

Association

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Study by W.D. Frazee—March 27,

I would like to start with a text from Numbers 23:9. Balaam speaking by inspiration concerning Israel.

“For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills
I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall
not be reckoned among the nations” Numbers 23:9.

The people who would like to be in an institution like other institutions are somewhere else. Isn't that right? For many of you, if you look back in your experience, one of the things that led you to Wildwood is the fact that you were not satisfied with what you saw in other places, in other situations. Now unless we, in following God's blueprint, aim very high, eventually the type of individual that is hunting for that something better, something different, will pass this place by and go on to someplace else that has the torch.

This is true. It's a difficult thing to *start* an institution with these principles, but it's far more difficult to hold on course. I'll tell you why. It's because, as time goes on and the institution gets bigger, there's an increasing need for personnel to staff the institution. If we will say that there are a dozen essential points, Brother A comes and eventually he's clear on 11 of the 12 points. But he thinks the institution is a bit too strict or too narrow on point number 12.

But Sister B comes, and she's very impressed with that 12th point, but she thinks point number 11 is out of line. And pretty soon, you can get on the campus many people who think that the program in general is what we ought to have, but it has some fly in the ointment, something that is out of line.

If those thoughts lead us to study, and to prayer, and to counsel, this is good. But if those thoughts lead us to take things in our own hands and propagate our personal views based on our past education and experience, then eventually we undermine the whole program.

Many thoughts have passed through my mind since I was asked to meet with you here tonight. I can only just allude to some of them. Let me say this, dear folks: Not one of us here on this campus is running an individual home of our own. At least we *shouldn't*. None of us own this property. This is the *Lord's* institution. It belongs to a non-profit corporation which has been chartered to do this work. And if I have been entrusted with the sacred responsibility of carrying one of these homes, then I must remember that what I put on my table, what I study at worship, the way I come in and go out of that home is not just my own business.

Now, if I don't want to be in that harness, then I shouldn't be here. Personally, I want to be in that harness. I want to recognize that what I do, while it is my personal responsibility, it's *more* than that. I'm accountable, not only to God and my own conscience, I'm accountable to this group. It's a very unfortunate thing if a student passing from home to home is *forbidden* to do something in one home, but *encouraged* to do it in some other home.

Don't misunderstand me. I wouldn't go so far as to want to regiment our menus so that every home served the same thing for breakfast every morning. That isn't what I am getting at. I am talking about basic *principles*.

Now, that which I was asked to talk about was this question of association. I ran across this statement that I have put in my files a few years ago, February 1966 Telenotes by *Faith For Today*—questions and answers that Pastor Faegal has a page on.

He's answering a question of some girl that wants to know for a long time whether it's right for a Christian boy or girl to date a *non-Christian*. What do you think? This is the sentence that interested me.

"The final intent and goal of dating is marriage."

Do you believe that? Or do you somewhere nurse in your mind the idea that there are friendships between young men and young women that have nothing to do with courtship and marriage? And that the ideal situation is to encourage a large number of friendships that are utterly unrelated to courtship and marriage? I could answer that briefly by saying, if you think that, you have simply fooled yourself. That's all.

Don't misunderstand me. I don't mean that all friendships eventually result in marriage. But Pastor Faegal is very realistic when he says, "The final intent and goal of dating is marriage."

Even if we were in a world where everything were ideal, it would still be true that there are certain basic lines of reserve between men and women not related, not in the home circle, that God has set up, and that He wants people to adopt and carry out. But we are not living in an ordinary time, dear folks. Are we? We're living in the days like before the flood and the days of Sodom and Gommorrah. So our principle must be stricter because the world is looser.

"This is an age when the world is teeming with corruption. Were the minds and bodies of men and women in a healthy condition, were the animal passions subject to the higher intellectual powers of the mind, it might be comparatively safe to teach that boys and girls, and the youth of still more mature age, would be benefited by mingling much in the society of one another. If the minds of the youth of this age were pure and uncorrupted, the girls might have a softening influence upon the minds and manners of the boys, and the boys, with their stronger,

firmer natures, might have a tendency to ennoble and strengthen the character of the girls. But it is a painful fact that there is not one girl in a hundred who is pure-minded, and there is not one boy in a hundred whose morals are untainted” *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol 4, page 95-96.

