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SOME INTERESTING LETTERS IN DEFENSE OF THE TRUTH

TO THE WATCH TOWER.

DEAR BRETHREN: – At a recent question meeting the following question was asked: "Should one who is in the Truth bring an action in damages for defamation of character? Does not the Bible teach that we should endure persecution without resorting to the law?" On several other occasions questions of the same import have been asked. My reply thereto has been to this effect: –

Under ordinary circumstances the Christian should not sue for defamation of character. There are circumstances, however, under which it would not only be right to sue, but it would be a neglect of duty to fail to do so. The principle is illustrated in the suit recently filed by Brother Russell against the *Brooklyn Eagle*. Brother Russell occupies a position peculiarly different from any other person in the world. The Lord has permitted him to proclaim the Gospel through the public press, and today hundreds of newspapers are publishing each week his sermons. This is a talent possessed by Brother Russell which is not possessed by any other Christian, for the reason that no other Christian is doing the same work. In order to continue to use this talent it is necessary for him to maintain his good reputation. An attack upon his character by an influential paper would tend to destroy his reputation, and therefore to destroy his opportunity for service through the public press. Should he refuse to defend his character and let the assailants go unchallenged, he would permit this talent to be rendered useless. As the servant of the Lord he could not afford to do this, but must defend himself in whatever way is provided. Under the Constitution of the United States and the laws of New York, the only means [R4962 : page 38] provided for defense against a libelous attack by a newspaper is by suit at law for damages; the purpose not

being merely to get money, but by means of the courts to compel the wrong-doer to desist, and at the same time let the world know that the charges made are false. Under such circumstances there is no alternative to one who is consecrated to use every talent in the Lord's service.

The Apostle Paul occupied a peculiar position toward the Church, being endowed by the Lord to do a certain work. He was arrested and brought into court for trial, and defended himself, taking advantage of legal technicalities. When he was taken before Felix for trial, Felix asked Paul if he would consent to go up to Jerusalem and there be tried. The Apostle could have well said, I am in the Lord's hands; I will not resist, therefore do with me as you see fit. Had he done so, he well knew that his life would be taken from him by the Jews and his opportunity to preach the Gospel would end, hence he declined to go up to Jerusalem, there to be tried, but appealed unto Caesar. It may be insisted that the Apostle here was merely defending his life and liberty, and did not himself prosecute a case in court. Such a position is untenable. He had said, "Neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received to testify the Gospel," etc. (Acts 20:24.) The Apostle's chief purpose was that he might fully use up his opportunities of service for the Lord. When, therefore, he appealed to Caesar, he put himself exactly in the position of one who institutes a suit in court, for the reason that the appellant on appeal becomes the plaintiff, or prosecutor of the case, whereas the appellee occupies the position of defendant.

When Brother Russell's character is attacked, he could say, I will not defend myself, but will permit the enemies to do unto me whatsoever they see fit since I am in the Lord's hands. Like the Apostle, his chief object is to finish his ministry of the Gospel. Personally, his reputation in the world is not dear unto him; not even his earthly life does he count dear, but these are necessary in order for him to finish his ministry. Therefore, it becomes his duty under a covenant of sacrifice with the Lord to maintain within legal bounds

his good name and reputation, to the end that he might continue to preach the Gospel through the public press, and his failure or refusal to appeal to the courts for this protection would appear to be a clear neglect of duty. Keeping in mind always that his chief object is to further the best interests of the Gospel, then we can readily see that Brother Russell in every sense is fully justified in the position taken.

In the service of the Truth, Yours faithfully,

J. F. RUTHERFORD.

EXPERIMENTAL EXTENSION WORK

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

I selected R-----, 22 miles from here, as the scene of an experiment in the Extension Work. It is perhaps needless for me to tell you that I do not know anybody in R-----. The morning came off rainy, but having decided to go anyway, I put on my raincoat and started. When I arrived at the station I found the train was an hour late, and then remembered that I had forgotten any pins with which to pin up my chart, that my voice was a bit husky and I had forgotten to bring any troches, and, incidentally, had also forgotten any breakfast with which to line up the inner man. This gave plenty of time to attend to these details.

