

SOME INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

My husband and I have entered the Colporteur work and the Lord has wonderfully blessed us.

As we are working in another brother's territory, I write to ask if Shiawassee County, Mich., is being worked. If not, will you assign us this county as soon as possible?

We have taken orders for nearly four hundred books in six days. We each took orders for nine full sets in one day. I never believed I could sell a book and dreaded to go into the work because of my inability to explain the Scriptures; also because I am not much of a talker. But I have found that God can use very poor material to do His work.

We have been greatly blessed and are thankful that we took your advice and entered the work. May the dear Lord bless you in your work!

MRS. S. H. GRIFFIN. – Ohio.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD: –

Many of the smaller classes, and perhaps some of the larger ones, do not realize the importance of order in regard to addressing only the brother occupying the chair. As a class we have about overcome this difficulty. We also used to think that it was not necessary to be strict in this because we were so few in number, but I always felt that I should be ashamed if anyone from an orderly class should visit us and witness the disorder.

The Elder of a disorderly class is especially in danger of displaying his lack of obedience to this rule when he visits another class, for he forgets that he is not occupying the chair and unconsciously comments on every expression to the annoyance of the class. I feel that it would not be easy for the leading Elder to correct him, for it would be like correcting your friends' children for misconduct.

Perhaps these friends overlooked the importance of addressing the chair as given on page 327, Vol. VI., and included in a past study. It would surely be beneficial to them to turn to it again with a spirit of obedience in their hearts.

May the Lord continue to bless you as you strive to carry out His will.

Your sister in the dear Redeemer,

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

Words cannot express my appreciation of the "Meat in due season" committed to your charge to dispense in "My Vow unto the Lord."

What a comfort it has been to me! what a help in keeping on "the whole armor of God"! to keep my heart with all diligence; to bridle my tongue!

Surely it is a wonderful gift from our Heavenly Father, for in every temptation and trial, in every thought, word and action, it helps us to remember our covenant to be dead with our Lord – to endeavor to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."

I must confess my tardiness in writing you; I took the Vow a year ago and testified to blessings received, promising then to send in my name. I feel that I have lost a blessing in withholding it so long.

J. A. THOMPSON. – Calif.

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FAITHFUL BARKING COMMENDED

DEARLY BELOVED PASTOR: –

When first reading the article in a past TOWER illustrating our "Old Creature," by a dog, it seemed a little amusing; but recently circumstances here in the Philadelphia ecclesia brought forth the need of studying the parable of the "Sheep."

We learn that all shepherds keep a good "sheep dog," which is gentle, kind, never vicious, but does considerable barking when the sheep are inclined to stray; and all sheep belonging to the dog's owner are *very dear* to the dog. Its sense of smell is *very* acute; if a sheep had been near a wolf the dog would detect it and bark at the wayward one.

Learning the above facts partly answered a puzzle in my mind, namely, whenever any "sheep" in our ecclesia strays from any of the *doctrinal points*, he or she is usually very composed about it, but those watching for such danger-places make a *big fuss* over it. It is talked and talked about. They seem very restless, disturbed, even to loud words.

Questioning the different "barkers" I find each ready to suffer anything if only the wanderer may return – have his eyes opened. So I have concluded that it belongs to the faithful "dog" to bark and bark at even the smell of a wolf, and that to err in the "dog" nature is nothing to compare to erring in doctrine. In other words, dogs would

better *bark too much* than not to be watchers and warners of the approach of the wolf. _____ [R5070 : page 235]

BEREAN QUESTION STUDIES

DEAR BRETHREN: – I have been for many years much impressed with the importance of Berean methods of study – indeed, ever since the Society began to bring them to our attention as specially desirable methods. I have since then aimed to follow them closely in my personal studies, but have realized all the while that, as classes, we were not getting hold of them properly.

A recent visit of the dear brethren, coupled with careful consideration of a letter (Tower, Sept. 15), has impressed the matter upon me as never before. I trust a new impetus has been given to "class" study and, with the thought of possibly adding somewhat to the impression, I am sending out to Ecclesias in this vicinity some suggestions, of which the enclosed is a copy: –

- (1) Berean Study is as old as the Church.
- (2) The volumes – STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES – like the Scriptures themselves, are full of interrogation points – that is, they suggest questions everywhere.
- (3) The average mind is not competent to make the best arrangement of these questions – linking them together in their proper, logical order.
- (4) The arranged Questions, furnished by the Brooklyn Tabernacle, supply this lack.
- (5) These "Question" Studies have been with us for years.

(6) The Bethel "Table Talks" are on the same general plan – surely a forceful demonstration and endorsement of the method.

(7) They foster concentration of thought, and give a definite aim in study.

(8) They develop ability in analyzing subjects.

(9) They assist all the members of a class to study along uniform lines.

(10) The Church being made up of separate Ecclesias, in proportion as the method is followed by the different Ecclesias, the Church as a whole is studying along uniform lines.

(11) We acknowledge the value of uniformity by our unanimous adoption of it in use of Daily Hymns and Daily Manna.

(12) They make the leader of a Class less a teacher, thus dividing up with the class, more fully, the responsibility for development.

(13) It encourages Class study, which is surely discouraged in proportion as the leader, either from inclination or as the result of less practical methods, monopolizes the explanation of Studies.

(14) It supplies the best basis for study of the lessons beforehand, and neglect of this spells proportionate failure in *any* method of Class work.

(15) Each member of a Class has a responsibility in this respect which he or she cannot afford to ignore. (It is our opinion that where Classes fail to make the method practical the main difficulty lies (a) in a lack

of preparatory study; **(b)** in failure of the leader to impress its importance.)

(16) Where an Ecclesia lacks "speaking" talent, it supplies a good substitute, and we believe in many cases more than a substitute. We incline to the conviction that less dependence on preaching and more on "class" study should be the order.

(17) Should the appointed leader be absent from any "study," the Class thus equipped could carry along the Study without interruption, any member reasonably well-informed being competent to take charge.

(18) If for any reason it should not be deemed wise to have a regularly appointed leader, different members would be prepared to lead in turn – each member recognizing such a one as leader, while filling the office, directing all questions and answers to him – thus holding the Class to order as effectually as though they had a regularly appointed leader.

(19) Any answer to a question should be supported by at least two good Scriptures. If each member recognizes his or her responsibility in finding these Scriptures, it will guarantee a study which should make any subject interesting to any visitor present who is interested in the Bible.

(20) Should any question come up on any paragraph, after those prescribed for the study have been dealt with, the leader, by turning it over to the Class, instead of answering himself, will make the study the more helpful. (This method of turning questions over to the class would often avoid a delicate situation, should the question be such as would call for an answer which might not be acceptable to the questioner. The leader, in thus sharing the responsibility with the class,

could express himself the more freely, and no special objection could be taken.)

(21) With the "Berean Question" method uniformly followed, in any "study" where a specific number of questions are marked off, and kept up with, we would be at home if temporarily present with any Class the world over.

(22) Additionally, we all desire to be as closely in touch with the "isolated" ones as possible, and it would seem that nothing could operate more effectually in this direction than the widest possible application of this principle of oneness in study.

(23) The fact that the Society is continually urging this method gives the unmistakable inference that WE NEED IT.

Your brother in service,

W. W. BLACK.

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