



Who should I
Marry?

kingsley okonkwo

WHO SHOULD I MARRY?

Copyright 2010 Kingsley Okonkwo

ISBN:978-978-49768-6-2

All rights reserved.

No portion of this publication may be reproduced,
or stored in retrieval system or
transmitted in any form or by any means-
Electronic, mechanical, photocopy or
any other without permission of the author.

CONTENTS

Preface

Introduction

- Christ
- Character
- Capacity
- Companionship
- Compatibility
- Chemistry
- Complimentary
- Commitment
- Conviction
- Counselling

Conclusion

PREFACE

I have discovered a lot of people don't really know the qualities to look out for in a spouse and the truth is you cannot blame them because they are not taught in school and most of our Parents; even those that know, might not be able to articulate the principles, let alone pass it on.

Unfortunately, because a lot of people can't really tell you the right qualities to look out for when choosing a partner, when they get into bad marriages, they start to send out the wrong messages. Without meaning to offend anyone, I am kind of tired of hearing people make marriage look like a war situation. The average married person just has stories of woes and you see as much as I want to relate with them, I can't.

The truth is, I am happily married; very happily married and you see the Bible says that God is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34) and is rich unto all

that call upon Him (Rom 10:12). So if God has done it for one, there is no reason why He will not do it for another. That is why our slogan for our LOVE DATING AND MARRIAGE seminar is *“You Can Have the Marriage of Your Dreams”*.

I believe it absolutely and I believe it was because I looked out for the right things when choosing a spouse and those are the things I want to share with you. The qualities that will help you make the choice that will give you a stress-free marriage.

INTRODUCTION

One Sunday morning, my wife and I were on our way to church, and as we were driving on the highway, we suddenly noticed a brand new car which began to swerve, the car was swerving like the ones you see in the movies, I thought may be something was wrong and as we looked back, we saw a husband and wife fighting in a moving vehicle, when I say fighting, I don't mean name calling, I mean real fighting, exchanging blows in a moving vehicle! by the time I looked back again the woman was on the driver's seat of the car with the man who was still struggling to hold on to the steering wheel while punching her with the other hand. They were not in a parked car.

Now, that is not the climax of the story, the sad part of it was their baby was in the car with somebody else, maybe their nanny, the person was at the back seat with the baby, can you imagine? They were ready to jeopardize the child's safety and the life of the person at the back.

This is my point: whether you like it or not, your decision to marry somebody will definitely affect other people. When you are choosing a husband: you are choosing the father of your children, likewise when you are choosing your wife, you are also choosing the mother of your children, that decision is a very serious one. If you marry right you are going to have a totally stress free marriage. The person you marry will affect the rest of your life.

When you are single your happiness and success; everything about you depends on you, once you are married, your partner matters. The rest of your life will be affected by who you marry, that is great power that God has put into our hands. The rest of your life if it's going to be successful, if it is going to be full of joy or pain, it's all dependent on who you marry. I have discovered that God did not put too many choices in our hands. I mean, when it comes to relatives, you didn't choose your parents; we just arrived here and suddenly saw our parents. We didn't have the choice; maybe some people would have chosen a rich millionaire. We also don't get to choose our siblings; that's why in some families we have some crazy

siblings that will just keep you wondering if you are from the same family and we don't also choose our children; we all meet at the hospital for the first time. If we had the option of choosing an offspring, who wouldn't want a genius for a child?

The only relative God allows us to choose is our spouse and unfortunately many don't know anything about choosing one; many don't know anything about how to choose a husband or a wife and like I said earlier, it's not their fault. There is no official place where you are taught who to marry, schools don't teach that and in most churches they don't teach that either. I am trusting God that the ability to recognize a good spouse will be released to you as you read this book in the name of Jesus.

When I talk to people sometimes, it becomes clearer that they don't know what qualities to look out for in a spouse. I was watching a television show at home recently and a very nice looking girl was being interviewed and she was asked, "Which kind of man would you like to marry?", and she said, she likes tall

men that are fair. I was heartbroken, funny though but that is how the average person thinks. How can that be the first quality you will mention?, what if it's a mad man, someone in the asylum now is tall and fair, will you marry him?, someone else in prison is tall and fair will you marry him?, many people don't know how to choose. "I'd like a tall and fair man", that's the worst thing I have heard this year probably. Is that how you choose who you want to spend the rest of your life with?

Someone called me a while ago and as we were talking on the phone she said, "pastor my relationship has ended."

I said, "No problem" and then after she took me through what happened, I asked "is there anybody else yet?"

She said, "Yes but I don't like him", I asked why? And she said, "He's not tall enough."

"Does he have good character?"

She said, "Yes"

"Do you like him and does he like you?"

She said, "Yes, but he is not tall enough."

I said, “The last one that broke up with you was he tall enough?”

There was some other guy I counselled a while back and he said to me, “Pastor, I want to break the relationship that I am in now”

I asked him, “ why?”

He said, “I want to break it because I don’t like the girl again”

I asked further, “what’s the problem? What made you decide to start the relationship in the first place? Why did you decide to marry her, what did you see?”

He said, “She was jovial and friendly”.

Now, you see that is not a tangible reason to decide to marry someone. If somebody is jovial, that same trait can be a problem tomorrow, when she becomes jovial with other people and you become uncomfortable with it.

A lady caught me on-line the other day, telling me that she is trusting God for a partner and I asked her if there was nobody interested in her? She said, there is this young man that likes her, they are friends, but she

said that he is not tall enough. It is amazing that people look at the craziest things when trying to find a spouse; they want a tall man so that when he wants to knock them he will see the centre of their head? That height can still be a problem; he will be able to reach the centre of your head to give you a knock. It will amaze you the amount of men that beat their wives, I am not talking about a slap I'm talking about a proper beating. It will amaze you what goes on in marriages behind closed doors.

Unfortunately, a lot of single people do not know these things, they think marriage is a game, it is when you have talked with married people that you know the challenges they face. It is usually because the foundation is not laid right. A good marriage is largely dependent on whom you marry. Once you marry wrong it might be difficult to have a good marriage; it might be a struggle from the beginning to the end. The best thing you can do to ensure you have a great marriage is to choose right. So, how do you choose? I'm going to give you a few basic things you must look out for when you want to marry a spouse, by the time

you have the basic picture you will be able to recognize the right person when you see them. It will be easy then.

Let's begin to see from God's word how we can recognize the qualities that we should look out for in choosing a spouse.

CHAPTER 1

CHRIST

“Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers”

-II Corinthians 6:14 (KJV).

I believe that the first thing that determines who you should marry is this: The person you are about to marry should be in Christ, I say this because, firstly, if you are not in Christ; that means you are not a believer, and you don't have the Spirit of God in you. However, if you are an unbeliever and you want to marry another unbeliever, there's no problem there, two unbelievers can get married, they go together. But, if you are a believer and you are trusting God to have a good marriage, then, there are some basic conditions: the person you are about to marry should be in Christ.

It is important that you understand that there is a difference between a good person and someone that has the Spirit of God. They are two different things,

completely different, you will say he is nice, he is a moralist; those things are generally good, but there is still a great difference between knowing God and being good, because on one side, the person is trying to live right based on his own strength: but the other person that has Christ is no more living his life based on his own strength, he is living by the Spirit of God. There is a difference.

Let's see it in Ephesians chapter 2:1-2, it said:

“And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.”

That is a clear picture of what we were like when we were not born again. It says, wherein in time past, ye walked according to the course of this world; that means there is a course, a path laid for us in this world according to the prince of the power of the air. In other words: there is a prince, there is a power

overriding people's lives; it said the spirit that now worked in the children of disobedience. Listen carefully, this world is a spiritual world, you need to understand God created this physical world from the Spiritual world and since that time the physical world is still controlled by the spiritual world, and you see the spiritual world has the positive and the negative side. God is the positive and the devil runs the negative side. So whether you like it or not as long as you are still on this physical world you are being influenced by the spirit or spiritual things, its either you are being influenced by the spirit of God or you are being influenced by the devil. You might not know the one you are being influenced by, unless you are born again. In other words, if you are not saved, there is a spirit at work in you; you might not even know it. Friend that spirit really drove me hard, I wanted to kill myself, I thought I was being a big boy.

There is a spirit at work, there is a part of you that only God can fill: if God doesn't fill it another spirit will, you might not know it; how many of you are drunk and will know that you are drunk? You can't be drunk and be aware, You can't know what you are doing, I have

been drunk in the past, I didn't know what happened, people were telling me all I said and did, I didn't know it. It said the spirit at work among the children of disobedience.

Verse 3 says: Among whom also we all had our conversation in time past in the lust of our flesh, did you see that? Fulfilling the desire of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath.

