

## FULLY PERSUADED.

We presume there was joy in heaven about the time the following letter was penned and we know there will be joy in many hearts as it is read.

The letter fully introduces and explains itself, but we wish all to note while reading, what is the *natural result* of the introduction of the truth into an honest heart prepared by discipline and experience and freed from sectarian prejudice. Note how *quickly* the truth commends itself over and beyond errors of many years growth and with every surrounding favorable to the errors and unfavorable to the truth. Note also the *effect* of the truth upon a fully consecrated heart.

Earthly prizes of worldly fame and earthly wealth, and worldly pleasures fade before the excellent glory of the great "prize of our high calling." And no wonder; if the accomplishment of the great divine plan was so grand as to be worthy our Saviour's coming from the heavenly courts to engage in it, is it not worthy the sacrifice of paltry earthly comforts or privileges on our part – if we are privileged to share in the present sufferings of Christ and also by and by in the glories to follow?

The letter is as follows: –

*May 21st, 1888.*

DEAR BRO. RUSSELL: – I want to write you a letter about myself: you can sympathize with me, and there is no one here that I know of, who can. But very soon I hope and believe the truth will have friends here, who will see and believe as I do. There are in this community, I think, quite a number of consecrated ones who do not see clearly, whom I humbly trust the "Chief Reaper" will permit me to search out, and be an humble instrument in his hands of leading them into the light, and more full consecration.

When I was quite a young man I felt that I was begotten of the Spirit, and if I understand myself, I was very honest and earnest in the matter. I united with the Baptist Church, and thought for a while I was all right. Being young and full of worldly-mindedness, I soon discovered that I was not living up to my duty, and so doubts came and I struggled on, but finally plunged into money making, pleasure and dissipation. And though prosperous financially and socially, yet I was very miserable and unhappy, and there was no peace. But the Lord in his goodness and mercy chastened me, and while it was the greatest trouble of my life, it brought me to my extremity, and then God took me up and comforted me, and I consecrated myself and all I have and am to his service. That was about six months ago. I then commenced to study God's Word with all the energy I had, with a view to engaging in the ministry.

When I commenced to study, and ever since, I have lived trusting earnestly in God to guide me in the way of all truth. I am 33 years of age and a little more, have a wife and three little children. I realized that I could not go to college to get the education and preparation I needed for the ministry, so I said, I am going to the feet of Jesus – He will be my teacher – and I prayed day and night as I studied, that the holy Spirit would guide me in the way of all truth.

Gradually I began to realize that in order to be a God pleasing minister, I could not preach the doctrine that most of the preachers I knew, preached. I saw there must be something wrong in the doctrines I had been taught. I saw that the parable of the Leaven surely did not mean the gospel hid in the three measures of meal until the whole lump was leavened with the gospel. I realized that Leaven meant something impure, consequently error, and I looked around me and I saw sure enough the whole lump is about leavened. I also discovered that our Master's second coming must be pre-millennial, and that according to the signs of the times, he would come long before the world was converted. So I made up my mind that the Baptist Church was the nearest right after all, and that the truly converted in that church would

compose the "Bride," and so I went to work in earnest talking to our large membership of Baptists, trying to get them more fully consecrated. I also went to work on the church roll with a view of getting the negligent and unworthy to either do better or withdraw so as to keep the church pure, but soon discovered what a Herculean task this would be, so I was puzzled.

I prayed more earnestly than ever for the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. I received fresh courage and strength, studied earlier and later, and talked to my Sunday School more earnestly than ever: I am Supt. of a Baptist S.S., numbering 125. I also went from church to church and assisted in revival meetings; but the more I engaged in that, and listened to the Evangelists, and heard them teach error, and saw them work for the big number of so called converts, and saw how they deceived the young and unsuspecting, the heavier my heart got, and I almost shuddered when I thought of being ordained by men to teach. So I made up my mind that I would close out my business, and go out in the highways and hedges, and invite and if possible bring in guests for "the marriage supper of the Lamb." When I reached this decision I was better contented, and God's blessed word seemed better food for the soul than ever. And while my eyes were thus becoming ready to be opened, yet I could not see clearly – the plan would not harmonize. I was so full of the eternal torment, and no chance after death doctrine, that at times I was almost ready to give up in despair; but I had faith in the blessed promises of my Master, and I continued at his feet, [R1049 : page 7] and my whole soul was filled with a longing desire to know and preach the doctrine first delivered to the saints.

By accident I came across your address written in pencil on a card, and so I wrote to you for a sample copy of your paper; you sent me two. I eagerly read them, and while I was bewildered, amazed, and almost stunned at times, yet I did not comprehend your full meaning, and I wondered who you are, and what church you belong to, etc. And I said that does begin to look like the "*Truth*," but his views are rather

too broad; I must be careful, it may be another seducing spirit, but anyway, I will send \$1.50 and get the paper for a year, also a copy of M. DAWN and some back numbers, and I did so. I said, I will prove it if I can as I go along, and if it is not according to the Bible, I will not hold fast to it. I am seeking after truth as earnestly, meekly and humbly as I know how, and I am not afraid to read his doctrine, for if it is wrong I know God will convince me that it is; for I have now reached the point where I have given up all else, and am relying completely on the guidance of the Word.

One week ago yesterday the DAWN and a large roll of back numbers of the TOWER came, and I commenced. I have read day and night since, almost. O, it was food to my hungry soul; and sometimes, Bro. Russell, I would just have to stop and lay the book or paper down and praise God. I was alone part of the time. The scales dropped from my eyes, and I am honest when I tell you, at times I got a glimpse into the "third heaven." The plan is such a glorious one; and I am now ready, God helping me, to commence running the race for the prize more earnestly. But O! you cannot realize unless you knew me, what a struggle I have had already, and what I will have to undergo in cutting loose from business, family, church, college and Sabbath-school relations. I have a large dry goods store, and am doing a splendid business, but I have resolved to commence closing out my stock this week. It will take me several months to wind up my business, but I want to do it as fast as possible; and in the meantime I want to continue to study, and to put in a word and a DAWN wherever I think it will do good.

But I cannot tell you how heavy, in one sense of the word, my heart has been all day to-day on account of a little scene I had yesterday in the house of my father. He is a well-to-do man, so far as this world's goods go, and a very strong Baptist. All my folks are Baptists. Yesterday I was with them – sister, wife, mother father. I told them of how good God was to me, and of how my eyes had been opened, and that I was going to commence closing out my business, to go into the

"Harvest Field" to work without money, and without price. They all cried as if their hearts would break, and when I went out of the room, I overheard them talking about me. They actually believe I have gone crazy, and so they are trying to keep me from studying so hard. But I must press on. The time is short, and I live in hope that their eyes may be opened too. I have given my mother some TOWERS. She is an honest consecrated woman, but much prejudiced. I have been praying very earnestly that she may know the "Truth" as revealed in God's Word.

Now this is too long a letter to write to one so busy as you *must* be, but it is a relief for me to write it, even if you never have time to read it. O, if I could only see and talk with some one face to face, that thinks and believes as you do.

May God bless you and all your co-workers in your labor of love, is my earnest wish.

Yours in the work, J. W. B.

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