

APPENDIX 3

DATING

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We will try to limit ourselves on this occasion to essentially questions related to our social conduct as distinct from other areas that we might normally bring up at a Bible study. The paper itself suggested in a letter that went out under the Singles Activities' Committee's name, that we discuss such matters as dating as it pertains to cultural, religious, and racial diversity.

I will also be discussing problems of the older people, the unmarried, and the divorced. I will give some general comments in certain areas, and if there are questions that are precipitated either by neglect of a subject that should come up that hasn't yet come to my attention, or added questions or comments, I'd be happy to receive them up here and we'll take a look at them. This is not so much an analysis of specific verses of the Bible that are at issue in any one person's mind as it is to give a broad outline of our general conduct, how we should conduct ourselves with respect to one another, and with respect to friends who are in the world who are not converted. Whether all of you are converted here, again, is always a question. Some are, some are not. Some are young people who perhaps have not yet been baptized. Some are friends who are here. I was talking with my wife about the question, that there are some very successful marriages between unconverted people in the world, and very unsuccessful ones between two people who, for some reason, have been baptized, let me put it that way.

We need to take a solid look at the whole picture. I would like to start out with an experience that others have been familiar with and it came to my attention last September on the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. I will address first of all the question of interfaith — inter-faith, not intra-faith. Most of our social relationship is intra-faith, that is within the faith or body of beliefs and practices that we hold. Inter-faith is between varied faiths, in this case normally within the Christian world denominational backgrounds.

In the island of Mauritius, and this could hold true of other areas and it may hold true of specific areas within the United States and Great Britain, or parts of Africa. There are a number of young people being called, all of whom are men. There are no young women. This is an unusual situation because from a social point of view there can be no dating if the rule pertaining to our social contact is an absolute rule related only to intra-faith relationships, or families at least that are normally in our fellowship. Sometimes, of course, there is an unconverted mate in such a family who comes.

The question would arise, what should be done in a situation as in Mauritius, as in some congregations in Great Britain, as in many areas of west Africa, where I am also familiar by verbal contact, where only young men are being called. Now the reason for this should be obvious. The men are more educated than the women. The men go out of the home. The daughters are protected. The men are likely to read a magazine that is on a newsstand. They are likely to converse with someone in business and the woman is at home helping her mother, or whatever the relationship is.

So I would like to start out with a fundamental area that may be of secondary importance to most of you, but one that we at least should look at so that we have it in proper perspective. In this case of dating someone who is not of the same faith, we have some varied problems related to it. The question is, many of our children are involved in social occasions within the Church but they are not yet converted. This may pertain to the Colleges as well, and what do we do in high school or colleges

when our young people are not attending Ambassador or had not been attending Imperial. What do you do on social occasions such as that? Remember, the question of dating is only one of a series of questions relating to this subject, because it would be very difficult to tell young people that if you date you can never become serious with someone, if you become serious you can never marry that some one because the some one is not of the same faith. I say it would be very difficult. It might be possible. Where children are absolutely obedient to parents they are likely to find that they can say “no” irrespective of their own emotional feelings. This is not true in most American homes and the way most of American children are reared, whether in or outside of the Church. So we have to face the seriousness of a question such as this, because if dating occurs on an interfaith basis there is always the possibility of having, let’s say, falling in love without realizing it and then you have to extricate yourself from it, or you will inevitably be involved in an interfaith marriage, if you go ahead with it. So I want to point up that there are areas of the world where we do have rather severe limitations, so we’ll take a look at certain principles.

In the Old Testament there were, and you’re familiar with these verses, prohibitions about marrying in another faith. Maybe the word “faith” is not even a nice word to use there. It would be better to call it religion. When the children of Israel entered the land of Palestine, or were to enter, they were told not to contract marriages — this is in Deut. 7 and elsewhere — which marriages could lead to the introduction of another religion, something opposite to what Moses had, through the power of God, been teaching the children of Israel. Their sons could turn away your daughters, their daughters could turn away your sons, and they were told not to contract such marriages. How absolute is such a statement? From the days of Moses to the fall of Judah we have no record in the Old Testament account, whether through Joshua, Judges, the Kings, or that part of Chronicles covered in this period, we have no record that any marriage that may have been contracted, was ever officially or formally set aside. Not that it may not have been, but we have no record. The first record we have pertains to the story of Ezra and Nehemiah. I would like to point this up. In other words, in the Old Testament, the reason we had the up’s and down’s in the book of Judges is the fact — we know this — that they had involved themselves in inter-faith, or inter-religious, marriages. Marriages with people who had another religious conviction, and indeed, idolatry among other things, and undoubtedly sabbath-breaking and who knows what kind of sins were the consequences of such relationships.

The question, however, is when a marriage is so contracted, is it necessarily void? And the answer is no. Any such marriage that is contracted is voidable because the law said it shouldn’t be entered into. Therefore it is voidable, that is subject to be set aside if a judicial decision is made. But we have none that is recorded to my knowledge, until we come to the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. That some may have occurred is very likely, but the Bible makes no issue of it one way or the other. In the days of Ezra and Nehemiah when there were only tens of thousands of Jews left who returned to Palestine, there were inter-marriages with the Philistines of Ashod, inter-marriages with Ammonites and Moabites and for that matter Samaritans, we have such records, and at this point there was even the impact of culture that affected the language of the children that were being born. Now, at this point, Ezra and Nehemiah — it’s really focusing in under the work of Ezra here as the religious leader and Nehemiah as the governor — came to a conclusion that for the good of the nation these marriages not only had to cease in the future, but had to be set aside in the present. That’s the first record we have of such a situation. The survival of the community of Judah and Levi was at stake at this point. We are not here dealing with the broad distinction of Negro Africa, or oriental Asia, in terms of white Europoid or Caucasoid stock. We are dealing here with a mixed people, they are already defined as mixed of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab, who descended as cousins from the children of Israel. So the question of race at this point is not fundamental to the issue. The question was the matter of marriage with people of another religious conviction and of another cultural background, and of course, linguistic diversity, which would have jeopardized the continuity of the Jewish culture, that is the culture of the then congregation, or church, of God, the congregation of Israel, it would have jeopardized the language so that the language in two or three generations would not even have been Hebrew and they wouldn’t even have been able to read the Bible, as it had been given to them.

