

INTENDING COUPLES, SINGLES & COURTSHIP

1. Can you choose a partner by prophesy?

You cannot choose a partner by prophesy. The bible shows us the pattern for locating a partner (Proverbs 18:22). There is a finding process that the bible gives us when locating a partner. This therefore demonstrates that it is not by prophesy because God is never the author of confusion.

2. My girlfriend and I hardly see each other but communicate regularly. Even though we aren't married she likes saying things like, "I can't wait to see you, to hold you and to touch you". Do you think we should continue this kind of conversation?

Is this girl of yours a born again Christian? If yes, then you have to make her understand that words like that bring up desires that should be reserved for marriage, both for her and yourself. She might consider this as just some innocent words, but out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. Such desires should wait till you are married. Both of you should also read books that will educate you on remaining pure before married. If she is not born again, then you are in a wrong relationship. The Bible states that "You shall not be unequally yoked with an unbeliever".(1Cor. 15:33)

3. Is sleeping with the person you are engaged to okay for a Christian?

No. It is not okay because this is fornication. 1 Cor 6:9 says *'Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind....'*

Paul then gave a warning in verse 18: **"Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body"**. The body is the temple of the Holy Ghost.

Heb 13:4 says **"Marriage is honourable in all and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge"**. We must therefore avoid fornication and adultery. If you have already engaged in this practice you must repent, ask God for forgiveness and desist from doing it again.

4. Do the scriptures say anything about marriage between those with a significant age gap between them e.g. 10 years or more? Is it wrong?

There is no prescribed age difference stated in the scriptures but there should not be a gap that distorts understanding between both parties involved.

5. I believe the matured singles need more attention in the church. The yearnings of 40-50 year old hopefuls are different from those of the singles in their 20s. Please do something as a church.

This is something we have taken into consideration and in due time, whatever is put into place for the matured singles, will be communicated accordingly.

6. Can a 48 year old marry a married man? I am still holding on and have refused the man's proposal. But the pressure at home and my surroundings have increased so much and I want my own children before menopause. The church seems to have no answer or support other than 'wait'. What should I do?

My dear sister, do not allow any pressure either from age or anybody to make you sin against God "and yourself". Marrying a married man does not make you married as it is invalid; it only turns you to his harlot. You will be committing adultery and satisfying three desires: sexual, procreation and pleasing people.

You will still be unmarried and by God's standard, you will only be playing the role of a harlot! You are worth more than that. Your relationship with God is worth more than earthly desires. If a married man can see you and be interested, that means if you wait on God and make yourself available in the right place as you align your step with God; the right person will see you and make the proposal.

To be frank, menopause is just what it says it is a "pause", not a full stop; and since when has man's calendar started affecting God's ability. If going by menopause, Elizabeth and Sarah would be without a testimony. Please do not just wait, wait on the Lord with full confidence in His Fatherhood, and wait rejoicing in Him. The bible says "male and female created He them"- Gen 5: 2, Matt. 19:4; so there is a man God has created for you; and as you seek the Lord, your blessings will never pass you by and you will be located in due time.

7. Is it ok to date a Muslim knowing that it might lead to marriage?

The Word in Amos 3: 3 says "*Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*" Marriage is a covenantal commitment between two people and God. The Bible further says in 2 Cor 6: 14-16 "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with

unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness...”

So getting married to a Muslim negates the word of God.

8. The man I hope to marry soon is not a serious born again believer like me but he is a nice person and attends his own church. Please advice on what I should do?

You are either for the Lord or not. If your fiancé’s spiritual walk is at a standstill, he has literally put the Lord second place or out of his life and something else has taken precedence.

You need to seek the face of the Lord to know what to do about your relationship with him if you don’t want to encounter challenges when you are married. If his stand is not strong move on and don’t compromise.

9. I was in a relationship for over five years. When I met my ex-fiancé I sought the counsel of a man of God who told me that he was my God-ordained husband. Even though my ex has married another woman, the man of God still says that he is my husband. What am I supposed to do in this case?

