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NTIA I. NTIA



**MAKE YOUR
MARRIAGE
WORK**

MAKE YOUR MARRIAGE WORK

© 2021 Rev. Ntia I. Ntia

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God Made
Marriage





Chapter One

God Made Marriage

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:18



IN Genesis 2:18, the Bible says “*And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him*”.

We see here that it was not the man that told God about the need for a spouse, or about the idea of marriage. Marriage is God's idea all the way from conception to conclusion.

Now, let's acknowledge the following facts:

1. Marriage is God's idea and concept.
2. Marriage is God's plan for man.
3. Marriage is God's will and purpose.
4. Marriage is God's creation and agenda.



MARRIAGE IS GOD'S WORK

Consider the following steps God took towards revealing and creating the blessed institution of marriage.

1. God saw a missing ingredient (relationship) and saw there was a need.



Marriage is God's idea all the way from conception to conclusion.



2. God spoke to signal to man that it is not good to be single and unmarried as an adult.

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone...

Genesis 2:18a

3. God gave to man the revelation and provision of marriage.

...I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:18b

4. God made the first man and woman and brought them to each other to establish the marriage relationship.

And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

Genesis 2:22

5. God stirred love in Adam to recognise, accept





and celebrate the attraction of love and the pull of marriage with his wife.

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

Genesis 2:23

6. God carried out the joining and blessing of the first marriage between Adam and Eve, thereby establishing the first family on earth.
7. God inspired Adam to prophesy the establishment of marriage as a provision for all people and for all time.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

Genesis 2:24

Therefore, let these truths be clear and settled in





your heart:

- ✦ God made marriage!
- ✦ God inspired marriage!
- ✦ God introduced marriage!
- ✦ God began marriage!
- ✦ God revealed marriage!
- ✦ God first spoke about marriage!
- ✦ God brought man into marriage!
- ✦ God ordained marriage for the man and the woman!



Marriage is God's plan for man.

- ✦ God made preparations for marriage and family!
- ✦ God brings spouses together!
- ✦ God joined the first marriage!
- ✦ God approves of marriage!
- ✦ God participates in marriage!
- ✦ God says marriage is good!
- ✦ God gives the desire for marriage!





WHAT IT MEANS TO MAKE

The Hebrew word used for *MAKE* here is 'ASAH', and it means the following:

1. **To accomplish a performance:** This goes beyond making an attempt or effort. God accomplished a successful performance. This truth must sink into our spirits. The marriage institution is a successful performance of God. It is not some imaginary emotional arrangement of man. The same is true with every marriage that is joined – SOMETHING REAL AND TANGIBLE IS ACCOMPLISHED BY GOD.



God approves of marriage!

2. **To cause to be or become:** God has caused the institution of marriage to come into being. Marriage is real and does exist. Everyone's marriage is real, not a figment of the imagination. Every time people are joined in marriage, something real and





divine comes into being.

3. **To bring forth into existence:** God has brought the institution of marriage into existence. Recognise your marriage as real, tangible and divine. Every time a man and a woman are joined in marriage, a spiritual and physical covenant, and union comes into real, actual existence.



The marriage institution is a successful performance of God. It is not some imaginary emotional arrangement of man.

4. **To execute a plan or project:** When God said, *"I will make him..."* He was declaring the intention of the execution of a plan or project. God had the plan from eternity, and He executed the same fully. In every marriage, we must look beyond the couple or the pastors, and see God executing His plan.
5. **To fulfill a dream or desire:** Marriage is





God's dream and desired intention, and He fulfilled it. Marriage is not an afterthought. It is God's dream project which He fulfilled. Please do not handle marriage lightly, casually or carelessly.



In every marriage, we must look beyond the couple or the pastors, and see God executing His plan.

6. **To labour as a workman:** God laboured as a workman to bring marriage into existence. And He continues to labour to maintain it. Do not be one of those who destroy what God has laboured to make. Join God to build, value and maintain marriage.

7. **To ordain and establish:** Beloved, God has ordained and established the institution of marriage authoritatively, permanently and finally. Marriage is dear to God's heart and He does not want it to be destroyed. God will never do away with marriage and nei-





ther should you.

8. **To arrange and organise:** This means to bring together several separate parts needed or required, to compose a whole. God is the one that brings together the people and supplies the provision for the establishment of marriage. Indeed our God is awesome.



Beloved, God has ordained and established the institution of marriage authoritatively, permanently and finally.

9. **To fit together:** This means to couple, fix and weld together. It means to adjust and blend together. God does not just bring people together, He helps couples adjust, adapt and fit together in marriage.
10. **To maintain and sustain:** God continues to oversee, supervise, support and sustain marriage. The help of God is present and





available for all couples to engage and take advantage of in marriage.



EVERYTHING GOD MAKES...

From the record of creation, we can discover what happens to anything God makes. The following truths also apply to marriage.

1. It happens as God made it to be.

... and it was so.

Genesis 1:7

2. He approves as good and acceptable.

... and God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:10

3. He establishes it permanently in its place.

And God made...; And God set them in...

Genesis 1:16-17





4. He blesses and empowers it to function and produce beneficially.

And God said, let us make ... So God created ...; And God blessed ...

Genesis 1:26, 27, 28

5. It continues to be as God ordains it.

... And the evening and the morning were

...

Genesis 1:8

... they continued this day according to thine ordinances

Psalms 119:91

6. He continues to oversee and sustain it.

And God saw everything that He had made ...

Genesis 1:31

Since marriage is also one of the things God has





made, we can therefore say with all authority that:

- ✦ Marriage has come into existence as God intended it to exist.
- ✦ Marriage is approved by God as good, and it is to be accepted by all, and not despised or rejected.



God continues to oversee, supervise, support and sustain marriage.

- ✦ Marriage has been given its place in life permanently by God. It should not be derailed or displaced.
- ✦ Marriage has been blessed and empowered by God for our benefit.
- ✦ Marriage is to continue as God has ordained it.
- ✦ God continues to oversee, supervise, support and sustain marriage.





MARRIAGE IS A MIRACLE

1. **A miracle of divine pronouncement.** God spoke marriage into existence just as He spoke light and creation into existence. Be careful what you say about marriage, how you see marriage and how you treat your spouse in marriage. God's spoken Word created the miracle called marriage.



Marriage has come into existence as God intended it to exist.

2. **A miracle of divine provision:** God created and provided the revelation; He planted and prepared the garden that became the location and home for marriage. God created and provided the couple that He used to establish the institution of marriage.
3. **A miracle of divine planning and preparation.** God thoughtfully planned and executed the creation of Adam, the planting of





the Garden of Eden, the equipping of Adam with skills, occupation, source of income and accommodation before giving him a wife. God planned the creation and grand arrival of Eve, and the successful execution of the first marriage.



Marriage is approved by God as good, and it is to be accepted by all, and not despised or rejected.

4. A miracle of divine operation and arrangement.

▣ Made Different

- ✦ God made the *male* man different from, and yet compatible with the *female* man (woman).

▣ Made Right

- ✦ God made Adam the right person for Eve and made Eve the right person for Adam.





▣ Made Ready

- ✦ God made and got Adam ready for Eve before she arrived into His life, and also made and got Eve ready to be a wife before bringing her to Adam to be his wife.

▣ Made Willing

- ✦ God made both Adam and Eve to independently have the desire, openness and willingness for marriage, and for each other.



Every time people are joined in marriage, something real and divine comes into being.

▣ Made Complete

- ✦ God made both Adam and Eve to develop, cultivate and possess the qualities, capacities and capabilities that will equip them to function and serve each other as a couple and serve God together as a family.





▣ Made Visible

- ✦ God made Adam while Eve was absent, and made Eve while Adam was asleep. God made them what He wanted them to be apart, afar off, and away from all interference. He then made them visible and accessible to each other by spiritually and divinely arranging the circumstances of their meeting, getting them introduced, getting them connected and into the relationship that led to their marriage. If the circumstance of meeting is not divinely arranged, the outcome will not be divinely approved.



God thoughtfully planned and executed the creation of Adam, the planting of the Garden of Eden, the equipping of Adam with skills, occupation, source of income and accommodation before giving him a wife.

▣ Made to Fit

- ✦ God stirred inside Adam and Eve the





right expectations to desire and look out for in a spouse. He gave Adam the vivid clarity required to be able to work with the animals, but refuse to see or choose any as a potential spouse. (Genesis 2:20: *Adam gave names to all ... but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.*)

When they finally met each other, both Adam and Eve became convinced that they fit; were satisfied with the qualities they saw in each other; both were attracted to each other and got connected in a godly relationship; both chose and accepted each other, and ended the search for a spouse. THEY WERE MADE TO FIT.



If the circumstance of meeting is not divinely arranged, the outcome will not be divinely approved.



Not Good
to be Alone





Chapter Two

Not Good To Be Alone

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:18



ART of living the abundant life is to learn to live in the will and plan of God. The will of God is for man to be married and not be alone.

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:18

In Genesis 2:18 God said, "*It's not good for the Man to be alone; I'll make him a helper, a companion.*" [MSG].



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ALONE?

There is a time to be alone and there is a time not to be alone anymore. You see, in the beginning, in Genesis 2:7, when God created man, God didn't say anything about the man being alone. So there was a time for man to be alone and it was okay. Then God came and said, "*..It is not good that the man should be*





alone...".

That means:

1. There is a time when it is good to be ALONE.
2. Being ALONE is not always God's will for adults.
3. Being ALONE is not always God's best for adults.
4. Being ALONE is not always good and right.
5. There is a time when being ALONE is bad and wrong.



TO BE ALONE MEANS:

1. To be all by yourself.
2. To be independent.
3. To be isolated and separated.
4. To be distant and disconnected.
5. To live with no sense of accountability.
6. To be disconnected from relationship.
7. To be Isolated from partnership.
8. To be apart from companionship.
9. To be excluded from interaction.





10. To be without intimate involvement.



“IT IS NOT GOOD” MEANS:

When God said, *“It is not good that the man should be alone...”*, what was He saying?

1. It is not the best and it is not God's best.
2. It is not sufficient and satisfactory.
3. It is not to be permitted, accepted or accommodated.
4. It is not right to remain that way.
5. It is not helpful to destiny to remain alone.
6. It is not profitable but a limitation.
7. It is not progressive but a drawback.
8. It is not beneficial or advantageous.
9. It is not productive but counterproductive.
10. It is not to be celebrated.



There is a time to be alone and there is a time not to be alone anymore.

Note the following thoughts as an adult who is





still alone:

- ▣ No matter how good you think your life is right now, it can be better.
- ▣ Get up and do something about getting married.
- ▣ If God says something is not good, do not paint and present it as acceptable and okay.



WHO SHOULD NOT BE ALONE?

When God said, “*it is not good that THE MAN should be alone*”, who was He referring to?

1. The Adult Man, Both Male And Female

The Bible begins by using the phrase '*the man*' to refer to the human being in general, mankind as a specie. Man, therefore, can refer to both male and females.

*And God said, Let us make man in our image
... So God created man in his own image ...
MALE and FEMALE created he THEM.*

Genesis 1:26, 27





Therefore, it is not good for any adult human being to be alone. All adults, males and females alike, should regard, value, desire and celebrate marriage.

2. **The Male Man That Should Seek And Find A Wife:**

The journey and pursuit of marriage are meant to be initiated by an adult male, who ought to find a wife.

... for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:20

The adult male should be restless and dissatisfied with being single and alone, and then begin searching for the wife God has made for him. It is not the adult female that should go searching for a spouse to marry. Genesis 2:24 says,

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife...

Genesis 2:24





God is saying to every adult male who is still single, *“It is not good that the man should be alone...”* Rise up and take steps to find your God-ordained spouse and be settled in marriage.

3. **The Adult Man With A Settled Source of Livelihood.**

I would like us to note that the man God said should not be alone was well settled in life.

- ✦ **Adam had a settled accommodation.** A place to live comfortably. He was not squatting.



Get up and do something about getting married.

- ✦ **Adam had a settled career/job.** A clear, well-defined field for self-engagement. He was not floating about with no defined career path and pursuit.
- ✦ **Adam had a settled source of income.** He had a consistent inflow of sustainable





income that could take care of him and a wife. He was not hoping, believing or begging for his next financial income. He was not living a life of empty blind 'hope', false 'grace' or false 'faith' with no works.

- ✦ **Adam had a settled base of operation.** He was not living an unsettled life, with no fixed address, no clear plans or defined goals.



