

EG White Guidelines On What To Do After The First And Second Phase Of The Sunday Law

April 6, 1911 A Study of Principles -- No.5

Methods of Labor Where Prejudice Is Strong

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IN THE SUMMER OF 1895, THERE WAS RENEWED ACTIVITY IN SOME OF THE SOUTHERN STATES IN ARRESTING SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS FOR SUNDAY LABOR; AND THERE WERE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION AMONG SOME OF OUR BRETHREN AS TO HOW FAR THE BRETHREN IN THAT FIELD SHOULD GO IN THE MATTER OF REFRAINING FROM THEIR ORDINARY SECULAR WORK ON SUNDAY. {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 1}

SOME FELT THAT, WHERE A SUNDAY LAW WAS BEING ENFORCED, TO REFRAIN FROM SUCH LABOR UNDER ANY CONDITIONS WOULD BE A DENIAL OF FAITH, AND WOULD INVOLVE RECEIVING THE MARK OF THE BEAST. THE ONLY LOGICAL CONCLUSION TO SUCH A PREMISE WOULD BE THAT OUR BRETHREN SHOULD TEACH ALL, EVEN THE SABBATH-KEEPERS AMONG THE COLORED PEOPLE, THAT, BE THE CONSEQUENCES WHAT THEY MIGHT, IT WAS THEIR DUTY TO LABOR OPENLY, AS USUAL, ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, IN DEFIANCE OF THE SUNDAY LAWS. OTHERS WHO WERE LABORING IN THE SOUTH, WITH THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF THE CONDITIONS AND THE FIELD, AND OF THE STRONG PREJUDICES OF SOME OF THE PEOPLE, FELT THAT OUR WORK WOULD BE GREATLY HINDERED WERE TO MAINTAIN SUCH AN ATTITUDE. {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 2}

ON THE MORNING OF NOV. 20, 1895, ON THE ARMADALE CAMP-GROUND IN VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA, A SPECIAL MEETING WAS CALLED TO CONSIDER THE MATTER. THERE WERE PRESENT W. W. PRESCOTT, A. G. DANIELLS, W. C. WHITE, M. C. ISRAEL, L. J. ROSSEAU, W. A. COLCORD, M. G. KELLOGG, W. D. SALISBURY, JAMES SMITH, AND SISTERS E. G. WHITE AND E. J. BURNHAM. {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 3}

SEVERAL LETTERS WERE READ WITH REFERENCE TO THE QUESTION AT ISSUE, AND THE BRETHREN WERE INVITED TO DISCUSS THE POINTS TREATED IN THE LETTERS; BUT ALL SEEMED DESIROUS OF HEARING FROM SISTER WHITE, AND IN THE COURSE OF HER REMARKS, SHE SAID:- {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 4}

"There is a terrible crisis just before us, through which all must pass, and especially will it come and be felt in ----. My mind has been much troubled over the positions which some of our brethren are liable to take in regard to the work to be done among the colored people in the Southern States. . . . {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 5}

"When the truth is proclaimed in the South, a marked difference will be shown by those who oppose the truth in their greater regard for Sunday, and great care must

be exercised not to arouse their prejudice. Otherwise we may just as well leave the field entirely. . . . {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 6}

"Our laborers must move in a quiet way, striving to do everything possible to present the truth to the people, remembering that the love of Christ will melt down opposition. {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 7}

"From the light that I have received, I see that if we would get the truth before the Southern people, we must not encourage the colored people to work on Sunday. There must be a clear understanding regarding this. . . . {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 8}

"We are not to make efforts to teach the Southern people to work on Sunday. That which some of our brethren have written upon this point is not based upon right principles. When the practises of the people do not come in conflict with the law of God, you may conform to them. If the workers fail to do this, they will not only hinder their own work, but they will place stumbling-blocks in the way of those for whom they labor, and hinder them from accepting the truth. On Sunday there is the very best opportunity for those who are missionaries to hold Sunday-schools, and come to the people in the simplest manner possible, telling them of the love of Jesus for sinners, and educating them in the Scriptures." {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 9}

Question: "Should not those in the Southern field work on Sunday?" [The questioner evidently had in mind to inquire regarding the duty of our brethren under conditions then existing in the South, rather than their duty in that particular locality, regardless of conditions.] {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 10}

