipei Ecclesia Policy after all, even though he had actually signed his agreement on every point in the 8-point document.
- 8th November - Bro. James Larsen met and discussed the matter with Bro. Jonathan Burke. Bro. Jonathan tells Bro. James the same - that he personally did not believe point 3 of the Taipei Ecclesia Policy.
- 8th November - Bro. Jonathan Burke then confirmed to other ecclesial members that he didn’t agree with point 3 of the Taipei Ecclesia Policy.
- It now became clear to all that Bro. Jonathan had not changed his position on GDE, and for some reason had signed all 8 points without actually agreeing to them all, particularly the key defining point 3 which states that “*The Bible condemns the theory that man evolved from animals....*”
- Bro. Jonathan’s about-face came as a huge disappointment to the ecclesia. The transcript of the group chat between ecclesial members and founders at the time when they were drafting the Taipei Ecclesia Policy establishes that Bro. Jonathan agreed for the wording of Clause 3.2 of the CBM baptism guidelines to be inserted as point 3 of the Ecclesia Policy, and, confirming his apparent genuineness in this regard, his intention to tell James Paul Chappell that he could not be baptized (see Appendix 6).
- In signing and agreeing to every point of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy, Bro. Jonathan fully understood that point 8 made this a matter of fellowship – one cannot break bread with the ecclesia if they accept evolution as God’s method of creation.
- Some members felt strongly that Bro. Jonathan had deceived them. When they all signed the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy there was joy and a great sense of relief that Bro. Jonathan was now at one-mind with them in agreeing that the Bible condemns the theory of evolution. However, Bro. Jonathan’s behaviour, for which he never apologised, sent the ecclesia into turmoil. They felt that, at least for the time being, they could not trust Bro. Jonathan and hence decided to meet without his presence for a short period of time as they needed to decide what to do in a calm manner.

2015 - November 10

- The Taipei ecclesia agreed it was time to officially ask the ACBM to once again become actively involved in supporting the spiritual needs of the Taipei ecclesia on a long-term basis. Hence the members and founders of the ecclesia wrote and signed a letter, written in both Chinese and English, asking the ACBM to send brethren to Taipei for Bible teaching and to help with their work of preaching the gospel. (see Appendix 7)

2015 - November 10

- Bro. Michael Newman arrived in Taipei wanting to hold a Bible Class with the ecclesia.
- Members of the ecclesia became concerned when Bro. Michael called for a special meeting specifically excluding Bro. James Larsen. As Bro. Michael made it clear that he was in opposition to the eight point document the ecclesia had signed, they decided not to meet with him.
- Bro. James Larsen met with Bro. Michael Newman the next day, and talked about the 8-point “Christadelphian Taipei Ecclesia Policy”. Bro. James expressed concern that Bro. Michael provided counsel to the Taipei ecclesia as an individual, rather than discussing the matter with the Hong Kong ecclesia first and then replying with the Hong Kong ecclesia’s view on the matter.
- Bro. Michael was insisting on “due process” to hold a Bible Class with the ecclesia, but he himself had thwarted the Taipei ecclesia’s effort to reach out for help.

- Bro. James told Bro. Michael that he needs to first help Bro. Jonathan. Bro. Jonathan had signed the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy, an act which unified the ecclesia. But then he undid all of this by subsequently stating that he actually did not agree with the key principles in the policy, even though he signed it.
- Bro. James Larsen once again met with Bro. Jonathan Burke, however, Bro. Jonathan Burke maintained his position that he could not agree with point 3 of the Taipei Ecclesia Policy.

2015 - November 19

- Bro. Jonathan Burke sent an email to Bro. James Larsen confirming that both he and Sis. Dianne Burke cannot agree with the wording of point 3 of the Taipei Ecclesia Policy, and suggested some alternative wordings that he could agree with. At the same time he sought to undermine the Taipei Ecclesia Policy that they had all signed by suggesting that Bro. Daniel and Sis. April have an open mind on the key defining point 3 - *"The Bible condemns the theory of evolution..."* - and that the reason why most members signed all 8-points was not necessarily because they agreed with them all, but rather out of their "love and concern for Yuan". Specifically, Bro. Jonathan's email to Bro. James contained the following:
 - o *"I could agree with this: "The Bible can be read as compatible with evolution, but the Bible does not support the theory that man evolved from animals. God created man, Adam, and woman, Eve; and their descendants populated the world."*

*I could agree with some other combination, probably even stronger. **But the statement which begins "'As the Bible condemns this theory', is not the position of Taipei ecclesia. It has been agreed that this is what we teach baptismal candidates, but this is not the position of the entire ecclesia. It is Yuan's position, and it is probably Joshua's position. But it is not my position, it is not Dee's position, and both Daniel and April have told me they are open minded on the subject and not dogmatic..... So in actual fact, the statement which begins "As the Bible condemns this theory", is the view of two members of Taipei ecclesia (at best). It is not the view of the ecclesia as a whole".***
 - o *"... Despite this, all other members of the ecclesia (including me), have submitted our personal views to Yuan's preference (even at considerable personal expense, in the case of Dee and myself). **We have been prepared to do this because of our love and concern for Yuan.** But the fact cannot be avoided that Yuan's view is actually a minority among the six of us. It would be to Yuan's spiritual advantage if she came to understand (over time if necessary, with me out of the way), that other completely mainstream orthodox ecclesias allow some latitude on this point so long as the key points of the gospel are upheld and evolution is not taught or mentioned in any way (as per our current ecclesial policy). The BASF remains our ecclesia's basis of inter-ecclesial fellowship, of course."* (Jonathan Burke, email to Bro. James Larsen, 19 November 2015)
- However, if Bro. Jonathan was truly acting out of "love and concern for Yuan" why didn't he apologise to her for the trouble and confusion he created by signing his agreement to all 8 points in the Taipei Ecclesia Policy, and then letting her and other members of the ecclesia down by revealing that he didn't agree with the key defining point 3 of the policy after all? Why did he choose to first reveal this to a member of another ecclesia (Bro. Carl Parry)? If he was acting out of love and concern, wouldn't it have been better not to sign his agreement to the policy and explain this at the time, rather than effectively deceiving her and other members of the ecclesia? If he was truly worried that his views on GDE could upset Sis. Yuan, or any other members of his ecclesia, and was acting out of love and concern for them, why had he been posting numerous articles proactively advocating GDE on public internet forums over the past 4-5 years attributing authorship to himself as a member of the Taipei ecclesia?
- Note: Bro. Daniel and Sis. April re-confirmed that they do fully agree with the key defining point 3 of the Taipei Ecclesia Policy – "that the Bible condemns theory of evolution..." – when they additionally signed the ecclesia's "Reaffirmation Statement" on December 08 (see below).

2015 - November 20 – 30

- At the request of the ecclesia, Bro. Garnet and Sis. Renera Alchin visited the Taipei ecclesia.
- During this period Sis. Sherry was baptized on Sunday, 29th November.
- Bro. Garnet meets with Bro. Jonathan.

2015 - November 30

- Bro. Jonathan Burke requests a breaking of bread meeting with Bro. James Larsen.
- Bro. James and Bro. Jonathan meet for a breaking of bread meeting, where they exhorted one another to love and good works, and to think deeply about the wonderful fellowship they share based on the one true faith.

2015 - November 30

- SARC made aware of Taiwan situation. 30th November pm SARC meeting held. Bro. Rob Thiele submitted the following three motions:
 1. That they accept Taiwan's appeal and SARC form an area team for Taiwan.
 2. The area team for Taiwan ought to be distinct from the China area team for the present.
 3. That Bro. Nathan Shaw continue to act in the role of area team secretary for Taiwan.
- *[The above details of the SARC meeting including the three points is based on email correspondence Bro. Nathan Shaw sent to Bro. James Larsen].*

2015 – November 29 – December 08

- On 29 November 2015 ecclesial members and founders present gathered together at Bro. Peng's apartment to draft a second document - "Reaffirmation Statement Concerning Creation" (see Appendix 8).
- The document was produced in an iterative manner with sections being added and explained in Chinese and then modified to make all points clear. The motivation behind the document, and the input into its contents, came from the members and founders of the Taipei Ecclesia who signed the document – who specifically were: Bro. Peng, Bro. Daniel, Bro. Joshua, Sis Yuan, Sis April, Sis. Lorna, Sis. Sherry Peng, and Bro. James Larsen. The final version of the document was signed by them on 08 December 2015.
- Their rationale for creating a "reaffirming" statement so soon after they had agreed on the Taipei Ecclesia Policy was as follows:
 - a) Bro. Jonathan's disappointing admission that he did not actually agree with the key defining point 3 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy, even though he signed his agreement to all points in the policy.
 - b) Bro. Jonathan was seeking to undermine the Taipei Ecclesia Policy by suggesting that apart from Sis. Yuan and Bro. Joshua, most other members did not agree with the language in point-3 that "The Bible condemns the theory of evolution..." (which is the same as Clause 3.2 of the CBM baptismal guide). As Bro. Jonathan was effectively trying to overturn the ecclesia's policy, the members wanted to double confirm their understanding and agreement with the key defining point 3.
 - c) Their Taipei Ecclesia Policy did not contain any references to the BASF, and so the ecclesia wanted to make their position very clear by having a document that would link the key defining point-3 of their policy to the BASF.
- The following **four** sources were used by the members present to create this 3-page "Reaffirmation" document:
 1. **Clause 3.2 of the CBM Baptism Guidelines was used for the first paragraph:** (this is exactly the same as the key defining point 3 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy): *"The Bible condemns the theory that man evolved from animals by revealing that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them. See Genesis 1:27; 3:20; Matthew 19:4; Romans 5:12."*

Clause 3.2 of the CBM Baptism Guidelines was also used and elaborated upon for the second paragraph: *"The Bible makes it clear "that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them"; therefore, this, is part of The Faith of the members of this Ecclesia. This essential element of The Faith precludes the theory of evolution."*
 2. **The Adelaide inter-ecclesial statement was used for the third and fourth paragraphs:** *"BASF Clauses 3 and 4 both state that Adam was 'the first man', with Clause 4 adding 'whom God created'. The reference to Adam being the 'first man' precludes the view that there were other humans or similar beings existing at the time of his creation (see also Genesis 2:5; 2:18; 3:20; Acts 17:25-26; 1 Corinthians 15:45, 47). This*

understanding is consistent with the teaching of Christ and the apostles, all of whom upheld the literal interpretation of the creation record (Mark 10:6-7; 1 Corinthians 11:7-9; 2 Corinthians 4:6; 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 2 Peter 3:5).

Importantly, the reason why these two paragraphs from the Adelaide inter-ecclesial statement were chosen is because they are very similar to the points the Taipei ecclesia chose for the first two paragraphs (based on the CBM Baptism guidelines), and importantly they link these same points with both the BASF and the teachings of Christ and the apostles. They were not chosen just for the sake of solidarity with the Adelaide inter-ecclesial statement.

3. **BASF Clauses 3, 4 & 5 were inserted for the next three paragraphs;** and

4. **A list of 14 additional Bible verses were inserted over the remaining two pages:** In the view of Taipei ecclesia members present, these 14 verses make it very clear that the Bible condemns that theory that man evolved from animals, and to the contrary make it very clear that Adam and Eve were the first humans created by God and that all other men and women are descended from them.

- Hence, in light of Bro. Jonathan's attempts to undermine the Taipei Ecclesia Policy, the purpose of this "Reaffirmation" document was twofold: 1) to re-affirm that all members clearly understood and agreed with point 3 of the Taipei Ecclesia Policy (which is the same as Clause 3.2 of the CBM Baptismal Guidelines); and 2) to clarify that this understanding is confirmed by Clauses 3, 4 and 5 of the BASF, and accordingly it is an essential belief of the Christadelphian faith and hence a matter of fellowship. In turn it was sincerely hoped that Bro. Jonathan would be able to sincerely agree to this document without any reservation, and that Paul James Chappell would be able to accept it as well.
- Almost 9 months later in September 2016 members of the ecclesia (including Bro. Daniel, Sis. April and Sis. Lorna) double confirmed with Brethren and Sisters attending the Taipei Ecclesia Bible Camp, that they clearly understood and willingly signed this document, and in no sense were they forced or told that they had to sign it.

2015 – December 14

- New Taiwan ACBM committee formed, and first meeting held. Members include Brethren Nathan Shaw, David Evans, Garnet Alchin, Craig Hill, and Daniel Walton. Date of the Taipei Bible school agreed, and discussion centred on moving forward with the ecclesia. *[This paragraph is based on email correspondence Bro. Nathan Shaw sent to Bro. James Larsen]*

2015 – December 17

- Bro. Bro. Abraham Wang distributed the final signed version of the "Reaffirmation Statement On Creation" (Appendix 8) to a Taipei ecclesial chat group of 24 people including Bro. Jonathan. The ecclesia hoped that Bro. Jonathan would contact the ecclesia and respond positively by confirming his agreement with this document.

2015 – December 20-27

- In light of Bro. Jonathan's persistence in teaching GDE, his intention to baptize someone who believes in GDE, his rejection of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy (which he initially signed but subsequently rejected), and his own admission that a traditional reading of the BASF does not accommodate GDE along with his own re-interpretation of BASF Clauses 3-6, 8 & 10 (Appendix 3), the ecclesia concluded that Bro. Jonathan's beliefs are in serious conflict with the Christadelphian basis of fellowship, specifically with Clauses 3, 4 & 5 of the Christadelphian BASF. Reluctantly in light of this, the ecclesia decided to withdraw fellowship from Bro. Jonathan.
- The ecclesia drafted a short withdrawal letter via an iterative process prepared in both Chinese and English (see Appendix 9). Bro. James drafted the initial wording in English and then it was translated into Chinese by Bro. Daniel and Sis. Sherry, and further discussed and refined by all present on Sunday 20th (Including Bro. Joshua, Bro. Daniel, Sis. Sherry, and Bro James Larsen). That evening it was circulated to all members for them to review during the next week. The withdrawal letter was finalised with all signatures on Sunday 27th.
- Of uttermost priority with the Taiwanese ecclesial members drafting and signing the letter was that the contents of the letter should: a) clearly explain why Bro. Jonathan was disfellowshipped; b) express their deep sadness over his departure from the One Faith; and c) offer him a clear way to come back.
- Taipei ecclesia members that signed the letter were: Bro. Joshua, Bro. Daniel, Bro. Peng, Sis Yuan, Sis. Sherry, Sis Lorna, and Sis April (see Appendix 9).

- To communicate the matter adequately in English, the ecclesia asked Bro. James to meet with Bro. Jonathan, and plead with him one last time to reconsider his position, and if possible ask him to sign the ecclesia's "Reaffirmation Statement Concerning Creation".

2015 – December 29

- Bro. James met with Bro. Jonathan and explained that the Taipei ecclesia had entrusted Bro. James to personally deliver a letter of withdrawal of fellowship, and that this was one of the most difficult and heart-breaking tasks he had been ever been asked to perform, given how close he had become to Bro. Jonathan since he first came to Taipei over 10 years ago, and Jonathan's enormous contribution to and support for the Taipei ecclesia. Bro. James explained that more than anything else, he really wanted to tear-up this letter of withdrawal, and all Bro. Jonathan needed to do was to read and honestly sign the ecclesia's "Reaffirmation Statement Concerning Creation".
- Unfortunately Bro. Jonathan Burke confirmed to Bro. James that he does not agree with point 3 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy, and both the 1st and the 3rd paragraphs of the Taipei ecclesia's "Reaffirmation Statement Concerning Creation" (see Appendices 3&5).
- On behalf of the Taipei ecclesia, Bro. James Larsen then gave Bro. Jonathan Burke the withdrawal letter signed by the members of the Taipei ecclesia (see Appendix 9), explaining that he hopes Bro. Jonathan Burke will seriously reconsider his position.
- Bro. Jonathan told Bro. James that he had already heard about this letter of withdrawal prior to receiving it, with people asking him to confirm if he had been disfellowshipped. Bro. James sincerely apologised to Bro. Jonathan for this. The members and founders of the Taipei ecclesia deeply regret that the letter was leaked out as the draft was being circulated among themselves for final review, and Bro. Jonathan heard about the letter of withdrawal before he actually received it from Bro. James.
- The ecclesia held back in formally announcing Bro. Jonathan's withdrawal from fellowship until March 2016 (when published in the Christadelphian magazine), in the hope that Bro. Jonathan Burke would reconsider.

2016 – January

- January 14-22 - Taiwan Bible School held. Supported by Bro. James Larsen, Bro. Nathan and Sis. Tonia Shaw, Bro. Garnet and Sis. Renera Alchin, and Sisters Ruth Tang and Joanna Cho from Seoul, Korea.
- Bro. Nathan holds discussions with members of the Taipei ecclesia and Bro. James Larsen regarding the process and events that led to the ecclesia withdrawing fellowship from Bro. Jonathon Burke. They also discussed the role of ACBM involvement with the Taipei ecclesia going forward.
- January 21 - Bro. Nathan Shaw meets with Bro. Jonathan.

2016 – February 13

- Bro. Jonathan Burke baptizes James Paul Chappell, with Bro. Steven Cox helping with the preparation prior to baptism and the confession of faith heard by Bro. Steven Cox and Bro. Jim Cox.
- Nobody from the Taipei ecclesia knew about the baptism of James Paul Chappell until four months later in June 2016 when Bro. Nathan Shaw advised the founders and members of the Taipei ecclesia that he had received an email from Bro. Steven Cox confirming that James Paul Chappell had been baptized. (see entry below 2016 – June).

2016 – February 15

- ACBM Taiwan area team meeting agreed that at its earliest convenience the ACBM national committee should meet to discuss the process of dealing with ACBM issues regarding ecclesial "calls for help" in mission areas.
[This paragraph is based on email correspondence Bro. Nathan Shaw sent to Bro. James Larsen]

2016 - February 29

- The South Australian ACBM regional committee agreed that the ACBM national committee should meet to discuss the process of dealing with ACBM issues regarding ecclesial “calls for help” in mission areas. *[This paragraph is based on email correspondence Bro. Nathan Shaw sent to Bro. James Larsen]*

2016 – February to August

- Bro. Jonathan Burke frequently makes comments promoting his view of Evolutionary Creation on the discourse section of “biologos.org”, a major US site promoting Evolutionary Creationism. (see Appendix 1)

2016 - March

- The Taipei ecclesia’s notice of withdrawal of fellowship from Bro. Jonathan Burke was published in the March 2016 edition of the Christadelphian Magazine (see Appendix 10):
 - o Taipei [Daniel Lu & Joshua Chang]: We have had a trying time here in Taipei dealing with problems associated with evolution, but thankfully with the support of brethren who responded to our call for help, we have been able to deal carefully with the upset in our meeting and now move forward positively in a united way. In dealing with the problems we faced, the ecclesia has formally accepted a statement setting out our position on matters associated with evolution. Bro. Jonathan Burke, who had expressed his views for some time, was unable to accept this position as he holds views that do not harmonise with the clear Bible teaching on the subject and the sections of the BASF that cover these issues. Consequently, we have found it necessary to withdraw fellowship from him. We hope that he will reconsider his position and return to the faith once held.
- The basic intent and outline of the letter was decided by the ecclesia as a group. Then Bro. James Larsen assisted in getting it into suitable wording for publishing in the Magazine via an iterative process with ecclesial members, with the draft wording being translated into both English and Chinese a number of times so that members could fully understand the content and intent.
- February 28-29: Bro. Jonathan Burke’s rebuttal of the notice in the Christadelphian Magazine is posted on various online forums, including the “Christadelphian Open Debate” Facebook page, and the ex-christadelphian.com website (see Appendix 11)

2016 – May

- Bro. Craig Hill meets with Bro. Jonathan. According to Bro. Craig, Jonathan agreed with the dis-fellowship position he was in and did not seem to be overly concerned for the trouble this has caused among other ecclesias where he has friends supporting him. He understood that members of the Taipei ecclesia could not accept his return to them unless he changed his views on GDE. *[This paragraph is based on email correspondence Bro. Craig Hill sent to Bro. James Larsen]*

2016 – June

- Bro. Nathan Shaw conveyed to the Taipei ecclesia that he had received email correspondence from Bro. Steven Cox confirming that James Paul Chappell had been baptized. This was the first time that the founders and members of the Taipei ecclesia had heard that Bro. James Paul Chappell was baptized by Bro. Jonathan, and that Bro. Steven Cox was involved in the instruction prior to baptism and also heard the confession.
- The Taipei ecclesia was deeply disappointed to hear this news, as they were hoping Bro. Jonathan would reconsider his position, contact them and tell them that both he and James Paul Chappell no longer believe that God’s method of creation was evolution, and return to the one true faith. The Taipei ecclesia’s perspective was that by baptising someone who believes in GDE, as per James Paul Chappell’s faith statement which Bro. Jonathan presented to the ecclesia, Bro. Jonathan was now in breach of almost every point of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy on evolution which he had initially signed his agreement to.