If God says something is not good, do not paint and present it as acceptable and okay

Therefore, get organised and settled with a career/job, steady source of income, accommodation (not your family house), a clear plan for life – then you can go for a wife.

Secondly, every man that God has helped to be settled in a job/career, source of income, and personal accommodation – should immediately get settled in marriage.





CONSEQUENCES OF BEING ALONE AS AN ADULT:

1. It affects God's plan and purpose for marriage and life.
2. It limits destiny impact and effectiveness. Don't glory in your being alone.
3. It slows down life progress and advancement.
4. It limits one's capacity for productivity. Like the Bible says, *“one shall chase a thousand and two, ten thousand”*. When you are alone, you achieve minimal results.

“How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up?”

Deuteronomy 32:30

5. It robs a person of God's best.
6. It disconnects a person from needed help and support.
7. It leads to avoidable failures and losses. E.g.





Loss of time, potentials and opportunities and results.

8. It exposes a person to the attacks and manipulations of the enemy. The partnership of marriage was designed by God to be a shield, support and cover against attacks.

For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.

Ecclesiastes 4:10

9. It leads to unrealized and unachieved greatness.
10. It exposes a person to avoidable destiny contamination, failure and downfall.



The adult male should be restless and dissatisfied with being single and alone, and then begin searching for the wife God has made for him.





HOW CAN A PERSON UNCONSCIOUSLY PROGRAMME BEING ALONE?

1. **Emphasizing areas of difference rather than similarities.**
2. **Holding on to wrong attitudes that derail relationships:** Many times, people with negative attitudes end up with successive broken relationships. Such negative attitudes include anger, suspicion, unforgiveness, laziness and stubbornness.



*The will of God is for man to be married
and not be alone.*

3. **The biased influence of wrong association or company:** The influence of the wrong company exposes a person to wrong information, mindset and beliefs that will cause a person to act wrongly in a relationship, leading to constant separation.





- 4. Lack of knowledge:** Knowledge builds a person's capacity to relate right with others, lack of knowledge limits capacity. When a person lacks knowledge of right relationship principles, he will continue in wrong actions and attitudes that derail relationships that should lead to marriage.



Therefore, it is not good for any adult human being to be alone.

- 5. Abandonment of personal responsibilities:** Each of us have the responsibility of learning, growing and changing in preparation for a successful life and relationship in the future. Failing in these areas of personal responsibility leaves us unprocessed and unprepared for marriage. Adam was already busy developing himself and making progress before God said that he needed the help of a spouse. No one can take over your responsibility. No one can force you to learn, change, grow, cultivate your





potentials, discover and pursue your purpose or fix your character. Those who abandon personal responsibility frustrate themselves and others who relate with them. No one wants to marry you as a burden, and carry you as a life-long responsibility. Don't abandon your responsibilities.

- 6. Stubborn refusal to make adjustments and take corrections in one's attitude and character:** Making the right changes, corrections and adjustments help a person become the kind of spouse another person would like to connect and settle with. Refusal to change can put off a potential spouse and prolong marital delay.



The journey and pursuit of marriage are meant to be initiated by an adult male

- 7. The habitual trap of wrong attraction:** Continuously attracting the wrong people into your life can delay your settlement in a good relation-





ship and marriage. Examine yourself carefully to change the wrong attitude or wrong character that feeds such negative attraction. Also, go to God in prayer to break any spiritual root behind such negative attractions: *“O Lord, anything in my life attracting the wrong people to me, I break it in the name of Jesus.”*

Come out of every habitual cycle of wrong attraction. It is a trap. Don't settle for it. Snap out of it.

Friendship and relationship connection is not by force; it is by choice. You need to know what you want and look out for it, so you can recognise it when you see it.



Knowledge builds a person's capacity to relate right with others ...

8. **Suppressing the healthy desire to connect with the right people and get married:** It takes desire to engage in pursuit. It takes right and healthy desire to prepare for and go after the





right people and things in life. When people ignore, despise, deny or suppress this desire for relationship and marriage, opportunities come and go without being recognized or well utilized.

9. **Lack of openness and room for others:** When you don't create room for others, you send signals to them that you are not ready; you tell them that you are married to your job, family, career, money or cars. This can also suppress the healthy desire to settle down in marriage.



Adam was already busy developing himself and making progress before God said that he needed the help of a spouse.

10. **Lack of sensitivity of right timing.** There is a right time, and season to settle down in marriage. Do not miss your season. The Bible says "*time and chance happens to everybody*". Jesus cried over Jerusalem saying "*... they knew not their hour of visitation...*"





11. **Not praying for God's help and guidance.** The prayer you don't pray, God won't answer. God helped Adam find Eve, and can help you too. God is the one that knows the heart of people and can lead you aright.



Continuously attracting the wrong people into your life can delay your settlement in a good relationship and marriage.

12. **Lack of relevant knowledge regarding how to marry and how to make a marriage work.** Ignorance leaves a person unprepared and open to fears and misconceptions. It is possible to grow older and not have the relevant knowledge on how to marry or how to be a wife or husband. If you have never read a book on marriage, how are you going to acquire the knowledge on how to, and who to marry? Lack of this knowledge can lead to abuse.



**Note:**

If you don't address these things, it will keep you from being settled in marriage.



GAINFULLY ENGAGE THE TIME OF BEING ALONE

How do you gainfully invest the time of being alone, to be ready for marriage?

1. **Acquire right and relevant knowledge.** This is study time. This is the time to read and receive instruction. This is the time to study the Bible and relevant Christian and educational books on key topics like marriage, relationship, career and finance.



Come out of every habitual cycle of wrong attraction. It is a trap.





2. **Build up your potentials for handling responsibilities.** Marriage is a responsibility. Therefore cultivate, develop and build up your potentials on time. Give yourself to learning and training. Work on knowing better, growing more and becoming better.
3. **Open up and apply the knowledge acquired for necessary personal adjustments.** Don't gain knowledge yet remain rigid. Apply them and make changes. Nobody is going to manage error forever. Make the necessary changes to be a better person.



It takes right and healthy desire to prepare for and go after the right people and things in life.

4. **Deepen your spiritual capacity and walk with God.** Know God personally so you can handle responsibilities and challenges when you face them. Grow in spirituality and godly character. Develop and deepen your relationship with





God in study of God's Word, prayers, godliness and faith.



Friendship and relationship connection is not by force; it is by choice.

5. **Engage in service in God's house.** Find a place in God's house and serve God. Engaging in kingdom service will expose you to the right people with the same godly values and convictions. Engage in continuous service to both God and man. Avail yourself of service opportunities. It shows people the quality of person you are, what you are capable of, and what you have to offer. Service in God's house attracts God's grace and blessings into your life.
6. **Serve well under masters, teachers and tutors to earn trust.** A person trusted by a master will be trusted by a spouse. If you can be trusted, you can be recommended and supported. Quality service and mentoring give you a good





name and a lot of goodwill.



***When you don't create room for others,
you send signals to them that you are not
ready***

- 7. Build a career/job/business.** Do not enjoy doing nothing all day long. Marriage is an invitation to work, duty and responsibility. Love work and cultivate good work ethics. Your work is key to your worth. Apply yourself to your work. Give yourself to work. Work out the laziness. Work has never killed anybody. Work sharpens you, work strengthens you, work gets you sound and ready for your future.
- 8. Study to master and maximise your strengths and minimise your weaknesses.** Study to improve on your weaknesses and master and maximise your strengths. People will enjoy a better relationship with you when you learn to minimise your weaknesses and maximise your strengths, especially when they know who you





are.



CLOSING COUNSEL TO SINGLES

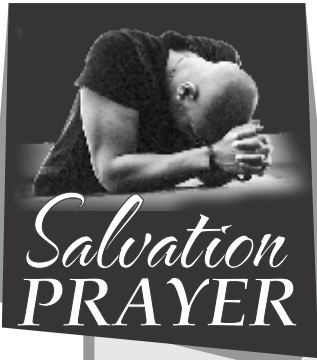
To avoid being alone for too long:

1. Be dissatisfied with being alone.
2. Be spiritual to tap into and receive God's help.
3. Be happy with a healthy self-esteem.
4. Be busy with continuous self-discovery and development.
5. Be positive and open-minded towards marriage.
6. Be willing to reach out and relate with others.
7. Begin to watch out for positive attractions.
8. Be more accommodating, flexible and less critical.
9. Believe and trust God's power and promises.
10. Be humble, teachable and willing to adjust.





Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Without Jesus in your life, your future is not safe. Pray this prayer with me right now and mean it from your heart. Jesus loves you and He wants you to be saved.



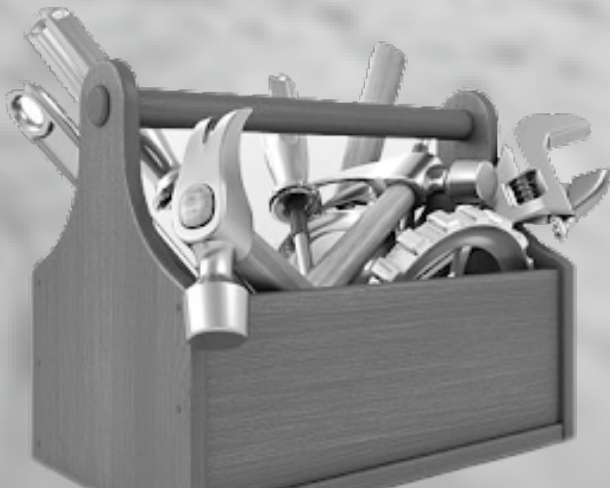
Salvation PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I come to you just as I am, I am sorry for my sins. Please come into my heart, be my Lord and Saviour. Satan, I reject you, I reject your lies, temptations and traps in the name of Jesus. I receive eternal life into my spirit by faith in the finished work of Calvary. I am born again. I am a child of God. Thank you for saving my soul, in Jesus name.





11 Things to Make
Your Marriage Work





Chapter Three

11 Things To Make Your Marriage Work

*Therefore shall a man leave his father and his
mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they
shall be one flesh.*

Genesis 2:24



OD'S picture of a working marriage can be seen in Genesis 2:24: *“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*

In this chapter, we will be looking at the following questions:

1. What does it mean for Marriage to work?
2. Can marriage work?
3. What are the things that make marriage work?
4. What hinders a marriage from working right?

It is important to note that while one is single is the best time to prepare for marriage.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR MARRIAGE TO WORK?

1. To be successful and rewarding. There is a level of success to be enjoyed in marriage.

Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

Ecclesiastes 4:9





2. To be uplifting and inspiring.

*For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow:
but woe to him that is alone when he falleth;
for he hath not another to help him up.*

Ecclesiastes 4:10

3. To be beneficial and profitable.

*Two are better than one; because they
have a good reward for their labour.*

Ecclesiastes 4:9

4. To be positive, loving and encouraging.

*Again, if two lie together, then they have
heat: but how can one be warm alone?*

Ecclesiastes 4:11

5. To be constructive and supportive.

*And if one prevail against him, two shall
withstand him; and a threefold cord is not
quickly broken.*

Ecclesiastes 4:12





6. **To be improving and progressive.** A working marriage is not necessarily a perfect marriage but a progressive marriage. It is an improving marriage. To remain unchanged shows a lack of growth and progress.
7. **To be sweet and enjoyable.** A good or working marriage is not the one that stresses you out.

*Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing,
and obtaineth favour of the Lord.*

Proverbs 18:22

8. **To be stable and sustained.**

*Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal
upon thine arm: for love is strong as
death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the
coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a
most vehement flame. Many waters
cannot quench love, neither can the floods
drown it: if a man would give all the
substance of his house for love, it would
utterly be contemned.*

Song of Solomon 8:6-7





CAN MARRIAGE WORK?

YES, MARRIAGES CAN WORK! How you visualize marriage before you step into marriage matters. Many times, people have not sat back to find out the purpose God had in mind for creating marriage, before they step into it. In Genesis 2:18, God was the first to ever think of marriage. You need to have an understanding of the purpose of God concerning marriage to be prepared to make marriage work right.

Marriage can work and it is workable. Have that conviction. A lot of people get into marriage without the conviction to make it work. If you don't work it, it won't work out.