The whole chapter is very interesting and meaningful. So, we’re not living in an ideal situation; we’re dealing in a special time of need for carefulness in these matters.

Now in the book *Medical Ministry*, we have much precious instruction on these points. And especially in pages 141-144 of *Medical Ministry*, we have wonderful instruction on this question of association.

Here’s one particular sentence I’d like to read:

“Often the education and training of a lifetime must be discarded, that one may become a learner in the school of Christ” *Ministry of Healing*, page 453.

What article of furniture in the home or the office would you use if you were going to discard something? The wastepaper basket.

And often, it says, what has got to be discarded? The training and education of a lifetime. Do you know that’s a hard thing to do—to take the training and education of a lifetime and put it in the wastebasket? Most of us do it tiny little pieces at a time.

Now wouldn’t it be a wonderful thing, friends, if there is anything in my mind that needs to be discarded, if it could be discarded *tonight*? Wouldn’t it? Are we *willing*?

There are a few sentences on your handout that you will find in this chapter in *Medical Ministry*. But most of it is taken from the unpublished part. But you’ll find things just as strong here in the book. I just thought you might be interested in this wording of it.

“There are always individuals connected with our institutions whose characters are cast in an inferior mold, and they need but a word of encouragement from those in higher positions to take liberty to gratify the unholy heart. There are those at the sanitarium that are not open sinners; they hide their sins from human eyes; they have a fair outward morality; but the Lord’s eye sees them. They find means to gratify the low, sensual propensities; their lives are tarnished, and they are tarnishing others by their example. These very ones carry a pretense of piety; they offer prayers, bear testimony in meetings, and are apparently serving the

Lord; but their hearts are corrupt, their conduct is condemned by the law of Jehovah which they profess to keep” *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 18, page 295.

That is an interesting picture here isn't it? That people can pray, bear testimony in meeting, and apparently have a good influence, and yet secretly, underhanded, they are carrying out immorality. This lays quite a responsibility upon us to look into our own hearts, and also to be good watchmen in general on the campus, in the sanitarium, and in our homes.

I had it copied there on your handout as a prelude for what follows. This is the part I want you to especially see:

“There are those who are not guilty of these gross transgressions,...”

They're not immoral, this next class it talks about.

“...but who do not have spiritual discernment...”

What does discernment mean? Shrewdness, seeing *through* something.

“and see not the necessity of putting up the bars, and of guarding every point [of action] lest iniquity should be practiced in our institutions. They cannot see any harm in the young people's being in one another's society, paying attention to each other, flirting, courting, marrying, and giving marriage” *Ibid*, page 296.

Now notice these people that are being described here. Are these the immoral ones? No. They are just people that lack what? Discernment. And they don't see any necessity for strict rules. They don't see any harm in the young people being in each other's society. Now, could that be that that might be *my* mental condition? Could that happen?

If I have been brought up in conventional society today, is that my condition? Yes. If I have influenced by the conventional thinking, there is no subject that Wildwood stands for that's more peculiar than this one. Some people think we're peculiar in health reform. My dear friends, there are a hundred times as many people see our principles on diet as do on this association question.

But this is even more important as far as keeping the law of God is concerned, in many cases. Now let me continue:

“This is the main engrossment of this time with the worldlings, and genuine Christians will not follow their example, but will come out from all these things and be separate. In our sanitarium, our college, our offices of publication, and in every mission the strictest rules must be enforced” *Ibid*.

Now notice, this doesn't apply merely to an academy or college; it applies to every institution. And so you see what we're dealing with here isn't just teenagers, and it isn't just students, it's everybody.

