

COLPORTEUR REPORT – PHOENIX – 1965

Time: March, April, May 1965 (2 ½ months)

VOLUMES: 67 First Volumes 1 Sixth Volumes
 1 Third Volume 2 Tabernacles
 6 Fifth Volumes

DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES:

One third of our time was spent doing follow-up work on names that were received last year from the colporteur work. Most of the people had read and appreciated the volume but didn't want more literature. Those who were further interested bought Third, Fifth, Sixth Volumes, and Tabernacles.

EXPERIENCES:

One lady claimed she had the first volume. With further questioning we learned she had received it from a woman at the end of the block. Several others remarked that a woman at the end of the street had told them about the "Truth." With rising hopes we came to the last trailer on the street...and much to our joy we found one of the Lord's consecrated people. The sister originally from the St. Louis class, had just moved here and was searching for the Bible Students' meeting. She was thrilled to have received our contact and was very eager to have her children get back to the children's Bible class. The whole Andrada family have been attending meetings. Her husband is Spanish and has offered to help in the follow-up work for the Spanish Frank and Ernest program just beginning. We rejoice in the Lord's overruling to call on this sister; and it makes us glad to know she was giving the Truth to many of her neighbors in the short time she lived in Phoenix.

A minister we called on felt we were destroying the faith of his congregation and was just about to go and hunt us out of "his territory." He also felt we were deceiving everyone when we denied being Jehovah's Witnesses because our book was written by Charles T. Russell and his cult book said Pastor Russell was the founder of the Jehovah Witnesses. When he found that we refused to bear arms in time of war, he accused us of being communists. He agreed that Babylon was the nominal church and the Lord's people are called to come out, yet he felt if anyone accepted Jesus, that was enough. By the Lord's grace and help the Truth shined brightly; we are very grateful that the Lord takes over... "I will be with thy mouth."

We had two interesting encounters with Jehovah Witnesses. One was with a very pleasant woman who has just recently begun to study with the Jehovah's Witnesses. We had a nice conversation with her. She agreed on many points, was quite open-minded, and took a First Volume saying she would be glad to read it. She praised a neighbor who had taught her the truth and said she hoped we would have a chance to talk with her. The next day we colporteurd the Jehovah's Witness who had been instrumental in bringing the first woman to her knowledge of truth. On arrival she was most pleasant, praised us for our door-to-door work, and asked various questions concerning our work. Up to this point we didn't know she was a Jehovah's Witness.

All of a sudden she reversed her strategy—telling us we were of the “evil servant class” and liable to second death unless we sought truth before the Battle of Armageddon. She also used answers we had given her regarding our work to show us how the Lord wasn’t dealing with us because we weren’t receiving like persecution, our membership wasn’t increasing, and all of our body didn’t go door-to-door.

Through this experience we gained a greater insight into Jehovah’s Witnessism—the points they dwell on, the Scriptures they use to prove their points, and also our weaknesses in proving some of our points in contrast. It gave us a greater zeal to “search the Scriptures” and prove “the hope within us.” We also appreciated our liberty in Christ—that we are not compelled by a spirit of fear, but of love in preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom.

We did a follow-up call on a woman who had purchased a First Volume last year. She agreed with us on several points: no hell-fire, no trinity, a kingdom on this earth, 144,000 in the little flock, etc., etc. We asked with what denomination she was affiliated and she said she didn’t attend a church but studied with two neighbors. During our call the neighbors came—dressed in long white robes and capes with the Star of David and a Cross on them. In discussion they told us they had been hearing God call their names; could preach the Bible without previous study; and had the gift of tongues and healing. Our main points of disagreement were that man was still under the law and that we were too young to have received the Truth from God—but perhaps someday we would receive it.

We appreciated this experience from the standpoint of seeing how subtly Satan works as a messenger of light and how careful we should be to shun any such darkness. We gained a greater appreciation and proper understanding of our knowledge of truth.

In a back call from news ads for the Grace of Jehovah booklet placed last year, we found a man who had the set of Studies in the Scriptures and a set of Reprints. He was well acquainted with the history and doctrines of the Bible Students and very desirous of being invited to any of our public meetings. We were surprised when he said he was a Mormon, but we are glad he knew so much of the truth. The Brethren plan to keep in contact with him.

We were greatly encouraged by a response from a trailer area to a tract left when no one was home. The woman had borrowed the First Volume from her sister across the street and had purchased it when we colporteured the area. The woman wanted one of her own. When we went to deliver the book and speak to her, the conversation was on the subjects in Volume Five. We suggested it to her and she purchased it. She attended no church and agreed much with us on the subject of the spirit.

After last years’ studies and a winter of correspondence, we returned to Phoenix and again called on the Garners. Experiences and time had undoubtedly hardened their heart against the doctrines of truth, for they were more firmly fixed than ever in their sectarian views. Though they were very friendly, we had few meetings because we could do no more than reiterate our beliefs.