

# Marriage: Success Factors

**Dickson E. Atsenuwa**  
**Lead Consultant**



**HelpMasters  
Consulting**  
...Multi - Dimensional Consultants

SINCE 2012

**HelpMasters Consulting**

*Professional & Customized Services For The  
Total Person & Organizations*

helpmastersconsultin@gmail.com.

www,helpmastersconsulting.org



### **Our Vision:**

A world where people are equipped to harness their potential to overcome challenges, and live an authentic and fulfilling life

### **Our Mission:**

To Lead in the provision of relevant and effective services that glorify God, by equipping and enabling individuals and organisations to pursue and achieve excellence

---

### **Philosophy & Core Values:**

- God-Given Human Potentials are Limitless
- Living an Authentic and Fulfilling Life is Real life
- Integrity, High Sense of Responsibility and Christian Morality
- Respect for Human Dignity
- Jesus Christ is Lord and In Him Is Life
- Principles & Approach:
- Harnessing and Redirecting Potentials for Competence and Excellence
- Each case is unique, and requires appropriate and relevant professional and therapeutic approach (s)
- Non-Oppression, Non-Discrimination, respectful, Empowerment perspective
- Success is doing what is right in light of God's Word.

## Preface

It is with great pains that I write this book, because its writing coincided with an event that should at the worse, have been just a bad dream, and not a reality. It is my prayer that you will learn from it, and take definite and intentional steps to work with your spouse to ensure that your marriage works. *Marriage Is a Lot of Hard Work!* Do not just present a façade, but cooperate with one another and the Holy Spirit to make your marriage real, and the site of God's purpose of being a point of reference, and the place to raise godly children who will continue the legacy of godliness, especially at a time when ungodliness and worldliness have entered and taken a place of prominence in the church.

My interest in Marriage and Marriage Counselling dates back to before I was even a teenager. At that time, I had secretly decided that I was not going to get married due to what I saw of marriages, especially of my aunties and my mother (late). These women were generally nice people and beautiful, and I could not understand why they were not in their married homes. So, I had anger in me, and decided that I would not marry so that I do not unconsciously take this anger out on whoever to whom I will be married. But I discovered a love for the female gender, which manifested in taking the stance to support them and fight on their behalf. This I did from when I was in primary school as I fought with boys who bullied girls. As a jovial person, who loved drumming and dancing, girls easily drifted to me. Besides, I grew up among girls, with six (6) girls among Nine (9) children, as siblings from my mother. But at the same time, I could not stand abusive girls who

use very scathing and abusive words, especially when they have disagreements with boys, and I would beat them after due warning. However, as I grew older, with the early opportunity to be involved with church work – started teaching Sunday School before I was a Teenager – I found that my decision was shifting. God was breaking me, and my position to support girls who were bullied increased and I started thinking that if I ever get married that I would show the woman to whom I would be married a true love and care, and let other men know the need and value of being nice to women. This gradual shift notwithstanding, I presented a very unwelcoming front to females, especially when my contact with them increased as a youth leader, not just in a local church, but on the broader level of the Association and Conference levels of the Baptist Convention, in Nigeria. Was my shift in decision, right? I do not know.

Over time, I have come to the firm belief that a Christian woman's disregard for respect and submission to their husbands must stem from taking the love and care of their husbands for granted. I came to this conclusion after years of marriage counselling work, and hearing Christian women say, even before they get married, that if their husbands are truly Christians, they cannot divorce them no matter their misbehaviour. Consequently, they believe that they have the right to behave in ways that are disrespectful, and do not display a submissive spirit to their husbands. This attitude is worse among those with high levels of academic education and doing well financially. (hence traditional men usually warn against marrying academically educated women). But it is not

their level of education or financial status that is the issue or to be blamed, it is a behaviour flaw, which include selfishness, stubbornness, arrogance, lust, and greed. These together with buying into wrong feminist and humanist theories hook line and sinker, produce a proud, disrespectful, and stubborn woman. So, a stubborn and disrespectful wife, who is outrightly disobedient to God, and is therefore an unbeliever, and so, has lost the privilege of being treated as a Christian woman, and runs the risk of being treated as an unbeliever - Fired!<sup>1</sup>

I am writing this book from a point of great pain, as I have watched marriages, including mine suffer great dysfunction, despite great efforts to prevent such an outcome. I write to warn and appeal to couples, especially women to return to the Word of God and commit to obedience. Moreover, couples must appreciate that marriage is the first place of the attack of satan, and that just as he attacks fervent Christians so ferociously, so does he do to Christian marriages. The warning not to give a foothold to satan is an important and timely one at all times, and no place is it as important as in the Christian marriage relationship. Like Apostle Paul, while not in any way comparing myself with him, my life's desire has been and still is, to be pleasing to God, and to fulfil His purpose(s) in my life. I will not give anything for fulfilling this goal, as long as God gives me His precious breath.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 2:18, 20-23; Ephesians 5:22-24,33b; Matthew 18:15-17; 1Corinthians 7:15 [12-16]; Galatians 5:1,13,15.

<sup>2</sup> Ephesians 4:27; Phil.3:8-11.

As I reflect on how people live the Christian life, which I call the “Amazing Walk” in another of my Books, marriages, including mine, I am reminded of the relationship between the Israelites and God, and I weep unconsolably. I also remember the warnings and pleas of men of God such as Moses, Joshua, Micah, Jeremiah, and Apostles Paul, Peter, and John. These men were saying to the people of God, God has been gracious; loved you so much to call you His children; sent His only begotten Son to die and redeem you from sin and slavery to satan and corruption; He has given you every good and great things; He has taught you on how to live with and for Him; given you leaders, prophets, and teachers; given you the Manual of life; how is it that you cannot follow in the path He has designed and shown you as acceptable? How come that you cannot understand that every good thing that you will ever need now and for eternity are to be found in this path? How is it that you cannot understand that His patience and long-suffering is not weaknesses, but further signs of His great love for you? Why can't you understand that your God is the everlasting God and that He is the only One that is worthy of worship? Your running after other gods in the form of materialism, fame and positions amount to backsliding and idolatry and that you will be sorely punished at an appointed time without mercy? We plead with you, choose and remain in this path, which gives you life, so that you and your children and generations after you will flourish in the places, He has intentionally located you. Today as you still

have His breath in you, be reconciled with Him and do not continue to harden your hearts!<sup>3</sup>