Sin comes naturally to a sinner, look, people that will go to hell will not go because they did something very bad, many people don't understand that, the person that will go to hell is not going because he smokes, or because he drinks or womanizes, no, because, there are some Christians that do some of those things: there are some Christians that lie; but the person that will go to hell will go because he has not received the forgiveness of God and walked with it. A Christian commits sin sometimes when they fall or are weak: but it's different with a sinner, sin commits a sinner; he is committed to sin, and that is the difference. He is a sinner; we don't expect him to do anything else, but

sin. But when a Christian commits sin, he has the access to get repentance, to get forgiveness, it says that there is a spirit at work; who by nature, in other words when I see people lie, I know they don't have the spirit of God, People that kill themselves with overdose of drugs; is that normal? He is taking the drugs and is about to die and is still taking more, those things are not normal; they are influences, strong influences.

Look I have been a sinner, I have received Christ, and there is a great difference. The man that does not know God commits sin naturally, the man that knows God, even when he steps out of God's will, he knows that something is wrong. It is better to marry somebody that is influenced by the Holy Ghost, not by the evil ghost. The scripture tells us that by nature they are the children of wrath, that there is a spirit within them, the guy might look good, but the spirit can come upon him anytime.

Maybe I should explain how the hierarchy of God works; some people think it is words and opposite,

God and Satan, Black and white, Good and bad, oh no!. Good and bad is word and opposite. Black and white is word and opposite, but God and devil is not.

There is hierarchy in the things of the spirit, God is number one, followed by us his Children, the Bible said we are joint heirs with Christ; we are seated in Heavenly places with Christ. If my body is in London can I be in Nigeria? The Bible says we are the body of Christ, we are one with Him; so we are second in command, after us we have Angels, the Bible says Angels are ministering spirits, God created them to serve, they are ministering spirits sent to serve us the heirs of salvation; they are third in command, they protect us, they guard us, then after the Angels, there is Satan, Satan is a fallen angel, Satan is not competing with God. Satan is a creature of God, God is the creator. They are not even comparable; they are not on the same level. Then after the devil, guess who is down the line: the unbeliever. So every other thing controls him, the devil can wake up one morning and ask him to slap his wife or marry another wife.

The thing that differentiates us from animals is the Spirit of God. The bible says God breathed into man and he became a living being and without the breathe of God, that is the Spirit of God, we are just like other animals.

I have never seen a marriage that they divorce in the wedding picture, they are usually full of smiles, some marriages don't last 2 days, some don't even last 2 weeks, some others don't even last up to 2 months before they call it quits. It's important that the person you intend to marry is a child of God, a born-again Christian.

Friend, marriage is spiritual, you must get this, it wasn't man's idea, Adam was not the one that invented marriage, the magazines you read did not invent marriage, the blogs you find on the internet were not the ones that invented marriage, God did. It was God that said that it is not good for man to be alone (Gen 2:18). If God created marriage and God is Spirit (John 4:24) then, marriage is spiritual. That means if someone is not born again he lacks the capacity to function in marriage. As a believer you

cannot marry someone that is not saved the person should be in Christ. Many women always think they are the Holy Ghost they want to change the man, if you are good at changing people then you might need to start a crusade. You cannot save anyone, let him give his life to Christ and not to you.

Ephesians 2:2 says,

“where in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience among whom we also had our conversations in time past in the lust of our flesh fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind we were by nature the children of wrath “

When a person is not born again, it is not just their actions we are talking about it is their nature. That is why you can't be a believer and want to marry an unbeliever his nature is not changed he might do everything as a moralist now even if he does not lie his nature is wrong, it is like a fish marrying a human

being, where will they live? They don't have the same equipment for sustenance.

You are born again going to heaven; he is born against going to hell, some people don't like to hear this but except a man is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3). So how can you say you are in love with him? Where will you live? In water or on land? A human being cannot live in water. 2nd Corinthians 6:14 states clearly that; it is an unequal joining and you cannot be unequally yoked with an unbeliever. It further states, what agreement has Christ with Belial and what concord has light with darkness, what fellowship can you possibly have? It's just like trying to mix diesel and water; no matter how you shake it and try to mix it once it settles, one would go up the other will go down, that's how it is when a believer marries an unbeliever.

As a believer you don't have the same nature with an unbeliever. When I was an unbeliever, I knew how I was; now you can't tell me to marry my old nature. The person must have Christ because all the things we

teach are from the bible, if he doesn't have Christ he does not have the capacity to

CHAPTER 2

CHARACTER

“Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that fears the Lord, she shall be praised”

- Proverbs 31: 30

The second quality to look out for is Character. You hear a lot of people say “oh! That girl is a fine girl, she is fair, she has a lovely shape, and the girl is simply *hawt*.” all those things don’t count for anything in marriage; it does not amount to character. The bible says a woman that fears the Lord, you can vouch for

Many times people come to me and they tell me, “the lady I want to marry, I don’t really trust her, sometimes I feel like I don’t know her, there are always stories, too many controversies, and I’ve found out that she tells lies, but pastor I want to marry her.” I ask them to listen to themselves, when I ask, “can you vouch for her?” He says, “no, but I love her.” that my friend is not love.

Some versions of Prov 31: 30 use the word charm rather than favor; charm and favor here mean the same thing. It speaks of charisma or the art of being charming; things like, “I like the way she talks” or “I like the way he walks” that means he has charm, he has charisma. Note however, that the bible says beauty is vain but a woman that fears God, let her be praised. Many people choose on the level of beauty. When asked, why do you want to marry this girl? They answer, “She is beautiful”. It was God that created people and He said beauty is a vain thing to build a relationship on; charm is deceitful because you will assume that because that person has charisma that he has character.

Now, when you were not born again I understand that you were largely moved by the outward, but now as a child of God you should know better, be like your father, look at the inward (1 Sam 16:7), what is the character of that person; don't base your decision on things like, “I like her voice”, those are vain things they don't count in marriage, it's a woman that fears the Lord or a man that fears the Lord.

Some people are too obsessed with attraction and emotions, and unfortunately, those things are fleeting, they don't last in marriage. I was talking to someone that had just experienced a failed marriage and I was just saying to him that all of the other ladies that he had been hinting me that he wanted to marry were people that had character issues, so I said to him, "Why are you always pointing to people with questionable character? Why don't you look out for other fine girls in church that have good character?" and he said, "I am not attracted to those ones" and I said to him, "Is it not this attraction that made your first marriage fail? You want to build another one on attraction?" Attraction cannot hold anything.

Some people build their relationships on lust and on attraction. Some of the finest girls that confuse people in show business have been married and they have been divorced, you might be saying if I marry someone really beautiful, I won't cheat. Let me tell you, I know for a fact that the reason why you are in lust now is because you don't have a beautiful woman. When you do, you will know that all women are the

same there's nothing that one woman has physically that the other does not; but one can have good character while the other might not, that's where the difference lies.

Lust and attraction are based on what you don't have. Let me give you a practical example, were there ever things you wanted badly? Maybe, a pair of shoes, when you got it, you were so excited, you screamed and you were so happy that you wore it with practically every outfit but when you wore it again and again, after a while you threw it away. The passion for it died, because you were only crazy about it because you did not have it. Do you realize when you buy a car and the brand new model of that car comes out your own immediately becomes old? Attraction thrives on lust. I am advising you, marry character because after you have married beauty and there's no character you will soon hate the woman.

Character comes first. Young men, stop chasing charisma, most times when I interview young men I can tell that they are in trouble by the ladies they point to saying "Pastor, see that girl, I like her" and "I

will say do you know her?" of course he will say "no, I just like her," and I know it is attraction and I know the lady does not have character but he thinks he is in love; he is crazy about her.

Stop making your choices based on the outward things; they don't last. Look out for character, does that person fear God? Is he a liar? The person lying for you today will lie to you tomorrow. Whenever I encounter lying, I don't take it lightly. If you lie to me once, I will mark you from that day because I don't know if what you are saying now is the truth or not.

You must understand that I can forgive you, I don't have a choice, in fact, I must forgive you immediately but I've learned that trust must be earned over time. Can you imagine you gave someone a million naira to buy you something and when he returned, he claimed there was no change, but on further investigation you discovered there was change of over a hundred thousand naira, will you still give him one million naira to purchase something else? If your answer is in the affirmative, then you are not very wise.

Character is so important when dealing with anyone in any capacity. Let me share this story with you of someone who wanted to help me purchase something. The problem was that he had already lied to the owner that we went somewhere else to compare prices and the price we were getting elsewhere was cheaper, so he told me “now, pastor I am going to the man’s house and I have told him that we went together”, I immediately told him, “as you are going there now correct every lie you have told him because if that man calls me I will tell him exactly what happened. I didn’t go anywhere with you. So, as you are going there now correct it”

.
He thought he was trying to do me a favor by lying for me but from that day anything that man tells me, how am I going to believe it? Why is he not going to lie to me when he needs to do someone else a favor? So the man that is lying for you now and you say, “he is covering up for me”, will soon cover you the day he needs to.

