

Courting in School

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Questions to Ask Yourself

Section I – Social Relations

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*new items

Questions to Ask Yourself

Here are questions you may find the answers to in this study:

- * Why have I lost my peace of mind? Why is my sleep disturbed? 1MCP 302
- * How can students refresh their teachers? (Smile!) 4T 432
- * What brings students to a longing desire for change and pleasure? 4T 432
- * What counsel is there regarding putting relationships on long-term hold or on keeping them under control? TSB 19
- * What is the historical context of the strongest statements on courting in school, and what evidence is there in history and in the Spirit of Prophecy regarding a non-dating policy in a college where students average about 20 years of age? 6Bio 382
- * What privileges (see CT 101) should be given to students that are older and more mature? How can it be determined who qualify for these privileges?

Questions to Help You Use This Paper while Keeping Up With Vast Loads of Other Work

These questions are intended to bring important facts to the attention of the reader. The student

willing to take the time to prayerfully and carefully read through all the statements may find the questions superfluous, but others will doubtless appreciate them as a guide to finding the statements that most directly deal with the questions they are facing themselves. Questions prefaced with "Thought:" may not be answered in the statement. Their purpose is to alert students to thoughts that have an important bearing on the intended meaning of the paragraph.

GH 12-01-01

Thought: What is endearment? What must it be subjected to?

ST 10-23-84

Will devotion to God injure the happiness of our social relations?

ST 09-10-85

What determines the power of the influence of the associations that we form? Do your recreations impart moral energy?

18MR 337

What are Christ's principles "in our social relations"?

4T 432

What age-level of students could be expected to carry out the first few sentences without being coerced? Under what conditions will students not manifest a longing desire for change and pleasure? What may students do to refresh and strengthen their teachers? Upon what class rests the responsibility to preserve and perpetuate many of our institutions?

FE 62

What specific privileges were sometimes granted to students at CollegeCity? Where might one find similar regulations? What types of rules are “indispensable”?

Does it appear that most students placed themselves in Battle Creeks? What are three circumstances that demand that a student not yet select a life partner?

19MR 82

How old were Mabel and Ella when Mabel received this letter?

Did Ellen White think it reasonably possible for her granddaughters at that age to keep themselves “free from attachments?” Is there any indication that Grandma White had dealt with this issue before with Mabel? What two reasons does Ellen White give in the beginning of this paragraph for Mabel to keep herself free? Which of these would still apply to Ella at age 22?

11MR 154

To despise restraint, follow inclination, and to be “jolly” with young ladies is the _____ of the _____.

What practice did not seem dangerous to certain administrators at that time? Thought: If the young men and women had asked counsel of their elders, is it likely that they would have found one that would encourage them to proceed with their relationship? What two institutions, other than the college, were to enforce strict rules against apprentice courtship? What action would most effectively demoralize these institutions? Thought: What would be demoralizing about it? It is

natural, isn't it?

8MR 256

Thought: Define "favoritism" and "attachments." Thought: Define "first thread." What should students addressed in this paragraph do with their ideas regarding attachments in school?

For facts relevant to this quote, see questions below on 6Bio.

13MR 144

In the context, what does it mean that school staff members should stand shoulder to shoulder? Why would it be unreasonable to have lax rules and expect students to govern themselves? What would be the effect of that laxness?

4Bio 312

Thought: Was Ellen White afraid of making too big an issue of this topic? Wasn't it possible to say what needed to be said in one talk? Why such repetition?

4T 209

Which class of students should be brought under the "closest restrictions"?

5T 109

Thought: Does the introduction, "My brother," imply anything about this gentleman's age? Under what circumstances would Battle Creek have been "worth nothing"? Thought: How does this counsel accord with the idea that students may entertain thoughts of marriage and feelings of love if they are careful to not get physically involved? What about counsel to keep a relationship under control? What does it mean to "put this entirely out of your mind"? What action shows a "lack of good judgment"? Under what conditions is it appropriate for Christian youth to associate with the

irreligious students and youth?

8MR 261

Thought: In this and other counsels, does Ellen White seem to be concerned with the fact that students may find few options, and no good ones, when looking for a spouse upon returning home from school? Why not? There were fewer Adventists, many churches being composed of one or two families. Suggested answer: Adventist schools were established to train missionary and gospel workers. These found spouses readily in the field of labor, and by meeting them in the field of labor, were better able to match callings.

RH 03-28-99

Of the portion of Avondale students that were over 16 (about 50%) what portion were hired by the conference for religious work? Thought: Is it valid to cite this paragraph as evidence that Ellen White's counsels on courting in school should only apply to academies? Many of the counsels are written specifically to those that were hired by the church. What portion of these were under 16 years old? Is this paragraph dealing with the issue of courtship? See notes on 6Bio for more thoughts and facts on this point.

10MR 74

10MR 196-197

3Bio 383

SpM 66

Was Carrie of an age when God could sanction and bless her marriage to Hickox?

Apparently she was old enough and ready. Then again, once a marriage is made, if the partners are never to cherish the thought that their marriage was a mistake, would we expect a prophet to tell them so? In the first counsel was the issue readiness, age, or place? Was Hickox a student at Avondale? How long had he been in the work?

6Bio 382

Some colleges made allowances for students of “mature age and good standing.” Give an example of these allowances. Why were some college administrators “inclined to some leniency” on this issue? Thought: What is “sound experience”? Suggested answer: This indicates a work history and a reputation for spiritual stability. Thought: Who, in the light of the CT 101 statement, is responsible to decide which students have “sound experience”? Is age to be considered? The statements considered already have given two examples of privileges that older and more mature students might expect (accompanying each other to and from meetings, meeting together in a dormitory sitting room to talk). Do these, either implicitly or explicitly give permission for students to engage in courting? Irwin had been personally at Avondale as college president. Did he understand the counsels to refer only to the young and immature students?