2016 – August

- Bro. Nathan Shaw forwarded Bro. James Larsen email correspondence he had received from Bro. Kent Wilson, which appeared to indicate that Bro. Steven Cox made an error of judgment regarding his involvement in the baptism of James Paul Chappell. Specifically Bro. Kent Wilson's email to various ACBM committee members on August 18, contained the following paragraph:
 - o *Last evening (17/8), Bro Steven Cox, Bro Michael Newman and I held a skype conversation. I can advise that **Bro Steven Cox admitted that with the benefit of hindsight he made an error in judgement regarding his participation in a confession of faith in Taiwan.** On the basis of this acknowledgement and in consultation with Bro Peter Heavyside we have decided that Bro Steven will be welcome to participate in the Greater China Bible School in Hong Kong.*

2016 – September 03

- An extraordinary ACBM National Committee meeting that was held in Adelaide on 03 September 2016 to discuss recent events in Taipei and China. Bro. Steven Cox and Bro. Jonathan attended this meeting via Skype, and Bro. James Larsen was present in person.
- On the same date of this meeting, Bro. Steven Cox sent an email attaching a document containing his additions, corrections and questions to the SARC's timeline of events in Taipei. Bro. Steven sent this email to the ACBM Secretary (Bro. Keith Pearson), the chairman of the meeting (Bro. Rob Alderson) and various other ACBM committee members, and to Bro James Larsen. Notably, Bro. Steven Cox's proposed amendments included the following paragraph, which confirmed both his involvement and ongoing agreement with the baptism of James Paul Chappell:
 - o *13 February 2016: Bro Jono baptizes interested UK friend James, good confession heard by Steven Cox (Beijing) and Jim Cox (Leicester Westleigh) according to BASF, **following preparation for baptism with Steven per UK CBM Guide. Steven and Jim continue to regard the confession as a good and valid confession without any reservation.***
- During this meeting Bro Steven was asked if he was able to confirm with James Paul Chappell during the baptism preparation process whether or not he still believes the same as Bro. Jonathan with respect to GDE, in line with his personal statement of faith which was previously presented to the Taipei ecclesia (see previous entry in this timeline - 2015 – September 12). However, Bro. Steven evaded the question and still needs to clarify this.
- The Taipei ecclesia was very concerned to hear this news. They could not understand why Bro. Steven Cox didn't inform them directly that he had been involved in the preparation and the baptism of Bro. James Paul Chappell. If James Paul Chappell's beliefs were now truly in line with the BASF, and in line with the UK CBM Baptism guidelines which Bro. Steven confirmed at this ACBM meeting, then it would mean that James Paul Chappell was baptized into the One Faith of the Christadelphian fellowship, and this should have been a cause for great rejoicing. It was strange that Bro. Steven Cox did not immediately notify the Taipei ecclesia of such wonderful news. Why did the ecclesia have to wait until months after the event to be indirectly told by Bro. Nathan Shaw? Moreover, if James Paul Chappell was truly baptized into the one true faith (as per the Christadelphian BASF and the CBM baptism guide), the ecclesia could not understand why Bro. Steven didn't invite all members of the Taipei ecclesia to attend this baptism. Despite the language barrier, most members have a basic understanding of English and would have been thrilled to witness the baptism of a candidate into the one true faith.
- Bro. Steven was fully aware that the Taipei ecclesia had not been able to make any progress on Bro. Jonathan's ultimatum to baptize James Paul Chappell because James Paul Chappell's personal statement of faith openly stated his belief in GDE. Bro. Steven was fully aware that the members and founders of the Taipei ecclesia agonised over this issue, and how all of them, including Bro. Jonathan, resolved the matter by drafting, finalising and signing the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia policy on Evolution, which brought peace to the ecclesia. Moreover, at the time they were drafting this policy, it was Bro. Steven himself who proactively suggested that the UK CBM baptism guide should be used, and made specific reference to Clause 3.2 *"The Bible condemns this theory [evolution] by revealing that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them."* which became the key-defining point of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy. (see earlier entry in this timeline – 2015 – October 29). Bro. Steven was fully aware of Bro. Jonathan's subsequent about-face admission that he never agreed with this key defining point that he signed his agreement to, and how this resulted in enormous distress for the ecclesia.

- From the perspective of the Taipei ecclesia, Bro. Steven's statement, presented at this extraordinary ACBM meeting, that he prepared James Paul Chappell for baptism following the UK CBM baptism guide and that he continues to regard it as a "good confession" suggests one of two possibilities:
 1. That James Paul Chappell no longer believes in GDE. If this is the case, then it is a cause for great rejoicing, and although the ecclesia is disappointed that Bro. Steven took so long to tell them, and are concerned that he failed to notify them and invite them to the baptism, they want to sincerely thank Bro. Steven for all the work he did to convince James Paul Chappell of the truth of the One Faith that Christadelphians have always believed as per our BASF and the UK CBM guide.
 2. That Bro. Steven was prepared to baptize someone who believes in GDE regardless of his recommendation to the ecclesia that they use the UK CBM baptism guide, and regardless of his specific recommendation to include Clause 3.2 "The Bible condemns the theory of evolution....." in the Taipei Ecclesia Policy.
- Accordingly, the Taipei ecclesia would be grateful if Bro. Steven could clarify in the first instance whether or not James Paul Chappell still believed in GDE when he was baptized. If the answer is affirmative, then the Taipei ecclesia would appreciate if Bro. Steven could clarify:
 - a) His own understanding of the BASF given that Bro. Jonathan has publicly admitted that his views are not in line with a traditional reading of the BASF or the way the writers intended it to be read, and that Bro. Jonathan considers Clauses to be in error (see Appendix 3); and
 - b) Why he recommended the Taipei ecclesia use the UK CBM baptism guidelines given that so many Clauses cannot be harmonised with GDE (see Appendix 4).

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Sample of Bro. Jonathan's Online Activity Promoting Evolutionary Views
- Appendix 2: Bro. Jonathan's view of Human Nature and the Diabolos
- Appendix 3: GDE Beliefs Conflict With 9 Clauses Of The BASF
- Appendix 4: GDE Beliefs Conflict With the CBM Baptism Guide
- Appendix 5: Taipei Ecclesia: Eight-Point Policy On Evolution – 04 November 2015
- Appendix 6: Taipei Ecclesia Group Chat Discussion When Drafting Ecclesia Policy
- Appendix 7: Taipei Ecclesia: Letter For Help – 11 November 2015
- Appendix 8: Taipei Ecclesia: Reaffirmation Statement – 08 December 2015
- Appendix 9: Taipei Ecclesia: Withdrawal Letter – 27 December 2015
- Appendix 10: Withdrawal Notice in The Christadelphian Magazine – March 2016
- Appendix 11: Bro. Jonathan's Rebuttal of the Withdrawal Notice and a Review Thereon

Sample of Bro. Jonathan's Online Activity Promoting Evolutionary Views

2009

- Bro. Jonathan Burke, using his internet persona of "Fortigurn", starts making numerous comments in favour of the evolutionary world view on various internet sites, including the Berea-portal.com forum which includes many posts and comments made by Christadelphian brethren either believing in or sympathetic with TE/EC views
- <http://berea-portal.com/forums/topic/121-evolver-zone-a-resource-on-evolution/#comment-760>
- <http://berea-portal.com/forums/topic/273-peter-enns-on-pauls-adam/fin>

2011– April

- Bro. Jonathan Burke, using his internet persona of "Fortigurn", indicates his leaning toward evolutionary views on a public blog run by an atheist (anatheistviewpoint.wordpress.com):
 - o *"The earliest anatomically modern human being was a direct descendant of archaic Homo sapiens. The new subspecies is known as Homo sapiens Whether the emergence of Homo sapiens was uni-regional or multi-regional, there was still one being which was the first member of the new species"*
<https://anatheistviewpoint.wordpress.com/2011/04/19/visiting-christadelphians-please-clearly-explain-what-you-believe-and-why/>

2012 – 2013

- Between October of 2012 and February of 2013 Bro. Jonathan took a prominent role in debating GDE on a Christadelphian mailing list called "Watchmen". At its peak, the "Watchmen" distribution list comprised 90 brothers and sisters from around the world and the contents of the debate were distributed far and wide. Sample content of the emails Bro. Jonathan's sent to this "Watchmen" distribution list is listed below:
 - o *"Apart from the fact that they [scientists] don't need to look at creation from the divine point of view in order to reach accurate conclusions about the natural world (conclusions which you can confirm for yourself with nothing more than a spade), what they're looking at is God's own record of His own handiwork. If you don't like their interpretation of it, you'll need to come up with a better one, but until you've done so you can't claim that those who have looked at creation from a divine point of view have any advantage when it comes to reaching accurate conclusions about it"* (Jonathan Burke, 09 January 2013)
 - o **Question:** If Adam was a special creation, how does this harmonise with evidence for common descent in the human genome, which seems to be regarded as one of the strongest pieces of evidence for evolution?
JB: Adam's genome had to be compatible with those of other humans if his children were to reproduce with them

Question: It is alleged that Cain married another human extant at the time, rather than one of his sisters, as this latter option is terribly abhorrent. On this basis would it be fair to assume that all Adam and Eve's offspring did the same, as incest would have been equally abhorrent to them?
JB: Actually it is alleged that Cain married another human extant at the time because that's what the text clearly indicates. Yes, all Adam and Eve's children would have been in the same situation.

Question: Assuming there were other humans contemporary with Adam, would not their offspring now inhabit the world alongside the descendants of Adam in such a way that now, thousand [sic] of years later, the two would be indistinguishable?
JB: Yes. This would have happened almost immediately, so talk of us being only half descended from Adam doesn't even make sense

Question: Assuming these others were mortal, after the manner of all animals ... in what sense is it true to say "...sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned" (Rom 5:12) as Paul states?
JB: Adam was the first man enlightened by divine law; Paul tells us specifically that there is no sin without such enlightenment. The death which entered the world was the 'forever death', annihilation as a punishment for sin, the 'wages of sin'. The last part of Romans 5:12 ('so death spread to all men [x] all sinned'), is notoriously difficult to interpret, as the Greek allows for at least three meanings. We will have to investigate this in detail in another thread. (Jonathan Burke, 14 January 2013).
 - o *"Your only reason for interpreting the text one way is to avoid evolution, which you don't like. So your interpretation is not an honest one, it's a motivated reading" "Scriptural foundation' does not simply mean 'taught in the Bible'."* (Jonathan Burke, 25 January 2013)

2013 – August

- Bro. Jonathan Burke, using his internet persona of “Fortigurn”, states his belief in Evolution on a public Taiwanese blog (Taiwanease.com):
 - o *“The scientific evidence for evolution is overwhelming. It is substantiated by many other branches of science, and all of them would have to be wrong in order for evolution to be false.”*

<https://taiwanease.com/en/forums/evolution-vs-creationism-t11294.html?sid=85e308ff1333da4fec9183dfeeb826c4>

2014 – July

Bro. Jonathan Burke, in conjunction with Bro. Ken Gilmore (Kedron Brook Ecclesia, Australia), launched the following public Facebook sites, promoting and defending their view of Evolutionary Creation, and publically criticising articles published in Christadelphian magazines on various subjects including those that conflict with their view that evolution was God’s method of creation:

1. “Science & Scripture”

<https://www.facebook.com/Science-Scripture-1449424052004603/>

This Facebook site contains many articles promoting Evolutionary Creationism, criticising those who publically defend special creation, and frequently quotes from or links articles from Biologos.org (a major website in the US promoting Evolutionary Creationism).

2. “The Lampstand Reviewed”

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Lampstand-reviewed-500484383419073/>

This Facebook site contains articles specifically criticising articles in the Lampstand Magazine, including a series published in the Lampstand titled “Evolution and our Statement of Faith”.

3. “The Christadelphian Magazine Reviewed”

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Christadelphian-Magazine-reviewed-707984089236927/>

4. “The Testimony Magazine Reviewed”

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Testimony-Magazine-reviewed-326477574188393/>

5. “The Bible Magazine Reviewed”

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Bible-Magazine-reviewed-1432035180419012/>

- All of these public Facebook sites remain active, with the “About” section on each site explaining that “Unless otherwise noted, notes and posts are written by brother Ken Gilmore (Kedron Brook Ecclesia, Australia), and brother Jonathan Burke (Taipei Ecclesia, Taiwan).”

2015 – July 30

- Bro. Jonathan Burke sends an email to the Christadelphian Ecclesial Discuss List, criticising Bro. Stephen Palmer’s articles on “Creation or Evolution” published in the Christadelphian Magazine, with the following remarks:
 - o *“Evolution is not a random process and does not depend upon “natural, undirected chemical accidents by that by chance gave survival and reproductive advantage”. Stephen says “The conflict between the two positions is stark and cannot be avoided”, but provides no evidence for this. The argument he makes is exactly the same argument people used to make about the earth being flat, and the sun orbiting the earth, and other embarrassing mistakes about science.*

*The fact that after 150 years, even Christadelphians who don’t accept evolution can’t agree on how to interpret Genesis 1, is sufficient to warn us that wild speculation about the text, **completely isolated from reality and the witness of God’s own handiwork**, is a futile way to approach God’s Word (not to mention being grossly disrespectful). The shifting sands of Christadelphian interpretation cannot be relied on. **We must look to the record God Himself left written in the earth.**” (Jonathan Burke, email to Christadelphian E-D list, 30 July 2015)*

2015 – 2016

- Bro. Jonathan Burke advocates evolutionary creationism on Bro. Mike Pearson's "Christadelphians Learning From Science" public Facebook page. A few examples include:
 - o "Like David and Job of old, **we must look at the natural creation** and learn from it humbly as God intended, instead of preferring to take our own way and make unsubstantiated claims about what God has and hasn't done." (Jonathan Burke, 26 January 2016)
 - o "God hasn't told us the details of how He created. However, **He has left a physical record in the natural creation itself. I don't know anyone who thinks God described evolution in the Bible.** I certainly don't". (Jonathan Burke, 26 March 2015).
 - o "What He hasn't told us in the Bible is what that miraculous process was. However, **in the physical record of the natural creation itself. He has told us what that miraculous process was**" (26 March 2015).
 - o "I have faith in the Word of God **and in the record He left in the natural creation**, which is why I have no faith in your personal interpretation of the Word of God." (Jonathan Burke, 26 March 2015)
 - o **I changed my view as a result of what I saw in the Bible itself.** At the time that I accepted evolution, I believed in a very old earth and in 'micro-evolution', both of which are completely orthodox beliefs in our community. **I did not change my position on evolution as a result of any new scientific evidence I saw, or any scholarly argument I read. I changed my position on evolution as a result of reading the Bible,** and reading what our earliest commentators wrote about the Bible, and after I realized that the views I held weren't incompatible with evolution anyway. **I didn't consult "explanations on the origin of life written by so-called qualified "experts".**" (Jonathan Burke, 26 March 2015)
 - o "This is why their (Biologos') community is going to thrive, while ours will die (despite the fact that we have a true understanding of the gospel and they don't). Ironically their willingness to deal with this issue in this way is going to require them to drop some of their unScriptural beliefs such as original sin, the immortality of the soul, and substitutionary atonement. **So evolution is going to help correct their theology.**" (Jonathan Burke, 21 January 2016)

2015 – 2016

- Bro. Jonathan Burke proactively advocates evolutionary creation on his own "Science & Scripture" public Facebook page. A few examples include:
 - o "Here are some of the consequences which are the product of brothers and sisters rejecting evolution (a rejection encouraged by people like you). ... 1. Non-Christadelphians driven away from the gospel, because our community rejects what they undersatnd to be a documented scientific fact. 2. Christadelphians disfellowshipping other Christadelphians who accept evolution. 3. Christadelphian ecclesias splitting over evolution when their members disagree. 4. Christadelphian young people walking away from our community and rejecting the gospel, either before or after baptism, because our community rejects what they understand to be a documented scientific fact." (Jonathan Burke, 25 April 2015)
 - o "What that shows Kel is exactly what evolution predicts we would find in the fossil record. 1. First we find Australopithecus, but Habilis, Erectus, and Sapiens don't exist yet. 2. Then we find Habilis, slightly different from Australopithecus, and overlapping slightly in time. 3. Then we find Australopithecus dies out, Habilis continues to exist, and Erectus emerges, slightly different from Habilis. 4. Then we find Habilis dies out, Erectus while Erectus remains. 5. Then we find Sapiens emerges, slightly different from Erectus, and overlapping very slightly in time with Erectus. 6. Then we find Erectus dies out, and only Sapiens remains. This is hard enough for a Special Creationist to explain, but the fact that it takes place over at least three million years is even more challenging. How do you explain this evidence?" (Jonathan Burke, 2 May 2015)
 - o "God is directly responsible for initiating the creative process, but He is not directly responsible for the animals resulting from that process. They are the product of an earthly process resulting in an extremely broad range of creatures with numerous different features, and since that process is earthly it is imperfect and its results are sub-optimal. There is divine law and order behind the process, but there is no specific divine guidance, planning, and design of each individual creature; they are of the earth, earthly, and bear the image of that which is made from dust.

Their sub-optimal features and imperfections are product of the earthly process which made them; God is not the one responsible. In the same way, a human baby born with a hole in its heart, or with additional fingers, or missing a limb, is not the direct creation of God, although He was responsible for initiating the creative process from which the child came. No one would claim God designed this child with a hole in its heart, and then attempt to find ways to justify why He did so; they would accept that the process by which the child was born is earthly, imperfect, and prone to error, though it was instituted by God, and that sub-optimal results are occasionally the product of this process. That process was evolution." (Jonathan Burke, 24 May 2015)

- *"The Bible never says mortality is the result of sin. It says Adam was created mortal, and death is the wages of sin, not mortality. And that death is the second death."* (Jonathan Burke, 2 June 2015)
- *"Special Creationists realise that if they acknowledge these Scriptural teachings, they will be compelled to acknowledge creation as a faithful and reliable witness to God and His works. This in turn will require them to acknowledge what the natural creation is saying about how God created; they will be required to acknowledge the creation's own witness to the age of the earth and to evolution."* (Jonathan Burke, 21 June 2015)
- *"If we were desirous of renown, we wouldn't be airing our views on evolution. Doing so brings instant infamy and constant abuse. It does not bring any fame or glory, which is why so many Christadelphians who accept or accommodate evolution are still too scared to say so. But those of us who do declare our position do so because we are compelled to tell the truth, and we do not seek the praises of men."* (Jonathan Burke, 25 September 2015)
- Bro. Jonathan makes frequent posts on his *"Science and Scripture"* Facebook page linking articles from the *biologos.org* (Evolutionary Creationism) website
- Bro. Jonathan frequently posts on his *"Science and Scripture"* Facebook page excerpts from books by John H Walton including *"The Lost World of Adam and Eve"* and *"The Lost World of Genesis One"*. Walton proposes that the record of the six days of creation in Genesis is a seven-day inauguration of the cosmic temple in which God has taken up his residence on earth, and from where He runs the cosmos. Hence Walton believes that Genesis 1 is not about the material creation of the cosmos, but rather the revelation of the functional origins of the cosmos at a point in time that is well after the actual material creation. Walton claims that only after extensive study of ancient near eastern (ANE) texts, culture and their worldview (i.e. by referencing ANE "experts" like himself) can one correctly interpret Genesis. Walton advocates that all Christians should not use Genesis 1 to account for the origin of life on this planet. They should leave this for the scientists to decide for them.
- One of John H Walton's most quoted statements is *"The Bible was written for us and for people of all times and cultures, but it wasn't written to us in our culture or language"*. Walton argues that in order to understand Genesis *"we need to try to enter their world, hear it as the audience would have heard it and as the author would have meant it, and read it in those terms"*. Hence, in complete contrast to what Christadelphians have always taught regarding one's ability to determine truth by comparing scripture with scripture, as per the noble Berean approach in Acts 17, John Walton insists that we can't understand the original intended meaning of the Bible by ourselves, we have to consult relevant qualified experts who can tell us how the original recipients would have understood it.
- Jonathan Burke repeats this exact same logic of John Walton in an email he sent to the Christadelphian Ecclesial Discuss list in December 2015:
 - *"The fact that the Bible wasn't even written in our language is another reminder that the text was written for us, but not to us. Reading the text always involves layers of interpretation, starting with the act of translation. This requires a knowledge of the original context in which the text was written; the socio-historical context. Consequently, we must take care in our interpretation."*
 - "...The same is true of Genesis 1; it was written for us, but not to us. It is communicating to us the same essential message it communicated to the original audience, but in language we must translate and interpret. That essential message must have been accessible to the original audience, without the advantage of the scientific knowledge we have now, and without needing to use the rest of the Bible, which had not been written in their day."*
 - "... In order for us to comprehend that essential message, we must read the creation account as it was read by the original audience. This requires us to identify when and to whom Genesis 1 was written, so we can see the chapter through their eyes."* (Jonathan Burke, email to Christadelphian E-D list, 29 December 2015)

2016

- Bro. Jonathan Burke frequently contributes to discourse or forum section of “biologos.org”, a major US site promoting Evolutionary Creationism.
- <https://discourse.biologos.org/search?q=Jonathan%20burke>
- Examples of comments made by Bro. Jonathan Burke include:
 - o “Understanding how Scripture describes God acting through natural laws and complex systems which He has ordained, helps us understand how God can be both visible (at the macro level), and invisible (at the micro level), in nature. This is obviously relevant to the question of how God is revealed in evolution.” (Jonathan Burke, 07 February 2016)
 - o “Chambers observed that God had very obviously given the creation the capacity to “create” (all living organisms reproduce), and used that as part of his argument for a creation which could create new things which had never existed previously. Which is pretty sensible.” (Jonathan Burke, 08 February 2016)
 - o “So what? That doesn't effect at all the fact that what you call “Darwinian evolution” actually takes place, from a micro level to the macro level.” (Jonathan Burke, 08 February 2016)
 - o “God consistently uses natural laws to bring about His purpose. Evolutionary creationism fits well within God's typical method of acting within His creation I call myself an an [sic] Evolutionary Creationist. I know what that means, and so do most people.” (Jonathan Burke, 15 February 2016)
 - o “Working through natural laws is God's standard modus operandi. Evolutionary creationism therefore agrees with well established divine practice, as revealed consistently in Scripture. It just makes sense.” (Jonathan Burke, 17 February 2016)
 - o “They [scientists with Ph.D.s in biology] tell us it is no longer possible for a scientifically educated person to believe the first human couple was created only around six thousand years ago, or that the entire human species descended from a single human couple six thousand years ago, or that Adam and Eve (if they existed six thousand years ago as a special creation), were the first humans. And I agree with all that. I believe humans already existed at the time of Adam and Eve, and had existed for a long time. I do not believe all humans are descended directly from Adam and Eve.” (Jonathan Burke, 19 February 2016)
 - o “Modern science can and should inform our interpretation of what the Bible says about the cosmos and the earth, and life on earth. If modern Christians who oppose evolution can't learn from the Galileo affair, then they'll simply repeat the same mistake the Catholic Church made.” (Jonathan Burke, 25 February 2016)
 - o “John Paul II put it well when he said “The error of the theologians of the time, when they maintained the centrality of the Earth, was to think that our understanding of the physical world's structure was, in some way, imposed by the literal sense of Sacred Scripture”. (Jonathan Burke, 07 March 2016)
 - o “What Biologos does is to read Genesis the way it was intended to be read. The reason why this ends up being harmonious with evolution is that Genesis was never intended to address scientific concerns. So its harmonization with evolution is a spandrel of the Biologos reading, not the aim” (Jonathan Burke, 12 March 2016)
 - o “Where we go for the final authority is evidence based science. Not me. Definitely not you. The scientific consensus is a far more reliable guide. Evolution has not been a matter of serious scientific debate for decades. It was settled a long time ago. It is not “a theory in crisis”, and it has proved to have enormous explanatory and predictive power.” (Jonathan Burke, 15 March 2016)
 - o “Let me know when evolution has been proved false. In the meantime you'll need to address the fact that over 100 years of research and experimentation have demonstrated its explanatory power, its predictive power, and its real world application to a wide range of sciences.” (Jonathan Burke, 21 March 2016)
 - o “We have learned the hard way (from incidents such as the Galileo affair), that reading the text alone, uninformed by external sources, can lead to exegetical error. In this case a host of external knowledge informs us; paleology, geology, archaeology, biology, and other sciences tell us that Genesis 4:14, 17 is correct, that there were other people around, and that they did not come from Adam and Eve.” (Jonathan Burke, 14 May 2016)
 - o “The Big Tent of Biologos/EC accommodates a range of theological views, within specific boundaries. While making the case that certain views are most likely, others are less likely, and some are only marginally likely, Biologos/EC is prepared to accommodate these various theological views on the basis that theology is ultimately a matter of interpretation and that orthodox Christianity has been prepared to accommodate diversity within specific boundaries. The accommodation is one of theology, not science. Thus Biologos/EC can rightly claim to be “doing theology”. (Jonathan Burke, 30 September 2016)

Bro. Jonathan's view of Human Nature and the Diabolos

The following quotations are taken from email correspondence between Bro. Jonathan Burke and Bro. James Larsen over 10-13 December 2013

- **Q: James Larsen:** I still have the same logical issues with the reasoning in connection with the Diabolos. In simple terms you use the distinction between mortality and dying. Since this death you refer to commenced with Adam then the Diabolos came into existence when Adam sinned. Since the Diabolos has the power of death. Therefore the evolved beings before they met Adam did not have the Diabolos as they were mortal but not dying. Correct?