Is he violent? A woman-beater? He has slapped you once or twice now that you are just in courtship; he will punch you in marriage. On the other hand, don't marry the woman that hates authority. Don't marry a rebellious woman. She is always fighting her father, fighting her boss, fighting her pastor, and then you believe that she will submit to you? Why? Because you're her god? If she is constantly speaking evil of her pastor or those that have authority over her, then she doesn't have any knowledge of or respect for spiritual authority.

Marriage is about spiritual authority. The bible says that the head of Christ is God and the head of man is Christ and the head of the woman is the man. Marriage is about spiritual order and if she doesn't have regard for spiritual things and she comes to you and insults her pastor and you say, "Its okay honey, remember I love you." Let me warn you that if she insults her pastor, she will insult you because if she doesn't have qualms about insulting God's representative over her life then you are too small for her not to insult you.

A man forcing you to sleep with him doesn't have character. It's not about you or how much he loves you. He can't control himself, many women say, "he loves me so much he can't control himself." My response to this is simply, "and the day you are out of the picture?" Of course, he will still do it with whoever he chooses. It's not about you; please stop fooling yourself. You say, "Anytime he sees me Pastor, he can't control himself. It's because he loves me so much pastor." It's not love; it's lust.

Proverbs 31:11 says that when it come to a virtuous woman and her husband, his heart doeth safely trust in her. Many marriages are under tension today because there's no trust. If you see the way they count money to the last dime and they even fight over money. They count the pieces of meat in the pot of soup to confirm that the money they gave their spouse was used for its purpose. That's why when I teach some men that you and your wife should work together financially they find it hard because there's no trust between the two of them. They are both afraid

of allowing the other party know how much they earn; talk less of giving them their money.

Personally, I don't touch money, I don't do anything with money; I am always at peace because there's someone in charge: my wife. I have never checked her kitchen or her purse because there is absolute trust. Sometimes, it amazes me when I see people fight over money. My wife is a signatory to all our accounts; we are both signatories. There's no big deal when there's absolute trust.

Too many marriages are under tension because the trust foundation is broken and the rest of the marriage is affected. It's terrible; I've even heard of men that check tyre tracks to see if the car went out of the house when they were away. They even touch the car engine to know whether it is hot in order to confirm whether she went out that day or not. I know of a couple that when the wife says she is out with someone, he will call to confirm if she is really with that person. Sometimes, he sounds paranoid when he is asking, "Where are you?"

And when she replies, “I am at aunty Nkechi’s house”

He will say, “give aunty Nkechi the phone let me confirm... aunty Nkechi where are you? Are you both there? Are you sure?”

It may sound funny but trust is such a major issue in marriage. It is what fuels a good marriage and when a partner is of questionable character, it can be a big issue in marriage.

“The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.”

Proverbs 31:11

They found out at the embassy when they were doing DNA testing for families that wanted to get a visa to travel together as a family that a lot of the children belonged to the mother but they did not belong to the father. When you want to travel as a family, they will need to verify that you are really a family and they will run a test. Sadly, it is at the embassy that they find out that the child is really a child of the mother but the DNA does not match that of the father. It will amaze you and I know that some people think it is only men

that cheat. Sadly, that is not the case. I cannot even begin to tell you the amount of women I have personally counseled that are involved in adultery. They are married women; Marriage doesn't change anyone. A woman that sleeps around before marriage will sleep around in marriage; nothing will change.

A man that sleeps around now will sleep around in marriage. He is receiving strange text messages now from different girls, but you say, "I will still marry him, he will change." He is an adulterer in the making already. You say different girls are sending him love texts and he is keeping it in his phone, he picks up strange calls at night and you say I love him; that is not love, there must be character. Look, by the time all these things that excite you are gone; the thing that will keep you is what I'm sharing with you now. There must be character.

Attending church does not automatically translate to character. Therefore it is not every "Christian" that you should marry. It is not every one that claims to be a Christian that has character. There are a lot of

deacons, deaconess, workers, some even pastors that have no integrity. Character is so crucial, can you trust the words that come out of their mouth, do they lie, and do they steal? You will say he or she is a worker in his church that doesn't mean anything. What kind of life do they live behind closed doors?

I have said before that if you don't marry someone that has character, you will live a life where you are constantly checking up on your spouse? How can you be calling your wife to find out where she went? Sometimes, you even call the person she said she was going to see to find out if she really went there; why don't you settle down and look for someone with character now and save yourself all the heartache?

I have never had cause to look for my wife or question where she went. Can you imagine me checking whether she really went there? Checking the tyre tracks; why are you punishing yourself? If your husband says something, you should be able to trust him. check for character, he is calling three girls now, the day he will propose to you he will propose to

three other girls, you will say, I love him, that is not love and love is not the issue here, character is. There must be character.

CHAPTER THREE

CAPACITY

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh”
—Gen 2:24(KJV).

The third quality is there must be Capacity. Capacity simply talks about being competent or showing capability to manage or handle a certain situation or position. However, for the purpose of this book I want to adapt it to mean maturity.

Marriage has demands, it even has challenges, yes it is true, it's not everybody that has the capacity to cope, a lot of people are still too selfish to be thinking about marriage, they still love themselves too much. Isn't it rather amusing that no marriage has ever broken up because of too much love? It is usually selfishness, it's always about “I” or “Me”; it's always about the way you are treating *me*, the way you talk to *me*. It's always for one selfish reason or the other;

there has never been a quarrel out of love; it's always about selfishness.

I believe that capacity is one area that too many of us overlook. You need to even throw the question at yourself first. Ask yourself, do you have the capacity to take care of another person? This question is important because if you are not able to take care of yourself how can you carry someone else with you? Capacity covers a large variety of areas but I'd like to start with Financial Capacity because too many Christians are just too broke and they will not do anything about their state, and it is sad that they want to add a woman to the poverty.

There is nothing wrong with not having money, but to remain poor is the problem. Solve your own problems first. Marriage is about carrying somebody else with you. Now that you are alone you can't even make sense of your life yet and you want to join someone with you, and you see, those people will never go for financial seminars, never read books, they will never find out how to leave their present state. What they

are looking for is a wife. They say, pastor I don't have a job now, but I need a wife, I'm looking for a wife.

Look for a job first. What you need is a job not a wife. Genesis 2:24 says;

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife and the two shall become one flesh”

Now take note, the bible said the man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his *wife* not his *babe* or *girlfriend*. Friend, it is not everyone that has capacity for marriage. It is not for boys; it is for men. The definition given to a man here is that he must be able to leave his father and his mother and that speaks of complete maturity and independence. Many people today are boys; old boys. At forty, still complaining about pocket money, still fighting for meat in their parents' house. A basic criterion for being a man is that you can leave your father and mother physically (you can rent your own apartment). When you are still living with your parents they can

determine so many things you do and the decisions you make. So you must be able to leave even if it is a small apartment to start with. Move out, your thinking will expand and maturity will set in when you are on your own. You cannot be seeing things from a man's perspective as a boy, because you are not paying bills.

When I hear some people share their vision, I just know it is because there's somebody else paying their rent. If you are the one paying your bills you'll be dreaming more practical and realistic dreams. Usually, you build castles in the sky because you're not paying rent or feeding yourself.

Secondly, Leaving also means you leave financially, I am surprised when I see grown men; twenty five years old saying my mother did not give me money, I have been running ministry since I was nineteen; a teenager. At nineteen I had already started running ministry on my own without a dime from my family, but now you see a twenty five year old man saying "my father..." a full grown adult blaming his father for

all his woes. You must be able to leave your father and your mother financially. We have too many spoilt boys and I fear that we will soon cease to have a generation of real men. You need money for everything so if you are not making, managing and multiplying your own money then I wonder how you intend to marry someone else because the truth is that you will pay bills in marriage. sometime ago, a young man said to me, "Pastor, all the women I like don't like me, they are running away from me, is it that Christian ladies are now no more interested in spiritual things, are they only looking at status?"

I said, "Yes, they are! Because I will not give you my daughter, if you do not have a job." Most men are looking for where to get free lunch. They are looking for hard-working women to sponge off.

Believe me, if that man doesn't have a job now, when you marry him, that is the end, He will not work again, you will go to work and bring food for him. It's not that people are necessarily getting more materialistic but, who wants to marry a liability? It's only a dumb

woman that will do that. The Bible says *he that does not work should not eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10)*, should he now be looking for a wife? It said he should not even eat. So if the bible says don't allow him eat, do you think it will be wise to give him a wife?