Does the term “larger number” hold up in the face of the evidence regarding the ages of the students? It appears here to be an exaggeration leaning to the point Arthur White was trying to make. Elsewhere the records indicate (see 8MR 261 and RH 09-28-1898) that about half were “over” 16. *History of Seventh-day Adventist Education in Australia*, a thesis by W. J. Gilson (hand dated 09-26-1968), page 148-152, indicates that the second year the number of boarding students increased dramatically, while the number of village remained static. Here are the facts:

<u>1897</u>	<u>1898</u>		
Advanced	45	68	
Intermediate	10	16	
Primary	17	22	
Boarders	40		61
Day	42	45	

[The reader may notice that there seems to be a ten students discrepancy in the numbers of 1897. ($45+10+17=72$; $40+42=82$). These were likely the day students, as may be deducted by comparing the number of Intermediate and Primary in 1898 with the number of Day students (38 to 45). As the figures stand, this is far different than the 1897 figures (27:42). Most likely the number “42” was a typo and should read “32.”] Irwin felt that “many would soon be ready to participate in the organized work of the church.” *Ibid*. A number of them were preparing to enter the field as

teachers, and two were soon hired to help teach the primary students right there at Avondale. Dr. Caro instructed many of them in the arts of nursing. *Ibid.*

4T 433

Thought: Does this statement indicate that a back-burner courtship conducted slyly is less objectionable?

CT 100

Which of the following seem to be reasons urged in the first paragraph for students to not enter into a courting relationship while in school?

- (A) Students were not old enough?
- (B) Dating is wicked.
- (C) Courting may absorb our attention and confuse the mind.
- (D) It represents a careless disregard for the rules.
- (E) Fitness for the work is ever to remain uppermost.

To this point Ellen White has used the terms, “young man,” “young woman,” “youth,” “students,” and the like. In the sentence that refers to giving certain students special privileges, what terms does she use to denote those that should receive them? What, in context, could it mean that we “must not lessen our firmness and vigilance in dealing with students of all agree”? Did some consider these restraints “too severe”? How does the counsel evaluate “free and easy association between young men” and women? How does home training and discipline fit into the freedoms that can be accorded to youth in school?

AH 200

What did Ellen White think of the theory that at 16 or 18 years of age improperly trained youth will

become useful and independent in thought?

1MCP 295

Both parties in a courting relationship should observe rules of _____ and _____. If they do not, they are guilty of _____. The noblest traits of character will not be developed unless one discerns the “high, _____, _____,” design of God in marriage.

1MCP 296

What customary habit of courting couples displeases God? Why?

1MCP 298

The terms “young boys” and “little girls” in this paragraph apparently apply to youth that recently entered their _____.

1MCP 299

How many ignoble young men gain influence over a young lady's mind? What does it mean to trifle with hearts?

1MCP 300

Why do youth feel greater liberty when adults are absent?

1MCP 302

Immature attachments may rob young ladies of peaceful _____ and healthful _____. These

may, if opposed, become _____ and low _____.

4bSG 132

When should a man's will be subdued?

When will children often feel that they are in no danger while hanging around their associates?
Who, during these ages, should see the danger and prevent it by keeping "them back"?

2SAT 139

What mistaken apparent "kindness" may teachers give to students?

GCDB 02-06-93

Thought: At what age is a young man old enough to be "selected" by a conference, offered a scholarship to train for a specific ministry, and accept that offer and the call to enter, for example, the colporteur ministry that comes with it? When are they old enough to sign a contract *before beginning* their education that they will devote a certain portion of time after graduation to doing the work they are training for? That is the age group that this counsel is written for. Time and money are wasted on those that _____ in _____ before "completing their education."

Which class will not hesitate to make a commitment to spend post-graduation time in missionary labour? Under what condition might these missionaries in post graduation consider entering the marriage relation? What trick of Satan has kept many missionaries out of the work?

AH 79

In this statement, the judgment of a 19-year-old has not yet had time to become more _____.

TSB 19

Would one or two years make a significant difference in the readiness of this young man to consider marriage?

Would it be wise for him to select someone to keep his affections for that length of time and then make his move at the end of it? Continued attentions to Nellie would interfere with his (Jon's) office _____ and education. When are "early attachments" particularly "evil"?

When a young man gives his attention to a young lady prematurely, who is demoralized? When one is considering the subject of courtship and marriage, duty to God and everything else becomes _____.

Young men who are not ready should not let this subject _____ their _____.

Nellie, even at 25 years old, would lack what two needful preparations?

THE STATEMENTS

The Gospel Herald 12-01-01

With Christ everything was made subordinate to His Father's kingdom and the great, grand work of saving souls. Redemption was the keynote. He left His royal throne, laid aside His royal crown, laid off His royal robe, and submitted to a life of humiliation. "For your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." And the same devotion, the same subjection of every social relation and endearment, is to be ever paramount in His disciples.

The Signs of the Times 10-23-84

The wise man says that wisdom's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Many cherish the impression that devotion to God is detrimental to health and to cheerful happiness in the social relations of life. But those who walk in the path of wisdom and holiness find that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." They are alive to the enjoyment of life's real pleasures, while they are not troubled with vain regrets over misspent hours, nor with gloom or horror of mind as the worldling too often is when not diverted by some exciting amusement.

