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1118 North Alabama Street,  
Indianapolis, Indiana.

Jan. 21, 1909.

Mrs. Judge Tourgee,  
Mayville,

Chautauqua Co., N.Y.

Dear Mrs. Tourgee:-

I received this morning the enclosed letter and envelope relating to your husband's famous story "Mervale Eastman". I enclose a copy of my reply to the writer. I forward her letter and her own addressed envelope to you.

I am happy to tell you that Mrs. Vincent is slowly recovering. She has had a two year's siege of it. She has suffered acutely. Her patience is wonderful. The doctor gives me assurance that she will recover.

Remember me to your daughter and your sister and believe me ever,

Sincerely yours,

Dictated.

*John D. Bennett*

### Becoming A Church Member

1. In a sense, every child born into the world of whom it can be said "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven" is a member of the Church of Christ.
2. It is at least a candidate for, and with a right to Church membership.
3. This is preeminently true of children born into Christian households.
4. The right of children, even as infants, to such open recognition through baptism is generally acknowledged among Christian people. Children thus presented by their parents to the Church and recognized by the Church should be enrolled as candidates for full membership and encouraged early to make public profession of their faith in Christ.
5. As such candidates they are now to receive special attention and thoroughly to be trained by parents, pastors and other officers of the Church as probationers and catechumens in preparation for a more public and formal recognition.
6. This public profession having been made they are now members of the Church, fully initiated students and disciples of Christ. And it will be well for the Church and for the race if all Church members shall account themselves as life-long students of the Word of God, of His self-revelation in all history, science, literature and especially in the blessed mysteries of an earnest inner life of the spirit. And they never graduate. And Death itself is only a promotion from one department of the School of Eternity to another. And there The Lamb—the ever living Leader of souls shall "lead them by the fountains of living water"—streams of the wisdom and the life and the love of God, never ceasing in their flow, never failing through the cycles of Eternity.
7. What an unspeakable pity it is to be a member of the University of Eternity, to have such a matriculation as is guaranteed us on earth, and such immeasurable opportunities, and yet to be so neglectful of the great text books within our reach: The Oldest Testament in Nature, The Old Testament of the Hebrews, The New Testament of the Christians and The Newest Testaments of God's revelation in History, Biography, Literature, Science, Art, and Christian Psychology, the enlarged and inspired soul possessed by the spirit of God and enriched by a vital religious experience.
8. Becoming a Church member means so much that one wonders that so little is thought about it, so little is made of it. Let us open our eyes!
9. And still further, what a strange thing it is that so many of the pastors of the Church of the Eternal Life give so little attention to the making of students out of the children of our own households and out of the children and youth within our reach, and especially out of the adults, the grown-up and older and oldest people in the Church and community, these mature and experienced folk, men and women of thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty years of age. (A man of seventy or eighty is but a youth when we think of Eternity. And the experience of a long life only makes him a better student if you can only keep hope alive in his heart.)
10. Let us take a new start as Pastors who are divinely appointed Teachers, Professors, Presidents of the College we call the Church. Let us develop Church members into Students. Let us turn Homes into Recitation Rooms and Experiment Stations, in all of which we may increase the number of thinking, reading, Bible searching, praying, loving and living students of the University of the Life Eternal.
11. What we sometimes call "revivals" are useful if the life they revive be really LIFE, and not a throb of personal and often selfish solicitude and alarm followed by an assurance of "safety." Such "experience" of religion is not likely to last long or to yield much fruit in self-sacrificing service to the church and the great philanthropic, reformatory, social and spiritual ends for the promotion of which the church was established.
12. Let us commit to memory as ministers and as lay-members of the church two great passages of Holy Scripture. Let us preach a course of sermons on them. They may be found in Philipians IV: 4-8. Also Second Peter I: 1-8.