A: Jonathan Burke: *The evolved humans had the same natural desires in them as Adam did, before they met Adam. They did not yet have the diabolos, any more than an animal has the diabolos, because the diabolos is the state of mind which arises when our natural impulses come into conflict with divinely revealed law, and they were completely ignorant of divine law (as animals are). As soon as such law was revealed to them, they would experience the struggle with the diabolos described in Romans 7. They were mortal, and to be mortal is to be dying; see brother Thomas' original description of Adam and Eve before the fall, 'the death principle was an essential property of their nature', 'two essentially dying creatures', 'the dying process shall not be interrupted, and therefore death would follow'.*

I do not refer to mortality as commencing with Adam. On the contrary, I have stated the opposite and quoted brother Thomas saying that death and mortality was already in the world before the fall, and before Adam and Eve were even created; 'Death and corruption, then, with reproduction, the characteristic of spring and summer, is the fundamental law of the physical system of the Six Days', 'seasons of decay and death, were institutions existing before the Fall; and presented to Adam and Eve phenomena illustrative of the existence in the physical system of a principle of corruption'.

- **Q. James Larsen:** Did Adam and Eve have the Diabolos before sinning?

A: Jonathan Burke: *Of course Adam and Eve had the diabolos before sinning, as I have said previously. The diabolos is simply the state of mind which arises when our natural impulses are in conflict with revealed law, as I said previously, and it arose in Adam and Eve as soon as they were given law; their sin resulted from them succumbing to this diabolos. You can't sin without the diabolos being there in the first place, and the diabolos can only be there in the first place if you are enlightened by divine law; before that, none of your natural impulses can be described as the diabolos, nor can any of your actions be described as sin. See my previous quotations from brother Roberts to this effect, there is 'nothing essentially evil in this', it is the 'law given that made the gratification of that nature sin', 'The impulses that lead to sin existed in Adam before disobedience, as much as they did afterwards'.*

- **Q. James Larsen:** Is the Diabolos the same as mortality and "prone to sin"?

A: Jonathan Burke: *No the diabolos is not the same as mortality; it is nothing to do with mortality. Yes it can be equated with our basic proneness to sin, which as Paul says clearly only arises when our natural impulses (which are lawful), come into conflict with divinely revealed law (at which point acting on our natural impulses becomes unlawful).*

- **Q. James Larsen:** Does the Devil have the power of death or does the Devil have the power of mortality?

A: Jonathan Burke: *Yes the diabolos has the power of death; the eternal death which is the wages of sin. No the diabolos does not have the power of mortality, or Hebrews would say 'the power of mortality' instead of saying 'the power of death'. If we're going to replace words in the Bible arbitrarily like that, we might as well say the diabolos has 'the power of Batman', which makes as much nonsense as saying the diabolos has the power of mortality.*

There is a difference between mortality, and death. As I demonstrate, they are two different words in Greek, representing two different concepts (as in English), and Paul does not equate them; he uses them in distinctively different ways. The diabolos has the power of eternal death, not mortality. We do not die because we have impulses to sin. We die because we are mortal. Christ destroyed the diabolos which has the power of eternal death as punishment for sin; that is the death which is the wages of sin. The death we experience as a result of being mortal, is not the death which is the wages of sin.

- **Q. James Larsen:** Is the Diabolos "very good"?

A: Jonathan Burke: *No, the diabolos is not 'very good', and is not referred to anywhere as 'very good', just as Adam and Eve themselves are not called 'very good' (though Rachael is in Genesis 24:16). Of course the diabolos does not arise until our natural impulses are in conflict with divinely revealed law, and Adam and Eve when created were ignorant of any law at all. The diabolos did not exist in them until they were given a law which conflicted with their natural impulses.*

- **Q. James Larsen:** BASF Clause 7 mentions that Jesus would be raised up “in the condemned line of Abraham and David, and who, though wearing their condemned nature, was to obtain a title to resurrection by perfect obedience, and, by dying, abrogate the law of condemnation for himself, and all who should believe and obey him.”

1. Is condemned nature “impulses which lead to sin”?
2. Is condemned nature “the state of mind which arises when our natural impulses come into conflict with divinely revealed law” – Diabolos?
3. Did the evolved beings have “condemned nature” before meeting Adam?

A: Jonathan Burke:

1. No, condemned nature is not impulses which lead to sin; it is our natural flesh, our mortal bodies.
2. No, condemned nature is not the state of mind which arises when our natural impulses come into conflict with divinely revealed law; it is our natural flesh, our mortal bodies.
3. Yes the evolved humans had condemned nature before meeting Adam (I have said this many times previously, in conversation and in writing); they had the same natural flesh, mortal bodies, as every other human being, including Adam, ourselves, and Christ.

As defined in explicit detail in the Australian Unity Book, to have a 'condemned nature' simply means to have a nature which is mortal; it is not a moral condemnation, or a judicial condemnation (that was the error of PO Barnard, against which brother Carter wrote extensively). As brother Roberts said (quoted in the Australian Unity Book), 'Condemnation in Adam means, therefore, that we are mortal in Adam; mortal in the physical constitution—the organisation'. And again, 'Suffering the Adamic condemnation is a question of physical constitution', and again 'This mortality is our condemnation in Adam'. It is only 'condemned' in the sense that this is the fate which was assigned to it by God when He made this nature in the first place.

GDE Beliefs Conflict with 9 Clauses of the BASF

I. Preamble

This Appendix firstly presents Bro. Jonathan's side-by-side interpretation of BASF Clauses 3-6, 8 & 10, which he wrote in November 2013. This is then followed by our review of Bro. Jonathan's interpretation, pointing out why it is impossible to harmonize Bro. Jonathan's view with the BASF. Also included are the Foundation Clause and Clauses 9 & 12 of the BASF, and our comments demonstrating that these Clauses are likewise in conflict with GDE beliefs. Finally, we include some tables with quotations from Bro. Thomas, Bro. Roberts, Bro. Walker and Bro. Carter on the relationship between human nature and sin.

It is important to keep in mind that the GDE position demands that Adam was not the first man, that he was not the first man to fall short of God's glory, and he was not the first man to die. GDE advocates believe that other humans were living and dying well before the time of Adam and Eve's creation or appearance. This viewpoint is in complete opposition to the clear teaching of the Bible (both Old and New Testaments) as adequately summarized in our BASF.

In order to accommodate their view, GDE advocates need to wrest parts of the Bible and fundamentally alter the principles of the atonement in order to accommodate their false teaching. The key changes Bro. Jonathan and other proponents of GDE are making include:

- Restricting the definition of sin to only include acts of disobedience by those who know God's laws, as opposed to the Bible's wider definition of "falling short of the Glory of God" (Rom 3:23), so that "all unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5:17).
- Removing the cause and effect relationship between fallen human nature and sin (see Tables 2-4 on pages 50-52), and thereby changing the relationship between fallen human nature and death.
- Changing the definition of the diabolos from our sin-prone nature with which all (both enlightened and unenlightened) are born as a consequence of Adam's sin, to a mental state that only arises when our natural impulses come into conflict with divine law, hence sin only applying to those enlightened by God's laws.
- Changing the definition of death in the Bible from physical mortality and cessation of life to a new kind of legal or judicial death called "eternal death" (death at the judgment seat of Christ) which is only applicable to those who know and break God's laws. (See Table 1 on page 44)
- Creating a new relationship between law, sin and their newly-invented legal death to allow for mortal humans well before Adam to live and die independently of sin and its consequences.
- Undermining the righteousness of God. If God created hominids via an evolutionary process with a nature that is mortal and prone to sin, then effectively this would mean that God is the author of a sin-prone nature because He directed the development of this nature. This would mean that God created and introduced man's problem – the inevitability of sinning – and had to raise up a Son to solve the problem that God himself introduced.
- Wresting passages of the Bible in an attempt to imply that other humans existed at the time when God created Adam and Eve.

Bro. Jonathan has tried to keep the language of his interpretation of the BASF as close as possible to the original, and claims in the introduction to his side-by-side table that "the wording of the BASF does not need to be changed in order to accommodate evolution". However, this is not the case. Bro. Jonathan's interpretation is a deliberate attempt to manipulate our core beliefs. The Bible and our BASF clearly teach that Adam was literally the first man, that Adam's sin caused the first death, and this death impacted the entire human race as well as God's plan of salvation.

According to the EC perspective of GDE believed by Bro. Jonathan, Adam was a unique special creation, who although being in a "very good" state was supposedly biologically identical to all the evolved humans who had mutated from their lower animal form ancestors. Adam was created and separated for the purpose of selecting a new covenant seed apart from all the other evolved humans who were, for some reason, not offered this hope. Adam was given a specially created wife, rather than taking a wife from all the evolved women outside the garden of Eden, for the specific purpose of separating the new covenant seed. However, both Cain and Seth then married evolved humans, which actually then breaks down their whole point of Adam and Eve being miraculously created for the purpose of separating a new covenant seed, but proponents of EC insist that a marriage with evolved humans was the only option given, in their view, that God would not have allowed incest. Accordingly, they believe that the line of Jesus Christ came from a son of the miraculously created Adam and Eve marrying a daughter of the evolved over millions of years.

The purpose of this appendix is to make it abundantly clear that it is impossible for GDE views to be harmonized with the Christadelphian statement of faith (BASF). This is not an insignificant matter. Moreover, it is not just one or two Clauses that conflict. As illustrated in the following pages, GDE views directly conflict with at least 9 Clauses of the BASF.

II. Bro. Jonathan Burke's Interpretation of the BASF

Received November 2nd 2013

Evolution and the BASF

The BASF was not written with the aim of accommodating evolution; it was written specifically with the understanding that all humans are descendants of Adam, and that evolution is false. Nevertheless, as it stands the wording of the BASF does not need to be changed in order to accommodate evolution.

Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith	
Clause	Interpretation
3. That the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth on the earth was necessitated by the position and state into which the human race had been brought by the circumstances connected with the first man.	As a result of Adam's sin a unique opportunity for life offered in Eden to this representative of the human race, was lost.
4. That the first man was Adam, whom God created out of the dust of the ground as a living soul, or natural body of life, "very good" in kind and condition, and placed him under a law through which the continuance of life was contingent on obedience.	Adam was the first man with whom God entered into covenant relationship. ¹ This clause describes Adam as a mortal being, someone who will die unless kept alive by God as a reward for obedience; been 'created out of the dust of the ground as a living soul, or natural body of life', and 'under a law through which the continuance of life was contingent on obedience'.
5. 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.	As a result of sin Adam was deemed unworthy of immortality; his sentence was exile from Eden and being left to suffer the natural consequence of his mortal body (decay and death), which was inherited by all his descendants. ²
6. That God, in His kindness, conceived a plan of restoration which, without setting aside His just and necessary law of sin and death, should ultimately rescue the race from destruction, and people the earth with sinless immortals.	Though eternal death remained the punishment for sin, the opportunity of eternal life was offered by God to all humans who accept and become a part of His plan through Christ, who bore exactly the same mortal and sin-prone nature as all other human beings who have ever lived.
7. That these promises had reference to Jesus Christ, who was to be raised up in the condemned line of Abraham and David, and who, though wearing their condemned nature, was to obtain a title to resurrection by perfect obedience, and, by dying, abrogate the law of condemnation for himself, and all who should believe and obey him.	

¹ This view was known and rejected by our pioneers, due to their rejection of evolution; 'Observe! the first man "made," not the first man whom God took into covenant-relation.', Roberts, 'The First Man', The Christadelphian (25.292.618), 1888.

² The Cooper-Carter Addendum rewrites this clause significantly, omitting any reference to Adam becoming defiled, or anything becoming 'a physical law of his being'.

Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith	
Clause	Interpretation
10. That being so begotten of God, and inhabited and used by God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was Emmanuel, God with us, God manifested in the flesh-yet was, during his natural life, of like nature with mortal man, being made of a woman of the house and lineage of David, and therefore a sufferer, in the days of his flesh, from all the effects that came by Adam's transgression including the death that passed upon all men, which he shared by partaking of their physical nature.	As a human being descended from Adam and therefore identical to those he came to save, Christ shared the same mortal and sin-prone nature as every other human being who has ever lived, which all of Adam's descendants inherit as an inevitable consequence of his sin, and was uniquely used by God for His plan of salvation.

III. Key Problems with Bro. Jonathan Burke's Interpretation of the BASF

BASF Clause 3	3. That the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth on the earth was necessitated by the position and state into which the human race had been brought by the circumstances connected with the first man.
JB Interpretation	As a result of Adam's sin a unique opportunity for life offered in Eden to this representative of the human race, was lost.
Obvious Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vital connection between 1) Adam's sin (as the first man); 2) the state of humanity (due to circumstances connected with the first man); and 3) the necessity for the appearance of Jesus is completely removed. • Adam is only a representative of the Human Race, not the "first man". However, BASF Clauses 3 and 4 both state that Adam was "the first man", with Clause 4 adding "whom God created". The reference to Adam being the "first man" precludes the view that there were other humans or similar beings existing at the time of his creation. (see also Genesis 2:5; 2:18; 3:20; Acts 17:25-26; 1 Cor. 15:45, 47). However, Bro. Jonathan limits the scope and impact of the Clause to Adam alone, a man who he believes to be a single human among many other evolved humans. • The "unique opportunity of life" was only offered to "this representative of the human race" "in Eden". Hence the scope of God's salvation is narrowed to Adam alone, not the whole human race. So the whole human race is no longer impacted by the consequences, and no longer potential beneficiaries of the reward. • However, Clauses 3, 6, 12 and 30 of the BASF refer to the human race as a single human race, i.e. there is only one family of human beings all derived from a common ancestor, (e.g. "human race" – Clause 3; "Adam's disobedient race" – Clause 12). These Clauses define clearly that the first man of the human race was Adam (Clauses 3 & 4), that the whole race became disobedient because of Adam's sin, and that the work of Christ is to completely restore this same race to the friendship of the Deity (Clause 30). Accordingly, Christadelphians believe that the Human Race started with Adam and Eve, and this rules out the possibility of any other humans (or human-like hominids) existing before or contemporary with Adam and Eve. • No mention of Jesus Christ being connected with this "unique opportunity of life" offered to Adam.

BASF Clause 4	<p>4. That the first man was Adam, whom God created out of the dust of the ground as a living soul, or natural body of life, "very good" in kind and condition, and placed him under a law through which the continuance of life was contingent on obedience.</p> <p>Genesis 2:7; 18:27; Job 4:19; 33:6; 1 Corinthians 15:46-49; Genesis 2:17</p>
JB Interpretation	<p>Adam was the first man with whom God entered into covenant relationship.¹ This Clause describes Adam as a mortal being, someone who will die unless kept alive by God as a reward for obedience; [sic] been 'created out of the dust of the ground as a living soul, or natural body of life', and 'under a law through which the continuance of life was contingent on obedience'.</p> <p>¹<i>This view was known and rejected by our pioneers, due to their rejection of evolution; 'Observe! the first man "made," not the first man whom God took into covenant-relation.', Roberts, 'The First Man', The Christadelphian (25.292.618), 1888.</i></p>
Obvious Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denial of the plain intended meaning that Adam was the first man. Bro. Jonathan tries to limit the scope and impact of this Clause to Adam alone, a man, who in Bro. Jonathan's mind, is a single human among millions of evolved humans. However, BASF Clauses 3 and 4 both state that Adam was "the first man", with Clause 4 adding "whom God created". The reference to Adam as the "first man" precludes the view that there were other humans or similar beings existing at the time of his creation. (see also Genesis 2:5; 2:18; 3:20; Acts 17:25-26; 1 Cor. 15:45, 47) • Instead, Bro. Jonathan asserts that Adam is the "the first man with whom God entered into a covenant relationship". However, there are no scriptural grounds for this assertion. Bro. Jonathan introduces this new theology as a basis for his manufactured notion of legal death. On this point, Bro. Jonathan acknowledges in his footnote that his "view was known and rejected by our pioneers, due to their rejection of evolution". • This BASF Clause does not describe the condition of Adam's nature as "mortal". Rather, it describes the state of Adam when created as "a living soul", or a "natural body of life" which was "very good in kind and condition". Bro. Jonathan's interpretation that Adam was created as a "mortal being" is further contradicted by BASF Clause 10 which equates mortal nature with "<i>all the effects that came by Adam's transgression including the death that passed upon all men</i>". • Bro. Jonathan spends a lot of time in his writings objecting to the view that "very good in kind and condition" means neither mortal nor immortal, as well as opposing the Christadelphian view that God's condemnation of Adam's sin resulted in the first death. Yet in his interpretation of this Clause, after stating that "<i>This Clause describes Adam as a mortal being, someone who will die...</i>", he then inserts wording similar with the original Clause – "<i>unless kept alive by God as a reward for obedience</i>", and "<i>under a law through which the continuance of life was contingent on obedience</i>". In light of Bro. Jonathan's insistence that Adam and Eve were mortal (i.e. dying creatures) on what basis does he append the wording of the original Clause to suggest that Adam could be "<i>kept alive by God as a reward for obedience</i>"? Does he mean that somehow Adam's mortal state could be continued without dying if he did not break God's law? His logic seems very contradictory. Mortal man kept alive by God is neither mortal nor immortal.