The Signs of the Times 09-10-85

In our social relations, in our intercourse we with another, the words of Christ, "Ye are the light of the world," are especially true. Every association we form, however limited, exerts an influence on the life and character; and the extent of that influence will be determined by the degree of intimacy maintained, the constancy of the intercourse, and the love and confidence felt for the one with whom we associate. Even the enemies of Christ, as they see his spirit and life exemplified in the daily life of his followers, will be led to glorify God, the source of their strength and honor. Thus those who have a living connection with God can exert a saving power in the church and in society. Reader, examine your own course; consider the character of the associates you are choosing. Do you seek the company of the wise, or are you willing to choose worldly associates, companions who fear not God, and obey not the gospel? Are your recreations such as to impart moral and spiritual vigor? Will they lead to purity of thought and action?

18MR 337

In our social relations with one another, we are to work on Christ's principles. Honesty, true courtesy, kindness, and gentleness are to be seen in our dealings with one another. But there is more than this. We are to exhort one another daily, while it is called today. True faith is not narrow or selfish. We need to be actuated by a strong, living piety, which draws us to God and leads us to work earnestly to correct our errors.

4T 432

Those students who profess to love God and obey the truth should possess that degree of self-control and strength of religious principle that will help them to remain unmoved amid temptations and to stand up for Jesus in the college, at their boardinghouses, or wherever they may be. Religion is not to be worn merely as a cloak in the house of God, but religious principle must characterize the entire life. Those who are drinking at the fountain of life will not, like the worldling, manifest a longing desire for change and pleasure, to their deportment and character will be seen the rest and peace and happiness that they have found in Jesus by daily laying their perplexities and burdens at His feet. They will show that there is contentment and even joy in the path of obedience and duty. Such will exert an influence over their fellow students which will tell upon the entire school. Those who compose this faithful army will refresh and strengthen the teachers and professors in their efforts by discouraging every species of unfaithfulness, of discord, and of neglect to comply with the rules and regulations. Their influence will be saving, and their works will not perish in the great day of God, but will follow them into the future world; and the influence of their life here will tell throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. One earnest, conscientious, faithful young man in school is an inestimable treasure. Angels of heaven look lovingly upon him. His precious Saviour loves him, and in the Ledger of Heaven will be recorded every work [433] of righteousness, every temptation resisted, every evil overcome. He will thus be laying up a good foundation against the time to come, that he may lay hold on eternal life. [434]

Upon Christian youth depend in a great measure the preservation and perpetuity of the institutions which God has devised as means by which to advance His work. This grave responsibility rests upon the youth of today who are coming upon the stage of action. Never was there a period when results so important depended upon a generation of men; then how important that the young should be qualified for the great work, that God may use them as His instruments. Their Maker has claims upon them which are paramount to all others.

FE 62

The rules of this college strictly guard the association of young men and young women during the school term. It is only when these rules are temporarily suspended, as is sometimes the case, that gentlemen are permitted to accompany ladies to and from public gatherings. Our own College at Battle Creek has similar regulations, though not so stringent. Such rules are indispensable to guard the youth from the danger of premature courtship and unwise marriage. Young people are sent to school by their parents to obtain an education, not to flirt with the opposite sex. The good of society, as well as the highest interest of the students, demands that they shall not attempt to select a life partner while their own character is yet undeveloped, their judgment immature, and

while they are at the same time deprived of parental care and guidance.

19MR 82

(To Mabel White. Jan. 9, 1904) (b. 11-01-86, age 17; Ella, mentioned in paragraph, was 22 at time) (See 1MCP 302 in the "Age and Maturity" section of this paper for more of this letter.)

The Lord desires you to be a sensible girl, and, by appreciating and improving the advantages given you, to develop into a useful woman, able to act a part in some line of service in the Lord's cause.

I want you to listen to what I am going to say to you. You must on no account entertain thoughts of marriage. Such a thing must not be thought of until you have gained a decided victory over the dangers that threaten your physical health. [Mabel's mother had requested that upon her death that Ellen would take up the training of her grandchildren, and that she would especially take care of Mabel with her "pulmonary" problems.]

In order to obtain the full benefits of the educational advantages offered you, you must keep yourself free from attachments with young men. You are a minor, and you have no moral right to take yourself into your own control in this matter. You have evaded my questions. Some time ago you said that you liked, but that you had not decided to, or even thought of, marrying anyone. You have regarded the whole matter in a wrong way. Again and again I have charged you not to form any attachments for boys or young men. And you and Ella have assured me that you would not allow yourselves to be drawn into any familiarity with young men.

11MR 154

It is the spirit of the age to despise restraint, to desire to follow inclination, to jest and joke and be jolly in amusement with young ladies; and the result has been wrecks of character, encouragement to impurity, licentiousness, immorality, and marriages which have ruined the usefulness and efficiency of men and women who had ability and talents, but who have been unable to rise to any noble heights after their unwise marriages. . . . They [certain school administrators] cannot see any harm in the young people's being in one another's society, paying attention to each other, flirting, courting, marrying and giving in marriage. This is the main engrossment of this time with the worldlings, and genuine Christians will not follow their example, but will come out from all these things and be separate.

In our sanitarium, our college, our offices of publication, and in every mission, the strictest rules

must be enforced. Nothing can so effectually demoralize these institutions, and our missions, as the want of prudence and watchful reserve in the association of young men and young women.-Ms. 4a, 1885, pp. 30.33. ("Counsel to Physicians and Medical students" July 27.1885.)

8MR 256

We have labored hard to keep in check everything in the school like favoritism, attachments, and courting. We have told the students that we would not allow the first thread of this to be interwoven with their schoolwork. On this point we were as firm as a rock. I told them that they must dismiss all idea of forming attachments while at school. The young ladies must keep themselves to themselves, and the young gentlemen must do the same. The school was established at a great expense, both of time and labor, to enable students to obtain an all-round education, that they might gain a knowledge of agriculture, a knowledge of the common branches of education, and above all, a knowledge of the Word of God. The study of the Word is to be their educator. --Letter 145,1897, p. 3. (To W. C. White. August 15.1897.)

