

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Omotayo Okanlawon is a creative writer with a great bias for poetic pieces. He is known for his captivating rhythmic use of words in his writings and a compilation of his beautiful poems in the collection “My Fortitude” pose him towards being a national treasure. He has a magical touch on the pen, renowned for his smart play on words. He has written quite a number of soul-wrenching poems with thematic messages touching on love and beauty. He is highly inspired by nature and the stories around him.

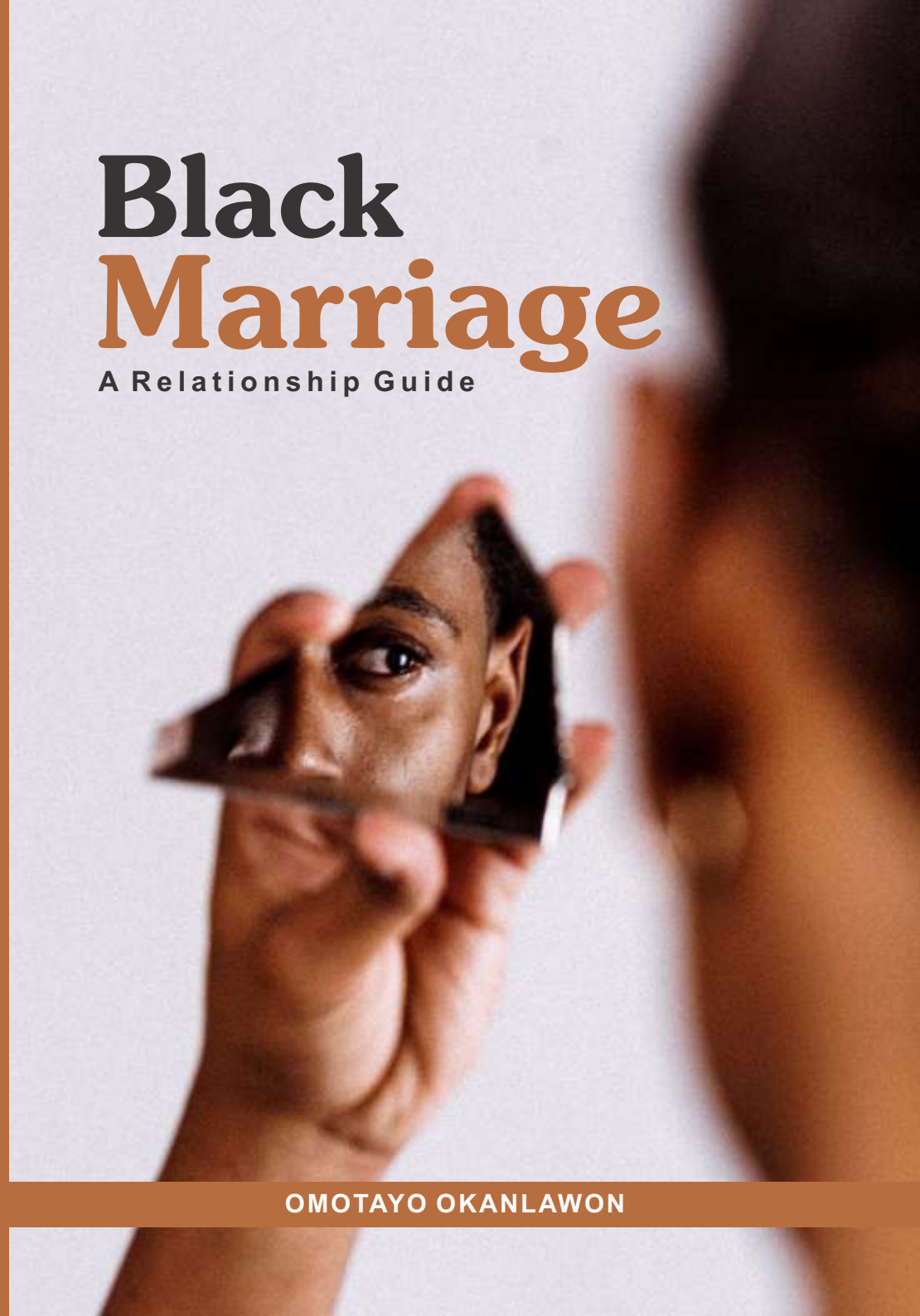
He is a creative person who believes there is always a new way of doing things better. He is a graduate of Sociology from the prestigious University of Ibadan Nigeria. He has a heart also for event management and protocol services.

ISBN

Black Marriage

A Relationship Guide

BLACK MARRIAGE — OMOTAYO OKANLAWON



OMOTAYO OKANLAWON

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Omotayo Okanlawon is a creative writer with a great bias for poetic pieces. He is known for his captivating rhythmic use of words in his writings and a compilation of his beautiful poems in the collection "My Fortitude" pose him towards being a national treasure. He has a magical touch on the pen, renowned for his smart play on words. He has written quite a number of soul-wrenching poems with thematic messages touching on love and beauty. He is highly inspired by nature and the stories around him.

He is a creative person who believes there is always a new way of doing things better. He is a graduate of Sociology from the prestigious University of Ibadan Nigeria. He has a heart also for event management and protocol services.

ISBN

Black Marriage

A Relationship Guide

BLACK MARRIAGE — OMOTAYO OKANLAWON

OMOTAYO OKANLAWON

BLACK MARRIAGE

Many are caught in the motion of wrong notions. Many beauty full hearts are broken and losing the beautiful acts endowed in them because they followed broken paths into marriages. The wrong trend of following unwholesome vogues has led many to take the journey in haste into a BLACK MARRIAGE.

Marriages are becoming nightmares. Those in it are having a 'hell of a time' while those preparing to go into it are in fright of what to expect.

BLACK MARRIAGE is a book that shares personal and impersonal experiences in order to help youths build and maintain purposeful relationships that will end in glorious marriages.

It is devoted to revoke ignorance in all possible ways and to evoke endurance in every possible way.

DEDICATED

To all youths single, engaged & married.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	1 – 7
CHAPTER 2	8 – 14
CHAPTER 3	15 – 20
CHAPTER 4	21 – 29
CHAPTER 5	30 – 35
CHAPTER 6	36 – 44
CHAPTER 7	45 – 52
CHAPTER 8	53 – 61

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First I want to thank God and my family.

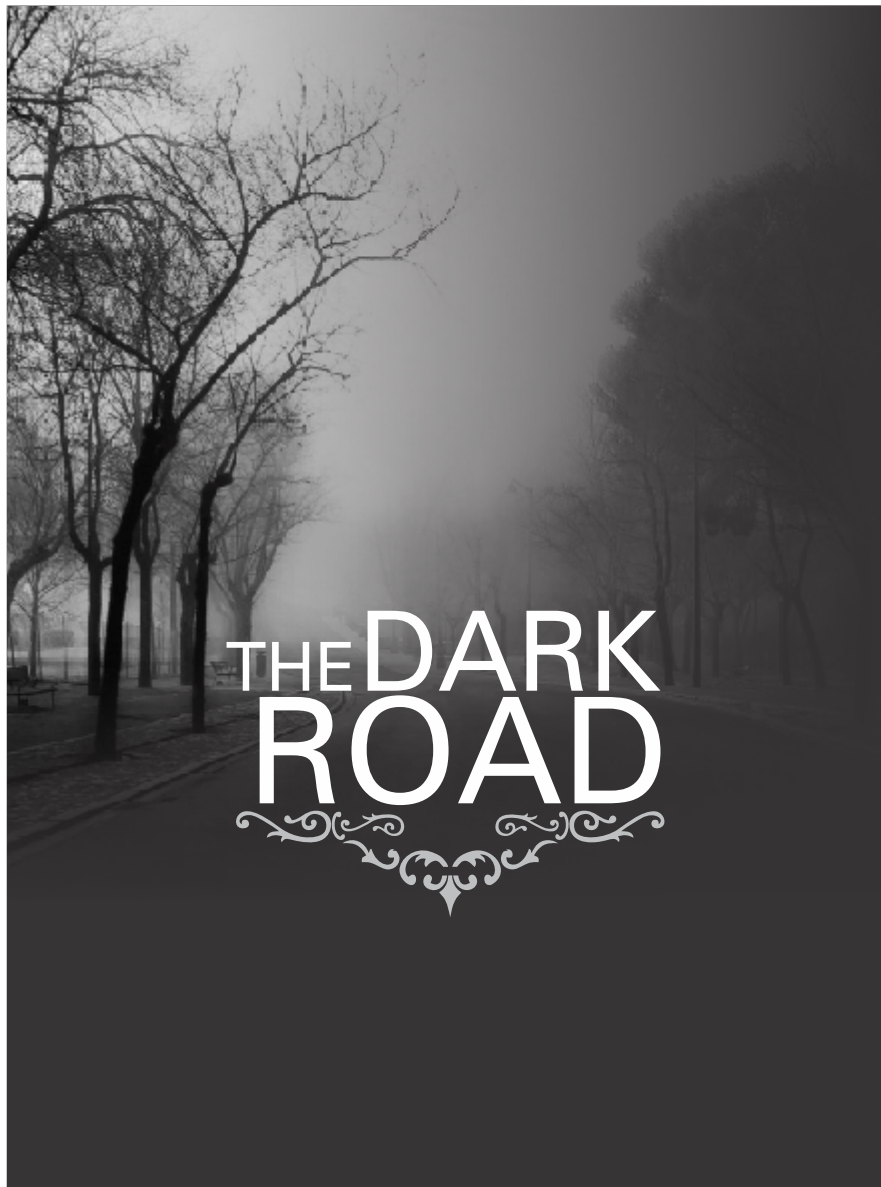
To Mom and Dad, thank you for the profound impact you have had on our lives and for being great and supportive.

To my brothers, Ayo and Dayo thank you for your love and respect.