Arrived at R----- at 9 o'clock. The weather had turned colder, so that there was no danger of rain. Approached the first pleasant-looking man I met, told him I was a representative of the International Bible Students Association, was a traveling man in C----- for a time, was greatly interested in Bible study, and had run out to R----- to see if I could find a few Christians who might like to listen to a talk on methods of Bible study. Asked about auditoriums and he gave me the name of the man who owns the school, which is private. Went to see him and he turned me down cold; said it would be necessary for

me to get some letters of commendation from local preachers who know something about my work; that there had been so many fakes come along that he never gave the use of the school building any more to people he did not know all about. Thought to myself he was wise, from his viewpoint, and if he really suspected what I represented he would be sure I was the worst fake of all.

Inquired about churches; found there were three, a Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian. These three churches divide services between them, it being understood that on Methodist day all the churches have their own Sunday Schools at 10 o'clock, but at 11 o'clock all go to the Methodist church. Happened to be Methodist day today, so I concluded to stay away from the Methodist church. Inquired names of trustees of Baptist church; was given two names, Brother M-----, living some distance away on the mountain side, and Brother S-----, living within a quarter mile.

Called on Brother S-----; most hospitably received. Invited me to go to Sunday School with him; stated he would have Sunday School dismissed early, so I could have half an hour or so for a lecture. There were over thirty present, more than half of them adults. Was requested to lead in prayer, which I did; then the teacher of the adult Bible class told me he had broken his spectacles and asked me to lead the class, which I did. The subject of the study was the rebuilding of the Temple, which gave a splendid chance for bringing in some truths regarding the true Temple. I then gave a chart talk on the three worlds, and was invited to return next Sunday and continue it (in the afternoon) when they have promised to have the whole town out to hear me. "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." Before I left for R----- I had told the Lord that if He desired me to go to R----- and just sit down on the depot steps and read the Bible until my train came to carry me back to C----- I would be just as glad to do that as anything else, but, of course, if He wanted me to go into this Extension Work I would be thankful for any evidences of His favor that He might be pleased to show me.

After the session (I spoke for about three-quarters of an hour, leaving plenty of time for the audience to get to the Methodist Church at 11:20) Brother S----- invited me to his [R4962 : page 39] home, where I spent a most enjoyable hour, listening to his questions, partially answering them, and asking him some to think about during the coming week. Then he invited me to dinner, and I went to my train, arriving home at 1:15, thankful of heart to the Lord for His gracious overruling of the whole affair. It is now 2 o'clock, the sun is shining brightly out doors and in my heart, and I am just going to the afternoon meeting. Maybe the Brethren won't be surprised when they see how easy it is for the Lord to start up this Extension Work! All He needs is a tiny, broken, earthen vessel, lying conveniently near His pathway.

Your brother and servant in the Lord,

C. J. WOODWORTH. – Tenn.

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PASTOR C. T. RUSSELL, DEAR BROTHER: –

I trust you will pardon me for intruding upon your time. I am filled with gratitude to the Heavenly Father for permitting me to recognize the channel through which the "meat in due season" is being dispensed, and I desire to thank you, as His servant, for the service you have rendered me. I am glad to acknowledge that every bit of heavenly Truth that has reached my ears has come through you. From present indications it appears to me quite probable that one of the tests of the Lord's people will be along the lines of loyalty to the source of Present Truth, and I want to keep my heart right, filled with love at all times, so that I will be able to stand with the faithful. Pray for me.

While grieved to learn of your trials, we are endeavoring to look at the matter as the dear Lord and Master would have us do, and to remember that "all things shall work together for good." How comforting the assurances that He "will not leave nor forsake thee,"

and that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that reverence Him" – "My grace is sufficient for thee!"

The friends here join in sending greetings and expressions of love and sympathy, and wish to assure you of their prayers in your behalf. We all earnestly desire to be "faithful unto death" and have part in the "First Resurrection."

Yours in the service of the King of kings,

M. E. C. – Tenn.

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DEAREST BROTHER IN THE LORD: –

With great pleasure I remember the joyful days, when I had the opportunity to meet you in Scandinavia. I should be very glad to see you again.