BASF Clause 5	<p>5. 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. Gen. 3:15-19, 22-23; 2 Cor. 1:9; Rom. 7:24; 2 Cor. 5:2-4; Rom. 7:18-23; Gal. 5:16-17; Rom. 6:12; 7:21; John 3:6; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:22; Psalms 51:5; Job 14:4</p>
JB Interpretation	<p>As a result of sin Adam was deemed unworthy of immortality; his sentence was exile from Eden and being left to suffer the natural consequence of his mortal body (decay and death), which was inherited by all his descendants.²</p> <p>² “The Cooper-Carter Addendum rewrites this Clause significantly, omitting any reference to Adam becoming defiled, or anything becoming ‘a physical law of his being’.”</p>
Obvious Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental change in the meaning of Adam’s sentence. Clause 5 states the actual sentence was a physical change - “to return to the dust from which he was taken” (i.e. decay and death), and “this sentence defiled and became a physical law of his being”. Bro. Jonathan completely changes this by stating that Adam’s sentence was a) “exile from Eden” (true, but not the focus of the sentence in this BASF Clause); and b) “being left to suffer the natural consequences of his mortal body”. Hence Bro. Jonathan has changed the meaning to convey that the sentence itself did not result in any physical change to Adam and Eve. • Denial of the intended meaning that Adam’s sentence “defiled and became a physical law of his being”. Clause 5 explains that the kind and condition of Adam’s physical or natural body, originally “very good” (Clause 4), changed detrimentally when he sinned. Moreover Clause 5 makes it clear that the physical consequences of Adam’s sin “was transmitted to all his posterity”. Hence Clause 5 clarifies what the “first man” (Clause 3) who “was Adam” (Clause 4) had done to the “position and state of the human race” (Clause 3), which necessitated the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth. The condition of Adam’s nature was changed to death-stricken and sin-prone in consequence of his sin; this became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to “all his posterity”, which is contextually synonymous with the entire human race (Clauses 3, 6, 12 and 30). Adam’s new condition was different from his earlier created state, which was described as “very good” (Clause 4). He now knew and felt the corruption of mortality. He was physically flawed, where previously he had not been. • Misquoting the Cooper-Carter Addendum. Firstly, the Addendum does not re-write the Clause, but provides clarification. Secondly the Addendum is very clear that mortality came in consequence of Adam’s sin, and that “we partake of that mortality that came by sin”. Bro. Jonathan does not agree with this. <p><i>Cooper Carter Addendum Regarding Clauses 5 & 12 of the BASF: “We believe that Adam was made of the earth, and declared to be very good; because of disobedience to God’s Law, he was sentenced to return to the dust. He fell from his very good estate, and suffered the consequences of sin—shame, a defiled conscience and mortality. As his descendants, we partake of that mortality that came by sin, and inherit a nature, prone to sin.” (Christadelphian Unity in Australia, Page 12)</i></p> <p><i>John Carter: “It was Adam who sinned; it was Adam who was condemned; it was the dust formed organisation that was sentenced to return to the ground. It was the physical man that sustained such changes as brought shame and fear and a defiled conscience, a defilement which then became, in Dr. Thomas’ word, “corporeal.” (Christadelphian Unity in Australia, Page 80)</i></p> <p><i>John Thomas: “Man’s defilement was first a matter of conscience; and then corporeal. For this cause, his purification is first a cleansing of his understanding, sentiments, and affections; and afterwards, the perfecting of his body by spiritualizing it at the resurrection. Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God (electronic ed., pp. 166–167). Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hence, Bro. Jonathan has substantially changed the original meaning of this Clause to read that there was no change in the condition of Adam’s nature as a consequence of sin. This is driven by his need to make Adam’s nature identical with the GDE view of the nature of evolved humans outside the garden who, not knowing God’s laws, had never sinned and were able to interbreed with Adam’s descendants.

BASF Clause 6	<p>6. That God, in His kindness, conceived a plan of restoration which, without setting aside His just and necessary law of sin and death, should ultimately rescue the race from destruction, and people the earth with sinless immortals.</p> <p>Revelation 21:4; John 3:16; 2 Timothy 1:10; 1 John 2:25; 2 Timothy 1:1; Titus 1:2; Romans 3:26; John 1:29</p>
JB Interpretation	<p>Though eternal death remained the punishment for sin, the opportunity of eternal life was offered by God to all humans who accept and become a part of His plan through Christ, who bore exactly the same mortal and sin-prone nature as all other human beings who have ever lived.</p>
Obvious Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No mention of God's plan of restoration (links back to Clause 3) and the need to "rescue the race from destruction". The "race" is a common theme in the BASF that links back to Adam – see also Clauses 3, 12, 30. Bro. Jonathan prefers to just state "all humans beings who have ever lived", thereby removing the BASF's deliberate definition of humans as all who are descended from Adam. Yes, Bro. Jonathan gives lip service to the important teaching that Christ "bore the exact same mortal and sin-prone nature", but he denies that this condition of human nature is a consequence of Adam's sin. • Bro. Jonathan introduces a new concept of "eternal death" as the punishment for sin, which is not taught in the Bible (see specific comments in Table 1 on the following page). Eternal death may sound all-encompassing, but GDE strictly limits this to those who have transgressed God's known law, and will potentially be sentenced with eternal death at the judgment seat of Christ. Accordingly, GDE believe that those who are ignorant of God's law, including all of the evolved hominids, still die, but will not face the "eternal death" or "judicial death" at the return of Christ, even though they die eternally and without hope. • Related to this, is Bro. Jonathan's insistence that sin only exists where there is law. To quote Bro. Jonathan's words "sin does not exist where there is no law". However, the Bible defines sin in a much wider sense of falling short of God's glory or righteousness (Rom. 3:10, 23; 1 John 5:17), missing the mark, and still applies to those who don't know God's laws and sin in ignorance (Rom. 2:12; Rom. 5:13-14; Rom 14:23; Gal 3:22; Gen. 6:5; Lev. 4:2-3; Luke 23:34). Moreover, the Bible refers to sin in a metonymical sense as the basic characteristic of human nature post Adam's transgression - as the root cause of sin (Rom. 7:17-25; Rom. 8:3; Heb. 2:14; 9:26; John 8:44; Mark 7:18-23; Gen. 8:21; Jer. 17:9). God's laws serve the purpose of shining the spotlight so that the full seriousness of our sins becomes visible: <i>"for by the law is the knowledge of sin."</i> (Rom 3:2); so that sin <i>"might be seen in its true light as sin, in order that by means of the commandment the unspeakable sinfulness of sin might be plainly shown."</i> (Romans 7:13; WNT). • Accordingly, Bro. Jonathan has developed a theological construct of "sin" and "death" that in practice bears no resemblance to what the Bible teaches about sin and death and what Christadelphians believe. This allows Bro. Jonathan and his followers to play the Trojan horse by affirming that they accept all the Bible passages that speak of the relationship between sin and death while not saying that they have, in fact redefined sin and death to suit their acceptance of GDE. • Importantly Bro. Jonathan's view of hominids with a sin-prone nature undermines the righteousness of God. If God created hominids via an evolutionary process with a nature that is mortal and prone to sin, then effectively this would mean that God is the author of a sin-prone nature because He directed the development of this nature. This would mean that God created and introduced man's problem – the inevitability of sinning – and had to raise up a Son to solve the problem that God himself introduced. There is no wisdom or righteousness in this arrangement. The BASF on the other hand speaks of death and proneness to sin as being introduced by man, and therefore God raised up His only begotten Son to redeem man from the problem that man introduced.

Table 1: GDE Concept Of “Eternal Death” Is Not Taught In The Bible

The introduction of “eternal death” as the punishment for sin, as opposed to normal death, is a most peculiar aspect of the GDE-friendly version of the atonement. According to GDE advocates, eternal death is different from mortality. It is the death that people who have sinned knowingly against the law of God will face at the return of Christ. Hence, GDE proposes that people are only eligible for eternal death after obtaining knowledge of God’s laws, and accordingly this would exclude all the evolved humans living and dying well before the time of Adam. However, eternal death is a manufactured construct that has no basis in biblical reality:

- The phrase “eternal death” or “everlasting death” does not appear in the Bible.
- In the OT, the Hebrew word for death (“muwth”) occurs 791 times, and it always refers to a physical death, including the death experienced by animals and unborn babies. “Death” in the OT simply refers to the cessation of life that is associated with mortality.
- If the GDE view is correct, that Adam and Eve were already mortal dying creatures and sin resulted in “eternal death”, then we should find evidence of this when God pronounced his punishments upon them in Genesis 3. However, in Genesis 3 there is no mention of “eternal death” as something separate and distinct from “physical death.” Rather we are simply informed of God’s declaration that they would return to the dust as the punishment for sin – *“till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return”* (Gen. 3:19). From the beginning the punishment for sin was clearly a physical death and such a death occurred when they died.
- Notably the word “muwth” is used when Eve reiterated her understanding of what would happen if they disobeyed - *“God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die”* (Gen. 3:3), and it is the same word used by the serpent when he claimed *“Ye shall not surely die”* (Gen 3:4). Following this, it is fitting that the next occurrence of the word in the OT is the actual record of Adam’s death *“And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died.”* (Gen 5:5). Hence the normal word for “death” (muwth), which is the same word used for the death of unborn babies, the death of people who live in ignorance of God’s laws and the death of animals, is used to warn Adam and Eve in advance and then relate what actually happened to them as a consequence of their sin.
- In the NT, the Greek word for “death” (“thanatos”) simply means a physical death, and applies to all mortal creatures regardless of whether or not they have any knowledge of God’s laws (e.g. 2 Cor. 7:10; Rev. 6:8; 9:6; 13:3; 18:8). On many occasions it is clear from the context that “thanatos” is referring to an imminent physical death well before the return of Christ (e.g. John 21:19; 2 Cor. 11:23; Rev. 2:10; Rev. 9:6).
- GDE labour the point that “death” (“thanatos”) and “mortal” (“thnetos”) are different Greek words. However, on at least three occasions both words are used in an interchangeable sense to describe exactly the same kind of death (1 Cor. 15:54; 2 Cor. 4:11; and 2 Cor. 5:4, cf. 1 Cor. 15:45).
- Most importantly “thanatos” is used to refer to the death that Christ experienced, even though he was sinless (Matt. 20:18; 26:38; John 18:32; Acts 2:24; Rom. 5:10; 6:9-10; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 2:9,14; 5:7). In what sense could we possibly ever say that Christ was sentenced with eternal death as a punishment for sin? Hence, the GDE view of “thanatos” meaning ‘eternal death’ for those who know and transgress God’s laws completely breaks down on this point alone.
- While “thanatos” also appears in contexts describing those who have knowledge of and disobey God’s laws (e.g. Rom 6:23 *“for the wages of sin is death”*), this does not validate limiting the meaning of the word down to only mean the GDE sense of eternal or judicial death at the return of Christ.
- In contrast to GDE teaching, the Bible teaches that those who are judged unworthy of eternal life at the return of Christ will be subject to a “SECOND thanatos” (Rev. 2:11; 20:6, 14). If “thanatos” by itself means eternal death, how is it possible to die eternally twice? This can only make sense if one has first been subject the first or normal “thanatos” associated with mortality this side of the return of Christ, and then sentenced to a “second thanatos” (i.e. to die again) after being resurrected at the judgment seat of Christ.
- From a logical point of view, “eternal death” as the punishment for those who know God’s laws and sin does not make sense. This is because those who are enlightened have the hope of being resurrected and, by God’s grace, rewarded with eternal life. In contrast, all the evolved humans living in ignorance of God would actually be the ones who die with no hope and hence face “eternal death”. Rather than “eternal death”, the Bible teaches that enlightenment will result in a “sleep-death” (see Dan. 12:2; 1Cor.15:18; 1Thess 4:14), which is a much more positive teaching filled with hope.

The GDE concept of eternal death is not taught in the Bible, yet the concept is promoted by Bro. Jonathan and his followers as they need to account for evolved humans who were living and dying well before Adam without any knowledge of God’s laws. This notion itself, of evolved humans living and dying before Adam, is likewise contradicted by the Bible which repeats many times that sin came before death, and death was introduced by one man.

By subdividing and inventing a new kind of legal or judicial death, Bro. Jonathan can allocate eternal death as the wages of sin while separately accounting for evolved people living and dying outside of the realm of God’s *“just and necessary law of sin and death”*. In order to do this, Bro. Jonathan must also alter the atonement further. Sin is no longer falling short of God’s glory by acts of commission, omission or ignorance. Rather, according to Bro. Jonathan, sin does not exist where there is no law. Subsequently, human nature (the flesh, the heart of man, or the diabolos) must also be decoupled as the root cause of sin post Adam’s transgression, in order to account for the GDE view of evolved humans with exactly the same nature who could interbreed with Adam’s descendants, but were not sinning. There is very little that makes sense in this false teaching, and our most precious doctrine of the atonement is left in tatters at every level.

BASF Clause 8	<p>8. That these promises had reference to Jesus Christ, who was to be raised up in the condemned line of Abraham and David, and who, though wearing their condemned nature, was to obtain a title to resurrection by perfect obedience, and, by dying, abrogate the law of condemnation for himself, and all who should believe and obey him.</p> <p>1 Cor. 15:45; Heb. 2:14-16; Rom. 1:3; Heb. 5:8-9; 1:9; Rom. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 8:3-4; Heb. 2:15; 9:26; Gal. 1:4; Heb. 7:27; 5:3-7; 2:17; Rom. 6:10; 6:9; Acts 13:34-37; Rev. 1:18; John 5:21-22, 26-27; 14:3; Rev. 2:7; 3:21; Matt. 25:21; Heb. 5:9; Mark 16:16; Acts 13:38-39; Rom. 3:22; (Psa. 2:6-9; Dan. 7:13-14; Rev. 11:15; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 14:9; Eph. 1:9-10)</p>
JB Interpretation	<p>[Note: this is exactly the same as his interpretation of Clause 6] Though eternal death remained the punishment for sin, the opportunity of eternal life was offered by God to all humans who accept and become a part of His plan through Christ, who bore exactly the same mortal and sin-prone nature as all other human beings who have ever lived.</p>
Obvious Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This BASF Clause emphasizes our “condemned” nature - Jesus was raised up in the “condemned” line of Abraham and David, and was born with their “condemned nature”, and in dying “abrogated the law of condemnation for himself and for all who believe.” • Although Bro. Jonathan makes no mention of the word “condemned” in his interpretation, separately, he has stated regarding human nature that “it is only 'condemned' in the sense that this is the fate which was assigned to it by God when He made this nature in the first place” (see Appendix 2). So this would mean Jonathan believes that God created all evolved humans and Adam and Eve in a state that was already “condemned”, and hence the condemnation had nothing to do with Adam and Eve’s sin. • In context, BASF Clause 5 has already described this “condemnation” as the “sentence” to die (return to the ground) in consequence of Adam and Eve’s sin, and that this “sentence” defiled and became a physical law of human nature. • The reference to a “condemned” line or nature is an important teaching in the BASF (see also Clauses 9 and 12). As a consequence of Adam’s sin, all of his posterity inherit mortality and a proneness to sin (tendency to moral corruption). This includes Jesus Christ who “bore our condemnation” (Clause 9). The new testament describes this as “sin’s flesh” or “sin in the flesh” which God publically condemned when Christ died upon the cross (Clause 12; Rom. 8:3). It all originated due to Adam’s sin. The condition of human nature or flesh changed to be prone to sin, and accordingly our nature or flesh can, by casual language, and on the principle of metonymy (putting cause for effect), be described as “sin’s flesh” (Rom. 8:3) or “sin that dwelleth in me” (Rom. 7:17, 20). Human nature could not be described by metonymy as “sin’s flesh” or “sin in the flesh” before Adam sinned. The apostle Paul in Romans 7 refers to himself as a “wretched man” in need of deliverance from the “law of sin in his members” and describes this same nature as a “a body of death” (Rom. 7:23-24). This was not the “very good” condition of Adam’s nature before his sinned. Jesus Christ was born with exactly the same sin-prone mortal nature, so that he might “condemn sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3) or “destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14). The devil (diabolos) is a very fit and proper word by which to describe human nature subject to the law of sin and death, or sin’s flesh. • Bro. Jonathan prefers to describe Christ as bearing the same sin-prone nature as everyone else, rather than the BASF’s continual reference to “condemned nature”. This is in order to harmonize the GDE view of fully-evolved humans outside the garden of Eden. He has to avoid terminology that would imply that the state or condition of human nature is a consequence or result of Adam and Eve’s sin and God’s sentence or condemnation. • Bro. Jonathan understands a sin-prone nature to mean a nature that has “natural impulses which naturally come into conflict with divine law”, and that this applies to all humans regardless of whether they have sinned or not. This includes the fully evolved hominids living outside of the Garden. However, because Bro. Jonathan believes it is impossible to sin without knowledge of God’s laws, it is completely illogical for him to insist that those living without knowledge of God’s laws (hominids) can have a nature that is prone to sin. It would be possible to describe hominids as having a nature with natural impulses, but without any knowledge of God’s laws (upon which sin is dependent in Bro. Jonathan’s view) it would be impossible for any of their natural impulses to be described as sin-prone.

BASF Clause 10	<p>10. That being so begotten of God, and inhabited and used by God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was Emmanuel, God with us, God manifested in the flesh-yet was, during his natural life, of like nature with mortal man, being made of a woman of the house and lineage of David, and therefore a sufferer, in the days of his flesh, from all the effects that came by Adam's transgression including the death that passed upon all men, which he shared by partaking of their physical nature.</p> <p>Matthew 1:23; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 2:14; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 2:17</p>
JB Interpretation	<p>As a human being descended from Adam and therefore identical to those he came to save, Christ shared the same mortal and sin-prone nature as every other human being who has ever lived, which all of Adam's descendants inherit as an inevitable consequence of his sin, and was uniquely used by God for His plan of salvation.</p>
Obvious Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denial of God manifestation? – Bro. Jonathan does not confirm this important doctrine. Clause 10 emphasizes the important doctrine - Jesus was “begotten of God”, “inhabited and used by God”, “Emmanuel”, “God with us”, God manifest in the flesh”. However, Bro. Jonathan merely states that Jesus was uniquely used by God for his plan of salvation. • Bro. Jonathan affirms that Christ shared in common with us his mortal and sin-prone nature, but he disconnects this from Adam's transgression. In contrast, the wording of this BASF Clause is very clear that Christ suffered “all the effects that came by Adam's transgression, including the DEATH that passed upon all men, which he shared by partaking of their physical nature”. • This Clause clearly equates mortality - “<i>of like nature with mortal man</i>” as being synonymous with i) “<i>being made of a woman</i>”; ii) “<i>days of his flesh</i>”; iii) “<i>therefore a sufferer from all the effects that came by Adam's transgression</i>”; and iv) “<i>including the death that passed (i.e. from Adam) upon all men</i>”. Bro. Jonathan merely states that Christ was a human being descended from Adam, which in his view is no different from a human being descended from an evolved hominid. In Bro. Jonathan's mind a sin-prone nature and mortality is not coupled with Adam's transgression, and therefore it must be decoupled from the atonement. • Contradictory logic over human nature. Bro. Jonathan first states that “Christ shared the same mortal and sin-prone nature as every other human being who has ever lived” (which would include his understanding of evolved hominids). However, then Bro. Jonathan goes on to state that “all of Adam's descendants inherit [the same mortal and sin-prone nature] as an inevitable consequence of his sin”. So which is it? Do all humans inherit a mortal and sin-prone nature as an inevitable consequence of Adam's sin or not? What if some of us, as per Bro. Jonathan's view, are descendants of hominids living outside of the Garden of Eden? In such a case we could not claim fully that we inherit our mortal and sin-prone nature as a consequence of Adam's sin. • Bro. Jonathan is being inconsistent as he attempts to marry-in similar wording to the BASF on the inevitable consequences of Adam's sin. In truth, Bro. Jonathan believes that Adam was created sin prone and mortal, and accordingly he believes that Cain would have been born sin prone and mortal regardless of whether Adam had sinned or not. The only consequences for Adam himself, in Bro. Jonathan's view, was Adam missing out on the opportunity of eternal life at that time and being sentenced with “eternal death”. From a hereditary point of view, Bro. Jonathan does not believe that any of Adam's descendants, including Jesus Christ, suffered any effects in consequence of Adam's transgression. • The Bible locks the entire scope of the atonement between: a) Adam as the first man through whom sin and death entered the world as a result of his transgression; and b) Christ as a descendant of Adam and therefore inheriting all the effects of Adam's transgression including a proneness to sin and the certainty of death (mortality). This connection is vital as it allowed Christ to represent the entire human race and put that sin prone nature (which came in consequence of Adam's sin) to death. • The false teaching of Bro. Jonathan and his followers destroys this relationship and destroys the atonement. Christ's relationship to Adam is reduced to a legislative act and a manufactured, meaningless legal death. Human nature, death and mortality have no bearing on Bro. Jonathan's GDE-friendly understanding of the atonement, because he needs to account for the GDE view of evolved humans who were supposedly living and dying sinless lives well before Adam was created. According to GDE supporters, hominids had no law, and assert that sin is only possible where there is knowledge of law.

IV. Additional BASF Clauses that Conflict with GDE Beliefs

BASF Foundation Clause	<p>THE FOUNDATION - That the book currently known as the Bible, consisting of the Scriptures of Moses, the prophets, and the apostles, is the only source of knowledge concerning God and His purposes at present extant or available in the earth, and that the same were wholly given by inspiration of God in the writers, and are consequently without error in all parts of them, except such as may be due to errors of transcription or translation.</p> <p>2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:13; Heb. 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Cor. 14:37; Neh. 9:30; John 10:35.</p>
Conflict with GDE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolution is not taught in the Bible, but special miraculous creation is. Hence the GDE viewpoint stands in direct contradiction to what God actually tells us in the Bible. • The Bible is truly the only reliable source of knowledge concerning God and His purpose. The method by which God created all life upon the earth as we know it is NOT an exception to this. The Bible is not silent on this subject. God tells us directly and very clearly that HE created all life in an engaged, powerful, intelligent and miraculous manner, all in a very short period of time. (Genesis 1 and 2; Exodus 20:11-12; Exodus 31:17; Psa. 33:6-9; Psa. 104:24; 136:25; Psalm 148:3-5; Prov. 8:1,22-29; Jer. 10:12; 51:15; Isa. 40:28; Mark 10:6-9; Matt 19:4-6; John 1:1-3; Rom. 1:20-25; Rom. 5:12-19; 1 Cor. 15:21-22; 1 Cor. 11:8-9,11-12; 1 Tim 2:13; Heb. 4:4; Heb. 11:3) • Jesus confirms that the creation record in Genesis 1-3 stands as God's eyewitness account of what actually happened at the "beginning of creation" (Mark 10:6-9; Matt 19:4-6), not at the end of a long-drawn out process over millions of years evolutionary creation. • We do not have to speculate, or try to interpret based on the limited evidence we have available today, what might or might not have happened when God performed his creative acts so long ago. God has told us. While he has not revealed all the "scientific details and formulae" behind what He did, He has nevertheless given us a majestic description of what He did and He has recorded this for us in a manner so that everyone can understand regardless of the level of one's historical or scientific knowledge. • Christadelphians believe that the scriptures are "wholly given by the inspiration of God" and have always determined right from wrong by following the noble Berean approach of "searching the scriptures daily" (Acts 17:11). There should be no exception to this on the subject of how God created all life upon this earth. The Bereans were not commended for first consulting the relevant experts in their day on Ancient Near Eastern culture, and then using this human knowledge as a filter on how they should read the scriptures. We need to take our cue from what the SCRIPTURES themselves say, and use the scriptures themselves as our basis for appropriately filtering what is suggested in additional resources written by fallible man. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). • GDE advocates are relying on a source of knowledge external to the Bible (a fallible interpretation of nature by non-theistic scientists) to form their opinion about how God created all life upon this earth, and then seeking to impose this same worldview on the Bible. • The problem with non-theistic science, from which GDE supporters take their cue, is that it is constrained by a paradigm that will only allow non-theistic and naturalistic assumptions to be tabled as possible explanation of origins. That is, the data they consider may only be understood within the presuppositions of the evolutionary paradigm itself. Anything that might lead to a conclusion on origins other than that life upon this earth evolved by itself has no place in scientific discussion. God's viewpoint, as plainly declared in the Bible, is simply not allowed on the table of consideration. • No man can serve two masters. It is both disturbing and telling that when asked to comment critically on the obvious limitations of non-theistic, naturalistic science, advocates of GDE appear unable to see the implications of trying to find the origins of creation using a form of science which denies a creator and never appeals to one. Yet, by contrast, the enthusiasm with which they take to the bible, cutting, pasting and modifying it to suit their own convictions, should warn us about the dangers of relying on so called "credible" human institutions to build our world view upon. Unfortunately, their allegiance to the paradigm of non-theistic science as the authority on origins, means that they are making God's own eye-witness record of origins, as revealed in the Bible, of none effect.