You must have capacity to take care of somebody else. Like we normally say, love is not cheap; there is no true love anywhere that is cheap. Did the Bible say God loved us so much that He wrote us a poem? God so loved the world He sent us a card or a love text message? No, the Bible says that, He gave us His ONLY begotten Son (John 3:16). If he didn't have the capacity to give it, then there's no point of Him telling us He loves us. You say I love you sister, I just love you and you remain in courtship for 10 years, people have studied medicine, others have completed their master's degree programme or even PhD and you are still in courtship.

You must also be able to leave your parents emotionally, and this is particularly very important for the women. It is funny that there are still married

women who are homesick. I find it very amusing because by now, you are someone else's mum and you are missing your mum and dad. You are now somebody's mum, you must be mature.

The bible says *he that finds a wife... (Prov 18:22)*. We don't find babes we find wives; you must first be a wife before you can be found. Wives and girls don't dress the same way; girls can expose their bodies; wives don't. Girls cannot cook; wives can cook. Girls cannot manage money, they spend without thinking of the future while, wives know about management because they run the home.

Ladies, do you have the capacity to control your emotions? There are some women that are in love with the idea of being in love. They are always in love with somebody, sometimes the person they are in love with doesn't even know they exist.

Sometimes when they are in a relationship, they start to pressure the man into marrying them. The woman in a hurry today, hustling you to marry her, proposing

to you, sending you everything to push you into marrying her by force, this simply means she lacks emotional control, what will happen if ten years into the marriage she tells you she likes somebody else? This is usually the cause of high divorce rates in developed nations, it's not uncommon to hear things like "I don't love you anymore." if she could not control herself when you were in courtship then she won't control herself when you are married

I even hear people give the excuse that the reason they rush into marriage is to avoid sexual temptation. Who told you that when you are married the temptation will stop? That is when the real temptation starts; there are married women that are being wooed all over this country. In fact, there are pregnant women whom are still being chased. I've heard real life situations, where the woman is pregnant and I mean visibly pregnant but the man still says I like you. So are you mature enough to control yourself emotionally or should I say sexually? Can you say "no!" or will you still try to hide behind marriage?

Is there capacity for spiritual things? Because whether you like it or not marriage is spiritual. Do you have spiritual maturity? Some people have never heard God, but they want to hear from God for the first time concerning marriage. Have you taken time to grow in your walk with God? Have you taken time to grow in your understanding of the things of God? Have you taken time to become a mature person, to have a very balanced view of life? There must be capacity because marriage is not for boys, it's for men.

I've heard Ladies say, "Pastor, he is shy, he hasn't proposed. Should I propose for him?" He can't be shy, If he is too shy, it means he doesn't have the capacity, because proposing to you is just one step, he will still go and propose to your father, tell him I want to marry your daughter, that's not all, in some tribes, he will still has to go and propose to all her uncles, he has to have the capacity today to do all that. So check for capacity- financially, spiritually, emotionally, mentally, socially and physically. Remember capacity simply means maturity.

CHAPTER FOUR

COMPANIONSHIP

"A man that has friends must show himself friendly and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother"
-Proverbs 18:24.

The bible is simply saying that there is a level of friendship that is stronger than blood ties. Many people do marriage as an assignment; marriage is simply living with your friend.

Marry your friend. Look among your friends and pick a wife. Don't try to make your wife your friend that's difficult; you might find out that both of you don't have anything in common, instead, make your friend your wife; it's so much easier.

There are couples that sit down to talk and find out that after one hour there is nothing to talk about because they are married as husband and wife; it is simply a job with defined roles - I am the husband; you are the wife. I bring money home; you cook and

stay home and raise the children while I go to work. It's just work, there is no relationship between them. The man is never at home; whenever you see women complaining, 'my husband is never at home.' Then I know that he is not her friend. You will leave your wife at home every day and come back at midnight or 11pm everyday that you are with your friends. So, who did you marry? A baby factory, to be releasing children, or a house help? The truth is that some people married a house help, they needed someone to be cleaning their house, washing their clothes and cooking their meals, that is why they married, there's no relationship.

Men always gravitate towards their friends. That's why they go out to the club and all the other places they go to. It's to be with *their* friends, so they can gist. If he is not your friend he won't stay at home, I wonder where I will be if I am not with my wife. Anywhere you see me you must see my wife; and I mean anywhere in the world and now because I've said it so often people always ask me, "where is your wife?" I will say, "There she is." She is my friend I don't desire the

company of any other person apart from her; anybody that is my friend is our friend that's how it works I don't desire to be away from her for one minute what am I going to discuss that I don't want her to hear? She is as intelligent as any of my other male friends and she has a strong sense of humor. There is nobody I want to hang out with when she is not there; and I mean absolutely nobody else I desire to be with like that – whether male or female. The key is to marry your friend.

Some people say I have a friend and I have a husband. No! They are supposed to be together because you shouldn't have too much time to share with someone else. Your husband should be your friend; your wife should be your friend. That way marriage is no more a burden it is just natural. I really don't understand when people say they fight in marriage. Because of all the negative things I hear about marriage, my wife and I often ask ourselves are you sure we are married?

Every one desires the company of their good friend. We don't make friends; we actually discover friends. That's why when you enter a class; maybe in university or you move from a certain level to another in your schooling or you get into a new class where everybody is new, do you know what is going to happen in the first four weeks of that class? People will enter that class and some will automatically go to the front; as soon as they enter the class, something moves them to the front. Those are the ones considered nerds, they always sit in the front of the class and those in front always do their assignments, they always know what the lecturer said but some others when they enter a class or even church, they naturally gravitate towards the back. In church, the ushers encounter such people all the time. When asked to go to the front, they naturally decline because they are born for the back. They are the ones that when the lecturer forgets to ask for the assignment, say "thank you LORD." because they did not do it.

So on entering a group, people naturally find their level, it is not everybody that can be your friend. Friendship requires that you think alike, and that you have things in common. Marry your friend that relationship is tighter than the one you have to do by force. Even in an office when office hours close people that are not friends just go away but people that are friends continue with the relationship even after office hours. Many girls say, "I can't marry this guy, he is my friend." who else do you want to marry, your enemy? It's your friend you need to marry. Marry someone you know, you should marry your friend, it doesn't have to be someone you know from childhood, but somebody with mutual values.

Marry your friend because the truth is, the real thing you will do in marriage is hanging out, spending time with yourselves, I usually tell people that there are 24 hours in a day. If both of you are very spiritual "Brother" and "Sister", say both of you pray and study the word of God for one hour, you challenge yourselves with scriptures, You do all those things for one hour, how many hours are left in that day? 23

hours, then both of you are so physically attracted to one another, and then you have sex passionately for another one hour. How many hours are left in that day? What will the both of you be doing in 22 hours if both of you are not friends? The real thing you will be doing in marriage is hanging out. You just sit down and talk, if both of you cannot talk now, you will bore yourselves to death.

I often hear people complain that it seems everyone is pretending these days and to be honest, I think it is because too many people are looking for spouses. If a woman is looking for a husband and you are looking for a wife won't both of you pretend? But if both of you are friends; friendship is built on reality, transparency, and sincerity but courtship can be built on being fake. That's why too many people pretend. people will pretend when the reason for coming together is marriage but when it is friendship the person will be real, they will show their true nature, so stop looking for a wife and look for a friend if you want someone who is real. When you are with your friend, you are real and not trying to impress anyone.

The first time my wife and I went out, there were no strings attached we just went out as friends, nothing romantic. I didn't even know I would think of her as a wife so it was very easy when we went out as friends to be very real with each other. You can pretend on a date, but you can't fake it inside the home so let him know who you are now. Too many people pretend and that's why marriages break. Romance is based on fleeting things, on things that are not reality, people choose to live in those fleeting things like chocolates, teddy-bears, scented candles, flowers, etc. but for how long will it last? So when those things end, the relationship or marriage too will end. All those things are good when there's a strong foundation. Pretense will be less when it is real friendship.

Most married couples don't talk, they don't have real intimacy, no real friendship; the husband is doing something the wife does not know about, the wife is doing something the husband knows nothing about, there's no real communication.

I remember the story of the woman that wanted her husband to spend more time at home because her

husband goes to the club after work each day and she said to herself, "Is it not the club? Is it not pepper soup he goes there to drink? And so, she prepared pepper soup for him and put his best drink in the fridge. Her husband came back from work as usual, had his bath and wanted to go to the club again when she stopped him saying, "No, wait! I have prepared pepper soup for you", and he said, "Ah! that's great!" he sat down and asked for what he would drink after eating, she brought him his best drink which he drank and when he was through he said, "I am still going to the joint", then she asked, "Is it not the pepper soup that makes you go there?" He said, "No, it's the gist, it's the guys, it is the hanging out, we just use the pepper soup and drink to wash it down."