Now since the law forbade a marriage, any marriage, with someone of another faith, the Canaanites being singled out but the Canaanites were themselves of a diverse racial group by this

time, which may be perceived very clearly from the skeletal remains from that period. There were numerous tribal groups. There had been intermarriage undoubtedly in the background of the Canaanites, but we're not dealing fundamentally with a question of race at this point in these verses. We're dealing essentially with a religious cultural matter. The law forbade it. Nevertheless, it was not in force in the sense that the state therefore would have a right to intervene and to set aside such a marriage by a legal permissible divorce in God's sight. But when Ezra and Nehemiah had to take action they did, and their action was not a blanket statement, that all of you who are married are now divorced. Their action was this: each single marriage was examined and there was a decision made of a divorce so that now there was a legal and an appropriate settlement for the care of the children and the wife who was put away, and there could be no further legal recriminations on the basis of the decision. In other words, it was not something that left the wives and children, or vice versa, some of the husbands — if a man had married his daughter to a Moabite or Ammonite — all those marriages were dealt with individually in order that financial and other needs were appropriately cared for. This is the only way to handle such a situation. The Jewish community, at that time, drew a hard and fast barrier. Now, when I say such a marriage initially is voidable I mean that it is left to the authorities in the community to decide whether to act or not to act. Parents could exercise, at the lowest level, such a decision if the church were the only governance, but in this world we have to recognize that there are only two ways — either there is recourse to the courts of the land, which would not recognize it on such a basis normally, or there is the matter of fellowship and disfellowship, which has a very strong means of influence if people have real spiritual conviction. In the days of Ezra and Nehemiah they did exercise the question of disfellowship for anyone who wouldn't have, or divorce for those who didn't submit. And all who were not of the same religion became treated as common — the word common or unclean are used in the New Testament — a clean animal that has been wounded when you pursue it, or that dies of itself is common, it's not an unclean animal, it's treated as common. In this sense the word common was applied to the Gentiles just as it was applied to some animals that God would not normally ask you to eat, you know those laws. That was a term that came into the language, so the Jew did not have fellowship with someone who was of another faith — that's social religious fellowship. He was not to eat with them and there were various other rules. It came to the point where they even prohibited drinking wine that Greek feet had trodden out, as I have said.

This is why you have these arguments that appear in Galatians and the Book of Acts, and why Peter withdrew himself from Gentiles, because of the strict pressure that was still in the Jewish community from the days of Ezra and Nehemiah when the survival of the community was at stake. However, when Paul came along into the Greek world in Asia Minor, and the Greek Isles of Cyprus, there were now problems in the Greek area, outside of Palestine and Syria, it was not uncommon for Jews and Gentiles to marry. Mostly the Gentiles were those who attended the synagogue — that would be obvious — but not necessarily that the men were circumcized, they at least were in attendance, and this was commonplace in the world outside of Syria and Palestine. There were such marriages as illustrated in the case of Timothy, whose father was a Greek and whose mother was a Jewess. So such marriages did take place. There were marriages now, not only between the Jew and the Greek, but Paul discovered in the church, as we do, that there are marriages that have taken place before when two people were unconverted and now one is converted. Maybe the man is, maybe the woman. The converted person attends church and the unconverted does not, or may, it doesn't matter. Here you have then a situation after a marriage in which one is now of another faith. Paul had to address this issue. His conclusion is simply stated. The law, as it is written, gives the converted mate the right — the letter of the law does — the right to put away an unconverted mate. By the very nature that such marriages shouldn't have been entered into in the first place, and now that conversion has taken place on the part of one it puts that one in a situation of having been bound in a marriage contract to someone who's not converted. Paul says, however, at this point, that it is his judgment — let me read carefully how he words it in I Corinthians so we understand. "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord." Now, the Lord spoke in Deuteronomy, the Lord spoke to Ezra and Nehemiah. "It is not good to enter into an interfaith marriage." That was the statement that the Lord gave to a congregation of Israel that was not converted, but now this is the converted Church of God. "If any brother has a wife who believes not, and she (the unbelieving wife) is pleased to dwell with him, let

him not put her away.” That’s Paul’s counsel. He said, “I speak, not the Lord.” Christ had not told him, but after all, having the mind of God and looking at the law in terms of its intent and purpose, Paul drew this conclusion, because if two people are happily married and one is now converted, why should they break it up. And Paul draws the conclusion as Christ’s apostle here, in an area in which Christ had not previously spoken, either in the Bible, or to the twelve, or to Paul himself. “Let him not put her away.” Therefore, we have to tell converted men not to put away their unconverted wives, if she, the unconverted wife, is pleased to dwell with him.

Now, if the man does, he’s going in accordance with the letter of the Law. Paul is expounding the intent of the law. That should be clear. Now, the woman which has a husband who believes not, and if he is pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. What does it mean to be pleased to dwell with? It should mean, let’s say, that there is a desire to live with the other person, and an expression that you’re happy to live and you wouldn’t want to break it up, it does not mean that the man can demand sex and beat up his wife, it doesn’t mean that the woman can demand half of the man’s income but refuses to submit herself to her husband in any way. I think it should be clear what the intent is.

So what we learn is that in terms of the intent of the law, Paul admonishes the individual person in the church to be willing to live at peace with an unconverted mate and not rock the boat if that unconverted mate is pleased to dwell with you. That is the proper thing to do. We cannot forbid divorce if people insist on doing it, and Paul does not address the ministry and tell the ministry what to do. That is, you have to punish somebody who does divorce in a situation like this with an unconverted mate. Such a person is going to be judged in the judgment and perhaps talked to sternly. But now what I’m getting at is that it is possible for church members to have a happy marriage and have only one of a family converted. You see the picture that I am painting? It was not wise, ever, to enter into such a marriage in the Old Testament times when people were unconverted, and didn’t have the power of the Spirit of God. Now it would not be wise to separate if such a marriage had previously been entered into. It is possible, in other words, to obey God and still to live with an unconverted mate, whether man or woman. Is that clear? Whether a man or a woman. Therefore, it is not a sin to live with an unconverted person in marriage, whether man or woman. I am leading you step-by-step so you’ll understand what the Bible says. The Bible says, don’t get into any marriage where any children could be turned aside by someone of another faith, but it also says it is possible to live with someone of another faith if the other person is willing to live in peace and not make religion an issue, not make something else an issue. If religion is not an issue between the two, and it’s otherwise a happy marriage, Paul says “let it be.” It is not the ideal marriage. So what about unconverted friends of young people or older people who are converted. What does the converted person do in terms of dating people who are not in, say we say, our fellowship? First, we know that as older people we have children who may date children of church members, but the children themselves are not converted. We have to recognize, therefore, in the American or western custom of dating, which has many meanings but we know what it means — that is, to have social contact, either as one-on-one or group basis — you have among children who are not baptized dating that takes place between trained children but still unconverted and sometimes in Ambassador College and in the local church converted young people dating unconverted people who are children of church members who attend our social occasions. So within the church we already know. Is that clear? That when we have young people some will be converted depending on how young they are when they are converted and others will not be. Some are converted at the end of their teens and in the early twenties, and some frankly are not, yet we have never asked that children of church members — whether in college or in the church — must not date one another, that you have to wear a plaque “I’m baptized” or “I’m not baptized.”

