

## Chapter 30

# Ellen White's Assistants

To W. F. C., September 6, 1895. [Both Brother W. F. C. and Fannie Y were employees of Ellen White, first at Melbourne, and later at Cooranbong, New South Wales. In 1895 Mrs. White and her staff were living and working in tents while Sunnyside, the permanent residence, was being built.] This morning as I came from the school ground I saw your horse fastened to a tree before the tent occupied by Fannie Y. After a while I went to the tent. A lady from Newcastle and Jessie Israel were visiting Fannie. You were sitting down, writing on the typewriter. Why did you not take the typewriter at once into the dining tent? What impression can such a course make upon the mind of the young girl visiting at the school? It made an impression that was anything but favorable.

Your freedom with young women is improper, but it is so natural and common to you that you

think nothing of it. The Word of God has told you that you are to abstain from the very appearance of evil; but do you? You are a married man, with a wife and two boys, whom you have left in America, and this fact should be sufficient, without any further prompting, to lead you to cultivate sobriety and carefulness in your association with others.... I write these things to you because you are deceiving Fannie, and she is apparently totally blind and infatuated....

Placing yourself in the society of Fannie as much as you did while at Melbourne had not only the appearance of evil, but was evil. You enjoyed it, but you should have had discernment to understand that by your course of action you were encouraging others in the same path.

I am now going to Tasmania, and you and Fannie will remain at Avondale. After my absence, you will feel inclined to associate together more freely, because I am not present to hold the fort. I fear you will dishonor the truth by your familiarity. I decidedly protest against this. Keep yourself out

of Fannie's tent, or else a scandal will be created.—Letter 17, 1895.

**To W. F. C., c. September 1895**—I have had very little help from Fannie for many months, not because she cannot work, but her association with you has caused her to have an experience which has unfitted her to do anything in my work....

I feel deeply over another matter, and that is your visiting Fannie in her tent. I have already decided that you two cannot work together. You are a married man, father of two children. If your wife has obtained a divorce from you, that does not leave you free to marry again, as I read my Bible....

Before leaving I must lay down some rules. There is no call for W. F. C. to visit Fannie's tent. Fannie has not been in working order for some time. Her association with you is largely the cause of this. I know this to be so, and therefore I say, Keep away from her tent. When I am away you will feel that you have a fine opportunity to get into her society whenever you can; and I cannot go

without warning you and charging you to keep yourself to yourself. I want no reproach brought upon me nor upon this community by imprudent, careless habits or practices.—Letter 19, 1896.

**To Fannie Y, November 23, 1895**—I have been considering your case in connection with W. F. C., and I have no other counsel to give than I have given. I consider that you have no moral right to marry W. F. C.; he has no moral right to marry you. He left his wife after giving her great provocation. He left her whom he had vowed before God to love and cherish while both should live. Before ever she obtained her divorce, when she was his lawful wife, he left her for three years, and then left her in heart, and expressed his love to you. The matter has been negotiated largely between you and a married man, while he was legally bound to the wife he married, who has had two children by him.

I see not a particle of leniency in the Scriptures given either of you to contract marriage, although his wife is divorced. From the provocation he has

given her, it was largely his own course of action that has brought this result, and I cannot see in any more favorable light his having a legal right to link his interest with yours or you to link your interest with his. One thing is settled. I could not connect with either of you if this step is taken, for I see this matter in a light that the Scriptures would condemn your connection. Therefore, I wish you both to understand that from the light God has given me regarding the past and the present, I could not think of employing either of you if you take this step.

I am astonished that you should for a moment give thought to such a thing, and place your affections on a married man who had left his wife and children under such circumstances. I advise you to lay your thoughts and plans regarding this matter just as they are before our responsible brethren, that you may receive their counsel, and let them show you from the law of God the error into which you have fallen. You have both broken the law even in thinking that you might unite in marriage. You should have repelled the thought at its first suggestion.—Letter 14, 1895.

**To James Edson White, December 9, 1895—**

But oh, the heartache, for other things were developing and being made manifest which had been a fearful strain on me. It was the intimacy between W. F. C. and [Fannie]. I had presented before them all the dangers, but they denied it. But at the meeting at Melbourne Fannie acknowledged she loved W. F. C. and he loved her. I tried to present the matter before them in its true bearing. W. F. C. had a wife living. Recently she obtained a divorce. He had left her and been gone three years. But Fannie told me she had been praying that if it was right she should marry W. F. C. that his wife might obtain a divorce. What blindness will come to those who begin to depart from a straightforward course! These two had thought they could unite in marriage and they could both unite in carrying on my work. The management of all my business would be supposed to be in his hands. Not much, I told them. Such a step would cut them off from me forever, both of them, because W. F. C. had no moral right to [marry].—Letter 123a, 1895.

