

# THE MISSING DIMENSION IN SEX

## Part IV

***In my book The Missing Dimension in Sex, there appeared a chapter on the best age for marriage. It was, of course, speaking only of a first marriage of young people. And even then, only of the best age. But what about widows and widowers who, at various ages, contemplate another marriage? Knowledge of the "missing dimension" is revealed knowledge. The Bible reveals some remarkable case histories of remarkable biblical personalities — of various ages and circumstances — set forth as examples for us of today. They will prove an eye-opener for many.***

by Herbert W. Armstrong

IN THIS installment the purpose is to cover the question of "the best age for marriage" in the case of a second marriage — involving marriage by a widower or widow, or a second marriage at any age by those eligible for marriage.

If the parties concerned are of the same age, or, say, even within five to ten years of the same age, then age is no problem. But where there is a considerable age difference between the parties concerned, there could be a question that needs understanding.

What if a considerably older woman becomes interested in a much younger man or an older man in a much younger woman?

For example, British Prime Minister Disraeli married a woman 12 years older than he. My wife was 9 months older than I. And after 50 years of marriage, I have been alone almost 9 years. A number of well-known men are married to women from 30 to 50 years younger than they.

A person of older calendar age often faces the more or less common assumption that marriage to a much younger person is uncommon, irregular, and so is WRONG. This assumption is sufficiently general that

if an older man or woman of prominence marries a person a great deal younger it is blared forth in the press as sensational news or "scandal."

On the other hand, to many people, such a marriage lifts no eyebrows at all. "Well, what's wrong with age difference?" they ask.

### Is Age Difference a Factor With God?

In my book *The Missing Dimension in Sex*, it was stated, "Errors almost always come from false basic premises, assumed as self-evident and carelessly taken for granted."

It was also stated in the book, "It is God who joins together a husband and a wife in marriage. Therefore, it ought to be — in your own interest — God who selects for you the husband or wife you are going to marry. And God will do this, if you ask him and refrain from getting in a hurry and taking it into your own hands. This may require self-restraint and patience — yes, and also faith.

But if you rely on God, he will not fail you. And if he selects your lifetime mate, you'll have the right one."

In line with that advice, we may

ask, is age difference an important factor with God?

Would God ever select a woman in her thirties to be the wife of a man in his sixties, seventies or eighties — or a younger man as husband for an older woman? Don't be too sure!

Does the Bible teach that age difference in marriage is WRONG? Or is this feeling against a considerable age difference only a matter of prejudice, carelessly ASSUMED?

What, then, *if any*, is God's teaching on the question? Probably most of our readers have never given a thought to this question.

But, surprising or not, THERE IS NO BIBLICAL TEACHING AGAINST SUCH AGE DIFFERENCE!

### But There Are Some Astonishing Examples

As stated before, there are some very outstanding biblical EXAMPLES, involving some very outstanding personages — some very top biblical VIP's!

Suppose we start with the patriarch Abraham. No personage in the Bible (Christ excepted) ranks higher with God. He is called the "father the faithful." All the promises of eternal salvation for us, today, were made to Abraham and his children.

To inherit eternal life you must become one of Abraham's children through Christ. For, says your Bible, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29).

Again, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made" (Gal. 3:16). Again, "... they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham" (Gal. 3:7).

The wife of Abraham's youth, Sarah, died when Abraham was 136 years old. And when he was 145 years old, some 9 years after Sarah died, he decided to marry again.

Now suppose Abraham were living TODAY. He would assuredly be

the patriarch and HUMAN LEADER of God's people. And suppose some one should ask you, "What age woman do you think Abraham should marry?" Would you answer, "Why, some one very close to his own age."

Now Abraham was very close to God. God spoke directly and personally to him. He was undoubtedly very familiar with God's will. If it were contrary to God's will that a man of that very great age marry a comparatively young woman, Abraham would have known it. Furthermore, must we not suppose that a man so close to God would actually have done precisely as I suggested in the book — have relied on God to choose his wife for him? He did rely on God to select the wife for his son Isaac.