(Tape over, missed some)

.... unconverted and converted young people to date as long as there has been training given by parents and the church. That therefore could lead to a marriage, couldn’t it? And if you’re going to allow your son or your daughter to date a son or daughter of other church members but who are not

converted, if you're going to allow that dating to occur as a parent, you must accept the responsibility that you have no true social right to prevent a marriage from occurring between a converted son and an unconverted daughter of church parents. Or don't allow the dating in the first place. It is not fair to young people to say, "well, you can date but you can't fall in love." Or "you can fall in love but you can't marry." Now either parents must exercise strong control, and if a date does occur they should tell the child not to date more than once or twice if there is a potential of interest developing until the other person is clearly converted, or else as a parent to allow it. And it is your decision. The church has never exercised a decision-making power in this area. It has left it to the individual. We have cautioned young people. But if a marriage can exist between a converted and an unconverted after one has become converted and still be happy and at peace then it is possible for two young people who were reared in the church, one is converted and the other is not, who have lived together side-by-side in the local congregation for years to be married and to live at peace. It is also possible to be married and not to live at peace. It is also possible for two young people who are baptized to be married and not live in peace either. Don't kid yourself. That's happening too often. Some are not really converted. Some are not living up to what they intended to. They are falling by the wayside. But it is clear from this, is it not, that it is possible in terms of our own practice, for young people to enter into a marriage where there has been church training, even though one is not converted. Mr. Herbert Armstrong has, in times past, performed such a marriage. I have also. This goes back years. This isn't only of recent date. That should now make it clear what God permits.

Now it doesn't say what He recommends. What I am saying here is what He permits. Now what He recommends is already given you. It is not wise to enter into a marriage that has religion as a difference, but if the training is basically the same it would be very difficult not to tell the young people to go ahead if you, as parents, have allowed them to date to the point they become interested. We should go back to what Mr. Herbert Armstrong wrote in his autobiography, that if you think you could fall in love with someone, and you felt that it was not wise to be married to that someone whom you could fall in love with, for religious reasons or whatever, biological reasons, family problems, otherwise, don't date again so you don't get so close that you can't say no. We don't follow the advice that Mr. Herbert Armstrong wrote in that book, which is very important in terms of our social training.

But now, what do we do in Mauritius, where the young people are mostly liberal Hindu, in fact, all the young people other than the two Chinese men, all of them are essentially liberal Hindu young men who are being called. Not conservative idolatrous Hindus, but liberal non-idolatrous Hindus. There's a different school of thought. Mauritius is inhabited by people from India. It is my conviction that the following is an appropriate solution. The same for West Africa, where most people are Christian in a community in which our people are, Muslims live in the north, most of the church members live in the south. That is, I'm speaking of Nigeria or Ghana, for instance. It is my conviction that you have a choice to face. The scripture says, in the same chapter, it is better to marry than to burn. That is, to have sexual temptation and problems. It is better to be married than to live with a sexual problem. That can lead to sin. So let us now weigh the question. It is better to be married to an unconverted person than to commit adultery or sodomy, to get involved with prostitution, or any sexual sin. You have to weigh the question. To forbid all young people in the Church of God who are men to marry in Mauritius, or in West Africa, or young men in certain congregations of England where there are no young women, would be to say, it is better to burn than to marry.

It was my recommendation, and I drew up a statement which Mr. Ted Armstrong has approved, and that is there are certain situations such as you have in these places I have mentioned in Africa, and Mauritius as an illustration, but it doesn't limit itself to those, it's applicable here, but particularly there there is something very interesting. Women are expected to adopt the religion of their husband. Therefore, a young man in Mauritius who may marry a liberal Hindu has, in fact, socially in his own community the right to ask her to consider his religion and in that sense to attend our services. That's just sort of custom. Now happily, God isn't calling just women, so that they would have the problem of only marrying a man who would expect them to change. At least God is calling the men in this case. In West Africa it's the same way. A woman who marries out of her tribe, or out of her religion, is expected to consider and in a sense to cooperate with or adopt the religion of her husband.

As far as we're concerned we don't require it, because you can't convert somebody else by just using the power of influence. I was in Fiji before I got to Mauritius. There a church member, a young man, is converted. He had been married before conversion to a fine young Fijian woman, they're both Fijians, she asked about baptism. I went in a car to a street side out in the country, got out of the car and walked across timbers, across swamps and a stream, and came to their little house in which there are no chairs. We sat on the floor with their five children and discussed this question of baptism, because she knew that church members should be baptized, and therefore she wanted to be baptized so she could have the same religion as her husband. So I explained to her what conversion means and what baptism means, and it was a relief to her not to have to be baptized because she wasn't of a converted mind. But she was willing to live happily with him. So we would not ask these women, but I would have to conclude that in these places of the world it is better for a young man to marry an honorable, responsible, upright, openminded submissive (apply it to yourselves, ladies) young woman than to get involved in sexual problems by not marrying. Even though that woman is not converted. I would have to make that recommendation. I would say it for West Africa. I would say it for anywhere in the world as a matter of principle. But you know I described the woman in such a way that you really wouldn't have any trouble if you married someone like that. But you notice I'm addressing it from the point of view of a man to the woman. In such a society I would not want to recommend the reverse normally, because of the impact the man has in such a society.

In our western world now we come to something different. Our western world recognizes that it's possible to have such an intermarriage and you don't have to change your religion. Our western world also recognizes, as any Jew would say, any Catholic, any Episcopalian, any Mormon, to have an inter-faith or inter-religion marriage is not the wisest thing. Therefore it is not the wisest thing to date steadily with someone who is not of the same faith. It is therefore also not the wisest thing to date in the first place, but there may be reasons why, in a high school or a junior high if there is a requirement, that an occasional date is not something that is wholly forbidden. But I would recommend what Mr. Herbert Armstrong said: Don't date more than once or twice. If you feel there is any possibility of having some kind of interest develop in the other person if the other person is of another faith. It is not the wise thing to do. On the other hand, I know that it is possible for young women who are working in business, secretaries or otherwise or young men who are working, to be reasonably familiar with someone of the opposite sex at business, or let's say at Pasadena City College or some other college or junior college, and you can get close enough that you are emotionally interested in the other person. You should recognize that there are always problems that will arise, and it is wiser not to get so involved that it goes to that point. The parents should exercise a responsibility to guide their children not to make such decisions. We have not prevented our two older girls — one of whom is now 20 and the other is 17 and will be 18 this year — we have not prevented them from dating outside of the church in the sense that there is a high school or a college function. Not everybody in college is converted. I have exercised no control over my daughter who is in college, whether she dates someone who is baptized or not, she happens to be. The younger one is not baptized and therefore she's not converted either, and we have not prohibited her from dating someone outside of the church. But we have instructed and we would be very careful if they weigh the question, and when one is baptized this is a question one must also consider. It is not something the Church of God would recommend, and with this number of young people here as well as some of you who are older, there should normally be no reason why you should not find someone of interest, someone who is possibly one you could spend the rest of your life with. Don't worry about it. Maybe you're not one who has to marry. Some people emotionally and physically have no reason to. Maybe they're like Paul. But we want to be very careful about this.

