

Questions From A Teenager!

"My Dad gets angry at me for reading books! I'm sure the ones I read aren't bad..."

From Shuly Bolivar, C. Amer.:
(Ed: Dear Shuly wrote this before her battle w/ lupus & all the lessons the Lord taught her thru it [see FN's 32&34] - Still a good lesson & warning to all!)

Dear Mo & Maria,

I'M WRITING TO YOU BECAUSE I'D LIKE TO KNOW SOMETHING. My first love has always been the Word & the Lord. Nothing will ever take its place for me. I've learned thru trial & error that a good book will entertain, maybe teach a moral or a lesson, but the Words of God regenerate, inspire & give you a greater sense to fulfill your self for the Lord. They give life.

BUT I HAVE A PROBLEM. I love reading books. Sincerely speaking. Not any book. I would never dream of reading philosophy etc. etc. In fact it just bores me stiff & it's so complicated & long-winded I feel like diving under the carpet.

I'VE ALWAYS LIKED COMMUNICATIONS, written & talked. I've kept a diary for 2 years & I've done mas o menos 10 chapters of "my book", really just a collection of humorous events that happen in our crazy household! (Can we have a copy? - Maria.)

I CHOSE ANY BOOK I READ WITH EXTREME CAUTION because I've discovered if I read a bad book, I get into a bad temper & it's not good for me. I think love of literature runs in both sides of my family. My grandfather has many published & unpublished works & poems in Spanish. My Mom's uncle has written a book too.

I'M HAVING A PROBLEM WITH MY DADDY. He went to Bible School & they stuffed him with theology & he hates it, & I don't blame him. But he gets angry with me for reading books. To oblige him I read

mostly Christian books like "The Robe", "The Hidden Rainbow" (which is about the effect a Bible had on a Yugoslavian village) etc. I've also read true stories like "The Diary of Anne Frank" & "Nina Koshertina". Even then he still gets angry. Maybe it's just that he gets very extremist over certain things.

I DON'T WANT YOU TO THINK I'M JUST BEING A "REBELLIOUS TEENAGER" in this case because I know I'm naughty & have to get told off tons, but I'm dead serious about this book trouble. The only way I learned to write English was thru reading good books.

I DON'T THINK I'M GOING TO GET CARRIED AWAY with education. Serving the Lord & helping the lost is number 1 in my being. I don't think the Lord would mind me reading information books. (If you have time for it, after the Word & your other necessary duties & lots of witnessing & living!) The times I haven't gotten into the Word first I feel bad & slink guiltily off to make amends.

I LIKE READING ABOUT PAST CENTURIES, like "Pilgrim's Progress", Charles Dickens & Shakespeare. I've learned so much about human relations & feelings from observations of other people. (Amen! But "do all to the glory of God" - 1 Cor. 10:31. Read "UR What U Read!" - & do your "Get Out!" - Love, - D.)

I'VE LEARNED TONS FROM CLASSICS & I dislike stupid little books that don't come near to scratching the surface of human emotions & how God deals with them. I don't know, I'm young & there's so much I want to learn. I'm sure the books I read (My Mum checks them out) aren't bad. ("The school education of our children should be able to be accomplished within

6 or 7 years at the very most, by the time they reach their teens. - And if they want to learn anything more they can read it on their own." No. 371:71, 73. "When I was filled with the Spirit, finally at the age of 19, I had no taste or desire to read anything but the Bible! I stopped reading everything else." No. 775:7.)

THE MOST INCONGRUOUS THING, tho', is that Daddy goes to cheap empty movies & gets mad when I read good books. (You've got a point there, but remember, books take a lot more time to read than movies do to watch. If you happen to hit a worthless movie you waste a lot less time than if you find you've read an uninspiring book.)