13MR 144

The discipline of the school is not to be lowered, but all who have any part to act in relation to the school are required to come up to the right standard. They must maintain propriety of conduct in every line, and stand shoulder to shoulder. Those who profess to be followers of Christ are to draw with all their power in even cords. Every worker in the school needs to learn daily in the school of the chief Teacher, Jesus Christ, how to control the feelings, how to subdue the passions. We must live in obedience to the words of Christ, adhering strictly to His rules, heeding His injunctions to the letter. One may possess fine sensibility, but unless this is balanced by sanctified common sense, it becomes a wearisome burden in every council. It is as a ship without a helm to guide it. [145]

The school is not to be regarded as a place for courtship or marriage, but as a place where the youth are to be educated and disciplined for practical life. Flirtation or special attentions between young ladies and young men cannot be permitted in the school. Were the rules so lax as to admit of this, the education and home training of many have been so entirely different from what they

ought to have been that the school would become demoralized, and parents would feel no safety in sending their children to the school.

4BIO 312

One thing we are seriously considering, that the building for the boys shall be entirely separate from that of the girls, a distinct building. . . . I have spoken and read five mornings in succession in the school, and after talking with the whole school. I then took the girls by themselves and talked with them seriously and charged them to keep themselves sacredly to themselves. We would not, could not, allow any courting or forming attachments at the school, girls with young men and young men with girls. This I said before the whole school, and then to the young ladies. I entreated them to be reserved, to be delicate and refined and not to be forward and bold and inviting the attention of young men; [I told them] that they should consider it an honor to cooperate with their teachers and seek to please them in everything.—Letter 193.1897.

4T 209

The youth whose influence is demoralizing should have no connection with our college. Those who are possessed of a lovesick sentimentalism, and make their attendance at school an opportunity for courting and exchanging improper attentions, should be brought under the closest restrictions. Authority must be maintained. Justice and Mercy are twin sisters, standing side by side.

5T 109

Should you, my brother, go to our college now, as you have planned, I fear for your course there. Your expressed determination to have a lady's company wherever you should go shows me that you are far from being in a position to be benefited by going to Battle Creek. The infatuation which is upon you is more satanic than divine. I do not wish to have you disappointed in regard to Battle Creek. The rules are strict there. No courting is allowed. The school would be worth nothing to

students were they to become entangled in love affairs as you have been. Our college would soon be demoralized. Parents do not send their children to our college or to our offices to commence a lovesick, sentimental life, but to be educated in the sciences or to learn the printer's trade. Were the rules so lax that the youth were allowed to become bewildered and infatuated with the society of the opposite sex as you have been for some months past, the object of their going to Battle Creek would be lost. If you cannot put this entirely out of your mind and go there with the spirit of a learner and with a purpose to arouse yourself to the most earnest, humble, sincere efforts, praying that you may have a close connection with God, it would be better for you to remain at home. [110]

Some of those who attend the college do not properly improve their time. Full of the buoyancy of youth, they spurn the restraint that is brought to bear upon them. Especially do they rebel against the rules that will not allow young gentlemen to pay their attentions to young ladies. Full well is known the evil of such a course in this degenerate age. In a college where so many youth are associated, imitating the customs of the world in this respect would turn the thoughts in a channel that would hinder them in their pursuit of knowledge and in their interest in religious things. The infatuation on the part of both young men and women in thus placing the affections upon each other during school days shows a lack of good judgment. As in your own case, blind impulse controls reason and judgment Under this bewitching delusion the momentous responsibility felt by every sincere Christian is laid aside, spirituality dies, sad the judgment and eternity lose their awful significance.

Every faculty of those who become affected by this contagious disease-blind love-is brought in subjection to it. They seem to be devoid of good sense, and their course of action is disgusting to all who behold it My brother, you have made yourself a subject of talk and have lowered yourself in the estimation of those whose approval you should prize. With many the crisis of the disease is reached in an immature marriage, and when the novelty is past and the bewitching power of lovemaking is over, one or both parties awake to their true situation. They then find themselves ill mated, but united for life. Bound to each other by the most solemn vows, they look [111] with sinking hearts upon the miserable life they must lead. They ought then to make the best of their situation, but many will not do this. They will either prove false to their marriage vows or make the yoke which they persisted in placing upon their own necks so very galling that not a few cowardly put an end to their existence.

Associating with the vain, the superficial, and the skeptical will be productive of moral depravity and ruin. Bold, forward young gentlemen or ladies may have something pleasing in their address, they may have brilliant powers of mind and skill to make the bad appear even preferable to the good. Such persons will enchant and bewilder a certain class, and souls will be lost in consequence. The influence of every man's thoughts and actions surrounds him like an invisible atmosphere, which is unconsciously breathed in by all who come in contact with him. This atmosphere is frequently charged with poisonous influences, and when these are inhaled, moral degeneracy is the sure result.