We haven't addressed the question of someone who is a divorcee, or who is divorced, or who is a widow or a widower. Paul does have something to say about this in the same chapter.

Paul says the wife is bound by the law as long as her husband lives, as long as she lives with a man who is her husband she is bound to him. Now if her husband be dead she is at liberty to be married to whom she will, only in the Lord. So we want to notice carefully verse 39. Now she is happi-

er if she so abide after my judgment, and I think that I have the Spirit of God. She is at liberty to marry whom she will but he thinks she's happier not married. And that's Paul's point of view. I think indeed some women have had such a happy married life that no other marriage would make it as successful because that first man was a remarkable husband. But Paul recognizes that she is free to marry if she wishes. Now it states here at the end of verse 39, in, I Cor. 7, only in the Lord. What is unique about this is the following. When we state that you should marry only in the Lord we are quoting this verse. There is no other verse in the Bible using that expression pertaining to marriage. To whom is it addressed? It is addressed to a widow. It is not addressed to every young woman, and it is not addressed to men at all. Normally when the law speaks the law speaks in terms of the male. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. That's the law speaking. This doesn't mean a woman can covet her neighbor's husband, but the law doesn't have to define it in terms of man and woman. Law presumes that the principle that governs the relationship when stated in terms of the man is applicable to the woman, but when a statement in law is addressed in terms of the woman we should sit up and take notice because that's not the normal way it is expressed. And when it is addressed only to the widow we sit up twice and take note. Paul expressly in his wisdom forbids a widow who is converted to marry outside of the Lord or the church. Now the Lord is a term very important because there are people in the church who are outside of the Lord, or did you know that. They are in our fellowship but not of us. They may even be baptized and really have unconverted minds. This can happen. Paul doesn't say it's a question of in or out of the church as a congregation because we don't forbid unconverted men or women to come into our congregation and have fellowship with us with their converted members of the family. There is a plain statement here that a person who is a widow is likely to have a certain amount of money, possibly sexual temptation in a way that puts her in a very difficult position in which greater care and discretion should be maintained. There are many men who will try to take advantage of a widow because she may have been left with money. And there are women who are easy prey who crave a man's company after the death of the husband, who can't say no to a fool. In a situation like this Paul's admonition to a widow is very important. Otherwise we have only the rest of the Bible as a guide.

In the rest of the Bible we have Esther, who married Xerxes — now she didn't have very much of a choice — on the other hand she could have looked ugly, she could have looked the part to have turned him off, she didn't have to marry him, you know that. She could have done what a lot of wives do to their husbands, and Xerxes wouldn't have been interested, or Ahasuerus is the biblical name, but she knew what wives ought to know, how to influence their husbands. Therefore, we have a Bible example, that it is possible for a woman, and it is very difficult to think of Esther as other than a converted Jewess. She played no less a role than the prophets of old. She saved a nation, just as the judges did, as Deborah did in the book of Judges. And she married someone who was hardly converted, if you look at his personal life. So we have that example.

There is no doubt that, from a biblical point of view, we shouldn't marry out of the faith where religion is an issue. We should normally therefore not marry out of the faith, because religion can become an issue. We are not forbidden to retain a marriage with one who is unconverted, and therefore we cannot absolutely forbid a marriage with someone who is unconverted. But it is not the wise thing to do. It may, however, in certain cases be the only alternative, and by far the wiser thing, instead of getting involved with sexual problems because there is no converted woman, or vice versa. So it is a matter of weighing all of the scriptures that I have given. The statement in the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 7, which in a sense forbids unconverted nations to get involved with other nations, even if this one nation Israel did have the truth. That's like telling an unconverted child of a church member's family how important it is to marry someone who is also the child, converted or unconverted, of another church member family. Our unconverted children are like ancient Israelites, and it was absolutely told them it would be wrong to go marry outside — that is to marry some man or woman who was reared in a family having no connection with the Church of God. Yet Paul recognizes in the New Testament that if one is converted it is possible to live with just such a person and live at peace if the other person is willing to live at peace. So we do not have here the absolute statement that some have thought to be in the Bible. But we have a sufficient number of scriptures to point up the wisdom of the direction we should go. Unconverted children are like ancient Israel. They should

only marry within the fellowship of the Church of God, in terms of their safety and not marry somebody who has no contact with it. I'm talking about your unconverted children. Now converted young people should also marry within the faith, could marry children of converted church members even if the children are not converted, and on rare occasions could not be forbidden to find a wife who is of another faith, because Paul recognizes such a marriage as possible and successful and it is better to marry than to burn. I'm giving you the various implications.

For you to go out and rather freely date, and to go to social functions of this world I would think you should know would be unwise to find people out there instead of those in our midst. I think it is unwise. Paul goes so far, in fact, as to say to widows not to marry out of the Lord. That is a very strict statement. Now if you do Paul doesn't tell the church what to do. I can probably guarantee you'll lose your money, and the fellow will take advantage of you and you may lose him, and that would be an unwise thing to do.

I hope I have gone over this very thoroughly and very carefully, because any other problem is less serious. Our problems of a cultural nature, linguistic nature, of diverse ethnic or racial origins, all lie within the group. The most serious problem is that which lies without the group. I hope you understand why we should look at the area that is of greatest concern. Every generation, whether we like it or not, tends to evolve its particular traits. This is apparently true in the Church of God by the nature of the fact that our young people do grow up in the world and our parental control is similar to our environment. We are either strict, or not strict, depending on the world around us.

Let's take note of the fact that the kind of dance varies from generation to generation. Young people tend to dance the way other young people do, which is not always the way parents dance. Now who gets it started is a good question, but we tend to find that young people want to do it differently, and so we have now the craze going back to the 30's and 40's and 50's, certainly country western — which was almost unknown for a lot of young people in the United States, but by no means all — you know, you're dealing with a regional area — the western was really unknown for nearly a whole generation of young people who were reared on rock and related forms of music. Now there is a tendency to drift back to the music of the 40's. There was a time when ballroom dancing went out, and other kinds of dancing were dominant among young people. There was a time before ballroom dancing entered, that ballroom dancing was looked upon as immoral, but the people who dance ballroom dancing now would view some of the hug styles as immoral.

(Changed tape, may have missed some.)