- **God's word says marriage can work.** Genesis 2:24, "....they shall be one flesh".
- **Bible examples show it can work.** Abraham and Sarah; Isaac and Rebecca; and many others who got married and stayed married successfully.
- **Contemporary examples also show that marriage can work.** While some are talking





about their irreconcilable differences, some others are working at adjusting their differences.



11 THINGS TO DO FOR MARRIAGE TO WORK

Marriage requires certain things to be engaged for it to work. You work at it till it works out.

1. Quality relationship with God

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof

Genesis 2:7, 21

Relationship with God involves our daily spiritual walk with God. Spirituality is a plus to marriage. Relationship with God brings out the





best in a person. Anyone that cannot appreciate God who gave him everything will likely not appreciate you. How a person treats God is an indicator of how that person will treat his fellow man. You must give time to see a person's true relationship with God before you consider a love relationship with the person.



A working marriage is not necessarily a perfect marriage but a progressive marriage.

Two aspects of a relationship with God include:

- **Godliness:** This means how much God has changed a person. It refers to how much the nature of God has impacted the nature of a person. The more godly a person is, the more he will display the character of God. How much the character of God has influenced a person's character should be considered before you enter into a relationship and marriage with them.
- **Goodness:** This refers to the virtue of good





attitude, character and behaviour of a person.

No one can pretend forever. Give them time and their true character will manifest. Marriage is a platform for practising spirituality, godliness and goodness.

While you're still single, it is essential to build a quality relationship with God. If you have an epileptic relationship with God, marriage will bring it out and test it. Your relationship with God includes your studying of the Word, praying, worshipping, listening to the Holy Spirit and obeying God.



How you visualize marriage before you step into marriage matters.

2.

Capacity to work and handle responsibility

A life of responsibility is first built at home. Take seriously the various responsibilities you are given as you grow in life. Most of the couples in





scripture met in their work field. Nothing works where nobody is working. Be a person of responsibility. Needs in a marriage can stress out a marriage, so you've got to work, you've got to have a career and earn an income. Idleness is a breeding ground for uselessness. Don't be idle.

Your ability to handle responsibility prepares and positions you for your role in Marriage. Before God tested man with the responsibility of marriage, He tested him with the responsibility of work. To marry a person who cannot handle responsibility is to expose yourself to calamity. God gave man work first, then wealth (source of income, an inflow of resources) then, a wife.



Marriage can work and it is workable.

At every level of relationship, there are responsibilities. A person that cannot handle the responsibilities of friendship should not be trusted with the responsibility of courtship. Also, a person





that cannot do well with the responsibility of courtship should not be given the responsibility of marriage. You have to show your capacity to handle responsibility on one level before you are entrusted with a higher level of responsibility. It was after man did well with work, did well with wealth for some time, that God handed to him the responsibility of marriage.

3. Cordiality and friendship

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:18



God was the first to ever think of marriage.

For marriage to work, there must be a cord of friendship. You must understand your place as a





friend in the marriage. Understand that you are there to complement your spouse, not to complain or compete.

It is easier to move with someone that is going in the same direction as you: you have the same values, beliefs, likes and principles. All human beings begin as strangers. All relationships began from where we meet as total strangers.

Friendship begins to grow based on similarities in:

- a) Principles
- b) Purpose.
- c) Partnership.
- d) Pleasure.



To marry a person who cannot handle responsibility is to expose yourself to calamity.

Marry your friend: Even if you marry your so-called best friend, you'll still need to do some work. With the atmosphere of friendship already in place, you can now build other things.





Note this, true friendships grow on certain elements:

- a) Faithfulness over time.
- b) Contributed benefits. Consider what values you are gaining from this person before you talk about being married to the person forever.

Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful. And thou shalt have goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and for the maintenance for thy maidens.

Proverbs 27:6, 27

- c) Understanding and forgiveness: offences will surely come.

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.

Proverbs 17:9





We gravitate towards those who understand, tolerate and forgive us. The more intimate you get with a person, the more the potential for greater hurt. When relating from a distance, hurts could be superficial. You have to know how to forgive.

4. **Character adjustment**

We become friends with those who make changes and adjustments for us. You have to give the time required to know the person that is trying to get close to you. Look for proofs of genuine character adjustment. Friendship is where you learn tolerance, selflessness, and acceptance.

Watch people's character before you choose a life partner.

5. **Compatibly through adjustment**

Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and embraces his wife. They become one flesh.

Genesis 2: 24 (AMP)





It is possible to marry someone you are different from, but with a commitment to making it work, you begin to adjust. That is why it is called *compatibility through adjustments*.

You must be humble and patient to gain knowledge of the person you have gotten married to, and this happens over time.

Your commitment to making adjustments will automatically make the both of you work towards compatibility. A person that cannot make adjustments does not have space for you in the his/her life. Nobody is a perfect fit. You must adjust. You can't be rigid and have a blissful future in marriage.



Anyone that cannot appreciate God who gave him everything will likely not appreciate you.

If you want your marriage to work, you must decide to start being agreeable. Be interested in making timely adjustments. Be interested in making the sacrifices required. We are different





but that doesn't mean we cannot work things out.

Initially, it is interesting to note that our differences can attract us because we are attracted by the unfamiliar; the unique; what we do not have; and what we are not. So, the initial attraction pulls us but you must understand that the excitement of difference will not last forever because reality will set in.

Our place of familiarity is our comfort zone, whereas differences are challenging. Difference calls for adjustment. Difference attracts, but after some time, difference irritates; then difference frustrates; then difference infuriates, and leads to tensions and conflicts. Don't wait until differences become a reason to be frustrated, infuriated and irritated. While differences still attract, let differences illuminate, let differences expose you to something new you should learn; something new you should adjust to; something new you should master.



The more godly a person is, the more he will display the character of God.





Difference illuminates. It shows us areas of our lives to adjust and work on. Difference initiates. It can stimulate creativity and maturity. (You have no other choice but to learn). God created the world in diversity.

Differences should provoke and initiate adjustments. Use difference to unite. Use difference to initiate a process of growth and adjustment.

You must be willing to make adjustments. Marriage works out as people keep making adjustments; and keep building compatibility.

- ✦ Compatibility will eliminate tension.
- ✦ Compatibility will cure jealousy and envy.
- ✦ Compatibility will eliminate competition.
- ✦ Compatibility comes by adjustment.



Friendship is where you learn tolerance, selflessness, and acceptance.

You must be willing to appreciate each other's differences and work at it till it works out.

- There are various kinds of differences:





- I. Differences because of make-up (e.g. character, personality and emotional make-up).
- ii. Differences because of upbringing.
- iii. Differences in roles and responsibilities.
- iv. Differences in past issues and challenges.
- v. Differences in expectations and aspirations.
- vi. Differences in communication styles.
- vii. Differences in mentality and mindset.



It is possible to marry someone you are different from, but with a commitment to making it work, you begin to adjust.

6. Communication flow

Communication is the lifeline of any relationship. Communication facilitates interaction and connection. Communication builds unity. There is no issue that cannot be solved and resolved with proper communication.

How we communicate, and the quality of our communication determines the sustainability of





our relationship. Where there is no communication, relationships will collapse. Whether in an organization, a business or family. When issues that call for communication are not discussed, pressure and tension build up leading to an explosion.

The first thing that Adam did when he saw Eve was to talk to her, not touch her. If you can't flow in communication, it will be difficult to flow in other areas of marriage. Communication is the life of marriage. Don't say you're not the talking type. Learn to communicate. Practice talking with your spouse.

Cultivate a habit of giving room for communication. How you say what you say matters more than what you say. Therefore learn to communicate positively and constructively.



While differences still attract, let differences illuminate, let differences expose you to something new you should learn ...

The 'how' of communication is more important than the 'what' of communication. That is where





most couples miss it.

In marriage, we must give consideration to how we pass information across to our spouse. How we say whatever we have to say to our spouse matters. There are things to avoid during communication, such as accusations and the use of a harsh tone and abusive language. You must keep the communication line alive by making sure you say the right thing the right way.



The first thing that Adam did when he saw Eve was to talk to her, not touch her.

Note some tips to help your communication

- a) Get your point across not your anger. Be interested in being understood not just being heard. So it's not based on how loud we are, but how much we are understood.
- b) Be open to receiving a reply that brings progress to your communication. A one-way talk is a lecture, not communication.
- c) Create a right and encouraging atmosphere for





- involvement in communication.
- d) Give room for your hearer to process the issues you have raised.
 - e) Listen for feedback and respond to the issues you have raised.
 - f) Consider your hearer so you don't pass on unintended effects.
 - g) Address issues without attacking persons.
 - h) Avoid drawing conclusions without receiving clarification.
 - i) Be willing to offer and accept apologies.
 - j) Aim at reconciliation, not provocation.
 - k) Even while pointing out mistakes, be kind and courteous.



The 'how' of communication is more important than the 'what' of communication

7. Contribution and input

Do not just receive love and care, make sure you give. Make contributions and input. Don't be a





selfish receiver. Marriage will work where there is a mutual contribution. In a relationship, everyone has what to contribute to making it work.



Get your point across, not your anger.

Key things to contribute:

- a. Contribute interest (care).
- b. Contribute involvement (effort).
- c. Contribute Investment (input).
- d. Contribute improvement (change).
- e. Contribute insight (wisdom).
- f. Contribute income (resources).
- g. Contribute impact (results).

Some more things a wife can contribute to make marriage beautiful include;

- ▣ Timely counsel and advice.
- ▣ Resources.
- ▣ Submission, not confrontation.
- ▣ Support.





- ▣ Understanding.
- ▣ Humility.
- ▣ Simplicity (tenderness).

Some more things a husband can contribute to make marriage beautiful include;

- ▣ Responsibility
- ▣ Care for your wife.
- ▣ Listening Ability. Some problems cannot be solved until heard.
- ▣ Attention. (Be around, available and involved).
- ▣ Willingness to adjust.
- ▣ Leadership initiative.
- ▣ Give priority to your home.
- ▣ Show appreciation.
- ▣ Feelings of affection.
- ▣ Consideration.
- ▣ Forgiveness/compassion.



Marriage will work where there is a mutual contribution.





8. Continuous romance

For marriage to work well, we must make sure there is fun, friendship, sex and sweetness in the marriage. See sex as God sees it (pleasure). As Adam called Eve in Genesis 2:23 “... *flesh of my flesh..*”

Our flesh carries and contains feelings, sexuality and emotions. Healthy people should enjoy sex. When you are healthy mentally, physically or emotionally, you should enjoy sex. It is proper. Let the sweetness continue. Don't get married and become rigid and dry.



***You must keep the communication line
alive by making sure you say the right
thing the right way***

Sex is for every married couple. Upbringing might differ and our exposure to training might differ, but we must now allow ourselves to learn, grow and enjoy sex with our different spouses.

Body management is also important when it





comes to romance. We must maintain good exercise, good hygiene, good rest and cleanliness.



... the excitement of difference will not last forever ...

9. Care and concern

God needed a bone from the man to create a woman for him. He didn't take a bone from the head, hand or leg. He took the bone from the centre of feelings which is the ribs (near the heart).

This means:

- ✦ Be tender, loving and responsive.
- ✦ Have feelings of care and concern for your spouse.
- ✦ Don't get to the point where you don't care anymore.
- ✦ Be interested and show affection.

Care will bring commitment and sacrifice. Care





destroys selfishness. Care will bring carefulness. You will not be hardened and cold. Care will bring sensitivity and consideration for others.

10. Capacity to handle third parties

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother...

Genesis 2:24

This refers to people outside the two of you, such as your friends, neighbours, family members, in-laws etc. We must balance the involvement of third parties. Where there is no proper and deliberate “leaving” third parties can constitute a source of nuisance and manipulation and sometimes bring destruction to a marriage.



Sex is for every married couple.

When there is the slightest misunderstanding





with your spouse, your first inclination shouldn't be to call your father, mother, sisters or brothers to threaten your husband, or your wife; that is an error. You are setting yourself up for marital disharmony or disaster.

Your pastor, parents, family and other mature counsellors can and should be consulted to help. Good counsel sought for and received can make your marriage stronger, safer and sweeter. They should not hijack your marriage but should wisely play the role of helping both of you maintain a solid marriage relationship



For marriage to work well, we must make sure there is fun, friendship, sex and sweetness in the marriage.

Be careful of friends, balance the involvement of families, above all watch out for interference. On one side, you're building bridges and on the other side, you're establishing boundaries.





