

Chapter 15

Petting and Premarital Sex

Infatuation Not Love—You have spent hours of the night in her company because you were both infatuated. She professes love for you but she knows not the pure love of an unpretending heart. Satan has ensnared your soul. I was shown you fascinated, deceived, and Satan exults that one who has scarcely a trait of character that would make a happy wife and a happy home should have an influence to separate you from the mother who loves you with a changeless affection. In the name of the Lord, cease your attention to Mattie F or marry her—do not scandalize the cause of God....

The intimacy formed with Mattie has not had a tendency to bring you nearer the Lord or to sanctify you through the truth....

Mattie expects to consummate a marriage with you and you have given her encouragement to

expect this by your attentions. But will you choose this piece of perversity as your wife, and will you separate your affections from your mother and the people of God? ...

Better to Marry than to Continue Improper Attentions—If you persist in the course you have pursued it would be much better for you to marry her, for your course is as directly contrary to God's will as to marry her. Satan accomplishes his purpose all the same. If the atmosphere surrounding her is the most agreeable to you, if she meets your standard for a wife to stand at the head of your family; if, in your calm judgment, taken in the light given you of God, her example would be worthy of imitation, you might as well marry her as to be in her society and conduct yourselves as only man and wife should conduct themselves toward each other. You have about ruined yourself as it is. If through the period of your life you wish to enjoy the society of Mattie as you now appear to enjoy it and be fascinated with it, why not go a step farther than you already have and make yourself her lawful protector and have an undisputed right to

devote the hours you choose in her company and be charmed with her presence night after night?

Your acts and conversation are offensive to God. The angels of God bear record of your words and your actions. The light has been given you but you have not heeded it. The course you have pursued is a reproach to the cause of God. Your behavior is unbecoming and unchristian. When you should both be in your beds you have been in one another's society and in one another's arms nearly the entire night.... You give occasion to our enemies to judge our people as being loose in morals.—Letter 3, 1879.

Violation of the Seventh Commandment—
You were shown me in her [Mattie's] society hours of the night; you know best in what manner these hours were spent. You called on me to speak whether you had broken God's commandments. I ask you, Have you not broken them? How was your time employed hours together night after night? Were your position, your attitude, your affections such that you would want them all

registered in the ledger of heaven? I saw, I heard, things that would make angels blush.... No young man should do as you have done to Mattie unless married to her; and I was much surprised to see that you did not sense this matter more keenly....

Will you now change entirely, cut the last connection with Mattie? Will she do this on her part? If neither of you will do this, marry her at once and disgrace yourselves and the cause of God no more.—Letter 61, 1880.