“Nothing can so effectually demoralize these institutions and our missions, as the want of prudence and watchful reserve in the association of young men and young women. Give them freedom to go and come as they will in each other's company, and they will regard it as a restriction of their rights to be bound about with rules and regulations. Those who plead for the liberty to associate together are soon spoiled with lovesick sentimentalism; the enervating influence of this much-to-be-dreaded disease unfits them for their [sacred] duties, and they cannot fill any position of trust. The ever-increasing potency of vicious indulgences is so great and so strong that there is little room to hope for the recovery of souls who are thus afflicted, unless they can see the matter as God sees it, and become so thoroughly disgusted, as well as agonized, over their course of action, that they will have that repentance that needeth not to be repented of”
Ibid.

Now I would like to have you think of what's back of all this counsel. Somebody is probably thinking, Well how in the world are young people going to get married? Well, that's a good question. People have gotten married carrying out these principles. It happens. But I would like to raise a basic question. Is getting married the great goal of life? Is that what this is all about? Is that the great goal? Is that what we are carrying on this program for, to get people ready for marriage?

“To the young men and young women who are being educated as nurses and physicians I will say, Keep close to Jesus. By beholding Him we become changed into His likeness. Remember that you are not training for courtship or marriage, but for the marriage of Christ”
Counsels on Health, page 590.

Well, somebody says, Brother Frazee what does that mean? Listen friends, unless I know what that means, I'm really not fitted to train young people either in a class or in a home in this institution. I challenge you to study the matter. The great goal of God's training program is not to get people ready to establish homes, and live on this earth another generation, and see their children, and their grandchildren, and their great-grandchildren.

What are we trying to get ready for? The marriage of Christ. He's been waiting for 2,000 years, since He was here. We could skip some things just to help Him come to *His* marriage. What do you say?

Now we all know that there are times when young people can do better work married, and this is covered in this little series B number 16 where it says:

“I repeat, do not enter into a marriage engagement, unless there are good and sufficient reasons for this step,—unless the work of God can be better advanced thereby. For Christ's sake deny inclination, lift the cross, and do the work for which you are educating yourselves”
Series B, number 16, page 16.

You know, it would be a wonderful thing if every young person that finished our training had his mind not on marriage but on getting the work done and helping Jesus come. Now some of them, if they did that, would, in process of time, through proper counsel, get married in order that the work of God might be better advanced.

If young people are just straining at the bit and can hardly wait until their student days are over so they can date and carry on, they haven't caught the vision. They don't know what this is all about. Student days here at Wildwood are not a penitentiary in which you serve time and get time off for good behavior. No. That isn't the thing. Student days at Wildwood are to get us ready to do what we're trained for. Is that right? Yes.

Now the paradox of all that I'm saying is that proper understanding of this makes more successful marriages than the *conventional* program does. I say that's a paradox, but it's true. The best way to have a successful home today is to get ready, not to establish a home, but to help *Jesus* come. That's the best way to establish a successful home. And the people who are spending all this time in ordinary worldly marriage counseling, and in ordinary classes in preparation for marriage and homemaking, there's so much chaff along with the wheat, and so much conventional stuff you gathered from Babylon along with even quotations from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy that it's pitiful.

If we will boil ourselves and our folks in *Adventist Home*, *Child Guidance*, and these other sources that I've given you, we will have a philosophy of marriage which will in turn have a bearing on our attitude of the association of young people—married and unmarried, those who are students and those who are workers—which will please the Master.

Now I'd like to come to what I think is the heart of certain questions that may be in our minds. See if somebody finds this helpful.

I raise the question, why does the Spirit of Prophecy teach that, while students are in school getting their training, it's not the best time for courtship? Why does it? Is there something mystical or magical or precise about student days? No.

I'd like to suggest this for us to think about. You might even want to discuss it a bit. I believe that one of the basic reasons why the Lord has counseled young people who are in school to not try to carry on courtship or associations leading to courtship is this: The young person who carries out God's ideal in the matter of

courtship is working under close counsel and *with* close counsel of those that God has appointed as counselors.