Like Prophet Isaiah and Jesus asked rhetorically, do Christian couples not have ears to hear, eyes to see, and hearts to understand? They possess all of these faculties, but they have made them dead because of the choices that they have made. Their acts of disobedience, first to God, and then to their husbands and wives, have caused them blindness, and put them in a condition of stupor and hardness of heart. Sincere repentance, which starts with an acceptance of the sin of disobedience, pride, stubbornness, lust, and greed, must be the basis of restoration. God's arms are wide open to receive and pardon, but it is disobedient believers, who by their disobedience have become rebellious are the ones to return. They must return with a sincere and contrite hearts, and with weeping, and the loving Lord will generously forgive, pardon and restore.<sup>4</sup>

Do not rush to say that this work is sexist, macho, or any of those terms commonly used in western cultures to describe works that are direct in drawing people's attention to the problems in their relationship with their Maker, the Almighty God. I write from the perspective of God's Plan for Marriage. Humankind's disobedience and dismissal of God's plan for marriage has breed multifarious challenges in Marriages, Families, Communities, and

---

<sup>3</sup> Deut.10:12-17; 30:19-20; Josh.21:43-45; 24:15, 19-23; Micah 6:8; Jer,29:10-14; 2Cor.6:14-7:1; Rom.2:3-11; 2Pet.3:8-12; 1John 3:7-12; Heb.3:7-15.

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 29:10-16; 65:1-7; Matt.13:13-15; Rom.10:18-21.

Nations at large. These challenges have continued despite our claim to enlightenment, advancement in every field of knowledge, and the many centuries since the first family was led to fall because of the action of the first woman, Eve. This also partly explains the greater focus on the role of the woman in a marriage relationship and the challenges that are encountered in this work. It is my belief that when human beings, especially women return to obedience of the instructions of God as He has made known in His Word, the Bible, which reveals His will for humankind, there will be a definite and positive change. Prophet Isaiah warned the people of Israel, and the same is applicable to any generation: *“Forget all this gloom. Get off your narrow path. Stop telling us about your Holy One of Israel.” “This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: ‘Only in returning to Me and resting in Me will you be saved.... But you would have none of it.’ “So the LORD must wait for you to come to Him so He can show you His love and compassion. For the LORD is a faithful God. blessed are those who wait for His help.”*<sup>5</sup>

I am more than familiar with the pains and tragedy of failed marriages. God has given me the grace to be passionate and good at what I do; I am a good Marriage Counsellor; an Excellent Teacher of the Word of God, and one who is passionate, sticks to, and persists in the right things that I do. I offer you this book as my heart-felt gift for the restoration and stabilization of your marriage, so that you can experience the Love, Joy, Peace, Harmony, and all the other blessedness that God intends for

---

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah 30:11, 15, 18. [9-17].

marriage. May the Holy Spirit enable you to make sense of the content of this Book, and the grace to humble yourself and practice them, amen. I love you with the Love of the Almighty God.

## Table of Contents

Preface.....	3
Acknowledgment.....	12
Introduction .....	13
Part One - Foundational Issues .....	32
Chapter One - The Institution of Marriage .....	33
Chapter Two - Rules for Marriage Success .....	44
Chapter Three - Desperation .....	52
Chapter Four - The Out-Working of Marriage.....	56
Chapter Five - Poor / Lack of Sufficient Knowledge of the To-Be Spouse.....	60
Chapter Six - Lack of Appreciation /Acceptance of Individual Differences.....	66
Chapter Seven - Unrealistic/Unclarified Expectations.....	69
Chapter Eight -Faulty Assumptions.....	72
Chapter Nine - Comparison .....	74
Chapter Ten - Stamina for the Journey .....	76
Part Two - Key Success Factors .....	79
Chapter One - Respect .....	80
Chapter Two - Honesty .....	90
Chapter Three - Responsibility.....	97
Chapter Four - Love (Genuine, Agape Love) .....	102
Chapter Five - Submission.....	107
Chapter Six - Forgiveness.....	114
Chapter Seven - Effective Communication .....	118
Part Three - The Tragedy of Failed Marriages .....	127

Chapter One - Satan's Agenda ..... 129

Chapter Two - The Tragedy of Failed Marriages ..... 137

Chapter Three - Marriage and Divorce..... 147

Conclusion ..... 154

Your Reflections ..... 177

About the Author ..... 178

# Acknowledgment

This work is based almost entirely on the Word of God, the Bible, which is the revealed Will of God for Humankind. In addition, the Book is written through the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who is the Teacher, and gives meaning and interpretation to the revealed Will of God as found in the Bible. Most quotations are from the New Living Translation (NLT), and the New King James Version (NKJV) of the Holy Bible, except otherwise indicated.

The Holy Spirit has also used my time of meditation on His Word and writings of great men of God and authors such as Oswald Chambers, and Charles Spurgeon to inspire, and provide me with practical applications of the Word of God. This work has also benefitted from the reflection and inspirations gained from using "Today in the Word;" as well as "Our Daily Bread."

Finally, I must acknowledge the impact of the privilege of working on the Domestic Violence Prevention Programme, generally called Partner Assault Programme (PAR), with others, both full-time and part-time staff, of John Howard Society of Waterloo – Wellington, Waterloo Region, Ontario, Canada.

## Introduction

Marriage is the oldest institution created by God for the good of humankind. It was His decision to provide marriage for humankind when after creating Adam, placing him in a well provided-for location, the Garden of Eden, He stated that it is not good for man to be alone. He therefore, went ahead to look for a companion for Adam. The Bible records that God brought so many different creatures to Adam; Adam gave them names, but none of these creatures met the need of a suitable companion for Adam. This led God to make a woman out of Adam (Man). This creature God made out of Adam met with Adam's approval who stated: "*This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called "woman," for she was taken from man.*"<sup>6</sup> So, intimacy is to human relationships especially marriage, as oxygen is to life, and to live without true intimacy is to be dead while still living!<sup>7</sup>

But despite the importance of marriage, it is also the site of one of the most painful disappointments of humankind. What God intended for bliss, companionship, the satisfaction of sexual and relationship intimacy, support, mutual love, and the raising of godly family and worship of God, has been turned by sin and Satan to hell in extreme cases, while still living on earth. The primary cause of this ugly development is the rejection of God and the *Rules and Regulations* which He put in place to guide the institution of marriage. Of course, this can be traced back to the first act of disobedience and rebellion by humankind – Adam and Eve, instigated by Satan who had before now also rebelled against the authority of God. The

---

<sup>6</sup> Genesis 2:23 (read 18-23)

