

FALSE INDEPENDENCE

“Boldness, impiety, selfishness, and independence are so common and the standard of righteousness so low, and the end of all things is at hand.” 1888 Materials, p 1203.

“The independence and self-supremacy in which we glory are seen in their true vileness as tokens of servitude to Satan.” The Mount of Blessings, p 15.

Each human being is responsible to God alone – no responsibility needs to be shown toward our fellow brethren.

“...some of the workers are not willing to help or instruct their fellow workmen.” Counsels for the Church, p 45.

“The cause of the trouble it is not difficult to determine. The workers have been independent threads, when they should have regarded themselves as threads that must be woven together to help form the pattern....Every worker will be tested as to whether he is laboring for the advancement of the Lord's institution, or to serve his own interests.” Testimonies, vol 7, p 197-198.

We are responsible to God alone for our actions – no one can hold us responsible, or correct, or censure, or discipline us for what we do, even if our actions are wrong and adversely affect our fellow brethren.

“Many feel that the line of work they are doing belongs solely to them and that no one else should make any suggestions in regard to it. These very ones may be ignorant as to the best methods of conducting the work; yet, if one ventures to offer them advice, they are offended and become more determined to follow their independent judgment....Others who are inexperienced do not wish their ignorance to be known. They make mistakes, at a cost of much time and material, because they are too proud to ask counsel.” Counsels for the Church, p 45-46.

“The sin that is most nearly hopeless and incurable is pride of opinion, self-conceit. This stands in the way of all growth. When a man has defects of character, yet fails of realizing this; when he is so imbued with self-sufficiency that he cannot see his fault, how can he be cleansed?” Testimonies, vol 7, p 199-200.

“The evils of self-esteem and an unsanctified independence, which most impair our usefulness, and which will prove our ruin if not overcome, spring from selfishness.” Testimonies, vol 5, p 29.

“In heaven there is perfect order, perfect obedience, perfect peace and harmony. Those who have had no respect for order or discipline in this life, would have no respect for the order which is observed in heaven. They can never be admitted into heaven, for all worthy of an entrance there will love order and respect discipline. The characters formed in this, will determine the future life. When Christ shall come, he will not change the character of any individual. Precious, probationary time is given to be improved in washing our robes of character, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Counsels on Education, p 237.

“The Lord will never accept a careless, disorderly company of workers; neither will He undertake to lead forward and upward to noble heights and certain victories those who are self-willed and disobedient.” Manuscript Releases, vol 16, p 141.

“This independence to do every man as seemeth good in his own eyes is after the satanic order, but not after Christ. One sets himself up in a certain place...; another does the same in another place; and there is no more unity one with the other than between the strands of ropes of straw. This thing I have been shown is a disgrace...and a dishonor to the cause of God.” Pamphlet #66, p 5.

We are responsible to spiritually unite with God alone – no one is to visibly unite with one another in a church or in working capacity.

“Love of self, pride and self-sufficiency lie at the foundation of the greatest trials and discords that have ever existed in the religious world. Again and again the angel has said to me, "Press together, press together, be of one mind, of one judgment." Christ is the Leader, and you are brethren; follow Him. Walk in the light as He is in the light. Those who walk in the footsteps of Christ shall not walk in darkness, but those who draw apart in unsanctified independence cannot have God's presence and blessing in the work.” Christian Leadership, p 11.

“I am permitted to see the inclination of certain ones to follow their own strong traits of character. If they refuse to yoke up with others who have had a long experience in the work, they will become blinded by self-confidence, not discerning between the false and the true. It is not safe that such ones should stand in the position of leaders, to follow their own judgment and plans...The disposition of some to shut themselves up to themselves, and to feel competent to plan and execute according to their own judgment and preferences, brings them into strait places. Such an independent way of working is not right, and should not be followed.” Testimonies to Ministers, p 501-502.

“The people have long been afflicted with unconsecrated men, who have acted independently of the church, and have followed their own unsanctified judgment, imperilling our institutions by their unsanctified independence.” Pamphlet #66, p 11.

“...if you choose to make your own plans and go independently you will not have the Lord to go with you.” Manuscript Releases, vol 20, p 120.