My young brother, would that I could impress upon you your true condition. You must repent or you can never see the kingdom of heaven. Many young men and women who profess godliness do not know what it is to follow Christ. They do not imitate His example in doing good. Love and gratitude toward God are not springing up in the heart nor expressed in their words and deportment. They do not possess the spirit of self-denial, neither do they encourage each other in the way of holiness. We do not want young people to engage in the solemn work of God who profess Christ but have not the moral strength to take their position with those who are sober and watch unto prayer and who have their conversation in heaven, whence they look for the Saviour. We do not feel over-anxious for youth to go to Battle Creek who profess to be Sabbath-keepers but who indicate by their choice of companions their low state of morals. [112]

The door of our college will ever be open to those who are not professors of religion, and the youth coming to Battle Creek may have this irreligious society if it is their choice. If they have right motives in associating with these and sufficient spiritual strength to with stand their influence they may be a power for good; while they are learners they may become teachers. The true Christian does not choose the company of the unconverted for love of the atmosphere surrounding their irreligious lives or to excite admiration and secure applause, but for the purpose of communicating light and knowledge, and bringing them up to a noble, elevated standard, the broad platform of eternal truth.

8MR261

Courting is not to be carried on in the school [THE *REVIEW AND HERALD* (see below) INDICATES THAT AT THAT TIME ONLY ABOUT HALF OF THE STUDENTS WERE OVER SIXTEEN YEARS OF AGE.] That is not what you [262] are here for. We are here to prepare for the future life.--Ms 66.1899, pp. 1, 5, 6. (Extracts from a talk given by Mrs. E. G. White at the opening of College Hall, Avondale, April 17.1899.)

RH 03-28-99

Those speaking for the Avondale school said that during the first year of the workings of that school, with an attendance of sixty students, there were about thirty who were over sixteen years of

age; and from this number, ten were employed during the vacation in various branches of our religious work. During the second year there were one hundred in attendance, and from among fifty who were over sixteen years of age, definite work was found for thirty-two during the vacation. Twenty-five of these were employed by the Conferences and societies in religious work.

10MR 74

In order to act your part in the service of God, you must go forth with the advantages of as thorough an intellectual training as possible. You need a vigorous, symmetrical development of the mental capabilities, a graceful, Christian, many-sided development of culture, to be a true worker for God. You need your taste and your imagination chastened and refined and all your aspirations made pure by habitual self-control. You need to move from high, elevated motives. Gather all the efficiency you can, making the most of your opportunities for the education and training of the character to fill any position which the Lord may assign you. You need so much a balance wheel in judicious counsel. Do not despise advice. Bear in mind that the school is not a place to form attachments for courting or entering into marriage relations. -Letter 23,1893. p. 2. (Written from Hastings, New Zealand, Sept 13,1893, to Miss Carrie Gribble.) (Just shy of seven months later, in April of 1894, Ellen White wrote:)

10MR 196-197

About 11:00 a.m. Tuesday our large dining room was prepared for the wedding ceremony [of Carrie Gribble and Brother Hickox]. Brother [GB] Starr officiated in the service, and it passed off nicely. The request was made by Brother Hickox that Sister White should offer prayer after the marriage ceremony. The Lord gave me special freedom. My heart was softened and subdued by the Spirit of God. On this occasion there were no light jests or foolish sayings. Everything was solemn and sacred in connection with this marriage. Everything was of an elevating character and deeply impressive. The Lord sanctified this marriage, and those two now unite their interest to work in the mission field, to seek and to save them that are lost. God will bless them in their work if they walk humbly with Him, leaning wholly upon His promises.--Ms. 23,1894. (New South Wales, April 9,1894.)

Historical Footnote: He had been active in evangelism for the church for at least six years (3Bio 383) and the church needed a strong young couple like Carrie and him (SpM 66). The ceremony was blessed by God.

6BIO 382

When the work on the book [*Counsels to Parents and Teachers*] was first outlined, no consideration was given to dealing with the question of courtship in denominational schools. There were differences in policies from college to college; some allowed students of mature age and of good standing to meet in the dormitory parlor by permission of the preceptress. Other college administrators thought no provision should be made for such association, and were certain that their position was in harmony with the testimonies and Ellen Whites oral teachings (DF 251, WCW to Elders G. A. Irwin and E. E. Andross. Sept. 7, 1912).

In early September, 1912, W. C. White talked over this matter with his mother. He mentioned to her that administrators who were inclined to some leniency felt “that the strong and unqualified statements in the testimonies regarding this matter refer to and apply chiefly to the schools made up largely of young and immature students” (*ibid.*).

Ellen White responded at length, pointing out that the young and the old cannot be treated alike and that “age and character must be taken into account” She stated that men and women of sound experience and good standing have a right to expect some privileges not granted to the young and immature.

She mentioned also that if administrators are too stringent in this [383] matter, they shall make a serious mistake. If students feel that they are dealt with unjustly and without consideration, there is greater temptation to disregard the rules of the school and the advice of the teachers (*ibid.*).

PacificUnionCollege, nearby, was one of the schools holding to the more conservative position. Its president, C. W. Irwin, had served in the AvondaleSchool, where the school calendar quoted from an E. G. White letter stating:

We have labored hard to keep in check everything in the school like favoritism, attachments, and courting. We have told the students that we would not allow the first thread of this to be interwoven with their schoolwork. On this point we are as firm as a rock. —Letter 145, 1897.

This he had enforced as president of the AvondaleSchool and was currently attempting to enforce as president of PacificUnionCollege. As W. C. White discussed with him the forth coming book of counsels on education, Irwin pressed hard for the inclusion of something on courtship, rather

expecting that it would be an elaboration of the counsel given to the Avondale school.

However, as noted earlier, the discussion W. C. White had with his mother did not support this, but indicated rather that Ellen White would make a definitive statement for general use. When the new chapter on "Department of Students" was prepared, W. C. White sent a copy to A. G. Daniells with a description of the procedure followed in its preparation.

You will observe that this chapter is made up of three parts: first, a broad statement on general principles of deportment. This was drawn from *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 4. Following this is a statement regarding what may be permitted in our colleges in the association of men and women who, are mature in age and of good experience. This is followed by a restatement of the instruction Mother has always given in such schools as the Battle Creek College, the Avondale school, and elsewhere.-WCW to AGD, Feb. 7, 1913.