11. Commitment to transparency and mutual respect

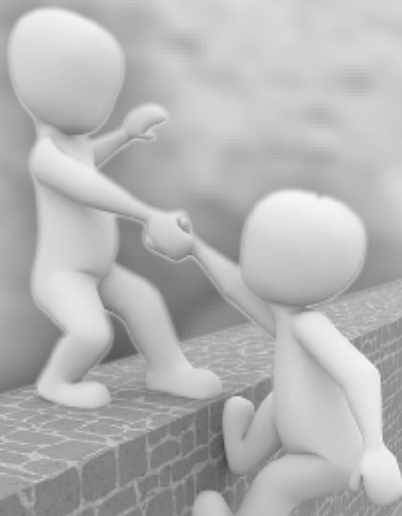
And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Genesis 2:25

Transparency means to be easily recognised and seen. It means to be open, frank and true. Transparency is needed to encourage intimacy (close personal relationship, and deep detailed connection).



Be a Help to Your Spouse





Chapter Four

Be A Help To Your Spouse

*And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man
should be alone; I will make him an help meet for
him.*

Genesis 2:18



WHEN God created and established marriage, what He had in mind was help, not hate or hurt. Is your marriage full of help or hate and hurts?

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:18

In this chapter, we are going to answer the following questions:

1. What does help mean?
2. What is the opposite of being a help?
3. How can you be a help to your spouse and marriage?

Every one of us will have the privilege of being connected to three families;

1. The family you were born into.
2. The families you are privileged to relate with (Your friends and neighbours).
3. The family you establish when you get married.





WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A HELP?

1. **To assist for advancement:** Marriage ought to bring about the mutual advancement of both you and your spouse. You are called to assist and advance the life and destiny of your spouse. Help them become better, not broken. Is your spouse better off for marrying you or broken, bruised and bitter?



Speak words of appreciation to each other.

2. **To provide support for weakness:** Your spouse is not perfect, just like you. Your spouse has areas of weaknesses. You are to support, strengthen and sharpen them lovingly to bring the best out of them.
3. **To contribute to progress:** God has deposited graces, virtues and strengths





inside you, to minister to your spouse. Rise and pour your best into your spouse without holding back. Help your spouse without holding back. Help your spouse make progress.

4. **To supply a lack or a need:** Look out for needs in the life of your spouse and supply what you can to help meet those needs. Do not mock or criticise your spouse's needs or lapses. You are God's channel for meeting their needs. Do not boast about being better than your spouse in any area. Supply what is lacking, to meet the needs of your spouse.



When God created and established marriage, what He had in mind was help, not hate or hurt.

5. **To be of great benefit:** You are to be a plus and a source of great benefit to your spouse. Your spouse should rejoice over getting married to you, not regret being married to





you. How have you been a source of benefit to your spouse?

6. **To deliver an advantage:** Your presence in the life of your spouse ought to produce a positive result. You are to be an asset, not a liability, a step-up not a setback, a profit not a problem, a push-up not a drawback.



Marriage ought to bring about the mutual advancement of both you and your spouse.

7. **To comfort and ease stress:** To comfort means to alleviate pain; bring cheer, cosiness, pleasure, warmth and satisfaction. You are to facilitate their wellbeing, relaxation and enjoyment. This is God's plan for you in marriage. Do not be a source of stress to your spouse or marriage.
8. **To provide relief from pain:** Marriage is meant to bring help and healing to couples,





not pain and brokenness. You are to be a source of solace, consolation, recovery and refreshment to your spouse. Do not be a source of pain or leave your spouse in pain.

9. **To make profitable investment:** We are called to invest care, love and support into our spouse. Do not be selfish, self-centred or stingy towards your spouse. Investing in your spouse is pleasing to God and profitable for your marriage. You are called to add value to your spouse and not devalue him or her.



***Your spouse is not perfect, just like you.
Your spouse has areas of weaknesses.***

10. **To serve or render service:** Where there is love, there is a willing, delightful service. We are to serve, support and advance the interest of our spouse. Be happy to be of service and assistance to your spouse. Be





happy to see your spouse make progress.

It is not an insult to serve your spouse. You'll hear some husbands say "how can you send a man. You don't send men". Be willing to serve each other.

It is not a demotion to serve your spouse.
Serving your spouse does not reduce you.



Do not mock or criticise your spouse's needs or lapses. You are God's channel for meeting their needs.

11. **To advance the interest of another:** Take steps and measures to advance the interest, purpose and vision of your spouse. Let their life goals be of concern to you. Do not sacrifice your spouse and their interests for others. Do not fail in encouraging the progress of your spouse.

12. **To protect or rescue and defend from troubles:** To protect means to cover and keep safe from attack or harm. It means to





cushion, defend, give refuge and shade. It also means to provide assurance against fears and anxiety. It means to stand guard and safeguard with keen interest. Do not expose your spouse to any assault, attack, shame, harassment or ridicule. Do not abandon your spouse to fight alone, stand with your spouse.



Do not be a source of stress to your spouse or marriage.



WHAT IS THE OPPOSITE OF BEING A HELP?

If a person is not a help, what is that person invariably doing? A person who fails to help is doing something either by omission (what they fail to do) or by commission (what they do). There is no in-between lines.





The opposite of being a help means:

1. **To be a source of frustration or stress.**

If you're not a source of help, you're a source of stress. Even if you don't lighten the load, don't become the load: your spouse is paying all the bills and you're just there. Don't be a liability.



Do not be a source of stress to your spouse or marriage.

2. **To be a source of stagnation and setbacks.**

It's possible to be married and instead of the person assisting you, the person is worsening your situation. It is terrible to be in a stressful marriage, where your virtues are dying daily because of a negative environment. Are you bringing out the virtues in your spouse or are you promoting vices in the marriage?





3. To be an impediment or an obstacle.

If you're not assisting to make things easier, you are frustrating your marriage. You're making things difficult for your spouse. But as human beings, we can change. We can change our minds, we can change our behaviours and attitudes. Don't be an obstacle. Some people entered into a relationship and all their life dreams died; all their goals and dreams were discouraged and talked down. Don't be that kind of a person. Advance your spouse positively.



*To protect means to cover and keep safe
from attack or harm.*

4. To be a major source of discomfort.

Are you creating confusion, never agreeing? Are you bringing peace or tension? It is bad for spouses to live in falsehood. Where they are nice before outsiders but are a discomfort in the home. They give attention





and time to outsiders but they starve their spouse of care and attention at home. We all should avoid that kind of situation because when all is said and done, you'll go back to your home. Therefore, give your spouse and family the best of you. Your spouse should be the first and most important recipient of your best attitude. Not when you smile with friends, you smile on the phone, and at home, you snub and you're cold. Do not use malice to cause tension in your marriage. You must give your spouse your best communication. Don't speak nicely to outsiders and then speak harshly, rudely and bitterly to your spouse.



It is not an insult to serve your spouse.

5. To be a source of discouragement.

Fix your marriage gradually, one step at a time. Attend to the details of your home.





Don't cover and pretend about it. Prayer cannot cover a bad attitude in marriage. Speaking in tongues cannot cover a nasty tongue in marriage. Singing songs, wearing suits and carrying a Bible cannot fix it. Running away cannot fix a marriage. Blaming others cannot fix your home. Settle down and fix any crack, one thing at a time.



If you're not assisting to make things easier, you are frustrating your marriage.



HOW CAN YOU BE A HELP?

1. Discover And Develop Yourself.

You must discover and develop your strength and minimise your weakness. The stronger you are built in capacity, the more you will be able to help others. For you to help someone, you've got to develop your capacities.





2. **Be willing to serve.**

To serve means to render support and assistance. It also means to provide what is needed. Opportunities abound for service in a home. From little things to more demanding needs. We must not see service as derogatory or demeaning.



If you're not a source of help, you're a source of stress.

3. **Be kind to your spouse.**

To be kind means to be good, considerate and benevolent in disposition. It means to be mild, humane and gentle. Even in correcting we must be considerate and kind. To be kind also means to be friendly, gracious and cordial.

4. **Make life easier for your spouse.**

As a responsible wife or husband, you must wake up every day and ask what you can do





to make life easier for your spouse. Sometimes, your spouse has things he wants to ask but doesn't want to bother you per-say, but if you display a level of tenderness, they will be glad to share some of their burdens with you.



Do not abandon your spouse to fight alone, stand with your spouse.

5. **Don't be a burden.**

Look for a way you can add value to your spouse and not devalue them. be more approachable and agreeable. Be active and effective in contributing your quota towards meeting needs. Avoid idleness, it makes you a burden to your spouse. Invest in yourself so you can develop and deploy your potentials towards contributing value to your relationship and marriage. Don't be too proud to start with the little things that are available and possible. Don't lift





yourself too high. Do what is possible and available and the preferable will come with time.



Advance your spouse positively.

6. **Be a source of motivation and inspiration.**
Believe, celebrate and encourage the dreams, pursuits and efforts of your spouse. Don't let outsiders believe in your spouse more than you do. Don't be a source of competition for your spouse. Consciously discover and develop your character and potentials for good use.

7. **Choose wisely with the intention to live permanently with whoever you marry.**
Some people marry with the mindset of "if it doesn't work out, I opt-out." They see marriage as just a paper agreement. You must marry who you are compatible with; to





live permanently and succeed together. You can grow in compatibility. It is not a one month or a two month thing, it is a life-time commitment

8. Carry yourself with humility and submission as a gift to your spouse.

Do not compete with or strive to outdo your spouse. Do not compare yourself with your spouse or run them down. Do not talk down or look down on your spouse. Help lift and build up the self-esteem of your spouse.



Are you creating confusion, never agreeing? Are you bringing peace or tension?

9. Create time to connect with and serve your spouse.

Don't give time to everyone outside and yet you have little or no time for your spouse. Don't allow other things to clog your schedule till you have no time for your





spouse. Being a husband or wife is not a post; it is a role you are called to function in. So create the time.



As a responsible wife or husband, you must wake up every day to ask what you can do to make life easier for your spouse.

10. Continue to change and adjust your life to adapt and fit with your spouse.

Change! People change and that's development, that's growth.

11. Communicate and talk with your spouse lovingly, truthfully and tirelessly.

Lovingly doesn't mean deceitfully. Nice emotional and appreciative words will bring healing to your home.

12. Care for, understand and accommodate your spouse with kindness.

Some of the behaviours people display with their spouses, if done in a neutral setting, would be a criminal offence. Don't use the





cover of marriage and hide a despicable behaviour. Do not abuse or batter your spouse. God is against all violence in marriage.



Even in correcting we must be considerate and kind.

13. **Choose to forgive your spouse genuinely and wholeheartedly as God forgives you.** Do not judge your spouse with extreme demands and standards of perfection. You are called to forgive lapses.

14. **Contribute sacrificially towards supporting and supplying the needs of your spouse and home.** Marriage flourishes where people make sacrificial contribution.

15. **Celebrate, promote and encourage the growth and success of your spouse.** Don't let your success separate you from





your spouse, rather, let it unite you both. In marriage, we are called to complete and not to compete. Celebrate your spouse without envy or jealousy.



Look for a way you can add value to your spouse and not to devalue them. Be more approachable and agreeable.

16. Cover and shield your spouse from error and evil.

Stand with your spouse against every form of attack or danger. Protect your spouse's best interest. Do not expose your spouse to criticism, condemnation or shame.

17. Challenge and motivate your spouse positively and constructively.

Be a source of continuous positive inspiration and motivation to your spouse. Help bring the best out of your spouse.



Create
Family Time





Chapter Five

Create Family Time

And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

Genesis 2:21-23



BUILDING or doing anything well will take time, including marriage. To build your marriage and family to make it successful and glorious, you have to give it time.

In Genesis 2:15-18, God gave man three areas of focus on:

1. **Responsibility/work:** “...dress it and keep it.” (v15). Work here represents labour, career, business and service.
2. **Worship:** “...the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...” (v17). Worship here represents your relationship with God, fellowship, spirituality, kingdom devotion, dedication and consecration.



Celebrate, promote and encourage the growth and success of your spouse.

3. **Marriage/family:** “...not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.” (v18). Note that with work and worship already in place, God still said that being alone





is not good. God then added marriage and family to give man a complete and balanced life. You have a job and career time? Awesome! But that is not enough. You have worship time, you go to church, and you are very faithful? Powerful! But God says it is not good enough, so He added family time.



To build your marriage and family to make it successful and glorious, you have to give it time.

