

"Advice for Living"

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Question: *My problem, I suppose, is a common one. I have been married for 18 months. My husband says he loves me just as much as ever, but he thinks he is entitled to a night out. The wife, he says, is not supposed to go out alone. Do you think a man should have a night out? If so, shouldn't a wife have a night out, too?*

Answer: The question of having a night out is one that needs careful examination. If it means simply having a night during the week that one can spend some time with friends of his own sex and social group, then a night out is a privilege which should come to husband and wife alike. There is a certain degree of individuality that all persons desire—a privilege of which marriage should not deprive them. On the other hand, if a night out means participating in activities and affairs that cannot be known by your mate, then it is something that neither husband nor wife should request. Actually, the idea of a night out is a meaningless concept if one's intentions are pure. If one intends to do the right thing, the question of a night out need never arise, for it may be necessary to have two or three nights out.

Question: *About two years ago, I was going with a young lady who became pregnant. I refused to marry her. As a result, I was directly responsible for a crime. It was not until a month later that I realized the awful thing I had done. I begged her to forgive me, to come back, but she has not answered my letters. The thing stays on my mind. What can I do? I have prayed for forgiveness.*

Answer: You have made a mistake. This you admit. Your admitting this fact is very wholesome, for it is the first step in the process of repentance and personality integration. One can never rectify a mistake until he admits that a mistake has been made. Now that you have prayed for forgiveness and acknowledged your mistake, you must turn your vision to the future. You must not become morbidly absorbed in a past mistake but you must seek to outlive it by creative living in the future. Now that you have repented, don't concentrate on what you failed to do in the past, but what you are determined to do in the future. This sense of penitence and this creative living will do more to cause the young lady to forgive you than anything you can say in words.

Question: *This question has bothered me for a long time. Why is it that if our men or women are fortunate enough to gain fame and fortune, they almost always marry white?*

Answer: First, let me say, I don't think it is true that the majority of Negroes of fame and fortune marry white persons. I could give a long list of Negroes who have risen to the heights of fame, and yet who have married within their own race. However, there is some truth in the statement that many persons of fame unite in interracial marriage. One of the basic reasons for this is that Negroes of fame are brought into contact with white persons more than the average Negro. Through such contact a relationship often develops which eventually leads to marriage.

June 1958 Also, there is something about fame that causes people to minimize the superficialities of race or color. People are often drawn to fame by the sheer fascination of its qualities, forgetting the fact that the possessor of the fame happens to be a Negro. It must also be emphasized that a Negro man or woman cannot marry a white person without the latter's consent. In the final analysis, marriage is a mutual agreement between two individuals. It should be based on similar interests, abiding faith and genuine love.

Question: *I've been separated from my wife for about nine years. My problem is, how do I go about meeting nice women. I know lots of women, but they are drinking people. I go to church, but all the women seem so distant. I am very unhappy because of my lack of companionship.*

Answer: You seem to have a problem meeting people. This probably grows out of some personality trait on your part rather than any deficiency on the part of all of the women in your community. You should do a thorough job of self-analysis and see if there is anything within your personality that causes you to withdraw from people or causes them to withdraw from you. In either case, you can easily improve the situation if you find the cause for it. It is possible that you are not out going enough and that you are not active enough in church and community affairs. I am sure that if you will become more active in such areas, you will be able to meet companionable and likable persons whose interests will be in the same area as yours.

Question: *Please help me and my wife to settle our religious differences. My understanding is that a man and his wife are to be as one in everything. I am a Baptist and she is a Seven-Day Adventist. She goes to church on Saturday and I go to church on Sunday. I don't think that is being as one and I don't think God is pleased.*

Answer: There can be no gainsaying of the fact that it is always a wonderful thing when husband and wife attend the same church. However, when such an arrangement does not exist, the family need not live in continual disharmony. The problem may be solved by concentrating on the unity of your religious views rather than accentuating your differences. There are certain basic points, such as the God concept, the lordship of Christ and the brotherhood of man that all Christians should be united on. Consequently, there can be unity where there is not uniformity. If you and your wife will concentrate on these points of unity and seek to minimize the ritualistic and doctrinal differences, you will come to see that you are not as far apart in your religious views as it appears to you on the surface.

Question: *I have made many friends, most of them white. My closest Negro friends tell me I am prejudiced against my own race.*

Answer: The only way you can prove to other persons that you do not choose friends on the basis of their color is through the sincerity of your motive in choosing friends. If you choose friends on the basis of mutual interests and mutual companionship, then your motives are sincere. If you choose friends merely because they are white in order to boast of the number of white friends you have, then your motives are insincere.

PD. *Ebony*, June 1958, p. 118.