Toyin, my one and only sister, you truly have an angelic nature.

Thank you for being there for the 'boys'.

BLACK
MARRIAGE



BLACK MARRIAGE

The long unlighted stretch of road was not just covered in darkness, scary animal sounds and incessant rumbles that come from the thick bush lining the roadside caused more scare than the thick darkness. Dirty and sweaty from having played soccer, we have to take our return journey back home through this dark scary road with no lamps or torches. This is a funny but true tale of how attending the Royal Ambassadors meeting every Sunday evening and returning home at night through the dark streets with folks and other kids in the neighborhood looked like.

At the beginning of the return journey back home we always psyched our confidence, boasting in strong confidence to confront whatever (danger) may walk out of the dark bush into our path. We would walk right in the middle of the road and watch around vigilantly. There are usually no troubles at the beginning but midway into the journey where the bush get thicker and the rumblings get scarily louder, then fear set in. At this juncture, most of us have our shoes in hand, ready to run and yes, it usually ended in a sprint through the rest of the journey.

Whatever happened to the boisterous boast of confidence we had at the beginning of the journey?

This story captures exactly how the journey of marriage is. There is a long stretch of dark (unknown) and scary road that couples must pass through in their nuptial journey. Their success largely hinges on how prepared they are for this road. At the beginning of the journey, many persons (couples) boast in the confidence of being able to confront

BLACK MARRIAGE

whatever may come their way but along the way, when the darkness gets thicker and the rumblings become scarier, they chicken out.

Many persons jumble into marriage, fumble in it and tumble out of it to later grumble on the many reasons why it didn't work out.

I have come to discover that a lot of young people have erroneous assumptions, various misconceptions, and self delusions about the concept and framework of marriage. A lot of them bring this ignorant misconceptions, delusions and unrealistic expectations into marriage and end up crashing it.

People nowadays go into marriage assuming they need no instructions about how it works. They are unprepared for its darkness and scary moments and lack knowledge on how to overcome them. Youths are modeling their marriages around other marriages close to them. As good as this may be, it may be far from what God intended for them. How do we prepare to go through this journey the right way? It is simply about knowledge- knowledge about the institution, how to institute it and how to run it.

The world has been polluted with strange philosophies that preach strange ideologies which harm marriages and relationships today.

Couples need to be very careful what books they read and what ideologies they follow. Many of these ideologies are borne out of pain, disappointment, and heartbreaks of the individual(s) propounding them; therefore, they often carry

subjective, bias and irrational conclusions. It has thus become imperative for Christian writers to rise to the challenge of uplifting biblical, Christ-centered doctrines about the marriage institution.

Read before you leap and also read after you've leaped. Never stop reading useful publications with strong biblical principles on how to build and live a purposeful marital life.

In the beginning...

Before marriage, he offered you heaven and earth and you took them all. He promised to take you to the moon and you fell head over heels.

After a glamorous wedding, he took you to his abode - which is a Hell of a place, and you are now shouting FIRE (domestic violence). Have you not read? For it is written... Watch and Pray

Back then, he swept you off your feet on the corridor of romance but now he is sweeping you off your feet in the corridor of punches. Then you begin to ask, "Where is the man I fell in love with?"

Have you not read?

In the beginning, there was the intoxication of love between the lovers. There was an overwhelming tender affectionate care of generous sacrifices, and hospitality. Along the line in the journey, there is a sad twist and things take an ugly swing. If after all the years of waiting and trusting to get the best out of marriage you could still end up in marital shambles, what fate is yours? It doesn't matter how well it starts, it is how well

it runs till the end.

Many persons have gone into marriage unprepared with the adequate knowledge required. They assume marriage is just a romantic and sexual relationship between lovers and it requires no in-depth understanding of the principles that make it last ages. This is understandable because at the beginning everything will seem to be going fine without much ado about any 'manual' for running the relationship. This ignorant behavior is further boosted by momentary ecstatic drive/urge being felt by the lovers. Once this momentary passion wades, confusion begins to set in and a struggle begins.

Many other persons go into marriage with strange and erroneous beliefs. These categories of persons build and run their marriage on erroneous philosophies as against biblical doctrines. There are many philosophies and theoretical movements teaching various strange ideologies about relationships and interactions in the world today.

These philosophies and theories have been formulated either from existing cultural practices, personal experiences or on religious doctrines. It is good to mention that some of these theories/philosophies have well-meaning ideas but some of them have been subjectively propounded and modified to align with societal trends thereby making them dangerous. A lot of youths (young couples) have been led astray by such shallow subjective theoretical/ideological movements.

BLACK MARRIAGE

The genesis of many problems encountered in marriage can be traced to either a faulty foundation and/or bizarre philosophies consulted for running the marriage as against Christ-centered biblical teaching on marriage.

A faulty foundation is when a person has chosen wrongly or married without a purpose or for the wrong reasons. Many have chosen wrongly and many more do not even understand the concept and framework of marriage at all. This book explores the principles of choosing right and the tenets for building strong marital relationships.

The Foundation:

He will be the sure foundation for your times (Isa 33:6).

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is (in) Jesus Christ (1 Cor 3:11).

"....If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire and the fire will test the quality of each person's works. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved- even though only as one escaping through the flames."

The above scriptures point to the fact that a marriage must be built on Christ the solid rock. Like the tree house story, he is

the huge mango tree that will carry and host the home. But this is not just all, we need to draw the architectural design (based on the purpose the home is going to serve) and we must select the right pieces (of fitments) to build the home.

Every structure requires a foundation upon which it will be constructed. The strength of the foundation determines the strength of the structure itself. The mango tree was a strong enough foundation for the tree house.

BLACK
MARRIAGE



A childhood friend of mine and I had once built a tree house during one of our jobless moments years ago. We exerted a lot of energy into pulling down tree branches and gathering planks needed to build the structure.

Excited by the fun of the project, we began to discuss the so many things we would be doing inside the tree house when completed. We had chosen a huge mango tree in my friend's compound to host the tree house.

We were too carried away with the frenzy of having a tree house that we went straight into construction without any architectural plans on how to actualize our tree-house dream on the awkwardly shaped mango tree we had chosen. We were soon besotted with a lot of challenges when the construction began.

No matter how hard we tried to use our 'by the moment' thinking to fit the planks, the structure kept collapsing on the tree. Not until we resolved to go back to the drawing board to map out an architectural design of how the house will fit on the tree, and then to trim the planks and tree branches to the specifications that will fit on the tree, did we record some success on the project.

Similarly, marriage is not a haphazard project that one jumbles into to do guess works. It requires some careful preparation and planning. Deciding on what the marriage will be founded upon must be clearly understood so that its architectural mapping may have all fitments trimmed to fit.

The major essence of a plan is to guide the construction and ensure the builders don't deviate from the desired design. Every detail has been put into design according to the purpose for which the structure is being put up and so must the construction be done.

Likewise, the intended purpose for which a marriage is being planned will determine its design.

Like the tree house experience when we initially began the construction without any consideration for the architectural design of the structure, many couples have also got no plans or designs for their intended marriage. Youths wake up to the lovely idea of wedlock, observe the model of marriages around them and also head to the altar just like that. Well, we had the same euphoria with the tree house project after having seen it on TV, loved the idea and dabbled into it without any concrete plans. Guess what, we initially failed.

Marriage is a serious business that requires proper attention. Many times, we wait till we experience roadblocks in life before we do the right things. Couples need to lay out a solid foundational plan for marriage before and not during wedlock. They are only supposed to build, improve upon and constantly refurbish this plan in their marital journey.

Architectural designs.

Architectural designs vary from house to house, society to society and country to country. The architects are good at

studying the demographic and geographic attributes of an environment to design the best adaptable and safe structures for it. Even if a structure designed for a particular location is to be replicated in another location, the architects do a lot to ensure that the right materials are used to the standard of the new location. Similarly, marriage structures differ from person to person, culture to culture and society to society. The design that works for Mr. A may not work for Mr. B, so it is pertinent for Mr. B (and A) to understand the best design or structure that works best for them in marriage.

The Architectural Plan.

The architectural plan for the tree house project was very simple and straight to the point. It was roughly sketched in haste because we had only seen the essence for it when we ran into troubles during the construction of the tree house. Architectural plans can be simple and can also get really complex like the Burj Al Arab, but no matter how complex, they all serve the same job to shape a structure in the safest habitable way.

I was to prepare a 3D animation of a hotel project sometime last year. I took the time to understand the architectural designs and the various signs used on the plan so that I can reproduce the 3D model of the hotel as the architect has designed it.

Though some signs in the document seemed to me as unnecessary but I was made to understand that every detail

in the plan served its purpose, else the structure that had been purposefully designed to be a hotel could turn out to be something else and the building could also be unsafe if the builders don't adhere to the plan.

Like the tree house experience when we initially began the construction without any consideration for the architectural design of the structure, many couples have also got no plans or designs for their intended marriage. Youths wake up to the lovely idea of wedlock, observe the model of marriages around them and also head to the altar just like that. Well, we had the same euphoria with the tree house project after having seen it on TV, loved the idea and dabbled into it without any concrete plans. Guess what, we initially failed.

Purpose in marriage

When the purpose of a thing is not known, abuse is inevitable. The purpose is the reason for doing something or the reason for which something exists. Some vital questions need to be asked (and answered) to establish purpose before a union is entered into and eventually sealed in marriage.

What is the purpose for that union? Are you going into it for a specific purpose? What specific purpose? These are vital questions that must get answered even before courtship begins. It is a fundamental step towards building a home (marriage).

One thing you need to settle with yourself as an individual even before engaging a partner is why you need to start that

relationship. If you cannot give yourself a satisfactory answer then you are not quite ready for a relationship. No matter how subtle or blatant the reason you give for going into a relationship is, it becomes the purpose of the relationship and will largely define what happens in it.