So, the best way to keep that man or that woman is to develop friendship. That means you should like some mutual things; be interested in some things your friend is interested in. it's simple really, if you are a woman and your fiancé loves cars, start learning about cars. Let him teach you; that will be fun.

Sometimes, when women don't like a thing they do not want to learn anything about it. They want to stick to what they are familiar with like novels and soap operas. You must get interested in his interests. I remember a woman who was always complaining that her husband was always going to the mechanic on Saturdays so her pastor advised her next time he is going pack a picnic basket, put on a pair of jeans and go with him to the mechanic, sit down there and gist with him; ask him questions. Learn about cars, learn about football, watch a match with him sometimes. It makes the relationship more interesting, don't just spend all your time gisting him about make up; men are not interested in such things.

I don't have any other friend, its either you are our friend, that is me and hers together because you will always see me with her, it will be difficult for me to get along with somebody she is not getting along with, she is my friend the main thing I want to do with her is talk.

Some people just think that when you are married, you will have sex, morning, afternoon and night. Ask people that have been married for 5, 10 years. That is why many people, the way they run their homes, they are the king, the wife seats down at the backyard, the man calls her mama so and so come here, bring the remote control, she came from backyard, the remote control is in front of him. He will say ok, go, where is the soup? Go and bring it, there is no salt. It is a dictatorship.

My wife is my friend, my best friend, I cannot say it enough, marry your friend. Marry your friend. The main thing you do is hang out, to talk and that is why true love doesn't happen instantly, it grows and when you now get married, it will keep growing because you understand each other. When it is an instant thing it's like a spark, it will be fading because the real issues is certain. Why did you marry her? The reasons I married my wife, the reasons are still present, they are still sparking happiness and emotions in me.

If you can understand how this things work, you will have a sweet marriage, I am not talking about a 2, 3,

10, 20 year happy marriage, but a lifetime of amazing friendships and unforgettable experiences.

CHAPTER FIVE

COMPATIBILITY

“Two cannot walk together unless they be agreed”

-Amos 3:3

Once you have sorted out the issue of companionship, then you need to be sure you are compatible. Compatibility does not necessarily mean that both of you are similar and exactly the same, it simply means that both of you can get along well, it means that you are well-suited for or attuned to each other. It doesn't mean that we should be the same thing, that if I have bow legs, she must also be bow-legged, that is not what compatibility means.

Compatibility means that we can go together; that we are well-matched. For instance your biro and the biro-cover are compatible, when you are not using it, it covers the main part of the biro-head, when you want to use the ball point, then you would cover the tail end of the pen with the biro cover and it would still sit there perfectly while you write, that is compatibility. It doesn't, like I said earlier, necessarily mean similarity, it simply means that both of you can

fit together. You might not be the same, for instance, my wife likes cold food, I like hot food, it shouldn't cause a problem.

There are two things that make people quarrel in marriage. First, it is when they, either or both are very selfish people and are unwilling to adjust, because no matter who you marry, no matter how compatible you are, there will still be need for adjustment, but if both of you are compatible the adjustment will be very little, it won't be stressful. Compatibility, like we have established doesn't mean that you won't have to adjust in some areas, but if both of you are not selfish it will be easy for you to adjust.

The second reason why people quarrel excessively is just total incompatibility that is when the two cannot even get along at all, even concerning the smallest things. They don't ever see eye to eye on any issue; totally incompatible. Ask yourself do we get along in basic things? What are our simple basic values? How do we treat people? How do we see life? Do we have similar goals in life? Genesis 2:18 says;

“And the LORD God said, it is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him an help meet”

That word is not one word it is two put together “help meet”. What He was saying is I will make him a helper that is *suitable* and *adaptable*. So it is not every one that you can get along with. Compatibility is about your ability to get along not necessarily your similarity. For instance, if someone is quiet it doesn't mean he has to marry another quiet person; no he might need to marry someone that can talk. They will be more compatible because it means one party will do more listening while the other will do more of the talking. If both of you talk a lot who will listen? If both of you are quiet who will talk?

It is not based on similarity but rather on our ability to meaningfully get along or fit into each other's lives. Marry someone that you are compatible with. It's not everybody you can get along with; it is not even every Christian that you can marry. Let me give you a practical example, there are some churches where women do not wear earrings while there are some

other churches where men are allowed to wear earrings. Imagine a man and a woman who go to churches like these planning to get married. He has a different belief from hers. Where will they be wed? So, you need to check your spiritual compatibility. We have basic fundamental differences not just in biblical understanding but in our lives as well.

Also check simple things like compatibility in your vision. Where are the two of you going? Are you headed in the same direction? It is not every woman that can marry a pastor. The calling of a pastor's wife is different from the calling of a business man's wife, and also different from that of a career man's wife. If you are a business man's wife you must know how to pray because in business there is no fixed income and getting by every day, is by faith. Then on the other hand, a pastor should not marry a business man's wife because in business everything is profit and loss, but ministry is not about profit and loss; at least not in monetary terms. In ministry, profit is counted by how many people were blessed not how much money was

made. So marry someone that you are compatible with.

I usually give this example, let's assume that your name is Jane and you have two suitors asking for your hand in marriage and both have the name Michael and your vision is to have an international choir that will sing at the world cup and international events. Who will you marry? Let me make it a bit clearer for you. The first one goes by the name Michael Jackson and the second one is Michael Tyson who will you marry? Certainly you will choose Michael Jackson because he can come to help you in the studio with your recordings, he can teach your back-up singers a thing or two. He can choreograph your songs and generally add value to your vision; his name just being added to yours will open doors for you and make your album sell. Sometimes, he can even feature in your songs.

On the other hand if your vision is to clear social miscreants (area boys) from a certain area, who will you marry? Marrying Michael Jackson would be a

major mistake while marrying Michael Tyson will make your job easier. Of course, once they see you they will just stay away because they know your husband can beat them up. Statistics show that most divorces are caused by irreconcilable differences, things they just couldn't agree about, ask important questions before you marry, what are your beliefs on God, money, kids, in-laws, talk about anything possible, differences weaken a relationship. Compatibility makes life ease.

CHAPTER SIX

CHEMISTRY

“Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love”. - Proverbs 5:19.

Another major quality to look out for is Chemistry. There must be chemistry. Many people believe you should just marry, just look at the spiritual virtue, be in the spirit, don't walk in the flesh just close your eyes and pray and just pick in the spirit. Do you know the bible says you should watch and pray and I don't know where else that phrase “watch and pray” is relevant than in the area of marriage, I don't think there is any other area where you need to be watching than in the area of marriage.

Watch and pray; don't marry in the Spirit because marriage has carnal aspects. The bible says in Proverbs chapter 5 verses 19, *let her breasts satisfy you at all times.* You know what that means, you must

be satisfied with the person you marry till you die, and you are not permitted to look at another person's wife.

So after you have checked out other major issues please marry somebody you like. Many people just marry, yet they complain, "I don't like her, I am just obeying God." I also hear people say things like, "I just like her, she is very spiritual", but my question is "are you attracted to her?" you'll hear them say "no, but she is very spiritual .She will be praying for me." Don't be deceived you can have the best of both worlds, God is not a task master; His commandments are not grievous. God will not tell you to marry someone you will not like. And I'm saying this because too many people want to hide under this guise saying, "I don't like you it is just God that forced me" don't let anyone marry you under pressure; they must like what they see.

I have seen men, Christian men put themselves under pressure, they marry a sister, she doesn't dress the way they like, she doesn't look the way they like. Every time they are together his eyes are going

everywhere, looking at other people's wives. Marry the one you will be satisfied with. All the other basic qualities must be in place, but please still marry someone you like; there must be chemistry. As much as we should look out for spiritual things, please marry someone that is fine to you. Other people might not think she is fine or he is fine, but the person must at least be fine to you. Now everyone may not like her, others might think she is too tall, too short, too fair or too dark but it is what you think that matters because every woman is beautiful and every man is handsome it all depends on how you see it. Some might say she is too short others might say she is cute, you can carry her easily. So there is no one that is bad it all depends on how you see it, so there must be chemistry. You must like what you see, don't say it is God then close your eyes. You must like her because you will be telling her that she is beautiful everyday and you must like what you see because you will be telling him that he is handsome and it needs to be the truth to you.

Personally, for instance, I like women to be as natural looking as possible. My wife is beautiful and even though she uses make-up, she never looks made up or

overdone. Nowadays, with quite a number of women, everything on their body is fake; the hair is fake (maybe a wig or a weave), the eyebrow is fake (permanently painted on), the eyelashes are fake (false eyelashes), the colour of the eyes is fake (contact lens), nails are fake (stick-on or acrylic), so by the time they get home with you after the wedding and start removing all the false parts of their body and she comes out of the bathroom you will say, “ah! Where is my wife? So it’s crucial that you are sure that you are getting what you like. Now please note that if that is what you do, I’m not saying that you should not do it, but as for me I like it when women look natural. I like to see my wife when she has not had her bath, before she puts on any make-up in the morning and still like her because she still looks just as beautiful.