Who is your God? The man of God or God Himself? When it comes to an issue with your life, God has given us the privilege of coming to Him straight without an intermediary. That is what Christ died for! You need to ask God for guidance. If you have been consulting God with everything else, then this should not be different. If your ex-fiancé is happy in his marriage, what do you want to do, split his marriage so that he can come back to you? Please, seek the Lord in order to avoid further confusion. A man of God is still a man, while God remains God. The Lord says He will not cast out those that come unto Him. The bible says “male and female created He them”- Gen 5: 2, Matt. 19:4, so never be discouraged as you seek His face because there is a man God has created for you; and as you seek God, you will be located in due time. Proverbs 3: 5 – 6.

10. Is it godly to use Christian dating websites to make yourself more available for a partner?

When seeking a marital partner, it is advisable to search the scriptures for God’s guidelines for a relationship. When Abraham wanted to seek a wife for his son, he went to his people whom he can verify their faith and trust in God. It is possible to be yoked with unbelievers unknowingly if dating channels are used because people’s integrity and commitment to God may be difficult to ascertain.

Seeking partners among your brethren where you are able to see their commitment to God in their service groups and other church environs; relate to them face to face; interact positively with them, and witness the

kinds of association and friends they keep is always helpful. But Beware! Jesus warns us about wolf in sheep's clothing. Though some Christians do use this dating method, the testimony of a positive and lasting relationship through this medium is low and this method is loaded with risks and failures.

11. How do you effectively help your spouse or intended spouse to grow spiritually? What are the things (activities) you personally undertake to help them grow?

Salvation is the beginning and the first step in such situation. Is your spouse born again? If not, ministering the good news of Jesus to them is vital. Also, sharing the word together and praying is equally important. Encourage fellowships with other believers; attend services and church programmes, etc together.

There are recommended books and tapes that can help your spouse grow spiritually. Service in the kingdom will further establish your spouse in the God's kingdom. There are men of God that God has put in the church to further help our spiritual development so consider seeking their counsel.

12. What must I do if my fiancé's parents do not consent to the marriage because I am from a different culture?

The heart of the king is in the hand of God. If you are sure you are where God wants you to be; then hand it over to God. With divine intervention, you will be surprised how quickly they will take to you. Be patient and allow God to perfect it, great shall be your testimony (Proverbs 21: 1, Esther 7). Seek counsel also from the counseling team or the Pastorate.

13. What do you do in a situation where one parent (father) consents to marriage but the other one (mother) doesn't, and they are divorced?

First, commit everything to God in prayer. Speak with your mother again, if she still doesn't consent, try and get family members that she respects to speak with her on your behalf (Proverbs 21:1). Also, you and your fiancé should stand in agreement in prayer and the God of Heaven will grant you favor (Matt. 18:19).

14. I am a single mother of a 17 year old and now in a serious relationship, can I marry this guy even though this will be his first marriage. I also want to marry at Winner's chapel but he suggests Christ Church, how do I solve this?

The fact that you have a child already does not disqualify you from being happily married. It is only important that this guy knows everything that

needs to be known about you, your child and your previous relationship before going into this marriage. You need to let your 17 year old know and understand the situation as well.

As per the venue, as long as the person is born again and attends a bible believing church. You could reason with him, as long as you understand that after the wedding you will be attending whichever church he worships in. More importantly, it is advisable you both attend marriage counseling together before the wedding. (Amos 3:3)

15. Is it ideal to marry through recommendation, if the man is born again but not a member of Winners, is that ok?

Although the link of recommendation is not stated; whether it is via an online dating agency or through a friend, one thing you must remember is, it is easy to fall in love but it is another thing stay in love. Never rush into marriage, otherwise you will find yourself rushing out.

With regards to the question about your partner not being a member of Winners Chapel, this is not a problem. The main issue is your relationship with the Lord Jesus. Thus, you are free to marry anyone outside of Winners as long as they are connected with Christ.

16. Can distance be a hindrance to a Christian couple who want to get married?

Distance should not be a hindrance to a couple who intend to marry. Nonetheless, you should not be away for too long as distance could ruin a relationship that is meant for a life time.

17. Is it good to kiss your fiancé in courtship?

The answer is not to qualify this act as good or bad, but the need to exercise caution or else it will lead to further temptation. Such act usually tends to take a couple further than they plan to go and keeps them longer in that situation than they planned to stay, so avoid it at all cost.

18. Is a court wedding compulsory before a white wedding?

A court wedding is to make your union legal before the law. However, you still need a church's blessing upon your marriage. If the church is licensed to issue you a certificate, then you do not need to do a court wedding as the certificate is recognized in the eyes of the law. If the church is not, then you have to go to the registry first before doing a church wedding (1Cor. 14:40).

