

## INTERESTING LETTERS

### "BEFORE AFFLICTED, I WENT ASTRAY"

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

I am happy this day to be able to address you as a brother by the grace of God. I am trying to write you, dear Brother, under much difficulty; but I want to let you know what a great blessing you have been to me. First of all, dear Pastor, if you will kindly excuse me for taking up a few minutes of your time, I would like to tell you a little about myself.

Six years ago I met with an accident in the coal mine, receiving a fractured spine, which left me with extreme paralysis; and for six years I have never been one moment free from pain. I lie on a water-bed, and almost everything has to be done for me. I am terribly crippled, even to my fingers, in which I have no grip. I hold my pen by means of an elastic band around my fingers and the pen-holder. I have a wife and a child eight years old; and by the guidance of our Heavenly Father we keep our home going, on a little compensation from the colliery.

Well, dear Brother, I have lived through a lot of pain, but I feel handsomely rewarded by being spared to see the Divine Plan of our loving Father. Soon after my accident I got converted, as I then understood conversion; and as the Methodists were very kind to me, I became a member of their Society. I have striven hard to live a life pleasing to God; and for five years I have studied religion, being a lover of books and my Bible, which was my greatest comfort; not because I understood much of it, but because in it I found sweet, comforting promises of a better life to come.

As I read after great religious leaders and endeavored to take a deep interest in the nominal Church, I soon discovered that there was a terrible confusion being made of God's Word. Everybody seemed to believe anything and nothing at the same time; and the only difference I could see between most of those around me who professed Christianity and those who did not, was that the former lived for the lust of the flesh under a cloak, while the latter did not care who saw how they lived.

I thought at that time that the Churches were the representatives of Christianity on earth, and that ministers *must* be right because they had been to college; and besides, didn't they often tell me when I asked for explanations that I was not learned, and so could not expect to understand God's mysteries in the Bible?

But after the war broke out, and I saw how the nominal Church completely threw over the chief principles of Jesus to support their earthly gods, I began to doubt whether there was really anything in religion after all. After having learned of the meek and lowly Jesus, and then to hear men from the church which bore His name, crying out from its pulpit for revenge and the blood of their fellows, I felt at a loss what to think. In the end I became very skeptical in my thoughts and began to feel that all my hopes were shattered; and I knew so little of the *Gospel* and felt so helpless for the want of a teacher! But where was I to find one? So I thought to throw up all and believe nothing.

At this point, dear Brother, your STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES were introduced to me by an old friend who used to call with a book on health, once a month. He was a Seventh Day Adventist, who had been to see the PHOTO-DRAMA and had read some of the STUDIES. As he told me of this grand light which had come upon him, I was astonished. Eventually he made me a present of the first volume. I thought I was going to find gold galore. But it was not until my friend had given me the second book, and I had

partly read it, that my mind opened as it were *all at once* and I prayed God to lead me and teach me in His Holy Word.

I cannot tell you, dear Brother, how I seemed to fill with joy and gladness as the Word of God was unraveled before my mind. Sometimes as I read I had to put down the book a few minutes to pray the Father to keep me *calm* in my joy. I did not then know who had written the books; but I loved him and thanked my God as I read and feasted upon the good things the Father had permitted him to set before me.

After I had read the second book, I longed to have the rest of them; and as my friend had no more to part with and had no means with which to buy them, he advised me to write the good people at our London Office and state my case. I did not like to do that; for I could not believe, all at once, that there were people so kind in London as all that. But when my friend came again, he persuaded me to *try them*. Eventually, half-heartedly, I did so; and to my great joy and comfort, three days afterwards I received the other four volumes, and I should like them to know what joy their gift has brought to my painful life.

I am the only I.B.S. in this town; but the dear brothers and sisters from several towns round about have visited my home and have not forgotten to bring food of both kinds with them. I also receive THE WATCH TOWER from Brooklyn. It comes as a message of love to me. As I read it, dear Brother, I feel that you are in my room and all the brethren. "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love!"

After the Heavenly Father accepted me as a son, I soon met with opposition; and eventually I felt obliged politely, but in a right spirit, to withdraw from the "Nominal." Some of my dearest friends said that Pastor Russell had turned my brain. To that I quite agreed, only I said that *God* had turned my brain *through* Pastor Russell, and had turned it in the right way, too.