<sup>7</sup> Genesis 2:7-24

death that God warned as the consequence of disobedience set in, not in physical terms but spiritual. So, everything concerning human beings have died since that event in the Garden of Eden. Satan lied and Eve believed, but in believing satan instead God Eve rebelled against the authority of God as well as that of Adam. I like to note here what has come to be my theory of what Adam did. I do not believe that Adam was there listening to the conversation between satan and Eve. If he was there, at the minimum, he would have stopped satan and challenged his audacity of not only speaking with his wife, but of questioning God's authority over the administration of the Garden. But given that only very few translations did not include the phrase 'with her' Adam's action evokes several personality flaws. In the first place Adam failed to display obedience and loyalty to God. Secondly, he failed to provide leadership, and with this failure, a failure to provide protection for the wife. In third place, he committed the first act of joint or group suicide. And in the final place, he showed connivance with eve to disobey and revolt against God. This last point, I state with some caution, because Apostle Paul was to write later that Adam was not deceived, (see 1Timothy 2:14). This is one of the bases of my claim that Adam was not present during the discussion between satan and Eve. But all the above notwithstanding, I do not believe that Adam just foolishly accepted the fruit from Eve, unawares of the consequences. NO! His action based on his knowledge of the consequences, seem to be fatalistic. He knew fully well that Eve was going to die and chose to die with her. This act may not be unconnected with his remembrance of the difficulty of finding a suitable companion for him in the first place. A more important inference is that this act can be said to foreshadowed Christ's death for corrupt humankind, and the Church. This is explained in Ephesians chapter Five verse thirty-two, where

correlation was made between the relationship between the Jesus Christ and the Church with what should be the relationship between a husband and his wife. Some men still do the same today, living under the abusive actions of their wives. They are not foolish as those women and the world usually think but are fulfilling their role as husband and the concomitant responsibilities. Returning to the action of Adam, the foregoing having been said, a major that I find with him is that of not thinking about his responsibility and accountability to God. Instead of accepting the fruit from Eve, he should have told Eve that the matter must be communicated to God, for them to know what God would tell them as a solution. So, while Adam's act should not be seen as foolish. Instead, it is Eve, and all women who after her have followed in her steps who are foolish. They take for granted and abuse the love, sacrifice, and privilege their husbands are displaying and bequeathing upon them.<sup>8</sup> Often those relationships eventually end up in divorce, after which, the women then live in regrets, even though some of them will not admit it publicly. I have met many of such women in my practice as a marriage counsellor.

Consequently, marriage has over the years failed to meet its ultimate purpose, and increasingly so with the development and acceptance of humanistic theories and thinkings that question the authority and supremacy of God and run contrary to the revealed will of God for marriage. The factors discussed in this Book are based on the recognition and acceptance of marriage as instituted by God and designed to work according to the Rules and Regulations that God has put in place for its operation. Jesus quickly pointed to this fact when in response to the Pharisees and Scribes who were always out to find fault with Him, stated

---

<sup>8</sup> Ephesians 5:29-32; 1Peter 3:7 (read 1-9)

the plan of God from the beginning for marriage. God intended for a man and a woman to be in a marriage relationship, raise a godly family without recourse to divorce. And His statement addresses the claim of those who preach and propagate the acceptance of different forms of relationships they call marriage. Marriage is between a man and a woman, simple! Every other combination are human contraptions, show human's rejection and rebellion against God. These actions which have brought with them untold pains to human beings, will be punished, and will continue to do harm until stubborn and disobedient humans beings suffer eternally in the Lake of Fire.<sup>9</sup>

So, it should be understood from the onset that failures in marriage are a consequence of humans' rejection of God and His Rules and Regulations for marriage. Mere, frail, and temporary human beings are playing God, and treating marriage as if it is something made by human beings, for which they have the right to put forward rules for its operation. What an effrontery, and irony that created things present as knowing more than their Creator. But how can people who have become vain in their imaginations with foolish hearts which have become darkened have knowledge that is worth hearing, as clearly described by Apostle Paul?<sup>10</sup> The knowledge that cannot recognize and respect its Source and Maker, definitely cannot be a knowledge worth knowing and applying to life. This is the tragedy of human life, that incomplete and imperfect knowledge is what is used to run life's affairs. Common sense would have told man that

---

<sup>9</sup> Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:3-9; Proverbs 19:28-29; 2Peter 2:2-6, 9-10.

<sup>10</sup> Romans 1:20-24; Isaiah 29:14-16.

this is not knowledge. But as it is often said, common sense is not common hence it is not available to all people. What is called 'common sense' is actually the Wisdom that comes from God, which is available only to those who have submitted themselves to God, and accepted Jesus Christ not only as Saviour, but more importantly as the LORD of their lives.<sup>11</sup> When humankind through Eve, deceived by satan went ahead of God to eat of the fruit of the knowledge of good and bad, they acted prematurely, and therefore did not attain full knowledge, neither were they given the wisdom which makes knowledge useful. Consequently, human being became rebellious, self-conceited, with foolish and darkened minds. Furthermore, God roundly turned their wisdom upside down. Hear what the Word of God says, "*For the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God. ... He traps the wise in the snare of their own cleverness.*"<sup>12</sup> Where did the knowledge of satan and Eve lead them and world that has followed after them? But for the love and grace of God, what misery would have been the portion of human beings for daring to disobey and revolt against God their Maker!

13

God is not just at the Apex of human life including marriage, but it means among many other things that He is the BOSS. As Boss, He is integral to any marriage but especially Christian marriage. God did not just create and then left His creatures in the wild to fend for themselves. In His love and wisdom, He created everything that humankind would need before He formed humankind. In the same vein, He provided a set of Rules and

---

<sup>11</sup> 1Corinthians 2:6-10.

<sup>12</sup> 1Corinthians 3:19; see also Genesis 3:7-8; 11:1-9, note 7-8; Romans 1:20-24; 1Corinthians 1:19-20; 3:18-21.

<sup>13</sup> Genesis 3:1-8, 12-19; John 3:16-18; Romans 5:8; 1John 3:1.

Regulations, His presence, and a paradise, called Eden, where He placed the first couple – Adam and Eve. He related with them, visiting them regularly to check on their well-being. As it is well known, it was during one of such visits, that the sin of disobedience and rebellion was uncovered; an event that plunged humanity into the abyss of evil, pain and every kind of corruption imaginable. It is therefore, the height of disrespect for humankind to ignore and neglect the God who created them and gave them the gift of marriage. And for Christians to behave in the same manner, with a claim to whatever philosophy, thinking or persuasions, deserves the stiffest form of punishment.<sup>14</sup>

But human beings are truly foolish, and have refused to learn from history, and instead have continued in the ways of their ancestors with greater zeal for disobedience, rebellion, and the crafting of all forms of evil, ignoring the sure consequences which await them. Hear Prophet Haggai as he stated God's attempts to bring His people back to understanding without success:

*"You have sown much, and bring little; you eat, but do not have enough; you drink, but are not filled with drink; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and he earns wages, earns wages to put into a bag with holes," ... "You looked for much, but indeed it to little; and you brought it home, I blew it away. ... Therefore, the heavens above you withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit. For I called for a drought on the land and the mountains, on the grain and the new wine and the oil, on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and livestock, and on all the labour of your hands." "So is this people, and so is this nation before Me, and so is*

---

<sup>14</sup> Genesis 1:1; 2:7-24; Isaiah 29:14-16; Jeremiah 18: 5-6,11, 15-17; Romans 9: 20-21.