A purpose is like an architectural design for a marriage, it determines the final outlook, strength, and safety of the home. It determines the dimensions, size, and strength of the fitments. If the fitments are not well cut and fitted according to the architectural plan, the structure may turn out distorted, weak and unsafe.

Purpose is also like a driver at the wheels of a relationship that determines the destination, direction, and speed of the relationship. It serves as a rail guard that ensures the engaged individuals don't go offroad and even if they do, they can decipher that they have gone off course and get back on the road. When the purpose is defined, it can be easy to put things to check.

Let's simplify this discourse on purpose. I've heard people wanting to get married just to bear children. For such a person, the purpose of marriage is to raise children and what this means is that the purpose is fulfilled when the children have fully arrived. Why should a woman get frustrated by his man's constant request for sex? When, before marriage, he had clearly made his intentions for coming into marriage for sexual pleasure and gratification well known to her. The moment such a woman deny him this sexual pleasure, the

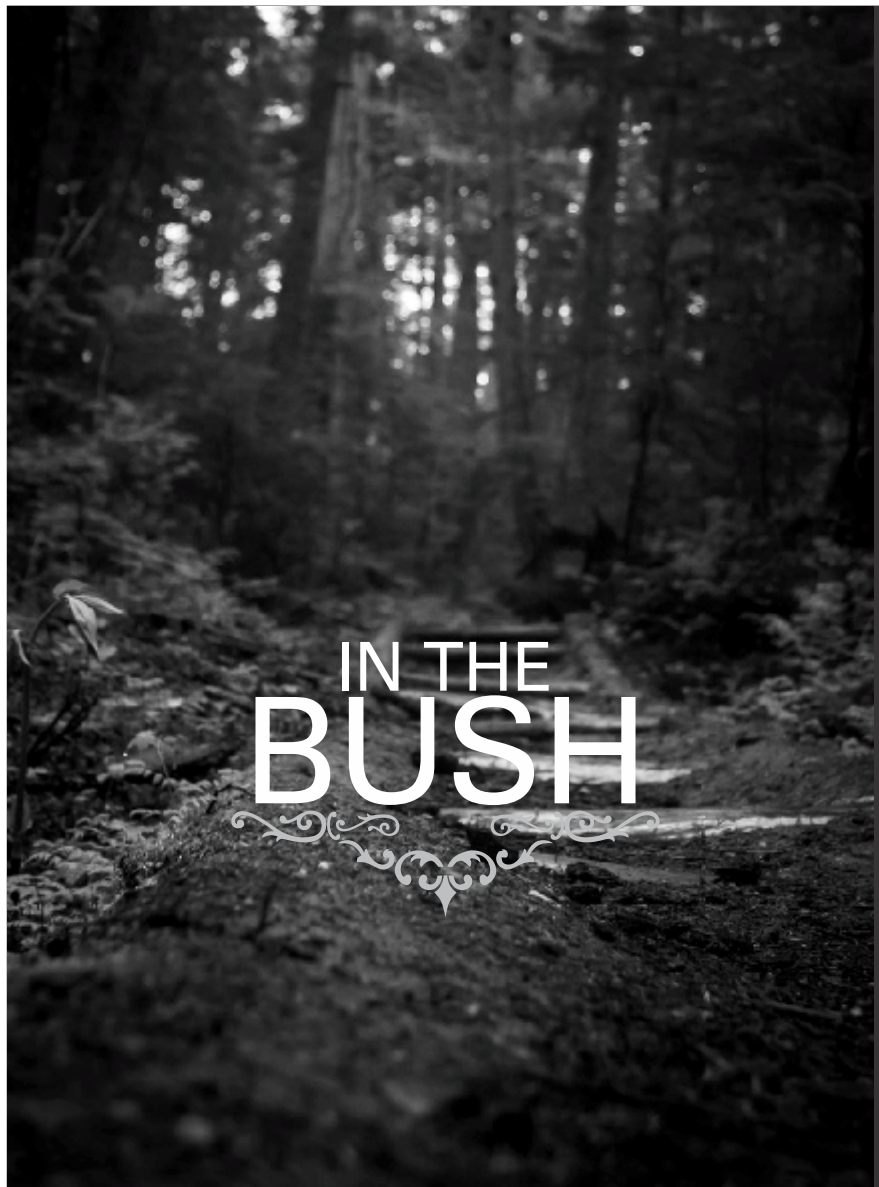
marriage is over. This is the logic behind the purpose of marriage.

Terms and Conditions apply

The defined purpose of a marriage is the 'contract' that binds on the marriage with its necessary terms and conditions. The termination of a contract is contained in the terms and conditions of the contract itself and in the context of marriage. The defined purpose of a marriage is the contract that contains its terms and conditions. It invariably means you and your partner, even before going into courtship must clearly define the purpose for the union. Such a definition will determine the longevity of the marriage. If your purpose aligns with your partner's, then there is an amber light ready to go green in marriage.

Having resolved on a personal definition of what you want out of marriage, which should be centered around fulfilling your godly mandate on earth, you can focus on getting the right partner that will best key into fulfilling that purpose with you. Another question then is, how do I know who is right for me?

BLACK
MARRIAGE



After we sketched out a design for the tree house, we headed to the nearby bush to get the needed materials (tree cuts, branches etc). In the bush, there were lots of materials (both attractive and otherwise). We were almost tempted to just pack everything back to the construction site but this was of no essence since we had a design of the materials (and dimensions) we needed. Even with a plan at hand, we had many suitable fits for the design but we had to choose the ones we viewed best. Our choice of materials was guided by the drafted plan.

Similarly, in the “bush” of prospects, there will be loads of attractive potentials. You may get really confused in the bush if you don’t have your desired plan at hand. Even with a plan at hand, you will have many attractive suitable suitors for marriage but the onus lies on you to be guided by the plan you have for marriage to choose right.

Choice- choosing the right fitment

The first time I saw an interlocking tile I had asked who had the time to go through the stress of making such designs and painting on the ground.

I had ignorantly not known that it was a clever interlock of individual small sized bricks. This interlock innovation explains the beauty of things when individual fitments perfectly fit together. People will simply not realize it’s a fusion of individual bricks.

Remember the tree house? The rain came just a day after its completion and this put the structure to test. The cabin was filled with water due to a gap in the roof. Out of exhaustion, we had 'managed' the planks to complete the roof, even though we knew they were not closely fit together. The result was a flooded cabin that greatly threatened the entire structure as the water soaked floor became weak and began to give way.

It is not just enough to have good dreams and purpose for marriage, it is important to be rightly fused in marriage with the right partner to actualize these dreams and to fulfill this purpose. When the couples are perfect fitments like a well-fitted interlock brick, the beautiful design of their marital purpose comes alive and attractive too.

Similarly, if the fitments are not the perfect combination, not only will the design become distorted, holes and gaps will be left in the finished work for 'water' to destroy. When couples are not the right fit for each other in marriage, the nuptial journey will not be a smooth one. So how do I choose the right personality fit for me in marriage? This takes us to the question of choice.

Who makes the choice, God or me? How will I know the right choice?

A lot of questions have been asked on the aspect of marital choice and a lot of answers have been proffered. Many Christian youths seek to know how to get it right with choosing a life partner but many don't simply know what to believe or what path to follow.

BLACK MARRIAGE

To put it straight, it is your choice to make. It is your responsibility to choose who is best fit for you to marry as the choice was mine and my friend's to gather the best planks and select the fit ones for the tree house project. God's role is to bring the best choice (or choices) our way like he brought Eve to Adam.

Following the model of the first marriage in the bible where God brought Eve to Adam, we get a clue as to how it works. Though Adam had only one option (Eve), which made the task easier for him, he was still left with the choice to either accept her or reject her. He also chose to make her his wife and not his personal assistant or any other role.

Secondly, did you observe that I emphasized choices in my statement that "God's role is to bring the best choice (or choices)" above? This means that, as against the false popular myth that there is only ONE ideal person God has created for you to marry, there actually are or may be numerous ideal persons available for you to marry- that is why it is called CHOOSING in the first place. If you have no options to choose from, then why are we discussing CHOICE? He who FINDS a wife finds what is good...(Prov. 18:22).

It is your duty (to be guided by the Spirit) to select the best and ideal persons that God has brought your way to become your helpmeet on the path to fulfilling your purpose.

But how do you decipher the ideal person if you have not

discovered your purpose on earth for which your partner will be a helpmeet?

How will I know the right choice?

Daggered?

How many times have you been daggered? This was a comic question my roommates and I poked ourselves with in the hostel whenever we discussed the issue of proposal rejection by women. When a woman says no to a man's proposal, we refer to it as a dagger to the heart of the man. Some vital questions come up during these discussions like, should a Christian Brother even experience 'dagging' at all? Shouldn't he be able to discern the right and exact woman waiting for his approach?

Multiple Proposals

I remember the time I learned that the student fellowship executives had put up a committee to manage marital affairs and proposals among members. When I probed into the reasons for such action, I was made to understand that a lot of ladies in the fellowship lodged complaints of receiving multiple proposals from various 'brothers' all claiming to have heard from God. So who truly heard from God or could God have directed them all to the same woman? Funny as it may sound it is a true occurrence in the Christian community.

Back to the questions raised above, How will I know the right choice?

When Adam saw Eve he was able to immediately identify her

in the place of his purpose in the garden.

I remember an article I wrote some years back titled "I only need one". Here is an excerpt from it:

"I have seen the lot and active, I have met them hot and passive, but I only need one. The cloud may spread extensively and the crowd may extend immensely but I only seek one. There may be many voices of choices but I must rise above the noise of all choices to make just one. I only need one who can connect in words and in silence. I only need one who can hear the unspoken words. I only need one".

Many are available, few are called but ONE must be chosen. Believe me it is not an easy task for the flesh to choose one in the midst of many beauties, it would want to have them all, but the biblical order is "a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be ONE flesh" (Gen 2:24).