Now tell me, among those that God has appointed as counselors, who are mentioned again and again as those who should enter into counsel with young people on this question of marriage? Their parents. Notice this statement in *Messages to Young People*.

“The good of society, as well as the highest interest of the students, demands that they shall not attempt to select a life partner while their own character is yet undeveloped, their judgment immature, and while they are at the same time deprived of parental care and guidance” *Messages to Young People*, page 442.

Now the young person in academy or college, he's not only undeveloped and immature, not only busy getting an education, but what is he deprived of? Parental care and guidance.

Well, some magical day he gets a diploma and then instantly he's free to do all this. Or is that the thought? It seems to me it takes a very superficial reading of all our material to arrive at that conclusion. Does the young person who has finished a course of training, could he still do with some counsel? Might he need the counsel of his parents? If he has read these books, will he *want* it? Yes.

Suppose he's around a place like an institution like this and he's not in training but he's part of the staff, a young worker, and his parents are off a hundred miles, a thousand miles, five thousand miles, suppose he's thinking about marriage now. What shall he do? Should he say, “Well, after all, I'm not a student anymore, and I will do as I wish?” Let me say very frankly, folks, a young person can do as he wishes. Don't forget it. And there are not policeman enough to keep him from doing it. I rejoice that our job is to help the people who want help, not primarily to be policeman on those who *don't* want it. Because we are unaccredited, we are not so burdened with people who care nothing for our principles, but want our diplomas.

Most of the students, and the young people who are non-students who are here, they *want* our principles. But brethren and sisters, any of us who have been entrusted with any responsibility, we have quite an accountability to God, and to the institution, and to our young people to be sure we give them proper guidance.

Now I want to ask you another question: Suppose I'm a young person at a proper age for marriage and am thinking about it, but I begin to get some counsel and find that some are a bit negative on what I'm thinking about. Is counsel shopping around until I find enough teachers, or homeheads, or administrators, or parents who will agree with what I want so I can say, “Well majority rules. I have counseled with seven people and three are negative, but four are positive. So I'll go ahead.” Is that what we're dealing with?

A young person asked me this sometime back. In fact they wrote me a letter about it. (It's nobody *here*.) I felt impressed to give them this, and you know, they

got the point, and they got help from it. I wasn't trying to lay down a rule. But I said, "You know, in some court cases, the issue is serious enough that it takes 12 men each voting the same way to reach a verdict." And I said, "If the matter you're considering is that important, you might consider that."

I am just pointing out that it's so easy for young people, and older ones, to get the idea that counsel is something like going through customs or immigration. You've got to have your visa stamped, and if you can get enough rubber stamps on that, well okay, you are cleared, and you can go on and do what you want to do.

What is this counsel all about anyway? Is it to get somebody's permission, and if you happen to strike the right official, you get a rubber stamp, and if you don't, you don't? Is *that* what we're up against?

If I happen to be in a home where people are lenient and look with favor upon the young people associating together, do I think I've got it pretty nice? But if I'm off here in another home where they look pretty carefully at who I associate with, well then I'm just like Joseph, in chains until my time of deliverance comes?

Let me ask you something: If there's a young person on this campus who would have a stricter time if they were in some other home than mine, do I need to make a restudy of these principles? Not that I necessarily should be ruled by what other people do, but should I reexamine my principles and my understanding of them?

I think I'll ask a few more questions. The questions that I am studying with you now are not relating to students. You all are clear that, according to the Testimonies, students are not on a courtship program, or an association leading to courtship. You're all clear on that, aren't you? If you're not, be sure to read Volume 5, pages 109 and 110—a study on social relations.

Suppose now we're dealing with young people who are of marriageable age, and they're not in a training program, but still we're trying to carry out this principle that we read here at length carefully. The question I raise is a very simple one: Does this institution as a whole, and does the individual home in which a person lives, have any responsibility in the matter? That's the basic question that we have to settle. But be careful, or you'll put your neck in a noose (or somebody else's). I don't mean that I think you *shouldn't*, but just be careful how you answer that first question because that's the basic question. Is there any responsibility, or isn't there?

