

CASA BAUTISTA DE PUBLICACIONES

El Atalaya Bautista
El Expositor Bíblico
Revista Juvenil
Nuestros Niños

519-521 N. CAMPBELL ST.
P. O. Box 667

El Defensor Evangélico
Tarjetas y Rollos Ilustrativos
de la Escuela Dominical
Libros y folletos.

EL PASO, TEXAS, E. U. A.

Oct. 2nd, 1922

Rev. T. B. Ray, D.D.,
Richmond, Va.

Dear Dr. Ray:

I have not written you as I had intended. I was sick when I sent you the message. Had been for several days, in fact, almost ever since I returned from my trip, I was having trouble with me heart like I had last year, and off and on through the intervening time. I set myself to thinking about the whole matter and thought better to wait till I heard from you before writing.

In the first place, the more I thought of it the more I was convinced--and still am--that El Paso is the place for this plant. The reasons I advanced in my report are, as I see them, unanswerable. The other places are not suitable for the work. This is the place, and I am thoroughly convinced of that.

And had you wired me to come on or written me to that effect, I would have declined unless there had been some better reason than myself--MYSELF, I say, for that seems to be the whole trouble. And this House as a mere plaything can be managed by some one else just as well, or even better than by myself.

I communicated with Dr. Gates about the matter of locating the plant in San Antonio, and he is not even interested. That might cause, as you suggest, trouble with Home Board folks, and as we are located properly to keep them in fair humor, we should stay located as we are, I think. We are on good terms with them now and want to stay that way.

The whole Mexican constituency--which is a very small part of our folks--is agreed that El Paso is the logical place for the plant. I am sure they would not be at all pleased with the plant at New Orleans, so far away. And San Antonio is quite a ways from the border, so this is certainly the place for it. Laredo has no facilities. San Antonio has, but is too far from the border. We do lots of our business with our Mexican folks through the Juarez Post Office. In San Antonio this would be impossible.

The Argentina house is doing quite a lot of work, but they do a mighty shoddy kind of work. Their literature is good enough, but the work is far from being what it ought to be. We are doing the very best kind of work now. Then they have failed to pay us promptly. They owed us more than \$1000 when I came back on this job, of which I have by much coaxing gotten a part. They owe us now \$700. We ought to have it. This is the way perhaps they can print so many books, leave us with the real mission work to do--Sunday School papers and other propaganda publications. However we are perfectly willing for them to do all they can.



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EL PASO, TEXAS, E. U. A.

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Willing is not the word to use--glad they are doing it, is better, and expresses my feeling in the matter. They buy a lot of books from us as well as all their Sunday School literature. We make it to them at less than cost to us, of course, I mean the Sunday School literature, but it is the same as others have to pay.

Now, let me say that I must get out of this work as soon as possible. I mean get away from here, and so it will be impossible for me to direct the work--the whole business--from a distance. I can do it for a while. But my days are numbered already as the slave of this Publishing House. I said SLAVE, and I mean it. That is just what my life is at this time--a slavery.

Here is what I have planned while you find some one to take this work. I am going next week to our Convention at Nuevo Laredo. Will return and get things in shape and get away to Missouri the first of November, where I am going to hold a couple of meetings. Then I will return and get things in shape again, and get away for the spring months which I can not possibly think of trying to spend here. Maybe I could then go on through the summer, but I must have relief. I am not saying this just for effect. The doctors told me to leave last December. I went to Dallas and told Dr. Love. I came back and battled away, being away part of the time. Got through the summer months right well. But am back now to the very worst.

I will give up mission work I think, so do your best to find a man to take my place. I am going to tell you frankly that I am going to Mo. for a couple of meetings in order to try to get hold of enough money to pay Mrs. Davis' hospital and operation expense, as our salary is not sufficient to meet expenses here. We are trying to keep Frank in college, and I know I can do it away from here but can not do it here in El Paso.

I can not write. Then too I have so much to do that I just have no time to write more. I wonder if this is what you want to know. It is my best and more mature judgment.

I wonder if you think of not allowing us the amount of equipment fund I asked for in my last. If you cut off everything else we have asked for, don't cut that out and the running expense fund. If you do then we are greatly handicapped. But of course, you will do what you can and think best.

I must get relief some way. Only by moving to a lower altitude can I get it permanently.

May the Lord lead and bless you.

Yours fraternally,

J. E. Davis

P.S. I send you my check for \$100 our offering on 75 Million Campaign Fund for 1922-23. I am reporting it to First Baptist Church here.