As a woman, you have been wired and being prepared to be a helpmeet to a specific purpose on earth, so when the right man (with that purpose) shows up, you will know.



After my friend and I returned from gathering materials needed for the tree house construction from a nearby bush, we began the construction work on the ground. We settled to first construct the box-like frame that will support the structure. Since we had taken time to prepare the dimensions for the frame according to the size of where it will fit on the tree, it took us less time to finish the fitting and this was done in an open ground by the tree. We ensured to hammer the planks for the frame strongly into each other before setting it on the tree. We understood the fact that a weak frame meant a weak structure altogether and we put effort to get it right. After the frame was completed, we carefully lifted it to fit on the tree and we got it right as the frame snug on the tree.

Discovering purpose and choosing rightly are not the only guarantee of experiencing a great marital life on earth. It takes much more to ensure marital bliss. I consider the framework of a marriage to be how welded (fitted) the individuals in it are. Even the bible support this concept and emphasized it that “the two shall become ONE”. The two shall become the ONE FRAME support for their marriage.

The “fitting” or welding of the frame (couples) is best done off-site (before marriage) before the setting on the tree (marriage). The building of the tree house frame on an open ground as against on the tree gave us a lot of advantages, top of which was the ample space (without obstructions) to work better in constructing the frame. It also allowed us the space to view the frame from all angles so as to check if there are flaws in the frame. Similarly, the “welding” of couples before

marriage (and not in marriage) give the couple's space, without much pressure, to see the flaws, red lights, and irregularities before the wedding.

Welding before wedding

THE WEDDING PARTY: The long-awaited ceremonial procession finally commenced. The bride had had a professional makeup artist work on her face for several hours until she was fully satisfied with her facial beauty. Her wedding gown swept loosely few yards behind her and it was beautifully adorned with shining gems. Her face practically glowed in the glitters of the pearls in the crown she had on her head and one cannot but be attracted to the glint of the diamond jewelry adorning her neck and wrist. She danced gracefully to the superb rendition coming from the choir as her groom and the pastor waited for her at the altar to seal the deal.

Within an hour the couple had signed their marriage certificates and the church procession was over. Well-wishers had their fill of food and still had a surplus to take home after the reception. Soon, the entire event venue was deserted and the new couples are left to take on the solitary journey of fate in marriage. They have done a great job to deliver a well-organized wedding ceremony. Now the event is over and it is time to test how well they have prepared for their marriage union.

BLACK MARRIAGE

The story above paints a picture of one of the most celebrated events on earth- a wedding ceremony. Resources are put in place and roles are assigned to event managers, planners, and protocol officers to deliver a “perfect” wedding ceremony but if only the same preparation, attention and planning can go into the marital journey. It’s quite unfortunate that huge human and material resources can be expended for an event of just a few hours but little or no planning is put in place for the lifetime journey of marriage itself. It is time we got our priorities right.

The alarming rate of single parenting, separations, and divorce in the society is becoming worrisome. I cannot but ask the question of why people do not get it right with marriage as they do with organizing the events surrounding them. Marriages crash barely a few months or years into its establishment. This shows us that the couple, who wonderfully danced happily together on the “glamorous” wedding day, cannot live together in marriage. I have discovered that young people going into marriage these days totally have a wrong perception about marriage and how it is designed to work. A lot of plans need to go into wedlock more than it goes into the wedding ceremony.

Welding is the joining together of metal parts (most of the same type) by heating their surfaces to the point of melting with a blowpipe, electric arc, or other means, and uniting them by pressing, and/or hammer. Take critical note of this definition as we will later be dissecting it to explain the concept of marital welding.

From the above definition of welding, you will see that welding (of metals) takes heating of surfaces to the point of melting. Similarly, welding (in marriage) is the conscious “heated” effort by two engaged individuals to submit their “self” (ego and personality) to go through the furnace in preparation to be hammered into one fine work. They have to go through the process of serious heating until they get to the melting point where they are in a liquid state (humble state) ready for the fusion. Many are however not ready to surrender to this welding process.

Welding as used in this marriage context is the time for a conscious effort by both engaged individuals to understand their differences and make necessary adjustments before going into marriage. You will observe I emphasized on the word effort in my earlier definition above, because like the process of welding two metals together is not easy, so also is the welding of two matured individuals not going to come easy. Also, as it takes the concentrated heating and hammering to join two metals, so also it takes concentrated effort and “hammering” for two matured bodies to fuse into ONE (considering differences in upbringing and personality).

The Welding Period

The courtship period is supposed to create the perfect avenue for the welding process but unfortunately, it is not fulfilling that purpose. It has only been reduced to moment for date nights, eat outs, excursions, prewedding shoots, and wedding planning. People are not paying attention to details

in courtship and have even reduced it to a time of pretense to woo and impress their partner.

Courtship is now being viewed by youths as an opportunity to impress, and to be at their “faked” best so as to win their suitor’s heart. This act of pretense to be “nice” during courtship is the genesis of the popular question being asked in troubled marriages; “where is the man/woman I fell in love with”? During courtship, the men will offer heaven and earth, make and fulfill many inconvenient promises to make the lady fall head over heels. But after the wedding when the deal is signed he switches back to his real self and the question comes “where is whom I fell in love with”?

My question to you is did you fall in love with the person or with the show of affection? Have you not read? For it is written..... (Go and study your bible).

Many ladies too, on the other hand, are ignorantly insensitive and unreasonable. Sometimes some red signs blink glaringly yet they ignorantly explain it away. Courtship is not the period to explain away any red lights but to address it to a logical conclusion. If you see any troubling traits about the man, it is a time to either call for help or run! Watch and Pray.

Now he is sweeping you off your feet on the corridor of romantic escapades but you see some signs that he may later sweep you off your feet in the corridor of punches, but you ignore it because of the current romantic escapades? Think again!

BLACK MARRIAGE

Women are witty and wired with sweet tongues that can melt the soul of men. It is how God wired them. They can use this wittiness to their good or evil advantage during courtship (or even in marriage), so men need to be prayerful to decipher the true character of a woman.

Also, women can exude beauty and body carriage that will make men fall in love at first sight. Insensitive men easily lust after this momentary packaging to later discover it is all facial 'make-up' beauty full of inner ugliness after the deal is sealed in marriage. Be sensitive.

Courtship is the period to build intimacy through quality interaction.

Some engaged individuals have no (or little) interaction during the courtship period. This is often the result of a distant relationship or poorly arranged betrothal or match-making etc. Whatever the reason that was given, it is a bad thing for couples not to relate well during courtship. Situations like this mean that both engaged individuals will discover in marriage the lapses they ought to have discovered before saying "I do" at the altar.

Be smart and alert during courtship. Open your eyes to read along and between the lines. Converse well with your partner and ask (probing and purposeful) questions when necessary. Courtship is a period to see the signs before crossing the line to the other side of marriage, so take ample advantage of that opportunity.

The Welding Process

A wedding is what 'ceremoniously' starts a marriage, Welding is the pillar that keeps the marriage standing. Many couples prepare for the ceremony rather than the pillar that keeps it standing. As explained earlier using the analogy of metal welding, I will now reiterate on the process of welding in marriage.

As the welding of two metals together is not an easy task, so also is the welding of two matured individuals with differences in nature, perception and lifestyle not easy. It takes concentrated heating and beating by a skillful goldsmith to join two metals in good looking fashion. Also, it takes concentrated perseverance, drive and passion for two matured individuals to make a marriage relationship work.

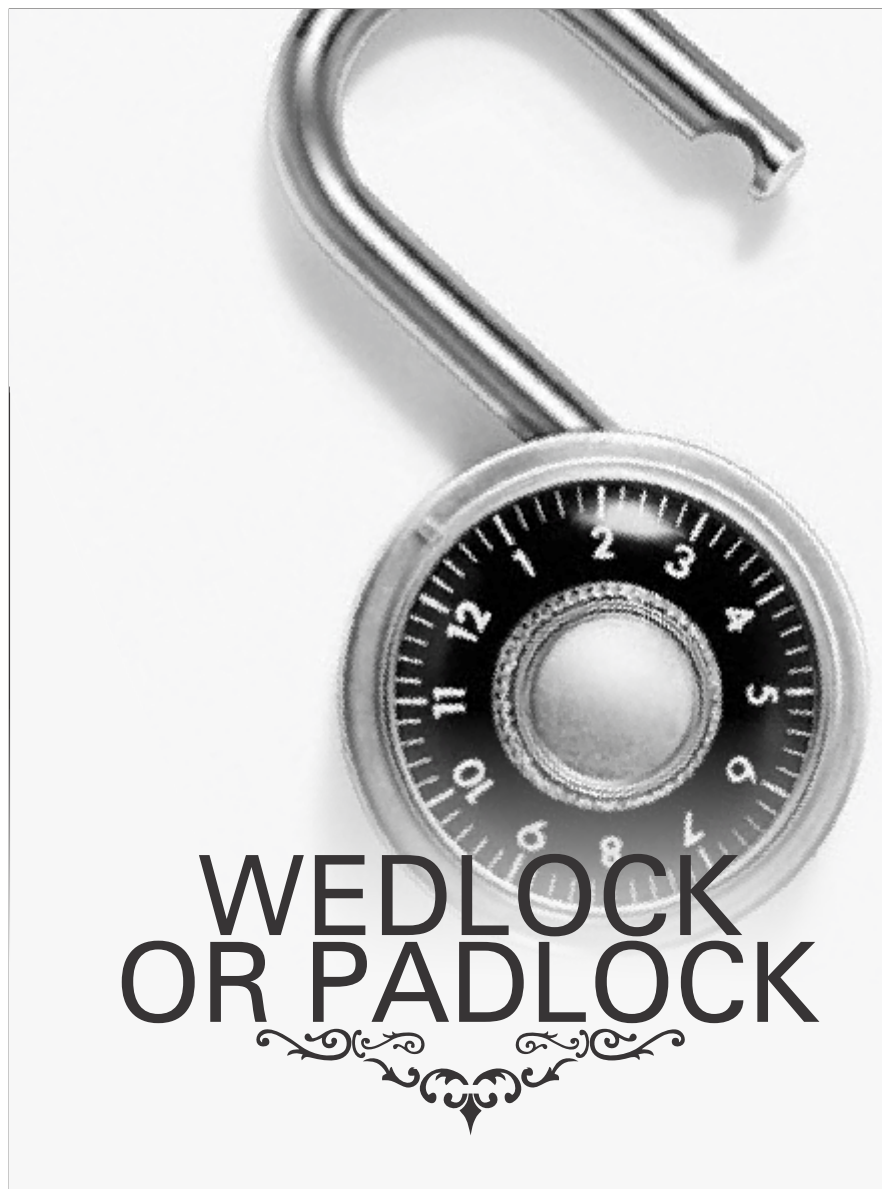
Like two separate metals of different shades, density, and weight get welded together, so must two individuals of different training, upbringing, character, lifestyle, and personality join together in marriage. For welding, the goldsmith needs to put in place some materials like fluxes, electrodes etc. For marital welding too, the individuals need patience, endurance, tolerance, and prayer.