*every work of their hands; and what they offer is unclean". "I struck you with blight and mildew and hail in all the labours of your hands; yet you did not turn to Me, says the LORD."*<sup>15</sup> *What a knowledge you have human beings! Apostle Paul said of human beings with foolish and darkened minds, "Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man - ... Therefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonour their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever, Amen."*<sup>16</sup>

This is the depth of the degradation, degeneration, and dehumanization, all of which were self-inflicted by 'wise' mere human beings. It goes back to the Garden of Eden. It was there, after the rebellion that humankind began to experience shame, having lost the covering of God over them, and was left with the certainty of eternal, spiritual death. It is curious to observe that the apparently friendly and wise satan (serpent) did not come to their aid.<sup>17</sup> The reality of what James was to later write about sin dawned upon them, "*... each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.*"<sup>18</sup> Adam and Eve were left to devise a temporary solution to the problem Eve's lust, pride, and greed have brought upon them, and the whole of humanity. Satan achieved his goal of bringing humanity under his control, presenting lies as if they are

---

<sup>15</sup> Haggai 1:6, 9-11; 2:14, 17.

<sup>16</sup> Romans 1:22-25.

<sup>17</sup> Genesis 3:8-10

<sup>18</sup> James 1:13-15.

truths.<sup>19</sup> But the physical experience is only a tell-tale of a deeper spiritual fact of exposure to, and control by satan and the forces of evil. Evil entered human existence and has continued and has increased in its ramifications since that time. Satan is a rebel who got about twenty-five percent (25%) of other spirit-being (angels) to support his rebellion against God. These have increased since then with the gift/skill of craftiness with which they deceive unsuspecting human beings. The lust, greed, and pride which propelled Eve in her decision for satan has continued to spread since then like wildfire in the lives of human beings. This trend will continue after our generation, until Christ returns, with marriage being the first and fiercest front of the attack by satan.<sup>20</sup> This is treated in great details in my yet to be published Book: Adam and Eve- The Unending Challenges.

Therefore, it is important to emphasize that marriage will succeed only if based on, and operated according to God's design, with the utmost respect and regard (Awe) for the Almighty God who created human beings and gave them marriage and all its benefits as a gift. In addition, success is not a function of merely remaining in a marriage relationship. Without God as the *Foundation* and *the Reference Point*, what is called marriage is only a cohabitation of people satisfying their emotional and psychological needs. It is like people operating an appliance without the manual and the knowledge of how the appliance is designed to function. Such people will have a limited success, until the appliance malfunctions. It is then that the

---

<sup>19</sup> Ephesians 4:14; 2Peter 2:1-3, 10-15; 1John2:15-17.

<sup>20</sup> Romans 1:28-32; Jude 1:5-6; Revelations 12:7-9

poverty of their knowledge of the functioning of the appliance becomes very obvious. I am fairly a handyman, and love to play with appliances, a pastime I developed as a young person. My mother (of blessed memory), had a Grundig Transistor Radio in those days (1970<sup>s</sup>), which invariably became mine since she did not have the time to listen to it. In my adventurous bent, I bought a soldering iron that I see radionics use. So, I would regularly open up the radio with the goal of understanding how it picks radio waves and bring sounds as music and news etc. I still do a lot of self-help stuff around the house and for close friends today, but I know my limit. Just like in my youthful exuberant inquisitive days, I was, and I am still not a trained technician, I do not go about claiming to know what electricians do, or to compete for an electrification project, without having the truly trained technicians in my team! In the same manner, if people without the technical knowledge of their appliances desire to continue to use the appliances, not only must they refer to their manuals when there is a fault, but they must call for experts / skilled people on the functioning of the appliance. Failure to do so will mean forfeiting the use and benefits of the appliance (s). This is exactly what happens with most marriages, when it is said that they hit the rock and disintegrate. The people involved have been running the marriage without reference to the Manual and the *Designer of The Manual and Marriage*. And when they run into problems, they do not contact the *Manual* or *the Designer and Expert on marriage, the Almighty God*. This is the case of all marriages not based on the Almighty God's Design, Rules, and Regulations for marriage.<sup>21</sup>

The point about the challenges of marriage is that it bears relevance and

---

<sup>21</sup> Genesis 2:7-8, 15, 18-24; 5:2

importance only when considered in connection with believers. It is believers, unfortunately not all of them, who know that their marriage is their first and most important mission field. There, they succeed in their mission or they fail. The standard and requirement are that they live with godly love, humility, and obedience to God through exhibiting these requirements through their relationship with their spouse. They raise godly children, who will continue the legacy after their departure to eternity. God needs to be able to say of every wife that she has served Me in her mission field because she was respectful and submissive to her husband, who she supported so that God could say of her husband, just like He said of Abraham, *"I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to the husband what He had spoken to him."*<sup>22</sup> And this husband has served God because he loved and cared for the wife, making her spotless, just like Jesus cares for His church.<sup>23</sup> Eve did not make any connection between her actions and the husband, and by extension humanity. But there was a connection which has brought disaster to humanity since the Garden of Eden. This calls for discernment! Adam, in my opinion eat of the fruit given to him by Eve, out of deep love and commitment to his role, to be willing to die for the good of the wife, just like Jesus died for the Church. This is often neglected or not taught or spoken about. But Apostle Paul made allusion to this point when he stated that Adam was not the one tempted or deceived, but Eve was the one deceived and committed the first

---

<sup>22</sup> Genesis 18:18-19.

