

Mr. S. A. King
Concord, Ga.



Mrs. Norman F. Williamson
Gurton,
Ga.



Concord, Ga.
April 14, 1941.

My dear Mrs. Williamson,

Why in the world did you send me such a beautiful letter? You can not possibly want to hear from me again, yet you must have known I would have to answer some things you said. I was not expecting a letter, and the surprise of it nearly took my breath away. But you have a habit of doing surprising things.

Forgive me for using the typewriter. It is difficult for me to control a pen for a long letter, which this will probably be. When I was in Atlanta three weeks ago, Sammy let me have his typewriter, since he does most of his work at the hospital. It needs a new ribbon, and I am not familiar with it, but even so, I am sure it will be easier to read than my own writing. And if I am calling at too inconvenient a time, just put me aside for a while, but don't forget me entirely, for you must read what I have to say.

It is embarrassing to have to refer to certain things again, but I must make this clear. You asked me not to send you material gifts, to use them for myself. Unless my memory has failed, and it hasn't, I have sent you such things three times only, and only once was it directly from me. I am sure you remember how that first check came to me, and under no circumstances would I have used it for myself or family. The only regret I have is that you did not use it to better advantage. I could have, and so could you, but we did not know. I knew the story I told you about this last gift sounded fantastic, and am not surprised if you did not quite believe it, but it was true. The only regret I could have there was if it gave you pain. And the second gift, which really was from me, was, as I told you at the time, given in memory of the finest, most unselfish, most truly Christian person I have ever known. He had a great admiration as well as a deep sympathy for you, and if he knew what I did, and I hope he did know, I believe he approved. In that case I have no regrets, and I don't believe you have.

But I am afraid you are still thinking of those other things that have come to you from time to time. I can not understand why you ever thought I was the guilty person, especially as they came from various places. I know the first was from here, for I saw that one, I think, and the last must have been, since you thanked me for it. But I am sure Dr. Williamson told me there was one from Macon, one from Madison, or Monticello, and possibly one from a hotel in Atlanta. Not only are those cities out of my line of travel, but it happens I haven't a friend in either place, and as for the hotel, I was never in it in my life, and so far as I know, no member of my family or any of my friends have been there. I imagine Dr. Williamson first connected me with the thing because of my interest, and that I once said I thought I knew who it was sending them. And I was concerned when he told me C.R. had confessed to sending some of them, for it was out of keeping with my idea of Richter, and with what I thought I knew. When your letter came, and I realized for the first time that you thought I was the person, I decided to ask the one I suspected to make herself (if I am right) known to you, but the more I thought of it, the more unwise it seemed. It was so distinctly none of my business, and there was the possibility I might give offense, and cause the gifts to stop, which I would not want to happen because of me. And then,--- I could be mistaken, and I must admit, the coming from different places does not quite fit in. But anyway, dear lady, please stop thinking of me in connection with them. We can not always understand the motives back of peoples actions, but evidently there is a strong one back of these gifts, or they would not have kept coming. I have never understood why my friend was so determined that I should have that \$50.00, for I know she is alone, has very little, is older than I, and her future no more secure than mine. But what could I do after such a request?

Now to get away from the material, and to that which is more important. You made me very happy by what you said in regard to yourself, but I do not see what part I have had in your spiritual growth, except that I have been praying for you. It is you who have helped me, no one more, except possibly one person. I wish I could tell you of some very deep, rich experiences I have had recently, but it would take too much of your time. But I will tell you that early in March, I think I finally learned a lesson that God had been trying to teach me for two years, that all my help and strength were to come from Him, not from human friends. I was in real trouble, and nearly crazy with worry and pain, when in the middle of the night, I was led to give the whole thing over to the Lord, with the promise that whatever happened I would accept as His will for me. My worry was over, and in a few days, the business was settled satisfactorily, in a way that would have been impossible if I had not had that help. I have seldom been as happy as I was for days afterward, and the following Sunday, I had Mrs. Alexander sing for my special benefit, "Be Still, My Soul, The Lord is on Thy Side" to the beautiful Finlandia. You won't remember this, but once when you came to see me, you told me to take that verse "Be still, and know that I am God", just to meditate on that alone. I can do it now, as I could not then.

You may not have intended there to be any significance in the way you expressed yourself that you had grown spiritually "since leaving Concord." But I am sure that is true. I know the months spent here were probably the darkest in your life. I have a conviction that when you came here, we were being given an opportunity for doing something for the Master, exceeding anything we had ever done before. And we failed miserably, failed Him, you, and ourselves. Indifference, pride and greed came between us and the doing of His will. And we hurt terribly, cruelly, the ones He had sent to lead us. Can we ever undo the harm we have done? What is it going to take to bring us to our senses, to our knees?