The worship of God does not satisfy family time. A good job and business will not take care of family time. What you are to gain from family time, nothing else can give it to you.

To be alone without having a family is not good. It is wrong to say, 'I don't want to marry; I don't feel like having a family'. No! God, your maker, the creator says it is not good for a person to go from year to year without a family life and time. IT IS NOT GOOD!

Listen to the Word of God! **YOU NEED**





FAMILY TIME!

God gets into action to make sure man has a family and family time. God suspended Adam's work, He suspended Adam's worship time and put him (Adam) to compulsory sleep to create a family for him. After God created a wife for Adam, marriage and family life began for Adam.

The investment you are to make for family time is little compared to the profit you will get out of it. The investment you need to make for a functional, profitable, family time is little compared to the benefit you will harvest from it.



Note that with work and worship already in place, God still said that being alone is not good.

Don't say you don't have time, or you can't afford to create time for your family. You can! The investment is for your good and benefit. Out of just one rib came a family, out of one rib came children and out of one rib came humanity.





Note the following about family time:

1. The investment you are to make to have a beneficial family time is little compared to the benefit you will derive. So you should do it.
2. Whatever you are to invest for quality family time is something you already have. God will not ask you for what you don't have.
3. Whatever you invest for a quality family time never leads to losses. If you invest time, attention and anything else, it never leads to losses. Every investment towards quality family time leads to fulfilment, never losses.
4. The benefits of quality family time are too numerous to be overlooked.



Listen to the Word of God! You need family time!

Note the following:

- ✦ If you don't miss your family, it is not





because you don't have a need, but because you are insensitive.

- ✦ Ability to sense needs is a sign of good emotional, and mental health.
- ✦ There is something wrong when a person cannot sense a need for family and relationship.

5. No one can have a flourishing family time without the investment of commitment. You must invest commitment to have a flourishing family life and time.



The investment you are to make for family time is little compared to the profit you will get out of it.

6. To have a flourishing family time, other attractions must be sacrificed. You can't have a flourishing family time while also satisfying everything and everyone. You must disappoint some other things or people.





WHAT IS FAMILY TIME?

1. It is a time set apart to interact and relate with members of your family.
2. A time spent away from others, together as a family.
3. Time spent having fun as a family.
4. A time to share intimacy with the family.
5. It is time spent celebrating together as a family.
6. Time spent bonding as a family.



HOW POSSIBLE OR WORKABLE IS IT TO HAVE FAMILY TIME?

1. **Schedule It:** It can be scheduled in your family calendar. The same way we make our work schedules, we can make a schedule for family time. Despite our busy lives, it is possible if you schedule it.



Whatever you are to invest for quality family time is something you already have.





2. **Prioritize it.** Certain things have to give way for family time. You must give up some things for family time.
3. **Observe it:** After family time has been scheduled, be sure to honour that time without excuses or compromise.



REASONS PEOPLE DON'T HAVE FAMILY TIME

1. Family time is considered unimportant and trivial. They don't see it in the context of scriptural relevance. Anything people consider important, they make time for it even at a great cost.
2. Wrong management of time. Thus, they claim they don't have time.



You can't have a flourishing family time while also satisfying everything and everyone.





3. A total absence of priorities or misplaced priorities.
4. Past misconceptions from wrong traditions and upbringing.
5. Fear that makes a spouse to avoid areas of communication; to void uncomfortable topics.
6. Unaddressed distractions and unrestrained interruptions. Distractions that pull you from inside and interruptions that pull you from outside.
7. Improper consideration of implications of mismanagement of finances.
8. Self-destructive overindulgence. You over-give yourself to work, people and things to your destruction.



There is something wrong when a person cannot sense a need for family and relationship.

9. Domineering, manipulative tendencies. i.e. where things are either done your way or no way. When one person wants to take charge of





everybody's life, they will end up chasing everybody away. Everything should be negotiated.



Realise that it is possible to enjoy love and friendship in the family despite human imperfections.

10. **Spirit of competition and jealousy.** When people that are supposed to be loving each other are competing with each other, everything else suffers.
11. **Pride and overestimation of self.** Note that the essence of family time is not about how much money you spend, it is about having time together. Overestimation makes people seek to live above their present financial level. Remember, life is in stages.
12. Not making room for inputs and contribution from others.





HOW TO PROMOTE FAMILY TIME

1. Begin to de-emphasise self and emphasise family.
2. Give unconditional love and acceptance to all in the family.
3. Enjoy the family despite past misunderstandings and offences.
4. Learn to forgive and overlook mistakes.
5. Focus on enjoying areas of family life that are working well presently.
6. Be patient and positive in giving room for adjustments.
7. Be appreciative and contented with the progress made so far.
8. Scale down on your financial plans to fit available resources.



After family time has been scheduled, be sure to honour that time without excuses or compromise.





9. Ignore problems and focus on shared victories and successes.
10. Realise that it is possible to enjoy love and friendship in the family despite human imperfections.



DISADVANTAGES OF A LACK OF FAMILY TIME

1. Self-centred existence and nature of selfishness.
2. Loss of healthy development through mentoring.
3. Death of closeness and intimacy.
4. Existence as strangers to each other.
5. Exposure of the family to external distractions.
6. Corruption by destructive vices outside the family.
7. Loss of mutual support and involvement.



Learn to forgive and overlook mistakes.





8. A limited flow of blessings and benefits.
9. Separation and destruction of the family structure.
10. A future in isolation and loneliness.

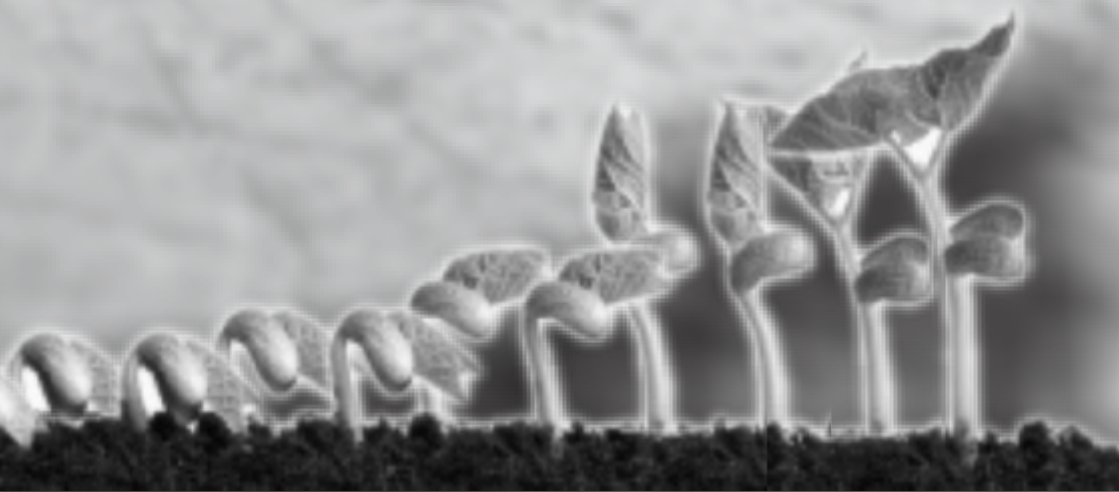


COUNSEL

1. Recognise and embrace the importance of family time.
2. Use your family time to show affection, appreciation and encouragement for everyone in your family.
3. Begin to schedule time for the family: daily, weekly, monthly and yearly.
4. Be very deliberate about your family time knowing there are benefits.
5. Begin with what is possible and affordable now.
6. It is not too late to start. You can start today so you don't incur more losses.
7. All members of the family should make sacrifices and adjustments to achieve success.



Cultivate Friendship
in Your Marriage





Chapter Six

Cultivate Friendship In Your Marriage

*And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and
flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a
man leave his father and his mother, and shall
cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*

Genesis 2:23-24



GENESIS 2:23-24 paints a picture of love and friendship. God creates a woman and brings the woman to the man. This is the first time Adam is meeting the woman but Adam is excited and expectant because God told him, *"I will make an help suitable (meet) for him"*. Now let's see vs 23: this is Adam's response when he meets Eve for the first time.

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.

Genesis 2:23

In this verse, Adam implies:

1. **Relationship:** Adam says, *"... she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of man."*
2. **Friendship:** Adam says, *"...this is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh..."* emphasising the bond that exists between them, a connection of closeness, fondness and affection. She was taken out of man. So we see a relationship, a





connection, a friendship, and a bond of closeness.



Realise that it is possible to enjoy love and friendship in the family despite human imperfections.

Note the following:

1. Two people can marry as strangers, and then cultivate the bond of friendship progressively. Lots of couples pictured in the scriptures got married as strangers, e.g.: Isaac and Rebecca. Rebecca was married and brought to him. Eliezer brought Rebecca to Isaac after the marriage was completed. So, ignore the fact that both of you are from different backgrounds, with different upbringings, and cultivate friendship in your marriage.
2. Marriage does not automatically produce friendship. That two people get married does not mean they have automatically worked out the smooth flow of friendship.





3. After getting married, there is work to be done continuously to cultivate and establish friendship. Any couple that stops cultivating friendship after the wedding will begin to drift apart. True friendship is cultivated continuously over time.



Two people can marry as strangers, and then cultivate the bond of friendship progressively.

4. The sweetness of marriage is determined by the success achieved in the cultivation of friendship. If your marriage is going to enjoy sweetness, it will be determined by how successful you were in the cultivation of friendship between you and your spouse. So some people became married and after a while, things got worse. All the excitement disappears. All the fun evaporates, all the happiness erodes because of repeated tensions, offences, conflicts, confrontations and lots of other issues that keep piling up until ultimately two people become





strangers. The sweetness of the marriage is dependent on the success achieved in cultivating friendship.



FIVE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What Is Friendship?
2. Who is a Friend?
3. What does it mean to cultivate?
4. Why is there a need to cultivate friendship in marriage?
5. How do you cultivate friendship in marriage and family life?



After getting married, there is work to be done continuously to cultivate and establish friendship.



WHAT IS FRIENDSHIP?

- a) Affection and accord between people.





- b) Acquaintances and closeness between people.
- c) Agreement and cordiality between people.
- d) To be amiable and amicable.
- e) State of closeness and concord.
- f) Positive attraction and attachment.
- g) State of fondness and familiarity.
- h) Bond of goodwill and harmony.
- i) Existence in love and good rapport.



WHO IS A FRIEND?

- i. A person with whom one has a bond of attraction and attachment. But note that this does not in any way reveal what a person is on the inside.



The sweetness of the marriage is dependent on the success achieved in cultivating friendship.

- ii. A person we are attracted and attached to with feelings of affection. Among the many





people we are attracted to, there are some we will start having feelings for.

- iii. A person who cares to give assistance and support. Amongst the people you have affection for, which of them cares enough to assist? (not the ones who come for assistance). Which one can identify with you when you are in need and can help. If you marry someone who is not prompted to give care, assistance or support, such a marriage will be a stress. Your friendship is incomplete or incorrect if you're the one always receiving support and assistance without giving back the same.



That two people get married does not mean they have automatically worked out the smooth flow of friendship.

- iv. A person who is cordial with you not hostile. If you are hanging around a person who uses you to practice abuse then you're in the





wrong circle. But if you are already married, you need to pray for and work harder on your marriage. If a person uses cordial words on you, the person loves you too much to leave you damaged with the effect of hostile words. A person that does not care about the effect of the words they use on you should be avoided. Children growing under constant verbal abuse will end up being abusive verbally and physically.



After getting married, there is work to be done continuously to cultivate and establish friendship.

- v. A person who enjoys closeness, familiarity and intimacy with you. The person should enjoy being in your close space, not the one saying I need my space.

- vi. A person who shares involvement, partnership and investment with you.





vii. A person who wishes you well and contributes to your welfare.

These are the reasons we must cultivate friendship. A true friend is not necessarily a perfect person but he/she must care and make positive, value-adding investments in your life.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO CULTIVATE?

Generally, to cultivate means:

1. To groom for growth.
2. To prepare.
3. To develop.
4. To improve.
5. To promote.
6. To strengthen.
7. To nurture.



True friendship is cultivated continuously over time.





TO CULTIVATE ALSO MEANS

1. To work towards achieving healthy growth. Don't settle where you are. Don't settle in a toxic situation.
2. To labour towards improving things.
3. To develop through training.
4. To invest careful management to arrive at maturity. Carelessness can destroy a friendship, relationship or marriage. The Bible says our vine have tender roots. Don't allow the foxes to attack them.