I wish to thank you, dear Brother, and all the dear brethren through whom I receive THE WATCH TOWER – gratis. I would be glad to receive THE TOWERS so as not to be a burden to the brethren. But our Heavenly Father has willed it that He Himself shall provide for my every need. So be it. I go over our beautiful Vow each day, and I pray the Father to keep and guide you and our dear brethren. Will you please pray for me that I may go on by His grace to make my calling and election "*sure?*"

I hope, dear Brother, that I have not taken up too much of your valuable time by asking you to read this letter, which after all only partly expresses the joy and gratitude that is within me. If I am not asking too much I should love to have a line of comfort by *your own hand*. I close thanking God for preserving me long enough to become

Your Brother in the Lord,

A. W. JENNINGS.

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## **THE PROGRESS OF THREE MONTHS**

DEAR PASTOR RUSSELL: –

I am writing to ask your advice on a few questions. I was brought up a Catholic and attended church till I was married, thirteen years ago. My husband was a Methodist, although he never attended church until two years ago, when an evangelist came here. He then joined the Methodist church. He often asked me to go, but I did not care to. He took our three little girls to church. I prayed God night after night to direct me so that I could see which was really the right church.

A year ago I found a tract under the door of our home which I believe was an answer to my prayer. The tract was, "End of the World in 1914 – Not the View of Pastor Russell," and oh, how happy I was after reading it! I also read it to my husband and he thought it grand. I then took his Bible to find out if those things were so.

My mother had then been dead about a year. I often wondered why God had taken her away from us and oh, that little tract did set my mind free and at rest! My husband thought it so grand he had to tell the Methodist minister and his friends about it.

A little later the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION came to our community and we attended it. I commenced attending the meetings for Bible study and my husband did not object. About a month later his minister handed him two books about you for me to read. I had gotten just enough of the Truth to know that these books were lies they were telling about you. One item was that Pastor Russell did not believe in Jesus Christ!

The minister came for the books and I told him we do not deny Jesus Christ; that "To us there is one God and one Lord Jesus Christ" – two separate Persons; that it was he who was denying Jesus Christ, by the little book he had given my daughter. He asked me to explain and I showed him where it said, "Jesus is the God-man; He was truly man and also truly God;" they deny Him by calling Him God.

I told him God was from everlasting to everlasting and had no beginning; that Jesus was "the First-born of every creature," that He said, "My Father is greater than I." The minister replied, "That is a mystery to me and we ought to leave anything we don't understand to God." But I replied that God directs us to "Search the Scriptures" and find out if the things told us are true.

Five months ago my husband moved us to a farm four miles from the city, telling me if I attended any more of those meetings against his wishes I would be sorry; but I would not stop attending. He refused me the horse; recently I took the horse and he ran away with me, breaking my foot. I am now recovering and long to go again to the meetings. What would you advise me to do? My husband wants me to go to church with him.

Your Sister in the Truth,

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## **INTERESTING LETTERS**

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### **THE BLESSING OF A FAMILY ALTAR**

DEAR BROTHER: –

I desire to write you how much I appreciate your work of love for us and tell you of the blessing we are receiving from our family altar.

As soon as breakfast is over we read the Vow, the Morning Resolve, the prayer meeting topic and comment, then the text for the day with comment. Then either Brother White or myself leads in prayer, followed by all joining in "the Lord's Prayer;" then we sing the Bethel hymn.

We have two daughters, of thirteen and eight years, respectively. We do not insist on their being present at the early

service, though they almost always are present, and are as quiet as if they were in regular church service.

It is of the special service that I have with the children alone that I wish to tell you: Just before schooltime I have them take their turn to have their hair combed. One sits on a low stool before me, and while I comb her hair she reads a Bible story while the other listens, and then the other one does the same. Then we three kneel and I put them into the Hands of the Lord, asking His blessing upon them and their teachers for the day. Then I kiss them good bye and send them to school.

This is proving a great blessing to us all and I am surprised at the amount of reading they accomplish. The older girl has read the PHOTO-DRAMA SCENARIO through twice. I think she will be ready for the first volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES soon. She also voluntarily goes several squares from home every week to read to a dear old Sister who is nearly blind. She generally reads your sermons from the newspapers and never forgets to go, always asking me, "Mama, what shall I read to Sister H.?"

The other daughter reads more simple stories and talks about the pictures. We certainly have blessed times together. I am not telling this boastfully, but it has come to my mind several times to write it to you, thinking it might be of comfort to you as well as to us.

I often wonder if parents realize the blessing they miss in not instructing their children in the Scriptures and I have found this a most helpful way. On Sunday mornings we go over the Sunday School lesson with them. I certainly wish to thank you, and praise the dear Lord that He is using you to help us understand His Word.

Yours in His love and service,

MRS. F. D. WHITE. – *Ohio.*

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## **CONDITIONS NOW VERY DIFFERENT**

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

Greetings in our dear Redeemer's name. Knowing your time to be filled with the Lord's work, I hesitate to infringe upon it; but I would appreciate it very much if you would make it plainer as to what you see to be the Lord's will in regard to the Lord's poor. Some time ago there was an article in THE WATCH TOWER regarding friends availing themselves of public institutions. Would that mean that you considered it the Lord's will for an Ecclesia to permit an aged sister to go to the poor-farm [where she has no fellowship] when by just a little self-denial some, if not all, could put by a little each week to care for her?