19. Is it advisable to marry someone who has had a baby out of wedlock?

Everyone makes mistakes in life and when these mistakes happen we have to live with the consequences of those choices. The God we serve doesn't judge our wrongs on different levels. He warns us in the scriptures against having sex outside of marriage; but there is no reason why someone should not marry a person who has had a child out of wedlock, as long as there has been repentance and a mending of ways.

20. What is an ideal age for a woman to be married and how many months is recommended for courtship before marriage?

No age can be tagged as ideal for a woman to be married. There is an inherent danger in trying to do this. The vital requirement is not age but readiness. The question to ask is when is a woman ready to take on the responsibility of marriage? Marriage is an institution established by God Himself. It has been defined as the covenantal commitment of two people to each other's welfare.

Marriage is not just the sharing of one or two aspects of our lives but the sharing of all of ourselves; it is the journey when two become one. It requires among others, commitment, understanding, agreement, adjustment, appreciation etc. So a woman and indeed a man must be convinced that he/she is really ready to imbibe and meet the requirements without any distractions in his or her life.

Likewise there is no specific recommendation for period of courtship. However, since marriage is a life-long commitment, it is essential that intending couples allow enough time in getting to know each other before committing to marriage. A broken courtship is better than a broken marriage.

21. Can my fiancé attend marriage counseling in his home country, while I attend counseling here in the UK, or should we wait until we can attend counseling together?

If it is possible to attend marriage counseling together, then perfect. But if not, alternative arrangement must be made. For specifics you need to meet with the Marriage counseling team.

22. Should I recommend Christian materials on marriage and relationships to my spouse, so that they will impart both of us with more scriptural knowledge and insight on how to have and build heaven on earth in our marriage and home?

Yes, the effect of doing this is already in the question.

COMMUNICATION

- 1. Please enlighten us on how to deal with issues without resolving to arguments.**

Arguments are uncivil communications. The fact that two people have different viewpoints does not mean they must resort to arguments. Therefore we should discuss issues and not allow our discussion to deteriorate into any argument.

Also, we should discuss with the understanding of reaching a compromise. Where there is difficulty in reaching a compromise, the right thing to do is to take it to God, and not allow it to be in a source of contention.

- 2. When we have arguments, my husband says some upsetting words to me that sometimes I feel like leaving him. How do I deal with this?**

It is advisable that if you are having arguments with your spouse that result in hurtful statements, the two of you need to discuss it. If it has not yet been discussed in a sincere way; then that needs to be done.

You will need to go to God and ask him to touch your husband's heart when you speak to him (Proverbs 21: 1, Isaiah 45: 11). However, should this issue remain unresolved, then it may be important to seek Godly counsel (not from friends) from spiritual authority over your lives.

- 3. How do you handle a man who criticizes everybody's opinion and thinks he knows all?**

Patience is a virtue. Be patient with him, listen to what he has to say and ask God to give you the wisdom to take the right step at all times for the peace of your home. Avoid creating an argument and seek the right moment to make your opinion known to him.

Prayer is also a vital tool and with the word of God as your guide you will begin to notice positive changes in your relationship. Always ask for the help of the Holy Spirit. Read; 1 Co 13: 4 Love is patient, love is kind. Eph. 4:2 humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another, 1Th, 5:14.

- 4. I am a British citizen and my husband has a permanent leave to remain in the UK, However, our objectives differ. I want to build my future in the UK and be stable before building it in our home country, whereas he wants to build our lives there before doing anything else in UK. I have expressed my opinions to him but he does not see it from my own perspective. Please advice me in this regard, thanks.**

This should have been one of the things you should have discussed during your courtship- before proceeding with marriage. That being said, now that

you are married, if you cannot come to an agreement regarding this, your husband's objective takes priority. You are to submit as he is the head of the home. It is where the head goes that the rest of the body follows. At least he is not saying UK is out of it, he just said home first before UK. That means your desire to build a life here "might" still materialize. But where your husband goes, you must go with joy. (Ephesians 5: 22)

5. How ambitious should a wife be? Will it be selfish of her to pursue this in marriage?

There is nothing wrong with being an ambitious wife but it must never be at the expense of your marriage. Before you get married, you must let your potential husband know what your passion in life is and you must also find out what his passion is and make sure he is willing to support you all the way. Remember, however, that sometimes, you may have to slow down or take a break to accommodate his own goals and then get back on track with yours. Regardless, it should never be done with resentment or in anger. Remember, marriage is all about being selfless.