The crucial paragraphs in the chapter allowing for association of mature students, were dictated by Ellen White. She then reviewed [384] them several times, commenting on each principle and expressing her approval of the wording.

When the chapter was submitted to Professor Irwin, he was surprised to find that it did not accord with the instruction given to the Avondale school. He wrote to W. C. White that the instruction was "something entirely new" and that he was "at a loss to know how to make it agree with matter which Sister White has written on other occasions." He inquired whether some new light had been given to her on this point (DF 25 C. W. Irwin to WCW, Feb. 12, 1913). What Irwin had not taken into account was the different circumstances under which the seemingly divergent counsels had been given.

When she had written in 1897 the larger number of the students were under 16 years of age. [see notes in this study regarding the accuracy of this generalization.] The Avondale school at that time was primarily an academy, not a college. The majority of students in the church's colleges were older and more experienced and mature. Ellen White, in providing general counsel for denominational educators, took this into account and wrote accordingly.

The whole experience was wholesome, for it drew out from W. C. White an explanation of principles that has been most valuable in dealing with the Ellen G. White counsels, in both primary and secondary ways. Of this he wrote to C. W. Irwin:

One of the most perplexing problems we have to deal with in preparing Mother's writings for publication is in just such matters as this, where the conditions of a family, or a church, or an institution are presented to her, and warnings and instruction are given regarding these conditions. In such cases. Mother writes clearly and forcefully, and without qualification regarding the situation presented to her. And it is a great blessing to us to have this instruction for our study in dealing with similar conditions elsewhere.

(skip several paragraphs]

W, C. White told Irwin that from the outset, in developing the chapter on “Department of Students” it was thought that the statement written to the school at Cooranbong, if used, “ought not to stand alone, but that a more complete presentation of Mother’s views should be given than was found in that one manuscript” [386] (DF 251, WCW to C. W. Irwin. Feb. 18, 1913). And he told of how, with the manuscript ready to go to the printer, and considering the far-reaching nature of the statement on courtship, he asked Ellen White to read the chapter again. He reported that “she began with ‘Courtship’ and read to the end, commenting upon and approving point by point of the instruction. —DF 251, WCW to J. E. White, Jan. 25. 1913.

The chapter was included in the finished manuscript as it went to the printer, with the subtitle “Courtship” replaced by the less-pronounced “Association With Others.” The portion in question reads:

In all our dealings with students, age and character must be taken into account. We cannot treat the young and the old just alike. There are circumstances under which men and women of sound experience and good standing may be granted some privileges not given to the younger students. The age, the conditions, and the turn of mind must be taken into consideration. We must be wisely considerate in all our work. But we must not lessen our firmness and vigilance in dealing with students of all ages, nor our strictness in forbidding the unprofitable and unwise association of young and immature students.—CPT, p. 101.

Thus, Ellen White refused to allow a statement written to meet the needs of the Avondale school in its beginning days, with its enrollment of young students, to be used as a rule to guide in college administration. The book came from the press in mid-May, 1913.

4T 433

The course pursued at the college by Brother C, in seeking the society of young ladies, was wrong. This was not the object for which he was sent to Battle Creek. Students are not sent here to form attachments, to indulge in flirtation or courting, but to obtain an education. Should they be allowed to follow their own inclinations in this respect, the college would soon become demoralized. Several

have used their precious school days in slyly flirting and courting, notwithstanding the vigilance of professors and teachers. When a teacher of any of the branches takes advantage of his position to win the affections of his students with a view to marriage, his course is worthy of severest censure.

CT 100

While at school, students should not allow their minds to become confused by thoughts of courtship. They are there to gain a fitness to work for God, and this thought is ever to be uppermost. Let all students take as broad a view as possible of their obligations to God. Let them study earnestly how they can do practical work for the Master during their student life. Let them refuse to burden the souls of their teachers by showing a spirit of levity and a careless disregard of rules.

Students can do much to make the school a success by working with their teachers to help other students, and by zealously endeavoring to lift themselves above cheap, low standards. Those who co-operate with Christ will become refined in speech and in temper. They will not be unruly and self-caring, studying their own selfish pleasure and gratification. They will bend all their efforts to work with Christ as messengers of His mercy and love. They are one with Him in spirit and in action. They seek to store the mind with the precious treasures of God's word, that each may do his appointed work

In all our dealings with students, age and character must be taken into account. We cannot treat the young and the old just alike. There are circumstances under which men and women of sound experience and good standing may be granted some privileges not given to the younger students. The age, the conditions, and the turn of mind must be taken into consideration. We must be wisely considerate in all our work. But we must not lessen our firmness and vigilance in dealing with students of all ages, nor our strictness in forbidding the unprofitable and unwise association of young and immature students.

In our schools in Battle Creek, Healdsburg, and Cooranbong I have borne a straight testimony concerning these matters. There were those who thought the restraint too severe; but we told them plainly what could be and what could not be, showing them that our schools are established at great expense for a definite purpose, and that all which would hinder the accomplishment of this purpose must be put away.

Again and again I stood before the students in the Avondale school with messages from the Lord regarding the deleterious influence of free and easy association between young men and young women. I told them that if they did not keep themselves to themselves, and endeavor to make the most of their time, the school would not benefit them, and those who were paying their expenses would be disappointed. I told them that if they were determined to have their own will and their own way, it would be better for them to return to their homes and to the guardianship of their parents.

This they could do at any time if they decided not to stand under the yoke of obedience, for we did not design to have a few leading spirits in wrong doing demoralizing the other students.