It is not just enough for welding to take place, it is also very important that the welding has a smooth finishing. A smoothly welded metal produce a fine looking metal work. So also, smoothly welded individuals produce a fine marriage that will ENDURE through time. There can be an awkward joint if the joining is not done in the right process of

BLACK MARRIAGE

mutual and total submission. If the willingness of both individuals is not mutual, the wedding may not be smooth and will cause a lot of painful friction later in the marital journey.

Observe the emphasis on the word ENDURE. Endurance is the ability to whit stand an unpleasant or difficult process or situation without giving way. Sincerely, the journey of marriage is not as easy as we dream it but both individuals must endure the unpleasant situations in it and as well enjoy the pleasant ones together too.



BLACK MARRIAGE

Many couples are living a married life of horrid frustration. Their destiny is locked to the fate of a miserable marriage with no marital bliss and happiness. How did they find themselves in this? Some other couples are enjoying the glory of a stable, peaceful and happy home (marriage). How did they achieve this?

Many aspiring couples dream of being ushered into marriage with a talk-of-the-town glam wedding and thereafter live happily ever after with their lover. We daydream about a perfect future and spend our youthful years fantasizing on a perfect marriage (home) we wish to build (leaving out the 'evil' thoughts of any marital turbulence and/or divorce). But we someday find ourselves hit with the hard realities of marital life- the reality of living with the pressures of running a home and surviving the turbulence of marriage. These are hard realities many couples do not prepare for, or out of 'spiritual over-confidence', ignorantly renounce with a "it is not my portion". Truth be told, whether you will get some or all portions of it depends on the preparation you put in place. Marriage is not a bed of roses as portrayed in some movies

Wedlock is the state of being married. To some, it will be a glorious journey while to others it will be horrid and miserable. Marriage is synonymous with a judicial sentencing. When two individuals come together to say "I do" at the altar, they are simply sentencing themselves to either a lifetime of bondage or that of bliss.

No one is particularly pre-destined to experience a lifetime of miserable marriage (though some will invariably do), but it is the will of God for us to experience joy, love, and peace in our marriages (if we can follow his principles).

14-year wait

Jacob waited and served for 14 years to get the love of his life. He paid the price to get the prize. Yes, it was supposed to last 7 years and it could have been seven years if Leah had been married before Jacob's proposal to Rachel, but it took two 7 years and Jacob waited irrespectively.

Some individuals will quickly reach the height of intimacy needed for them to go into marriage than some others who will need to build it over a long period of time. Bonding is very important in marriage. Couples must always be in physical, emotional and spiritual connection in marriage. Like the popular saying "You don't prepare for war during a war", so also does it apply for bonding in marriage. Don't plan to get bonded during the marriage, it may become frustrating. Instead BUILD the connection, bond, and intimacy during courtship and then GROW it in marriage. Don't rush courtship.

Secondly, courtship allows the intending couples to build a life together before marriage. They are supposed to work out their spiritual, emotional, physical and financial standing in readiness for the marital journey. They are to reach this agreement during courtship and not take the disagreements

into marriage. If the two individuals are convinced that they are meant for each other in marriage, they must be ready to achieve the above-listed importance of courtship no matter how long it takes.

The weight of the wait

“Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord”

God also recognizes the fact that waiting is weighty and uneasy for the flesh and that is why He is asking us to be strong and take heart in waiting for the Lord. For men to wait amidst emotions swelling is a difficult thing but as the scripture says;

*“Wait for the Lord's help and follow him, He will honor you and give you the land and you will see the wicked sent away”
Psalm 37:34.*

I have received this message on being strong in waiting times over. When my emotions seemed to be swinging heavy on me, I still get the “be strong and courageous” message. If not for these messages I would have taken hasty and beclouded conclusions that may have marred a lot of things.

This means that whatever “land” one desires, if it is to be taken with the deserved honor, free from all wickedness, then it is paramount to wait for the Lord's help. It takes patience to move with God. For God’s purpose to be realized in one's life, one must be very patient and be reassured that God is in charge of all things.

Delay in life sometimes may be because you are not ready for where you are headed but Grace is keeping you from ruining the place if you go into it with your current inadequacies. Patiently wait in prayer. Think deep! Pray hard! Learn well!

"I do" while Idle

Today, the ideal is being altered as many idle souls head to the altar to say 'I do' to something they cannot handle. Many jumbles into marriage, fumble in it and tumble out of it to later grumble on the many reasons why they failed. Marriage demands physical, spiritual, emotional and financial maturity from the individuals in it. Trying to blend with the trend of events will put you into trouble.

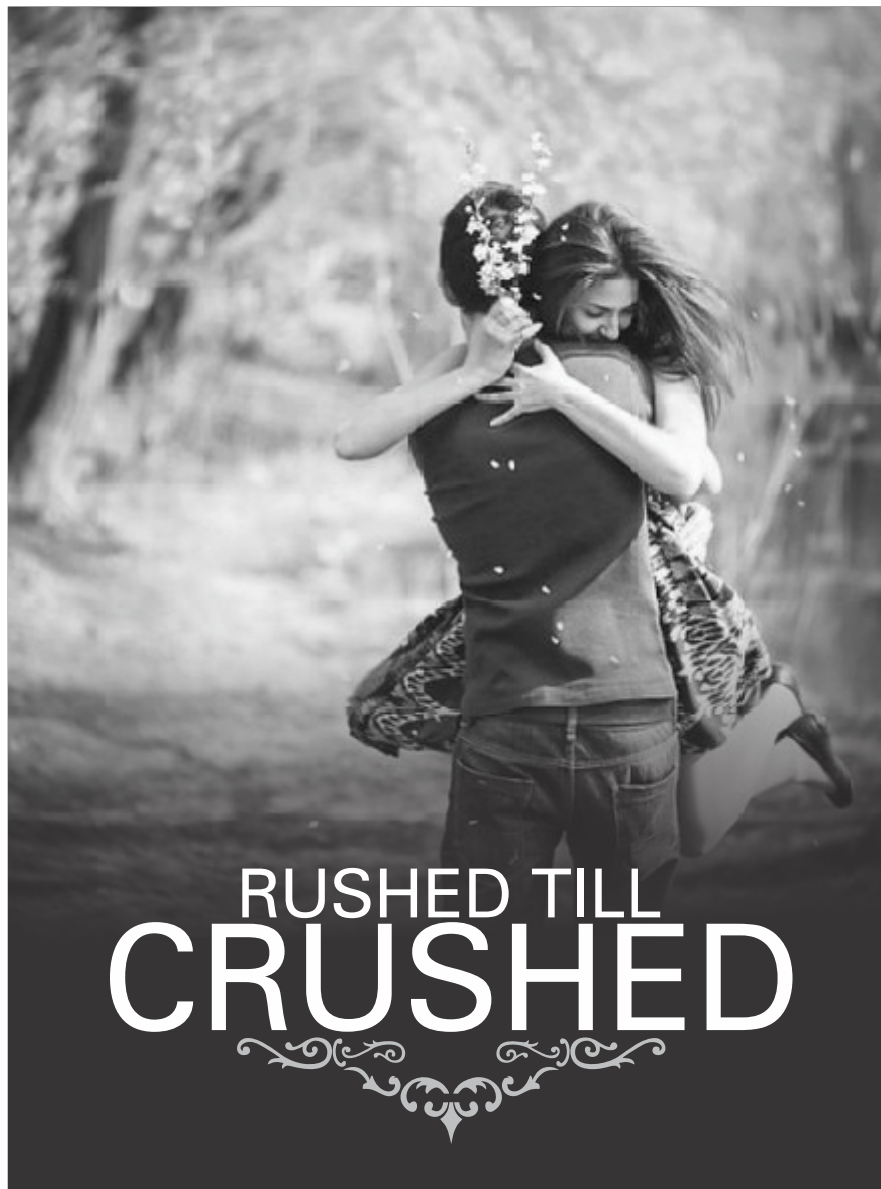
I remember that the tree house project idea was birthed out of idleness. It was a holiday and we had nothing doing but watching TV all day, then the show came up on TV where we saw children playing in a tree house, we decided to take on the project (you know how the rest of the story went). Many couples see the need for marriage out of idleness and some others go into it idle.

This particular topic is a sensitive one and I will soft pedal on it. For many reasons, the top of which is family and societal pressure, many individuals go into marriage prematurely and unprepared. The wedding event itself may be completely sponsored by family and friends who will later leave you to the struggle of making ends meet in marriage.