BASF Clause 9	<p>9. That it was this mission that necessitated the miraculous begetting of Christ of a human mother, enabling him to bear our condemnation, and, at the same time, to be a sinless bearer thereof, and, therefore, one who could rise after suffering the death required by the righteousness of God.</p> <p>Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–35; Galatians 4:4; Isaiah 7:14; Romans 1:3, 4; 8:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 2:14–17; 4:15.</p>
BASF Clause 12	<p>12 That for delivering this message, he was put to death by the Jews and Romans, who were, however, but instruments in the hands of God, for the doing of that which He had determined before to be done, viz., the condemnation of sin in the flesh, through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all, as propitiation to declare the righteousness of God, as a basis for the remission of sins. All who approach God through this crucified, but risen, representative of Adam's disobedient race, are forgiven. Therefore, by a figure, his blood cleanseth from sin</p> <p>Luke 19:47; 20:1–16; John 11:45–53; Acts 10:38, 39; 13:26–29; 4:27, 28; Romans 8:3; Hebrews 10:10; Acts 13:38; 1 John 1:7; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Peter 3:18; 2:24; Hebrews 9:14; 7:27; 9:26–28; Galatians 1:4; Romans 3:25; 15:8; Galatians 3:21, 22; 2:21; 4:4, 5; Hebrews 9:15; Luke 22:20; 24:26, 46, 47; Matthew 26:28</p>
Conflict with GDE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GDE advocates believe that Jesus was born with a nature that was the same as all other evolved humans – dying and prone to sin. As they do not believe that Adam's sin resulted in any physical change to the condition of human nature, GDE insist that the physical state of the nature with which Jesus was born was not a consequence of Adam's sin. They believe that we can only be condemned with the punishment of "eternal death" once we have knowledge of God's laws and disobey them. • However, Clauses 8 and 9 emphasize that Jesus <i>"bore our condemned nature" and "by dying, abrogated the law of condemnation for himself and all who should believe and obey him"</i>. What is this condemnation and from where did it come? Romans 5:17 explains that "because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man", and then Romans 5:18 refers to the "condemnation that came upon men as a result of the one man's offence". • Like us, Jesus was born with a physical nature that was condemned to death as a result of sin in the beginning. Hence, it is the condition of Adam's nature after his sin which passed through to all "in Adam" by physical descent. As the promised savior, Jesus bore the responsibility of conquering sin and death, so it was essential that he should bear the same nature condemned to death. • Clause 9 confirms that the condemnation Jesus bore refers to the condition of the physical nature with which he was born, by explaining that this mission (of abrogating the law of condemnation for himself and all who believe – Clause 8), necessitated that he be born of a "human mother". • The "condemned nature" that Jesus bore in common with us is explained in Clause 10 as i) a nature that is "mortal"; ii) the "flesh"; iii) a nature suffering "all the effects that came by Adam's transgression including the death that passed upon all men"; and iv) one's "physical nature". • Clause 12 explains that through the death of Christ, God was able to condemn sin in the flesh, and that Jesus was a representative of "Adam's disobedient race". Jesus crushed the 'serpent' sin in the very place where it came to rule—in human nature. 'God sent His own son in the likeness of sin's flesh, and condemned sin, in the flesh' (Rom. 8:3). Jesus was "made . . . sin for us who knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21) in the sense that he came in 'sin's flesh' (Rom. 8:3). This did not mean that Jesus was a sinner, for he was sinless. It means simply that Jesus came in the same nature subject to all the effects that came by Adam's transgression, including proneness to sin, and death. And this is the condemned nature that all humans inherit in consequence of Adam's sin. However it never ruled Christ, so sin was dethroned, crushed and overcome.

- Hence understanding that Jesus did in fact come under the “dominion of death” (Rom 6:9) is crucially important. It means that the problem of the “diabolos” that he destroyed when he died was part and parcel of his nature (Heb 2:14). Like all of us, being born with a nature prone to sin and dying (mortal) was Jesus’ misfortune not his crime. But Jesus, as a sinless bearer of our identical sin-prone death-stricken nature, still had to go through the death that came by sin in order to “condemn sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3) and in so doing uphold his Father’s righteousness.
- The GDE explanation of the origin of sin and death completely undermines the representative nature of Christ’s death on the cross. If, as per the GDE view, our mortality is not a consequence of sin, but simply the original condition of our nature before Adam’s sin, then the nature Jesus bore, while mortal, is unrelated to the consequences of Adam’s sin. If that is the case, then Jesus could not bear the condemnation that came into the world by Adam’s sin, and as such his death was unrelated to the problem of sin and death in the world. In fact it would have been unrighteous for him to die, as he was not under the dominion of the death that came into the world by Adam’s sin. Jesus should have been rewarded with immortality without having to die, as per what would have been the case for Adam and Eve if they had not sinned (as evidenced by the hope associated with the Tree of Life in the garden, cf. Gen 3:23; Rev. 2:7; 22:2,14). Hence, if the nature that Jesus bore was not the nature prone to sin and condemned to death as a result of Adam’s sin, then Jesus is separated from the work he came to do; he does not physically represent us, but died as a substitute (to pay for our legal sentence of eternal death).

Table 2: The Relationship Between Fallen Human Nature and Sin

John Thomas, 1850, *Elpis Israel*, electronic ed., pp. 126-130, *The Christadelphian*

"The word sin is used in two principal acceptations in the scripture. It signifies in the first place, "the transgression of law"; and in the next, it represents that physical principle of the animal nature, which is the cause of all its diseases, death, and resolution into dust. It is that in the flesh "which has the power of death;" and it is called sin, because the development, or fixation, of this evil in the flesh, was the result of transgression. Inasmuch as this evil principle pervades every part of the flesh, the animal nature is styled "sinful flesh," that is, flesh full of sin; so that sin, in the sacred style, came to stand for the substance called man. In human flesh "dwells no good thing" (Rom. 7:18, 17); and all the evil a man does is the result of this principle dwelling in him (Rom. 7:18,17)."

"Sin, I say, is a synonym for human nature. Hence the flesh is invariably regarded as unclean. It is therefore written, 'How can he be clean who is born of woman?' (Job 25:4). 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one' (Job 14:4). 'What is man that he should be clean? And which is born of a woman that he should be righteous? Behold, God putteth no trust in His saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in His sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water?' (Job 15:14-16). This view of sin in the flesh is enlightening in the things concerning Jesus. The apostle says, 'God made him sin for us, who knew no sin' (2 Cor. 5:21); and this he explains in another place by saying that, 'He sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh (Rom. 8:3) in the offering of this body once (Heb.10:10,12,14). Sin could not have been condemned in the body of Jesus, if it had not existed there. His body was as unclean as the bodies of those he died for; for he was born of a woman, and 'not one' can bring a clean body out of a defiled body; for 'that' says Jesus himself, 'which is born of the flesh is flesh.' (John 3:6)

"Children are born sinners or unclean, because they are born of sinful flesh; and 'that which is born of the flesh is flesh' or sin. This is a misfortune, not a crime. They did not will to be born sinners. They have no choice in the case; for, it is written, 'The creature was made subject to the evil, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected it in hope' (Rom. 8:20) ... Hence, the Apostle says, 'By Adam's disobedience the many were made sinners' (Rom. 5:19); that is, they were endowed with a nature like his, which had become unclean, as a result of disobedience ..."

John Thomas, 1852, *The Herald of the Kingdom an age to Come*, Volume 2 (1852), V2, p. 182

"The word *sin* is used in two senses; first, to represent that combination of principles within us which in excitation is manifested in passion, evil affections of the mind, diseases, death and corruption. They are called sin, because their manifestation was permitted as the consequence of transgression. And this is the second sense of the word; as it is written, "sin is the transgression of law." Transgression was the effect of *the unbridled inworking of humanity*; and when the transgression was complete, or "finished," that inworking and its result were both styled *sin*"

CC Walker, 1929, *The Atonement*, *The Christadelphian*, Vol. 66, pg. 110

"Metonymy (*meta*, change, and *onoma*, a name, or in grammar, a noun) is "a figure by which one name or noun is used instead of another, to which it stands in a certain relation." There is metonymy of cause, of effect, of subject, and of adjunct. Thus "sin" and its synonyms are put for the effects or punishments of sin These things enable us to understand the like figures in the New Testament. "The body of sin" is "our mortal body" (Rom. 6:6; 8:11), mortal because of sin (Rom. 5:12). "He hath made him (Christ) to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). That is, "God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin (R.V. as an offering for sin) condemned Sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). Or, again, Christ "himself likewise took part of the same (flesh and blood) that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil" (Heb. 2:14). "Our old man was crucified with him" (Rom. 6:6). "Jesus Christ by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14)

Amended Continental Reunion Committee of North America, "*Redemption in Christ*", May 1931, and reprinted in *The Christadelphian*, June 1980, Vol. 117, pg. 197

"The sin of Adam brought consequences for the whole of the human race, every member of which inherited a proneness to sin and the certainty of death. Men are in no way responsible for Adam's sin nor is there any guilt attaching to them on account of the nature which they bear, even though it is unclean and tends only to sin. Man's guilt is for his own sin, actual transgression of God's law, and not for the natural state in which he finds himself."

J. Carter, *On the Nature of Man and the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ*, *The Christadelphian*, 1939, pgs. 228-230

"The scriptures define sin, in the primary sense, as transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4) or, as in the R.V. with a closer reproduction of the original, "sin is lawlessness." In a few passages of Scripture the word "sin" is used in a secondary sense, by metonymy, of human nature. As Paul could speak of "sin that dwelleth in me" so he could describe the nature in which dwells "the law of sin" as "sin," inasmuch as it inevitably produces sin in all, with the exception of the Lord Jesus who always obeyed God. Thus Paul says, "God made Jesus to be sin for us who knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21); again, "He shall appear the second time apart from sin" (Heb. 9:28 R.V.)

Table 3: Bro. John Carter - The Death that Adam Was Sentenced With

John Carter, *On the Nature of Man and the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ*, The Christadelphian, 1939, pgs. 228-230

We believe that because of the disobedience Adam was sentenced to return to the ground, and that this sentence brought him at last to death. *"By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin"* (Rom. 5:12). *"By man came death"* (1 Cor. 15:21). Death "came by decree extraneously to the nature bestowed upon him in Eden," to use the words of brother Roberts; or, in other words of brother Roberts, "Death did not come into the world with Adam, but by him after he came."

We believe it is contrary to the meaning of Scripture to say (1) that the words *"Dust thou art, to dust shalt thou return"* described the condition of man when first created, and **is therefore not a sentence of death subsequently passed by God upon Adam as a result of transgression;** and (2) **that the "death which has come by sin" is not the death common to all men, but the second death.** The true teaching of the Bible, we assert, is that we are dying creatures, inheriting a nature which is "evil" (Matt. 7:11), in which *"evil is present,"* which evil is further described as *"a law in our members," "the law of sin in our members"* (Rom. 7). **Such phrases could not be used of Adam before he sinned.**

The scriptures define sin, in the primary sense, as transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4) or, as in the R.V. with a closer reproduction of the original, *"sin is lawlessness."* In a few passages of Scripture the word "sin" is used in a secondary sense, by metonymy, of human nature. As Paul could speak of *"sin that dwelleth in me"* so he could describe the nature in which dwells *"the law of sin"* as "sin," inasmuch as it inevitably produces sin in all, with the exception of the Lord Jesus who always obeyed God. Thus Paul says, *"God made Jesus to be sin for us who knew no sin"* (2 Cor. 5:21); again, *"He shall appear the second time apart from sin"* (Heb. 9:28 R.V.).

Jesus possessed our nature, which is a condemned nature. Because of this he shared in the benefits of his own sacrifice, as Paul declares: -

Heb. 7:27: *"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he offered up himself."*

Heb. 9:12: *"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption."*

Heb. 9:23: *"It was therefore necessary that the pattern of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these."*

Heb. 13:20: *"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant."*

We believe that we cannot consider Jesus alone in this matter, but must always remember that he was "the arm of the Lord," raised up for the work of reconciliation of mankind who are perishing. God sent forth Jesus to declare His righteousness as a condition for the forgiveness of sins in the exercise of His mercy. To effect those objects it was necessary that Jesus should be of our nature, yet sinless. If he had not been of our nature which is under condemnation he could not have righteously died: had he not been sinless he could not have been raised from death to everlasting life. The wisdom of God is shown in the raising up of a Son who, though tempted and tried like all of his brethren, was yet without sin; who, therefore, by the shedding of his blood confirmed the new covenant for the remission of sins and obtained eternal redemption for himself and for us.

The denial that Jesus had our nature strikes at the root of the principle stated by Paul, that the righteousness of God was declared in his death; and because of this the apostles were insistent that believers should test all doctrines presented to them for acceptance, and that teachers of error and their doctrine should both be rejected. John says (1 John. 4:2):-

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God."

Again (2 John 7-11):- *"For many deceivers are entered into the world who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves that we loose not those thing which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath born the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."*

When John says *"in the flesh"* he means the same flesh as ourselves. These false teachers attributed some other nature to Jesus, different from our own. Because of this apostolic injunction we believe it is necessary to maintain the truth on this subject by declining to have fellowship with any who uphold the contrary.

The statement of the principle underlying the sacrifice of Christ in "The statement of Faith" is elaborated in the pamphlet *The Blood of Christ*, which, in our judgment, sets out the truth on this subject.

Table 4: Bro. Robert Roberts - The Death that Adam Was Sentenced With

R. Roberts, *The Nature of Man and the Sacrifice of Chris*, Diary of a Voyage 1896 pgs 66-69, The Christadelphian, 1896, pgs 339 - 442, and reprinted in The Christadelphian, 1907, pgs 458-459, and 1937, pgs. 552-554.

- 1) **That death entered into the World of mankind by Adam's disobedience.** "By one man sin entered into the World, and death by sin" (Rom. 5:12). "In (by or through) Adam all die" (1 Cor. 15:22). "Through the offence of one many are dead" (Rom. 5:15).
- 2) **That death came by decree extraneously to the nature bestowed upon Adam in Eden, and was not inherited in him before sentence.** "God made man in his own image a living soul (a body of life) very good" (Gen. 1:27; 2:7; 1:31). "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife unto the dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:17,19).
- 3) **Since that time, death has been a bodily law.** "The body is dead because of sin" (Rom. 8:10). "The law of sin in my members the body of this death" (Rom. 7:23,24). "This mortal we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened" (1Cor. 15:53; 2 Cor. 5:4). "Having the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead" (2 Cor. 1:9).
- 4) **The human body is therefore a body of death requiring redemption.** "Waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23). "He shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His own glorious body" (Phil 3:21). "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). "This mortal (body) must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:53).
- 5) **That 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.** "In me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18). "Sin dwelleth in me" (Rom 7:20). The law of sin which is in my members (Rom 7:23). "Every good and perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of Lights" (James 1:17). "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts" (Matt 15:19). "He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption" (Gal. 6:8). "Put off the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22).
- 6) **That God's method for the return of sinful man to favour 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.** "God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy that having the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14). "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body to the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. 6:6). "He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the World" (Jno. 16:33). "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God, to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:25-26).
- 7) **That the death of Christ was by God's own appointment, and not by human accident, though brought about by human instrumentality.** Rom. 8:32; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-28; Jno.10:18.
- 8) **That the death of Christ was not a mere martyrdom, but an element in the process of reconciliation.** Col. 1:21-22; Rom. 5:10; Isa. 53:5; Jno.10:15; Heb. 10:20.
- 9) **That the shedding of his blood was essential for our salvation.** "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even for the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14). "Without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). "This is the new covenant in my blood, shed for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). "The lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (Jno. 1:29). "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:5). "Have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. 7:14). Rom. 5:9
- 10) **That Christ was himself saved in the Redemption he wrought out for us.** "In the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared. Though he were a son yet learned he obedience by the thing which he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:7-9). "Joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). "By his own blood he entered once into the Holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:12). "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect, &c." (Heb. 13:20).
- 11) **That as the anti-typical High Priest, it was necessary that he should offer for himself as well as for those whom he represented.** "And by reason hereof, he ought as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest, but he that said unto him, &c." (Heb. 5:3). "Wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer" (Heb. 8:3). "Through the Eternal Spirit, he offered himself without spot unto God" (Heb. 9:14). "Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins and then for the people's: for THIS he did once when he offered up himself" (Heb. 7:27). "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens (that is, the symbols employed under the law), should be purified with these (Mosaic sacrifices), but the heavenly things themselves (that is, Christ who is the substance prefigured in the law), with better sacrifices than these" (that is, the sacrifice of Christ - Heb. 9:23)

Key Q&A from the CBM Baptism Guide

- The Difference Between the One Faith and the faith of GDE

CBM Question	CBM Answer	GDE Answer ¹
3-1. How was mankind made?	Man was created "in the image of God". The first man was formed by God from the dust of the ground. God breathed life into him and he became a living creature. (See Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:7).	Man evolved via an evolutionary process from lower animal forms. Adam and Eve may have been a special creation, created exactly like the evolved humans to enable procreation, or may not have been created at all but rather a representation of those evolved humans who came to understand about God and His laws.
3-2. Does the Bible support the theory that man evolved from animals?	No. The Bible condemns this theory by revealing that God created the first man, Adam , and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them. (See Genesis 1:27; Genesis 3:20; Matthew 19:4; Romans 5:12).	The Bible does not condemn the theory of evolution as it does not reveal the first man was Adam or that we are all descended from him. The Bible does not support the theory of evolution directly. However, we must look to the record God has written in nature to determine the answer. The Bible can be read as compatible with evolution.
3-3. How does the Bible explain the fact that all men die?	Adam rebelled against God. As his punishment he was sentenced to death by God . This curse of death has been passed down from Adam to us, because we are descendants of Adam , and through him, we are naturally rebellious against God . (See Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 3:9-10; Jeremiah 17:9; Mark 7:21-23; Romans 5:12).	All men that ever lived are by nature mortal and will die the same death as animals. God created all human beings with natural mortal bodies, and hence human beings were dying well before Adam and Eve. The words "death" (Gk "Thanatos") and "mortality" (Gk. "thnetos") in the New Testament are two different Greek words, and "eternal death" is what came in consequence of sin, whereas mortality was already in the world. The death which entered the world as a result of sin was the eternal death ¹ or annihilation as a punishment for sin. All those who are enlightened and judged unworthy of eternal life at the return Christ will be sentenced to eternal death. Hence, this sentence of eternal death is not something we inherit (passed down) from Adam, but rather is "the wages of sin".
3-4. What is sin? 15.1 What is sin?	Every time we break one of God's commandments, we sin. It is still sin, even if we do not realize that we are sinning. (See 1 John 3:4; Leviticus 4:21).	Sin is impossible without law. Sin is strictly transgression of the law. There is only one form of sin. Adam was the first man enlightened by divine law; Paul tells us specifically that sin is not accounted where there is no law.
3-5. Why do people die?	Death came as the punishment of sin . (See Genesis 2:11; Romans 6:23; Ezekiel 18:4).	All human beings die because they are mortal. The Bible never says mortality is the result of sin. It says Adam was created mortal, and death is the wages of sin, not mortality. That death is the eternal or judicial death which the enlightened will face at the judgment seat of Christ.
3-6. What happens to people when they <u>die</u>?	When people die they cease to exist . Dead people are not able to think, or do anything, or feel anything. They are unconscious, as if in a deep dreamless sleep. (See Psalm 6:5; Psalm 49:12, 14, 20; Psalm 146:3-4; Ecclesiastes 9:5-6; John 11:11-14).	If one's understanding of the verb "die" is with respect to mortality, then people cease to exist when they die. However, if "die" corresponds to the noun "death", then this refers to the "judicial death" or "eternal death" that Christ will pronounce upon all enlightened humans he judges as unworthy of eternal life at his return.

¹ The GDE Answers in this table are based on Bro. Jonathan's Evolutionary Creation (EC) view, as quoted throughout the body of this Taipei Ecclesial Timeline and in Appendices 1, 2 & 3.