**To W. F. C., April 9, 1896**—I am greatly distressed as I review the past, and as matters are brought to my notice by the Spirit of God. I have a decided message to bear to you, Brother C. Special light in regard to you and your family was not given me until about two years ago. I was then shown that the attitude you manifested in your home life was unchristian. You began your married life by accepting a false sabbath, and by sailing under false colors. But a wife that was obtained by selling principles of truth could not bring peace or happiness to the purchaser. God was dishonored by your action in this matter, and His truth was trampled in the dust.

When you gave up the Sabbath for your wife, she rejoiced that she had gained a victory, and Satan also rejoiced. But when she accepted a man who was willing to sell his Lord for her, she could not look up to him and honor him as a wife should honor her husband. When she married you under these circumstances, she did not distinguish between a heaven-born love and an earthly love, not of divine origin. A man who will sacrifice his

love for his heavenly Father for a wife will also sell his wife for another woman. This quality of love is base; it is of this earth, and will never bear the test of trial.

The Lord does not revise the laws of His government, the laws which control His subjects both in this world and in the heavenly universe. Natural laws must be obeyed. But you were so determined to obtain your wife that you broke down every barrier, and broke God's law by yielding up the Sabbath; and you have been reaping only that which you have sown.

After marrying your wife, you again accepted the Sabbath. This was the right move to make if you made it in sincerity and in the fear of God. Said Christ [John 14:21, 23, quoted].

But you secured your wife under a promise which you afterwards broke. You paid a dear price for her, and by breaking your word you have given her every reason to be tempted. Thus Satan has had every opportunity to deceive her, and he has



presented this matter to her in his own light. You sacrificed the truth and sold your allegiance to God to obtain a wife, and after you again commenced keeping the Sabbath, your course toward your wife should have been entirely different from what it has been. You should have shown her all the tenderness, forbearance, and love which you manifested toward her before your marriage. But this was not done. You did not pursue a course which would keep her love. I myself cannot put confidence in you as a Christian, and under present developments, I could not give my consent for you to become a member of any church.

You thought that when you were once married you could do as you pleased. This has embittered your married life, and your wife has had every reason for refusing to leave her home and come to you to this country. Your acceptance of fanatical views was nothing in your favor, and gave your wife an opportunity to strengthen herself against the principles of truth.

For years you have been away from your home.

Leaving as you did was a wrong against your family. You have told me that you would never humiliate yourself by going back, never. But the Lord has presented this matter before me. I know that you cannot be clear in the sight of God until you do all in your power to be reconciled to your wife. You have a work to do in your family which cannot be left undone. This I stated to you last September. Whatever position your wife has taken, whatever course of recklessness and levity she has pursued, this does not excuse you from acting a father's part to your children. You ought to go back to your home and do all in your power to heal the breach, which you, a professed believer in the truth, have done more than your wife to make.

When you placed your love upon another woman, even though your wife had obtained a divorce, you transgressed the seventh commandment. But you have done worse than this. You loved another woman before your wife obtained a divorce, and you have said to one, "How hard it is to be bound to a woman I do not love, when there is one I love, yes, the very ground she

walks on.”

Your course while in my family was not open and frank. The transactions between you and the one upon whom you placed your affections were carried on under falsehood and deception. In the guise of false pretension, secret plans were carried out. The Lord opened these matters before me, and I tried to change the order of things, but the burden of soul was to you and others accounted a thing of naught. At this time you were giving Bible readings, and taking a prominent part in church work. My advice and counsel was not asked in regard to this important decision. Had I been, I should have been spared much pain that followed.

When I talked with you in regard to your freedom in the company of young ladies, and told you that I could not have you in my family while I went to Tasmania, your answer was that you had always been sociable with young women, and had never thought that there was any harm in it. I told you that I knew there was harm in this freedom and that I could not feel justified in leaving you in my

family while I was absent.

When I told you that you could not remain in my family, you said that after settling your accounts, which would take about a week, you could go. But this matter dragged along, or was neglected, till about two weeks before our return from Tasmania, and then in July we went to Cooranbong.

This matter cannot rest here. I cannot be looked upon as keeping you from your home and family. It was a mistake, I think, to bring you into my family at all. I did this to help you, but I cannot let it be represented to others that we consider you a man worthy to engage in the sacred work which the Lord has given me. I cannot have this matter appear thus, for it places me in a wrong light.

I cannot appear to justify your course of action in your married life. Leaving your wife and family is an offense to God, and I must present this matter as it is, before the president of your conference, Elder Williams. I had hoped that when you saw

your delusion you would feel that repentance for your course of action that needeth not to be repented of. But my experience at Armadale, and the burden brought upon me there, made me a great sufferer; and matters in regard to your past life have been more fully opened before me....You have thought that you would receive the credentials of a minister of the gospel, but had these been given you, reproach would have been brought upon the cause of God. You have represented yourself as being a wronged man, but it is your wife who has been most wronged. She should never have been treated as you have treated her. You pursued such a course toward your little ones that your wife could not but be estranged from you. Her heart was wounded, bruised, and she was almost distracted by your overbearing, masterly government in discipline of your children.