“Satan took advantage of Brother and Sister G's lack of union with the body. They desired to take an independent course, and to lead instead of yielding to be led. Brother G has a jealous disposition, which, together with his independence, has kept him to one side; for with this spirit he could not be a true yokefellow with his ministering brethren. Sister G is of a jealous disposition, and possesses much firmness. She lacks experience, and has not been sound in the faith or united with the body. Her heart has risen up against the gifts of the church. There was a lack of meekness and humility in her articles sent to the Review for publication.” Testimonies, vol 1, p 230.

“The Lord in His wisdom has arranged that by means of the close relationship that should be maintained by all believers, Christian shall be united to Christian, and church to church. Thus the human instrumentality will be enabled to cooperate with the divine. Every agency will be subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all the believers will be united in an organized and well-directed effort to give to the world the glad tidings of the grace of God.” Acts of Apostles, p 164.

“These self deceived men are drawing away souls from the body, scattering from Christ, and bringing in dissension and division. Individual experience is set above the authority of the church, and their example leads others whom they deceive to regard lightly the voice of counsel and admonition of the church. This course has worked the ruin of very many souls in every age of the world.” Signs of the Times, October 23, 1879.

We are responsible to believe and teach what we want to – regardless of what our fellow brethren agree is truth.

“Individuals who will strike out upon some new light and some new truth, independent of the body, are pursuing a course directly contrary to the word of God. If they have any influence over others, it is to disaffect them and lead them away from the watchcare, counsel, and strength of the body. And the very ones who claim sanctification, have in their hearts insubordination, pride, envy, jealousy, and evil surmising of their brethren. They sit as judges upon the life and character of their brethren. These are the fruits generally to be found growing upon the tree of false sanctification.” Signs of the Times, October 23, 1879.

“Brother G boasts of his independence of mind and judgment...but he is deceived in the quality of true independence. Independence is not obstinacy, although obstinacy is often confounded with independence....His pride of opinion is hard to yield, even in the face of light and evidence sufficient to convince him if he would be convinced. He thinks that if he should admit that he was wrong, it would be a reflection on his judgment and discernment.

“Brother G, you are in great danger of losing your soul. You want to have the pre-eminence....(and) It is an honor to confess a wrong as soon as it is discerned.” Testimonies, vol 4, p 239-240.

“They became jealous of my husband, myself, and other brethren and sisters, because they did not receive as much attention from them. Bro. and sister Hale were a great trial to the church. They were most of the time on the contrary side, seldom in union with the church. They could seldom be found twice of the same mind. They had a way and will of their own, which they wished others to follow; but they were not willing to be led. They were both independent, willful, set, and unyielding. They had their points to carry, and were unwilling to submit their will and judgment to that of the church.” Pamphlet #159, p 172.

“Those who are inclined to regard their individual judgment as supreme, are in grave peril. It is Satan's studied effort to separate such ones from those who are channels of light, through whom God has wrought to build up and extend His work in the earth. To neglect or despise those whom God has appointed to bear the responsibilities of leadership in connection with the advancement of the truth, is to reject the means that He has ordained for the help, encouragement, and strength of His people. For any worker in the Lords' cause to pass these by, and to think that his light must come through no other channel than directly from God, is to place himself in a position where he is liable to be deceived by the enemy, and overthrown.” Acts of Apostles, p 166.

“You are inclined to fanatical sentiments on some things, and you regard your strong feelings as presentiments from the Lord, when He has nothing to do with it. Now, please stop walking in this unsanctified independence and self-confidence, for it will prove your ruin unless you see the evil and repent of it and submit to follow the way of the Lord.” Manuscript Releases, vol 20, p 119.

“We should never feel too independent to learn of one another. While it is not according to God's plan that one man's mind shall control all other minds, he is not pleased to have individuals strike out on a new track, and present new theories independent of the body.” Historical Sketches, p 125.

We are responsible to follow our own way – and we do not need to seek or follow the counsel of others of experience.

“The Lord has not qualified any one of us to bear the burden of the work alone. He has associated together men of different minds, that they may counsel with and assist one another. In this way the deficiency in the experience and abilities of one is supplied by the experience and abilities of another.” Testimonies to Ministers, p 499-500.