CBM Question	CBM Answer	GDE Answer
5-3. How can the Lord Jesus bring us back to God?	<p>a. We are like children who have run away from their father. We are separated from God by our sins. The Lord Jesus is able to bring us back to God by his perfect life and his willing death. Because he was born of Mary, Jesus was human, but because he was also born by the power of the Holy Spirit, he is the Son of God. (See Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 2:17-18).</p> <p>b. He was, therefore, both God's representative to us and our representative before God. The Bible calls him the "mediator" (this word means "middleman"), between God and men. Being a man, our Lord was tempted like us; but unlike us he always triumphed over sin</p>	Christ did not triumph over sin (personal transgressions) in himself, as he did not sin. He did not triumph over sin (sin nature) as human nature was not changed a result of the sin of Adam and this is an incorrect definition of sin. By themselves his mental impulses were natural (the same as all humans that lived before and after Adam) and had nothing to do with sin of Adam. He triumphed over his natural impulses that were in conflict with the divine law.
11-5. Are there any other promises in the Bible?	a. Yes. The first promise related to Christ is the promise of a 'seed' to Eve who would triumph over the 'seed' of the serpent; sin (Genesis 3:15; Psalm 91:13; Luke 10:19).	The seed of the serpent that Christ triumphed over was not "sin" or "sin in the flesh" but the false teachings of the serpent. The condition of Man's nature did not change as a result of Adam's sin, and hence man is not born with a nature with serpent thinking in it as a result of Adam's sin. Christ achieved a moral victory over the false teachings of the seed of the serpent.
15.2 Who tempts us to sin?	<p>Temptation to sin comes out of our own minds and bodies; we are tempted by our own "human nature". The apostle Paul called this the "law of sin" in his body. Sometimes other human beings persuade us to give in to the sinful desires of our own nature.</p> <p>See James 1: 14-15; Mark 7:21-23; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 7:18-25; Romans 5:12; Proverbs 1:10.</p>	All human beings, regardless of their origin, are "prone to sin", insofar as they have natural impulses which naturally come into conflict with divine law. However, prior to being enlightened by God's laws, human nature does not have sinful desires and cannot tempt one to sin. It is only when we are enlightened by God's laws that temptation to sin, sinful desires, and hence actual sin is possible.
15.3 What is "the devil" ?	<p>The devil is a kind of parable of the wickedness of human nature. Unchanged human nature is displeasing to God. He shows this by calling it "the devil". Wicked men are also sometimes called "the devil".</p> <p>See John 6: 70; John 8:44; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 2:10.</p>	The diabolos is a state of mind that arises when our natural impulses come into conflict with divinely revealed law. This applies to all human beings regardless of whether or not they evolved. If any human is able to live their life without coming into contact with God's laws, the diabolos does not exist in them. Diabolos only exists from the point at which one is aware of God's laws.

CBM Question	CBM Answer	GDE Answer
15.4 What happens if we give in to the wicked desires of our human nature, and so live sinful lives?	<p>We shall die. That is why the Bible says that the devil (human nature) has "the power of death". See Romans 6:23; Hebrews 2:14.</p>	<p>Natural desires are innate in human nature, but wicked desires only arise when one's natural desires come into conflict with God's laws. You can't sin without the diabolos being there in the first place, and the diabolos can only be there in the first place if you are enlightened by divine law; before that, none of your natural impulses can be described as the diabolos, or "wicked desires", and nor can any of your actions be described as sin.</p> <p>Once enlightened by God's laws wicked desires occur and we sin against God's laws. The punishment for this is eternal death or judicial death, meaning that all those enlightened and judged unworthy of eternal life at the return of Christ will be sentenced to eternal death.</p> <p>Human nature does not have the power of death. It is the diabolos (mental state in conflict with God's laws) that has the power of death; and importantly this is eternal death which is the wages of sin.</p>
15.5 What did the Lord Jesus do to the devil?	<p>The Bible says that the Lord Jesus destroyed the devil. This proves that the devil cannot be a great evil monster, who is alive today. Our Lord had a human nature just like us, and he was tempted to sin just as we are. This means that the Lord Jesus had to struggle against "the devil" (his own natural desires) just as we do. But, unlike us, the Lord won every struggle; never once did he give in to temptation, and so "the devil" was defeated. Since Jesus Christ rose from the dead, he has had an immortal body and no longer faces temptation. For him, human nature ("the devil") has been destroyed and is dead. See Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 4:15; Romans 6:6- 10; 1 John 3:8.</p>	<p>Christ destroyed the diabolos (mental state in conflict with divine laws) which has the power of eternal death as punishment for sin.</p> <p>The diabolos the Lord struggled against was not the natural desires of his physical nature, but a mental state that arose from the point in his life when he was sufficiently enlightened by God's laws such that a conflict between God's laws and his natural desires.</p> <p>Hence Christ did not destroy human nature on the cross. He destroyed or defeated diabolos –his own mental state of conflict between his own natural desires and God's laws.</p>



弟兄姊妹教會台北會眾政策

**Christadephian
Taipei Ecclesia Policy**

1. We will maintain the existing policy that evolution is not taught within the Taipei Ecclesia.

Unanimous. James David Larsen, Jonathan Peter Burke, Dianne Estelle Burke.

1. 我們將會保持現行的政策，不在台北教會內教導進化論。

一致同意。張家新 Joshua，劉媛（張媛）Yuan，陸右晟 Daniel，郭玟伶 April，
王志慶 Abraham ChihChing Wang，危存忠 John Tsun Chung wei。

2. We will maintain the existing policy that evolution (as described in point three), is not taught to contacts, interested friends, and baptismal candidates, or brothers and sisters of other Christadelphian Ecclesias, and appeal to the conscience of our members to individually maintain this policy.

Unanimous. James David Larsen, Jonathan Peter Burke, Dianne Estelle Burke.

2. 我們將會保持現行政策，不對和我們有所接觸的人、有興趣的朋友、準備受洗的人、或其他基督教弟兄會的弟兄姊妹們教導進化論，按著台北弟兄姊妹們的良知訴求及至個人來保持這個政策。

一致同意。張家新 Joshua，劉媛（張媛）Yuan，陸右晟 Daniel，郭玟伶 April，
王志慶 Abraham ChihChing Wang，危存忠 John Tsun Chung wei。

3. Baptismal candidates will be interviewed using the CBM preparation notes (as used in India, China, and the Philippines), with particular attention paid to question 3.2 Does the Bible support the theory that man evolved from animals?

ANSWER:

No. The Bible condemns this theory by revealing that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them.

See Genesis 1:27; Genesis 3:20; Matthew 19:4; Romans 5:12.

Unanimous. James David Larsen, Jonathan Peter Burke, Dianne Estelle Burke.

3. 準備受洗的人接受面試，會使用「CBM準備表格」（這份表格也同樣的被使用在印度、中國、菲律賓），特別要注意的是

3.2：聖經是否支持人類是由動物進化而成的理論？

答：不。聖經否定這理論，並顯示上帝創造世上第一個人亞當，和第一個女人夏娃；而以後的所有人類都是他們的後人。「創世紀1：27；創世紀3：20；馬太福音19：4；羅馬書5：12」

一致同意。張家新 Joshua，劉媛（張媛）Yuan，陸右晟 Daniel，郭玟伶 April，
王志慶 Abraham ChihChing Wang，危存忠 John Tsun Chung wei。

JB 張家新 張媛
郭玟伶 April
Dianne Burke
Daniel Lou 陸

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4. Baptismal candidates must spend regular personal time with us, as much as possible, prior to baptism; three months is ideal.

Unanimous. James David Larsen, Jonathan Peter Burke, Dianne Estelle Burke.

4. 在受洗之前，準備受洗的人必須盡其可能的花個人的時間定期和我們聚會，三個月是個理想的時間。

一致同意。張家新 Joshua，劉媛（張媛）Yuan，陸右晟 Daniel，郭玟伶 April，王志慶 Abraham ChihChing Wang，危存忠 John Tsun Chung wei。

5. Visiting brothers and sisters must be made aware of our ecclesial policy by being shown this document.

Unanimous. James David Larsen, Jonathan Peter Burke, Dianne Estelle Burke.

5. 來訪的弟兄姊妹們，必須意識到我們教會顯示的政策。

一致同意。張家新 Joshua，劉媛（張媛）Yuan，陸右晟 Daniel，郭玟伶 April，王志慶 Abraham ChihChing Wang，危存忠 John Tsun Chung wei。

6. The ecclesial policy not decided on personal decision or ecclesial decision but what the Bible says.

Unanimous. James David Larsen, Jonathan Peter Burke, Dianne Estelle Burke.

6. 教會的政策不是個人或教會的決定，而是根據聖經上所教導的。

一致同意。張家新 Joshua，劉媛（張媛）Yuan，陸右晟 Daniel，郭玟伶 April，王志慶 Abraham ChihChing Wang，危存忠 John Tsun Chung wei。

7. Visiting brothers and sisters known to accept evolution and who DISAGREE with our policy, cannot break bread.

Agreed they cannot break bread: James David Larsen, Jonathan Peter Burke, Dianne Estelle Burke.

7. 如果已知來訪的弟兄和姊妹們是接受進化論的，並且不同意我們的政策，不能與我們擘餅飲杯。

同意不能與我們擘餅飲杯的有：張家新 Joshua，劉媛（張媛）Yuan，陸右晟 Daniel，王志慶 Abraham ChihChing，Wang危存忠 John Tsun Chung wei。郭玟伶 April 棄權。

JB
郭玟伶 April

張家新 張媛

Dianne Burke

Daniel Lou 陸

首榮

8. Visiting brothers and sisters known to accept evolution (as defined in point 3), are not welcome to break bread regardless of whether or not they agree with our policy.

Unanimous. James David Larsen, Jonathan Peter Burke, Dianne Estelle Burke.

8. 如果已知來訪的弟兄和姊妹們是接受進化論的，「如第三點的定義」，是不歡迎與我們擘餅飲杯，不管他們是否同意我們的政策。

一致同意。張家新 Joshua，劉媛（張媛）Yuan，陸右晟 Daniel，郭玟伶 April，王志慶 Abraham ChihChing Wang，危存忠 John Tsun Chung wei。

同意並簽名
Agreed and Sign

James David Larsen 	Jonathan Peter Burke 	Dianne Estelle Burke 	
張家新 Joshua	劉媛（張媛）Yuan	陸右晟 Daniel	郭玟伶 April
			
彭首榮 Peng 			
王志慶 Abraham ChihChing Wang	危存忠 John Tsun Chung wei		

Agreed 4th November 2015

Transcript of Taipei Ecclesia Group Chat Discussion when Drafting Ecclesia Policy



2015/11/04(Wed)

9:50 Jonno B I sent the meeting minutes to Sherry last night. She translated them last night and sent them back to me. She will also share them here..

9:58 Abraham OK

11:54 Abraham I will offline a bit and come back

12:00 James L 3.2 Does the Bible support the theory that man evolved from animals?
ANSWER:
No. The Bible condemns this theory by revealing that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them.
See Genesis 1:27; Genesis 3:20; Matthew 19:4; Romans 5:12..

12:01 James L Please include as we discussed in document with translation so we are clear what we discussed.

12:01 Jonno It's in the baptismal interview guidelines.

12:02 James L Yes but this is the pertinent bit we discussed in meeting. That we wanted to include to be clear.

12:03 sherry peng Ok, I will add this part?

12:04 Jonno Yes add it.

12:04 sherry peng Ok

12:05 Jonno I'm pretty sure people aren't confused about this. They know what guidelines we're referring to and which question. They aren't stupid.

12:07 Jonno I will tell James Chappell he can't be baptized.

12:08 sherry peng who else should I invite into this group?

12:08 Jonno John Wai. Daniel.

12:08 sherry peng already done that

12:08 Jonno April. That's all.

12:08 sherry peng ok

12:09 Abraham Kevin

12:09 Jonno NO. Kevin isn't a member of our ecclesia. He isn't even a Christadelphian. This group was set up for us.

12:10 Abraham Ok

12:11 sherry peng how about peng peng

12:14 James L Yes

12:14 sherry peng ok

12:14 James L He must know

12:15 sherry peng ok

13:44 Jonno If people keep treating Kevin as a brother in Christ and member of our ecclesia then he will never change.

13:50 Abraham I am not saying treat him as brother, he did not break bread and cup with us. I am saying he already in our first meeting. If we do not want to add him, then just keep him info. For me, I think just too pity full

14:10 張媛(Yuan) Subtlety early from the rock just like us, because of his father and mother now, in leading Presbyterian Church pension, can not do without this income, he recognized from the outset that we do not believe in the Trinity, but his father and mother to him this question, now no way to be baptized, he knew he could not have been breaking bread with us drink cups, but now he do not believe the Trinity, and he translated more than ten years, to participate in the holy business, in the church piano, we can not do without him, at least I think he give us a great help, also attended the meeting yesterday, I hope also to respect him

15:29 Jonno It should only say we want people to have at least three months of PERSONAL CONTACT FACE TO

FACE with us before baptism. It is NOT saying they only need to learn for three months then we can baptize them. Even after three months on personal face to face contact, we might not baptize them. It could take much longer.

15:33 Abraham 4. Baptismal candidates must spend regular personal time with us, as much as possible, prior to baptism; three months is ideal.

15:33 Abraham Instead of ideal then should say at least

15:34 Jonno Last night we discussed saying "at least" and people like Daniel and Yuan and James said "ideal" is better so wet can be flexible.

15:35 Abraham We just want to avoid not knowing the person

15:35 Jonno That's exactly right.

15:38 James L On point 2 we also covered evolution being taught to members of other ecclesias. Can simply add brothers and sisters in to sentence

15:39 Jonno That's explicitly covered in point one. That is what point one is all about

15:39 Jonno Oh you mean other ecclesias? Sure go ahead put it all in.

15:39 James L What about teaching brothers and sisters who are not part of Taipei Ecclesia

15:40 James L Yup. Sherry please insert

15:40 Jonno So other ecclesias must follow our policy too.

15:41 James L In point 2 brothers and sisters. We agree not to teach brothers and sisters of other Ecclesias evolution. Like contacts etc. Same as not teach contacts

15:44 Abraham 2. We will maintain the existing policy that evolution is not taught to contacts, interested friends, baptismal candidates, and brothers and sisters.

15:45 Daniel Lu I can't attend the meeting tonite so do april she need to work

15:48 Jonno What do we still need to discuss?

15:48 Dianne That's what I would like to know?

15:49 Daniel Lu I dont know but I think everything is fine. it's clear last night

15:50 Abraham Please see 7 and 8

15:51 Jonno I don't know what everyone thinks about point 8 (only Yuan)

15:51 Dianne What about it?

15:51 Jonno I know we all agreed on point 7.

15:52 Abraham Not in PDF

15:52 Abraham Yuan, Joshua, James, Daniel, Abraham, John, Jonno, Dee say no. April abstains:

7. Visiting brothers and sisters known to accept evolution and who DISAGREE with our policy, cannot break bread.

8. Visiting brothers and sisters known to accept evolution and who AGREE with our policy... [we did not get to vote on this issue]

15:53 Jonno We didn't get time to vote on point 8 last night.

15:53 Abraham For pt 7 is April did not agree

15:54 Abraham For above point we need to use Bible, not voting. We can not voting for Truth. Truth in Bible is accept or not accept

15:55 Jonno But we might not all agree about what the Bible actually says.

15:55 Abraham Voting is world matter, we vote for none doctrine matter

15:56 Abraham Such as color of hall. What we eat for pizza or Chinese food ... Etc

15:56 Jonno We are not voting about a doctrine, we are saying what we think the ecclesia should do in this situation.

15:57 Dianne What passages are you referring from scripture Abraham?

15:57 Jonno The question is not "What does the Bible say?" the question is "What will the ecclesia do in this situation?".

15:57 Dianne I agree Jon.

15:59 Abraham 林前10:16 我們所祝福的杯，豈不是同領基督的血嗎？我們所擘開的餅，豈不是同領基督的身體嗎？

16:00 Dianne I don't read Chinese.

16:00 Jonno (1 Corinthians 10) We're talking about breaking bread with brothers and sisters who visit, not breaking bread with devils.

16:03 Dianne Respectfully, can we please stop adding to what we agreed to last night?

16:03 James L Not vote but must all agree . One mind as ecclesia

16:05 James L We must be of one mind if we break bread with someone who agrees with our policy and accepts evolution

16:06 Jonno Yes that is the issue.

16:07 James L We need to all agree on this

16:07 James L Either we do or we do not

16:07 Jonno Yes.

16:07 Jonno It seems Yuan and Abraham say no.

16:08 Abraham If the person believe evolution, then the person is not have same faith as us

16:09 James L Almost all who have read our policy and accept evolution will not want to break bread with us or push to break bread

16:09 Abraham Since the baptism guide already rule out to baptize people who believing evolution. Then why we breaking bread with people who believe evolution. I will not breaking bread with trinity people

16:11 Jonno "Then why we breaking bread with people who believe evolution " because we didn't baptize them, they were baptized by other ecclesias.

16:12 Abraham Because different faith , as same token, trinity people won't breaking bread with me either

16:13 Abraham That is interesting

16:13 Jonno But in Christadelphia there are ecclesias which break bread with brothers and sisters who believe evolution and who don't teach it in the ecclesia.

16:16 Abraham If the person come as brother and did not tell me about he is believing evolution, then breaking bread is fine with me, because he will face God; but if he tell me, once I know, then I will not breaking bread with him, because we have different faith ; I will need to face God in my concious

16:16 Jonno That's fine, that is your conscience which should be respected. Everyone has their own conscience.

16:17 James L The question is what do we as Ecclesia agree

16:17 Jonno Yes.

16:17 Abraham What I mean is not by choose!

16:17 Abraham Sorry for my poor English

16:18 Jonno Yes, understood, your English is clear.

16:20 Abraham Once the person is disclose his believe, then why he want to breaking bread with people have different faith

16:21 Abraham If the person want to do that, then I will be very worry, maybe he is sick, may be he try to do harm to us

16:21 Dianne My conscience tells me that I shouldn't speak for God when at the end of the day he's the ultimate judge, not me. It's Him that decides who comes to the mercy seat.

16:22 Abraham I agree

16:22 Jonno Because he believes he has the same faith. He believes the same about God, Christ, atonement, judgement, repentance, good works, etc.

16:23 Abraham This is just like catholic they believe everything

16:23 Jonno No it isn't. We have a statement of faith in our ecclesia. It lists Bible doctrine we agree with. It does not say anything about evolution.

16:23 Dianne I refuse to deny good and honest brothers and sister fellowship when we don't even know how God will judge them.

16:25 Abraham I am not judging them , just say they have different belief. They believe creation as well as evolution

16:26 Jonno Well OK, but if they accept our ecclesia's statement of faith then how can you say that have a different faith?

16:26 Abraham They have plus

16:27 Jonno But they accept our statement of faith. The "plus" isn't part of their faith.

16:27 Dianne They believe in the same gospel as you.

16:28 Jonno Yes.

16:28 Abraham This is sound complicated

16:28 Jonno It isn't complicated. They accept our statement of faith. Simple.

16:28 Abraham When we were studied bible we did not have this

16:28 Jonno You're saying the statement of faith is not enough.

16:29 Abraham Not sure I agree

16:29 Dianne BTW, what I stated is my personal belief. I will move ahead with what the Ecclesia decides.

16:30 Jonno This is about visitors and the global christadelphia statement of faith. We either agree with it or we don't.

16:32 Abraham Statement of Faith forming the Christadelphian Basis of Fellowship
[Bro. Abraham copies in parallel English/Chinese version Clauses 1-4 of the BASF]

16:37 Jonno You can see the statement of faith says nothing about evolution. If people accept that statement then they are in fellowship.

16:39 Dianne Abraham, at the end of the day, I personally do not believe in judging people on those uncertain details that's not explicitly stated in scripture, that's between that person and God. If it's something explicitly stated in the Bible, then that's different.

16:40 Jonno It doesn't mean you as an individual must break bread with them. But it means this is the standard for how our ecclesia handles visitors.

16:40 Jonno The statement of faith is about how we deal with visitors.

16:51 Abraham Do not understand why you are not seeing in no 3 of statement of faith and 4 first man...

16:53 Jonno I'm seeing it. But this has gone on long enough. Taipei ecclesia's members need to all express their own conscience decision.

16:53 Abraham Better we discuss at meeting .

16:58 Dianne I agree. Too long. Again with respect, can we please not add to what was agreed to last night?

17:03 Abraham We did not add anything , these were discussed last night and agree

17:03 Abraham My question is 7 and 8

17:05 Jonno The part about talking to brothers and sisters in other ecclesias, we said the opposite last night. It was said they are not covered by our policy since they are not in our ecclesia and not taught by our ecclesia. James asked last night about personal conversations with brothers and sisters in other ecclesias and I said personal conversations like that had nothing to do with our policy.

17:09 James L Then I misunderstood I think. We can clarify tonight. It is very important not to be teaching evolution to anyone as a member of Taipei Ecclesia

17:10 James L Anyone includes brothers and sisters

17:10 James L All over the world

17:11 Jonno I don't know anyone who would do that but I see that as going well beyond what is done in and by the

ecclesia.

17:11 Jonno Which to me is the greater concern.

17:13 James L Individuals of Taipei Ecclesia not teaching brothers and sisters of other Ecclesias evolution is something we agreed last night

17:15 Jonno The context was visiting other ecclesias and wet agreed on that. You asked about personal conversations and I said that was a completely different issue. If the ecclesia wants to include that I'll go with it but this is now going well beyond ecclesial policy and us dictating individual behavior and topics of personal conversations.

17:16 Jonno Let's be clear on the increasing number of restrictions being applied to ecclesial members.