<sup>23</sup> Ephesians 5:25-28.

sin of disobedience and rebellion against God. in this same passage, the role of the woman and how they will receive salvation or relief from the curse of pain during child-bearing was clearly stated. Many pastors and teachers of the Word avoid these passages to placate women who have become very vociferous in their claim of equality with men.<sup>24</sup>

Marriage is an institution set up by God, with Rules and Regulations as earlier noted. A marriage vow is not just between the man and woman. More importantly, it is a vow with God, who established marriage. It is only to the extent that both persons in the relationship focus on obedience to God that this relationship (marriage) will stand. But as soon as one or both people start to act in ways which contradict the dictates of God, satan is invited into the marriage. Where does a person take instructions for living in a marriage relationship, if it is outside of God's instructions? Most people do not recognize this fact when they begin to foment or tolerate actions that are outside God's perfect plan for marriage. This is why attention is on the spouse. Yes, it is the spouse that is seen to be acting contrary to the will of God. But such action(s) is sin against and sin is disobedience to God. When God is put out of a marriage, a space is created for satan to occupy. Satan's purpose is to steal, destroy and kill. Believers are warned not to be unmindful of his attacks, his craftiness and treachery, and that he is at the root of conflicts in any situation including marriage. The warning about satan includes the fact that we do not fight against

---

<sup>24</sup> 1Timothy 2:13-14; 12, 15; Genesis 3:6.

flesh and blood, but satan and his demons- principalities and powers in dark places.<sup>25</sup>

There are only two forces or powers at work in the world – God and satan; and human actions are not free of the influence of these powers.<sup>26</sup> Divorce can never, and should never make anyone especially a Christian claim to be at peace with God. How can doing what God hates, and is an act of stubbornness be pleasing to God and bring His peace? So, the peace claimed by those who divorce is not the peace of God and can only be temporary. A person who has to go for a divorce because the spouse has made living a marriage life impossible, can be said to be living in the permissive will of God, just like God through Moses allowed for divorce in the Old Testament. He/she will enjoy some peace, because that person did not precipitate the divorce. Apostle Paul about treating people who refused to live godly lives with believers as unbelievers, and to let them go. Jesus also taught that offences will come but woe to that person through whom the offence comes. These are difficult teachings, but are part of the whole Gospel, and they are the reasons people should guard their marriages with all their heart and strength.<sup>27</sup> Just like our Spiritual life, Love and Marriage-life does not run successfully on Autopilot. We need to consciously and deliberately take appropriate steps to make it run well, and in accordance with

---

<sup>25</sup> John 10:10; Psalm 119:9-11; 2Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 6:10-19.

<sup>26</sup> Galatians 5:16-17.

<sup>27</sup> Proverbs 4:23; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 18:7-9; 19:3-9; I Samuel 15:22-23; Ephesians 5:21-30; 1Corinthians 7:5, 15.

God's instruction. Marriage was His idea, and He has Rules and Regulations Which Guide It. It is the height of disrespect and the foolish arrogance of mere human beings to operate marriage outside of God, and His Rules and Regulations. Such can only lead to Disaster!

The importance of the extent to which Christian marriages succeed as the yardstick for determining the success of marriages, can only be appreciated through the eyes of Christian marriages. This is because Christians are the ones from whom the display of godliness in every facet of life as a testimony to the reality of God and a witness to the redemptive work of Jesus Christ is required. Here lies the challenge of marriage, not in the length of co-habitation of a man and a woman. While generally speaking, the failure of a Christian marriage does nothing to change the nature and all the attributes of God, it however clearly broadcasts the failure of Christian living. Jesus told His disciples, after His resurrection that they are the ones who have been with Him, seen, and experienced all that He had done, therefore, they are the ones to bear testimony to these facts. He then promised them the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish this task. What He told those disciples was not limited to those who were His physical audience, but also to all who will become His disciples following the witness of those first set of disciples.<sup>28</sup> The fact that we have the Gospel in our time is proof that those early disciples fulfilled the task given to them.<sup>29</sup> Can the same be said of our generation and the ones to come if Jesus delays His second coming? People were not saved to live to

---

<sup>28</sup> Luke 24:44-49.

<sup>29</sup> Matthew 28:19-20.

themselves and yet call themselves Christians, neither is living the Christian life limited to Sunday morning ritual. It must be understood that anyone who calls him/herself a Christian has no other life but the Christian life, which must be lived in total submission to Christ, and in ways which clearly display the attributes of Jesus Christ twenty-four-seven!<sup>30</sup>

But it is a very well-known fact that this is not the condition of marriages, even of those called Christians. Consequently, the failure of marriage is the outcome of mere mortals, fallen, and corrupt human beings, arrogating to themselves the power to make rules for something for which they are not qualified, and for which they know little to nothing. The pitiable fact is that believers follow these human – made rules and hope to have successful marriages, where there exists the presence of God, His peace, godliness, and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Nothing can be further from the truth! Therefore, let me repeat again, that marriages will only succeed when human beings know how to humble themselves, respect, and return to God, and fully embrace His Rules and Regulations. In the same vein, the success factors also succeed only because they are based on the acknowledgment of God as the Sole Creator of the universe, including human beings, who deserves humankind's absolute obedience and worship, and is allowed to rule in marriages, which He instituted in the first place. Women, especially Christians, must be careful not to be deceived and allow earthly knowledge to make them disobey God, and claim to be Christians. The extent to which they honour their husbands according to Scripture, is the extent to which they can they be truly said to

---

<sup>30</sup> 2Corinthians 5:13-15; James 4:4-5.

be Christians. The same is true for men! Those who abandon their homes and spouses in pursuit of fame and other material possessions have failed to be Christians, because they are living clearly outside the will of God. God will require account from them because of the pains, shame, disappointments, and untold pains they cause their spouses at the appropriate time.<sup>31</sup>

Finally, it must also be accepted that at the foundation of marriage is the fact that it is a Spiritual Enterprise, having been instituted by the Deity, God, who is a Spirit. He created human beings in His image and likeness, and human beings function properly only to the extent that they are spiritual. This is why cohabiting successfully is not the same thing as a successful marriage. While psychological and emotional needs, as well as the function of procreation are fulfilled, the spiritual goal, and the need of godliness, if not present, there cannot be said to be marriage in the eyes of God – the Author of marriage. Being spiritual means that we need the Spirit of God to understand and operate life successfully. Again, the Scripture makes this point very clear, Jesus told Nicodemus, a Scribe and leader of the Jews that salvation is spiritual and that he needs spiritual support which comes by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to access it. Apostle Paul stated the same thing, noting that spiritual things are spiritually understood, and that believers who still live and enjoy sin and being carnal, cannot understand it. This is one great area which believers should be careful about before jumping at any doctrine of the world. These doctrines ultimately come from the pit of hell where satan and his demons are, and so

---

<sup>31</sup> Exodus 20:39, 43-48; Jeremiah 25:31-33; Isaiah 66:15-17; 2Thessalonians 1:5-8.

it is not just about being independent, free or inclusive; these doctrines which look innocent on the surface are part of the cunning craftiness of satan.<sup>32</sup>