ANOTHER THING IS MY 11-YEAR-OLD SISTER. Finally she is beginning to read English & we're thankful to God she's trying, altho' it's hard for her. My Dad's mad at my Mum because she got hold of some simple good English books for her. (We don't have a TV). (Have you also tried the Letters? There are simple worthwhile books in existence, but difficult to find. Choose prayerfully!)

DEAR MO, I'M SORRY FOR TAKING YOUR TIME but this has been a pressing matter for quite a while. My sister loves the Word too, but she needs simple vocabulary books. I'm sure you'll understand. I really really love the Lord & He's FIRST but I do enjoy other stuff that's good. I'll certainly not read junk. As a practical virgo & a Christian I just don't see the point. (Don't let it take up too much of your time. Time's too short!) Please keep on sending the Letters, we pounce on them! My God ever keep & bless you. Lots & lots of love, your daughter in the Lord, Shuly B. (Has He given you the answer thru Lupus? - Love, - D.)

Praise Gets The Victory!

Beauty Emerges From Ashes! Precious Lessons Learned!

From Shuly Bolivar, age 16; Central America:

Dear Mo,
HOW ARE YOU? I'M WRITING TO SAY THAT I'M MUCH, MUCH BETTER! I went to the doc, after being 3 weeks on cortisone, & I changed from "barely being able to walk" to "almost normal". I'm thrilled to bits!

ALL THE PAIN & FRUSTRATION HAVE PASSED like a bad dream, & the lessons I've learned are the only thing left! The Lord has really answered prayer because with this disease everything they do on you is an experiment, because everyone is different. My parents said that my getting better was the best Christmas present they ever could have had - straight from Jesus!

I STILL HAVE TO AVOID THE SUN & to run around with an umbrella & will for the rest of my life. But I see the Lord's hand in this too. It is a constant reminder for me of the death-life factor in everything, making me more conscious to witness.

IT IS VERY HUMILIATING also, & that helps me have more boldness when witnessing. I have to use my umbrella, in spite of what people say, & I've noticed that I'm witnessing when otherwise I might have felt awkward, embarrassed or inhibited because I can do it in spite of what people say. I'm learning to go ahead anyway!

IT IS EASY FOR A YOUNG PERSON LIKE ME TO GET TRIPPED OFF - on friends, dancing, fads & the rest of the junk kids do. The Lord has very mercifully shut the temptation gate, because as I can never be normal



physically (swim in the sun, hike etc.), I can never be the same spiritually either. It reminds me of my responsibility toward God for them.

OF COURSE, EVERYTHING HAS A FUNNY SIDE. The wisecracks that used to make me mad & embarrassed now amuse me. The latest is: "You'll get sunstroke!" - Or no, even better, "Lend me the umbrella so I don't get wet!"

I TAKE MY UMBRELLA EVERYWHERE to get in the habit, & sometimes it turns out to be other people's thorn in the flesh as well as mine! - Like today when getting off the bus, I hooked a guy by the collar as he was trying to get on, dragging him half-strangling backwards, bottlenecking the entrance of the bus to the which 25 people were bee-lining to! Blissfully unconscious of the commotion, I kept on, realizing what was happening only when a guy yelled at the victim, "Watch out where they're taking you!"

MY APPETITE HAS INCREASED A LOT TOO, as someone remarked while I was eating a piece

of shortbread my Grandma gave me on the way to the bus. "Watch out you don't choke!" Maybe Latins (at least here) are over-communicative, but spaced-out we could probably beat them, like today.

I BALANCED MY PURSE & UMBRELLA ON A LEDGE to tie my shoe when during the middle of doing so they clattered onto my head! After solemnly apologizing to the thin air, I puzzled over the strange looks people gave me! Ha!

I'M DOING QUITE A LOT OF WITNESSING to my friends now. It's really inspiring! I'm going to quit school because the curriculum is very heavy & I'd have to dedicate too much time on worthless study (at least for the type of life I lead). Instead,

I'm taking courses in sewing, guitar, dancing, painting etc. I'm going to continue Russian too. Not only will I be learning useful things but I'll have a great opportunity to witness to my classmates. I know that if I did get my title (I lack one year) I'd lean too much on my mind & not on the Lord.