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EL PASO, TEXAS,

Oct. 3rd, 1922

Dear Brother Ray:

After writing the inclosed letter, it occurs to me to add a little more. I make a plea for the two items of appropriation: the equipment fund of \$3500 and the regular running expense fund. If you can not see your way yet to give us the money for the house, I will rent a place and move a lot of our stuff into it. This of course will be temporary. We will have to do it. Our rent now is \$110 per month. We will have to add \$20 more perhaps in order to get a place near here that will do.

But unless you give us this we are going to be handicapped with our work. You know we have a pay roll of about \$275 per week. Our paper bill this month will be over \$700 and all this difference we are gathering through different channels, such as work for the public, subscriptions and sale of books.

I think that if only conditions would get a little better we could in another year certainly cut down the amount we ask for running expenses. But consider that we pay the rent out of this, salaries of two editorial workers, office help and the force that runs the shop.

I wish I could get your ear. Certainly there is a great future before this house, despite the fact that we have many drawbacks. Yet you will see that in the next five years our publications will double their circulation, if not in less time. In the time I have had the plant, I mean the Sunday School literature, it has increased from about 1500 circulation to over 20,000. How is that for a real live story?

Well, I am leaving it with you. Don't turn us down. There is a way out, and if ever there was a time when literature was needed it is now.

May the Lord lead and bless us all in His work.

Faternally yours,

J. E. Davis

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EL PASO, TEXAS,

Oct. 3rd, 1922

Dear Brother Ray:

I wrote you yesterday, but I was so nervous and tired that I do not think I made myself altogether intelligible especially about one matter.

I said that I was a slave. This is not the first time you have heard that. I think I told you that when I was going down the time before this. But I do not want you to think that I do not like this work, and am not interested in it in every way possible. I only wish that such a division of the work could be made that I could get out from under this load of detail work, which I am not fit for any more, so that I could give myself to editorial work. This is what I need to do, and then in case I could not live here all the time, why then I could get away and hold a meeting or an Institute, or a teacher training school, etc. But this is almost impossible as matters are arranged at present.

I do not know whether you know it or not, but it is true just the same that I write the most of El Expositor Biblico and have to read lots of proof and these details sap the very energy that I need for other things. As long as I am responsible for the running of this House, it will be the same old story. I am just cut out that way, and can not do otherwise. I have been told many and many a time to take it easy. Just as well tell my good old mother to take it easy. I take after her in many respects.

Could there not be some way worked out in the near future for some active man with quite a bit of business sense to come and take charge of the Business Management, leaving me at the head of the Editorial end of the matter, with nothing to look after but that end of the work? If such a way out of the tangle could be found, it might set things right without a complete overturning of the business.

While you are looking out for this man, I will try to stick. I will not be here all the time, as I told you in my letter yesterday, but can with the help of Mrs. D. see that it all goes forward properly. Mr. Boone is a good man for the place he holds but is not a successful business man; never has been. Then his knowledge of Spanish is limited and very naturally always will be, beginning as late in life as he has.

Trusting that all this may help you to see just what we need here, and wishing you the richest blessings, I am

As ever, sincerely yours

J. E. Davis

October 6, 1922

Rev. J. E. Davis,
Box 667,
El Paso, Texas.

Dear Davis:-

I am glad to get your letter of October 2nd.

You have played in character exactly. You have taken an unselfish view of the situation in connection with the publishing house, and have shown your willingness to make whatever sacrifice that is necessary for the good of this cause.

Your solution is rather drastic, and it makes me tremble to realize that on account of the many conditions we have to face, we may be compelled to follow the line of action you put forth. I find it almost impossible to bring myself to the idea that you should give up work in connection with the publishing house. I must confess that you have put the case just as strongly as it can be put. Considerations for keeping the publishing house in El Paso are well nigh unanswerable. I really think we have got to think it through with the idea of El Paso being the location.

But does this necessarily contemplate the elimination of J. E. Davis from the work of the publishing house? Is there not a great work that can be done by you and have you located at another place where the altitude would not be so trying on your heart? I know that if you were to keep your connection with the publishing house, and at the same time be located somewhere else, it would be necessary for us to have a business manager to look after the affairs of the house in El Paso. The business manager can't be absent from the office very long as you very well know.

So let's not entertain the idea for the present of your eliminating yourself from the work of the publishing house. Let's take more time and think through the thing to the place where we feel quite certain that we have the proper decision.

If you are to give up work with the publishing house, then the question would arise immediately as to your successor. Who is he? And where is he? He would have to be a man of experience. He would have to know the Spanish language, and have several qualities that you possess to a rare degree, and altogether the combination is not easy to find. We will have to take sometime to work it out. I do not believe the Board will be in a position to make any final disposition of the matter at its October meeting. In the meantime, I know that you along with us, will be much in prayer.

Thank you for the check for \$100.00 from the 75 Million Campaign. I realize the reason you have for sending it in. I wish a great many more people felt as you do. I pray that the blessing of God may be on you.