Here I am. I'm in charge of a home, and a young man calls on the telephone, or he comes up and knocks on the door, and he wants to see a young woman that lives in my home. Suppose I happen to know, or maybe I don't happen to know, that what he's interested in is courting that girl. Do I have any responsibility? Well, if I *don't*, if it's all up to *her* to take the initiative in securing what counsel she decides to get, and if she doesn't decide to get any then I merely say, "All right, Mary, so and so is here to see you, and here are the keys to the car, take it and go, and stay as long as you wish, have your visit, or sit here in the parlor, and have your visit." Is that the program?

If not, why not? That's the question. Isn't she old enough to get married? Yes. Somebody says, "What *about* this young man? Is a Seventh-day Adventist or not?" Before I *answer* that question, I *ask* the question: Have I any *right* to ask that question? If so, why do I? Do I have any right to ask whether he's a Seventh-day Adventist or not? Why *do* I have the right? I must have responsibility if I have some right to ask.

Then the next question is: Do I have any right to ask what *kind* of a Seventh-day Adventist he is? Or do I leave that up to the girl to decide?

But suppose (now the questions may be getting harder, but that's all right), suppose this young woman has already checked with her parents, or he has checked with his parents or with her parents, then do I have any responsibility? If I *don't*, my answer is very simple: Let her go home to her parents. Let her parents carry that responsibility. If she doesn't need my counsel, then I mustn't be burdened with the responsibility. It's that simple.

Suppose that the young man having found, or fearing, that I'm not planning to allow him to carry out his desires and plans, finds ways to circumvent that—ways to see that girl contrary to my best judgment. Or suppose that, if he's at a distance, he finds ways by roundabout methods to communicate in correspondence. Do you begin to see that I must accept one or the other of these two explanations of that? Either I, as a homehead, am out in the dark, and God is putting something over on me because I won't cooperate, or else the enemy is working with somebody who is double-crossing and underhandedly carrying on a courtship, not only without my counsel but contrary to it. Do you see that it's one way or the other? Yes.

Now you know the world has a proverb that says, "All the world loves a lover." And don't forget, that isn't in the Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy. That's just one of those worldly proverbs. Sister White warns us not only against worldly fashions and worldly customs, but worldly *maxims*. Did you ever read that?

The world has another one, "Love laughs at locksmiths." It's going to mean something folks to have a generation of young people that love a law, and love authority. Some of us got our mates through jestingly and jokingly circumventing or thumbing our noses at the rules. Or if we got our mates in a situation where there weren't any rules, let's adopt the same attitude toward that that we do toward the Sabbath if we were brought up keeping Sunday. What do you say? Do you see what I mean?

If God in mercy led us through a period when we didn't know what the book said, and He helped us out, praise His Name! Praise His Name! But if God has brought some young people to a school, to a school of the prophets, let's listen to what the prophets have spoken, and seek to carry it out.

Frankly, when young people come to me for counsel, do you know what I tell them? I say, "John or Mary, I will be just glad to help you whatever you want to do. If you will just tell me what it is you want to do, I'll be glad to help you. If you want to go the conventional road, I'll help you do that. I can give you the names and addresses of a dozen institutions where you can do just the conventional thing and

you will be in good and regular standing, and you can conduct it in a decent way. But if you want the *manna* program, if you want *counsel*, if you want to get a companion like God's *highest* ideals according to these principles, well, I can help you do that too.

I think we should make no effort to inflict the Lord's beautiful standards on people who don't want them. But I hasten to add, I think they ought to get on another bus if that's the road they want to go. And if a young person, whether they be a student, or not a student, if what they want is to carry on the conventional program, I think the honorable thing is to tell us, "Dear folks at Wildwood, I'm glad for all you have taught me, but this way is just a little too narrow, the gate is just a little too tight. I don't want to do anything bad, I don't want to do anything criminal, I don't want to do anything immoral, but I do want to carry on a courtship in the conventional way, and so I'm just giving you my two weeks, or 30 days written notice, and I will be on my way, and with all good feeling." I can pray for a person like that, but the thing that I feel so bad about is when young people try to mix everything all up. And they would like to get the satisfaction of feeling that they're in this program, and at the same time, bypass, or circumvent, or ignore the counsel of those that are in responsibility and authority.