The push, especially by feminists about female individual freedom and ownership of her body has pushed sexual relationship to be just for the pleasure, and can be done in any way that is considered pleasurable. But God intended sexual relationship for marriage.<sup>33</sup> From just adventure and being a victim of bad groups, engagement in sexual activities is now for pleasure and for sale. Children, not even up to teenage years are taught and they engage in sexual activities. The rise in teenage pregnancy, sex trade (sex slavery), unwanted children is one of the disturbing outcomes of the bloated doctrine of individual freedom, ownership of our bodies, and the freedom to use it as one sees fit. In most cultures in modern times, especially western cultures, gender identification has been made fluid and not limited to the male and female, which God who created human beings made. This has been heralded by the dilution of morality in every aspect of life, including sexual morality, which in turn is one of the outcomes of humanist theories with no regards and acknowledgement of the Almighty God and His revealed and written Will the Bible. But since God made human beings male and female, every other description, are mere contraptions of the foolish (reprobate) minds only capable of producing “*every kind of wickedness, sin,*

---

<sup>32</sup> Genesis 2: 7-8, 18-24; John 3:3-7; 1Cotinthians 2:13-15; 3:18-20; James 3:14-18.

<sup>33</sup> Genesis 4:1-2.

*greed, hate, envy, murder, quarrelling, deception, malicious behaviour, and gossip.*"<sup>34</sup>

The list of the outcome of human depravity is longer as can be seen from the additional verses of the reference. The point is that marriage like all other things about life, is not the making of human beings, who lack true knowledge, intelligence, and wisdom, such that they pontificate about marriage. Believers follow the directions of the world only to their destruction, just like the world and all its lusts will be destroyed at the appointed time.<sup>35</sup> The Bane of society is that it is made up of Thieves and Collaborators and Enablers. But these classes of people are also found in the Church, they are among the husbands and wives in a Church, and are among leaders and the led. As the Scripture says, they use empty and boastful words to lure and deceive. Lustful and young believers easily fall prey to their deceits. But they themselves are slaves to their own depravity, their evil deeds and actions will boomerang on them, and their end will be worse than their beginning. In particular, those who are teachers and leaders in Churches who use their privileged position to commit atrocities will have the "blackest darkness" reserved for them. And because they are greedy, they are idol worshipers even though they are in the church or even leaders.<sup>36</sup>

But when greed is at work and especially when not acknowledged, people know no bounds. They behave in

---

<sup>34</sup> Romans 1:28-29 [21-22,24,26-32]; see also, Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7,21-24; 5:2.

<sup>35</sup> Genesis 1:1; 2:18-24; Isaiah 42:5, 8; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 Peter 1:3.

<sup>36</sup> Proverbs 1:10-19. 2 Peter 2:17-22; Col. 3:5; Jude 1:11-13.

dangerous ways which include eliminating others in order to secure the object of their greed. They do not know or accept that there is a point of saying enough, and giving room to others. And if they cannot stop, how can they think of supporting others? Propelled by the love for money and lust, they not only do harm to others, but also to themselves and close family members.<sup>37</sup> Do greedy and callous people know the saying that *'you can't take it with you or 'I never saw a U Haul following a Hearse'*? No one can serve God and materialism. When a spouse or both make materialism, fame, and the pursuit of worldly pleasure their pursuit, instead of building a godly marriage and raising godly children, they are idolaters. They are not different from other corrupt people in any society, who have become the characterization of society in modern times. In so doing, they only work to destroy their marriage relationships, and they leave a trail of pain and suffering for their spouses, children, extended family and friends; shame on the Church, and dishonour to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>38</sup>

A woman who cannot be submissive to her husband as an act of respect for God and her husband does not deserve to be addressed as a wife or even a woman! Adam was the person who gave the name "woman" and "Eve" to the person who God made out of his body; and God accepted the name or label/title. But this person was made principally as a "help meet" for Adam by God out of

---

<sup>37</sup> 1Timothy 6:7-10.

<sup>38</sup> Luke 16:13; Colossians 3:5-6; Romans 2:1-9, 17-24.

His love and care, who thought and said, that He was not going to leave Adam to be alone without a suitable companion. God then made them husband and wife, put them in a well-furnished, provided for, and equipped paradise called Eden, and commanded that what He has joined together, NO ONE should separate or put asunder.<sup>39</sup> It is to the shame of what humankind calls civilization, that they including those who call themselves Christians, that they do not recognize, accept, and obey, what their Creator, provider and sustainer has established! But they would rather believe the lies of satan, which he sends out through sinful and fallen human beings like them. They rush at, and gurgitate, and regurgitate what they suggest, like herbivorous animals. The only seemingly justifiable explanation for such absurdity, is pleasure/enjoyment, which has transformed into unimaginable levels of evils and every kind of corruption, that has become characteristic of societies. And because of the gravity of the unfathomable damage this behaviour and actions of human beings, God will hold the originators, perpetrators and enablers/partners in crime, responsible and accountable at the appropriate time (Amen).<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> Genesis 2:8-25; 3:20.

<sup>40</sup> Acts 17:24-31; Rom. 1:20-32; 2Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:1-3, 7-15.

# Part One

## Foundational Issues

This material is not intended to treat in details the factors responsible for the failure of marriages. Its intended purpose is to provide tips on success factors for marriage. But it is necessary to examine some foundational issues if only by mention. So, first, let us examine briefly some foundational Factors for the Success of Marriage. When these Factors and are understood and applied appropriately, there will joy and satisfaction in a marriage, but when not known and not applied, they can Mar marriages. Taken together they constitute what I teach as *Pitfalls of Marriage*. These will form the discussion and content of the succeeding chapters

# Chapter One

## The Institution of Marriage

As noted in the introduction, marriage is the First Institution made by God for the functioning and smooth running of the life and society, which God will create through humankind. From God's account of creation and the establishment of marriage as recorded Genesis chapter two from verses 18 to 24, the following reasons, which address purpose can be identified i). The decision to create a woman was entirely from God, out of His Infinite Love (Agape) for humankind; ii). The woman was created as capable helper to the man. In this capacity, she was required to fulfil at the minimum, the following roles:

a). Provide *Companionship; The Foremost Reason for Her Existence*; b). Provide Support to the man so he can adequately care for the Garden and work to provide for the home. The issue of provision for the home, which was primarily the responsibility of the man has long changed, such that women also increase their support to including working to supplement the provision made by the man<sup>41</sup>. So far, great. But when women decided that they have to work even as hard as men to prove equality, *they lost sight of their primary essence – support*. Increasingly, society has supported women in this area, for many reasons some of which are reasonable. For instance, work is not just about earning income, but it is in addition, using your skills to make positive and productive contribution to life. This is an emotional and psychological need and should be encouraged. However, with the