We are going to do our very best in the matter of appropriations. I hope you will not be disappointed. We may not be able to give you all you have requested, but we will go the limit.

You have my heart.

Cordially yours,

R/F

October, 9, 1922

Rev. J. E. Davis,
P. O. 667,
El Paso, Texas.

Dear Davis:-

Thank you for your two letters of October 3rd.

You answered in a way come of the questions I asked in a letter recently written you. I wish you would go farther a little more definitely in answer to that letter, and make suggestions as to how you think the plans you outline can be carried out.

Have you anybody to suggest that might take over the business end of the publishing house, and leave you to write the notes for the Expositor, and do other things in a literary way for the house.

Where would you live if such an arrangement as this could be made?

I can't now predict just what the appropriation will be for the house, but you may be certain we are thinking sympathetically and will go to the very last limit in doing for you all we can.

We are praying that God may guide us.

Cordially yours,

R/F

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EL PASO, TEXAS, Oct. 11, 1922

Dr. T. B. Roy,
Richmond, Va

Dear Roy:

I am on my way to Convention. A wreck is delaying us. May not get there on time now. But will get the most of it, I am sure.

I write to ask you about James M. Justice. Is there any reason why the Board might not appoint him to take this management, if I can get him convinced? My mind has been turned toward him involuntarily the past few days. He knows nothing about it. I want to hear from you first, and then while I am in K.C. next month I can take the matter up with him.

I wish I had you for a couple of hours, and I would convince you of a few things, especially if my heart were acting crazy at the time.

I am going to hold this together if it costs my life, but we must get things in shape as soon as possible. For a year now I have been disregarding the counsel of my physician, and am failing fast. I of course am going to get away from El Paso soon for six weeks, as I wrote you, but I will have to live some

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EL PASO, TEXAS.

Other place and keep them out in an
editorial way. I have a plan in
mind, but the first thing is to hear from
you about Justice.

May the Lord lead us all.

Yours

J. E. Davis

October 14, 1922

Rev. J. E. Davis,
P. O. Box, 667,
El Paso, Texas.

Dear Davis:-

Thank you for your letter of October 11th.

I hope you will not say anything to J. M. Justice or even suggest his name to anyone else until I write you further. I have grave doubts in my mind about the advisability of the step you suggest, but I will take steps to get more definite information. It may perhaps take three months to get the information I think we ought to have before we make a final decision, and I think it better to keep this matter perfectly quiet until we have more definite information along the course that you suggest.

I hope you have had a fine meeting of the Convention.

Cordially yours,

R/F

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EL PASO, TEXAS,

Oct. 17th, 1922

Dr. T. D. Ray,
Richmond, Va.

Dear Ray:

Your three letters of the 6th, 9th and 14th respectively, are here before me. Two of them were here when I returned from the Convention and the other came just now. I was waiting for this last one so I could answer you more intelligently. So here goes.

I think I made myself understood that I do not want to give up my relation with this House. Of course, I shall be more than happy the day I can pass over a lot of the work to others. I have been doing that right along, adding one after another worker, and yet the thing grows so fast that it is impossible to get it all adjusted and then keep it that way.

You know what this work is--its importance and now its far-reaching influence is a mighty power in the whole land. I wish you could see the new demands that are coming from Spain and other countries. Oh, it is great to be in this splendid work. I do not want to get out of it.

I see you take me seriously. I am glad of that too. It really was time I think. But I realize that it will take time to work this all out. If I could feel as well all the time as I feel today, why the matter would be solved already, but this is after two days of intense suffering and taking medicine every four hours.

Now, I have things arranged temporarily. Mrs. Davis is feeling so much better that she is helping us out now and lifting a heavy burden from my shoulders. She will continue while I am away, and then while I am away later on, for I am already planning to be away in the Spring, as I can not endure the winds and dust here during the Spring months. I will go somewhere to write my lessons for the rest of the year during that period. Then I can get by during the Summer. So it seems that we can hold things together for about a year if Mrs. Davis can stand up under the work that will fall on her. And she is in better health since her operation than she has been in for many years, thank God.

So let us look about for the man that should take this work and make no mistake. You know how the wrong man would stop the work, or slow it down at least. So for the present we will cast around and the Lord surely will lead us to the man He wants here as Business Manager.

I will say nothing about Justice in connection with this work. That is the very reason I wrote you first. I will say nothing till you write me further.

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EL PASO, TEXAS,

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The men I know who might be available are not live wires. There is Clark, but it would die under his management. There is Porter, but the same thing would happen. Both are good men, but not for this place. Boone is a fine man but not a success as a business man. Well, there is a man, where? I do not know yet, but the Lord knows.