You mentioned in each of your letters that Dr. Williamson was not well. That is a very real grief to me, for I have no doubt that we are largely responsible. I know so well from my own experience that illness and discouragement go hand in hand, and I would give anything to be able to lift him up as he did me so many times. It was he I was referring to when I said one other had possibly helped me more even than you, but he never knew it. I realize it

more as time goes on. As you knew at the time, he adopted me into his spiritual family, because my own pastor could not be here, but he was more than pastor, he was an understanding friend. It seems to me "brotherly-kindness" is the word to use in speaking of his service to me, and it was the more appreciated because my own brother, though kind, was not able to give the service most needed. Only you and Dr. Williamson, among all my friends, were able to do that. This past week, when I have living over again the same period of two years ago, it seems every little thing has come back to mind. So many, many things for which I am indebted to you and him., not only ~~only~~ personal services to me and the children, but other things, parts of sermons, certain poems and hymns, music, one particular talk to the Fidelis class which I would give a great deal to hear again, your prayers, and always, the books. I think he was inspired in his selection of what books to give me, for among the very first, before we knew Mr. King was ill, I was greatly impressed with a chapter that was later to become a source of comfort and strength. Was that accident, coincidence, --or preparation? When I think of all these things, I wonder that I let you go without telling you how I felt. No doubt others felt much as I did, for you helped many, but I am afraid they did I as have done, accepted and ^{book} taken for granted, all our blessings.

I did want to talk with you before you left, and tried several times, but you would not let me. You are so reserved yourself that it was hard for me to become very personal. You are afraid to let people know the real you, but I am very thankful that I was able a few times to penetrate below the surface reserve, and find what I did find- not only a great faith, courage, strength in spite of weakness, -- but sweetness as well.

Do you wonder why I am writing all this now? Well, here is why! I knew of course, much of what you were suffering here, but not even I dreamed it was so bad that you never wanted to hear from any one from this place again. And I was the nitwit who had to go and force hateful memories back on you. I am not altogether sorry, for you have now given me something that I did not have before, and that means so very much to me. But I want you to know definitely that I am not forcing myself on you again. I never did have any idea or thought, of any regular correspondence with you. I knew you had neither the time nor the inclination, and even if you had, there is nothing I could give you. But I was anxious to know how you were. I made you write to me the first time, but you wrote the second letter because you wanted to, and for that I thank you. You will not have to write again unless there comes another time when you want to "give yourself the pleasure of writing to" me. If that time does come, you already know you will be giving even more pleasure at this end of the line.

I am sending you one more gift, but you are not to consider it a material one. Two years ago, a copy of this book was given to me, and from the very first, I found it a great help spiritually. I have known of others who have been helped by it. I wanted to give you mine last fall, but unfortunately, it is now so full of my markings, I can not put it into the hands of other people. Some time ago, I found another copy, just for you. Dr. Williamson told me you did not have it. There is hardly a page in it that does not hold inspiration for me, though not until this year did I begin taking it day by day. No matter where you start, I want you first of all, to begin reading in December, and see how long it takes you to recognize yourself. Soon after I got it, in June, 1939, I found something over there, which I knew expressed, or rather explained you and your ability to help others, and I wrote your initials by the side of that day's reading. Some time later, weeks perhaps, while reading it again, I suddenly realized the same thing applied to Dr. Williamson, also. And now F. L. W. and N.F.W. are both concealed in that first letter of the upper left hand word. I wonder if you will recognize yourself? There are so many passages I would like to call your attention to, but you must find them for yourself. The same things that appeal to me so much may not be the ones that will attract you. And don't think me crazy for sending you a book, surrounded by books as you are. I am not writing anything in it, for possibly you may prefer to pass it on.

One thing more, dear friend. I have wondered many times why so much suffering, so much pain, has come to you two people, who have given so much to the Lord in service. Recently, the thought came to me that possibly all this was a preparation for a still larger service. Perhaps He has greater things in store for you. More than anyone I know, you are qualified for certain work, you typify the very finest in Christian ministry to me, and I believe that He still has something for you to do. And I will be praying always that everything will work out according to His will. And we do not doubt that, of course.

And I think I can promise definitely that never again will you have such an epistle as this inflicted upon you by me. And in closing, may I say, God bless you both, my dearest friends, always.

Flourance King.

Have you heard this? That Bessie Tipt has been chosen one of six outstanding colleges in the U.S., because of its religious training? I wonder how they are judged, and by whom?

