

Biography of Pastor Russell

CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL, known the world over as Pastor Russell, author, lecturer and minister of the Gospel, was born at Pittsburgh, Pa., February 16, 1852; died October 31, 1916. He was the son of Joseph L. and Eliza Birney Russell, both of Scotch-Irish lineage. He was educated in the common schools and under private tutors. Author of "OBJECT AND MANNER OF OUR LORD'S RETURN," "FOOD FOR THINKING CHRISTIANS," "TABERNACLE SHADOWS," "THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES," "THE TIME IS AT HAND," "THY KINGDOM COME," "BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON," "THE ATONEMENT," "THE NEW CREATION," "WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES ABOUT HELL," "SPIRITISM," "OLD THEOLOGY TRACTS," "THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION," et cetera, et cetera.

Pastor Russell was married in 1879 to Maria Frances Ackley. No children blessed this union. Seventeen years later they disagreed about the management of his journal; and a separation followed.

Reared under the influence of Christian parents, at an early age he became interested in theology, united himself with the Congregational church, and became active in local mission work. The doctrine of eternal torment of all mankind except the few elect became so abhorrent to him that at the age of seventeen he was a skeptic. He said: "A God that would use his power to create human beings whom he foreknew and predestinated should be eternally tormented, could be neither wise, just nor loving. His standard would be lower than that of many men." He continued to believe, however,

Biography

in the existence of God, but was not willing to accept the commonly understood teachings as God's revelation of himself to man. He turned his attention to the investigation of heathen religions, only to find each and all of these unsatisfactory.

HIS TEACHINGS

Naturally of a reverential mind, desiring to worship and serve the true God, Pastor Russell reasoned: "All the creeds of Christendom claim to be founded on the Bible; and these are conflicting. Is it possible that the Bible has been misrepresented? It may not teach the terrible doctrine of eternal torment." Turning again to the Bible he determined to make a careful, systematic study of it without reference to creeds of men. As a result the remainder of his life was wholly devoted to teaching the Bible, writing and publishing religious books and papers, lecturing and proclaiming the message of Messiah's kingdom. He was the greatest religious teacher since St. Paul, and did more than any other man of modern times to establish the faith of the people in the Scriptures.

He was not the founder of a new religion, and never made such claim. He revived the great truths taught by Jesus and the apostles, and turned the light of the twentieth century upon these teachings. He made no claim of a special revelation from God, but held that it was God's due time for the Bible to be understood; and that, being fully consecrated to the Lord and to his service, he was permitted to understand it. Because he devoted himself to the development of the fruits and graces of the holy spirit, the promise of the Lord was fulfilled in him: "For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Peter 1:5-8.

Biography

He clearly taught, and proved his teachings by the citation of Scriptural authority, that man does not possess an immortal soul, that he is a soul and is mortal; that the wages of sin is death, not eternal torment; that death came upon man as the just penalty for the violation of God's Law; that death means the destruction of man; that God, in his goodness, has provided the great ransom-price whereby man may be delivered from the bondage of sin and death; that God's beloved Son, Jesus, became a man, grew to manhood's estate, was put to death as a man and raised again from the dead a spirit-being, possessing the divine nature; that by his death and resurrection Christ Jesus provided and produced the ransom-price for man's deliverance and restoration; that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man; that every man in God's due time must, therefore, have a fair trial for life, and to this end there shall be a resurrection of all the dead; that Jesus Christ ascended into heaven and must come the second time; that the period of time elapsing between the first and the second coming of the Lord is devoted to the election of the members of the body of Christ, taken from amongst men; that the requirements for election to that exalted position are, full faith in the shed blood of Jesus as the ransom-price, a full consecration to do the Father's will, and a faithful continuance in obedience to the Father's will even unto death; that all who thus are consecrated and begotten of the holy spirit and are overcomers shall have part in the chief resurrection, and be exalted to positions in the heavenly kingdom of God and participate with Christ Jesus in his Millennial reign for the blessing of all the families of the earth; that during the thousand-year reign of Christ all of the dead shall be awakened, and given a fair and impartial trial for life or death; that under said reign the wilfully disobedient

Biography

shall be everlastingly destroyed, while those obedient to the righteous rule of Christ shall be fully restored to human perfection of body, mind and character; that during this Millennial reign the earth shall be brought to a state of Edenic Paradise and made fit as a place habitable for perfect man; that man, fully restored to perfection, will inhabit the beautified earth in all the ages to come.

HIS WORK

Seeing that God has such a wonderful plan for the blessing of mankind, Pastor Russell gave all his power and energy to making known these great truths to the world. He never took a vacation; he worked until the day of his death.