6. What do I do if my partner's attitude used to be very good but it changed suddenly; however, I still see the good qualities in her.

Communication is important in marriage. Create time to talk to each other to resolve conflicts. Maybe she has reasons for the change in her behaviour. Pray about the recent change in her attitude and if the one to one discussion does not work, you may seek the help of your spiritual leader or pastor to intervene for an amicable solution. Learn to forgive one another and overlook each other's shortcoming.

7. My female friends say that I should put my mother first before my husband, what do I do?

The Word in Gen. 2:24 says 'therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.' Of course this literally does not refer to men only but the man and woman involved in marriage. It is the beginning of the blessings, favours and other legacies that follows this great institution created by God. God's concept of marriage entails openness in all areas but marriage should principally involve only the husband wife and God. Parents must be treated with the due respect at all times whilst we must recognize that only God is the third cord in the 'three-fold cord that is not easily broken.'(Eccl. 4:12).

8. As we are having our first baby, I want my mother to come and help with the baby, but my husband keeps referring to the Bible, therefore my mum should not come. How do I deal with this?

If your husband completely disagrees with having your mother in your marital home, he may have his reasons. The best approach is to communicate with him effectively in order to obtain a solution. You can also suggest a time limit for your mum to stay and keep to it. Ask God to soften his heart towards you but remember that you should never go against his wishes because, if she does come into your home without his consent, that can cause irreparable damages in your marital home.

9. My husband is a very quiet person, as a result of that; I do most of the talking to ensure that the communication gap is not broken. Sometimes I feel that am talking too much and then decide to keep quiet but when I do that I start feeling bad within me and when I ask if everything is alright, he will smile and say yes. How do I get him to talk more?

The fact that your husband is a quiet person should never pose as a challenge in your home. Remember, we all have different personalities and we must learn to respect that. Begin to locate areas of joint interest and build discussions around it to encourage effective communication. This can stand as a platform for other discussions to evolve.

10. I have a humble and lovable husband who has a heart for God. He served God faithfully in Nigeria till we relocated to London. He still loves God but due to the sort of job he does now he hasn't been able to join a service team. I feel very bad that he is not as dedicated in church as he used to be. I love it when we serve God together. How do I handle this?

God is not limited to place. The same God is Lord over all regardless of where you are. God is the author of work, in fact he is a hard worker, but work without God leads to frustration. We are created to worship him and that is our first duty. He then helps us to find fulfilment in our work. Matt.6:33 says seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness. There should be no substitute to God. Exodus 23:25 says your blessing is in worshiping Him.

Pray for him and discuss your concerns with him; also encourage him to find a department in church that can accommodate his work schedule. Some departments work during the week days, for example he can join the prayer team if he is led. The sanctuary keepers unit also have flexible times, etc. Encourage him to enquire and I see God elevating him and giving him the desire of his heart as he engages in active worship and service in the kingdom.

FINANCE

1. Do you or will you encourage Joint account in homes?

The issue of having a joint account in homes has always been a touchy one for many. We can take a cue from The Word; Gen 2: 23-25 says *“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 mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed”*.

Having a joint account enhances the openness concept of a Godly home. We must note also that two shall become 'one flesh'. Our Lord Jesus emphasizes this again in Matt. 19: 6 *'Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath put together let no man put asunder'*.

2. Would you agree to husband and wife splitting the cost of running the home 50%, 50%? What ratio/percentage would you advice or suggest and why?

It is written in Gen 2:24 *'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh'*. Marriage is not a mathematical equation of 50%/50% neither is it that of ration and percentages but that of union of two individuals who are in love and have covenanted to be one together.

Whatever both of you have belongs to the two of you. Therefore, look at what needs to be done at home and use your joint resources to meet the required needs. Also, let there be a clear understanding of individual responsibilities within the household and together focus on building a Godly home.

3. If there is a joint account, is it right for the man to take decisions without the woman's consent on the basis that his full salary goes into this account and he is the head with final say?