In the early Church they brought what they had, and no one went without. I would like if you would either answer my letter personally or put an answer in the TOWER.

The STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES have been a great blessing to me, and I know that God will continue to bless and strengthen you.

Your sister in Him,

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## **EDITOR'S REPLY**

Conditions have greatly changed since the times of our Lord and the Apostles. The teachings of Jesus have greatly broadened the world's sympathies. Now it is considered a disgrace for any community to fail to make provisions for its poor, its aged, its imbecile, its sick. The provision made for these through public taxation is much better than the provision that was made in the early



Church, and much better than the majority of people have at the present time. Visit your own County Homes for the poor, etc. See how clean they are, how reasonably comfortable, and how, in a majority of cases, the inmates are better off than they were at their own homes. Applying the Golden Rule to himself on this subject, the Editor would be quite willing to go to such public institutions as he knows of, if the Lord's providence so arranged. He would prefer so to do rather than be burdensome to others.

The child of God, on the alert to serve His King, would probably find many more opportunities for service in a public institution than if he were shut up in a private home. Who knows but that there are hungry hearts needing the bread of life, and that the Lord's providence might guide some of us to the feeding of these, and thus furnish opportunities for their blessing through association with them?

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**A WORD TO THE WISE**

MY DEAR PASTOR: –

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you! About two years ago this past summer, there appeared an article in THE WATCH TOWER, the title of which was something like this: "Proper Decorum in the Church of God."\* It seemed to me at that time to be just what was needed. Since then large numbers have been added to all the classes and a reprinting of this same article might prove very helpful.

\*The article will be found elsewhere in the columns of this issue.

My reason for thinking so is this: At a Sunday afternoon service of a large class of Associated Bible Students which I attended recently, the confusion before the service was so great that the leader, in order to make himself heard in announcing the first

hymn, had to resort to the undignified means of pounding the Hymnal with his fist.

After the service, a newly interested lady was overheard to remark – "Yes; I enjoyed the *sermon* very much; but the people here have not the reverence for God that they have in the churches. There, they enter quietly, and wait on the Lord until the service begins, and thus prepare themselves for the blessing of the hour." One cannot help but deeply regret that thoughtlessness on the part of the friends is permitted to cast a reflection on the cause they love to serve.

It always has seemed difficult for the dear friends to realize that the same reverence and dignity should characterize their words and actions in a *Hall* as in a Church building.

In writing this, dear Brother, I am voicing the sentiments which I have heard expressed by others; and I trust it will [R5813 : page 367] not seem like a complaint, but instead, a service in behalf of the cause we all love so well. With warmest love in the Lord,

Yours in His service,

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## **TIME ENOUGH FOR PROTEST**

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

In reading and rereading the first article of Sept. 1st TOWER; i.e. "Christian Duty and the War," we have been greatly helped and encouraged. We especially wish to speak of the last part of the article and the advice given therein. We gladly accept and appreciate this advice. You seem to have said just what was in our hearts and minds.

We are desirous, however, of asking a further question. Would you think it proper and wise to place before the government at this time, before they become involved in the war, our determination in case they do? "Be it known unto thee, O King, we will not serve thy (War) gods." Would not a perfectly frank and honest position on our part require such action? As for instance, the sending of a resolution to this effect signed by all who wished, to President Wilson and the public press.

Greatly thanking you for your continued labors of love and praying the Master's richest blessing upon you and the glorious work you are doing, we remain,

Yours faithfully in the Anointed, \_\_\_\_\_.

We advise that no protest be made until there is some demand; and then only a quiet, modest, declaration of our consciences on the subject.

EDITOR.

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**"LIFT UP YOUR HEADS AND REJOICE!"**

*Question.* – Should the Lord's people be grieved, or should they rejoice, over this present great international war?

*Answer.* – Our Master said, "When ye see these things begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads and rejoice!" We cannot think that the Lord meant that we should rejoice in the sufferings of those engaged in this war, nor in the sufferings of the wives and children, the bereaved ones, nor in the loss of those whose homes are destroyed, nor in the sorrows of millions here who are without homes in consequence of the war. We cannot think that he meant this! He says that we are to sympathize with those who are in trouble, to rejoice with those who rejoice and to weep with those who weep. The reason why we rejoice is that we know what the

outcome of this trouble upon the nations will be, as foreshown in the Scriptures. We rejoice not in the sorrows, the difficulties, not in the war, and what is to follow in its wake, but in the fact that all these things prefigure the end of the reign of Sin and Death and the inauguration of Messiah's glorious Empire!