---

<sup>41</sup> Proverbs 31:10-26

rise of feminism and other philosophies, which actively project equality with men, the activity which was supportive and met the emotional and psychological needs have been pushed beyond its limits. Modern women have taken career as a human right, and in their pursuit neglected their primary role as a support (help meet) to the man. It should be noted that the position of "Help Meet"<sup>42</sup> is a noble role which includes being an effective and compassionate home-maker, providing nourishment and nurture to both the man and children where they are available. In so doing, they join the man in ensuring that they raise godly children. But with the misinterpretation and miscarriage of this purpose, marriage and family have been destroyed, and by extension, destroying an important fibre of society. The enormous damage this development has done and continues to do is close to the consciousness of every right-thinking person, but continues to be ignored by the pressure of what I regard as a misapplied feminism and consumerism. Some governments response is to set up institutions to treat symptoms - addiction, self-harm, teenage pregnancies, abandoned children, and violence among many other ills of society, while pretending not to know the root problem. To pursue career to the utter neglect and detriment of building intimacy and a loving and godly homes contradict and defeats the purpose of a Help Meet, work, and career. It is also an act of disobedience and rebellion against God, who created a woman for a purpose. This is one of the sad and shameful outcomes of the civilization that emphasizes individual freedom

---

<sup>42</sup> Genesis 2:18

without commensurate responsibility, and the abandonment of the path clearly defined by the Almighty God<sup>43</sup>.

c). Satisfaction Of Emotional Need Including Sexual Needs of The Man; and d). Through Sexual Intimacy to Raise Godly Children and Family That Will Carry-On the Will of God<sup>44</sup>. It must be noted therefore, that as a helper, she is second in command and not the commander. While this does necessarily mean been subservient, it means that the woman must be submissive and respect the man<sup>45</sup>. But Eve usurped the position of Adam and plunged the world into the darkness that is still besetting the world. So, rather than submission and respect, Eve decided to be the one in charge, the Boss, as it is generally said. This is key to what has become of marriage, and so important and I would shed some light on it here.

In the marriage covenant, three entities are involved, namely, man, woman, and God. Many do not realize this fact but at best accept that His presence was at the wedding if conducted in the Church. No! God's role in marriage which He made is more than just a presence gracing a wedding ceremony! He is the third and the most important Person in the covenant being established<sup>46</sup>. Each person's positioning speak to their relative importance. This positioning is best illustrated with a Triangle. The man and woman are at the ends of the base, while God is at the Apex. The implication of this illustration is that the Apex completes and

---

<sup>43</sup> 1Peter 3:5-6

<sup>44</sup> Malachi 2:15

<sup>45</sup> Ephesians 5:22-24; 1Peter 3:1-2, 5-6

<sup>46</sup> Malachi 2:14-15

gives the proper shape and design to the Triangle, and by extension the marriage relationship. The shortest distance between the couple is at the Apex of the Triangle. But no one can truly approach God without His fear (Awe and Reverence) and worshipful attitude. Therefore, each person in a marriage relationship MUST reverence and worship God in any marriage that would be successful. Abraham and Sarah practiced this structure, and the Bible records that God called Abraham a friend who will instruct his children to follow his godly example.<sup>47</sup>

God was building a new and fresh family for Himself through Abraham and Sarah, after Adam and Eve, and even Noah's descendants could not live up to God's expectation of having a people with whom He can have close fellowship. This is the unique position of Israel, and God disciplined them severely because they failed on many occasions to recognize the great responsibility of being chosen, placed on them. I do not believe that there are any other people - group in the world that was punished as God did to the Jews. The writer of Hebrews called this an act of discipline, which is done to every child, in encouraging Christians of the need of not giving up their faith because of difficulties, which could be God's way of discipline!<sup>48</sup> Therefore, anyone who would be reconciled with God must recognize and respect this fact<sup>49</sup>. In addition to the privilege of becoming children of God, they must recognize the responsibility

---

<sup>47</sup> Genesis 18:18-19.

<sup>48</sup> Exodus 4:22; Hebrews 12:4-8.

<sup>49</sup> 2Corinthians 5:19-21

it demands. This partly accounts for the reason Jesus genealogy was traced from Abraham<sup>50</sup>. Abraham and Sarah set an example, especially of total commitment and dedication. This explains the importance of the Fear and Worship of God<sup>51</sup>.

The first marriage displayed this structure. Adam and Eve were together and enjoyed their companionship. God regularly visits them to ensure that all was well with them; and indeed, all went well until Eve truncated this structure and relationship by her act of disobedience and rebellion to God<sup>52</sup>. Furthermore, Sarah called Abraham lord, as an act of reverence to God through Abraham, the husband and the spiritual head of the home. And both Prophet Isaiah and Apostle Peter challenged humankind, especially women to remember Abraham and Sarah, the root from which they have come, and follow their example<sup>53</sup>. So, not only must the structure be maintained, but also, there must be genuine Dedication, Reverence, and Commitment to God. They not only waited for twenty-five (25) years for the child of promise, but also promptly obeyed when God tested them with the sacrifice of the child of promise. This faith and trust – being totally abandoned to God, knowing He made and gave us life, is the call of Christianity. This is the essence of Consecration and Sanctification, and many do not get to this point in their relationship with God<sup>54</sup>. Not so with Eve! She quickly became greedy and arrogant, thinking only

---

<sup>50</sup> Matthew 1:1-2, 17

<sup>51</sup> Psalm 47:2-4; Isaiah 42:8; 45:5-7.

<sup>52</sup> Genesis 3:5-6

<sup>53</sup> Isaiah 51:1-2

<sup>54</sup> Genesis 22:1-3, 6-12; Deut. 10:12-17; Romans 4:16-22.

of herself, and the end result of her rebellion and her reaction to the punishment put on her, was the desire to control her husband. See the New Living Translation of Bible of Genesis 3:16b, “*And you will desire to control your husband, but he will rule over you.*” This disruption of God’s order for marriage relationship has continued through the ages *with disastrous consequences*. In fact, modern cultures, especially western cultures, have completely turned things upside down, making men to be subservient to women, or treated as equal with women, at best. The increase, encouragement, and acceptance of same sex relationship is one of the off-shoots of this trend of competition for leadership and equality with man.<sup>55</sup>

