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Dear Friend:

Many people want to know how far a Christian should go in telling others about the truth of God.

Most people, when they are converted, make the mistake of trying to argue their friends, neighbors and relatives into conversion. But we must continually keep in mind that no one can force his religion on someone else. And no good thing is accomplished by trying to do so.

A Christian is known by his good works (Matt. 5:14-16)--not by "good arguments" or "constant preaching." Our righteous, confident, happy lives--the way we live and the customs we keep--will influence others far more than our words. God has commanded only His ministers to sound the trumpet in teaching people His ways (Isa. 58:1). Laymen--and ministers, as well--should concentrate on producing good deeds that will rightly influence others. Remember, a light is easily seen, but makes no sound (Matt. 5:14).

However, if someone wants to know the truth, and asks us in sincerity, then we should answer to the very best of our ability. ". . . be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (I Pet. 3:15). Trying to explain God's truth to people who are not ready to receive it is worse than useless! If we offend them we can have no good influence on them at all. The best way to bring another to conversion is to refrain from talking religion with that person and pray to God instead! You cannot argue or talk anyone into conversion!

We ourselves must obey God, but leave the lives of others in His hands. God will call all men to a true understanding in His own time and in His own way. Read John 6:44, 65 and I Timothy 2:4; then II Timothy 2:21-26, and you will better understand how to help others and to be patient until God opens their minds to understand what you know.

Lay members first ought, above all things, to be able to set a good example, be able to answer questions when asked, pray for others, pray for the ministry, and pay their tithes and offerings. That is their duty.

LETTER ANSWERING DEPARTMENT

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