Although Abraham was 145, undoubtedly he *looked, acted, and felt* very, very much younger.

Abraham did not marry a woman near his own age. He married a comparatively *young* woman — young enough to bear him possibly twelve children. Probably Keturah, the young maiden whom he married, was in her twenties and quite surely not beyond her early forties.

Keturah did bear Abraham six sons, named in the Bible, and the number of daughters is not recorded, but according to the law of average it should have been about — a probable total of TWELVE children. And even in those days, with the possibility of a later-age menopause, a woman could hardly have *begun* with the first of twelve children if over forty years of age. I think it would be much safer to estimate that she was in her twenties or at least under the mid-thirties. And Abraham was 145!

After all, God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone!"

The next biblical VIP case history was so important that God inspired a whole book in the Bible to give us the story — the book of Ruth. This case history involves the great-grandparents of King David and the ancestors of Jesus Christ, by 28 generations.

Calculating from the genealogies of Jesus Christ and other biblical

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passages, we are surprised to find that Boaz was 100 or more years of age when he married Ruth, a Moabitess who became an Israelite. In probability Ruth was in her early thirties.

#### Now Christ's Own Mother

Now we come to Mary, mother of Jesus, the woman God chose and honored perhaps above any other woman to become the mother of His Son and our Saviour Jesus Christ! The scriptures indicate that Joseph, the husband of Mary, died before Jesus chose His disciples, Jesus being about age 30. Joseph is not mentioned again in the Bible after Jesus was a boy of twelve years. It is unthinkable that with Jesus continually healing all He encountered, that His mother's husband would have come to a premature death by any sickness or disease.

Undoubtedly Joseph died naturally from old age. More probably, if the Heli of Luke 3:23 is the Heli of the royal house of Britain (73-72 B.C.), Joseph might well have been nearer 75 years of age when he married Mary, a young woman undoubtedly in her twenties. Although no one can be sure, Mary may have married a husband at least 50 years older than she!

Was such an age difference approved by God? God's angel said to Joseph, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife" (Matt. 1:20).

These three biblical case histories concern age differences in marriage of from fifty to more than one hun-

dred years — all very apparently approved of God, if not directly chosen by God.

Yet, in this world, many would think of an age difference of even 30 or 40 years as not only uncommon, but irregular, or even WRONG. But that is not God's teaching!

But suppose an older man married a girl in her mid or late teens? That would be a mature person marrying an immature one.

And although there is no literal, specific teaching in the Bible against such a marriage, it might be very hazardous and even violate a biblical teaching IN PRINCIPLE.

The Bible says nothing against age-difference IN GENERAL. What it does teach is "like-mindedness."

For example, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (II Cor. 6:14) is God's command. The Bible teaches LIKE-MINDEDNESS, *not* like-aged. Jesus Christ is going to marry the church — *when* it has been resurrected to SPIRIT composition and immortal life. One might make a comparison there, as to age. Christ has existed from eternity (John 1:1-3). And, as the firstborn, by a resurrection, of many brethren, He was born a divine Son of God by a resurrection (Rom. 1:3-4) more than 1900 years older than His wife!

But His wife **MUST BE LIKE-MINDED!** "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye *be like-minded*, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (Phil. 2:2). And again, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5).

This points out a reason for avoiding interracial marriages. An Oriental mind, for example, normally thinks in a different manner than an Occidental mind, and a hamitic or black mind than either Oriental or Caucasian. Furthermore, even two people of the same race but of different backgrounds or cultures may find it difficult or impossible to be LIKE-MINDED.

What I said above about a mature person marrying an immature person enters in here. Age difference is no problem as long as there is LIKE-MINDEDNESS

A very large percentage of marriages of teen-agers break up in divorce. Two people — both immature — are not LIKE-MINDED!

Another important factor: It is a great mistake to count age by the calendar. I, myself, for example, am not, in *actual* age, anywhere near my *calendar* age. Few indeed will believe I am at the calendar age of 82. Recently I asked a man who had not seen me before, and knew nothing of my age, how old he would guess me to be. "Well," he said thoughtfully, "you might be approaching sixty — probably late fifties." And even that advanced age, I suspect, was estimated because of my white hair.