After giving up Fannie you placed your affections upon another. This shows just what you would do if opportunities presented themselves. You show young girls attention and thus win their love, for if you choose, your manner can be very

gracious and attractive. As these things have passed before me, I have felt indignant. I cannot, will not, keep silent on these matters. I determined that you should be unveiled as an unprincipled man. Your ideas of what a Christian should be are so much unlike the principles laid down in the Word of God that no responsibility in connection with the cause of God should be given you.—Letter 18, 1896.

**To Elder I. N. Williams, President of the Pennsylvania Conference** [W.F.C.'s home conference], **April 12, 1896**—We have had great trouble of mind in regard to Brother W.F.C., who expects to return to America by this month's boat. He has shown a fondness for the society of young girls, and has been full of gaiety, conducting himself like a boy. About a year ago, at the suggestion of my son, W. C. White, I employed him to run the typewriter for Fannie Y, as she read the manuscript to him. But soon I became burdened. Warnings were given to me again and again. I talked with him by himself in regard to his freedom and enjoyment in the society of young

women and his frivolous conduct, but he said he had always been sociable with young ladies and thought it no harm.

We wanted to help him, for he had no money and but very poor clothing. He has good ability, and might have developed into a competent helper for W. C. [White] or a worker for me. But I dared not have him remain a member of my family.

He became attached to Fannie Y and the matter was carried on under a deception before he learned that his wife had obtained a divorce. When he heard this he seemed greatly relieved, for his heart was fully weaned from her. But the Lord gave me light in regard to the matter. I consider that he is far more to blame than his wife in view of the fact that he claims to believe sacred truth, and she makes no such profession. He has not been a kind, tender husband; he has not been patient and forbearing, but very critical and overbearing if his wife displeased him in any way. I cannot see how his wife, in contact with his temperament and disposition, could feel drawn toward the truth. She

has opposed him and has made it hard for him, but not a whit harder than he has made it for her by his course of action. He has not taken opposition patiently, or as a Christian should. He did wrong when he left his home and his wife and children. A few months ago I learned that he had done nothing for their support.

As matters were unfolded to me, it was a most serious matter for him to allow his affections to center upon another woman when he had a wife living, whom he had promised to love and cherish as long as they both should live. Why he should leave his home so long has been a mystery to us all, until recently I have had divine enlightenment.

He can appear very attractive, and win the confidence and favor of the girls, but when crossed he has such a temper and disposition that, unless he is changed, no woman, believer or unbeliever, could live peaceably with him. He would pursue a course that would make any woman miserable. He is an intemperate eater, and this is why he has so little patience.



I felt that the time had come when I should no longer employ him to transact my business, for warnings kept coming to me from the Lord concerning his course of action.

I will write further in regard to this if necessary. Please write to me, stating facts concerning the family there, as far as you know. Help W.F.C., if you can, to set things right and remove this reproach from the cause of God. Even if his wife is already married, it may be there is something he can do for his children.—Letter 104, 1896.

**To Brother and Sister G. C. Tenney, July 1, 1897**—The work between Fannie Y and Brother W.F.C. was begun at the Melbourne camp meeting [January, 1894]. There she became enamored of a married man, with two children. She utterly denied that there was any affection between her and Brother C. She stood before me in my tent and declared that there was nothing to the reports. For one year after this she was good for nothing to me,

only a dead, heavy load....

We had the affair between Fannie and W. F. C. all through the Armadale camp meeting. I talked with them both separately, and told them that the Lord had a controversy with them both. They denied that there was anything like particular attachment between them. I knew better; but the Lord helped me to work through the meeting. Just before the meeting closed, Fannie came to me and said, "Oh, Sister White, I have come to you as to a mother. I do love Brother C with all my heart, and my heart is just broken. Three times has this cup of bliss been presented to me, and then been snatched away." Then the girl said, "I prayed that if it was right for us to get married, his wife might get a divorce from him, and it was not many weeks before she did get a divorce. Now don't you think the Lord heard my prayer?" I dared not talk with her, for I had to speak that day before a large congregation. If Sister Prescott is in Battle Creek, she will be able to tell you the particulars.

Well, from that time I cut loose from Fannie,

never, as I thought, to connect with her again. But a little while after this, Fannie was in Sydney and wrote me another confession. I thought that I could not take her back, but the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me, and said, “Give her another trial.” So I decided that I would see Fannie and tell her that I would take her back. This I did, and she remained with me several weeks, but was not able to do any work; then she decided that she wanted to go home to her mother, and I told her that she might feel free to do so.—Letter 114, 1897.