If you marry someone who is not prompted to give care, assistance or support, such a marriage will be a stress.

5. To till and tend tirelessly unto fruition.
6. To plough, plant and prepare for profitable returns of harvest.
7. To nurse and nourish for consistent improvement. Ask yourself the following questions: What area of training do I need to enjoy an





improvement in my marriage? What kind of friend did you marry if you're married? What kind of friend are you about marrying, if you are still single? The kind of friend you marry shows you the extent of friendship cultivation you will need to invest.



5 LEVELS OF FRIENDSHIP TO CONSIDER

1. A person who is interested in starting a friendship journey with you. It doesn't mean the person has an initial understanding of friendship. They are just interested to start.
2. A person who shows a friendly behaviour towards you. This kind of person is just a jovial type of person, he is the same with everyone.



A person that does not care about the effect of the words they use on you should be avoided.





3. A person who has a friendly nature, attitude and character. This person is tamed by principles. Nothing controls behaviour like principles. Until you know a person's principles, you can't predict their behaviour.



A true friend is not necessarily a perfect person but he/she must care and make positive, value-adding investments ...

4. A person who has well-cultivated friendship skills and values, but is in connection with people with no friendship values. The problem with lots of people is that their circle of friends from which they can choose a spouse has little or no cultivated friendship skills and values. The person recommending another person to you, what are the principles they hold and observe? Boaz didn't know Ruth but he had some trusted workmen. Jonathan had a trusted and tested friendship with David. What a lot of people call friendship is falsehood. They are mutual partners in a permissive coverup.





5. A person who has developed tested, tried and proven skills and values, and a bond of friendship that leads to marriage.



HOW TO CULTIVATE FRIENDSHIP IN MARRIAGE

Cultivating friendship is a practical thing. Here are some steps to take:

1. Be ready to do the work that is required to build friendship in your marriage and family.
2. Find out the interest of each other and create time to participate.
3. Use conflict to address areas of existing differences and make changes.



Carelessness can destroy a friendship, relationship or marriage.

4. Cultivate trust. Two people cannot be friends where trust is lacking.
5. Be transparent and open to each other.





6. Share information and communication abundantly.



What area of training do you need to enjoy an improvement in your marriage?

7. Be closer to your spouse than other people. You might have had people as friends before marriage, but now that you're married, there should be a shift in closeness and allegiance. Give priority closeness to your spouse, not other people or things.
8. Be open to receive and give contrary views in criticism, corrections or observations.
9. Intentionally create a conducive, receptive atmosphere for you and your spouse.
10. Be generous in sharing your resources with your spouse. No one should remain only on the receiving end.





Until you know a person's principles, you can't predict their behaviour.

11. Repent and try not to repeat past hurts and offences. When offences are repeated endlessly it kills hope for a better future.
12. Value and never take each other for granted. Value each other's goals, dreams, pursuits.
13. Genuinely celebrate each other's progress and achievement without competing.
14. Show respect and regard, and respond promptly to each other's needs.
15. Be available to support and defend your spouse's interest passionately.
16. Avoid and distance yourself from associations that dishonour and hurt your spouse especially where it is done continually.
17. Receive the favour and assistance of your spouse with gratitude and appreciation. Most times the voice of a friend is what ranks highest in a person's life. It should not so. Your spouse's voice should rank highest in your life.





Nothing controls behaviour like principles.

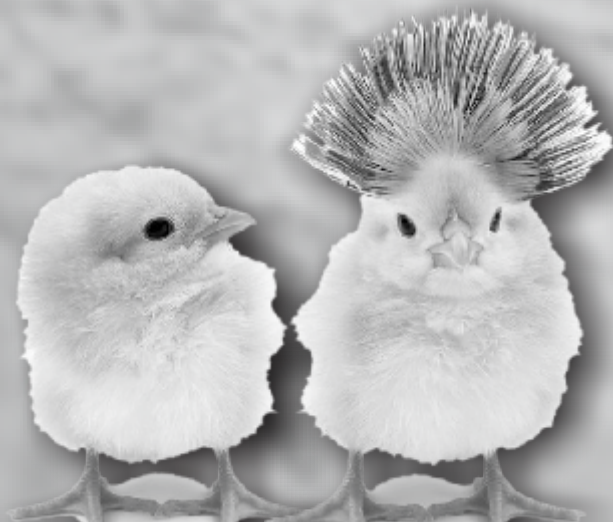
18. Admire and celebrate the good qualities, strengths and potentials of your spouse openly. Do not only celebrate your spouse in private but also do so openly before others.
19. Do not be quick to embrace and believe accusations against your spouse without clarification.
20. Show concern and solidarity for the struggles, challenges and battles of your spouse.
21. Make changes to accommodate the changing phases of your life together. Your spouse won't be the same when she was a wife, compared to now that she is a mother.

Cultivating friendship is a life long journey of adjustments.





Wagon Year Differences





Chapter Seven

Work On Your Differences

*And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man
should be alone; I will make him an help meet for
him.*

Genesis 2:18



WORK on your differences; this is an instruction from God. Husband! Wife! work on your differences.

Fiancé, fiancée, while you are courting, work on your differences. Young man, young woman, before you get into a relationship, work on your differences.

Are men and women different? Yes!

1. We are different in the names we are called.
2. We are different in the days we were made.
3. We are different in the substance we were made from. The man was made from dust, and the woman was made from bone.
4. We are different in our body makeup and feelings. God used a word when talking about the man and woman: and that word is MEET.

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Genesis 2:18

The Amplified Bible translation says,





*Now the Lord God said, It is not good
(sufficient, satisfactory) that the man
should be alone; I will make him a helper
meet (suitable, adapted, complementary)
for him.*

Genesis 2:18. AMP

Working on your differences means, learning to adjust. Address areas where you need to adjust. There are lots of differences between the man and the woman.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE DIFFERENT?

1. Not alike.
2. Not identical.
3. Distinct.
4. At variance.
5. Diverse
6. Unique
7. Peculiar





This clearly lets us know that we have things to adjust to. One of the synonyms of differences is conflict. If we do not adjust our areas of differences there will be clashes and conflicts, not because we are evil but because we are different.



IS IT WRONG TO BE DIFFERENT?

If God made the man and the woman different, and if all He made is very good, therefore it is not wrong to be different.

And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Genesis 1:31

We are not wrong because we are different, rather, we are different because we were made that way. It is not wrong to be different but it is wrong to be rigid and not adjust in your areas of differences.





God has called us to adjust and work on our areas of differences. In 1 Peter 3:7, the phrase the Bible used there is, '*dwell with her according to knowledge.*' That means one should use wisdom, knowledge and know-how to adjust. He didn't say separate from her, bully her or force her to change. In Genesis, the woman is told to adjust; in 1 Peter, the man is told to dwell with her according to knowledge. So, both the man and the woman have been instructed to adjust to each other. We must work on our areas of differences so that we do not separate or diverge, rather, we converge.



AREAS OF DIFFERENCES TO WORK ON

1. **Communication:**

We all communicate uniquely and differently. Women process and communicate information by feelings, while men do so by thinking. It doesn't mean the women don't think, neither does it mean the men don't show feelings. A





husband should not put down the feelings of the wife, neither should a wife put down the thinking capacity of a husband.

- a) First of all, accept the communication style of your spouse. Don't talk down on their communication style.
- b) Allow room for expression.
- c) Accept and draw wisdom light from each other's approach. There is wisdom you can get from feeling or thinking that you can't get from either. Appreciate, accept and adopt. Don't be biased or write off one's communication before you even listen or receive the expression.



Be transparent and open to each other.

2. Temperaments

No two human beings are the same in temperament. The compatibility of temperaments is very important.





- a) Know your temperament and your spouse's temperaments and learn how to adjust accordingly.
- b) Know that temperaments are learned behaviours. If they are learned, it means that they can be unlearned. If it is as a result of upbringing, it means that it can be adapted to or adjusted over time.
- c) Do not defend a negative temperament. Eg: Anger, and moodiness.



Be generous in sharing your resources with your spouse. No one should remain only on the receiving end.

3. Approach to third-party:

These include friends, parents, and office colleagues. Spouses can choose to see third-party as interference or interaction in family affairs.

- a) They should discuss the issue and shouldn't force any decision on others instantly. One spouse might be more open about marital





issues to the siblings while the other isn't. Each person should be willing to adjust to the other's level.

- i) Acknowledge the difference.
- ii) Discuss the difference.
- iii) Adjust appropriately to the difference.



Work on your differences; this is an instruction from God.

- b) Put all third-party relationships in proper perspective. Friendship with your neighbour is not as important as your relationship with your spouse. Do not sacrifice your marriage for friendship with your neighbour or your sibling. Put things in their proper place of importance. Adjust out of love, and respect for your spouse and home. Our relationship with a third-party should be determined by how helpful or hurtful that third-party is to your marriage. If a third-party is hurtful, even if it is your par-





ents, you must protect your marriage.
God said to the man,

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

Genesis 2:24

And to the woman,

Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.

Psalms 45:10-11

- c) Always give priority to your spouse and marriage. Understand that your family comes first, ahead of every other relationship. Just as God told the man to leave his father and mother so that he can cleave to his wife, He also told the woman to forget her





people so that she can be the desire of her husband. A serious priority setting is necessary. You have to adjust. You cannot be best of friends with someone who keeps disregarding your spouse irrespective of who the person is. Do not exalt any relationship above your relationship with your spouse.



... it is not wrong to be different.

4. **Intuition:**

Men and women have intuitive differences. Women can capture things intuitively, unexplainably, seemingly unreasonably but very accurately with feelings. They pick subliminal messages and can decode and understand them accurately beyond the man's reasoning. Reasoning deals with analysing facts, and facts must be observed, gathered, grouped and analysed. Whereas intuition does not wait for facts, it can travel and pick signals





intuitively. Many men could have saved themselves some problems if they just followed their wife's intuitive communication. There is also a problem when a wife presents her intuition as a commandment and not as a suggestion. That will put the man off totally because no man was created to be commanded by the wife. Therefore, women, when you want to communicate your unclear, subliminal communication, present it in a suggestive manner, not as a command or instruction. Men, note also that an intuitive suggestion from your wife doesn't imply that you should abandon your reasoning. Intuition, like mentality, isn't always accurate nor perfect, but when both are combined, we become alert and efficient.



One of the synonyms of differences is conflict. If we do not adjust our areas of differences there will be clashes and conflicts ...





5. Physical body:

Another area of difference between men and women is their physical body. Men have more brute, strength and energy than women. Don't expect your wife to stand on her feet for as long as you do. But a woman has more endurance capacity. A woman has a greater pain threshold than a man. A woman can endure more pain. That is why God did not fashion into man the ability to give birth. A woman can endure pain for a longer period than a man.



Women process and communicate information by feelings, while men do so by thinking.

About 40% of a man's body weight is from his muscle, while 23 to 28% of a woman's weight comes from her muscle. All these can be altered by training. Don't expect your wife to be as forceful as you, she will be more graceful. Don't subject your wife to forceful and energetic demands and unnecessary brutality. Men have





a higher oxygen intake capacity. That is why in races, men record greater speeds than women. Don't treat your wife like a man. Men have more red blood cells than women, therefore, their body retains more oxygen supply and distribution.



Allow room for expression.

6. **Mental and emotional differences:**

Men and women have mental and emotional differences. Men are more interested and preoccupied with practical logical analysis while women are more interested in emotional comparative analysis. This is why men and women shop differently. A man can buy five different things in one shop, but a woman would rather go to five different shops for the same five things. Don't get offended if your spouse acts differently, rather, adjust accordingly.





Men are wired toward vocations: things to do, problems to solve, things to fix, challenges to tackle, whereas women are more wired towards how one feels. That is why women can appreciate a little gift presented with the right feeling more than a very expensive gift presented without feelings. I am not saying this so that we remain the way we are, I am presenting it so that we can adjust towards each other.



No two human beings are the same in temperament.

Men tend more towards instant and immediate conclusions whereas women are more procedural and progressive. The woman wants you to talk through the process with her, whereas a man wants to just make a decision and move to something else. With the woman, the process is more important than the end-product but with the man, the end-product is more important than the process. That is why





women tell stories differently from men.

