

Chapter 31

Respect for Unbiblical Marriages

Separation Not Recommended—Dear Brother [C. H. Bliss]: Your letter has been received and read. I have had acquaintance with several such cases and have found those who felt conscientious to do something in similar cases to the one you mention. After having stirred things up generally, and torn things to pieces, they had no wisdom to put things together to make matters better. I found that those who were so zealous to tear things down did nothing to build them up in right order. They had the faculty to confuse, distress, and create a most deplorable condition of things, but not the faculty to make them better.

You have asked my counsel in regard to this case. I would say that unless those who are burdened in reference to the matter have carefully studied a better arrangement, and can find places

for these where they can be comfortable, they better not carry out their ideas of a separation. I hope to learn that this matter is not pressed, and that sympathy will not be withdrawn from the two whose interests have been united.

No Hasty Movements—I write this because I have seen so many cases of the kind, and persons would have great burden till everything was unsettled and uprooted, and then their interest and burden went no further. We should individually know that we have a zeal that is according to knowledge. We should not move hastily in such matters, but look on every side of the question. We should move very cautiously and with pitying tenderness, because we do not know all the circumstances which led to this course of action.

I advise that these unfortunate ones be left to God and their own consciences, and that the church shall not treat them as sinners until they have evidence that they are such in the sight of the holy God. He reads hearts as an open book. He will not judge as man judgeth.—Letter 5, 1891. [Just

twenty years later W. C. White wrote another correspondent:

“Mother has received during the last twenty years many letters making inquiry regarding the matters about which you write, and she has many times written in reply that she had no advice to give different from that of the apostle Paul. Recently she has refused to deal with letters of this character, and tells us not to bring them to her attention.

“My own views regarding this matter, which I believe to be in harmony with the counsel that I have heard Mother give to individuals years ago, and which I believe to be in harmony with views of the leading brethren and with the teaching of the Scripture, is that there is no blessing to come by our breaking up families who may have sinned or been sinned against before or since they embraced present truth.”—W. C. White letter to Elder G. W. Anglebarger, October 6, 1911.]