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"Advice for Living"

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Question: *I am an Oklahoma white woman. I feel so antagonistic toward the word Christianity because of white people's attitude toward the colored peoples of the world that I cannot make myself attend church and worship under such hypocrisy. There are no inter-racial churches here. Is it necessary for me to worship publicly? I do not feel free to ask this question of a white preacher.*

Answer: I can well understand your antagonistic attitude toward the Christian church for its failure to match practice with profession in the area of the brotherhood of man. It is still appallingly true that eleven o'clock on Sunday morning, when we stand to sing "In Christ There Is No East or West," is the most segregated hour in Christian America. In spite of this, the church is making progress. More and more the moral conscience of Christendom is being aroused on the question of race. It is for this reason that I would advise you to stay with the church. It will be persons like yourself that will keep the church moving on toward the ideal of brotherhood. You can always help a situation more when you are in it than you can from the outside. Internal criticism is always more effective than external criticism. I hope you will stay with the church and continue to sting its conscience on the question of race and color.

Question: *My husband and I have been married for nine years and have five children. We have never had an understanding about money. I have never had any money for personal use or anything else. When I ask him about his salary or his money, he gets mad and starts to arguing. This has been going on for nine years. Is a wife entitled to an allowance or a little money from her husband for personal use? Does a wife have a right to know her husband's salary?*

Answer: I think you are quite right in feeling that your husband should give you money for personal use. There are always those personal items and individualistic concerns that a woman should not be deprived of simply because she is married. I also feel that it is a good idea to know your husband's salary and as many of his business concerns as possible. This is in no way to infringe upon his individuality, but it is simply a safeguard in the event that something happens to him. It is unfortunate indeed that many husbands have passed on and left their wives without one iota of business judgment. This has often resulted in the unnecessary loss of money. Therefore, I would advise you to seek to show your husband the practicality as well as the morality of discussing his salary and business concerns with you. Marriage is a cooperative enterprise in which two individuals are seeking to become one. You may do well to seek to convince your husband of the wisdom of having joint bank accounts.

Question: *I've been in trouble one way or another all my life. My problem is that I don't like to fight unless I have to. Like you said in a speech once, when someone hates you don't fight back but love them and pray for them. Well, I do that, but it doesn't seem to help. Last night I got into an argument with one of my friends. When I walked off, he hit me over the*

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head with an iron pipe. The fellows told me I should have killed him, but instead I went home and prayed for him. What should I do to get people to understand me?

Answer: It is very difficult to get a "don't fight back philosophy" over to a group of people who have come up under a tradition that so strongly expresses a philosophy of hitting back. It is very difficult to get over a philosophy of non-violence to people who have been taught from the cradle that violence must be met with violence. But you must somehow continue to follow this way in word and in deed. You must get over to your comrades that the man who does not hit back is the strong man. To return violence for violence does nothing but intensify the existence of violence and evil in the universe. Someone must have sense enough and morality enough to cut off the chain of violence and hate. It is ultimately the strong man who can do this. He who accepts violence without returning it is much stronger than he who inflicts it.

Question: *I am a white boy who is in love with a girl of your race. A few of my white "friends" (I use that word very loosely) say that the Bible is against interracial marriage. They cannot point out the passages and I have found no such passage in the Bible. Can you advise me?*

Answer: I have not found any passage in the Bible condemning interracial marriage. It is true that there are occasional references condemning marriage between persons of different religious groups, but it is never on the basis of race. In other words, the Jews were often admonished not to marry persons of another religion. But there was never condemnation of one marrying beyond racial lines. Therefore, one who stands against interracial marriages can find no justification in the Bible for that particular view. Actually, there is nothing immoral or irreligious. Marriage is at bottom a mutual agreement between two individuals. One always has the freedom to say yes or no to the agreement. Individuals marry, not races.

Question: *I was under the impression that the NAACP was strictly a Negro organization. Is it true that it is was founded by whites and that it is run and backed by whites today?*

Answer: The NAACP has never been strictly a Negro organization. It has been an interracial organization from the very beginning. The organization grew out of a conference between Mary White Ovington, William Henry Walling and Henry Moskowitz which was held in January, 1909 to discuss problems of discrimination against Negroes in the United States. A second conference was held in May of 1909 in New York City and a committee of forty was formed to begin the national work. It was at this meeting that the NAACP was organized as a permanent body. W. E. B. DuBois became an executive in the association and publication of the Crisis Magazine begun in November 1910 with DuBois as editor. So it is clear that the NAACP has been interracial from the very moment of its origin. It continues to be an interracial organization to the present day. Many of the officers and board members are white persons. It is not quite true to say that the organization is run by white persons today. It would be more accurate to say that white persons of goodwill are working cooperatively with Negroes to solve a problem that is harmful to the whole of America. The white persons who work with the NAACP are persons who have a great passion for human dignity and racial justice.