7. Sexual difference:

Men and women are different in their sexual makeup and their sexual constitution. Men are more quickly sexually awakened and aroused while women are more gradual in their sexual responses. That is why a man must understand that you don't rush straight into sex. You must give time to arouse and satisfy your wife sexually.



Friendship with your neighbour is not as important as your relationship with your spouse.

8. Personality difference:

This is not necessarily in men and women alone, but generally, we all have our personality differences. Some of us are reactionary to things while others are not. Some of us are hyperactive, and intense, whereas some are laidback and basic. Some of us are persistent, but others





are flexible and permissive. Some of us are very adaptable, while others are resistant. The important thing is that there is a difference between your spouse, and you have to know how to work on your differences.



BUILDING BALANCE DESPITE DIFFERENCE

Despite our differences, we can build a balance.

1. Know that your spouse is not wrong or fake by being different. Do not try to change your spouse to be like you. See their difference as their uniqueness.
2. Even when our differences cannot be eliminated, they can be adjusted and moderated. From extreme ends, we can strike a balance.
3. Avoid stubbornly insisting on always having your way at the expense of your spouse. Both spouses must make adjustments.
4. Both spouses should see the need to discuss differences and agree on mutual





moderations. It must be mutual and not one-sided.

5. Avoid judging and criticizing each other. Avoid rude and abusive jokes.
6. Learn to understand the things that cannot be changed immediately, and patiently work overtime to improve things. Marriage is a work in progress, so learn to accommodate things that cannot be adjusted and changed immediately.



5 R's FOR WORKING ON YOUR DIFFERENCES

1. Realise that this is who you married.
2. React slowly to the things you don't like.
3. Relax some of your standards. Be flexible, not rigid.
4. Remember to forgive. No matter what you do, offences will come.
5. Re-strategize your approach. Change an approach if it is not working.





HINDRANCES TO RESOLVING DIFFERENCES

1. Being set in your ways. People are raised in different backgrounds and have different perspectives. Therefore, be open to other perspectives of life.
2. Exalting human standards as absolute and unchangeable. That your parent's standards worked for them doesn't mean it will work with your spouse.
3. Ego and pride. Do not look down on your spouse even when you're right and your spouse is wrong. You are only different from your spouse, not better than him or her.
4. Lack of communication. Where there is no communication, matters are difficult to resolve.



***Understand that your family comes first,
ahead of every other relationship.***





5. Inability to appreciate differences and be accommodating.
6. Not focusing on the gains of adjustment.
7. Not celebrating your spouse's impact and effort or the progress made so far.



Learn to Resolve Conflicts





Chapter Eight

Learn To Resolve Conflicts

*And the man said, The woman whom thou
gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree,
and I did eat.*
Genesis 3:12



In Genesis 3:12, the Bible says “*And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat*” Here, we see the first indication of conflict. The next record of conflict is in Genesis 4:5-11 where Cain was angry with Abel over his rejected sacrifice.

But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

Genesis 4:5

In this chapter, we will be considering the following objectives:

1. What is conflict?
2. What are the causes of conflict?
3. Consequences of conflict.
4. Steps on how to resolve conflict.

Note these facts:

1. Conflict, tension and anger is sin. But you have the capacity to resolve and overcome it. God said to Cain, *sin lies at the door*. Conflict, quarrel,





misunderstanding, malice, refusal to communicate and coldness are sins, and you have the capacity to overcome and defeat them. It is after you. The spirit of conflict comes after people in every relationship. Cain ignored the warnings God gave, and rather than resolve and overcome conflict, he hardened his heart and continued in hatred. Some couples hear the Word of God, yet continue in their ways of conflict as though God never spoke to them



***Where there is no communication matters
are difficult to resolve.***

2. Resolving conflicts or continuing in it is a choice. People think that marriages and relationships fail because the church is not powerful or because the pastor is not anointed. God himself spoke to Cain, yet Cain left his conversation with God and continued with his plan of hatred and more conflict. He did not shift grounds despite the appeal God made to him.





3. So it is possible to be under the anointing and yet stubbornly continue in bitterness, unforgiveness, pride, hatred and more conflict.



Conflict, quarrel, misunderstanding, malice, refusal to communicate and coldness are sins ...

4. Conflict can be covered and disguised with pretence. Abel followed Cain to the field not knowing that Cain had deep-seated anger and hatred towards him.
5. Conflict can be so disguised that people are not aware of it. Hatred and bitterness can be covered with a pretentious smile. But remember, God sees it all. I pray for you, your heart will not be like that of Cain in Jesus name.
6. People will lie to others and themselves to cover conflict.
7. People will threaten their spouses to keep con-





flict covered.

8. Unresolved conflict can consume and destroy both the perpetrator and those they love.



Hatred and bitterness can be covered with a pretentious smile. But remember, God sees it all.

So we can see that conflict first occurred between Adam and Eve and also between Cain and Abel. Conflict first occurred in a marriage and in a family before there was tribal conflict, religious conflict or language barrier conflict.



SATAN IS BEHIND ALL CONFLICTS

- ✦ Those who celebrate conflicts are influenced by Satan.
- ✦ The foundational reason for conflict is Satan finding people he can use; willing tools he can use to derail relationships and marriages.
- ✦ Your inability to forgive, aggressive temper,





refusal to apologise, pride, bitterness, selfishness, bitterness and hatred will fan the embers of conflict.

Whatever reason anybody might have as an irreconcilable ground why they should hold on to conflict, the Word of God is saying to you that all conflicts are from Satan.



Your inability to forgive, aggressive temper, refusal to apologise ... bitterness ... and hatred will fan the embers of conflict.

Conflicts occurred when there was just one family on earth; when there was only one marriage on earth. They weren't struggling over land, yet there was conflict. They were not fighting over property or position, yet there was conflict; only two brothers to inherit the earth, yet there was conflict; they were of the same religion, worshipped at the same altar, yet there was conflict, and God said: "*there is sin at the door.*"

Nobody took anybody's position, there was no scarcity of opportunities, yet there was conflict.





There was no scarcity of resources, in fact, there was no provocation, there was no insult, no abuse, there was no ethnic or tribal difference yet there was conflict. There was no case of parental preferential treatment, yet there was conflict.



No level of provocation takes away your power of choice.

There was no career tussle, yet there was conflict. The root of all conflict is Satan the devil. No matter what is the surface explanation or issue. Stubborn rejection of God's Word and rejection of wise godly counsel fuels and sustains conflict. No level of provocation takes away your power of choice. You can choose to resolve conflict. It is not how you are provoked that matters, but how you choose to respond when you are irritated or provoked. Receive grace to rule over conflict. Receive grace not to yield to temptation and provocation of conflict. Receive grace not to be a tool for instigating, fuelling or sustaining any kind of





conflict. Refuse to be ruled by the demon of conflict. Rule over the demon of divorce, breakup and division. Receive the grace to please God in Jesus name.



CHOOSE TO SEEK SOLUTIONS

Everyone involved in a conflict has the opportunity and capacity to help resolve it. Either by working out a solution or by rising above the provocation. Sadly, not everyone wants to resolve conflict.



Stubborn rejection of God's Word and rejection of wise godly counsel fuels and sustains conflict.

In every conflict, every person loses and no one gains except Satan. No one wins. There are things that can cause conflict but there is no excuse for you to keep living in unresolved conflicts.

Those who work at resolving conflict grow in maturity, mentality and spirituality. Those who





refuse to resolve conflict block their opportunities and ultimately waste their destiny. Refusal to resolve conflict is a sin before God.

It is wisdom to resolve conflict and those who do so are wise. James 3:14-17 calls it the wisdom that is from above.

But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

James 3:14-17



WHAT IS CONFLICT?

1. A state of struggle or clash between two or more people.





2. Quarrelling or fighting between people.
3. Disagreement between people.
4. Strife between two parties.
5. Opposition and bitter confrontation.
6. A controversy between two or more people.
7. A competition or contest for superiority.



WHAT ARE THE CAUSES OF CONFLICT?

Many things can stir up, provoke or lead to conflict.

1. Difference in interest or opinions.
2. Unreconciled upbringing.
3. Lack of effective communication.
4. Inferiority complex.
5. Insecurities.
6. Unwillingness to accommodate differences.
7. Deliberate rudeness.
8. Unclarified intentions or motives.
9. Biased perception.
10. Unfair or unmet expectations.
11. Inconsiderate decisions or choices.





12. Unkind or uncaring actions.
13. Unwise or uncontrolled reactions.
14. Harsh or hurtful communication.
15. Unchecked aggression or harshness.
16. Toxic emotions such as suspicion and resentment.



Those who work at resolving conflict grow in maturity, mentality and spirituality.

17. Unvoiced impressions.
18. Misunderstood expressions.
19. Untamed passions and desires.
20. Negative association that threatens trust.
21. Expressed or unaddressed aggression.
22. Unexpressed or unaddressed frustrations.
23. Erroneous interpretation and conclusions.
24. False accusations.
25. Unhealthy competition.
26. Humiliating confrontation.
27. Prolonged suppression and domination.
28. Thoughtless retribution or drive to revenge.





29. Inexcusable violations and betrayals.
30. Deliberate provocation.

A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.

Proverbs 15:18

The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with. He loveth transgression that loveth strife: and he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction.

Proverbs 17: 14 & 19



CONSEQUENCES OF CONFLICTS

1. Division and separation.
2. Suffocation of love.
3. Unhappiness in the home.
4. Lack of transparency.
5. Loss of intimacy.
6. Misunderstandings.
7. Revenge and hurts.





*And if a house be divided against itself,
that house cannot stand.*

Mark 3:25

*And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said
unto them, Every kingdom divided
against itself is brought to desolation; and
every city or house divided against itself
shall not stand.*

Matthew 12:25

You must be interested in resolving Conflicts.

*Two are better than one; because they
have a good reward for their labour. For if
they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but
woe to him that is alone when he falleth;
for he hath not another to help him up.
Again, if two lie together, then they have
heat: but how can one be warm alone?*

Ecclesiastes 4:9-11





Working out your marriage is better than divorce.

8. Loss of spirituality.
9. Loss of tranquillity or peace.
10. Loss of unity or oneness.
11. Loss of Harmony and happiness.
12. Loss of stability.
13. Loss of productivity.
14. Loss of security.
15. Abundance of calamity.

But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

James 3:14-15

Can Conflicts be resolved? Yes, conflicts can be resolved.





STEPS TO RESOLVING CONFLICTS

1. Identify the real issues.
2. Be willing to be calm.
3. Listen to each other.
4. Be ready and willing to make sacrifices.
5. Be humble to seek and receive wise and right counsel.
6. Give room for communication.
7. Be sincere and open to God and one another.
8. Learn to celebrate differences.
9. Be willing to put on your best self/good character.
10. Be willing to take the lead; to take responsibility.



In every conflict, every person loses and no one gains except Satan. No one wins.

11. Repent and reject the state of conflict and





tension. Everyone in a conflict owes God repentance.

12. Agree from onset to arrive at reconciliation, not separation.
13. Be willing and available to initiate and participate in communication.
14. State your views and concerns, not conclusions.
15. Focus on sharing facts, not insults and abuses.
16. Take turns to talk and receive feedback, not lectures.
17. Take notes of key points to avoid interrupting one another.



Refusal to resolve conflict is a sin before God.

18. List out and address all issues one at a time.
19. Separate problems from persons.
20. Be open and honest in your presentation.
21. Emphasize desire for reconciliation, not threats.
22. Listen to understand not to counter and condemn. To communicate your response





- properly, you must hear beyond what is said.
23. Understand the heart more than words.
 24. Accept responsibility and apologize. You don't just apologize because you are wrong, you apologize because you care.
 25. Be flexible and creative to arrive at mutually acceptable solutions.
 26. Team up as partners to put decisions into actions.



Refuse to be ruled by the demon of conflict.



SUMMARY

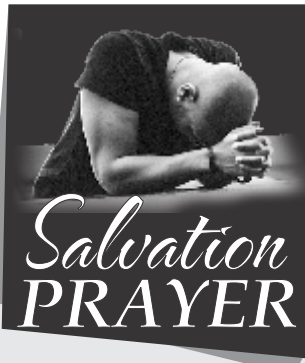
1. We must repent and reject the state of Conflict and tension.
2. Settle down, talk and listen to each other.
3. Be Willing to carry out decisions made and agreed upon.





4. Start with current and present issues, and gradually work on the past. A present state of harmony will help you resolve other issues.