WHEN YOU'RE AS SICK AS I WAS, things sort of get in correct proportions. School, which used to be 2 inches from my nose, seems to have dwindled to an insignificant part of life, & souls have become much more important.

THRU IT ALL I NEVER DOUBTED that the Lord knew what He was doing, altho' sometimes it certainly didn't seem so! But now I'm realizing that that's what it took to show me certain things, not because I didn't want to learn & the Lord was chastising me, but you realize the height of the cliff more when you're on the top about to fall off than at the bottom. Thanks so much for your prayers. I'm praying for you! May God bless & keep you. Love, Shuly.

The Story Behind The Song!

How & why Martin Luther wrote "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God!"

(From "Living Stories of Famous Hymns" by Ernest K. Emurian.)

IN 1517 MARTIN LUTHER BOLDLY NAILED HIS 95 THESES to the Cathedral door in Wittenberg, Germany. Subsequently he publicly burned the Pope's order of his excommunication, translated the Bible into the local German language, wrote a flood of books, & restored singing of music by the whole congregation instead of just the choir.

BUT IN 1529 HE BECAME SEVERELY DISCOURAGED. "When I go to bed, the Devil is always waiting for me," he wrote. So he began ridding himself of his hellish adversary by preaching & singing to him; on some occasions it worked wonders!

"LIFE IS FOR ME A CONSTANT STRUGGLE FOR FAITH," he said. "Sometimes I have to meet the Devil head-on & clash openly with him; then again, at other times, I have to meet his challenge indirectly in order to vanquish my enemy."

BUT AT ONE TIME HIS DEPRESSION LINGERED for days on end & as he battled in the spirit out of the depths of his agony & despair he remembered the words Jesus cried from the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He reminded himself that the very cry of despair began with the words, "My God", an affirmation of faith.

HE HAD WRITTEN 3 RULES for shaking off sloth & despondency: Faith in Christ; Get mad; Win the love of a good woman. But his favourite medicine was music.

"THE DEVIL HATES MUSIC," he said, "because he cannot endure gaiety. Satan can



Luther posts his 95 Theses on the church door.

smirk but he cannot laugh; he can sneer but he cannot sing." So he would sing with his family, with his friends, & even when alone.

THIS MAN, WHO HAD GIVEN BACK THE BIBLE to his countrymen in their own tongue, had also restored the practice of congregational singing, writing hymns in his own language & composing tunes that he felt his people would love to sing. He made music once more the joy of the entire congregation rather than the sole duty of the choir, & gave it the spontaneity which has always characterized Christian hymnody at its best; it even allowed the women to sing with the others in public, a privilege that had been withheld from them for a thousand years.

PSALM 46 WAS A GREAT COMFORT to him, & he repeated the first verse over & over again, "God is our refuge & strength, a very present help in trouble". With these words burning inside his heart, he hurled his defiance at his enemies, & penned the account of his struggle in this majestic hymn:

A mighty fortress is our God,
A Bulwark never failing;
Our helper He, amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft & power are great
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right man on our side,
We should have perished long ago.

The Man of God's own choosing:
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth, His name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.

And tho' this world with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed,
His truth to triumph thru us:

The Prince of Darkness grim;
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly powers,
No thanks to them, abideth;
The Spirit & the gifts are ours,
Thru Him who with us sideth:
Let goods & kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still,
His kingdom is forever.

THE FOUR STANZAS WERE REMINDERS that God is the fortress of the soul; Christ the champion of the soul; & Satan, the enemy of the soul. But the ultimate victory will be God's whose "Kingdom is forever".

The Shepherdesses!

Latest news from one of the first "FF Homes" - FF Miracles & Lessons Learned!