BLACK MARRIAGE

Another class of people are those who are not “financially idle” but go into marriage out of idleness for the fun of it (or for the fun in it). As David sinned against God with Uriah’s wife out of idleness, idleness is causing a lot of havoc in people’s lives today also. Some people don’t go into marriage out of personal conviction but as the answer to their idleness.

The wrong motion of Vogue and peer influence has caused many to take the journey in haste. Don't follow the crowd. Take time to prepare yourself for marriage. There is no attendance for late comers in it neither are there any penalties for marrying late. If God blesses you with the resource to run a marriage, all those permutations on reaching retirement age when your children are still in school will not matter. Take the time to develop the spiritual, emotional and financial capabilities you need to survive in marriage and live a blissful marital life.



SMITH DROVE SLOWLY INTO THE GENERAL CAR PARK of the Animal Science department. His clean Toyota Camry glittered in the reflection of the sun ray as it grounded to a halt at the car park. The other students and lecturers around the park could not but notice the paparazzi pulled by Smith at the car park. The female students silently 'crushed' after Smith while the men boiled in jealousy.

Though Smith cruised about in his parent's car, no one cared. To them, he was a big boy and the desire of any woman. Beautiful Lizzy, Smith's closest pally, walked with shoulders high to meet him at the car park. Though unofficial, she was regarded by everyone as 'Mrs. Smith' and she seemed to be enjoying the reverie of the moment. She opened the front passage door and got into the car as if it was her usual practice. She seemed to be sending a warning signal to other 'crushing' ladies to keep off.

Soon the news was all over town that Lizzy and Smith had made their engagement official. More rumors spread about how Smith is being pushed to marry Lizzy and how Lizzy is being rushed into marriage by her parents.

One clear thing about Lizzy and Smith's story is that they were both not ready to get married.

"I don't see myself getting married in the next two years. I've still got more pursuits to make", Smith had earlier told his friends. But now he was having his family members in conjunction with Lizzy's parents planning a wedding on their

behalf. He was clearly not ready for marriage as he had no stable source of income and still lived in his father's house. Smith's father had taken up the financial responsibility for the ceremony and had an apartment rented in readiness for his son's rushed marriage. Lizzy's mother had everything planned for the bride just to see her daughter off in marriage.

"I am getting married in two weeks' time", Smith finally caved in as he declared to his friends. Whatever happened to the next two years plan?

"Why the rush?" His friends inquired. The candid reason given was that both families want to have it so and have done a good job to organize and finance a wedding.

Barely seven months into the marriage had Lizzy voiced out in anger 'I regret ever getting married to you'. Smith no longer put on his wedding ring and his home has become a hell on earth. Both individuals want out of the marriage but the family kept managing the situation for them. Surely, it will only be a matter of time before the seams will burst at the helms and the marriage will be over. This is a typical example of the kind of marriages and homes we have in the society now.

Many individuals have been rushed into a marriage that crushed their destinies. Marriage is a holy institution designed to help the couples in it achieve their purpose in life. The woman is supposed to be a help meet for the man to fulfill his God-given task and so also is the woman supposed to find her fulfillment in the union. Sadly, the devil has attacked the marriage institution to make it a frustrating one

that crushes purposes.

The available error

‘If the desired is not available, you make the available desirable’ is another evil fallacy. If this is your belief, then you have just fallen into the “available error” that has crashed and still crushing many destinies.

Impatience has destroyed many destinies through marriage. The frustration of tirelessly waiting for the right partner has led many people to accept just any available alternatives. These alternatives have ended up being a bone in their necks and a blight to their destiny. Waiting, for the average human, is a tough task, especially amidst pressure but it is what we must learn.

The desired

The issue of the “available-desirable” analogy in marriage is a serious one.

One person once asked me if it was not among the available (circle of friends) that the right choice will be. That is, can the ‘desired’ choice be outside the (immediate) circle of friends? These questions are dicey and must be handled with care, especially if it is being asked by a frustrated fellow.

We all pray to marry a friend. A friend is someone with whom you are acquainted, someone you know well and regard with affection and trust. It is paramount that couples are the best of friends in marriage because it’s a life-long journey. A relationship should not result in marriage if the couples are

BLACK MARRIAGE

not best of friends. Whether it's someone you have known before or just meeting, the fundamental step is to establish a cordial level of friendship and intimacy with the person.

The right choice may come from your immediate circle of friends and may as well be someone you have not even met yet. It all depends on fate, circumstance and your journey in life.

From what location the final suitor will come from is not really of importance (but it must be from the right place), what matters is the cordial level of intimacy existing between the engaged partners. Note that I reiterated that the selection must come from the right place. Where is the right place?

As a Christian, the bible says you must not be unequally yoked. This simply means that your selection is restricted to persons only in the body of Christ. This, however, is not a guarantee of getting the best partner (because you still have some assignments to do), but it puts you in a safe zone.

If the desired is not available, the one available may be a bomb waiting and seeking where to explode. If the one available is not for you, don't make it yours, wait and pray for yours to come your way. It is better to wait to get it right than going through years of painful struggle by making a hasty decision.

Many end up accepting to marry persons who are misfits for their purpose. They go into such marriages believing or

hoping a miracle will happen in the long run. I still have not been able to decipher why, for any reason, people go into the wrong relationship despite knowing it is not the best one for them. This often results in what I term a 'salvage/manage' relationship.

I remember the pressure on Mr. T to get married to his wife, a woman whom he doesn't love and he is not sure she loves him as well. The woman was the flirty type but Mr. T's family are of the opinion she will grow out of it when she gets married. (I wonder why people are of the opinion that marriage bring maturity or end immorality).

The couples battled in silence for five years. The home is blessed with three kids but the woman of the house is still writhing in her flirty lifestyle. The man, as a Christian, does not want a divorce. He tried and is still trying to salvage the situation. He combines the motherly responsibilities with his own fatherly responsibility just to cover up for the marriage flaws. He does the child care while the wife goes about her unruly life with her wayward friends. She is clearly managing to exist in the marriage as an exit out of it will be frowned upon by family and society.

Manage or Salvage?

In a "one chance" situation (where the individuals are wrong matches), the result is often that one party will be trying to salvage the relationship while the other will be trying to manage the relationship. Frustration easily set in for both parties.

So why the rush?

Also, many broken hearts belief in finding relief by getting into another relationship. At this their broken moment, they are vulnerable and fall for the available mumbo jumbo that offers some form of comfort and the offspring of which is regret.

Founding the genesis of a relationship on worldly heresies is a serious trouble to many Christian unions. Trying to blend with the worldly trend is causing serious bends and dents in Christian relationships. These dents and bends are not easy to mend in marriage and partners only tend to salvage the situation which often eventually lead to the end of the union. The standard of a marital relationship is to be with a compatible soul mate.

When the compatible partner is not readily available, the available one may be nothing compared to being compatible. So, do not fall into the 'available' error.

Patience is a virtue. Many have impatiently blown with the wind into the arms of the available person and rowed to the altar with the incompatible.

In the end, they flowed into the stream of unbearable violent tides in marriage. Take time!

The Concept of Singleness

Two singles

Cindy is a randy beautiful teen, full of life and socially active. In terms of beauty, she is the dream of any man. Her ever moisturized light skin deliberately oiled to glitter whenever

she wriggles past men captures the masculine soul. Her sleek body, with appropriate curves, is irresistible.

Her fitted dressing style always brought out her attractive figure and her facial makeups are of high class. Her stimulating eyeballs are magically lazed to spell any man and the red outline of her lips are magical attractions.

My relationship with Cindy began without any official proposal. We were both attracted to each other and began a love fantasy without anyone asking each other out. We exchanged love messages and shared quality time together. We were fond of each other so much that the entire school knew about the relationship without any public announcement of it. "Two love birds" were the words that captured the picture of things between us.

If it was about feelings, the relationship was built on it and if it is just all about care, we shared it a great deal. A deep emotional attachment was the engine powering the relationship and sensation was the driver. The union was the envy and talk of everyone in the school.

Others copied our model and it soon became a widely used model in the school. The relationship was romantically modest and emphatically exceptional.

The relationship would have been perfect but for a clause, Cindy was randy. She had other guys flocking around her and she flirted around with them. She truly loved me and proved it to me in many ways but she was also in love with flirting and was not ready to let go of that lifestyle. She enjoyed it as a part

