

Washington, D.C., Sept. 19, 1905.

Dear Mother:--

In starting this letter I desire to first get at my true status. I want to say at the start that I can see, O so plainly, how I have been making a mistake of ~~quite~~ quite a portion of my work. From time to time new plans would come to me, and it would seem that if they were undertaken they would aid the work so much. I thought I could start them, and then turn them over to some one who would carry them out and my time be not taken up with them. So one thing after another was undertaken, and then I found that those I had relied upon did not take the matter off my hands as I had supposed they would, and I had my hands full of business, and worry, and care, and disappointment, and financial trouble. I did not do this viciously, for I thought it would all come out right, and I could soon put away all the care of it and give my time to the work the Lord had marked out. When I really came to myself I found I was all tied up with every-day cares and difficulties, until I was absolutely unfitted for the real work I was to do. I am so thankful that the Lord was so in earnest with me that he followed me with disasters, and then sent me the Testimony which fully opened my eyes, and showed me the real necessity of turning squarely about.

At the present time not a wheel is turning in my office or on my ~~my~~ premises. I shall never again take it up myself. If it ever moves again it will be because some one else takes it entirely. There is not a hand in my office connected with any manufacturing business.

I have been seeking the Lord very earnestly in regard to myself. I see the mistakes I have made, and the sins I have committed. The search light of Heaven has been turned on, and I can now see, but for a time I was blind. God has forgiven my sins, and I have the evidence that pardon has been written off against my transgressions.

Now, mother, I feel that I have the right to say what follows:--I was wrong. The wrongs were pointed out to me. They showed against me. I accepted the instruction and reproof, and OBEYED THE INSTRUCTION. I have confessed my sins and mistakes before God and man. I have a right to say that I am, therefore, no longer wrong in these respects, but am RIGHT. On these things I feel to speak positively, and I AM NOW RIGHT WITH GOD. The reproofs that have come ARE NO MORE AGAINST ME. For if I have turned it is not possible for them to be against me.

But regrets,--how is it possible for me not to be filled with regrets. I see what I have missed. I see how I have made my life hard and Emma's life hard. I see how I have not been able to do what the Lord wants me to do because I was so filled with my own way that I could not follow His way. I ~~no need~~ need to be in financial difficulty, but could be free financially, and have an income to do most anything I desire to do in forwarding the work.

Cast down,--I was for a time so discouraged when I fully saw the difficulties that I have made for myself. But this feeling is passing, for I have taken it all to the Lord, and am simply relying on Him to open ways before me as I try to go forward in lines He has marked out. The history of Israel as recorded in Kings and Chronicles has been a great help to me. No matter how bad they were, if they returned to the Lord, He always turned their captivity, and worked for them marvelously. I know that the Lord has accepted my work in the past, and as I return to Him he will return to me. He is returning. He has returned.

Now, mother, I have just prayed to God for help to finish this letter as it should be, and I believe He will help me.

When I have been in difficulty and deep distress in regard to the work with which I am connected, I have come to you. You know that at such times I have not come to you with a long story. You know that I have each time related simple facts to you, and then said to you, "If the Lord has given you any light on this, or if He shall give it, I want to know it, so that I may know how to act." My visits have not been with a tale of woe to pour into your ear. neither have I endeavored to influence you. But as the people came to the prophets of old, I came to you to know "What the Lord had to say."

Now, mother, I feel that I have a right to this. If it is ever decided that I have not this right, I shall never again pass your door. I claim the same right that is taken by W.C., by Eld. Daniells, and by others who feel that they need special counsel in times of pressure. W.C. has access to you continually. In the past Eld. Daniells has approached you ten times where I have once.

I am not saying this in the way of reproach or faultfinding, but to establish a principle, and to be sure where I stand.

For nearly eleven years I have been connected with a work that tried men's souls. Dangers and difficulties surrounded me on every side. You know that through it all there were very few, beside yourself that stood by me. I had to rely on you. With scarcely a soul in any leading position in the denomination that was favorable, I was driven to seek you, and use your words as the only help at hand to prevent being overwhelmed. In the work I DID TRY to follow the instructions you would send, and I did bring to the people the words of comfort, and encouragement and instruction in regard to the work. THESE THINGS FROM YOU WERE ALL THE BACKING I HAD. I HAD TO USE THEM OR SINK. Now, why should I not use them? What were they given for? Why have not I the right to use them as well as Eld. Daniells and others when they are in a close place and need some backing. When the Washington work was in danger, you came clear from California to back them up.