Lord Jesus, I surrender my life to you, I repent of sin and stubbornness, I repent of pride. Everything that exalted my will over the will of God, I repent. Jesus please come into my life, be my Lord and my Saviour. Change me today, I receive my sins forgiven. I receive eternal life into my Spirit. I am Born again in Jesus name. Amen!





FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE BRANCH DIRECTORY

HEADQUARTERS

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
Noah's Ark Auditorium
Full Life Avenue,
Off Nsikak Eduok Avenue, Uyo
08134515626

EKET

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
23, All Weather Road, Off Idua Road
Eket, Akwa Ibom State.

CALABAR

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
61, Mayne Avenue,
Opp. Tech. Sch., Calabar,
Cross River State.

PORT HARCOURT 1

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
Brian Ogbonda Lane, By 1st Car Wash
Off Alcon Road, Woji, Port Harcourt
Rivers State

PORT HARCOURT 2

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
12 Psychiatric Road (adjacent to
the Promise Fast Food), Rumuigbo,
Port Harcourt, Rivers State

PORT HARCOURT 3

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
10, Abuja Lane, Off Emekuku
D-Line, Port Harcourt, River State

IKEJA, LAGOS

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
110, Awolowo Way
Ikeja, Lagos.

MAKURDI

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
11, Itobe Lane, Behind Sandra Hospital,
Barracks Road, Makurdi.

WARRI

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
25 Okoloba Street,
Off Effurun-Sapele Road
Warri, Delta State.

IKOT EKPENE ROAD, UYO

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
184, Ikot Ekpene Road, Uyo
Akwa Ibom State.

IKOT EKPENE 1

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
Full Life Avenue,
Raffia City Garden Estate
Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom State.

IKOT EKPENE 2

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
5, Essien Road, Ikot Ekpene
Akwa Ibom State

IKOT ABASI

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
69, Ikot Obong Road, Ikot Abasi
Akwa Ibom State.

IBESIKPO ASUTAN

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
Akpautong/Air Force Road
Ikot Udo Ibesikpo, Ibesikpo Asutan
Akwa Ibom State.

ABAK

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
101, Hospital Road, Abak
Akwa Ibom State.

ITAK

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
Ikot Ekpene Road, Nung Udoe Itak
Akwa Ibom State.

ORON

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
29, Ebughu Road, by Tabasco House
Eyo Abasi, Oron, Akwa Ibom State.

ITAM

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE
5, Effiong Udo Street,
Off Water Board Road,
Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.





FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

ABUJA

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

AMAC Resource Centre
(after the Police Station & VIO Office)
Apo Resettlement, Abuja

MASSACHUSETTS, USA 1

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

340 Main Street,
6th Floor Event Centre
Worcester, MA, 01608

MASSACHUSETTS, USA 2

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

79, Merrimack Street, Lowell
Massachusetts

TEXAS, USA

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

2722 West Kingsley Road
Garland, Texas

NWANIBA ROAD, UYO

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE (SAT.)

20 Obot Etukudo Road,
Off Nwaniba Road
Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

ORON ROAD, UYO

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE (SAT.)

592 Oron Road, After Customs
Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

AKURE

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

19/20 Industrial Layout (Behind TISCO)
Opp. Akure South Council Secretariate
Off Oyemekun Road, Akure, Ondo State

EKET 2

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

45 Edemudo Street
Eket, Akwa Ibom State

ETINAN

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

6, Nkanga Street, Off Hospital Road
Etinan, Akwa Ibom State.

OWERRI

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

68, Wetheral Road, Slot Building
Owerri, Imo State.

OKOITA, IBIONO IBOM

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

Nebro House, Oko Ita Junction
Ibiono Ibom L.G.A., Akwa Ibom State

IDORO ROAD

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE (SAT.)

168 Idoro Road
Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

NWANIBA ROAD 2

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE (SAT.)

164 Nwaniba Road
Opp. Adiaha Obong Sec. School
Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

UDOETTE STREET

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE (SAT.)

2 Udoette Street, Off Ikpa Road
Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

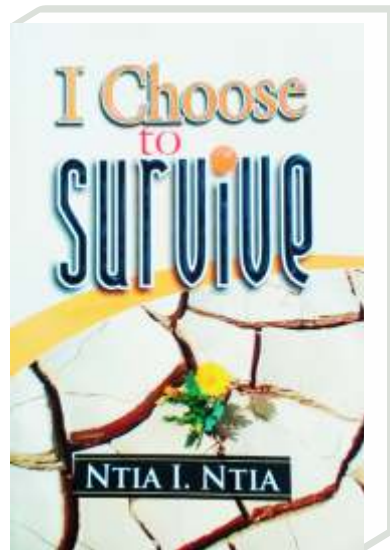
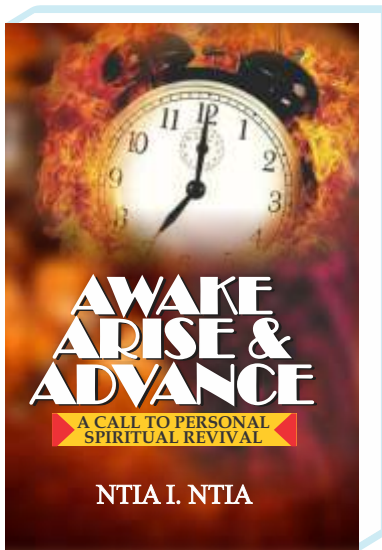
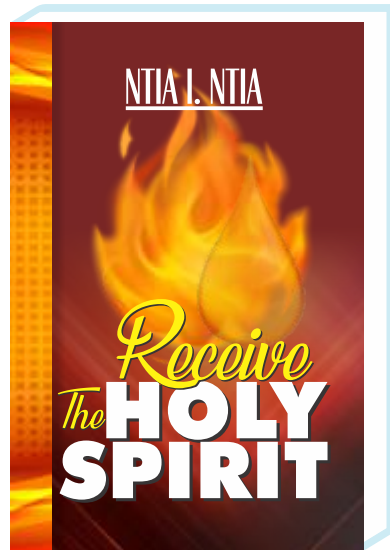
BARRACKS ROAD

FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE (SAT.)

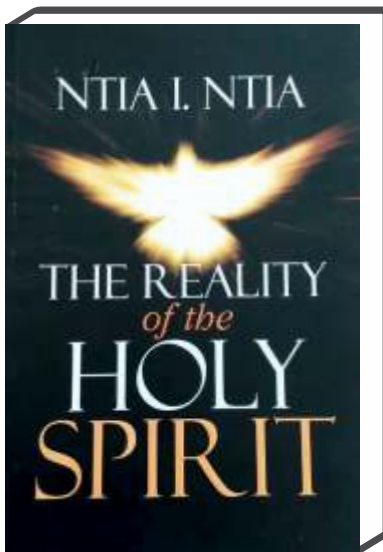
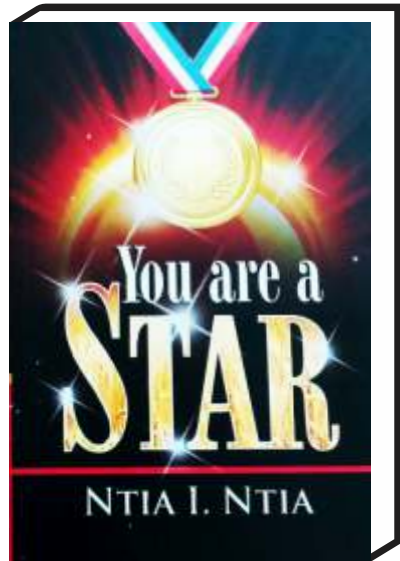
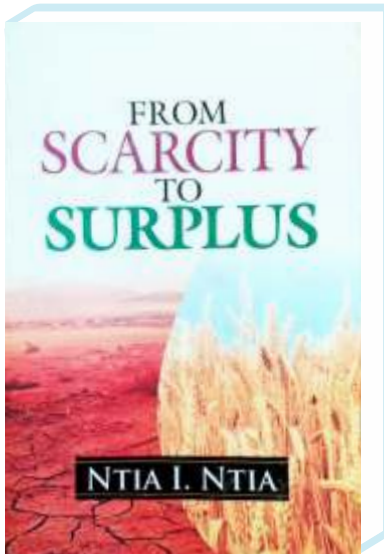
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Uyo, Akwa Ibom State



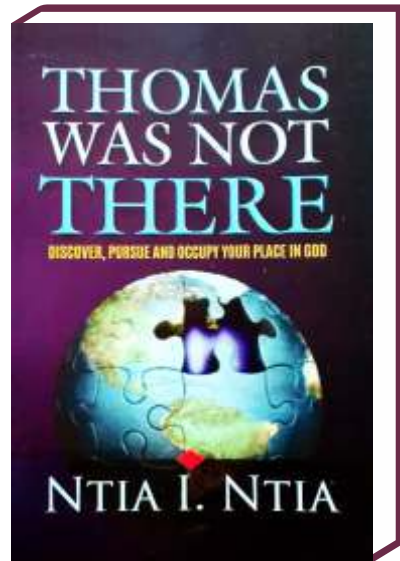
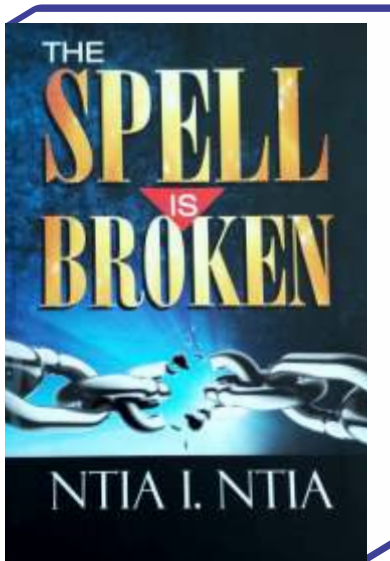
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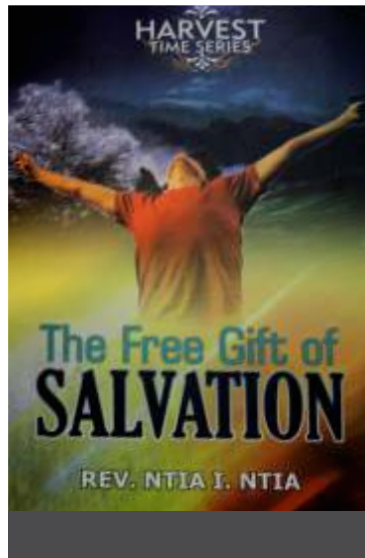
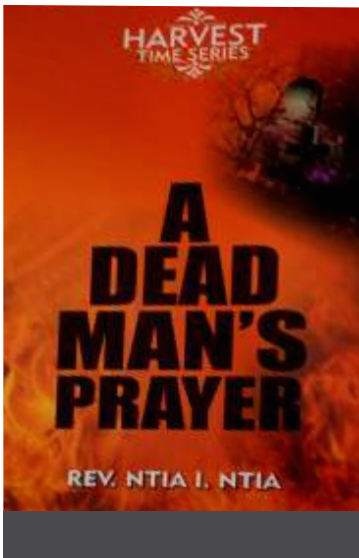
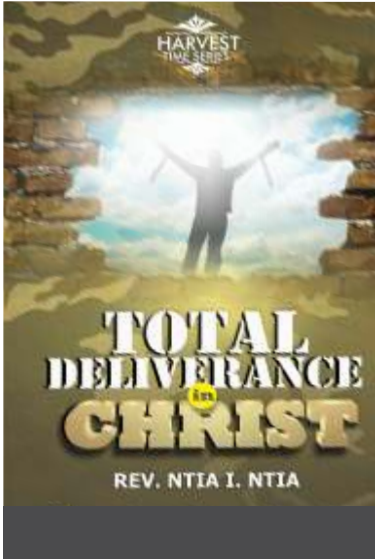
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FULL LIFE CHRISTIAN CENTRE

Worship with us

SUNDAY

**3 POWER PACKED SERVICES
7:00AM, 9:00AM & 11:00AM**

MONDAY

**BREAKTHROUGH BLAST
6:30AM**

WEDNESDAY

**TEACHING & COMMUNION SERVICE
5:00PM**



**NOAH'S ARK AUDITORIUM
FULL LIFE AVENUE,
OFF NSIKAK EDUOK AVENUE,
UYO, AKWA IBOM STATE**

... stirring men into the fullness of God.



Rev. & Pst. Mrs. NTIA I. NTIA