Like other Christians he was looking for the second coming of Christ. Between 1872-6 he discovered that the Scriptures clearly teach that the Lord would not return in a body of flesh, but would return as a spirit being, invisible to human eyes, and that his second presence was due in the autumn of 1874. This led to the publishing of a booklet entitled, "The Object and Manner of Our Lord's Return," which had a phenomenal circulation.

Many students of the Bible throughout the United States and Canada responded to the information derived from that book, and his correspondence became voluminous. Realizing the necessity of keeping the truth before the minds of those who had begun to investigate, in 1879 he began the publication of *THE WATCH TOWER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE*, and was its sole editor to the time of his death. This journal is issued semi-monthly; it never publishes advertisements, but is devoted exclusively to religious topics. Among the English-speaking people in the United States, Canada and Great Britain, its semi-monthly circulation is 45,000 copies. It is also published in Armenian, Dan-

Biography

Norwegian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish, Roumanian, Slovak, Spanish, Swedish and Ukrainian, reaching a large number of subscribers in America and Europe.

Pastor Russell was President of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY from its organization in 1884 until his death. He was also President of the PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION, organized in 1909, and the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION, incorporated in London, in 1913, both of the latter corporations being adjuncts to the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY. Through these religious corporations, as well as by word of mouth, he promulgated the Gospel of Messiah's kingdom. He was the author of the following publications, issued between the years 1881 and 1914, each having phenomenal circulation, as given below:

FOOD FOR THINKING CHRISTIANS.....	1,450,000
TABERNACLE SHADOWS.....	1,000,000
DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES.....	5,532,500
THE TIME IS AT HAND.....	1,878,500
THY KINGDOM COME.....	1,792,500
BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON.....	714,000
THE ATONEMENT.....	663,500
THE NEW CREATION.....	646,500
WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES ABOUT HELL?	3,000,000

He was also the author of WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES ABOUT SPIRITISM, OLD THEOLOGY TRACTS, et cetera, et cetera. He was the author of the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, which prior to his death had been exhibited to more than nine million persons. He wrote and published the SCENARIO of the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, which has had a very wide circulation. His publications were translated into thirty-five dif-

Biography

ferent languages. At the same time he was pastor of more than 1,200 congregations of Bible Students, in different parts of the world. These he visited and taught as often as possible.

Pastor Russell organized and conducted a Lecture Bureau which constantly employed seventy Bible lecturers, who traveled and delivered lectures on the Scriptures. He organized and managed an auxiliary lecture bureau of seven hundred men who gave a portion of their time to lecturing on Bible teachings. Each year he wrote practically all of the copy for the BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY, the annual distribution of which amounted to approximately fifty million copies.

His weekly sermons were handled by a newspaper syndicate. More than 2,000 newspapers, with a combined circulation of fifteen million readers, at one time published his discourses. All told, more than 4,000 newspapers published these sermons.

The Continent, a publication whose editor often opposed Pastor Russell, once published the following significant statement concerning him:

“His writings are said to have greater newspaper circulation every week than those of any other living man; a greater, doubtless, than the combined circulation of the writings of all the priests and preachers in North America; greater even than the work of Arthur Brisbane, Norman Hapgood, George Horace Lorimer, Dr. Frank Crane, Frederick Haskins, and a dozen other of the best known editors and syndicate writers put together.”

HARVEST WORK

Pastor Russell adhered closely to the teachings of the Scriptures. He believed and taught that we are living in the time of the second presence of our Lord, and that this presence dates from 1874; that since that time we have been living in the “time of the end,” the “end of

the age," during which the Lord has been conducting his great harvest work; that, in harmony with the Lord's own statement, this harvest work is separating true Christians, designated as "wheat," from merely professing Christians, designated as "tares," and gathering the true saints into the kingdom of the Lord. It is here interesting to note that Jesus said: "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he shall make him ruler over all his goods." Thousands of the readers of Pastor Russell's writings believe that he filled the office of "that faithful and wise servant," and that his great work was giving to the household of faith meat in due season. His modesty and humility precluded him from openly claiming this title, but he admitted as much in private conversation. For a more detailed account of his work, reference is made to **THE WATCH TOWER** of June 1st, 1916.

In 1910 Pastor Russell visited Palestine and Russia. He there delivered to thousands of orthodox Jews lectures on the regathering of the Jews to Palestine. In 1911 he was one of a committee of seven who made a journey around the world and especially examined into the conditions of missionary work in Japan, China, Korea, and India. On the same occasion he again visited the Jews in Palestine and Galatia, explaining to them that the prophecies teach that the Jews at an early date will again be established in Palestine. On his return to America he was given a great ovation at the New York City Hippodrome by thousands of Jews, his discourse on this occasion being published by Hebrew papers both in America and in Europe.

During the forty-two years of Pastor Russell's Christian work he never directly or indirectly solicited money.