Proverbs 5:19 says

“Let her be as the loving hind and the pleasant roe let her breast satisfy thee at all times and be thou ravished always with her love”.

So God is saying the summary of it is that you must love the person you want to marry. Did I hear you say his lips are too big, or his eyes are big? If you don't like it leave him, someone else will like those big eyes and big lips. As a woman you need to know that whatever thing you think is a disadvantage is the very thing someone else will like and will want to marry you for, so stop trying to change yourself. You say, "But I am too fat." Is that your excuse? People fatter than you are married. But if you need to lose weight do lose some weight for health reasons but don't use that as an excuse to be unhappy or settle for less than you deserve. Marry the person you like, refuse to manage anyone or be managed by anyone.

CHAPTER SEVEN

COMPLEMENTARY

“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 when two lie together then they have heat but how can one be warm alone? , If one prevail against him two shall withstand him and a threefolded cord is not quickly broken.”

–Ecclesiastes 4:9

The person you marry must complement you; (s)he must add to, supplement, match, balance, round out, and complete you. In joining, with them you must bring better results. (S)he must complement you just as the bible put it, two are better than one. The two of you coming together must produce a greater result. Two must always be better in marriage than one. There are some marriages that one is better than two; their joining together will reduce their chances of making it in life.

Friend, marriage is not a joke, two must be better than one. The bible said; *he that finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord. (Proverbs 18:22)*. Life should be on a flight upward when you get married not allowed to be in reverse or on ground level. Many get married and that's the last hope, everything is finished. Some people say, I am just in love and the man has no job and you want to marry him? No, let him find a job before he finds a wife .When God created Adam He gave him a job first before He brought him a wife. A woman must not meet you jobless, you might say, "I finished school since 1982 I cannot find a job." If you cannot find a job then create a job. God expects you to be a strong individual before you join to another person because if you join with that weakness you have, it will be doubled.

There are some people that came to me saying pastor we want to get married, when I saw the two of them, I said, "if you join the problem both of you are carrying together we will need external help to keep you down" because I saw the individual struggles they are

yet to make a headway in their own personal lives. It's easier to solve your problem when you are alone, when you are married, your life is no more your own; your money is half, your time is half ,everything is divided and you now want to solve a problem you could not solve when you were whole and you had all the time and money to yourself.

I have seen two people come together with serious issues; no job, nothing and you want to get married. Next thing, children will appear because you can get pregnant the first day. So, nine months after, a child has entered the picture; he will not eat love, then there are no "*love diapers*", all diapers are paid for, he will need to go to school, all school fees are paid for with money not love and he will not wear love he will need clothes.

So you were struggling as an individual and now you have joined yourself with somebody struggling as well and the joining does not increase you, if anything it reduces you. It is easier to rescue an individual than to rescue a family. If one person has a problem we can

easily help but when the whole family has a problem who will you pull out first? All of them are in danger.

Whoever you choose to marry must be complimentary; two must be better than one. Open your eyes when you are getting married, please. Marriage is a covenant partnership, like in business you don't just join to any company for joining sake there must be something we are going to add to each other. Can we add value to each other? when I was getting married I knew I needed someone that would stand with me in ministry not a minus I needed an addition and it is there today since we have gotten married things have gotten better ministry-wise, everything has gotten better; my life is more organized, far more focused and productive.

So many people say they are in love but when they are faced with real issues and the challenges of life, they suddenly discover that the love has gone out the window, when the landlord shows up and he is kicking them out they will forget love. I am not saying you should marry out of greed but you must see that

your partnership will produce a better result than you being alone. Marriage is not a vision, marriage is not an end; it is only a means to an end. It is part of the vehicles we use to enter fulfillment.

There is a guy I counseled, I told him you are not ready for marriage don't try it because the way he was thinking and as a man you represent the highest wisdom in that family and you are talking like this I have not seen his children but I am pitying them because that will be the highest level of wisdom available to them. I told him don't talk marriage go and improve yourself.

Friend as that man is wooing you or as you are beginning to develop love for that girl ask yourself when we join together are we going to produce more; are we going to be better? Any union that adds joy to you naturally will make your life better but any union that reduces you before long resentment sets in and you will begin to wander secretly, did I marry the right person? And it will continue to build till it gets to the point where it becomes a real issue and the

marriage breaks. Men listen to me carefully, don't marry any woman that says I will marry you like that you can be poor; she is lying or simply making an emotional decision. When real issues arise she will change her mind; when all her neighbors are buying *Aso-ebi* and she can't buy, the neighbors' children go to good schools and hers can't, her tone will change. Life cannot be allowed to go backwards, if you have never been rich and now you are poor it won't pain you but if you have been rich before and you now become poor it is painful. Some men that say I want to marry a sophisticated woman, now that she is on her own she travels out of the country at will, she now marries you and all these things cease, she could go for lunch before but now she can't go for lunch. Don't allow romance blind you, it must be complementary, are we going to add to each other's lives?

CHAPTER EIGHT

COMMITMENT

“Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.” 1 Cor 13:7(KJV)

Marriage is largely run by commitment and nothing else. I know before we entered we were thinking it's feelings, we thought it was about emotions, I love you, you love me, you are my pumpkin, you are my ice cream, you are my butterfly, that's before marriage, while your heads are still in the clouds, check for commitment, that's the thing that'll keep any one in marriage.

Those that have great marriages are the ones that usually have great commitment. Because in marriage it will not be convenient you will not always feel like doing the things you ought to do. No woman wants to cook when she gets home at ten o'clock in the night from work; she'll be exhausted but that's where commitment comes in. she knows that even when she doesn't feel like it, she still needs to.

Listen, even the sex in marriage is by commitment because many young men are trying to marry beautiful women because they think that's what will sustain sexual pleasure in marriage. No, when you marry you will discover all women are the same and the pleasure is the same. If you are married for a year, two, three, four, you will not see all those things single men are seeing, its commitment that will keep you at that level. It's not all about sex, if you know how many people have this problem in marriage that I have counseled, if you ask, what is it? They will say my husband does not sleep with me anymore. It's funny because as a single man it was a challenge trying to get him to control himself and now two or three years into marriage he cannot even get himself to have sex with the same person he couldn't control himself around anymore. The wife is complaining for the past one month my husband has not touched me. So even when you get married, the sex that used to excite you as a single person, will be by commitment.

There was a young man that sent me a mail saying pastor my wife is not always happy, I told him do what

you should do because his wife was telling him to do something. I am sure when he was young they will be telling him cool down, cool down, he will be saying no, o.k. go ahead, three years down the line he is tired. Ask the married men around you they will tell you it is commitment. So, true love is commitment.

Fear the quitter. The person that is a quitter today will also quit in marriage. Check the person that quit school for no reason quits church for no reason, quits his job for no reason or when faced with the slightest challenge, always quitting, he will also quit in marriage. Check the one that quits the department, why did you stop work in your department? I just got tired, he will get tired in marriage because it is for the rest of your lives, and it's forever. Look out for the guy that has no commitment, he quit his last relationship for nothing, why did you leave your last relationship he'll say I just got tired and you want to start another one with him. He's a quitter, marriage won't change any one. Watch out for the quitter, quit school, quit church, and quit work. Doesn't have commitment watch out for the committed people they are the ones that can stay in a marriage. Marriage will require

commitment. Do you think when people say “I have been married for twenty years...” it is by romance? It is commitment that keeps you married fifty, sixty years down the line. I agree there should be romance and feelings, but commitment will stand the test of time.

Statistics show that fifty percent of first marriages end in divorce, sixty percent of second marriages end in divorce, seventy percent of third marriages end in divorce and so on. This goes to show that the same way you were not committed in the first marriage to stay married, you will exhibit even less commitment in the second marriage and so on because it is not about changing partners, it's about staying committed to the one you choose to marry. Even if you marry an angel you will still need commitment for it to work.

CHAPTER NINE

CONVICTION

**Let every man be fully persuaded in his own heart
– Romans 14:5.**

You must be convinced in your spirit that the person you want to marry is the right person.

Proverbs 3:5 “Trust in the LORD with all thy heart, and lean not on your own understanding, in all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct your path”

So, when it comes to marriage after you have checked all other things that need checking please pray; there must be that spiritual conviction. Many people don't know anything about prayer these days, they just cajole God, let this man marry me, they don't know how to ask, “LORD is it your will; is it this one?” Don't force God to bless what he has not blessed. It's only what God has joined together that you cannot put asunder (Matt 19:6) but what you joined together by yourself can definitely break or be put asunder.