Financial decisions should be taken jointly. As a married couple you must understand that the two of you are one and that the decisions taken affect both parties in the relationship. While the man is the head, he must understand that no part of the body is complete without the other. For men in the house, let us not convert the authority placed on us as leaders into tyranny.

4. **As a single parent bearing many responsibilities alone, my income is spent entirely to meet household needs for myself and my children. Is it irresponsible if I have no savings?**

It is irresponsible if you have no savings at all. This could be either you are living above your means or you need to stretch yourself a bit more as far as taking additional work responsibilities to accommodate your family lifestyle. It is advisable that at the beginning of each month, you set a budget for all items in your home and be prudent never to go above it no matter what. Open up a savings account which you have limited access to and send a certain amount of money every month to that account. Do not live above your means with your needs and your children's needs. Remember that their future is also at stake. You never want to get to a point where some funds are needed urgently and you are stranded. Make sure that whatever goals you set, are set in stone and make sure you do not waver. I know His grace will be available for you in Jesus name.

5. **We have been advised in the Church against the use of credit cards; why then are we asked to pay our offerings by credit cards?**

We do not ask people to use credit cards but debit cards. I believe there was a period where that mistake was being made but it has been corrected for a long time now. If you examine the offering slip, you will realize that there is no provision for credit cards.

6. **What advice can you give a woman who is about to give up on her marriage of many years and is blessed with lovely children; but abused both physically and emotionally as well as financially with substantial finances spent by the husband on extra-marital affairs?**

For anyone in this position please connect with the marriage committee or the pastorate for godly counsel.

7. **The bible says "If a man does not provide for his family he is worse than an unbeliever". Please give a comprehensive explanation of this scripture, so that it is clearly understood as it can be sometimes used out of context.**

A man is the head of the home and thus God has entrusted him with the care of everyone in that home; primarily, his wife and children. If that man is negligent in undertaking this duty (which includes feeding, caring, nurturing spiritually, protecting, etc); he has failed in his God ordained duty. Although that is his ultimate responsibility, it is also the place of the wife to make sure she helps

in meeting the needs of the family. There is also an obligation to other family members such as parents, etc but it should never be done at the expense of your immediate family's well being.

8. Should joint accounts be discussed before marriage? What should you do if your spouse disagrees with it? Is this a good enough reason to quit the relationship?

Joint account does not mean a joint heart. An account should not determine the fate of your marriage. Many people with a joint account have come out with regrets as one party has ruined the other when they have a disagreement regarding the use or misuse of their joint account. I am not saying having a joint account is wrong, not at all; what is important is how you view any money that comes to you. If you see it as "our" money rather than "my" money, then every decision you make regarding it will put the other person into consideration. A joint heart and the right approach/understanding are what are important. It is not a good enough reason to immediately quit the relationship but if neither party is willing to compromise and it is becoming a source of contention, then it might be advisable to do so, as two cannot walk together unless they be agreed.

9. Is it right for my spouse to work very long hours with hardly any time for the family on the basis that he has to provide for his household?

Creating time for your family is absolutely important in every relationship. However, provision for the household is also of equal importance. You need to strike a balance within the family and you may need to address expenses to see if as a family you are living above your means. This may be what produces the necessity of long work hours of work.

You must firstly consider the level of expenditure you have. Cut it down to your level of income and then the necessity of long hours will be reduced. We must emphasize at this point that as a wife you should never discourage hard work, because we are all in pursuit of purpose. However, you must encourage your spouse to become involved in the family as it is the first ministry placed into our hands.

10. Please can you advise how to resolve premarital debt issues if it begins to affect the marriage?

Were you aware of this debt before you got married? If yes, what was your agreement about it? If no, it is unfortunate that you were not given the opportunity to decide or prepare yourself for this situation. Now that you are married, the first thing is to forgive him/her for not being sincere with you from the beginning. The next step is to come together and work out a way to resolve the situation. Remember, two are better than one. If both of you work together as one, it will reduce the burden being placed upon your marriage. Although there might be a strain on your finances, but a burden shared is already half solved. And you have begun this step by acknowledging the situation at hand. Let forgiveness first take place and

then let love have its way (Eccl.4: 9, Phil.4:19). As a couple, you should look up to God for divine ideas on how to pay off the debts and live debt free. Also, you might have to make some adjustments in your budget so as to clear the debt on time.