Biography

No collection was ever taken at any meeting addressed by him or by any of his associates. He had faith that the Lord would supply sufficient money to carry on his work; that the work was the Lord's and not man's. The fact that voluntary contributions were liberally made by many persons throughout the world proved that his conclusions were correct.

He devoted his private fortune entirely to the cause to which he gave his life. He received the nominal sum of \$11.00 per month for his personal expenses. He died, leaving no estate whatsoever.

Thus closed the career of a most remarkable man. He was loved most by those who knew him best.

Pastor Russell's Will and Testament

Having at various times during past years donated to the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY all of my personal possessions except a small personal bank account of approximately two hundred dollars, in the Exchange National Bank of Pittsburgh, which will properly be paid over to my wife if she survives me, I have merely love and Christian good wishes to leave to all of the dear members of the Bible House Family, and all other dear colaborers in the harvest work, yea, for all of the household of faith in every place who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus as their Redeemer.

However, in view of the fact that in donating the journal, ZION'S WATCH TOWER, the OLD THEOLOGY QUARTERLY and the copyrights of the MILLENNIAL DAWN SCRIPTURE STUDIES Books and various other booklets, hymn-books, etc., to the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, I did so with the explicit understanding that I should have full control of all the interests of these publications during my life time, and

that after my decease they should be conducted according to my wishes. I now herewith set forth the said wishes—my will respecting the same—as follows:

AN EDITORIAL COMMITTEE OF FIVE

I direct that the entire editorial charge of ZION'S WATCH TOWER shall be in the hands of a committee of five brethren, whom I exhort to great carefulness and fidelity to the truth. All articles appearing in the columns of ZION'S WATCH TOWER shall have the unqualified approval of at least three of the committee of five, and I urge that if any matter approved by three be known or supposed to be contrary to the views of one or both of the other members of the committee, such articles shall be held over for thought, prayer and discussion for three months before being published—that so far as possible the unity of the faith and the bonds of peace may be maintained in the editorial management of the journal.

The names of the Editorial Committee (with such changes as may from time to time occur) shall all be published in each number of the journal. But it shall not in any manner be indicated by whom the various articles appearing in the journal are written. It will be sufficient that the fact be recognized that the articles are approved by the majority of the committee.

As the SOCIETY is already pledged to me that it will publish no other periodicals, it shall also be required that the Editorial Committee shall write for or be connected with no other publications in any manner or degree. My object in these requirements is to safeguard the committee and the journal from any spirit of ambition or pride or headship, and that the truth may be recognized and appreciated for its own worth, and that the Lord may more particularly be recognized as the Head of the church and the Fountain of truth.

Biography

Copies of my Sunday discourses published in the daily newspapers covering a period of several years have been preserved and may be used as editorial matter for THE WATCH TOWER or not, as the committee may think best, but my name shall not be attached nor any indication whatever given respecting the authorship.

Those named below as members of the Editorial Committee (subject to their acceptance) are supposed by me to be thoroughly loyal to the doctrines of the Scriptures, especially so to the doctrine of the Ransom—that there is no acceptance with God and no salvation to eternal life except through faith in Christ and obedience to his Word and its spirit. If any of the designated ones shall at any time find themselves out of harmony with this provision they will be violating their consciences and hence committing sin if they continue to remain members of this Editorial Committee, knowing that so to do would be contrary to the spirit and intention of this provision.

The Editorial Committee is self-perpetuating, in that should one of these members die or resign, it will be the duty of the remainder to elect his successor, that the journal may never have an issue without a full Editorial Committee of five. I enjoin upon the committee named great caution in respect to the election of others to their number—that purity of life, clearness in the truth, zeal for God, love for the brethren and faithfulness to the Redeemer shall be prominent characteristics of the one elected. In addition to the five named for the committee I have named five others from whom I prefer that selection should be made for any vacancies in the Editorial Committee, before going outside for a general selection, unless in the interim, between the making of this will and the time of my death, something should occur which would seem to indicate these as less desirable or others more desirable for filling the vacancies

mentioned. The names of the Editorial Committee are as follows:

WILLIAM E. PAGE,
WILLIAM E. VAN AMBURGH,
HENRY CLAY ROCKWELL,
E. W. BRENNISON,
F. H. ROBISON.

The names of the five whom I suggest as possibly amongst the most suitable from which to fill the vacancies in the Editorial Committee are as follows: A. E. Burgess, Robert Hirsh, Isaac Hoskins, Geo. H. Fisher (Scranton), J. F. Rutherford, Dr. John Edgar.

The following announcement shall appear in each issue of THE WATCH TOWER, followed by the names of the Editorial Committee:

ZION'S WATCH TOWER EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

This journal is published under the supervision of an Editorial Committee, at least three of whom must have read and have approved as TRUTH each and every article appearing in these columns. The names of the Committee now serving are: (names to follow.)