So I would like to point up that, to my knowledge, the Bible does not have a chapter devoted to the proper form of dancing. I do not find women dancing in circles with women, with the men playing, forbidden, this is what we have in Tonga — the women and girls, as a whole, dance and the men play the musical instruments. In other societies it's men with men and women with women, and then there are some musicians. In our societies we have often the intermix, as they do also in those cases. There will be many forms of dance. So I would like to address the question. Mr. Herbert Armstrong has always pointed up that the most important thing is that you concern yourself with (1) your own conscience, why you do what you do; and (2) your concern for the conscience of another. If how you dance offends others then you need to consider whether you should dance that way when others are there, or dance that way when others are not there. It has to do with eating meat before a vegetarian, drinking wine before a Seventh Day Adventist friend, such as I have. I don't offer him wine. What you do, have your liberty with yourself or with others who are understanding and not present a situation which can be problematic. Now, in a large group, suppose we have 100, 200, 300 people gathered together, inevitably there will be some older people, maybe some younger, who would be offended without any question, that is the offense is some thing like this — “well, how can they dance like that without having sex on their mind?” Now, I don't know whether they can or can't. But I would put it this way. If you find that a Church-sponsored dance has so many kinds that upset you, then don't go to the social occasions and get upset at the church. I'm being plain.

Do you know why I don't attend most of the social occasions of the church? The music is too loud. I have yet to get this over, despite what I have said, and I have not attended any to know whether it has been successful. I have walked in on occasion where music was being played, with all the modern electronic gadgetry, and after 30 seconds I had to leave. And I'm not going to harm my ears. When you get old you'll appreciate them. A lot of young people today won't even get old before they'll appreciate them because of the damage that is being done. I'm not talking of the kind of music, I'm talking of the loudness, but I'm saying this. I would rather not get all upset at the church for allowing that kind of thing to occur, because I suppose there are a lot of young people who think anything less is not audible. And for their sake I'll go somewhere else, and not be offended by it or get upset. I normally am not a kind of person to get offended, I will use that term, I'm thick skinned. But I just would be upset and would just have to say, "well, so that's what's happening." And of course that is what's happening, but if I'm not there I don't recall it so often.

Let's face the fact the church does not ask you to give up vegetarianism, it does not ask you to drink wine in order to inherit the kingdom of God. The church does not ask you to dance, it does not ask you to tone down your music in order to enter the kingdom of God. It does not say ballroom dancing is wrong, but the fox trot is right, it doesn't say that whatever modern form — that varies now — a form related to the hug rather than each one dancing separate but let's say opposite that was typical of some of the rock dances, and I'm not acquainted with the terminology — the church has not defined it nor has the Bible defined it. Apparently David danced the kind of dance that offended his wife. He shouldn't have done it. She shouldn't have gotten offended, but it happened. And it can happen in our midst. Let us try to have wisdom not to go so far as to look questionable and not to be so concerned as to be emotionally upset with what you see. We should be careful to think of the conscience of another person and to examine our own consciences in terms of what we're doing. There are things that I would do that somebody else would be offended at, or would say, "what's he doing that for, being a minister?" and undoubtedly it could be the reverse. Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong has said in years past, and all who are responsible in the Church have said, that we should do that which is uplifting, that which is of benefit, and our cultural differences in our upbringing can vary this higher. There was a time when we were perhaps defining what the most proper form of culture should be, where we wanted everybody to seek the highest; that is now beyond our capacity. We have to put the responsibility on the individual church member. And so, more and more, is the responsibility of young people to their parents and parents to Christ. Now dating on these occasions should not be strictly limited to just being alone with somebody, or related to a social function, attending a movie alone, or having a dinner just together, now it's not wrong to attend a movie, it's not wrong to be alone, not wrong to dine, but be very careful not consistently whenever there are areas of doubt as to the wisdom of marrying someone, don't get so close in a one-on-one relationship that you would find it emotionally traumatic to say no or to break it up. It's better to have dinner with another couple, go to a movie — if you go at all with another couple, and I'm not recommending "*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*." I have not seen it, and just because it won all the awards I don't think we should now suddenly become interested in insane asylums — which is what it's about — but if you do see a movie I think it is good that you have the company of someone else, when possible, group functions are very good. It enables you to think more widely and, in fact, I think you enjoy things better. Now when you have come to the place that there is no doubt in your mind but what it is possible that you might find real emotional satisfaction in living with someone like that the rest of your life, that's another matter. But what often happens is we find young people dating out of the faith, getting so far removed in areas of cultural and ethnic background, and alone, that they get involved before they have analyzed the wisdom of what they're doing. So let us be careful in evaluating our dating situation, because it's very often left to the individual. Let us be very careful, be discreet in our conduct. I talk to too many people who are not discreet, and they sometimes wonder why they let themselves do what they did before they were married because the consequences emotionally are paid afterward.

So the Bible asks you to dance that which is enjoyable, that which is uplifting, and that which is hopefully least offensive because there's always bound to be in a social situation, something like this that will offend. Music is the same way. There are kinds of music that some people appreciate and

others cannot. I think we should seek in our social functions to have that which is acceptable to the largest group at any time, and if we need to have social functions for some who perhaps are of an older generation and those who are younger and let it be known what the emphasis will be, so that we don't ask young people to come to hear music that, in fact, they have no real interest in and have an evening they have no pleasure with, or older people — and I don't say that there's always a hard-and-fast line, so I'm not telling you how old you have to be to be older — where you might enjoy some kinds of music and not others. I think we should have it as diverse as possible. It is essential that we have social functions that don't involve the aspect of marriage as the only logical result. There are people who, at their age, young or old, frankly are not interested in getting married, and dancing as a whole is an opportunity to get emotionally closer to someone than merely attending the Museum of Fine Arts, or things of that nature. I think we should have social functions for individuals, both who may be interested in marriage and those who are not. And we do have more older women than men, and I think this is one of the problems that we have to take a look at what would be good for some of our older women. I think there should be a reconsideration of the breadth and depth of our social life for people who have other interests, intellectual, musical, horticultural, artistic, or whatever it may be, to provide opportunities, and I would like to recommend that. I do know that there are many such opportunities that we have not availed ourselves of because we have never really given thought to it, and I think we should have such an opportunity.