From Beatriz, Sofia & the FF's in Spain:

AFTER A SERIES OF CHANGES & REORGANISATION in the last few months, we found ourselves to be only three girls, one of them pregnant. But the Lord is not limited by many or by few. After a fast day & communion, we went out with great boldness & faith that very same night to one of our favorite fishing spots where the elite of this city go.

UNTIL THEN WE'D BEEN FISHING MAINLY TRAVELERS & changing fishing spots every night, always a little afraid to be seen too often in one place. But down deep in our hearts, we all had the burden to reach this city & get to know this very closed circle of people who more or less dominate the social world here. These people had seemed to more or less have rejected us. We knew a few here & there, but never could actually say we'd "claimed the land".

SOFIA HAD A VISION THAT WE WERE LIKE "THE SHEPHERDESSES" to these people that were coming to eat out of our hands & listen to the Word, like a sheepfold. Well, since that eventful night everything seemed to change! - Everyone was attracted to us, saying hello & acting as if it was the first time they'd ever seen us. Even people we'd seen for years but never talked to, began to approach us & observe us intently.

THE LORD WAS TEACHING US SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT since all of a sudden with this circle of people we realised what delicate ground we were walking on. Altho' Spain is a free country & we can witness openly, we got such heavy checks

in the Spirit about going slowly, letting the people see us & get to know us little by little, arousing their curiosity & trusting in God's Spirit to do it so as not to scare them off. But the Lord is faithful!

THAT VERY FIRST NIGHT HE LED US TO TWO MEN who since then have proven to be key figures in our work, not only because they know everyone in town, but because they are both very precious & hungry sheep & not afraid to introduce us to their friends & let us enter their little circle.

AS WE BEGAN TO GO VERY OFTEN TO THIS PLACE & began to give the people the security of knowing where to find us when they want to, we all felt that the years we've spent fishing was only a preparation for this battle, as never before had we known what it meant to really wait on the Lord, watch & pray & let Him go before us & pave the way into their hearts.

THIS FISHING SPOT IS VERY SMALL & everything we do is observed by all. This makes it impossible to move around or be involved with many people on a very personal level. We've had to pick & choose, since so many are good friends with each other, & it would do more harm than good to create competition or bad feelings between them.

SO WE'VE CONCENTRATED ON 4 OR 5 SPECIAL FRIENDS who have since then introduced us to many more, some women & couples too, & we found that deep friendship & concern for them wins their hearts more than anything, as there is so much superficial sex & frivolous women around all the time.

ONE OF OUR SPECIAL

FRIENDS IS G., a young man who comes from an important family of nobility. He got saved with R. recently after a long & hard fight for his soul. Then there is Pepe, one of the first two friends. He's a very intelligent, quick-witted Aquarian who entertains everyone with his observations & jokes, a sort of "court jester" type. He loves us & is fascinated by the Spirit.

There is also F., a Cuban businessman, lonely & sensitive, who is there every night & introduced us to his best friend B., also from a noble family. He is a direct descendant from Christopher Columbus & is so love-starved & sick of his life of riches, bored & angry with the world. A., whose father is

a rabbi, of an orthodox Jewish family who have become hard-hearted capitalists, has fallen in love with the Spirit, altho' he still fights the Name of Jesus. He invited Sofia & R. out to dinner with a friend of his who turned out to be a very interesting & important man whom Sofia had met once a year ago & had been praying for ever since. He got saved that very night.

PTL! Plus, there are many more observing us constantly. BUT THE MOST FASCINATING & WONDERFUL THING ABOUT ALL THIS is that it's been all the Lord by His Spirit, since we could openly witness to so few. One by one they began to find out who we are, but after they already knew us, we saw how the Lord in His wisdom had let each one find out when he was ready to, not before.

OUR MISTAKES HAVE TAUGHT US SOME BITTER LESSONS, as every time one of us has done something without prayer or counsel, not having the patience to wait for the Lord's time, it's borne bad fruit. Well, we really feel like a "Gid-