LOVE & MARRIAGE

1. What exactly is the role of the husband and the wife?

The Husband and wife first and foremost are to complement one another. Even then, each has roles to play to sustain a happy home. The husband is the head of the home and must fend to support the family; and the wife supplements to support as a helper to the husband in achieving this.

The wife mainly must see to the comfort of the home and family; ensuring the home environment is neat and tidy at all times. The husband must also be supportive of his wife as she performs her role in caring for the family. However, the roles are interwoven; and must be performed in love and with mutual respect for each other.

2. How do I overcome and move beyond the hurt caused by adultery? Despite the fact that it happened years ago though my man apologized initially but he is still exhibiting the same behavior of lying and secrecy.

This is a case that will require some counseling to help the restoration process especially with the attitudes described here. Please seek the help of the marriage counseling team or the pastorate.

3. What do you do if there is no love in your relationship? I have tried everything and I just can't love this man again. I don't trust my husband one bit as he lies so much. I would really like to make it work but don't know what else to do.

God is love. Pray for the divine intervention. The same Jesus that provided wine at the wedding in Galilee is able to provide a new wine of love in your marriage. God cannot be limited; He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above what you can ever imagine.

Secondly, you need to seek an appropriate place and time to discuss your feelings with your husband, and together seek to find a solution that is acceptable to both of you. Learn to forgive and trust your husband again

despite his actions and behaviour. It is advisable to also seek counselling from the pastorate.

- 4. I know my husband loves me but I would like him to prove it by occasionally buying me things rather than giving me money to buy for myself. I feel honored when he gives me gifts and I have complimented him about this on several occasions even though he is not a shopping person. What must I do to convince him of the importance of proving his love by giving me gifts?**

1 Corinthians 7:3 “Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband”.

If you want to receive gifts from your husband, it is advisable to buy him books on marriage that relate to that issue and encourage him to read them.

You have to make sure he understands that you appreciate him for his generosity towards you. However, let him know that receiving a gift of some sort on special occasions makes you feel extra-special. You should also let him know what you like, e.g. some women like chocolates or flowers.

- 5. Would you advice a married couple to sleep in separate rooms?**

A married couple should not be sleeping in separate rooms except where they have agreed to do that for a short period of time to seek God (1 Corinthians 7: 2-5). But it should not be a permanent arrangement.

- 6. Is it wrong for the man to help out with some house chores, especially if the woman is a nursing mother busy with the child and this takes most of her time?**

The husband and wife are to compliment and support one another. House chores and meals preparations are not exclusive to the wife. Husbands should act in wisdom to ensure the well-being of the family; this includes helping out with house chores when necessary irrespective of whether the wife is nursing or not.

7. If a Christian through ignorance, fear or disobedience walks out of God's plan and ends up marrying an ungodly person; how can they ensure that their marriage partner does not influence the fulfillment of God's purpose for their lives?

Walking out of God's plan for you for whatever reason is simply disobedience to God. For every decision we make, we have to take responsibility for the consequences. Our primary assignment is to make sure that marriage works. That means complying with every scriptural injunction regarding marriage. That is God's purpose for you. Your spouse cannot prevent you from fulfilling this role, since it relates to his/ her happiness. If you focus on this whilst relying on God's love and mercy to save your spouse, every other thing will fall into place (Romans 8: 28, Proverbs 21: 1, Esther 7: 1-10).

8. I know I am married to the wrong man. Do I move on and be happy or stay in the marriage and live unhappy?

What makes you think you will be happy by moving on? Seeing that God hates divorce! Divorce is not an option in marriage! The bible says if the man is happy to continue with you, do not seek to separate from him (1 Cor. 7:13 – 14). Because you made a wrong choice before does not mean you have sentenced yourself to a life time of misery.

Now that you realize your wrong, why don't you ask God for mercy and seek to know how to make the best of things. As long as you involve God, in His mercy, He is able to make everything work together for our good. The past is past, you cannot undo it; look to make your future better, and that does not mean divorce. (Romans 8: 28). Please seek Pastoral counseling.

9. I believe both husband and wife are responsible for ensuring the continual success of a marriage. If the marriage breaks down who is to blame?