I will tell a story. This happened in the Crimea, if I am not mistaken, with my wife and a number of women who were on the bus — I don't know if there were any men other than myself and the driver — this was in our 50th anniversary trip in the Soviet Union. The area was a remarkable garden that pertained to the nobility of times past, and the guide was having trouble trying to translate her thoughts of Russian into English because she didn't know the answer to all the things she wanted to explain in the botanical garden. So my wife began to help her, and my wife, she clearly saw, knew enough about it that she said, "look, why don't you then lead the group through the botanical garden, and I'll just walk along with you." And so my wife was explaining to these high school and college teachers what they themselves were interested in and didn't know. This was a group of historians who were not necessarily that oriented in this area, and we have individuals — I know Mrs. Elliott has done a great deal and I know others that be who are making, let's say, a social life available and of course we have the community itself around us that can help that way where there are opportunities for tourism, but I think we can create something that we haven't done, and I'm just giving this as a single illustration, we have able individuals who can be used, and if you want to talk to my wife I give you permission in this matter. That's why I brought her along. I want to get her involved. I think it is good because there are opportunities to help others in their social life and then there are opportunities for groups to visit people who can't go out, who are handicapped because of age, and we should help to take care of them. My children find that visiting some elderly people, and I'll name one in particular, Mr. Hugh Mauck's mother, they find intellectually stimulating even though she can't come out to visit them when we, on rare occasions, visit her, they have commented, "why that woman" said our 14-year-old boy "she's interesting." Now a lot of young people don't know how interesting older people can be, because they've been around the Dolans. Now, I'm saying that for your benefit, to be on your guard. I believe it's true. I think we have some very interesting elderly people, and there are others of course who need our help who have never had the opportunity to be interesting because their experiences were never that impressive. And they never knew how to use them, it was unfortunate. So much for that view. I hope we have something we can do there because I know that there are areas in which we can help socially a great deal, and all of you can help. I want you to work on that.

Now with respect to the untouched and untouchable area, I would like to make a general summation. First of all, sometimes there are things that I can say that others cannot, and things that I could not say because of my background. I am not and do not think of myself in terms of the flesh as an Israelite and therefore from a Gentile background — or a goy, as a Jew might look at it — there are things that I might not have been able to say because it might have been misinterpreted as someone who is not an Israelite versus someone who is. In the other hand I'm a member of the, what we call the white community, so I hope you will understand that I speak as a man, as a member of the

white community, I speak of someone who's ancestry is not an Israelite country and I was never reared to think of myself as a traditional American. I speak of someone as someone who appreciates brethren and loves to be with them in their culture, whether I'm in Tonga or Fiji or Mauritius or South Africa, or Pasadena. There are certain points we should bear in mind, and I can make it plain and simple.

Marriage is a relationship of the total person. When you marry someone who is not converted it will never be a totally happy marriage. Just by nature, that you cannot fully share that aspect, but I don't think that any marriage is totally happy, because we all have limitations. Marriage with someone in the faith is a benefit, without any question. Now, as we differ more and more in various areas, we have to recognize there are greater potential problems, so we should be careful whether within one's own ethnic or cultural element, or within one's own social stratum. It would be very unfortunate for a young woman brought up in a very cultured home to marry a young man who's father normally spread his arms out over the table and drank out of a beer can and shoveled the food in, and to have to live with a husband like that. Now if she grew up like that it probably won't affect her. It certainly will affect the children, but the marriage might be happy.

We can be happy at different levels depending on our upbringing. Mr. Armstrong has cited the uneducated around the world often have a measure of happiness that is lost when they suddenly climb the ladder of social success. When we consider so many areas, we have to recognize language as a barrier. Language is a barrier that has kept many people of the same basic racial stock — I will use that in its broad sense — from intermarriage, whether in Africa or Asia or Europe, but once there is a language unity, as English in the United States, then that barrier disappears. But marriage involves religious fellowship, or it should. It would certainly have to have some kind of linguistic fellowship, I think that's a foregone conclusion, so that two people who biologically, and every other way, might be happy, if they can't speak each other's language there's no use living with them, unless you're the last two on earth. But you have to realize that. That is a factor within the Spanish-American community, or Latin American community.

There are financial matters; there are educational matters; emotional matters. All of these things need to be taken into consideration, but you should know this from what we've said from the pulpit or what has been said in our literature, what Mr. Armstrong has discussed in his autobiography, where he did dwell upon this and, of course, in the section of the book, *"The Missing Dimension in Sex,"* this whole thing of proper dating is discussed.

Now the church has a unique situation in this country because we have diverse linguistic backgrounds. English is certainly overwhelmingly dominant, but we have to have translation even in some of our local churches in the United States, primarily into Spanish. We have to recognize that we have a large ethnic element, multicultural, multiracial in background, in the Latin American community. We have a diverse Asian community, and of course, without any knowledge of further background, the large number of our black brethren who's language now is wholly English in this country, though it may be French in some other areas of the world where the church is.

What do we do when we have social occasions? We could have social occasions administered by the local groups. People who wish to get together. That is your responsibility how you handle it. The church does not intervene in every local function that you, as brethren, might like to have by inviting your friends. The church itself has a responsibility and we have different kinds of functions. We have one where everybody is invited, the married couples. Then we have others that are emphasizing the singles, and in many local churches it's both together. Now we have occasions where we might have a German night, I can't say a Black night because how would we define that? But we have a German night, we have our black brethren having a social occasion, we have a Latin night on occasion where Spanish might be dominant, and then one where both languages are used, depending on the connection we have with our neighboring countries or our family background, we try to have all of these. What now should we do in terms of what is socially appropriate?

Let us say we have a young Asian girl, there are no Asian men, but we have black and white and this is a small local church. Because there is no Asian man, shall this Asian girl never attend socially our occasions, or if she attends shall she always sit in the corner because it would be inappropriate for any black or white man to date her because that's the first step to marriage? People who assume that every date is the first step to marriage are, of course, making a mistake. Maybe for them it is, but they're taking the wrong step. Dating may, but fundamentally should not be, the first step to marriage. It is an occasion which you share something of yourself with another. It is not something that you're trying to get. Fellows who want to get a girl, girls who want to get a man, it is a matter of sharing fellowship with another. The more diverse you can be in dating the better it is for you until you do discover someone who, emotionally, is that attractive that you really want to spend the rest of your life with that individual.

We have, as human beings, a social obligation that has nothing to do with the question of inter-ethnic or inter-racial marriage, that when in small groups locally we have individuals who have no one else of that ethnic background to escort them, we have a social obligation to extend men or boys to girls — men to women — or vice versa — to extend oneself to provide an interesting social evening. Whether a black young man or a white young man or a Latin young man steps up to an Asian girl, let us say, where there are no Asian men, to offer her a single occasion or to come as a group if you have a dance that involves numerous ones, the various squares and the rounds that we have — there are all kinds of dances — this would be right and it would be wrong not to. There is a responsibility that we have socially as human beings that a wallflower or someone like that should never be considered as someone to be treated as a pariah. I hold, and have held and do hold and shall hold, that if that that's the social occasion we have, where we cannot take care of someone in the situation that I have described, then we better not hold a social occasion.

What if this Asian girl is in a local congregation where there is a single Asian man? Shall we assume that the single Asian man always must escort this single Asian girl? Is this what the teaching of the church is? And the answer is no. Is this what the practice may have been? And the answer is, possibly.