I told the principal and teachers that God had laid upon them the responsibility of watching for souls as they that must give account. I showed them that the wrong course pursued by some of the students would mislead other students, if it were continued, and for this God would hold the teachers responsible. Some students would attend school who had not been disciplined at home, and whose ideas of proper education and its value were perverted. If these were allowed to carry things in their way, the object for which the school was established would be defeated, and the sin would be charged against the guardians of the schools, as if they had committed it themselves.

—————Age and Maturity Quotes—————

AH 200

The prevailing influence in the world is to suffer the youth to follow the natural turn of their own minds. And if very wild in youth, parents say they will come right after a while and, when sixteen or eighteen years of age, will reason for themselves and leave off their wrong habits and become at last useful men and women. What a mistake! For years they permit an enemy to sow the garden of the heart; they suffer wrong principles to grow, and in many cases all the labor afterward bestowed on that soil will avail nothing. . . .

1MCP 295

The ideas of courtship have their foundation in erroneous ideas concerning marriage. They follow impulse and blind passion. The courtship is carried on in a spirit of flirtation. The parties frequently violate the rules of modesty and reserve and are guilty of indiscretion, if they do not break the law of God. The high, noble, lofty design of God in the institution of marriage is not discerned; therefore the purest affections of the heart, the noblest traits of character, are not developed.-MS 4a, 1885. (MM 141.)

1MCP 296

The habit of sitting up late at night is customary; but it is not pleasing to God, even if you are both Christians. These untimely hours injure health, unfit the mind for the next day's duties, and have an appearance of evil. My brother, I hope you will have self-respect enough to shun this form of courtship. If you have an eye single to the glory of God you will move with deliberate caution. You will not suffer lovesick sentimentalism to so blind your vision that you cannot discern the high claims that God has upon you as a Christian. -3T 44,45 (1872).

1MCP 298

The young boys are like wise left to have their own way. They have scarcely entered their teens before they are by the side of little girls of their own age, accompanying them home and making love to them. And the parents are so completely in bondage through their own indulgence and mistaken love for their children that they dare not pursue a decided course to make a change and restrain their too-fast children in this fast age.—2T 460 (1870).

1MCP 299

A young man who enjoys the society and wins the friendship of a young lady, unbeknown to her parents, does not act a noble Christian part toward her or toward her parents. Through secret communications and meetings he may gain an influence over her mind; but in so doing he fails to manifest that nobility and integrity of soul which every child of God will possess. In order to accomplish their ends they act a part that is not frank and open and according to the Bible standard, and prove themselves untrue to those who love them and try to be faithful guardians over them. Marriages contracted under such influences are not according to the Word of God. He [a young man] who would lead a daughter away from duty, who would confuse her ideas of God's plain and positive commands to obey and honor her parents, is not one who would be true to the marriage obligations.— RH, Jan 26,1886. (FE 101,102.)

1MCP 299

To trifle with hearts is a crime of no small magnitude in the sight of a holy God, And yet same will show preference for young ladies and call out their affections, and then go their way and forget all

about the words they have spoken and their effect. A new face attracts them, and they repeat the same words, devote to another the same attentions,--RH, Nov 4,1884. (AH 57.)

1MCP 300

Why the young feel more liberty when the older ones are absent is: they are with those of their kind. Each thinks he is as good as the other. All fail of the mark but measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves among themselves, and neglect the only perfect and true standard. Jesus is the True Pattern. His self-sacrificing life is our example. 1T 154, 155 (1857).

1MCP 300

With many young ladies the boys are the theme of conversation; with the young men, it is the girls. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34). They talk of those subjects upon which their minds mostly run. The recording angel is writing the words of these professed Christian boys and girls. How will they be confused and ashamed when they meet them again in the day of God. Many children are pious hypocrites. The youth who have not made a profession of religion stumble over these hypocritical ones and are hardened against any effort that may be made by those interested in their salvation. 2T 460 (1870).

1MCP 302

[Written to Mabel White, 17 Years of Age. The note that it is written to a "girl of 18" is a mistake caused by not taking into account that Mabel's birthday was yet nine months away.], see 19MR pp. 81-87 for the entire letter.]

You have no right to place your affections on any young man without your father's and your mother's full sanction. You are but a child, and for you to show a preference for any young man without the full knowledge and sanction of your father is to dishonor him. Your attachment to this

young man is robbing you of a peaceful mind and of healthful sleep. It is filling your mind with foolish fancies and with sentimentalism. It is retarding you in your studies and is working serious evil to your mental and physical powers. If opposed, you become irritable and low spirited.—Lt. 9, 1904.

SG 132

The mother's work commences with the infant She should subdue the will and temper of the child, and bring its disposition into subjection. Learn it to obey. As the child grows older, relax not the hand. Every mother should take time to reason with the child, to correct its errors, and patiently teach it the right way. Christian parents should know that they are instructing and fitting their children to become children of God. The whole religious experience of the children is influenced by the instructions given, and character formed, in childhood. If the child's will is not subdued and made to yield in childhood to the will of the parents, then what a task! What a severe struggle! What a conflict, to yield that will which never was subdued, to the requirements of God? Parents who neglect this important work, commit a great error, and sin against their poor children, and against God. Children, while under strict discipline, will at times have dissatisfied feelings. They will feel impatient under restraint, and will wish to have their own will, and go and come as they please. And they will often feel, from the ages of **ten to eighteen**, that there would be no harm in going to picnics and other gatherings of young associates; yet their experienced parents can see danger. They are acquainted with the peculiar temperaments of their children, and know the influence of these things upon their minds, and in reference to their salvation, keep them back from these exciting amusements.