Pray; learn to trust in the Lord with all your heart, don't lean on your knowledge of how things are done or on your normal understanding by thinking, she's fine, she's good, she's a worker, she's a pastor, no! He can be a deacon now and be a demon tomorrow.

Lean not on your own understanding, He said, in all your ways (including marriage) acknowledge God and He will direct your steps.

That's why it's amazing for me that when women are doing things like fasting and praying together or organizing bible study meetings; some women will never show up then out of the blues they now want God to tell them who to marry. You are not building your relationship with God; you've never heard from God before on any other issue so how do you want to know when and how God is speaking to you when it comes to the issue of marriage.

Some people I don't even know sometimes call me or even come to see me saying, "Pastor, John and James want to marry me, please tell me, who I should marry?" I cannot tell you that! I cannot choose for you who to marry. **YOU** go and pray and hear for yourself

from God who you should marry, but you see the problem now is that since you have not been hearing God before, is it now you will hear God? How are you sure what you will hear is correct? Besides, I don't know James or John; I don't even know you Miss Jane, so how am I going to choose for you? It's not your prophets conviction it's your own because you are the one getting married. You cannot base it on anyone's conviction not even the person that is proposing to you; it must be your own conviction.

Some Christians are so shallow you won't believe it. You need to grow spiritually. You must have a real relationship with God; a living, walking, working relationship with God. I hear too many Christians say it was my pastor that prophesied that this is my wife. How can you base that decision on someone else? I've seen too many marriages crash because they were not convinced themselves they just give names to pastors or prophets, and say, 'Man of God, these are the names just let me know the one that's right.' When you see pastors that do that, just know that they are pastors with a low self esteem and usually they just

want to feel important. I don't believe that God place your marital destiny in anyone's hands. He may place people in your life as checks and balances but the choice of who you marry cannot be up to anyone else.

Too many people still want to place the responsibility of choosing a spouse on their pastors or prophets; I am not the Holy Ghost. The bible says, as many as are led by the Spirit of God (Romans 8:14), you cannot be led by a prophet, that is not the New Testament, you must grow for yourself, you must grow in the things of God. You cannot put your life in someone else's hands, you don't know if he has not prayed for the past three weeks. He might be having marriage problems in his own house and his wife's English name is Jane; his wife just finished slapping and tearing his clothes at home before you walked in to see him. Then you bring the name Jane to him he'll just tell you "no, no, don't marry Jane, thus says the Lord." It's not thus says the Lord its thus says the slap that his wife just gave him.

The bible says let the peace of God be the umpire in your heart (Colossians 3:15). In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path. Don't be lazy spiritually, it's your life. It erases all doubt when you are fully convinced after you have prayed. Nothing shakes you anymore because you are sure you have gotten God's go-ahead. When I met my wife, I liked her but I still prayed and I told her and we agreed that if two hours before the wedding I get a strong leading not to marry you I will not marry you. You must be that submitted to God. Not your parents conviction, not the suitors conviction, but on your own conviction. If someone proposes to you, saying, "God said I should marry you, God said you are my wife, you must marry me or else you will be walking outside God's will for your life and if you do you will never be happy." This puts too many women under pressure; you cannot marry based on his conviction. If God has not told you then don't marry him. Don't say, 'pastor he has heard God no need for me to hear God.' No! Hear God for yourself, it erases all doubt. There are many married people today wondering if they married the wrong person; every month they are

thinking about it: am I sure I married right? Is this the best I could have done? And the sad part is that they are already married. I am a hundred percent sure that I married the right person because I prayed about it before I went ahead and I heard from God. It erased all doubt for me, I am so certain that I married the right person for me so no matter what challenges I am faced with I know this is my wife, I am sure and nothing can change that.

When you are convinced, even when you face opposition on the way you are still strong not that you are shaking. You must hear God for yourself because as many as are led by the Spirit of God they are the sons of God. It erases all doubts from your heart forever. Get personal conviction.

CHAPTER TEN

COUNSELLING

“In the multitude of counsellors there is safety”

-Proverbs 11:14.

One of the most important things to take into consideration when getting married is COUNSELLING. Please take time to get Counselling. Too many people ask me questions that their Pastors will be in a better position to answer. Talk to someone who knows you and understands the things of God.

Please if you belong to a church; a bible believing church, get to know your pastors and let them know you. You should be involved in the church; join a department, attend services, be a worker in church, attend a cell group, make friends, etc. Be an active member of your church so they can get to know the real you and they will be able to answer a lot of questions. A lot of the questions people ask me there is no way I can answer them because some issues don't have a yes or no; right or wrong answer, it

depends on the people involved. For instance, a question like, “should I marry at 22?” I cannot just give you a general answer because the answer to that question is largely dependent on how well I know you as a person. There are some 22 year olds that are mature, while some are not. I cannot sit here and know if you are mature through the phone or through text messaging, but your pastor should be able to tell because they should know you. My dear, take your time, take counsel don't dodge counsel. I heard a story of a woman that was in a hurry to get married; but at her church they had a policy of six months courtship classes, but she was in a hurry because she felt she couldn't wait, she left her church and went to a church where the counselling classes could be done faster and she got married in another church, I think in one year or less than that the marriage dissolved and she got a divorce. Not quite long after that she met someone else who wanted to marry her and instead of waiting to do things right, because she was in a hurry again, she quickly arranged another one and that also ended in no time. Take it easy, slow down and let your Pastor know about your plans then go through proper

counselling. Don't try to dodge it; you will be doing yourself more harm than good. Marriage is a long term thing, it's not for 10 years, it's not for 20 years, it's for the rest of your life, trust me that is a very long time.

Counseling is very important, especially for this younger generation. I keep saying don't play with counsel especially when you belong to a church that's sound on teaching marriage because there are some things you'll not see especially when you are blinded by romance that somebody else will see, so get counsel.

In our church, our procedure is before you start a serious relationship talk to a pastor, there are many reasons why we insist on that in our own church and even if people grumble about it we still insist because it is for their safety. Some people you want to marry are already married. There are some people that have come to meet me, "Pastor I like that girl in the choir she is nice, she sings beautifully, she is pretty and she..." I finish for them, "... is married" yes, she is

married. She is nice, she sings and she is married, but most people don't know. I have just helped him and saved him the trouble of proposing to a married woman, that way you can quickly adjust your eyes and move it to someone else .Some are engaged may be their fiancé is out of the country briefly, someone walks up to me and says, "Pastor I like that girl, that usher, I'm sure it's the LORD" and I say "I'm sure it is not the Lord because she is already engaged and they are getting married in the next two months" so you see, counsel is for safety.

There are some people you even want to marry that are undergoing treatment. You must understand that a church is a hospital; that's why it's not everybody you meet in church you can marry. Church is a hospital and a good hospital is known by the amount of sick people you see in it. Can you see someone enter a hospital and say this hospital is an international standard hospital, a very good hospital but there are no sick people there. When you enter a good hospital you'll see someone's leg hung up, someone else in pains, some are vomiting in one corner yes that's a

good hospital, they are working. A good hospital is known by the amount of sick people inside so a good church is like a good hospital. We have insane people in church, we have fraudsters, we have liars and cheats, we have angry people; that's a good church. We are giving them treatment, some are responding while others are not yet responding. So it's not everyone you meet in church you can marry. You need to go and ask the chief medical officer or the chief consultant about the patients there. Ask how are they responding to treatment sir? Then we will now tell you that the illness is terminal the person will not survive do not marry or that person will be needing some more treatment and with some time will be perfect for marriage.

I am of the opinion that too many people can avoid broken-hearts if they would only take counsel, most times when your heart breaks it won't be possible to glue it back fully well again. You know when glass breaks and it's joined it will still show that it's been glued. It can never be put back to one piece again the way it was before it was broken. So avoid getting your

heart broken, get counsel. It sounds funny but there are some young men in church that have what I like to call the three months disease; they date a girl for three months then they get tired and move on. They've been doing it and both of us have agreed that it's a disease and I'm giving them certain tablets (in the scriptures) to see if we can treat the illness. Now, because it is not written on his face, one young girl came to church newly and did not ask any questions, she didn't tell anyone that he was interested in her, she met that same guy they fell in love and they started a relationship and in my mind I kept saying, "Oh! How I wish she had asked me", this thing is a three month disease. If she had asked me I would have warned her, we would have prayed about it, and asked her some questions to be sure she should get involved with him. Of course, she went along, she did not ask any questions and did not seek any counsel.