Let us suppose that you have a single white man and a single white woman, unmarried, they could be blacks, they could be Asians, doesn't matter what group, do you think that if you just take one white man and one white woman out, that automatically those two could always marry and be happy. Of course not. It is therefore unthinkable that every Asian fellow should have to date always the single Asian girl in this congregation merely because she's Asian and there aren't any others. And so they get so involved emotionally that they think they have to get married because they have gotten involved. There were ten social occasions during the year, and those ten they were always together, and by the time you're together at ten social occasions and assume that every time you want a date in between you have to date this same person, it's very hard not to think you have to marry the individual. And the result may be a disastrous marriage. We have had this happen, where single black men and single black girls in a local church have felt that because there wasn't anybody else there they had to consistently date that individual and it was never thought through, either by the local church or the people, that those two may not actually be mated in the sense of socially, emotionally, intellectually or otherwise, really capable of having an ultimately happy marriage. And yet because they dated that often they thought they had to get married. They didn't know anybody else in the local church, and so they were married, and so the marriage is a disaster.

Now am I making it clear that it is possible to force a situation on young people when we have ethnic groups that are few in number, to force a social situation on those young people where they're thrown together to date consistently, where they in fact practically have to get married emotionally when they should not, because it isn't going to work. Now I think I've gotten through to all of you to paint the picture. That's the one extreme we must avoid. We have a social obligation to take care of those in our society of the opposite sex. Now where only men dance with men and women with women there is still the obligation but in this case it's the obligation of the same sex. In our society we

tend to work it the other way around. If there's a single black man in a local congregation but a larger number of Latins, the dominant majority white, and a few Asians, our society has two alternatives. The black man can either stand there, what do we call a man who isn't a wallflower, is there a male flower that we can use, that's the situation, he can either stand there in an awkward situation, or we can have an alternative. Either he can ask, since he is a man, a woman to dance with him or ask to join in a group occasion if you a round or something like that, or else it can be the reverse. The women in the local congregation, of whatever background, have a responsibility to see that that single black person is not left without appropriate social opportunities for that evening. I hold that to be self-evident. Now because of the touchy feelings in different regions of this country and other countries, I would suggest, since this does not normally pertain to Asians like it does blacks, and it may pertain to Latins in some areas, the man should be very careful if he's alone, and there's no one of the same ethnic or racial background, he should be careful for his own good even in the Church of God, sorry to say, not to over extend himself first, but to offer the opportunity for young women to extend their responsibilities first because it is often thought, but untrue, that if a black man asks someone of another race or ethnic background to dance with him that he has ulterior motives. But they're no more ulterior than the other way around. And if they're ulterior that's only because he's a single individual and it would be no different than any other individual who may have such motives.

But we must be careful in our society and in the church itself, to do it as appropriately and carefully as possible, and I know people can misunderstand. Therefore I would caution men who are the single individuals to at least allow an opportunity for young women to offer the opportunity first. I think that is the wiser thing to do, but it is not inappropriate next for such a man, whether he is a single Asian, a single white, a single Latin — I'm just giving you various groups — whether it be Arabic or black, to ask in a social group such as ours, and suppose there's a single black fellow and a single black girl, it would be unwise consistently for that fellow always to ask the single girl out unless, of course, the two are really matched in terms of what their interests are. That's another thing. But we have to bear in mind that in the church we have a social responsibility toward others, so that an evening is appropriate. And we have a social responsibility to teach not to get so emotionally involved with dating that you get to the place where you want to marry someone whom you should not, because your marriage will be a disaster. The church must not force this by mistaken social concepts, and in our society where we're not compelled to, therefore we must not do it ourselves.

I have given you the exception of the single individual. Well, you finally have sometimes two or three and you have five or ten, and finally you come to the place you may have a church which has a Latin majority, or you may have a black majority in some congregations in the American south, and/or the great cities of the north and west, depending on what part of the town the local congregation may meet in. Now you're dealing with a question of degree, and you're dealing with wisdom. We are no longer in that period of time when we pass from segregation to the first social steps in the world of desegregation. That is now one generation ago, and of course that wasn't even one generation ago in some areas, and it was several generations in others. It all depends on the attitude that began to develop in the 1950's. What I'm saying is, that since dating on the one-to-one basis can involve marriage, we should not ask individuals where the number of the young people of that ethnic element is very limited, consistently to date to the point that a disastrous marriage is the result. But on the other hand, we should recognize the wisdom that comes with evaluating the differences of language, of culture, of genetic background, and the church has taught that we have sufficient examples in the way God describes how the world was repopulated, that God did segregate, divide, the sons of Adam as we are told in the book of Deuteronomy. That was in the pre-Flood world, and that God did scatter abroad in the post-Flood world the various nations, and when we look we do see the remarkable concentration of peoples in different areas of the world. We find even in these concentrations of and Japanese, Chinese/South Asians, a different approach to life. We recognize, therefore, that there are major diversities and minor diversities, and the church has always recognized that you can go further and further afield from your own general type of individual and what you will find are fewer things that you would have in terms of genetics and emotional make-up and things that make for a fully happy marriage in common and that you would have with those who are nearer your own background. And

this has to do with even nations within Europe, tribes within Africa, nations within Asia. This is a matter of wisdom. The church has taught, and still does, although there are peoples of different points of view today, some would view it socially not biblically. I would view it socially and biblically, and I think the Bible does imply without any question that God did intend different peoples to dwell in certain areas where their nearest neighbors were more like them than others, and the greatest amount of happiness will result in maintaining such a general relationship. We feel today that the best solution to the problem of what to do should rest with the family. It becomes a family responsibility to guide and instruct.

Therefore, what we are saying is, that your broadest differentiation between the three primary genetic racial stocks is only one of various areas which we should be concerned with. That is, more happiness as a whole will be found when people, even within the group that we consider white, make a wise choice of individuals within that group. Your Slavic areas of the world, you will find that emotionally the Latin area of the world is reasonably different. I have been in Italy, and I have been in Poland, and I won't tell you what my choice is because that's irrelevant, but there are just differences of people, that's all there is to it. And emotionally there are differences we have to recognize that are sufficiently great, that are not just of an individual nature but have to do with the whole nation itself. There are differences right within the United States, between regions.

What you should do as parents is guide your children and instruct them, give them wisdom to know what their social responsibility is to others, not to leave any one unattended in any social group when you have individuals of minor ethnic or cultural backgrounds who happens to be living in an area such as ours in the United States, but otherwise the greatest amount of happiness will be found in the white-within-the-white community, but the Bible does not draw any hard and fast line between whites living in western Europe and some peoples in the Balkans or the Middle East who are really browner skinned. In Romania there are many brown skinned people, remarkably so, and in Turkey, these people are all shading in to another group of people who will be like those in India, and they'll be shading in through Russia into directions that go to the true Asians in Central Asia, and in Far East Asia. We should use our good judgment in this matter as parents. And the church asks parents to be responsible here for proper advice and guidance. I think that's the way we should handle it.

