

PROPRIETOR OF

ELLEN G. WHITE

Publications

Office Address:

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS
TAKOMA PARK, WASHINGTON 12, D.C.

July 13, 1965

76 North Washington St.
Sonoma, California

Dear Brother Goodier:

We have your brief note asking if certain sheets you enclose are an authentic E. G. White production. The statement you send to us attributed to Mrs. White is made up of some material which purports to be a letter written to Sister White many years ago. We have no original of this letter and therefore are unable to verify the accuracy of the statement.

Several copies of the materials similar to that which you have sent to us, have through the years been received by our office. No two agree in wording. Sentences and paragraphs which appear in one copy do not appear in another. If there was such a letter written by Sister White, we have no way of knowing to what extent these copies which are in circulation are like the original letter. If she did write such a letter she never gave it to her secretaries for filing, and she never placed a copy on file.

The ideas which seem to be presented in some of the phrases which are attributed to Sister White, are quite out of harmony with the body of teaching which we know came from her pen, and by which we should judge her work. Sister White did not teach that there should be no children brought into the world. Rather she counsels, "He who gave Eve to Adam as a helpmeet, . . . ordained that men and women should be united in holy wedlock, to rear families whose members, crowned with honor, should be recognized as members of the family above." Ministry of Healing, Page 356.

Mrs. White points out very clearly the blessings of parenthood and even urges a childless couple to adopt a child for their own good. Again and again she speaks of the blessings which children bring to the home. I have a number of references before me, I will list them:

Adventist Home p. p. 159 - 161
Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 424
" Vol. 2, p. 417
Ministry of Healing, p. 356
Counsels to Teachers, pp. 143 -144
Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 195 - 196

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Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 84
Testimonies, Vol. 2, pp. 649-50
Testimonies, Vol. 2, pp. 290-31
Testimonies, Vol. 2, p. 329

On the other hand, Sister White points out the times in which we live as being a time of peril for children and youth. You will find some such statements in - -

Counsels to Teachers, p. 327
Testimonies, Vol. 2, p. 410
Testimonies, Vol. 5, p. 324
Education, p. 276
Ministry of Healing, p. 380

There were times when laymen and workers alike had very large families which led to problems in support and education, and at times cost the life of the mother. Counsel was given to some of these families. See Testimonies, Vol. 2, pp. 393-94; 379-81. Adventist Home, pp. 162-66.

Sister White recognized also that our missionaries would be handicapped should they have large families. Thus, in 1885, in the Review and Herald, she published this statement as a part of one of her articles:

"In sending missionaries to distant countries, those men should be selected who know how to economize, who have not large families, and who, realizing the shortness of time and the great work to be accomplished, will not fill their hands and houses with children, but will keep themselves as free as possible from everything that will divert their minds from their one great work. The wife, if devoted, and left free to do so, can, by standing by the side of her husband, accomplish as much as he. God has blessed women with talents to be used to His glory in bringing many sons and daughters to God; but many who might be efficient laborers are kept at home to care for their little ones.

"We want missionaries who are missionaries in the fullest sense of the word; who will put aside selfish considerations, and let the cause of God come first; and who, working with an eye single to His glory, will keep themselves as minute men to go where He shall bid, and to work in any capacity to spread the knowledge of the truth. Men who have wives that love and fear God and that can help them in the work, are needed in the missionary field. Many who have families go out to labor, but they do not give themselves entirely to the work. Their minds are divided. Wife and children draw them from their labor, and often keep them out of fields that they might enter were it not that they think they must be near their home. Let missionaries be missionaries; let them leave their own and their wives' hands and hearts free, taking their homes with them where they go, and great good will be accomplished." . . . Review and Herald, Dec. 8, 1885. Republished in Adventist Home, pp. 165-66

Our records would indicate that similar counsel was given to certain specific couples where both wife and husband were particularly fitted for special service in the Lord's work.

Sister White took a great deal of joy in her own grandchildren, and at the wedding of one of her granddaughters, in 1905, in offering the prayer she made reference to the new home which was being established and to the children which might bless the home. Putting all those things together, we can see very clearly that Sister White did not advocate childless homes, but she also gave counsel as to our workers burdening themselves unduly with very large families.

She did not advocate extreme positions concerning the marriage relation. While she counselled against excess, she recognized the "privilege of the marriage relation." Testimonies, Vol. 2, p. 250. See Adventist Home pp. 121-28.

I trust that this information will be of service to you.

With the best of wishes, I am

Sincerely your brother,

Arthur L. White, Secretary
ELLEN G WHITE PUBLICATIONS

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