2SAT 132

Those now being educated in this school should go from it to educate others. They are to eat, drink, and dress to the glory of God. We shall not keep here those who say, I am not going to keep the rules. They can return to their homes if they are not willing to come into order. Let not the teachers think they are doing the students a kindness by allowing wrong to go unrebuked. We should stand where the Lord will not need to say to us, "Neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you." —Ms. 66,1899.

GCDB 02-06-93

“When a Conference **selects young men and women, and aids them in obtaining an education for the canvassing field or any other branch of the work**, there should be an understanding as to what they propose to do,—whether they design to engage in courtship and marriage, or to labor for the advancement of the cause of truth. It is no use to spend time and money in the education of workers who will fall in love before they complete this education, who cannot resist the first temptation in the form of an invitation to marriage. In most cases the labor spent on such persons is wholly lost. When they enter the marriage relation, their usefulness in the work of God is at an end. They increase their family, they are dwarfed and crippled in every way, and cannot use the knowledge they have obtained.

“Before persons are admitted to our mission training schools, let there be a written agreement that after receiving their education they will give themselves to the work for a specified time. This is the only way that our missions can be made what they should be. Let those who connect themselves with the missions be straightforward, and take hold of the work in a business-like manner. Those who are controlled by a sense of duty, who daily seek wisdom and help from God, will act intelligently, not from selfish motives, but from the love of Christ and the truth. Such will not hesitate to give themselves unreservedly, soul, body, and spirit, to the work. They will study, work, and pray for its advancement. I repeat, do not enter into a marriage engagement, unless there are good and sufficient reasons for this step.—unless the work of God can be better advanced thereby. For Christ’s sake deny inclination, lift the cross, and do the work for which you are educating yourselves.

“Many of the marriages contracted in these last days prove to be a mistake. The parties make no advancement in spiritual things; their growth and usefulness ended with their marriage. There are men and women throughout the country who would have been accepted as laborers together with God if Satan had not laid his snares to entangle their minds and hearts in courtship and marriage. Did the Lord urge them to obtain the advantages of our schools and missions, that they might sink everything in courtship and marriage, binding themselves by a human band for a lifetime? By accepting the work of rearing children in these last days of uncertainty and peril, many place themselves in a position where they cannot labor either in the canvassing field or in any other branch of the cause of God, and some lose all interest to do this. They are content with a common, low level, and assimilate to the position they have chosen* The bewitching power of Satan’s deceptions wrought within the human heart its evil work. Instead of candidly considering the time in which we live, and the work they might do in leading others to the truth, they reason from a selfish standpoint and follow the impulse of their own unconsecrated hearts. “The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.” The natural appetites and passions become a controlling power, and the result is that spiritual growth ceases; the soul is, as it were, paralyzed.

AH 79

A youth **not out of his teens is a poor judge** of the fitness of a person as young as himself to be his companion for life. **After their judgment has become more matured**, they view themselves bound for life to each other and perhaps not at all calculated to make each other happy. Then, instead of making the best of their lot, recriminations take place, the breach widens, until there is settled indifference and neglect of each other. To them there is nothing sacred in the word "home." The very atmosphere is poisoned by unloving words and bitter reproaches.

TSB 19

I am sorry that you have entangled yourself in any courtship with Nellie A. In the first place, **your anxiety upon this question is premature**. Sound judgment and discretion will bid you **wait for one or two years**. But for you to **select one to be in your mind and affections that length of time would not be prudent** for you or just to the one to whom you pay your address.

I speak what I know in this matter, that the very best course for you and for Nellie is to give this matter up entirely, for no good can come of it. In continuing your attentions to her, you will be unfitting yourself for your office duties and placing obstructions in your way for a thorough education and for the habits of body and mind to become settled. Even to bind your affections prematurely is doing yourself and any young lady injustice. . . .

I have been shown the evil of these early attachments, especially when a young man is away from the home roof and must select his companion without the discriminating eye of his mother. It is not safe for you to trust to your own judgment. Early anxiety upon the subject of courtship and marriage will divert your mind from your work and studies, and will produce in you and the one whom you flatter with your attentions a demoralizing influence. There will be in you both a vain forwardness in manners, and infatuation will seize you both. and you will be so completely blinded in regard to your influence and example that you will, if you continue in the course you have entered upon, expose yourselves to criticism and demand that censure should be passed upon your course.

This courtship and marriage is the most difficult to manage, because the mind becomes so bewildered and enchanted that duty to God and everything else becomes tame and uninteresting,

and calm and mature thought is the last thing to be exercised in this matter of the gravest importance. Dear youth, I speak to you as one who knows. Wait till you have some just knowledge of yourself and of the world, of the bearing and character of young women, before you let the subject of marriage possess your thoughts. [S3P] Nellie A will not be as much prepared by cultivated manners and useful knowledge to marry at twenty-five as some girls would be at eighteen. But men generally of your age have a very limited knowledge of character, and no just idea of how foolish a man can make himself by fancying a young girl who is not fit for him in any sense. It will be far better not to marry at all than to be unfortunately married, but seek counsel of God in all these things. Be so calm. so submissive to the will of God, that you will not be in a fever of excitement and unqualified for His service by your attachments.-Letter 59.1880.

—————Additional items—————

Only Advised and Counseled

In regard to marriage, I would say. Read the Word of God. Even in this time, the last days of this world's history, marriages take place among Seventh-day Adventists. . . . We have, as a people, never forbidden marriage, except in cases where there were obvious reasons that marriage would be misery to both parties. And even then, we have only advised and counseled.—Lt. 60,1900.
1MCP 219

For the Word Doc: [Courting in School](#)