This penchant to disobey God and turn upside down God’s declared Will has witnessed great and painful consequences in every aspect of human endeavour, yet humankind seemed charmed and will not and cannot retrace their steps. For instance, God directed humankind to spread out to care for other creatures and have dominion over all His creation. But humankind decided the opposite; they gathered themselves to stay in one place – Babylonia, in stark disobedience to God’s direction. Furthermore, they decided to build a Tower that gets to heaven, and make a name for themselves (pride), and eventually compete with God. This was the sin of Satan, and also that of Eve. But the God who created them is wiser, stronger, and greater than them. No one can thwart his plans, though He may appear slow or even not to act. He sent confusion among them, and the site of that confusion

---

<sup>55</sup> Isaiah 29:16.

became known as the *Tower of Babel*, in the land of defunct Kingdom of Babylon.<sup>56</sup> God desires, and He is worthy of absolute obedience from human beings, because He made them and continues to sustain them. But human beings' behaviour and actions are in no way close to this expectation, despite the injunctions in Scripture.<sup>57</sup> This failure to truly fear and worship God with our life, is also true of couples. This has been one of the key challenges of marriage, and it leads a spouse to disrupt the structure of marriage. Unbelievers do not fully understand these dynamics, and mostly struggle all through their marriages. Unfortunately, the same has become true of Christians, as they copy the world and abandon God's injunctions. Consequently, any attempt to force a closeness by the couple moving horizontally towards each other simply destroys the Structure (marriage relationship). So also, is a marriage spiritually destroyed or at least empty, where there is no true worship and reverence for God. There is a separate Book on this illustration, so, it is suggested that you get a copy and read for your information and instruction in godly marriage relationship (Marriage Debacle - The triangle Model).

But Eve usurped the position of Adam and plunged the world into the darkness that is still besetting the world. So, rather than submission and respect, Eve decided to be on the driver's side of the home. The attraction was to be as wise as God; and so did the descendants when contrary to God's injunction, they decided to

---

<sup>56</sup> Genesis 11:1-9

<sup>57</sup> Jeremiah 7:22 - 28; Micah 6:8; 1John 5:3

stay in one place, build a tower, and make a name for themselves. But how can a created creature be as wise as the One who Created it? The Creator laughed at them and gave them different languages and they scattered in the confusion that ensued, leaving the tower they could not complete as a negative testimony of their disobedience in the place with the name of Babel! The city of Babylon, and the kingdom of Babylon was reportedly found on this site.

God continues to call His people to a relationship of love that is based on obedience. When this is fully understood and embraced, God comes into our life, including our marriage, and like Jesus, who saw His disciples struggling in a storm, will come in and say, Peace, Be Still.<sup>58</sup> But there must be the forsaking; the severing of the past sinful life, and the embracing of righteousness in Christ Jesus. The instruction is, “Come out from among them and be ye separate”!<sup>59</sup> No negotiation. But many want to have the best of two worlds, and Jesus sternly stated, you cannot serve two masters; you cannot serve mammon and God. You MUST choose one. Moses, Joshua and many others repeated this same call and direction from God. But modern man, and so called believers are still trying to play clever; and if they do not repent will end up in the Lake of Fire, just like the one who is deceiving them with the pleasures of this earth.<sup>60</sup> Christianity makes one to exhibit a life

---

<sup>58</sup> Mark 4:37-39; 6:48-51

<sup>59</sup> 2Corinthians 6:14-7:1

<sup>60</sup> Matthew 6:24; 13:22; 1Timothy 6:9-10; 1John 2:15-17; Revelations 20:10, 12-15.

which says, “the sins I once loved, I now hate; and righteousness and goodness are now the ideals of my life, because I am a Christian.”

In general, the following can be identified as basic Principles of Marriage:

1. Marriage is God-made and it's for Man (male) and a Woman (Female)
2. Principles must be believed, accepted, nurtured and practiced
3. Marriage is between a Man (male) and a Woman (Female). Any other contraption is an affront and an abomination to God
4. Sexual relationships are meant for marriage relationship. Any other use to which sexual relationships are put is sin! and
5. The woman or wife must accept and fulfil all that is involved in being an Help Meet to the man, including accepting and supporting the leadership of the husband.

*If a woman intentionally refuses to live up to those responsibilities, she has no right to the privileges of a “wife.”*

Apostle Paul spoke of the Thessalonian church, “For now we really live since you are standing firm in the Lord” 1 Thess. 3:8. This is something that couples should aim at. At no point should Christian couples forget that they are ambassadors for Christ. Their marriage as earlier noted is their first and most important mission field. They must guard their calling here with all seriousness and ensure that they fulfil and make full proof of this ministry God has graciously given to them.<sup>61</sup> People in a Christian

---

<sup>61</sup> 2Timothy 1:13-14; 4:2-5; 2Corinthians 4:1-2

marriage must take their bearing from Jesus Christ. With a commitment to please Him and be the best for Him. The marriage place becomes the first place for executing and fulfilling this goal. Anything short of this focus will lead to moving apart. Nothing must be as important as the marriage, aside from God. And there is no way to truthfully and faithfully serve God without implementing His will for marriage in one's home. It must also be noted that Church activities as important as they may be, are not the same thing as serving God in Spirit and in truth. God who created marriage will not call you to abandon your marriage including your immediate family, for your own and other church pursuits. Our calling is to be a man and a woman of God starting from our home, just like the spread of the gospel was to begin in Jerusalem, the city of God. A marriage is alive when each couple is standing firm in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ and living out that faith by allowing all the virtues of godliness to be exhibited and practiced in their lives. <sup>62</sup>

A final note on this opening chapter. The word "Marriage" is the functional form of the word "Marry." To marry, is to fuse two or more things together such that they become one. Jesus explained the heart of God, His standard for marriage to the Jews in answer to questions intended to find fault with Him as found in the record by Matthew, see Matthew 19: 4-6 especially verse 6. The people in marriage are joined together by God. This establishes the prominent place of God in marriage. If the couple do not

---

<sup>62</sup> Matthew 5:13-16; Eph.5:1-4; Colossians 3:1-3, 10-17.

understand and accept this position, they put God out of their relationship and consequently put the uniting factor - God out of their relationship. What follows are: complain, pain, and ultimately, divorce as the end result.

God stated from the beginning, "Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall become united and cleave (Marry/Fuse) to his wife, and they shall be one flesh" Genesis 2:24 (AMPC), see also Matthew 19:5; 1Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31-33. *"So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder (separate),* Matthew 19:6, AMPC. This is the purpose of God who made marriage, for humankind, and that is what it should be. Marriage is between a man and a woman, and they are to fuse together in such a way that they operate to fulfil the purpose God set forth for marriage, and to glorify God. This is why Jesus describes it as a mystery. Dear Christian, the Word of God, the Bible, is your only true and accurate guide to living a successful marriage life; not human philosophies, theories, perspectives and perceptions.