We have, let's say, family traditions. What the family is. We have our national traditions, what the nation is. Or tribal tradition, depending on the area of the world we come from. I think people need to realize that there are no absolute borders, the church does not draw absolute borders. Within the Latin American community there are no absolute borders and between the Latin American community and the rest of the European community on the one hand, there are no hard fixed borders, and between the Latin American community and the African area, let's say in Central America and the Caribbean, there is a drift in that direction. The Latin American community can have Swiss people and Germans in Chile, Italians and Spaniards and Englishmen in Argentina, Spanish and Indian and Negroes in Panama, and Portuguese Negroes or blacks and Ukrainians in Brazil, and we have a huge area of the world, limiting ourselves to either the Portuguese or Latin speaking area, you have a multiracial element, and within the whole Latin American community there has to be wisdom in family tradition.

The family should look at it in terms of what is best for their children, their social upbringing in the community in which they live. I think that if we look at it in terms of our family, responsibility — in the 1950's the church looked at it in terms of the United States as a nation and what it should have done, it should never have brought slaves over to this country in the first place. We are no longer addressing the nation. The nation has made a decision at the Supreme Court level and that decision, of course, governs the nation. What we are addressing is your responsibility in the church. Therefore the larger the group the greater the likelihood that you will find happiness, if you are a Latin American young person, within the broad multiracial multilinguistic background in your area, and by the very nature that is so diverse the border lines are never clear. Spanish people, who are European genetically, linguistically not English, Mexican American people living in the United States who are genetically diverse from their backgrounds whose language may not even be Spanish but English, you have to have the wisdom to guide and to make a choice so that culturally children are going to be brought up in

a home that will be satisfying. Negro young people are no longer really truly Negro, we just call them black now but even that is a misnomer because many of them are Mulatto in terms of background and are very, very light complexioned, the general wisdom of dating in a situation like that would be within one's own general group, but in the United States a person probably has to be three-quarters to even pass for white in terms of any normal definition as it is to be defined on paper. What should we do?

The church recommends that the black community, as we use the term, will find its greatest happiness by marriage within the black community, but I have already stated there are situations where dating can occur, and almost has to occur if there is going to be a normal social life where few blacks may be, where it might be with others. We should seek normally to find a solution at the greater occasions at the Feast of Tabernacles away from the local church if there are limits at the local church. Mr. Ted Armstrong does recommend, Mr. Herbert Armstrong does, and I do, and even those who may not, in or out of the ministry, take a biblical stance but merely a social stance, we recognize that the greatest happiness and the greatest continuity of what God has purposed in creating the diversity of the human family lies within the area of maintaining those family traditions. This is based on the fact that the Levites were asked even to marry within the tribe of Levi, because of the importance of the priesthood. That is very significant there. The Israelites were never forbidden to marry out of Israel *per se*. We have plenty of examples in the Old Testament when religion was not an issue. Many Israelites have married blacks in this country, and other non-Israelites have and we have a community that is normally associated with the black community that's certainly of multiracial, multi-ethnic or genetic background. I think black young people have to make a choice there of the wisdom of marriage. I don't think that in the community itself there is any basic difference as young black people look at it between those who are much lighter complexion than others. I think the community has to work that out in itself. And in the church I don't know of any such problem. In the world sometimes there are attitudes that are unfortunate.

The church makes a general recommendation. The family has a responsibility, and in this sense we do not forbid, where a large group is together — and I would certainly say we do not forbid dating that occurs between the ethnic groups — we do not recommend that this dating be consistently one-on-one of someone of very different diverse ethnic or racial background in terms of the potential of marriage — it's always possible. You can fall in love with somebody, and you have to ask the question — what is the wisdom of that? If you happen to be a person of Latin American background, one has to weigh the question of your relationship if you marry someone who is not likely to be found in the Latin American area. What are your relationships in terms of the Work if you were to marry someone who is quite different from you. How would it be accepted in the community. In some cases it makes no difference. In Hawaii, for instance, where we have all kinds of Europeans, a few blacks, many varieties of Asians, we have such a mixture there that it really has to be a family responsibility. The church could never make a recommendation. There's no way to. It should be a family responsibility. There is a new racial group developing in Hawaii, that is European-Asian mixture as a whole, with a small amount of African, very small. The barriers have broken down there, so much so that there is no basic way to make distinctions in Hawaii. And so the people in that sense become a new kind of people, and there are always new groups rising.

There is a new kind of black in the world, and that is the American black, who differs very greatly in this sense from the black Africans, because upwards of at least 30% now of the background of the American black is not African but European stock. That is a guess. Nobody really knows, but it is an educated guess. We do not recommend, however, that we should take no cognizance of these differences. Religiously we should be careful. Racially we should be wise in our dating. Culturally we should recognize these differences and try to find individuals who are as compatible as possible, where it will not lead to difficulties for children, and where children will grow up in a home that is as happy as possible. The Bible gives clear examples that an inter-racial marriage, such as Moses and the Cushite woman — and that was not with a Midianite — that was a Cushite — is not something that must be undone. The reaction that happened in the persons of Aaron and Miriam reflects the problems that arise with inter-racial marriage. Moses' sister and brother were upset, and if they were you can imagine

others were. But there is no question but what the issue of divorce as a requirement was never addressed in that case, and the church all through these years has recognized that an inter-racial marriage at the extreme ends — Asian and European or European and African or African and Asian — is still a valid marriage. It may be a happy marriage, but in most cases it would not be a wise marriage. But in any case itit's a valid marriage. And we have always recognized the validity of such a marriage coming into the church. We have not recognized always the wisdom of individuals who, depending on their attitude, got married afterward. But today that is a matter for the individuals to decide on the basis of wisdom, which you should seek.

I hope that my general explanation gives you an idea of your responsibility that we recognize that in any large group there will be inter-racial dancing and inter-racial dating, that it should be minimal, that we should be very careful to avoid consistent dating whether inter-racial or within our own ethnic group, consistent dating of the same person when it would be unwise to marry that individual, unwise for reasons other than ethnic background, and unwise if there are ethnic backgrounds that are sufficiently diverse that there would be social problems that would be misunderstood and/or consequence of children. We have to bear that in mind about the identification of children with the traditional background of the parents. It just is a human factor we have to live with. We are not dealing with a world that is perfect, and we also need to know that God did make us different and there should be some kind of respect and honor to our parents for what we are, not try to run away from that identity, whether I be an American Indian, whether I be a German, or whether I be a Ukrainian, I think there is a matter of upholding those traditions.

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