Few men of 50 or 55 could stand up under the rigorous ordeal of travel I am now put to, working up to 14 hours a day in vigorous driving work — usually working, even as I fly, at my typewriter. Few of 50 or 55 could retain the vitality of youth, energy and *drive* I do. Many of our readers are familiar with my

frequent, yet significant jesting of being only 37, going on 36.

A recently published encyclopedia says: "How old is 'old'? There are no figures available or even possible because there are too many variations in physique and personality that have nothing to do with the calendar. Age is not chronological — a mistaken idea that has caused much mischief and misery — but physio-psychological. Alarming changes in body and mind come primarily not from advanced age (by the calendar) but from earlier physical impairment and emotional disorders, often previously neglected."

I have seen many men 25 or 30 years younger than I by the calendar, who actually look, act, and feel older than I do and who could not possibly carry on with the vitality, drive, determination and endurance that I do.

To be like-minded, a marriage must be based on LOVE. Love is an outgoing concern for the good and

welfare of the other and must not be selfish. But it is more. I can only ask, what *is* that undefinable mysterious SOMETHING that causes one person to come to be IN LOVE with a certain person of the opposite sex in a manner he or she is not with any one else? Is it sex appeal? No, but that undoubtedly is included. But it is MORE. One thing it is NOT is lust. Too many confuse sex desire with LOVE. There is also a spiritual content in real LOVE. There must also be high regard and respect, and mutuality of interests.

Whatever this mysterious undefinable SOMETHING of real LOVE is, is essential in any happy marriage.

But, if any of our readers, contemplating in later life a second marriage, are concerned or worried over age difference, the sure Word of God tells you that you have no problem there at all! You undoubtedly will have the problem of *adjustment* — actually all at any age have that. Just be sure that you are LIKE-MINDED and IN LOVE! □

## NUCLEAR ACCIDENTS: A CONSTANT WORRY

by Robert Ginskey

What are the chances a nuclear reactor could release deadly radioactive contamination? Could an H-bomb accidentally go off while being flown over a populated area? Such questions are increasingly being asked as nuclear proliferation accelerates throughout the world.

In a thirteen-volume study released last October by the now defunct U.S. Atomic Energy Commission, the risks of nuclear reactor accidents are assessed as minimal.

One major conclusion in the report was that the chance of a major reactor accident — one large enough to kill 100 or more persons — was far smaller than the chance of an air crash of similar magnitude. In a

summary volume prepared for the general public, the claim is made that being killed by a reactor gone awry is about as likely as being hit by a meteor.

But environmentalists, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, have challenged the Atomic Energy Commission's conclusions, contending that the methods of statistical analysis used by the AEC cannot reliably predict the absolute probability of events that have never before happened.

Another source of alarm is the likelihood of an accidental detonation of a nuclear weapon. Three decades after the first atomic explosion, the United States has some thirty thousand nuclear weapons located in numerous countries around the world. With so many warheads in stock, many of which are being constantly carried in aircraft, it should not come as too great a surprise that mishaps have occurred.

The U.S. Department of Defense has admitted at least 11 "broken arrows" or major nuclear weapon ac-

cidents. And evidence indicates many other unreported and unconfirmed nuclear accidents.

A partial listing of such potential tragedies includes: a midair crash over Spain in 1966, which resulted in the dropping of 4 hydrogen bombs (none detonated, but radioactive leakage occurred); a B-47 malfunction which dropped an H-bomb over North Carolina in 1958 (the "trigger" detonated, but no one was hurt); a B-52 jettison of a 24-megaton bomb again over North Carolina, in 1961 (five of the six interlocking safety devices were set off by the fall); and a B-52 crash at a United States Air Force base in Greenland in 1968 with 4 nuclear weapons aboard (the high explosives of all four weapons detonated producing widespread plutonium contamination).

So far, no case of an accidental nuclear *explosion* has been reported. But the above examples show just how close we have come to disaster and why there is ample reason for concern. □