What shall I as an individual homehead do about things of this character? I would say this: If you have had the experience, and can handle it yourself, fine. If you can't, don't be foolish enough to give your human opinions, but either say to the young person, "Listen, this is something that needs more counsel than I am qualified to give you, and I'd like to have you and me sit down with somebody else of more experience." And I am not talking necessarily about this man. I am not the one counselor on the place. Thank God we have a number of people on this place who have proved themselves to be wise counselors on this subject. I know some people on this place whose counsel on these matters I value very highly. Very highly.

But friends, it is a wonderful thing when we as leaders respect one another. And the last thing on earth we ought to do is, by our words or our silence, give the least encouragement to any young person student or worker in their defiance or ignoring of authority in these matters. This is very unfortunate. Rather let us hold up one another's hands.

You know, some time back, in a place a long, long way from here, a young woman who had been brought up on very strict principles contrary to her parents' wishes, and to their urgent counsel, she went ahead and carried on a courtship with a young man. The young man had *his* parents' permission, more than permission, *encouragement*, but the point is: The young man did not have either the permission or the encouragement of the young women's parents.

But do you know what some "good" people told that young woman? They told her, "Well, you are old enough. You've had your training, and you're of age. If your parents won't give you their permission and blessing, go ahead anyway, and they will have to get used to it. They will just have to accept it once it's done."

I tremble when I think of what some people are going to have to answer for at the bar of God.

I have been dealing with principles. And oh I am so thankful for these principles. I am fully sold on them. I love them. I know what they do in the lives of the few who see them and follow them. But I have no burden to *inflict* them on anybody. You can't railroad these things. But you can, in a calm, earnest way, let young people see where this bus is going and just find out if they would like to go.

And if they would rather go on some other bus, there are plenty of buses running. I tell young people that there are three ways to carry on these associations. One is the loose, familiar way in which most people are carrying them on today. None of our young people want that. Another is what I'd call the conventional way. The decent Christians carry on these things. And I am sure God uses that with many people. But the third way is this way that we have been studying in our Christian Home classes through the years, and that we've gone over briefly here, which involves close counsel, careful supervision, on the part of young people who *want* that supervision, and who *want* that counsel, and who do not wish to move without it. This is manna. And if we will keep busy with the young people who *want* that, God will bring to this campus from all over this nation and from all over the world young people that can be prepared to give the loud cry under the latter rain. This is what I know you all want a part in. I thank God that we can labor together in these matters.

Turn to Deuteronomy the fourth chapter and the second verse.

“Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you” Deuteronomy 4:2.

The sixth verse:

“Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people” *Ibid*, verse 6.

If we will go by the books, even the world will recognize that this is a wise and understanding people.

Not long ago, some relatives of one of our families on this campus visited here at Wildwood, and these are non-Adventist relatives. In the course of the visit, they became aware of our principles on association. It led them to reveal the problem they have had and are having with their own young people who are attending the universities of the world in various states. You can imagine how the strict principles of association on this campus look to people. But the point is, they were very much impressed with the fact that our young people had something that these others didn't have.

We must remember that there are always more reasons for anything God says than what we see. Our wisdom is to do what God says. We may not be able to explain all the reasons, but there are plenty of reasons.

Notice God told Moses to tell Israel be careful that you don't do what? Add anything. And don't diminish anything. Whenever we add something, we have to diminish something. That's what Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees of His day. They had rejected the commandments of God in order to keep their own traditions. But those traditions were supposed to add to the commandments, you see, to show the people *how* to keep the Sabbath, and *how* to do this, and *how* to do that. But by the time they had gotten through with it, they were doing what men said in the name of the commandments, and actually disregarding some of the plain words of the commandments. So Jesus said:

“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” Matthew 15:9.