If the two are responsible for the continual success then the two are also responsible for the failure of their marriage. However, being the head of the family, a man has maximum responsibility placed on him as every failure is usually blamed on the head, and the home is not an exemption.

DIVORCE

1. Is divorce and remarriage biblical? Why do we see people divorcing and remarrying even in a believing church?

Divorce and remarriage is definitely outside of God's design for us and it should not be considered an option for believers. However, the reasoning behind people's decision to divorce is unique to that individual and must be treated as such.

2. Divorce is affecting even pastors, elders, and deacons even though they know that God hates divorce. Does divorce have anything to do with salvation and one's spiritual status?

Divorce is far from the heart of God. However, God is faithful to forgive those who recognize their faults and mis-directions. Therefore, their salvation and spiritual status depends on what steps have been taken between that individual and God. It must be understood here that the presence of grace is not a license for sin (Romans 6:1).

3. There are Christian men and women who were divorced for various reasons and have re-married even though their former partner(s) are still alive. Are they living in adultery?

Again each case of divorce is peculiar in nature. The previous question sheds some light on this.

4. Can a believer who has never been married before marry a divorcee who is not a believer?

No, this is absolutely wrong because the bible is clear that we should not be unequally yoked with unbelievers- whether or not they have been divorced (2 Corinthians 6: 14).

WEDDING CEREMONIES

1. If the wedding attended by Jesus was not performed in the church, why does the church usually regard a wedding done outside the church as invalid?

A person that is legally married is married, as long as both parties have agreed to marry; there is parental consent and both have been joined in the eyes of the law through a marriage registry; you are legally married. The reason a "church" wedding is emphasized is because as believers, we have been adopted into the family of Christ. As a new being, a spirit being,

your family (in Christ) needs to be involved, just as your family in the flesh needs to be aware.

If you are referring to the “church” as a building, it makes no difference. Although marrying outside a church building does not make your marriage invalid, it could mean a lot more. The most important thing is that, as a born again Christian, you take the right approach that proves your religious beliefs.

2. Must there be a public ceremony for marriage /wedding to be valid?

No! As long as the man, the woman, representative of both family and representative of God is there; that is sufficient.

3. My cousin’s fiancée told him that her father wants alcohol and secular music at their forthcoming wedding. Should he succumb to the pressure?

It is important to let our parents understand our faith and what we are able to do and what we cannot do. We need to take our stand in Christ for God to be able to intervene in our circumstances. Until we stand for Christ, we will abide alone.

Jesus said that if we abide in Him and His Word abides in us, we will ask what we will and it will be done unto us. The three Hebrew boys (Shadrach Meshach, Abednego), decided that they will not bow to the image of gold made by Nebuchadnezzar. Jesus appeared to save them Daniel 3:1-25. Pray, make your points known but don’t worship Baal in the process.

SEX

1. What is the ideal number of times couples should have sex per week?

This would be at the discretion of the individuals; no one can determine this issue for a married couple. According to the scriptures, Paul admonishes us that “the wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except *it be* with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency”.
I Corinthians 7:4-5

2. What can I do to rebuild my broken marriage and win back the heart of my husband whom despite all the love I have for him still went out to impregnate a married woman with grand children of the same age group with our children?

Please seek Godly counsel through the pastorate and the marriage counseling team.

3. My husband often hurt my feelings with his words and as a result I do not participate actively during sex. How do I get him to resolve our misunderstanding before we have sex?

Effective communication is an essential ingredient in marriage. You need to communicate your feelings to him prior to engaging in any sexual activity. This requires a bit of skill so that it does not lead to unnecessary arguments. Start when he is in a relaxed mood, and let him know that you do not mean to offend by what you are about to say. Let the scriptures be your guide.

You should direct him to a few scriptures thus: Eph 4: 29 *'Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers.'*

Explain to your husband that the way he addresses you is adversely affecting your relationship in the marriage. His corrections should be made in love, and give examples of these. Let him know that your wish according to the Word is that he should live joyfully with you as his wife ...all the days of his life (Eccl. 9: 9).

Husbands should take a hint from this question and be sensitive to their wives' feelings at all times. We should not give the devil any chance in our homes.

4. Is it morally right to ensure that I am sexually compatible with my future partner by impregnating her before marriage?

This will be an abomination unto the Lord. It is written 'Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. Sin is a reproach; please avoid it at all cost.