

# "A Red Letter Day"

The words in red in many Bibles are neither more nor less important than the words in black. Jesus said to the seventy: *"The one who listens to you listens to Me"* Luke 10:16. This was his position concerning every divinely inspired writer or speaker. While millions read the Bible daily, few know why some Bible publishers print the words of Christ in red. Mr. William Emmett Shelton, author, of Mogadore, Ohio, and Mr. Laurence S. Heely, Jr., former publisher of *Christian Herald Magazine*, say that the idea originated with Louis Klopsch, the first editor for the *Christian Herald*. The November, 1901, issue of that monthly ran a large advertisement offering a red letter Bible to the readers.

## Louis Klopsch

Mr. Klopsch was born March 7, 1852, in Germany. In 1853 his mother died. The next year his father, Osmar Klopsch, M. D., brought him to the United States. Louis studied journalism at what is now Columbia University. He graduated with high honors. He rose from stock boy to editor with religious publishers, and by about 1880 he was the owner-editor of the American edition of the *Christian Herald Magazine*.

He and his father worshiped at Brooklyn Temple, where T. DeWitt Talmadge was the minister. June 19, 1899, Dr. Klopsch was writing an editorial for the *Christian Herald* when his eyes fell on Luke 22:20 and the words:

*"This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood."*

Dr. Klopsch realized that these were the words of our Savior when he instituted the Lord's Supper. He reasoned that all blood was red. So, he asked himself, *"why not a red letter Bible with the red words to be those of our Lord?"* Dr. Talmadge, his preacher, encouraged him greatly by saying:

*"It could do no harm and it most certainly could do much good."*

## Red Letter in The Bible

Mr. Klopsch asked Bible scholars in America and Europe to submit passages they regarded as spoken by Christ while on earth. Some publishers have since expanded this feature to include in red all words spoken by Christ. The words of the ascended Christ are in red, as seen in Acts 9 and in the Revelation. In addition, words of Jesus which are quoted are also placed in red, as in Acts 11:16.

The first printing of a red letter Bible numbered sixty thousand copies. They were printed on presses owned by Dr. Klopsch. The edition sold quickly. Presses were run day and night to supply the demand. The King of Sweden sent a congratulatory cablegram. The telegram that thrilled publisher Klopsch the most, perhaps, was one from President Theodore Roosevelt. There followed a letter on White House stationery inviting him to dine with the chief executive. He accepted.

Dr. Klopsch died March 28, 1910, and was buried near Tonawanda, New York. The New York Tribune said:

*"He will not be easily replaced. He lived and died by his own motto: 'Do all the good you can for all the people you can'.*

*This, he truly did."*