Whatever positions of responsibility we hold in this world, you will see that this next paragraph is for us.

“The government of Israel was administered in the name and by the authority of God. The work of Moses, of the seventy elders, of the rulers and judges, was simply to enforce the laws that God had given; they had no authority to legislate for the nation” *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 603.

Now the implications of this are tremendous.

“This was, and continued to be, the condition of Israel's existence as a nation” *Ibid*.

This is the fundamental apostasy in the Roman Catholic Church. The change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday is a *mark* of that apostasy, but it's the *sign* not the basic *problem*. The basic problem is this: Does the church have the authority to add to, or diminish from, the Word of God? What is the mission of the church? What is the responsibility of church officers?

I would like to have us think of it here in this institution. What is our responsibility? Are responsibility is to do just what the leaders of Israel were to do, not to legislate but simply to enforce the laws that God had given. Is there a difference? Why there is a *tremendous* difference. But somebody says, “Yes, Brother Frazee, but the trouble is, there are no references that govern our particular problems.” Well, there are two answers to that that we need to think of. In the first place, maybe there are more answers in the books than we know about. Maybe it would be a good thing when we run into a problem, and we don't know where the answer is in the books, to start hunting. Maybe get some other folks to help us.

Every now and then, I'm impressed with how much detail God has given us in the books to deal with specific questions. The other thing is this: Should there chance to be some detail that is not covered by plain statements in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, wouldn't it be a good plan to lean in the direction of religious liberty rather than legislation? Wouldn't it? I think so.

In dealing with this question of association on the campus, in our homes, in our missionary work, and in general, do we have instruction from the Spirit of Prophecy or don't we? Yes we do. There are paragraphs, pages, and chapters. In fact, if it were all gotten together, it would make a fair-sized booklet. All right. Do we know what is in there? If we don't, let's find out. If we do, let's do what? Carry it out. We do not have to frame rules and regulations in this matter. We simply have to carry out the instructions that the Lord has given us.

I raise this question: Do we have a choice as to whether we will or will not carry those out? We have a choice in the sense we can decide whether we will or will not obey God, but when God tells an institution to do something, does He put it on a take-it-or-leave-it basis? Do parents have the right to abdicate their authority? Parents have the right of saying, "Johnny or Mary, I *could* enforce some discipline, but I think I'd rather not. You are only three years old, or seven years old, but I think I'll let *you* decide." As a parent, do I have that privilege? No. Of course it's true, nobody can stop me if I choose to use it, but my children will go to destruction on that program. And who will have to answer for it? I will. Is that right? Yes.

Now it's so in an institution. Let us understand clearly what religious liberty is. It is not either in the home, or the school, or the church saying, "Everybody do as they please and answer alone to God." Religious liberty is teaching what God has said, and letting those who are old enough to make their own decisions decide whether they're going with us in that or not.

Let me notice how this principle is applied to this matter of recreation. Notice this where Sister White deals with the question of amusements.

"To spend money, which is so hard to obtain, on materials with which to play tennis and cricket is not in harmony with the testimonies which have been given to our school in Battle Creek. ... It has been understood all through our ranks that these games are not the proper education to be given in any of our schools" *Manuscript Releases*, Vol. 8, page 74.

What games? Tennis and cricket. Cricket is English baseball.

How much money would it take to play tennis and cricket? It wouldn't take very much. Why, compared to the money that is going down the drain today in athletic education, this would be, as we say, "peanuts." Wouldn't it?

And now watch as we follow on:

"The school in Avondale is to be a pattern for other schools which shall be established among our people. Games and amusements are the curse of the Colonies, and they must not be allowed in our school here." *Ibid.*

You notice the point? Sister White didn't say, "We'll set up policeman to see that you will do this." No. No. She basically said, "This is the way the bus is going, and if you would like to go with us, if this is what you see and you want to go with us, come and we will do you good, for the Lord has spoken good concerning Israel. But if not, then the wise thing, and the honest thing, and the fair thing, and the decent thing for all concerned is for you to go where you can exercise your freedom of choice without interfering with the freedom of choice of this institution. Is that clear?"

