



Advice About Marriage

MEADE MAC GUIRE

THOSE who are deeply interested in the salvation and welfare of the young people are frequently asked for counsel and advice on the subject of marriage. It is certainly a vital question, and even the most impulsive young people are not blind to the fact that happiness and success in life may depend to a very great extent upon the choice of a companion. Contrary to the oft-expressed opinion, *marriage is not a lottery*. It is not by any means a matter of drawing a number with the hope that luck or chance or good fortune may make it a successful venture. Marriage, with each individual, should be a definite part of a pre-arranged, divine program for his life, just as being ordained to the ministry or going to a mission field is a part of God's plan. If it were so regarded, many disastrous failures and broken lives and homes would be prevented.

Inasmuch as marriage affects the life more profoundly than any other event except conversion, it is extremely important that the great fundamental principles be known and applied. Impulse, passion, or sentiment should not be the deciding factor. The following letter represents the situation in which many young people find themselves, and the fact that they seek advice by letter and in personal interviews, indicates that instruction should be given patiently, lovingly, and continuously, in order that, so far as possible, they may be saved the sorrow and heartache of severing these unscriptural ties, or the greater disaster of wilfully disobeying God.

"DEAR BROTHER:

"I have been burdened for a long time concerning a question on which I should like your counsel and

advice. First I shall explain why I am writing to you at this time. About two years ago I was at the college during the Week of Prayer. I was greatly helped by the discourses given, and ever since then I have professed to be a Christian. I ask your prayers, that I may be true to my Master. Because of my experience gained at that time,

I have thought you might be able to help me now.

"The problem I am facing is whether it is wrong for me to marry one who is not an Adventist, especially when I have hopes that through my influence he will be led to accept the third angel's message. I am engaged to him, but he is not a member of any church. When his work permits, he attends our church, and I have reason to think he is interested, and will some day unite with us.

"Would you advise me to break my engagement because he does not share my religious beliefs? I shall be grateful for your advice, and hope you will be able to help me decide the question.

"Yours sincerely."

I replied to the above letter, substantially, as follows:

"DEAR SISTER:

"I was much interested in your letter, but very sorry you are facing this serious problem. If you had

understood what the Bible teaches, and had sincerely determined to do the will of God, you would have escaped this very trying situation. The difficulty with many who face this same problem is that they want to be saved and go to heaven, but they are not willing that God shall have His way in their lives. They want God to come to their terms, and let them have their own way here, and then save them just the same. But we must be willing to acknowledge that God knows what is best, and that He requires of us only

Just for This Day

W. H. JERVEY

THE new sun's glittering ray
Limes all the east with red,
The starred sky merges into day —
Night pales; light reigns instead.

Keep, Lord, these wayward feet of mine,
These feet so prone to run astray,
These feet unused to paths of Thine —
Keep, Lord, these feet, just for this day.

These hands, these unclean, grasping hands,
These hands which are but sinful clay,
Fingers which spill life's precious sands —
O, keep them, Lord, just for this day.

These guile-smear'd lips, which speak the lie
When, Father, Thou wouldst have them pray,
These lips which vulgar jests sound high —
Keep, Lord, as Thine, just for this day.

These thoughts which revel in deceit,
These lustful, bestial thoughts which sway
My heart's desire their will to meet —
Them, Father, keep, just for this day.

These things, my Lord, I cannot keep —
Thyself must keep them, lest away
From Thee I fall. Then can I reap
Thy blessing, Lord, just for this day.

The old sun's shimmering light
Paints all the west with red,
The blue sky deepens into night —
Day flees; dark rules instead.

"Only the heart without a stain knows perfect peace."

that which is the best for our own eternal welfare.

"There is a doctrine running through the Bible from beginning to end, which we might call the doctrine of 'separation.' That is, God's children are always to be entirely separate and distinct from unbelievers. When the Lord led Israel into the land of Canaan, He gave this very explicit instruction about their association with the unbelievers of that land:

"Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly."

"The teaching of the New Testament agrees with this. Notice this statement in 2 Corinthians 6:14-18:

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath—

Righteousness	with	Unrighteousness?
Light	"	Darkness?
Christ	"	Belial?
Believer	"	Infidel?
Temple of God	"	Idols?

for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them."

"In these two columns is set forth God's view of those who are His children and those who are not. If He is dwelling in you and walking in you, why should you go over on the other side of that line to put your neck in a yoke with an unbeliever, when God says, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate'? If God really *dwells in you and walks in you*, do you not think that if it is His plan for you to marry, He can bring to you some one who belongs on His side? Do you think He would be obliged to go over into the ranks of the enemy to get some one suitable for His child?

"Christ says, 'Take My yoke upon you.' If you are yoked up with Him, do you think you would be really happy and satisfied to put your neck in a yoke with one who does not follow Him? Would it not be difficult to have your neck in a yoke with Christ, whose whole desire is to lead you upward, and at the same time be yoked with an unbeliever, whose interests are all for this world? Do you think it would be consistent of Christ to own you publicly as His child if you yoked up with an unbeliever? Would it not seem that He was placing His approval on the unequal yoke? Answer these questions honestly.

"Then, of course, we understand the yoke means service. To yoke up with Christ means to dedicate the life to His service. Now, if we should yoke up with an unbeliever, would it not make practically impossible the devotion of all our energies to the service of Christ? Would it not be, even at best, a divided service?

"As you study this great fundamental principle of separation, doubtless many other questions will occur to you, but I shall suggest only this one: You might marry an unbeliever, contrary to the plain instruction of God's Word, and he might turn to the Lord and be saved. Through the mercy of God this sometimes occurs; but you know well there is no certainty of such an outcome. Therefore you take the step facing a great uncertainty. If it turns out the usual way, he will not be converted. Then you will either be obliged to give up Christ and all hope of eternal life, and go down into darkness with him, or you will have to see him go down alone in the hour of that last awful, final separation. Would it not seem that the heart-break would be far worse then, after years spent in the closest relationship known to human beings, than to come out and be separate now, and let the Lord lead in harmony with His word?

"In view of these great and solemn truths given us of God, I do not hesitate to advise you to take your stand absolutely on the principle that you will never be 'yoked together with' an 'unbeliever.' God has something far better for you if you will follow His instruction and let Him choose for you.

"This would not hinder you from doing what you can to bring your friend to Christ, after explaining definitely to him your convictions and your determination to obey the word of God. If he is truly converted to Christ and embraces all the light that is dear to you, then the objection from the standpoint of this scripture would be removed.

"Praying that the Lord may give you wisdom, and the noble courage to follow your divine Master in perfect obedience to God, I am

"Yours sincerely."

Dear young people, let us pray for one another, that the Lord may give us grace to keep our affections wholly yielded to Him. He will then protect us from the snares and pitfalls of the enemy, and choose for us a way that will insure our peace and success in His service here, and a home with Him in heaven.



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