17:22 James L I thought we talked about forums and discussion groups etc

17:22 James L These are effectively teaching to a very wide audience

17:23 James L Of brothers and sisters from many parts of the world

17:25 Jonno Sure but who's business is that? It's neither by the ecclesia nor in the ecclesia and it's only by consent of those who want to be taught. Which is not ecclesial business. And what concerns me is that even though I don't teach evolution to anyone, a Clause like that will be used specifically to target me (as indeed it seems to have been written for), and interpreted so broadly that it can be used against me for anything.

17:28 James L We talked specifically about that last night. This is effectively teaching a broad audience. No matter what it is done by a member of Taipei Ecclesia.

17:28 Jonno Our discussion last night was specifically about what our ecclesia does and what our members do within our ecclesia and with people or ecclesia is teaching.

17:32 Abraham Another note: we do not have any intention to disfellowship anyone

17:32 James L 100 %

17:32 James L Just one mind

17:32 Jonno I think we'll do better when we talk in person.

17:33 Jonno This conversation is too rushed.

17:33 Abraham Sure

21:56 Abraham Reminder: in the document , please attach CBM preparation notes

2015/11/05(Thu)

1:04 sherry peng [File]

1:05 sherry peng Could everyone check for me.

1:14 sherry peng need to go to bed, good night.

1:15 Abraham Looks good

4:17 James L Thank you Sherry

4:36 James L All looks good

8:49 Abraham Since the meeting minutes are good

8:49 James L Yes

8:50 Abraham So can we format the document

8:50 James L All can sign

8:50 Abraham Such that put title on top center at page 1

8:51 Abraham List item 1-8 in Chinese and English

8:51 Abraham Remove names between

8:52 Abraham Then print each name after item 8

8:53 Abraham Each person sign in blue pen and seal with red ink

8:53 Abraham Then this will be our first official document

8:54 James L Yes

8:54 Abraham Title can be Christadelphian Taipei Ecclesia Policy

8:57 Abraham Chinese will be 基督弟兄姊妹教會台北會眾政策

8:58 sherry peng Ok

8:58 sherry peng Everyone give me the whole name

8:59 James L James David Larsen

8:59 Abraham 王志慶 (Abraham ChihChing Wang)

9:01 Abraham Sherry, 我們brother稱弟兄不是兄弟

9:55 sherry peng do you need to sign every single one or sign in the end of policy. 我們要逐條簽名還是最末尾統一簽。

10:04 Abraham We need to put initial at each item

10:04 Abraham And sign at bottom

10:04 Abraham Chinese initial at Chinese item

10:05 Abraham English speaker initial at English item

10:05 Abraham No need to put initial at both place for any one

10:05 Abraham Please leave space for initial

11:05 James L Whose name do we still need?

11:06 Jonno I'm at work, I'm just trying to catch up with this conversation. Just tell me what has already been decided.

11:07 James L Just all give full name

11:07 James L No change to document

11:07 Jonno Jonathan Peter Burke. Dianne Estelle Burke.

11:31 James L We should all plan to get together to sign. My time flexible

015/11/06(Fri)

5:56 James L Have document signed by Brother Jonno, Sister Yuan, Brother Joshua, myself

5:58 James L Need to still get signed by Sister Dee, Brother Daniel, Sister April, Brother Abraham and Brother John

5:59 James L Happy to meet anytime and place convenient to anyone not signed

6:00 James L Brother Abraham and Brother John please sign take picture and send

10:23 Abraham Will do

10:23 James L Thank you

10:24 sherry peng final version

10:25 sherry peng [File]

14:07 James L Saturday night special Bible Study on Bible prophecy. Brother Carl Russian Military action a sign of Christ's coming.

14:07 James L Need to decide best time

14:07 James L Have room available at hotel

14:16 Abraham Jonno and dee when will you available Sat.

14:17 James L All welcome. Just need to decide time. Flexible afternoon or evening probably

14:20 Abraham Jonno, please also invite friend James to come too

14:20 Abraham Bro James, please provide address for meeting location here

14:23 James L Sunworld Dynasty Hotel Taipei

2015/11/07(Sat)

9:11 James L Brother Carl to continue class from last night this morning at 10 AM. All welcome. 12th Floor. Sunworld dynasty

9:17 James L Preparation for baptism study I really enjoyed last night's study

9:29 sherry peng It was great I enjoyed a lot.

9:39 Peng I will be there after noon again. See you

10:49 James L Saturday night special Bible Study on Bible prophecy. Brother Carl Russian Military action a sign of Christ's coming.

10:50 James L Tonight 7h30. Please all welcome. Sunworld Dynasty Hotel Taipei

13:02 James L This afternoon 2h30 get together for chatting on 12th floor

13:02 James L All welcome

13:02 James L Brother Peng and children coming. Sherry Celine myself. Brothers looking forward to meeting everyone

18:35 James L Class on 14th floor. Conference room

18:41Jonno I'm on my way.

Taipei Ecclesia Letter For Help - 11 November 2015

基督弟兄姐妹台北教會所 (Christadelphian Taipei Ecclesia) 需要 ACBM 派弟兄來台北教導聖經並協助拓展福音事工。

Christadelphian Taipei Ecclesia requires/needs ACBM send brethren to Taipei for Bible teaching and to help expand preaching the gospel.

James David Larsen 	張家新 Joshua 	劉媛 (張媛) Yuan 	彭育榮 Peng 
郭致倫 April 	陳行健 Daniel 	危存忠 John Tsun Chung Wei 	王志慶 Abraham ChihChing Wang 
	彭麗珍 	彭儒慧 Sherry Peng 	謝明敏 Kevin Shay 

Date: 11/10/2015

Signed 11th November 2015

Taipei Ecclesia: Reaffirmation Statement - 08 December 2015

Christadelphians Taipei Ecclesia
基督弟兄姊妹台北教會

REAFFIRMATION STATEMENT CONCERNING CREATION 關於創世的重申宣言

The Bible condemns the theory that man evolved from animals by revealing that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them.

See Genesis 1:27; Genesis 3:20; Matthew 19:4; Romans 5:12.

聖經否認人是從動物進化來的。聖經表明神造了第一個男人，亞當，和第一個女人，夏娃；其他所有的男人和女人都是從他們而出。參看創世記 1:27；3:20；馬太福音 19:4；羅馬書 5:12。

The Bible makes it clear "that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them"; therefore, this is a part of The Faith of the members of the Ecclesia. This essential element of The Faith precludes the theory of evolution.

聖經明確地說“神創造了第一個男人亞當，和第一個女人夏娃；其他所有的男人和女人都是從他們而出”。因此，這部份是教會成員信仰的一部分。這一信仰的基本要素排除了進化論的觀點。

BASF Clauses 3 and 4 both state that Adam was 'the first man', with Clause 4 adding 'whom God created'. The reference to Adam being the 'first man' precludes the view that there were other humans or similar beings existing at the time of his creation (see also Genesis 2:5; 2:18; 3:20; Acts 17:25-26; 1 Corinthians 15:45, 47).

信仰宣言的第三條和第四條聲明亞當是“第一個人”，在第四條中增加了“他是神所造的”。亞當是“第一個人”的引證，排除了在亞當被造的時候還有其他人或類似的生命存在的觀點（參看創世記 2:5; 2:18; 3:20；使徒行傳 17:25-26；哥林多前書 15:45, 47）。

This understanding is consistent with the teaching of Christ and the apostles, all of whom upheld the literal interpretation of the creation record (Mark 10:6-7; 1 Corinthians 11:7-9; 2 Corinthians 4:6; 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 2 Peter 3:5).

這個理解與基督和使徒的教導一致。他們都堅信創世記的記載照字面意思的解釋（馬可福音 10:6-7；哥林多前書 11:7-9；哥林多後書 4:6；11:3；提摩太前書 2:13-14；彼得後書 3:5）。

BASF Clauses 信仰宣言中的條款：

3.—That the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth on the earth was necessitated by the position and state into which the human race had been brought by the circumstances connected with the first man.—1 Corinthians 15:21, 22; Romans 5:12-19; Genesis 3:19; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21.

第三條：鑒於人類因為和第一個人的聯繫而所處的位置和狀態，拿撒勒人耶穌在世上的出現是必要的（哥林多前書 15:21-22；羅馬書 5:12-19；創世記 3:19；哥林多後書 5:19-21）。

4.—That the first man was Adam, whom God created out of the dust of the ground as a living soul, or natural body of life, "very good" in kind and condition, and placed him under a law through which the continuance of life was contingent on obedience.—Genesis 2:7; 18:27; Job 4:19; 33:6; 1 Corinthians 15:46-49; Genesis 2:17.

第四條：第一個人是亞當，是神用塵土所造的活人，或作有生命的身體，本質和狀態都是“好的”，神把他安置在一條律法以下，從而生命的延續取決於他的順服（創世記 2:7; 18:27；約伯 4:19; 33:6；哥林多前書 15:46-49；創世記 2:17）。

5.—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.—Genesis 3:15-19, 22, 23; 2 Corinthians 1:9; Romans 7:24; 2 Corinthians 5:2-4;

張家新 劉曉遠 陸右成 郭成伶
張嬌(劉曉遠)
彭人豐 孔洛娜 Juking
by CamScanner

Romans 7:19-23; Galatians 5:16, 17; Romans 6:12; 7:21; John 3:6; Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:2; Psalm 51:5; Job 14:4.

第五條：亞當觸犯了這條律法，被判定不配有永生，被判歸於他所出的塵土——這個判決成為亞當必死的一個生命的自然定律，並延續到他所有的後代——創世記 3:15-19,22,23；哥林多後書 1:9；羅馬書 7:24；哥林多後書 5:2-4；羅馬書 7:19-23；加拉太書 5:16,17；羅馬書 6:12；7:21；約翰福音 3:6；羅馬書 5:12；哥林多前書 15:2；詩篇 51:5；約伯記 14:4。

Romans 10:17 (AV)

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
羅馬書 5:17 可見信道是從聽道來的，聽道是從基督的話來的。

Genesis 2:5 (AV)

5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.
創世記 2:5 野地還沒有草木，田間的菜蔬還沒有長起來；因為耶和華神還沒有降雨在地上，也沒有人耕地。

Genesis 2:7 (AV)

7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.
創世記 2:7 耶和華神用地上的塵土造人，將生氣吹在他鼻孔裡，他就成了有靈的活人，名叫亞當。

Genesis 2:18 (AV)

18 And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.
創世記 2:18 耶和華神說：那人獨居不好，我要為他造一個配偶幫助他。

Genesis 1:27 (AV)

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.
創世記 1:27 神就照著自己的形像造人，乃是照著他的形像造男造女。

Genesis 3:20 (AV)

20 And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.
創世記 3:20 亞當給他妻子起名叫夏娃，因為他是眾生之母。

Genesis 5:1-2 (AV)

1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; 2 Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.
創世記 5:1-2 亞當的後代記在下面。（當神造人的日子，是照著自己的樣式造的，並且造男造女。在他們被造的日子，神賜福給他們，稱他們為人。）

Genesis 9:19 (AV)

19 These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.
創世記 9:19 這是挪亞的三個兒子，他們的後裔分散在全地。

Matthew 19:4 (AV)

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,
馬太福音 19:4 耶穌回答說：那起初造人的，是造男造女

張家新 劉曉逸 陸右晟 郭斌伶
張媛(劉媛)
彭懷慈 孔洛娜 lukung

Mark 10:6 (AV)

6 But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

馬可福音 10:6 但從起初創造的時候，神造人是造男造女。

Acts 17:26 (AV)

26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

使徒行傳 17:26 他從一本（有古卷作血脈）造出萬族的人，住在全地上，並且預先定準他們的年限和所住的疆界。

Romans 5:12-19 (AV)

12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: 13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. 15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. 17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

羅馬書 5:12-19 這就如罪是從一人入了世界，死又是從罪來的；於是死就臨到眾人，因為眾人都犯了罪。沒有律法之先，罪已經在世上；但沒有律法，罪也不算罪。

然而從亞當到摩西，死就作了王，連那些不與亞當犯一樣罪過的，也在他的權下。亞當乃是那以後要來之人的預像。只是過犯不如恩賜，若因一人的過犯，眾人都死了，何況神的恩典，與那因耶穌基督一人恩典中的賞賜，豈不更加倍的臨到眾人嗎？

因一人犯罪就定罪，也不如恩賜，原來審判是由一人而定罪，恩賜乃是由許多過犯而稱義。若因一人的過犯，死就因這一人作了王，何況那些受洪恩又蒙所賜之義的，不更要因耶穌基督一人在生命中作王嗎？如此說來，因一次的過犯，眾人都被定罪；照樣，因一次的義行，眾人也就被稱義得生命了。因一人的悖逆，眾人成為罪人；照樣，因一人的順從，眾人也成為義了。

1 Corinthians 15:22 (AV)

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

哥林多前書 15:22 在亞當裡眾人都死了；照樣，在基督裡眾人都都要復活。

1 Corinthians 15:45-47 (AV)

45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. 47

The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

哥林多前書 15:45-47 經上也是這樣記著說：首先的人亞當成了有靈（靈：或作血氣）的活人；末後的亞當成了叫人活的靈。但屬靈的不在先，屬血氣的在先，以後才有屬靈的。頭一個人是出於地，乃屬土；第二個人是出於天。

張家新 張曉暉 陸右晟
BROTHER JAMES LARSEN 張曉(劉)暖 郭淑伶

彭懷慶 孔洛娜
Signed by CamScanner

Signed 8th
December 2015

which you initially held on these subjects.

就是您最初的信仰

If in the future you wish to return to the Faith we will be pleased to assist you in this.

若在將來您希望能回歸真理，我們將會非常歡迎，並且協助你

On behalf of the brethren and sisters of the Taipei Ecclesia

謹代表臺北基督弟兄會的弟兄姊妹們

張家新 劉暖 (張媛)	郭政伶 April Kuo
陸右晟 Daniel Lou	彭首榮 sj peng
彭懷馨 Sherry Peng	彭居逸 Chapery
	孔洛娜 Lorna Kung

Signed 27th December 2015

Withdrawal Notice in The Christadelphian Magazine - March 2016

■ TAIWAN

Taipei | Daniel Lu & Joshua Chang |

We have had a trying time here in Taipei dealing with problems associated with evolution, but thankfully with the support of brethren who responded to our call for help, we have been able to deal carefully with the upset in our meeting and now move forward positively in a united way. In dealing with the problems we faced, the ecclesia has formally accepted a statement setting out our position on matters associated with evolution. Bro. Jonathan Burke, who had expressed his views for some time, was unable to accept this position as he holds views that do not harmonise with the clear Bible teaching on the subject and the sections of the BASF that cover these issues. Consequently, we have found it necessary to withdraw fellowship from him. We hope that he will reconsider his position and return to the faith he once held.

Bro. Jonathan's Rebuttal of the Withdrawal Notice and a Review Thereon

The indented text below shaded in grey contains Bro. Jonathan Burke's rebuttal to the notice in the March 2016 edition of the Christadelphian Magazine. Bro. Jonathan's rebuttal is copied from an article posted on the "Christadelphian Open Debate" Facebook page by Julian Shipley on 28 February 2016.² Exactly the same text was also posted under an "Anonymous" ID, on the ex-christadelphians.com website on 29 February 2016.³ Julian Shipley prefaces Bro. Jonathan Burke's rebuttal with the introduction: "Statement from Brother Jonathan Burke – posted with his approval".

- "Daniel Lu & Joshua Chang."

Jonathan Burke: Brother Joshua knows about six words of English. Brother Daniel has much better English, but can't and doesn't write like this either. This entire notice was obviously written by a native English speaker, not the brothers whose names have been added to it.

This is simply not correct and misleading. The basic intent and outline of the notice was decided in Chinese by the Taipei Ecclesia, a very small group of eight brothers and sisters. There are only three brothers, all of whom have very limited English writing and speaking ability. Accordingly Bro. James Larsen, a founding member of the Taipei ecclesia who regularly visits Taipei, has helped with every baptism, and the brother whom Bro. Jonathan always included on his distribution of ecclesial activities and correspondence, assisted in revising the wording into a suitable form for publishing in the Christadelphian Magazine. This occurred via an iterative process with ecclesial members, with the draft wording being translated into both English and Chinese a number of times so that members could fully understand the content and intent. Regardless, it is perfectly normal for a non-English speaking ecclesia to obtain the assistance of a native English speaker when seeking to post their correspondence in a major English Christadelphian magazine.

- 2. ...thankfully with the support of brethren who responded to our call for help..."

Jonathan Burke: The ecclesia never made any call for help to anyone, to settle the issue of evolution. Brother James Larsen (of Seattle ecclesia), did the inviting; he told me himself. He also told Steve Cox that the idea of a visit had been proposed in a conversation between Abraham and David Evans, and that he (James himself), had suggested bringing in Carl Parry as well. With the exception of sister Yuan, the ecclesia didn't even know they were coming until two weeks before they arrived. James deliberately invited two Australian brothers who he knew had strong anti-evolution views and who believed evolution should be dealt with through disfellowship, and who he knew had spoken out against me specifically, in public.

This paragraph is incorrect and misleading on a number of points: The background to the "call for help" all started on 12 September 2015 when Bro. Jonathan Burke gave this very small group of brethren and sisters an ultimatum to accept his intention to baptize an interested friend by the name of James Paul Chappell who, like Bro. Jonathan, believes in God-directed Evolution (GDE). Bro. Jonathan stated "*if James cannot be accepted by Taipei ecclesia due to his views on evolution then neither can Dee and I. We would then meet with James, and Taipei ecclesia could manage itself. If the ecclesia feels that [sic] cannot baptize him in good conscience I will do it myself*". Bro. Jonathan forwarded to the members and founders of the ecclesia (including Bro. James Larsen) a copy of James Paul Chappell's personal faith statement, which included his belief in GDE. Accordingly, Bro. Jonathan's determination to baptize someone who believes in GDE precipitated deep concern among this very small group of brethren and sisters at the Taipei ecclesia.

On 27 September 2015, Bro. Jonathan asked four members of the ecclesia resident in Taiwan (Bro. Joshua, Sis. Yuan, Bro Daniel and Sis. April) to vote on his proposal to consider baptising James Paul Chappell **regardless of James Paul Chappell's views on evolution**. Bro. Jonathan is of the opinion that all four members unanimously voted in favour of his proposal that a belief in evolution would not be a barrier to baptism. However, from the perspective of the Taiwanese brethren and sisters who have limited English ability, they only voted their agreement to meet with James Paul Chappell for the first time and then to continue discussing the Bible with him. They were all subsequently very surprised to hear that Jonathan was actually asking them to vote on changing the ecclesia's existing baptism guideline policy (which refers to "the error of evolution") via a show of hands. Evidently the confusion is due to a language communication problem between Bro. Jonathan and these four members that arose after Bro. Abraham had to depart for pressing family matters.

² https://www.facebook.com/groups/481535488665825/permalink/594602894025750/?__mref=message_bubble

³ <http://www.ex-christadelphians.com/2016/02/has-jonathan-burke-been-disfellowshipped.html>

In light of Bro. Jonathan Burke's strong intent to baptize James Paul Chappell, and the ecclesia being so fragile with only 7 baptized members (including Bro. Jonathan and Sis Dianne) in regular attendance, in early October 2015 Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan sent an urgent appeal to Bro. James Larsen and Bro. Abraham (both founding members of the Taipei ecclesia) to return to Taiwan and help them sort through this matter. However, because they couldn't immediately return to Taipei immediately due to various commitments, Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan also decided to send a personal letter of appeal to Bro. David and Sis. Mary Evans in Australia for help (via Bro. Abraham who translated their email). They chose to appeal to Bro. David and Sis. Mary simply because they knew them well and greatly appreciated their many visits to help the Taipei ecclesia over the 2006 to 2011 period. Their first email was sent on October 8, and contained an appeal for guidance on what to do, and an appeal for help with Bible teaching to help balance what Bro. Jonathan is teaching, given that ecclesia is so fragile and has no other Bible study leaders apart from when Bro. James visits Taipei and the odd occasions when Bro. Abraham is able to teach via Skype.

Then on 21 October 2015, Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan sent another personal appeal for help to Bro. David and Sis. Mary Evans (translated into English by Bro. Abraham). Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan made two specific requests in this email: 1) please come to Taipei and help us sort through this matter; and 2) the Taipei ecclesia would appreciate ACBM spiritual guidance and Bible Teaching as it only has a few members and is still very weak. On the second point, Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan stated in their letter *"In the past we were receiving financial support from ACBM, and then when our ecclesia grew, then we did not want to cause any more financial burden to ACBM, so we told ACBM we were fine financially, but we never said we do not need ACBM spiritual support, and we always wanted the elder brother and sisters to come to Taipei to teach Bible and fellowship with us."*

Bro. David Evans gave the Enfield ecclesia the correspondence he received from Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan (via Bro. Abraham), and obtained his ecclesia's approval to respond to this personal call for help. He also contacted Bro. Rob Thiele (acting ABCM "linkman" for Taiwan while in "sleep mode") and Bro. Garnet Alchin (ACBM national secretary) and mentioned the appeal made by the Taipei ecclesia members to the ACBM for spiritual support. On October 25 he sent an email to Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan (via Bro. Abraham) confirming that he was able to come, and arrived in Taipei just under 2 weeks later on 05 November. Hence, Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan were not even in a position to confirm with the ecclesia that Bro. David Evans was coming until he responded to their email – which response they received only two weeks before he arrived. So contrary to Bro. Jonathan's inference, Sis. Yuan was not holding back anything from other ecclesial members. As soon as Bro. David Evans confirmed that they were coming, she told the ecclesia.