Now, I am not saying that I was right in all I did. I know I was not. But in the colored work I feel that Lord led me and prevented me from making mistakes that would seriously jeopardize the work. And now we have magnificent results to show for it. God has blessed it wonderfully. I am sorry that in my own affairs I have not been as wise. I have done myself serious injuries. And while I have injured myself, I have also seriously injured my power to do my work in the cause as the Lord has wanted me to do it.

Now, mother, in my great need, last winter, I went to California to see you, and get my bearings in regard to the work. I felt that I needed help. I believed that if I came to you I would get help. And I came to you in simplicity. I did not come to you with any out and dried line of propositions that I wanted you to sanction and approve. You know that I had little to say except to seek advice in regard to some important matters. This I did. In some of them I got relief, and in

Mother -3-

some you were not prepared to speak. But one thing I will say, In no case did I urge my affairs upon you. I endeavored to respect you as a prophet of God.

When I left your place I felt that I stood on solid ground. Upon several important points you had spoken clearly, and I felt that I had enough to act upon, and felt safe to leave the rest for the Lord to work out in His own good time.

But I now stand grief stricken and appalled at the course of denial and repudiation maintained by you and W.C. with regard to the two main considerations discussed and decided when I was there. They are as follows:--

W.C. denies the statements that I have been making in regarding the experience we had, and the decision arrived at in regard to the colored sanitarium and training school. But I will not go into that now.

The other matter can better be understood by quoting a few lines from a letter received by W.O. Palmer from Eld. Bollman:--"One thing I do not quite understand; W.C. urged me to see his mother. I told him I had nothing to present. He said she would like to see me. I went to the Glendale Sanitarium to see her. She did all the talking, I merely answered a few questions. One statement she made voluntarily, and even went out of the way to make it. It was that all her counsel to J.E. about the boat was in print. She said, "I have had no private conversation with Edson about the boat. Everything I have said on the subject is in print." I cannot understand it." C.P. Bollman.

Now, mother, if this were all true, what was your object in saying it to Eld. Bollman? What could be the object unless it was to discredit what I had said in regard to the matter? But if you felt that I did not represent the matter correctly, why not write to me about it? You have had plenty of time. I am not trying to avoid any errors or mistakes I have made. I am acknowledging them before those with whom I have labored, To our leading brethren, and to our church. I have gone beyond all reasonable limit to let it be known that I have been wrong in my methods and plans of work. If you had written it to me I would have responded to it quickly, and in a proper spirit. I have no spirit of rebellion regarding my wrongs.

Now, mother, you certainly have forgotten the conversations you had with me when I was in California last. I wrote you what this was, and I certainly thought you would remember it when I wrote it to you. Now, mother, I do not think you said a word with the intention of injuring me. You simply forgot what you said I did say. Try to think of it that way, or, better, try to remember it as I shall recall it to you. One day you seemed to be much exercised in regard to the boat, I suppose it was because I had told you that I intended to sell it. Three times at least you brought the subject up yourself. Each time you said, "Do not sell the boat." Twice you gave reasons why you did not want me to sell it.

First, You said there was a work for it to do along the rivers where the people could not be reached in other ways. Since then I have seen a letter from you Bro. Bollman in which you state that when at Vicksburg it was presented to you that there was a work yet to be done by the boat. There was yet a mission before it.

Second, At another time you gave a reason why the boat should not

Mother -4-

be said, for if it was sold those who had been my enemies in the work, and who had ridiculed the whole boat plan, and had talked against it, and me as connected with it, would triumph. You said, "They will say it was all a scheme of J.E.White's. He used it a while and then sold it, and that proves that it was just a wild scheme." You carried the idea to me that if I sold the boat it would injure my influence.

Now, mother, this is a correct of "private conversations" that you DID have with me in regard to this boat matter. And now, as God is my witness, before whose judgment seat I expect to stand, THIS STATEMENT IS CORRECT. I would be untrue to you, to myself, and to the work in which I am engaged if I did not promptly correct this wrong impression. I ask you to try to remember the circumstances, for I know they are ~~now~~ recorded in the books of heaven just according to the statements I have here made.

