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THE CINCINNATI, O., DEBATES

SOME time ago the Editor of this journal was approached by Elder A. A. Bunner, who urged a debate on six questions of difference. We replied that we were too busy, and, besides, preferred to state the Truth and leave it to the people – particularly as we now have the eyes of nearly a million readers every week. He demurred, and finally we agreed to debate with him if he could get the endorsement of the Christian denomination of Pittsburgh. He was unable to do this. He explained that the "Disciples" hereabouts are known as Progressives, while he is attached to the Radical wing of the same denomination.

The matter was finally taken up by the Editor of *The Leader and the Way* of the same faith. He found in Texas Elder L. S. White, supposed to be one of the ablest men of their connection. We have mutually agreed upon all the particulars for six debates at Cincinnati, O., in which we trust the Truth will be vindicated and caused to reach new ears and eyes. The entire "Disciple" Church seems to be aroused. It is expected that some of the railroads will grant concessional rates of fare. Probably some Cincinnati newspaper will publish stenographic reports of the debates. The following copies of correspondence may be of interest:

Dallas, Tex., Nov. 15, 1907.

ELD. C. T. RUSSELL, Allegheny, Pa.

Dear Sir and Brother: – Our correspondence has been delightfully pleasant (for which I am truly grateful), and as we are agreed on all details for the coming discussion, am sending you copy of all the propositions we are to discuss, properly signed by myself, and hereby extend to you, as per your request, formal

invitation to meet me in the discussion of these propositions in Cincinnati, Ohio, beginning Sunday evening, February 23, 1908, and continuing six consecutive evenings, of two hours each, with one evening to each proposition. I suggest that you make due announcement in your paper. I also trust that the discussion may be in the same good spirit of our correspondence, and that the same may redound to the glory of God.

Truly and fraternally, (Signed), L. S. WHITE.

PROPOSITIONS FOR DISCUSSION IN CINCINNATI, OHIO, BEGINNING SUNDAY EVENING (7.30), FEBRUARY 23, 1908, FOR SIX CONSECUTIVE EVENINGS:

(1) The Scriptures clearly teach that all hope of salvation, today, is dependent upon accepting the Gospel of Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, and that such acceptance is confined to this present life.

(Signed) L. S. WHITE, *affirms*.
C. T. RUSSELL, *denies*.

(2) The Scriptures clearly teach that the dead are unconscious between death and the resurrection – at the second coming of Christ.

(Signed) C. T. RUSSELL, *affirms*.
L. S. WHITE, *denies*.

(3) The Scriptures clearly teach that the punishment of the (finally incorrigible) wicked will consist of conscious, painful suffering, eternal in duration.

(Signed) L. S. WHITE, *affirms*.
C. T. RUSSELL, *denies*.

(4) The Scriptures clearly teach that the First Resurrection will occur at the second coming of Christ, and that only the saints of this Gospel Age will share in it; but that in the resurrection of the unjust (Acts 24:15) vast multitudes of them will be saved.

(Signed) C. T. RUSSELL, *affirms*.
L. S. WHITE, *denies*.

(5) The Scriptures clearly teach that immersion in water, "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy Spirit," of a believing penitent is for, in order to, the remission of sins.

(Signed) L. S. WHITE, *affirms*.
C. T. RUSSELL, *denies*.

(6) The Scriptures clearly teach that the second coming of Christ will precede the Millennium; and that the object of both – the second coming and the Millennium [R4119 : page 19] – is the blessing of all the families of the earth.

(Signed) C. T. RUSSELL, *affirms*.
L. S. WHITE, *denies*.

Allegheny, Pa., Nov. 26, 1907.

ELDER L. S. WHITE, Dallas, Tex.

Dear Sir and Brother: – I am in receipt of your formal invitation to a public discussion of our doctrinal differences along Scriptural lines. I accept the invitation, with the assurances of the Editor of the *Leader and the Way*, that you are a widely known and highly respected representative of the Radical branch of the Christian or Disciple denomination, and yourself a Christian gentleman.

I, too, have enjoyed the spirit of Christian courtesy [R4119 : page 20] which has pervaded our correspondence, leading up to

the final statement of the propositions to be discussed. I share with you the hope you express, that the result of our meeting may be to the glory of God and to the enlightenment, and therefore the blessing, of his people.

I might here remark respecting the first proposition, that I accept it as you prefer to have it, but only with the understanding that it is not two propositions, but one; for I would not be prepared to deny the first part of the same, "That the Scriptures clearly teach that all hope of salvation today is dependent upon the acceptance of the Gospel of Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures." I continually affirm that, but it is the after part of this proposition that I deny, viz., "That such acceptance is confined to this present life."

Your letter makes no reference to chairmen for the six sessions. I shall assume, therefore, that you will agree to my previous suggestion, viz., that the duties of the chairman shall consist in preserving order, and in notifying each speaker as to the termination of his limit of time; and that, if possible, ministers of Cincinnati, of various outside denominations, be secured as chairmen – if possible, a different one for each session. Your letter, while stating that the discussion shall be limited to two hours at each session, offers no suggestion respecting the division of the time. I shall assume this to be an oversight, and that my previous suggestion on this subject has your approval, viz., that the first fifty minutes shall be at the disposal of the affirmative; the second fifty at the disposal of the negative, to be followed by ten minutes for the affirmative and then ten minutes for the negative.

As respects rules for the controversy: I suggest that each speaker be allowed full liberty to order his subject according to his best judgment, and that it shall be in order for him to present his argument as may please him best. The language and conduct

of each of the disputants shall represent to his opponent and the auditors in general his conception of the divine rules and standards governing Christian courtesy.

With Christian regards and prayers for divine guidance of us both in the interests of truth,

Yours in the Lord,

C. T. RUSSELL.

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