

PACINO'S PATERNITY PROBLEM

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Hollywood and Broadway actor Al Pacino, at age 83, is expecting his fourth child, with his girlfriend Noor Alfallah. Meanwhile, his colleague Robert De Niro, who is 79 years old, recently fathered his seventh child. These developments call to mind Rolling Stones front-man Mick Jagger, the 79-year-old father of eight, whose youngest child was born when the rocker was 72. That son was a great-uncle upon birth, being younger than some of Jagger's great-grandchildren. News of men in their 70s and 80s fathering children often generates questions like: How old is too old?

It's not that he's too old. *"Abraham was one hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him"* (Genesis 21:5). Isaac was the son God promised to Abraham and through whom God fulfilled more and greater promises, including salvation in Christ Jesus. Thus, nothing about the man's paternity as a centenarian is faulty. Several miracles in Scripture involve parenthood at an advanced age (2nd Kings 4:14-17; Luke 1:1-25). Age need not be the issue some make it out to be.

It's not that the mother is too young. Many are bothered when they learn the mother of Pacino's child is only 29 years old, a 54 year difference between the parents. The mother of De Niro's little girl is thought to be 34 years younger than he is and the difference in age between Jagger and his child's mother is 43 years. The inspired story of Ruth largely involves the marriage of a man to a woman he affectionately refers to as *"daughter"* (Ruth 2:8), implying an age difference of at least a generation. That man, Boaz, contrasted himself with the *"young men"* Ruth might have had cause to prefer over him (3:10). The account of Ruth and Boaz is presented with divine approval. Indeed, the couple is named in the genealogy of the Savior (Matthew 1:5). Old men having babies with young women is not wrong.

It's the lack of marriage. While age and age differences may present certain practical concerns, neither is a moral issue so far as God is concerned. What matters to Him is that neither Pacino, De Niro, nor Jagger are married to the mothers of their children. Heed the inspired warning: *"Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge"* (Hebrews 13:4). Sexual intercourse outside of holy wedlock is condemned by the Almighty.

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KNOWING YOUR VALUE

Kyle Campbell, adapted

A father told his daughter, "Congrats on your graduation. I bought you a car a long time ago. I want you to have it now. Before I give it to you, take it to a car dealer and try to sell it. See how much they offer."

The girl came back to her father and said, "They offered me \$10,000 because it looks so old." The father said, "Now take it to a pawn shop."

The girl returned to her father and said, "The pawn shop only offered \$1,000 because they said it needs a lot of work."

The father then told his daughter to join a car club. The girl drove to the car club meeting. She returned a couple of hours later and excitedly told him, "Some people in the club offered me \$100,000 because it's a rare car in decent condition."

Then the father said, "I wanted to let you know that you're not worth anything if you're not in the right place. If you're not appreciated, don't be angry. That just means you're in the wrong place. Don't stay where no one sees your value."

You are intensely loved, appreciated, and valued by God, but too many people "wander in the wilderness" of sin and aren't valued, even by other sinners. But a godly, hardworking believer is intensely valued by a church. If need be, reignite your passion to serve and you'll quickly discover your value to God and His saints.

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"For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God" (1st Thessalonians 4:3-5). While Pacino, who has never been married, would improve his moral condition by marrying girlfriend Alfallah, neither De Niro nor Jagger could do likewise with the Lord's sanction. Both of them have been married and divorced. Jesus taught, *"Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her"* (Mark 10:11). In all cases, whether matrimony is a legitimate option or not, repentance is necessary.

While the celebrities mentioned herein are unlikely to care what is said about their immorality, it is important for everyone to be aware of what is and is not sin.

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

PROVERBS 25:11

"You can seek the truth or bury
your head in the sand. Both
require digging."

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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"LET HIM CALL"

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All who desire Christ's mercy in judgment must visit the sick (Matthew 25:36, 39, 43, 44), and elders of the church have particular responsibility in this matter, for it is written, *"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up"* (James 5:14-15).

While there is duty on the part of others – church leaders especially – to minister to the ailing, the ailing themselves bear a certain, small obligation. Namely, the sick are required to inform congregational overseers of their situation. James referred to the *"sick,"* and declared, *"Let him call for the elders."* If the ailing one fails to notify his brethren in Christ about his health, either directly or through a messenger, they cannot reasonably be expected to be aware of the problem, pray over him, or tend to his needs.

If the sick has steadfastly attended every assembly of the church and then is suddenly absent, that absence will arouse the attention of fellow Christians, who can investigate, leading to prayer and treatment. However, if the ailing member regularly forsakes the assembling, sickness is likely to go unnoticed, untreated, and not prayed for. In such a case, the patient is not being neglected by the church; rather, his neglect of the church has led to a distance between himself and brethren that he is totally responsible for.

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