

Chapter 23

A Would-Be Sanitarium Superintendent

Separation From Family Not Wise—Brother O: I must say some things to you, for your course is worthy of censure. You know what has been the course of Elder M and others connected with the Health Institute, and how difficult it has been to remove the impression once made. You know the history of the past and the reproach and disgrace that still cling to the institution, and the people at St. Helena are not ignorant of the great curse which fell upon it in consequence of the moral conduct of some who have been connected with it.

I cannot feel that it would be wisdom for you to act in the capacity of superintendent of the Health Institution, for you are not a wise man. You are here away from your wife and family when you should be with them; but if there are reasons to justify this separation, your course should be

altogether different than it has been. If you had the sanctifying influence of the grace of Christ in your heart, you would take heed to your own ways and abstain from every appearance of evil.

Your work has been such as to open to many souls the door of temptation, and many will be lost in consequence. You may reform, you may see your mistakes, but you will never be able to remove the impression that has been made.

Reproof for Familiarity With the Opposite Sex—Brother O, you are watched with critical eyes. Your attention to young ladies is not called for. You are out of place in giving so much attention to the P family. Mrs. P has done her work in ruining one good man. That matter was opened before me as an open book. I was told in the night season that you were not qualified to be entrusted with large or even limited responsibilities unless you repent and become a reformed man. God cannot be with you while you pursue this course. My guide told me to follow, and I was shown your boyish familiarity with girls, and your particular

sympathy toward Mrs. P and her daughters. The mother keeps [to] the bed much of the time when she should be engaged in some useful employment in the care of her family.

Your familiarities with the mother and daughters were opened before me. Your attentions and your gifts speak louder than even your flattering words. You are displeasing God, and Heaven looks upon you with reproof.... Had you a new heart, your motives, actions, and course of conduct would be such that both believers and unbelievers might have an example of a Christlike character. I have seen your case as God sees it, and I now present it to you. Better, far better, would it have been had you disconnected from the Health Retreat some months ago.

This freedom and gallantry toward young ladies is not the outgrowth of a tender, Christlike sympathy.... If you look upon these matters as unworthy of mention, you will repeat them. Investigate your past life, and let moral taste be created by a purification of the soul temple. Put

away your excuses, for you have none. Your ideas need a moral renovation, and then you will see things in a different light. God calls for men to do this work who are pure in heart and undefiled in thought, having an eye single to His glory....

Religion Not a Mere Cloak—God sees the heart, the deeds, and the purposes of the mind. It should be written on the conscience as with a pen of iron upon a rock that the man who expects true success in violating the eternal principles of right as written in the books of heaven, is not only foolish but wicked. Can men forget, “Thou God seest me”? Will you, my brother, turn away from idols? Your moral sense is clouded. Pray to God to bring all things to your remembrance that you may see things in their true bearing. Wear not the religion of Christ as a cloak, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Tests of a True Christian—The conversation of the man who claims to believe the truth for this time should be in heaven, not common, earthly, cheap, sensual. Holy maxims must be adopted or

that man will walk contrary to Christ, deceiving the world, betraying the truth. Why, oh, why do professed Christians keep so low a level when they have so pure and perfect a gospel?

Watch your religion with a jealous care, and let the word of God dwell in you richly. Let the question be asked, Am I a Christian? Do I love my neighbor as myself? Do I observe the golden rule, to do unto others as I would that they do unto me? Can I be a Christian, and taint and pollute my soul with sinful, corrupting imaginings? It was sin that crucified the Redeemer of the world. Seemingly upright men do strange things, utterly contrary to the oracles of God. Their righteousness is a pretense before Him who looks into the heart. We are not to study and plan for our own interest, but in keeping our souls pure give an example to the youth and to all with whom we associate.—Letter 5, 1890.