We have here with the Lord's aid continued the harvest work and as a result I send herewith the new edition of "The Divine Plan of the Ages" (*Jumalallinen Aikakausion Suunnitelma*); the second volume of the "Studies in the Scriptures," "The Time Is at Hand" (*Aika on Lahestynyt*); "What Say the Scriptures about Hell?" (*Mita Sanoo Raamattu Helvetista?*); "Hymns of Morning" (*Aamulauluja*) and the tract PEOPLES PULPIT (*Puheita Kansalle*), of which we already have distributed about 125,000 copies. We have also translated TABERNACLE SHADOWS OF BETTER SACRIFICES, THE PAROUSIA OF OUR LORD, and also, from THE NEW CREATION, STUDY X, THE BAPTISM OF THE NEW CREATION. Vols. III and V are also preparing. In various places we have held about 100 lectures and meetings before great and interested crowds. The total number of people in attendance has been about 25,000.

We have heard that you will make a trip around the whole world and it would be a very great joy to us if you could visit our country.

I know you are very busy and I have given you only a little record of our efforts in Finland. We remember you, beloved brother, with thankfulness in our prayers.

Yours in the Blessed Hope,

K. H. – Finland.

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MY DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

As I have come into the Truth, and rejoice in the new light and have newly consecrated my life to God, I write to say how thankful I am to have been directed through my dear son to your STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES.

I cannot tell you on paper what remarkable experiences have been mine the last six months, nor how I have been changed, surely by the grace and power of God, nor how I pray daily to keep strong in the faith and to learn, more and more, true humbleness of mind and obedience to the will of God.

I have had a number of sacrifices (hard to lay on the altar, except in His strength) to make, but I have made them joyfully, "counting all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

One of these – the hardest – has been coming out of sectarianism – pulling up lifelong roots; and I now feel rather lost and bewildered, although sometimes attending the Boston ecclesia with profit.

As I told you in conversation last summer, my life has been a cruel one and I had often thought of trying to enter an Episcopal

Sisterhood. But since visiting "Bethel Home" I have abandoned that thought.

I desire to take the symbolic immersion – "that I may know him and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death."

I would be very grateful for any words of advice from you.

Yours in Him,

W. B. B. – MASS.

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DEAR PASTOR: –

Loving greetings on your return home. It has not been my privilege to meet you in England this time, but I have followed you with loving interest and prayers day by day.

My object in writing at this time is to relate an incident to you which is interesting. Some months ago my eldest boy, who has always manifested an interest in the Truth, reached the age of 15 years, when it was decided for him to leave school, but what we were to put him at was the question which perplexed us.

I suggested that he try the colporteur work. He protested that he was too young; but I told him of some as young as he who had succeeded in other places. He followed my advice, and from the first day had more success than I ever dreamed. What was my joy in getting home last time to find that in one day he had taken orders for twenty-four volumes!

Further than this, the effect seems manifest in a wave of enthusiasm over the friends, and several of the sisters are giving some time with good effect. Even Sister Smith has **[R4963 : page 39]** been

giving the work a trial with marked success. Such is the wonderful effect of zeal and shows how the Lord can use weak means to great ends. – 1 Cor. 1:27,28.

You can imagine the joy that this brings to our hearts. I know it will bring joy to yours also.

Yours in faith and love,

R. G. SMITH. – England.

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER AND PASTOR: –

Christian love and greetings! It has been the privilege of Sister Louise Jolly and myself to spend the past few days colporteur-ing some of the offices of Plainfield. The dear Lord strengthened us so wonderfully for this service and granted us such fine experiences that I felt constrained to write you.

Having naturally too much caution, I have very few times colporteur-ed the business section of towns for fear of intruding. However, here few gave the excuse of being too busy, and when they did they invited us to call again. Those who purchased STUDIES thanked us many times for calling, as did also several who did not purchase. It is such a satisfaction to present the Message to those who are in the forefront of this great battle for existence and who seem to appreciate any literature treating the subject of present-day conditions.

A dear Sister said to me at the Put-in-Bay Convention, "Don't neglect the business section of your towns. The Lord has some precious grains of wheat among the busy business men." She gave her experience as having been so timid that before she could undertake that branch of service, she would have to have special prayer of each member of the class in her behalf. "Now," she says, "I would not take anything for my experiences in the business sections."

Again I desire to express my gratitude to the great Chief Shepherd, and incidentally to you, an appointed Pastor, for these soul-refreshing, life-giving waters of Truth, and His great condescension, in using to any extent an earthen vessel which seemed of *no use* at all. Pray for me, dear Brother, that I may continue to be "a broken and emptied vessel for the Master's use made meet," now and in the glorious future.

Yours in our glorious hope,

M. M. SPRINGER.

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