

Inter-Racial Marriage: Right or Wrong?

The Scripture NEVER makes race an issue in and of itself. What is and has been at issue are the contrary heathenistic beliefs and customs attached to those who are not God's people.

In the Old Testament those customs and beliefs were an integral part of a race's ethnic identification and thus each race became identified with a particular belief system. However, regardless of how many belief systems there were, God saw only two distinct divisions in the world - His people and those who were not or those who followed Him and those who didn't.

In Genesis 12, God calls Abram out from among the nations (I.e., Gentiles) to make a holy nation unto Himself. Hundreds of years later when God called out His nation from the people and land of Egypt and gave them laws by which to govern themselves, intermarriage was forbidden and the reason was clear. "You shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons; nor shall you take their daughters for your sons. For they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods; then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will quickly destroy you" (Deuteronomy 7.3,4). This zeal for a holy nation to be separate from the world remains God's call even today to every believer in Christ (see 2 Corinthians 6.14-15; 1 Peter 2.9; Titus 2.14). However it is not nor has it ever been about race but rather about the trappings and influence of that race. Romans 2.11 clearly states that "There is no partiality with God." When Moses was criticized by Aaron and Miriam for marrying a Cushite (possibly Ethiopian) woman in Numbers 12, it was the Lord Himself who defended him. Furthermore, God used Esther's inter-racial marriage to the King of the Medes and Persians to rescue His people from annihilation (see the book of Esther).

Therefore God's concern has never been over the "outward appearance" but "the heart" (1 Samuel 16.7). We are commanded to "judge not according to appearance" (John 7.24) and to "recognize no man according to the flesh" (2 Corinthians 5.16).

Yet, in spite of all this, inter-racial marriage should not be entered into or considered lightly for with it comes multiplied problems and adjustments which do not accompany marriages within the same race. Multiplied cultural variations and traditional preferences will only serve to further complicate an already difficult transition.

Like it or not, bigotry and bias exists and just as a man should not give a friendly kiss to a woman whose husband is rightly or wrongly insanely jealous (no matter how innocent the act may be); he knows that one indiscreet act could create a deluge of problems and regrets and bring hurt to many innocent lives. Romans 14.16 states "do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil." So then the question to the Believer is not do I have the right but what will be most profitable? "Let no one seek his own good" nor "seek his own profit" (1 Corinthians 10.24,33).

Last but not least, one should always consider the feelings and wishes of their parents. For by granting them honor in this way we convey that we believe that God is not only sovereign in all affairs but is able to work out that which is best for us in spite of the inequities and failing of men (Romans 8.28)