"If they do this, there is danger that as soon as the opposing element can get the slightest opportunity, they will stir up one another to persecute those whom they hate. At present Sunday-keeping is not the test. The time will come when men will not only forbid Sunday work, but they will try to force men to labor on the Sabbath, and to subscribe to Sunday observance or forfeit their freedom and their lives. But the time for this has not yet come, for the truth must be presented more fully before the people as a witness. What I have said about this should not be understood as referring to the action of old Sabbath-keepers who understand the truth. They must move as the Lord shall direct them, but let them consider that they can do the best missionary work on Sunday. {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 11}

"When the colored people feel that they have the Word of God in regard to the Sabbath question, and the sanction of those who brought them the truth, some who are impulsive will take the opportunity to defy the Sunday laws, and by a presumptuous defiance of their oppressors, they will bring to themselves much sorrow. Very faithfully the colored people must be instructed to be like Christ, to patiently suffer wrongs, that they may help their fellow men to see the light of truth. . . . {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 12}

"The people will soon find out what you believe about Sunday and the Sabbath, for they will ask questions. Then you can tell them, but not in such a manner as to attract attention to your work. You need not cut short your work by yourself laboring on Sunday. It would be better to take that day to instruct others in regard to the love of Jesus and true conversion." {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 13}

Question: "Should the same principles govern our work and our attitude toward the Sunday question in foreign fields where the prejudices of the people are so strong?" {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 14}

"Yes; just the same. The light that I have is that God's servants should go quietly to work, preaching the grand, precious truths of the Bible,-- Christ and him crucified, his love and infinite sacrifice,--showing that the reason why Christ died is because the law of God is immutable, unchangeable, eternal. The Spirit of God will awaken the conscience and the understanding of those with whom you work, bringing the commandments of God to their remembrance. . . . The Sabbath must be taught in a decided manner, but be cautious how you deal with the idol Sunday. A word to the wise is sufficient. {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 15}

"I have given you the light which has been presented to me. If followed, it will change the course of many, and will make them wise, cautious teachers. **Refraining from work on Sunday is not receiving the mark of the beast; and where this will advance the interests of the work, it should be done. We should not go out of our way to work on Sunday.** {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 16}

"After the Sabbath has been sacredly observed, in places where the opposition is so strong as to arouse persecution if work is done on Sunday, let our brethren make that day an occasion to do genuine missionary work. Let them visit the sick and the poor, ministering to their wants, and they will find favorable opportunities to open the Scriptures to individuals and to families. Thus most profitable work can be done for the Master. **When those who hear and see the light on the Sabbath take their stand upon the truth to keep God's holy day, difficulties will arise; for efforts will be brought to bear against them to compel men and women to transgress the law of God. Here they must stand firm, that they will not violate the law of God; and if the opposition and persecution are determinedly kept up, let them heed the words of Christ: 'When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.'** {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 17}

"The time has not yet come for us to work as if there were no prejudice. Christ said, 'Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.' If you see that by doing certain things which you have a perfect right to do, you hinder the work of truth, refrain from doing these things. **Do nothing that will close the minds of others against the truth. There is a world to save, and we gain nothing by cutting loose from those we are trying to help. All things may be lawful, but all things are not expedient.** {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 18}

"We have no right to do anything that would obstruct the light which is shining from heaven; yet by a wrong course of action we may imperil the work, and close the door which God has opened for the entrance of the truth. **The final issue of the Sabbath question has not yet come, and by imprudent actions we may bring on a crisis before the time.**" {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 19}

In a letter to Elder A. O. Tait, written the same day this special meeting was held Mrs. White wrote further in harmony with these principles. She said:-- {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 20}

"This morning I attended a meeting where a select few were called together to consider some questions that were presented to them by a letter soliciting consideration and advice on these subjects. On some of these subjects I could speak, because at sundry times and in divers places, many things have been presented to me in reference to some matters of labor that required great caution in speech as well as in the expression of thought with the pen. The advice given to our brethren in the Southern field has been diverse; it would bring in confusion. . . . {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 21}

"Should the colored people in the Southern States be educated, as they receive the truth, that they should work on Sunday, there would be excited a most unreasonable and unjust prejudice. . . . {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 22}

"Tell them they need not provoke their neighbors by doing work on Sunday; that this will not prevent them from observing the Sabbath. . . . Let the instruction be given to this much oppressed people that the keeping of the Sabbath does not necessitate their working on Sunday. . . . This people need not be told that the observance of Sunday is the mark of the beast until this time shall come. . . . {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 23}

"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.' All this may be, and yet not one principle of truth be sacrificed."

Mountain View, Cal. {RH, April 6, 1911 par. 24}