As for compensation, I think it wise to maintain the SOCIETY'S course of the past in respect to salaries: that none be paid; that merely reasonable expenses be allowed to these who serve the SOCIETY or its work in any manner. In harmony with the course of the SOCIETY, I suggest that the provision for the Editorial Committee, or the three that shall be actively engaged, shall consist of not more than a provision for their food and shelter and ten dollars per month, with such a moderate allowance for wife or children or others dependent upon them for support as the SOCIETY'S Board of Directors shall consider proper just, reasonable—that no provision be made for the laying up of money.

Biography

I desire that the OLD THEOLOGY QUARTERLY continue to appear as at present, so far as the opportunities for distribution and the laws of the land will permit, and that its issues shall consist of reprints from the old issues of THE WATCH TOWER or extracts from my discourses, but that no name shall appear in connection with the matter unless the same is required by law.

It is my wish that the same rules apply to the German, the French, the Italian, the Danish, and the Swedish or any other foreign publications controlled or supported by the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY.

I will that a copy of this paper be sent to each one whose name has appeared above as of the Editorial Committee or the list from whom others of that committee may be chosen to fill vacancies and also to each member of the Board of Directors of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY. This shall be done immediately on my death being reported, so that within a week, if possible, the persons named as of the Editorial Committee may be heard from, their communications being addressed to the Vice-President of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, whoever may be holding that office at that time. The answers of those appointed shall be to the point, indicating their acceptance or rejection of the provisions and terms specified. A reasonable time shall be allowed for any one mentioned who may be absent from the city or from the country. Meantime the remainder of the committee of at least three shall proceed to act in their capacity as editors. It shall be the duty of the officers of the SOCIETY to provide the necessary arrangements for these members of the Editorial Committee and to assist them in their duties in every possible manner, in compliance with the engagements made with me bearing on this matter.

I have already donated to the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY all my voting shares therein, putting the same in the hands of five trustees, as follows: Sr. E. Louise Hamilton, Sr. Almeta M. Nation Robison, Sr. J. G. Herr, Sr. C. Tomlins, Sr. Alice G. James.

These trustees shall serve for life. In event of deaths or resignations successors shall be chosen by the WATCH TOWER SOCIETY Directors and Editorial Committee and the remaining trustees after prayer for divine guidance.

I now provide for the impeachment and dismissal from the Editorial Committee of any member thereof found to be unworthy the position by reason of either doctrinal or moral laches, as follows:

At least three of the Board must unite in bringing the impeachment charges, and the Board of Judgment in the matter shall consist of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY'S trustees and the five trustees controlling my voting shares and the Editorial Committee, excepting the accused. Of these sixteen members at least thirteen must favor the impeachment and dismissal in order to effect the same.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUNERAL

I desire to be buried in the plot of ground owned by our Society, in the Rosemont United Cemetery, and all the details of arrangements respecting the funeral service I leave in the care of my sister, Mrs. M. M. Land, and her daughters, Alice and May, or such of them as may survive me, with the assistance and advice and coöperation of the brethren, as they may request the same. Instead of an ordinary funeral discourse, I request that they arrange to have a number of the brethren, accustomed to public speaking, make a few remarks each, that the service be very simple and inexpensive and that it be conducted in the Bible House Chapel or any other place that may be considered equally appropriate.

Biography

MY LEGACY OF LOVE

To the dear "Bethel" family collectively and individually I leave my best wishes, in hoping for them of the Lord his blessing, which maketh rich and addeth no sorrow. The same I extend in a still broader sweep to all the family of the Lord in every place, especially to those rejoicing in the harvest truth. I entreat you all that you continue to progress and to grow in grace, in knowledge, and above all in love, the great fruit of the spirit in its various diversified forms. I exhort to meekness, not only with the world, but with one another; to patience with one another and with all men, to gentleness with all, to brotherly kindness, to godliness, to purity. I remind you that all these things are necessary for us, necessary that we may attain the promised kingdom; and that the Apostle has assured us that if we do these things we shall never fail, but that "so an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

It is my wish that this, my will and testament, be published in the issue of THE WATCH TOWER following my death.

My hope for myself, as for all the dear Israel of God, is that soon we shall meet to part no more, in the first resurrection, in the Master's presence, where there is fulness of joy forevermore. We shall be satisfied when we awake in his likeness—

"Changed from glory unto glory."

(Signed)

CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL

PUBLISHED AND DECLARED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE WITNESSES WHOSE NAMES ARE ATTACHED:

MAE F. LAND,

M. ALMETA NATION,

LAURA M. WHITEHOUSE.

DONE AT ALLEGHENY, PA., JUNE TWENTY-NINE, NINETEEN HUNDRED AND SEVEN.