As to a place to live, I would suggest Kansas City or San Antonio. It is a pity we are so far from any low altitude. I think I will get a pass on the Rock Island. I get half fare now when I want to travel on it, and I think if I should live there in connection with this work, I could persuade old Bro. Allan to come across. No danger of getting anything of that kind in San Antonio however, as passes are against the law of Texas. But that can be decided later on.

Great enthusiasm about my Revista Homilética plan. The folks are tickled to death, for they realize it is a fine way to get in touch with the rest of the denominations. I am receiving quite a lot of orders for subscriptions and the paper is not yet well advertised.

In fact, there never was a time like this for our work. It is good to have a place in it.

The Convention was good. I was there only two days. The churches report more than 700 baptisms for the year.

And I should say we have hit the right nail on the head along the Sunday School and B.Y.P.U. lines. And just in the nick of time for I think Rudd was planning something which he will likely not get to put over since we have headed him off. I did not know it till the other day. We have the Normal Manual printed and on sale at last. The B.Y.P.U. Manual will be ready soon and the Quarterly will begin with Jan. 1st.

Well, I can not tell you all as I have no time for it. If I had time it would be great to put this in our papers. I know we ought to do it. Why I have a story of persecutions in Mexico that have all taken place recently that would make the folks up the country interested in Mexico. I am going to get it out some way.

I trust this will be satisfactory. I can think of no other way just now. So we will wait till you have something to propose or till we find the man to propose.

May the Lord greatly bless you.

Faternally yours,

J. E. Davis

P.S. Send me a receipt for the \$100 to turn over to the First Church folks here so they will get the matter right. I don't care to have to make explanations but I tell you it is time some others made them.

J. E. D.

October 23, 1922

Rev. J. A. Davis,
Box 667,
El Paso, Texas.

Dear David:-

I am much obliged for your good letter of October 17th. I think you summed the matter up quite satisfactorily and sensibly. I see no other course opened to us but the one you have outlined in this letter, and I am particularly happy to realize that you can go ahead with it along the lines you indicate.

I feel that you are quite essential to the plan for the Publishing House now, and I hope that nothing will occur which will tend to eliminate you from that work. We must find a man. I am just as much convinced of that as you are, but I am quite happy to realize that we will be able to tide things over in order that we may have a chance to find the man the Lord has for us somewhere.

I think it would be a fine idea if the things you refer to in your letter could be written up for the papers. "A New Plant for Work in Mexico," would be a very interesting story, and the story about the persecutions to which you refer would, of course, command interest. I hope you can find time to get this material to the press.

Please find enclosed a receipt for \$100.00 which you can turn over to the Treasurer.

Our Board at its meeting last week appropriated \$15,000.00 for the work of the publishing house for next year. It wasn't quite as much as you asked for, but it was the best we could do under the circumstances. We cut down our appropriations as compared with last year to the extent of little more than half million dollars. We cut out of the estimates, that is the requests that came in for appropriations, the sum total of a little more than \$725,000. The Board felt that

J A D -2-

under the present strain it had to be exceedingly cautious. We cut some of the missions very much more severely than we cut Mexico. I am hoping that within another year matters will get so staplized that we will be able to take hold with a stronger hand.

Blessings be on you.

Cordially yours,

R/F

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EL PASO, TEXAS, E. U. A.

Oct. 30th, 1922

Dr. T. B. Ray,
Richmond, Va.

Dear Ray:

Your good letter came Saturday. I was indeed glad to hear from you, and especially with reference to the appropriations for the coming year. Of course, I knew you would do your best for us, but I was not sure just what your best would be. I think we can get along with this. We will rent another house here close by and I will establish my office there and the rest of the house can be used for storage purposes. We will in this way make more room for us here in this place. In this way we can tide over till next year. Of course, conditions here are not what we should have, but that is true everywhere.

I certainly am thankful that you get the view-point from which I am compelled to see this whole matter. It will now be worked out. Of this I feel sure, and with relief in sight, I think I can get by some way. Mrs. Davis will help out all she is able and then some on top of that. She and Bro. Boone will keep this going while I am away this winter. I will just have to make myself scarce around here the larger part of this winter, but in this way we can make it till Spring when I will be able to be here I think the greater part of the time during the summer.

In the mean time we will try to find a place where we can live to advantage. And you will find the man. I will help in this all I can. Also will lay out the plans for the future of the work, and I feel sure that there will be plenty for me to keep busy at all the time. In fact there are a lot of things that I have been planning for years that I have not found time for, which I feel sure will materialize within a reasonable time after I get free from all these details.

Now, I am leaving for Mo. Friday of this week and will get a chance to look things over from various standpoints and you will hear from me in a more detailed way shortly.

Wishing you the richest blessings of the Lord, and asking an interest in your prayers, I am

Yours Fraternally,

J. E. Davis