Lo and behold, not long into it, the guy said to me, "Pastor, I'm in a relationship with this girl but I don't think she's the one." I've heard this before so I said, "I know. So have you told her yet?" because I knew it

wouldn't work, I knew it like I knew my name. I knew because before you came to join this church, he has done that to about five other people. Do you think you have the ability to change anyone? Ask questions; seek counsel.

Recently I was talking to a young lady and she was saying to me, "Pastor, we are having some problems in our relationship, help me call him and talk to him" Meanwhile, the guy just left a few days ago telling me "pastor, I've seen someone else somewhere that I like and I want to marry."

I said "what of the other one? I thought you were in a relationship?"

"We have ended it." He replied. Can you imagine? He has moved on but to the girl they are still together just having problems. Heartbreak can be avoided, a pastor will know about the people in his church, he's like a doctor he has the case file of each patient. There are some things he has seen that you may not see and that he will never tell you except it has a direct bearing on your own life.

When you seek counsel you will be aware of the treatments. You'll know what to do. As for the new girl he went to meet, I warned her; be careful with this guy, we are treating him, we don't know for sure if he is going to respond to the treatment before you join your heart with his, so take counsel.

Counsel will make life easy for you.

Proverbs 11: 14

"Where no counsel is the people fall, but in a multitude of counsel there is safety"

Proverbs 12: 15 "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes but he that harkeneth unto counsel is wise"

Proverbs 15:22,

"Without counsel purposes are disappointed but in a multitude of counselors they are established"

Proverbs 20:18

It says "Every purpose is established by counsel and with good advice make war"

Don't jump into marriage without counsel. An anointed pastor will see far better than you and will be honest enough to tell you whether to go ahead or not. Sometimes the guy is blinded by the girls shape, he can't even see her character but when you get counsel they'll sit you down and say this is the problem.

There's a story I always share of one of my sons in the Lord that brought one girl he wanted to marry I knew two of them well and I told him "no I don't think it'll work for so and so reasons." He insisted, "No we must get married." I talked to this guy for about three weeks consistently every day, trying to make him see reason why he shouldn't marry her. He insisted he would marry her. The girl went on to convince him, "who is your pastor that you are listening to him? Is he your father? I came all the way down to Nigeria for us to get married so we must do the wedding." Watch out for anyone that does not respect God because God ordained those authorities, the girl convinced him so they went behind me and got married. I saw the pictures two months after the wedding.

Unfortunately, it didn't make one year. One year after they were married, she called him up on the phone and said she wanted to break the relationship; she called a marriage of one year, **a relationship**. Remember when he came to me for counsel, I said, "don't do it." What he could not see I saw clearly. Today, he is divorced and trying to pick up the pieces.

When you come for counsel you must be ready to accept it. Don't come when you already know what you want to do in your heart. That's why it's not good for you to bring someone to your pastor, "pastor see my wife I'm going to marry this girl on the 30th of January." before you go that far, come to your pastor "sir or ma, I'm thinking of marrying someone what do you think?" before you go ahead and fix the wedding date.

Note that I am not asking you to ask for permission; what I'm saying is rub minds with your pastor; ask for his honest opinion. It's like going to buy a used car without asking your mechanic to take a look at it.

Another couple came to me that their relationship was as a result of match-making; someone gave him her phone number and they both hooked up. They said they wanted to get married in the next two months. I told the lady “Don’t rush into marriage. How well do you know each other?” I did not even say don’t marry each other, I was just saying, “It’s too early to decide. Take time to get to know each other. You’ve just met and you are planning a wedding in the next two months. That means from now till the wedding all you’ll be discussing are the wedding ceremony details. ‘Have you seen that hall? Let’s go and check that hall.’ It’s funny that even when they left my office they were going to check a hall for the reception.

You won’t really know each other. How can you meet on Sunday and plan a wedding in the next two months. Two months is actually enough to keep you busy planning the wedding you’ll never get to know each other. You’ll be talking about ties, shoes, gown, meet my father, meet my mother, bills, wedding colors; before you know it the wedding day will come and you are married.

After you get married, you'll start knowing the person, then you'll be shocked when you see things you didn't know existed and that you don't think you can cope with. I told them, "Do your marriage counseling classes first and in this church it is six months; go and do it. The six months will have a calming effect on you. It makes you relax because marriage requires patience. I said, "Take time, do the counseling classes."

"No! Pastor is wicked, how can he say we should wait six months? We have fixed the date and invited people." Six months is small compared to the sixty years of a bad marriage.

I said, "Go in peace", they went and married in some other church. The story is back now the man is saying, "If I knew I would not have married this girl" and she is back to her parent's house now. They are already separated. IF YOU RUSH IN YOU WILL RUSH OUT.

I knew they should have done counseling; it would have helped them refocus on the marriage and relationship proper rather than the wedding preparations. Get counsel, marriage is a lifetime thing you can't cross that line without counsel, it doesn't

make sense. To a trained eye, something that looks mysterious to you would look ordinary to him; things you cannot see will be very visible to him. You know when hearing a sound in your car in the morning you'll be wondering what's wrong with this car. But when taken to a mechanic's workshop, just by hearing the sound from afar, he will tell you check this or check that or it's the engine. A trained eye will see things faster than you'll ever see it and you'll think it's mysterious, it's not; he's just trained. Sometimes, when your car breaks down somewhere and it's not coming on, you'll think it's the devil but if a mechanic arrives on the scene, he'll tell you, "hit that thing, then start it and It'll start." is he a magician? No, he is just a trained eye. To you the car broke down for no reason but he knows why it happened.

CONCLUSION

Somebody is saying pastor, "I'm looking for a wife, for a husband." like I usually say, you don't have the power to give yourself a spouse, but you have the power to prepare for one. So you just go ahead and prepare yourself that is all God requires of you. Don't say I don't have any man now in my life, so you don't make up well so you don't do your hair well, so you don't wear perfumes and all that, take care of yourself now, you don't know the day the man will meet you. Take care of yourself.

Don't just focus on the physical, You must have a good attitude ,Rebecca was nice to that old man ,even though the man was not an eligible bachelor, she didn't know the man was coming in search of a wife for someone's child (Gen 24:17-24), you know some people are so rude to people they meet. Always carry a good attitude naturally, dress well **every day**, don't say I don't have anybody in my life, dress well **everyday**, prepare yourself, improve yourself, be the best you can be in whatever it is that you are doing, then trust God to do the one He only can do. The bible says wealth and riches are the inheritance of the

father, but a prudent wife is from the Lord (Proverbs 19:14). Man cannot give you a good wife, you cannot get one by power or by might only God can do that. Let God bless you with one.

SURRENDER TO CHRIST

If you have not given your heart to Christ this is a good opportunity to do so, God reserves only good and perfect gifts for His children. Come into God's fold today; let Him work out a good spouse for you, say this prayer from your heart:

Lord Jesus, I come to you today, I acknowledge I am a sinner and I believe that you came and died to save me. I open my heart to you and ask that you be my Lord and Saviour from today on-wards.[Romans 10:9-10].

Thank you Lord for saving me and transforming me into your kingdom.



'If you ever have been faced with the decision of choosing a life partner and you are wondering what attributes to look out for in an ideal spouse, then this is just for you.

This book identifies ten vital qualities you cannot ignore while making the choice of a life partner and rightly answers the question 'Who Should I

Kingsley Okonkwo is the founder and Lead Pastor of David's Christian Centre, a vibrant church with two centers in Lagos Nigeria. With over two decades of full time ministry behind him, Pastor K as he is fondly called is a profound teacher with a passion for Victory through the word. A unique minister of the gospel, his say it-as-it-is approach to the word of God has endeared him to many especially the generation of youths.

Pastor Kingsley is the host of the popular monthly relationship seminar; Love ,Dating and Marriage which currently airs weekly on television stations and aims at building strong marriages based on timeless biblical principles.

He has authored numerous books, organized countless seminars and is a much sought after speaker whose humor and practical styled teachings have been a blessing to people of all ages and races.

He is happily married to his lovely wife and best friend Mildred who pastors with him and they are blessed with three adorable children.



OTHER BOOKS BY

- **PASTORS KINGSLEY AND MILDRED**

OKONKWO

- 25 WRONG REASONS WHY PEOPLE ENTER INTO
RELATIONSHIPS
 - WHEN AM I READY
 - JUST US GIRLS
 - I LOVE YOU BUT MY PARENTS SAY NO
 - GOD TOLD ME TO MARRY YOU
 - SHOULD LADIES PROPOSE?
 - WAITING FOR ISAAC
 - 7 QUESTIONS WISE WOMEN ASK
 - 7 QUALITIES WISE MEN WANT
 - A-Z OF MARRIAGE
 - CHAYIL: Secrets of the Virtuous Woman
 - CHAYIL PRAYER JOURNAL
 - HELP! My Husband is Acting Funny