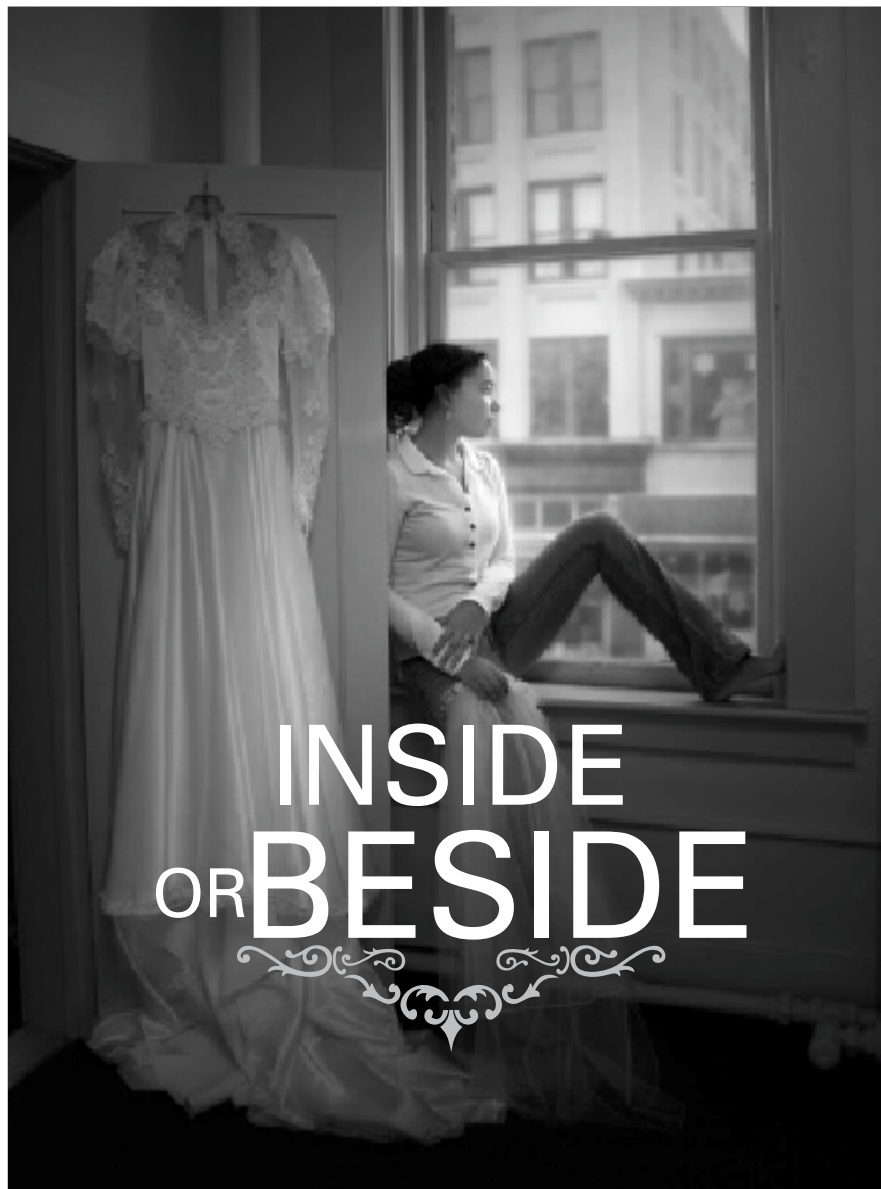
of her. After much endurance of this indecent lifestyle, I just had to call it to quit with her. I was ready to be single for her but she still wanted to be out there to mingle. That lifestyle ended what seemed a promising relationship.

Singleness

Engaged, not engaged or disengaged, whatever the status, the level of an individual's singleness is of paramount importance. I define singleness as the willingness to forsake every other in readiness to take one. There are relationship situations where only one individual is prepared to be single.

Don't get confused. This means that only one individual out of the two engaged individuals is willing to forsake every other (persons) in readiness to take one while the other is still out to mingle. In an ideal relationship that will go on to work out successful, both engaged individuals must be willing to be single. That is, they must be willing to forsake every other (persons) in readiness and willingness to take ONE and become ONE. Many relationships are rocked with fornication and adultery because of the neglect of this fundamental 'single concept'.

For many relationships, the danger signs are clear before marriage but were ignored. In courtship. Observing the 'single readiness' of your partner is important. Is he/she willing to close the door to other toasters or is s/he enjoying the toasting?



I REMEMBER HOW MY FRIENDS WANTED ME TO DATE when we were on campus. Yes, at that time everyone seemed to be in a relationship but I wasn't. They cared that I should also have a woman beside me to keep me company always but they do not understand the concept of companionship.

Not being alone does not solve the feeling of loneliness, having the right companion beside you is what does. It takes a connection between a lonely person and the right companion to end the feeling of loneliness. Without a mental association between the lonely and the companion, there will be no sharing of feelings capable of ending loneliness. Similarly, a relationship is not just about having someone to marry. It is about marrying the right person who connects with your personality, dreams, goals, and purpose.

Friendship in Marriage

The question of who is the right companion/partner has been resolved in the earlier chapters of this book and we also touched on the fact that the ideal situation in marriage is to have your spouse as your best friend.

Someone once said there is no scarcity of friends but of friendship. This is a simple statement with deep connotations. Marital partners are supposed to be in the best of friends as soul mates. There is a difference between marrying a friend and being in friendship with your partner. In friendship are support, help, and bond

HAVING A COPY OF WHAT IS INSIDE BESIDE

I have come to learn that what is beside you can offset what is inside you and what is inside you can similarly offset what is beside you. To literally put it, some people throw up when they are hit by the offensive smell of a dunghill, so also, some people cannot stand some attitudinal behaviors.

The term “beside” as used here refers to a spouse/partner. A spouse is the one who will forever be beside you on the marital journey. On the other hand, the term “inside” is used to refer to the content (personality, dreams, aspirations, purpose) you carry as an individual.

From the dunghill analogy given earlier above, if the spouse you have beside you on this journey nauseates your purpose, personality, and dreams, then be rest assured that your journey is sentenced to a life of unpleasant “throw-ups”.

To enjoy the journey of marriage, what is beside must not nauseate what is inside. Your dreams, goals, and purpose must align with your partner’s being, character, aspirations, and purpose. This does not magically happen, the individuals must walk and work it out as best friends.

Most Relationships are in disarray because there is non-alignment of purpose, dreams, and desires between the engaged partners. They are not agreed in purpose. To have the best of relationships, it is necessary to have a copy of what is inside you to be beside you.

As I have mentioned earlier, the genesis of a relationship should begin from defining what you want out of it and to do that, you need to know what you carry 'inside' of you. Answer some pertinent questions as to who you are? What your principles, desires, aspirations, and goals are?

What do you live for? What on earth are you here for? How can your partner come into your dream/life and become a help meet?

With a correct analysis of what you carry inside you, what you require "beside" you to complement and complete 'you' on your life journey will be easy. The search can then begin with a scope of this in focus.

And remember the law of attraction, what is inside of you largely determines what will be attracted to be beside you. Let me quickly now touch on the law of attraction.

Law of attraction

Simply put, the law of attraction is the ability and process of attracting into our lives whatever we focus on. This law is a universal concept that cut across several societies, religion, race, and culture. The law states that what you focus on, determines what you get out of life.

Unfortunately, so many persons are still blind to the potentials locked within them that they are not fully utilizing the power of this law of attraction. This concept works well in a relationship when you as an individual have built a positive magnetic force around you that pulls/attract only like-minded individuals.

To attract the right person, you must be living a purposeful life. This way, you will only attract to yourself those whose destinies ties with yours to join you on the path of purpose you are following.

Build a positive, godly aura around you, such that attracts positive godly individuals (partner) to you. However, this is not a guarantee that you will get the right partner. No, life is more complicated than that.

This law of attraction does not completely answer the question of selecting the right partner. It only tries to ensure that you the right persons, and fate to yourself.

Back to our discourse on companionship in marriage.

Accompanist VS Composer

Here I compare couples with the crew of a musical concert. In a concert, there are composers who write the songs to be played by the instrumentalists/accompanists. An accompanist is a person who provides a musical accompaniment to another musician or to a singer.

I refer to partners (spouses) as accompanists and /or composers. I have observed that some people have accompanists as a partner in their marital journey in life. Their partners are only being sheepishly dragged along on the journey, just playing along to the tune. On the other hand, I have seen where both partners are vibrant pillars in their marital journey (purpose) in life, both helping each other in the fulfillment of their engagements. They are both an active and integral part of fulfilling their purpose on earth. These are partners I

refer to as composers. The first decision I know I need to make is to determine if what I want is an accompanist or a composer?

The accompanist, as someone who just plays to the tune composed by the composer. He/she has no role other than to play along to the composed tune. The only time an accompanist run into a problem is if he/she does not understand the notes or the song becomes unfamiliar.

However, a partner who is also a co-composer of the song takes part in the writing or re-write of the song whenever necessary.

Don't misunderstand me here. I am not saying one is good and the other is bad. Each one has proven to work well at different times with different couples. What is important is the understanding and friendship between both couples on the journey as helpmeets.

DEFILED OR REFINED?

Individuals exist as either defiled or refined. For clarity, it is an individual's wholeness or uniqueness (which makes up the individual's personality, mentality, perception/thinking, composure etc) that I regard to here as either defiled or refined.

Defiled simply means marred, spoilt, profaned. Now imagine if an individual's personality, mentality, perception/thinking is marred and profaned. Such a person will exude tainted, dishonorable and bad character. Refined on the other hand

BLACK MARRIAGE

means pure, purified, cultivated, cultured etc. Also imagine if a person's personality, mentality, perception/thinking, and composure is pure, cultured and polished.

A defiled individual is likely to revile another individual, while a refined individual is likely to, in a refined manner, define and interact with other individuals.

From personal and impersonal experiences, I have seen the success of most relationships largely depending on whether both individuals are defiled or refined OR whether one of both engaged parties is defiled or refined.

Defiled inside, Refined beside (one person is defiled while the partner is refined):

As unfair as it may sound but it is true that most individuals with defiled characters end up marrying persons of refined personality. The church has over time served as the 'ideal' fishing grounds for partner selection. Many are of the opinion that it is the best place to find good partners.

Many guys want decent church girls as wives and so also do the ladies want polished Christian brothers as husbands. Even individuals who have lived wayward lives all through their bachelorhood/spinsterhood end up coming to the church (in pretense) to select a partner. Ignorantly falling for this deception has made many refined individuals end up with spouses of defiled characters.

