

I Am Enthralled by the Luminous Figure of the Nazarene

World-renowned scientist Albert Einstein, 1879 – 1955 was born in Germany and educated in German schools. He was awarded the Nobel prize for physics in 1922. Einstein served as professor of mathematics and theoretical science at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton University, 1933 to 1945.

Following is part of an interview printed years ago in *The Saturday Evening Post*:*

“To what extent are you influenced by Christianity?”

“As a child, I received instruction both in the Bible and the Talmud. I am a Jew, but I am enthralled by the luminous figure of the Nazarene.”

“Have you read Emil Ludwig’s book on Jesus?”

“Emil Ludwig’s Jesus is shallow. Jesus is too colossal for the pen of phrasemongers, however artful. No man can dispose of Christianity with a *bon mot*.”

“You accept the historical existence of Jesus?”

“Unquestionably! No one can read the Gospels without feeling the actual presence of Jesus. His personality pulsates in every word. No myth is filled with such life.”

The next paragraph is excerpted from Einstein’s letter to the Episcopal bishop Edward R. Welles in 1945 concerning the behavior of the church during the Holocaust.[†]

Being a lover of freedom...I looked to the universities to defend it, knowing they had always boasted of their devotion to the cause of truth; but, no, the universities immediately were silenced. Then I looked to the great editors of the newspapers whose flaming editorials in days gone by had proclaimed their love of freedom; but they, like the universities, were silenced in a few short weeks.

Only the church stood squarely across the path of Hitler’s campaign for suppressing the truth. I never had any special interest in the church before, but now I feel a great affection and admiration because the church alone has had the courage and persistence to stand for intellectual truth and moral freedom.

I am forced to confess what I once despised, I now praise unreservedly.

Keep Seeking His Truth ... Pastor Chris Heeb

* George Sylvester Viereck, “What Life Means to Einstein,” *The Saturday Evening Post*, 26 October 1929, reprinted from *The Saturday Evening Post* © 1929, The Curtis Publishing Company; used by permission.

† Reprinted by permission from Joseph Gallagher, “I have Set Before You Life and Death...Choose Life,” *The Evening Sun*, Baltimore, 13 April 1979.