Now, mother, I have no thought that you desire to tear me down, and destroy my influence, and my word, but you can readily see how such a thing as this would react on me. I am helpless in view of such statements from you. I ask, mother, if I have not enough difficulties to meet, and a strong enough tide to stem without such a blow as this coming from you? I shall be glad to receive from you ANY STATEMENTS you may feel are necessary to set me right. And if from them I find I have done wrong, or have misquoted you, I will send to the ends of the earth but what I will correct it. I am determined to be right with my God. But I now insist that Testimonies, or communications, or denials of any statements I have made shall come to me FIRST. I promise that they shall have attention from me. Then if I become rebellious and refuse to heed, carry it to our people in authority and let them deal with me.

During the recent trials I have been meeting I have at times felt that I MUST go to California, and have a good, heart to heart talk with you, and get everything straightened out. But then it comes over me to-night, What is the use? When I am with mother, and talk over the colored work with her, the real situation comes to her mind plainly, and she advises me what to do, and as she sees difficulties she promises to take up the matter, and see to it that some of the obstacles to the advancement of the work are taken out of the way. At such times mother seems encouraged to LIFT in the work where it will be felt. But when I am gone another influence comes in. I shall not dwell upon details, but the result is easy to trace. Promises and plans are forgotten, and so far as my last visit is concerned, it would be much better if I had not gone to you at all. When I met you at the Gen. Conf. at Washington I scarcely mentioned our colored work to you. There is certainly nothing to regret there.

For years we have been promised something from you in print that would set our people right as to the work we have been doing. It was promised as a part of a Testimony volume. For more than two years this publication has been delayed, BUT IT HAS NOT BEEN DELAYED THROUGH ANY FAILURE ON MY PART. What is right about this now I cannot say, but it seems to me that the time has passed when it would be best to bring it out. Whether it may be best to do so at some time in the future I am not prepared to say. But as matters now stand it would be painful for me to see it in print, and I cannot see how it would do good under existing conditions.

Now, again, for a long time you have urged me to come into harmony

Mother -5-

with the brethren in positions of responsibility. This I have endeavored to do. At the Gen.Conf. at Washington I tried to take a course that would win them. I think I succeeded quite well. Then, at a later period they passed a set of resolutions recommending a line of action in the work of our Society. I presented it to the Society, and we felt that the propositions were reasonable in all essential matters. A few, I really believe it was only one, was impossible at present, but that was arranged so it was satisfactory. We accepted the propositions and wrote to them. I received a very cordial letter from Eld. Spicer. I have also received cordial letters from Prescott and Evans. We were rejoiced to think that we were able to take a position that was acceptable to the Gen.Conf. people, and have no reason to think that anything out of harmony existed.

And now, just as we have brought the Society into touch with the Gen Conf, and with The SIME S.U.C, as Eld. Butler's frequent articles show, then the trouble begins on the Pacific Coast. Mother, I cannot understand it. Is it possible that however we may do there is no peace or help for our work for the colored people?

Personally I have made some mistakes, but I have seen my wrong, have suffered for it, have put it away. Then why should the work be given the set-back it is getting from your own house and offices? I must at this time speak plainly. Have you turned your back upon me and the work with which I am connected. Now, I tell you, mother, a few words of comfort and friendship will be appreciated, I assure you.

My visit here to Washington has been an important one. I have made contracts of great advantage to me, to The Review Office, and to the Nashville office. To me it means the ability to settle obligations that were coming upon me. Some have lost their head and felt that nothing but bankruptcy was before me. But such is not the case. When I turned to the Lord, confessed my sins, and turned square about in the things where I was wrong, I claimed of the Lord that He fulfill to me the promises He made to ancient Israel. When they had been wicked and turned to Him He returned to them, and blessed them, and restored them. The Lord is fulfilling this to me. I know that I have a hard struggle before me because of the mistakes I have made, but God will help me in them, and will bring me out. He is doing it.

Emma is still with her mother in Colorado. I do not think her mother will live long. As for myself, I shall be somewhat footloose as a result of closing up all manufacturing interests. I think I will try to go North with Emma every summer, and I know that will be much better for both of us.

Our colored tent meeting in Nashville is doing well for the people who are conducting it. I must help in that when I return. The chapel on the Morning Star is now ready for meetings, and as soon as I return shall begin a series of Sunday meetings and a Sunday School on the boat. Something should be done for the people about our own home. This is for the white people. We have some plans for the colored work which are not far enough along to present yet, but which we hope will build it up as nothing before has done.

Now, mother, I ask you to write me a good letter. I want to hear from you.

In love, your son,

J. E. WHITE.