Now notice how it relates to this question of association. The same setting, almost the same words.

"In our schools in Battle Creek, Healdsburg, and Cooranbong I have borne a straight testimony concerning these matters. There were those who thought the restraint too severe; but we told them plainly what could be and what could not be,... Again and again I stood before the students in the Avondale school with messages from the Lord regarding the deleterious influence of free and easy association between young men and young women. I told them that if they did not keep themselves to themselves, and endeavor to make the most of their time, the school would not benefit them, and those who were paying their expenses would be disappointed. I told them that if they were determined to have their own will and their own way, it would be better for them to return to their homes and to the guardianship of their parents. This they could do at any time if they decided not to stand under the yoke of obedience, for we did not design to have a few leading spirits in wrongdoing demoralizing the other students" *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, page 101-102.

Do you see the freedom of choice there? The student is not made a slave. The young person is not told, "You better submit whether you see this or not." No. But he is told, "This is our program. This is what is on the menu. If you find here what you would like for dinner, come, this is what we are going to serve. But if what you want is highballs and beefsteaks, we just don't have any. And you had better go where you can find what you wish." Is that clear?

Now my question is this: Do we have the authority to say, "Well, after all, maybe if we'd serve some cokes, and have a tennis court, and let the youngsters run around the way they do some other places, maybe we could get in some people and work with them, and gradually bring them to the place where they would accept." Is that the program? No.

In an institution, there are always those that lean a little in one direction, and some lean in another. And of course each one of us is in the middle of the road. But we need help in *really* being the middle of the road. Don't we? And this is my plea. While we discourage the inroads of liberalists, let us not think that the answer is to

get over into the pharisaical program of devising all kinds of rules and regulations in order for people to keep the law of God.

The principles are clear. Let's let human beings have joy of doing what God says instead of the bondage of doing what we say. Do you see what I mean? Let's not nag at people. Let's not criticize them and make them feel uncomfortable when we are around. Let us give our students, and our younger workers, and all of us the freedom that the Spirit of God brings.

Notice this statement in *Medical Ministry*.

"Kind, encouraging words will do wonders. There are many who, if a constant, cheerful effort is put forth in their behalf, without faultfinding or chiding, will show themselves susceptible of improvement. The less we criticize others, the greater will be our influence over them for good" *Medical Ministry*, page 208-209.

But when we see someone, a student or a fellow worker, that we feel is perhaps getting off the road a bit, or in danger of it, let us learn the science not of saying, "Don't you know that that's not in harmony with the rules of the institution? Don't you know that that's contrary to the principles?" No. I think there's a better approach than that. We might say, "Friend, may I help you with something? What are we here for? Well, we are here to do the Lord's work and get ready to do a better job. Jesus is soon coming." (I'm talking to my friend, you understand, that I am trying to help.) "Do you want this institution to be like other places?" No. There's nobody on this campus that wants it to be like other places, is there? No. "Well, what do you want to be different? Is it to follow out the Lord's instructions? Would you be glad if I'd call your attention to something?" And let them read it, and say, "Now you have an influence. And your influence is either helping to uphold these principles, or to water them down." And I'd say, "Now, do you really want me to help you with things like this?" And I think if we approach it in that spirit, we can be a great blessing. And I am sure you agree with me, and doubtless many of you have used these methods.

I'd just like to encourage you. I would feel so bad if, when we see certain trends, that we should be ready like one of these sheepdogs is to hear the shepherd say, "Sick' em." I don't want to set any dogs on any sheep. And I don't want to be that kind of a dog, running after the sheep and biting at their heels to bring them into line. I want to be a New Testament shepherd going after the sheep myself and putting that sheep on my shoulders rejoicing. And I know that God will bless us as we seek to do this.

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