“It is a mistake to withdraw from those who do not agree with our ideas. This will not inspire our brethren with confidence in our judgment. It is our duty to counsel with our brethren, and to heed their advice. We are to seek their counsel, and when they give it, we are not to cast it away, as if they were our enemies. Unless we humble our hearts before God, we shall not know His will.” Testimonies to Ministers, p 500.

“Love to God and love for one another are the two great principles which are to bind us in union with one another and the whole in oneness with Christ in God. The world is discarding these principles. It is catching the sophistries of the great deceiver. If these sophistries are introduced into the church, they will bring discouragement and spiritual ill-health. Those in the world, having lost their connection with God, are making desperate, insane efforts to make centers of themselves. This causes distrust of one another...The natural egotism of the human heart will be worked upon by Satan. He will use the uncontrolled wills and violent passions which were never brought under the control of God's will.

“This man wants his own way; the next man wants his own way. Every man's hand will be against his fellow man. Brother will rise against brother, sister against sister, parents against children, and children against parents. All will be in confusion.” Manuscript Releases, vol 14, p 146-147.

“There have ever been in the church those who are constantly inclined toward individual independence. They seem unable to realize that independence of spirit is liable to lead the human agent to have too much confidence in himself and to trust in his own judgment rather than to respect the counsel and highly esteem the judgment of his brethren, especially of those in the offices that God has appointed for the leadership of His people. God has invested His church with special authority and power, which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising; for he who does this despises the voice of God.” Acts of Apostles, p 163-164.

“To every church I would bear the message that man is not to exalt his own judgment. Meekness and lowliness of heart will lead men to desire counsel at every step. And the Lord will say, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me." It is our privilege to learn of Jesus. But when men, full of self-confidence, think that it is their place to give counsel instead of desiring to be counseled by their experienced brethren, they will listen to voices that will lead them in strange paths.” Testimonies to Ministers, p 501.

“We hear the plea: ‘Oh, I am so sensitive, I cannot bear the least reflection!’ If these persons would state the case correctly, they would say: ‘I am so self-willed, so self-sufficient, so proud-spirited, that I will not be dictated to; I will not be reproved. I claim the right of individual judgment; I have a right to believe and talk as I please.’” Testimonies, vol 3, p 360.

“Do not cherish a spirit of independence which will lead you to feel that if your brethren do not agree with you they must be wrong. The opinions of your brethren are just as precious to them as yours are to you. Christ in you will unite you to Christ in them, and there will be a sweet spirit of union.” Historical Sketches, p 126.

We are responsible to center our interests in our own work – regardless of the work and interests of our brethren.

“Oh, how much the workers need the spirit of Jesus to change and fashion them as clay is molded in the hands of the potter! When they have this spirit, there will be no spirit of variance among them; no one will be so narrow as to want everything done his way, according to his ideas; there will be no inharmonious feeling between him and his brother laborers who do not come up to his standard. The Lord does not want any of His children to be shadows of others; but He would have each one be his own simple self, refined, sanctified, ennobled by imitating the life and character of the great Pattern. The narrow, shut-in, exclusive spirit which keeps everything within the compass of one's self has been a curse to the cause of God and always will be wherever allowed to exist.” Review and Herald, April 13, 1886.

“Those who are under Satan's rules and laws suppose themselves to be independent atoms. Each follows his own human passions. It is Satan's principles which have placed men in collision with their fellow men. They lead men to draw apart from one another in suspicion, jealousy, and evil-surmising.” Manuscript Releases, vol 14, p 146.

“God has a special work for the men of experience to do. They are to guard the cause of God. They are to see that the work of God is not committed to men who feel it their privilege to move out on their own independent judgment, to preach whatever they please, and to be responsible to no one for their instructions or work. Let this spirit of self-sufficiency once rule in our midst, and there will be no harmony of action, no unity of spirit, no safety for the work, and no healthful growth in the cause. There will be false teachers, evil workers who will, by insinuating error, draw away souls from the truth. Christ prayed that his followers might be one as he and the Father were one. Those who desire to see this prayer answered, should seek to discourage the slightest tendency to division, and try to keep the spirit of unity and love among brethren.” Review and Herald, May 29, 1888.

“God forbid that any one of us will plan and devise to keep up separate interests.” Manuscript Releases, vol 15, p 359.

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