

CONGRESS HALL (Open Letter First)

October 16, 1967

My dear Friend:

This is not a letter about the radio. God has done something good and great for us, something which was unexpected, and I want to share this joy with you, for I believe that your spirit, too, will respond.

Many times I have talked about the Christian Admiral at Cape May, N. J., and so many the last five years have come from every section of the United States and Canada. This has been a part of our total ministry for Christ, a fruit of it and a blessing to it. I felt that we needed a great Bible conference and patriotic center, which would make its special contribution and a place where we could come to rest for vacation. God gave us the finest in the country, the oldest seashore resort, right on the Atlantic Ocean in Cape May, N. J. What a God-send; what a benediction!

But we have grown and grown. We have 330 rooms in the Christian Admiral Hotel, but we could use twice that many; yes, twice that many today! When we outgrew our auditorium, Reformation Hall, God gave Mrs. Robert Lee Gardner the joy of building our great new auditorium. Now we need more space, and she has promised \$75,000 to expand it.

I was praying, asking God's leading; we were talking and planning; and one day, in the most unexpected manner, there came to me the owner of Congress Hall in Cape May, with another gentleman. This hotel is a most cherished historical memory and landmark. U. S. presidents have stayed there. It has columns, fifty of them, and each column mounts one of the fifty flags of the States. It is on the order of Mount Vernon. It occupies an entire city block and includes the beach with the riparian grant down to the lapping of the waves. The owner told me that he wanted to get out. He had other interests in Wildwood, N. J., nearby that he wanted to concentrate on, that he was ready to sell it. He had put \$750,000 in it himself, \$60,000 this past year; including \$15,000 in new paving for parking; a new deep red rug over the entire dining room, which occupies one end of the building, and the Victorian-fronted Foreign Marts, covering four or five entrances, at \$45,000.

Yes, we can use it; yes, we need it! One hundred rooms, all with two windows; all with private baths, modern, with both tubs and showers; air-conditioned; television in every room; large swimming pool; six shuffleboards; special children's section and play yard. The gentleman explained that he had made a decision to get out and that there were three men that were interested in buying, in fact, had offered to buy it from him. His price, he said, was not negotiable but that he would make agreeable terms. We gave all consideration; we gave it prayer; we decided it was of the Lord. We bought it.

It is just a little over a mile from the Christian Admiral. Now we will have three dining rooms; the green one, with its massive Doric columns; the blue one, the George Washington sky-view dining room; and now the red one in the colonial Congress Hall.

Moreover, it is in perfect condition. It doesn't need to have a "cleaning party". Some people wanted to know if we were going to move it! It is too big for anybody to move, and certainly none would want to disturb its picturesque setting. We shall use it with the Christian Admiral.

Beloved, only God does things like this. We knew nothing of this. The text I was using on the radio when this happened was Jeremiah 33:3, "Call upon me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."