



The
William Booth
Collection

THE GENERAL'S LETTERS

ARE YOU SATISFIED?

From the "War Cry," December 31st, 1884.

COMRADES,

Some people are always complaining. Nothing is right with them. The weather is wrong, trade is wrong, their employers are wrong, their family is wrong - everything is wrong about them. Reader, do you belong to this class? If so, can we find out the reason. Instead of the trade and the family and the neighbours and other people and things, that you complain of so much as being wrong, perhaps after all it is yourself.

It is true that sinners' hearts are very hard, and that is the reason they are not converted; and some of your comrades are cold, and that is the reason why you don't get better meetings; and your officers may not be so clever and devoted as they might be, and that is the reason why you don't get more sinners into the Barracks, and therefore things are not so bright and prosperous at your Corps as they might be. But is there not another reason, which you have not mentioned, for your discomfort and the want of success in your Corps, namely that you are not right yourself? May there not be something terribly wanting in your own personal religion? Let me talk to you a little about it. Deal faithfully with your own soul. Tell the truth about your own heart to your own self, as fully as you would of anybody else's.

My first question is, Are you satisfied with your own religion? Other people can only make guesses about you. No matter how frequently they may be with you, they can still only infer what you really are from what you do. When people talk to you about your soul, about your state from the platform, or in the Holiness Meeting, you can put them off, tell them that you are right. I have no doubt you hope you will be when death or judgment finds you. Tell the truth now. Are you really and truly satisfied with your state? Can you look up to God while you read this and say, "The effect produced on me and in me by my Father's love and my Saviour's sacrifice, and the operations of the Holy Ghost and the teachings of the Bible and the labours of my comrades and the wonderful opportunities that I enjoy, is such that it gives me satisfaction?" "The past may have been very imperfect and very unfaithful, it awes me with solemnity when I look back on it, but the present condition of my heart gives me satisfaction! "



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More particularly:

1. Are you satisfied with what you realize of God in your own heart? You know the teachings of the Bible, and the experience of holy men and women justify us in expecting that God will talk to our hearts, tell of the forgiveness of sins, commune with us by the way, comfort us in sorrow, and satisfy us with the revelation of His love. Are you satisfied with what you have, and what God reveals to you?

2. Are you satisfied with what you personally know of the cleansing Blood of Jesus Christ? You believe that that Blood was shed to remove the memory and the power and the impurity of sin. Are you satisfied with its effects upon your own heart? Does the Holy Ghost witness with your soul as distinctly as you believe He is willing to do, that the end of Christ's sufferings and death has been answered in you? Have you the measure of Holiness which means deliverance from sin, which you believe is your privilege? As you look in upon your heart just now, are you satisfied that you have reached just the condition which God wants you to reach, and therefore which pleases Him, as He looks down upon you from Heaven?

3. Are you satisfied with the way in which you discharge the duties of life as a husband, wife, father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, master, servant – as the case may be? Out of these relationships in which you stand to those about you numerous duties arise; when you look them over, are you satisfied with the way in which you discharge them?

4. Are you satisfied with what you are doing for the Salvation of the world? You believe that people who live in sin in the daily and hourly transgression of the commandments of God are in danger every moment of the damnation of hell. You say so in your speeches and songs and prayers and conversation. You say so in the religion you profess. The Bible, which claims to be the Word of God, and in which you believe, says so most plainly.

Now this belief demands that you should act according to it. Do you? Nay, is your action such as gives you satisfaction? When you think of the poor people who are damned already; who have gone to hell from your own doors, or your own neighbourhood, are you satisfied? Can



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you rest feeling satisfied that you did what you could for them? When you go to bed at night and think of the thousands around you who will go to sleep on the brink of the bottomless pit, are you satisfied that you have done during that day what you could to wake them up? When you think how Jesus Christ's love and sacrifice are despised, do you get rest by thinking that you are doing what you can with your time and money and family and ability to bring the foul rebellion of the devil to an end, and bring the rebellious world to His feet?

Is it as well with you as it was when you were first converted? Doubtless you know a great deal more than you did then; can sing better, pray more fluently, and talk far more cleverly; know a great deal more of your Bible, and have learnt all about the plans and reasons and methods of The Salvation Army. You are better off in your circumstances, more respected by your neighbours, have acquired a large circle of Salvationist friends, who love you and think you a blessed holy saint. But are you satisfied in your own heart that your love for God and your devotion to the Salvation of men is equal to what it was the week after you were converted? Nay, are you satisfied that it is what it ought to be? I don't ask you, Is God satisfied or the angels satisfied, or the Corps satisfied, with your religion – but are you satisfied yourself?

If not, you know the remedy. Go clown before God, repent, confess, consecrate, believe, be filled and go forth to conquer.

WILLIAM BOOTH.