Also, the reason Bro. Carl Parry came had nothing to do with being invited by Bro. James Larsen. When Bro. David was conveying to Bro. Rob Thiele the request for ACBM Spiritual support from Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan, he mentioned that his wife, Sis. Marry would not be in a position to travel with him this time because of poor health. Bro. Rob Thiele then suggested that Bro. Rob's brother-in-law, Bro. Carl Parry may be in a position to travel with him.

To summarise what this "call for help" was all about, during a time of deep concern over Bro. Jonathan's ultimatum to baptize someone who believed in GDE, Bro. Joshua and Sis. Yuan reached out asking for help from: – a) two founding members of the Taipei ecclesia - Bro. James Larsen and Bro. Abraham Wang; and b) a couple from Australia who they knew and trusted on a personal level - Bro. David and Sis. Mary Evans.

- 2. "...the ecclesia has formally accepted a statement setting out our position on matters associated with evolution." **Jonathan Burke:** The ecclesia formulated a policy on evolution late last year before anyone visited Taiwan. In fact I proposed at least five of the eight Clauses. With almost no exceptions, it was simply a formal re-statement of how the ecclesia had been addressing the issue for the last few years; it was not to be taught in the ecclesia, it was not to be taught to contacts, and people who accepted evolution were not baptized. We had all agreed to it and signed it.

This above paragraph is largely correct. The policy on evolution referred to is the eight-point "Christadelphian Taipei Ecclesia Policy" (see Appendix 5). This document was signed by the ecclesia and founding members (Bro. James Larsen and Bro. Abraham Wang) on 04 November 2015, BEFORE anyone from Australia visited Taipei. The background to this policy is important to note – it was precipitated by (and hence was the ecclesia's official response to) Bro. Jonathan Burke's ultimatum for the ecclesia to baptize a candidate who believed in GDE (James Paul Chappell).

The key defining point 3 of the Taipei Ecclesia Policy is the third point, which is an extract from Clause 3.2 of the CBM baptismal guide: *"The Bible condemns the theory that man evolved from animals by revealing that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them. See Genesis 1:27; Genesis 3:20; Matthew 19:4; Romans 5:12."*

As Bro. Jonathan has noted, the Taipei Ecclesia Policy stated that evolution was not to be taught in the ecclesia (point 1), it was not to be taught to contacts (point 2), and people who accepted evolution were not to be baptized (point 2). Point 2 further clarified that Taipei ecclesial members would not teach evolution (as described in point three) *"to brothers and sisters of other Christadelphian Ecclesias"*. Point 6 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy states that the ecclesia's policy on evolution, and hence specifically why they reject it, is based on what the Bible says (hence not on what science may allege to be true). Points 8 made acceptance of evolution a fellowship matter, by clearly stating: *"visiting brothers and sisters known to accept evolution (as defined in point 3) are not welcome to break bread regardless of whether or not they agree with our policy"*.

Importantly, as noted by Bro. Jonathan "We had ALL agreed to it and signed it". This is a vital admission. Bro. Jonathan Burke agreed to and signed all 8 points in the Taipei Ecclesia Policy, and does not deny this fact several months later. Moreover, during the process of drafting this policy, Bro. Jonathan told other ecclesial members that he would tell his friend James Chappell that he can't be baptized if he believes in GDE (see Appendix 6). From the ecclesia's point of view the matter had been resolved, there was great joy and they were at peace with one another.

- **Jonathan Burke:** This notice fails to make any mention of that policy. When brother Carl Parry and brother David Evans visited, they persuaded the ecclesia to abandon the established policy in favour of a new policy. This new policy was not written by members of the ecclesia, nor did the ecclesia come together to discuss it. It was written by native English speakers, most likely in Adelaide since it included sentences which had been taken directly from the anti-evolution statement made by a group of ecclesias in Adelaide (South Australia). Once this new policy was written, members of the ecclesia were told they had to sign it. All this was done in my absence, and no one told me that any such statement had been written.

This is completely incorrect. Bro. Carl and Bro. David made no such suggestion or recommendation for the ecclesia to abandon its existing policy (which Bro. Jonathan had signed his agreement to) in favour of a new policy. The motivation to create and sign an additional document, which would link their existing 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy and not replace it, came from the members of the Taipei ecclesia themselves.

By way of background it is important to note that two related documents were signed by the ecclesia within the space of 5 weeks:

- The first was the 8-point "Christadelphian Taipei Ecclesia Policy" dated 04 November 2015 (see Appendix 5) which Bro. Jonathan himself signed. Importantly the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy is what is being referred to in the notice placed in the Christadelphian Magazine.
- The second is the related "Reaffirmation Statement Concerning Creation" dated 08 December 2015 (Appendix 8). The Taipei ecclesia called it the "REAFFIRMATION statement Concerning Creation" because the ecclesia was: a) reaffirming what everyone had agreed to, including Bro. Jonathan Burke, in the 8-point "Christadelphian Taipei Ecclesia Policy"; and b) including relevant Clauses from the BASF and additional quotes from the Bible to confirm that their 8-point policy was not a new basis of fellowship, but consistent with both the Christadelphian BASF and the Bible.

When Bro. Carl and Bro. David arrived in Taipei on 05 November 2015 they were pleased to note that the matter of evolution had already been resolved before their arrival by the ecclesia signing its 8-point policy. Accordingly, Bro. David and Bro. Carl simply intended to focus on Bible studies and current events talks, as well as spending time with candidates for baptism (including Sis. Sherry, who was baptized later in November).

However, when Bro. Carl met with Bro. Jonathan on 07 November 2015 (not the first time, as both spent several years together as members of the Mt Waverly ecclesia in Victoria), the subject of GDE came up. For some reason Bro. Jonathan decided to confess first to Bro. Carl that in actual fact he did not believe the key defining point 3 of the Taipei Ecclesia Policy, even though he signed his agreement to every point in the 8-point document. Bro. Carl conveyed this to Bro. James Larsen who then met with Bro. Jonathan on 08 November 2015 and confirmed Jonathan's about-face. Bro. Jonathan subsequently confirmed this with all other ecclesial members - that he personally did not believe point 3 of the Taipei Ecclesia Policy.

Hence, Bro. Jonathan had in no wise changed his belief that evolution was God's method of creation, and for some reason had signed all 8 points of the Taipei Ecclesia Policy, without actually agreeing to all of the points, particularly the key defining point 3 which states that *"The Bible condemns the theory that man evolved from animals...."* Jonathan's about-face came as a huge disappointment to the ecclesia. The transcript of the group chat between ecclesial members and founders at the time when they were drafting the Taipei Ecclesia Policy establishes that Bro. Jonathan agreed for the wording of Clause 3.2 of the CBM baptism guidelines to be inserted as point 3 of the policy (Appendix 6). Moreover,

confirming his apparent genuineness in this regard, the transcript also reveals Bro. Jonathan's intention to tell James Paul Chappell that he could not be baptized (Appendix 6). In signing and agreeing to every point of the 8-point document, Bro. Jonathan Burke fully understood that point 8 made this a matter of fellowship – visitors cannot break bread with the ecclesia if they accept evolution as defined in point 3

Some members felt strongly that Bro. Jonathan had deceived them. When they all signed the 8-point policy there was joy and a great sense of relief that Bro. Jonathan was now at one-mind with them in agreeing that the Bible condemns the theory of evolution. However, Jonathan's behaviour, for which he never apologised, sent the ecclesia into turmoil. They felt that, at least for the time being, they could not trust Bro. Jonathan and hence they decided to meet without his presence for a short period of time as they needed to decide what to do in a calm manner.

So why did the ecclesia perceive the need to sign a second document (the Reaffirmation Statement Concerning Creation) just 5 weeks after signing their 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy? Bro. Jonathan does not explain this, but it is important to understand. There were three main reasons:

- 1) Bro. Jonathan sent the ecclesia into turmoil by revealing (first to Bro. Carl Parry and then to the whole ecclesia) that he did not actually agree with the key defining point 3 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy, even though he signed it;
- 2) Bro. Jonathan was casting doubt by suggesting that he had spoken with other members and only two members really agreed with the defining point 3 of the policy (which is the same as Clause 3.2 of the CBM baptism guidelines), even though all members had signed their agreement to every point in the policy; and
- 3) The 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy did not contain any references to the BASF, and so the ecclesia wanted to make their position very clear by having a document that would link the key defining point-3 of their 8-point Ecclesia Policy to Clauses 3, 4 & 5 of the BASF. This way it would be clear that it is an essential belief of the Christadelphian faith and hence a matter of fellowship

Bro. Jonathan then incorrectly asserts that this second document *"was not written by members of the ecclesia, nor did the ecclesia come together to discuss it"*; that *"... it was written by native English speakers, most likely in Adelaide...."*; and *"... once this new policy was written, members of the ecclesia were told they had to sign it"*. All of this is completely false, as the idea did not come from any external party, and nor was anyone forced to sign the document. On 29 November 2011, members and founders of the ecclesia present gathered together at Bro. Peng's apartment to draft this second document. The document was produced in an iterative manner with sections being added and explained in Chinese and then modified to make all points clear. The motivation behind the document, and the input into its contents, came from the members and founders of the Taipei Ecclesia who signed the document – who specifically were: Bro. Peng, Bro. Daniel, Bro. Joshua, Sis Yuan, Sis April, Sis. Lorna, Sis. Sherry Peng, and Bro. James Larsen. The final version of the document was signed by them on December 08.

Hence, the members and founders of the Taipei ecclesia on their own accord decided to write a second document linking their 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy to the BASF. They understood that their eight-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy made it clear that they would not fellowship anyone who believes in GDE. However, they decided it would be appropriate to produce an additional unifying statement backing their 8-point policy with clear linkages to BASF and the Bible, translated into Chinese and clearly referenced. In turn it was sincerely hoped that Bro. Jonathan would be able to honestly agree to this document without any reservation, and that Paul James Chappell would be able to accept it as well.

Importantly, their 3-page Reaffirmation Statement Concerning Creation (Appendix 8) was created referencing **four** sources:

- 1) **Clause 3.2 of the CBM Baptism Guidelines was used for the first paragraph:** (this is exactly the same as the key defining point 3 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy): *"The Bible condemns the theory that man evolved from animals by revealing that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them. See Genesis 1:27; 3:20; Matthew 19:4; Romans 5:12."*
Clause 3.2 of the CBM Baptism Guidelines was also used and elaborated upon for the second paragraph:
"The Bible makes it clear "that God created the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve; and that all other men and women are descended from them"; therefore, this, is part of the The Faith of the members of this Ecclesia. This essential element of The Faith precludes the theory of evolution."
- 2) **The Adelaide inter-ecclesial statement was used for the third and fourth paragraphs:** *"BASF Clauses 3 and 4 both state that Adam was 'the first man', with Clause 4 adding 'whom God created'. The reference to Adam being the 'first man' precludes the view that there were other humans or similar beings existing at the time of his creation (see also Genesis 2:5; 2:18; 3:20; Acts 17:25-26; 1 Corinthians 15:45, 47). This understanding is*

consistent with the teaching of Christ and the apostles, all of whom upheld the literal interpretation of the creation record (Mark 10:6-7; 1 Corinthians 11:7-9; 2 Corinthians 4:6; 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 2 Peter 3:5).

Importantly, the reason why these two paragraphs from the Adelaide inter-ecclesial statement were chosen is because they are very similar to the points the Taipei ecclesia chose for the first two paragraphs (based on the CBM Baptism guidelines), and importantly they link these same points with both the BASF and the teachings of Christ and the apostles. They were not chosen just for the sake of solidarity with the Adelaide inter-ecclesial statement.

- 3) **BASF Clauses 3, 4 & 5 were inserted for the next three paragraphs ; and**
- 4) **A list of 14 additional Bible verses were inserted over the remaining two pages:** In the view of Taipei ecclesia members present, these 14 verses make it very clear that the Bible condemns that theory that man evolved from animals, and to the contrary make it very clear that Adam and Eve were the first humans created by God and that all other men and women are descended from them.

All members who signed knew exactly what they were signing, as every paragraph was translated correctly in Chinese. Moreover, almost 12 months, later members of the ecclesia (including Bro. Daniel, Sis. April and Sis. Lorna) have reconfirmed with Brethren and Sisters attending the Taipei Ecclesia Bible Camp, that they willingly signed this document, understood what they were signing, and in no sense were they ever “forced” or told that they “had to sign it”. And this applies to the ecclesia’s letter of disfellowship that they subsequently signed as well.

Bro. Jonathan then claims that “*all this was done in my absence, and no one told me that any such statement had been written*”. Again it’s important to note that “the statement setting out our position on matters associated with evolution” referred to in the notice in the Christadelphian Magazine is the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy on Evolution, which Bro. Jonathan helped write and then signed, but subsequently betrayed the ecclesia’s trust by revealing that he didn’t really agree with it after all.

Yes it is true that Jonathan was not present for the drafting of the second document - the “Reaffirmation Statement on Creation”. However, it is important to keep in mind that Jonathan’s about-face after signing the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy just three weeks prior, which was perceived by many as deceptive and for which he never apologised, sent the ecclesia into turmoil. Moreover, in addition, Bro. Jonathan was sowing discord by suggesting that other members were unlikely to apply a rigid interpretation of the key defining point 3 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy, even though they signed their agreement to it.

Consequently the members felt they could not trust Bro. Jonathan and for the time being they decided to meet without his presence as they needed to decide what to do in a calm manner. It was during this time they drafted and signed the “Reaffirmation Statement on Creation”. They wanted to be clear among themselves that, contrary to Bro. Jonathan’s allegations, they all did agree with the key defining point 3 of the ecclesia’s 8-point policy that they all previously signed. Hence they wanted a document that would restate this clearly and importantly back their understanding with the BASF and additional supporting scriptures which confirm that the Bible does condemn the theory that man evolved from animals. Also they remained hopeful that after having made their position clear, that Bro. Jonathan would also be able to agree honestly with this in the very near future. Bro. Jonathan received a copy of the final signed version on 17 December 2015, when Bro. Abraham sent the file to an ecclesial group chat that included Bro. Jonathan.

On 29 December 2015, on behalf of the Taipei ecclesia, Bro. James Larsen asked Jonathan to review and then if possibly honestly sign the ecclesia’s “Reaffirmation Statement”. However, on this occasion Bro. Jonathan honestly confessed that he could not agree with the 1st and the 3rd paragraphs of the Taipei ecclesia’s “Reaffirmation Statement”, and nor could he agree with the key defining point 3 of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy.

- 3. “Bro. Jonathan Burke, who had expressed his views for some time, was unable to accept this position...”
Jonathan Burke: This deliberately gives the false impression that I had been teaching my views in the ecclesia. In reality I had never taught it in the ecclesia, and the ecclesia had known of my views for two years before this, without anyone making it a fellowship issue, even those who disagreed with it.

Bro. Jonathan has proactively advocated, taught, and vigorously debated his belief in evolution as God’s method of creation on a range of public Christadelphian and non-Christadelphian internet forums since at least 2009, and in many cases he attributes authorship of his posts and comments to himself as a member of the Taipei Ecclesia (see Appendix 1). For some reason Bro. Jonathan thinks that publically stating and debating his views on GDE on both Christadelphian and non-Christadelphian sites (which he himself acknowledges conflicts with a traditional reading of the BASF – see Appendix 3) can be separated from having any impact on the brethren and sisters at his own ecclesia.

While he may not have directly taught the subject during a formal ecclesial meeting, most ecclesial members knew of and were very unhappy about his prolific internet presence promoting and debating GDE with Christadelphians all over the world. While he may not have directly taught his belief in man evolving from animals during official ecclesial meeting times, ecclesial members were very unhappy about his teaching of subjects with a peripheral link to GDE, including a Bible class where he proposed that Genesis was written at the time of Daniel. Moreover, Sis. Sherry who was baptized at the end of November 2015, stated that she had initially learned from Bro. Jonathan that the “daughters of men” in Genesis 6 referred to other humans already existing when Adam was created.

So, yes it's true that the ecclesia had known of Bro. Jonathan's view for some time, but this does not mean that they were happy or content about it. For over four years they were exercising patience in the hope that he would change his views and stop advocating his evolutionary beliefs to Christadelphians all over the world.

- **Jonathan Burke:** This also deliberately gives the false impression that the ecclesia's current anti-evolution policy was formed by the ecclesia, that I then disagreed with it, and that I was subsequently disfellowshipped as a result. In reality this policy was not formed by the ecclesia, it was written in my absence and without my knowledge, and I was not even told about it until weeks after it had been written. In fact Carl Parry had told the ecclesia they had to disfellowship me, even before this new policy was written (he said this in my presence at the last memorial meeting I attended).

Once again the ecclesia's “anti-evolution policy”, referred to in Christadelphian Magazine as the “statement setting out our position on matters associated with evolution”, is the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy which Bro. Jonathan himself helped write and signed his agreement on all eight points. The second “re-affirmation statement on creation” document the ecclesia subsequently signed, did not replace or supersede the 8-point policy that Bro. Jonathan signed. Rather it served to confirm that the Taipei Ecclesia Policy is a matter of fellowship by specifically linking Clauses from the Christadelphian BASF. In addition the local Taipei ecclesial members drafting the document wanted to include a list of 14 verses which they believe make it very clear that the Bible does condemn the theory of evolution.

Hence there was no deliberate intention to give a false impression in the Christadelphian magazine, as Bro. Jonathan is claiming. However, Bro. Jonathan still needs to explain and apologise to the ecclesia for his behaviour in giving the false impression that he was of one-mind with all other ecclesial members when he signed his agreement to all points of the ecclesia's 8-point policy (Appendix 5) and when he consented on an ecclesial group chat for the wording of the key defining point 3 to be the same as Clause 3.2 of the CBM baptism guide (Appendix 6). He further indicated his apparent genuineness in this regard by stating that he would tell James Paul Chappell that he couldn't be baptized (Appendix 6). If he was truly acting out of love and concern for his brethren and sisters, then shouldn't Bro. Jonathan have been honest from the beginning by expressing his reservations with the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy, instead of initially signing it and then afterwards expressing his disagreement? Unfortunately his behaviour, perceived as deceptive by many, only served to increase the level of heart-ache the ecclesia was already experiencing by introducing a new element of mistrust between himself and other members.

Bro. Jonathan claims that Bro. Carl Parry told the Taipei ecclesia that they had to disfellowship him. As always, Bro. Jonathan has not explained the full story, omitting many important points. Bro. Carl was the first person Bro. Jonathan told that he did not agree, after all, with the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy that he help draft and then signed his agreement to. Bro. Jonathan behaved in a manner perceived as deceptive by many in the ecclesia, and then for some reason decided to reveal this first of all to Bro. Carl and not to a member of the ecclesia. Moreover, based on Bro. David and Bro. Carl's official report of their visit to their respective ecclesias (Enfield and Salisbury), during this meeting, Bro. Jonathan also told Bro. Carl that a) he believes in evolution, and this belief was based on science and not what the Bible says; b) he realised that his position was not compatible with the BASF; and c) he realised that this presented a problem for many Christadelphians like Bro. Carl, and hence he would refrain from taking the emblems on the Sunday that Bro. Carl was there.

Bro. Carl asked Bro. Jonathan to think through the matter, and they could further discuss the matter for a few hours on Sunday morning before the memorial meeting (which in Taipei starts at 2:00 p.m.). Bro. Jonathan was unable to make it early on Sunday morning for further discussion with Bro. Carl, but was present on Sunday afternoon when the ecclesia discussed how best to resolve this matter. During this meeting with the whole ecclesia, Bro. Jonathan acknowledged that there is a conflict between what he signed and what he actually believes. Bro. Carl recommended that the ecclesia should resolve this situation in-line with their 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy on evolution that the ecclesia had already signed, bearing in mind that point 8 clearly made it a fellowship issue. In no wise did Bro. Carl suggest that the ecclesia should abandon their existing policy and create a new policy.

- **Jonathan Burke:** 4. This notice fails to reveal that a disfellowship letter was written by a native English speaker, the ecclesia was told to sign it, and the letter was then circulated in Australia (including to anyone who asked to see it), all at least a week (and more likely more), before I even knew such a letter existed, and before I knew I had been disfellowshipped.

Yet again, Bro. Jonathan's portrayal of events is not quite correct, but perhaps partly understandable in this instance given that the letter of withdrawal was regrettably leaked out while it was been circulated among members for their final review.

The ecclesia drafted a short withdrawal letter via an iterative process in both Chinese and English, and the final letter was written in both English and Chinese (see Appendix 7). Bro. James Larsen was present and hence was responsible for the final English translation. Importantly, everyone knew what they were signing, and no one told them or forced them to sign it. They all signed the withdrawal letter based on their own understanding of the 8-point Taipei Ecclesia Policy they had previously signed, confirmed by the "Reaffirmation Statement Concerning Creation" (Appendix 8) which they also signed and links with the relevant Clauses in the Christadelphian BASF which clearly made this a fellowship matter.

Of uttermost priority with the Taiwanese ecclesial members drafting and signing the letter was that the contents of the letter should: a) clearly explain why Bro. Jonathan was disfellowshipped; b) express their deep sadness over his departure from the One Faith; and c) offer him a clear way to come back. The Taipei Ecclesia members that signed the letter were: Bro. Joshua, Bro. Daniel, Bro. Peng, Sis Yuan, Sis. Sherry, Sis Lorna, and Sis April

To communicate the matter adequately in English, the ecclesia asked Bro. James to meet with Bro. Jonathan, and plead with him one last time to reconsider his position, and if possible ask him to sign the ecclesia's "Reaffirmation Statement Concerning Creation".

The Taipei ecclesia and founding members (Bro. James Larsen and Bro. Abraham Wang) deeply regret that the letter was leaked out as the draft was being circulated among themselves for final review, and hence Bro. Jonathan came to hear about this indirectly before he actually received the letter from Bro. James.