Such a union, when a refined person ends up marrying a person of defiled character, is likely to be largely based on frustration and hostility. The refined individual may try to

BLACK MARRIAGE

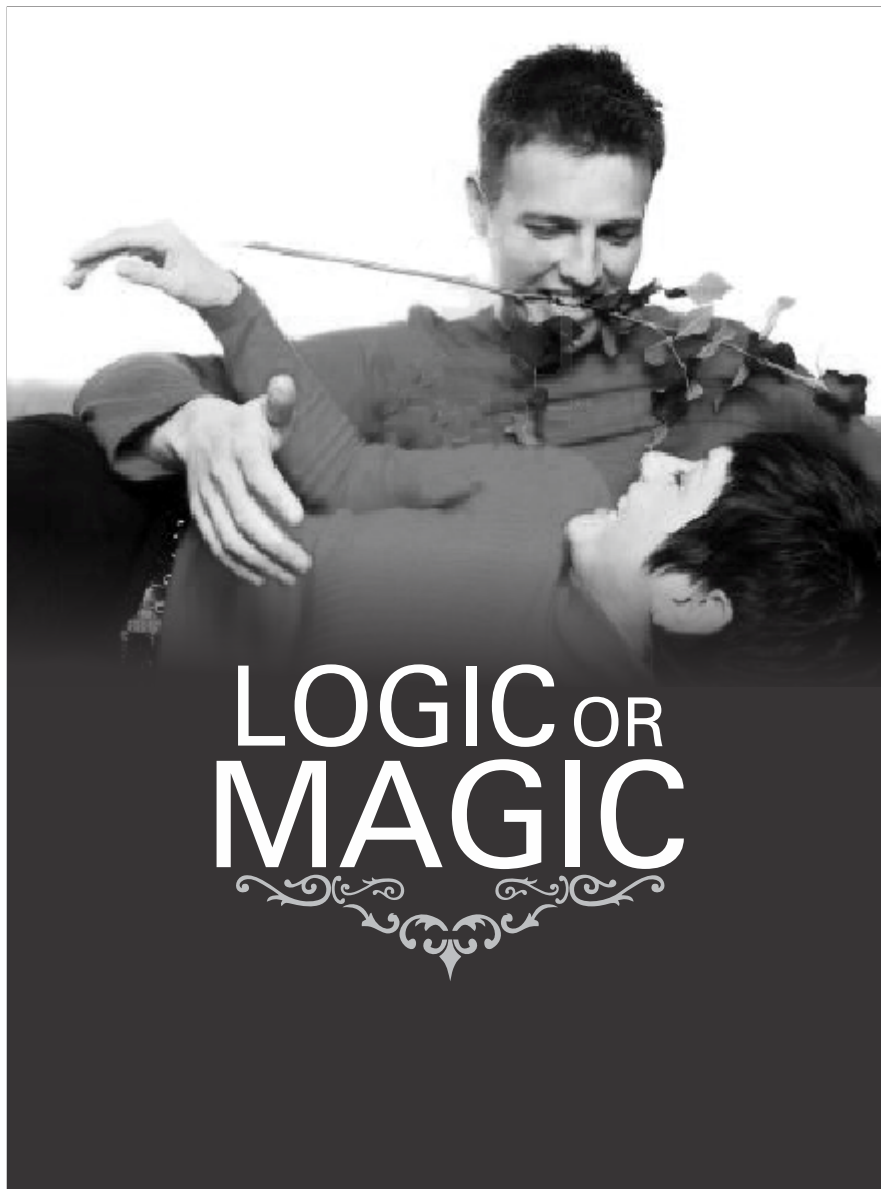
endure the reviling of the partner for a while but as human, the flesh will rebuke the reviling, in the long run, causing the elms to burst.

Also, another explanation for why refined persons end up with persons of defiled character is what I termed the ditch of “available error”. Some refined individuals impatiently end up with a defiled person in marriage as a result of falling into the “available error”.

What is the “available error”? The wrong but popular notion that; ‘if the desired is not available, you make the available desirable’ has ruined many lives who cannot wait for the desired to be available.

The ideal match is to have two refined persons marrying each other.

(Refined inside, Refined beside). That is, to have two individuals who have defined their focus by refining their minds in line with their purpose of existence of marrying each other will bring about a glorious and successful marital relationship.



There is a popular saying that Love is magical, but is this saying completely true? Is love attraction a magical or logical phenomenon?

What is a magical love and what is logical love? Simply put Logic is a method of objective reasoning while magic deals with supernatural force.

I have heard people talk about love at first sight. Is this true? Can someone fall in love at first sight? Or can someone fall in love by just mere sighting? What makes someone fall in love? Is love 'at first sight' magical or logical? What triggers love? All these and many more questions have I raised to task myself on understanding this phenomenon called love.

The definition of love is relative and personal. You will define love the way you feel it while another will define it differently. Considering this, I will stay away from defining it. I have read that "You cannot control what happens when you decide to be vulnerable and allow that word (love) to take over your soul". Is this the reason for "love at first sight"? Why will someone fall in love (or lust) at first?

Though I resent using the word "fall" in referring to when someone is in love because it makes it look like is a kind of ditch that people fall into. However, I will use it in the general usage.

What triggers love?

Love is a triggered phenomenon, that is, something initiates it. Sometimes it is unexplainable. It may be difficult to explain

why one is (feeling) in love with a particular thing, habit or person but however, sometimes there can be a (logical) explanation to it.

Children love biscuits because of its sweetness, this is a logical reason.

Similarly, children love their parents (mothers especially) without any particular reason. Love generally is triggered by the “law of attraction”, that is an attraction to either what you see, experience or feel but sometimes it may be triggered by an inexplicable force.

Love triggered by attraction

Many people when asked what they love about a person, thing or phenomenon, they are quick to give an explanation usually based on a physical attribute or likable character. For instance, when you hear men say what they love about or in a woman, they give mostly a physical or character attractiveness.

At this junction, I must establish that there is a thin line between love and lust, especially if it is an attraction initiated by what is seen (sight). What many experiences at “first sight” is lust but think it to be love. Mind you, I am not saying there is no love at first sight neither am I saying lust, (at first sight), is completely bad. No, I am only saying lust can be easily confused with love. Lust is a state of consciousness elicited by a strong physical urge or attraction. Lust is an infatuation (an intense but shortlived passion or admiration) fueled by fantasy and idealization. Lust is usually based on physical attraction and fantasy--it often dissipates over time

(especially when the "real person" surfaces).

What makes the difference between love and lust?

Lust makes you momentarily see only the attractive advantages in a person while Love makes you see farther than the physical into what you hope someone will be, can be and/or what you can be to them--rather than seeing the real person, flaws and all. Lust is a dangerous passionate urge that pushes the individual to take extreme (momentary) steps towards achieving the lustful desire during the peak of its short duration.

The same things that trigger lust also trigger love that is why I said earlier that only a thin line separates lust from love. Physical charm is often the trigger of love (logical love) but love can also be unexplainably triggered without any form of physical lure- this is what I call magical love.

What makes someone fall in love?

One often fall in love with another person's physical beauty, character, temperament, personality etc. These are immediate elements of attraction that make the heart "fall" in love.

On the other hand, like the example of a child-to-mother love given earlier, some categories of love can be inexplicable.

Physical attraction is an instinct we are all born with. It's a natural instinct also medically proven. Love is simply defined as 'an intense feeling of deep affection'. A feeling can be triggered by anything either from the physical or from the

magical. For logical lovers, there is always that element that can be pointed to as the element of attraction towards the loved person.

“What I love about her is her eyes, figure, and passion”, you will hear a man say. These are the elements of (logical) love of Mr. A for her woman.

Another thing about logical loving is that often time people are attracted to each other because they have a lot in common. They enjoy doing similar activities which make hanging out together enjoyable. This means there is a reasoning (that is logic) behind the action of showing love.

From personal experience, I know that love can be logical and/or magical. I have seen boys fall for girls for their physical attributes and beauty. You may say this is 'lust' and not love but I tell you, that desire grew into love. Don't be confused, lust, as defined earlier, is a state of consciousness elicited by a strong physical urge or attraction. Having a strong physical urge or pull towards someone is not a sin but the actions it leads to is the paramount thing of importance. Many are led into criminality and evil because of uncontrolled lust.

One's flesh must be put under adequate control and such person feeling a momentary strong attraction towards someone should take careful steps to meet, get to know, and intimate with the person to build a friendly relationship that can grow to become a marital relationship.

Physical attraction today has become the bane of love in

society.

People love what they see and are attracted to it, this is logical but what happens when such beauty fades? As good as physical attraction is, it can be dangerous to solely base love upon. Physical beauty will fade or may be lost and so might a love based on it fade or be lost when the beauty is gone. This raises another vital question.

Can someone fall out of love?

Yes, one can fall out of love. For lovers who founded their love on a physical element (beauty), there is a high tendency for the love to die when something goes wrong with that element.

Several other reasons can cause people to fall out of love with someone whom they had earlier professed love to but it is most often hinged on the betrayal of what brought the love to be in the first place.

Many wonderful love stories have had dreadful endings out of betrayal, infidelity and many other similar reasons. Another question raised here is, why would a lover betray his/her lover?

Betrayal or acts of infidelity is a serious virus destroying marriages.

How does it creep in? Is it caused by a loveless marriage? Many writers have tried to dissect the menace of infidelity especially with its primary role of destroying marriages. I will not like to go deep into the assessment of the various analysis done on the topic but I will touch on it as it relates to my

discussion on love.

Top on the list of the causes of infidelity is emotional disconnection. This disconnection often leads to secondary feelings that prompt the individual to seek another connection outside. It often starts as a temporary disconnection but the way the individuals handle it determines the longevity. Is this 'emotional disconnection' the same as love? Does it mean there is no more love between both partners?

Emotions and love are two entwined concepts, the end of one can be the end of the other or not. I have heard about couples who are seeking divorce or separation still professing love for each other despite all the odds threatening their union. This explains how complex this issue can be.

An emotional disconnection between two partners may be temporary and some couples may be able to make it through the moment of transient disconnect, it only takes patience and maturity

How to love right?

Love doesn't work unnecessary magic. Some things and situations must be right for it to be effective too. For example when two individuals whose lifestyles are incompatible fall in love with each other, extra efforts must be put in place to settle their incompatibility and individual differences. Challenges will arise in a relationship (both between

compatible and incompatible individuals) that will require matured measures to overcome. If this maturity is absent then such a relationship may not work out.

Love should be built on friendship. Whether love at first sight or at the long sight, whether logical or magical love, lovers must be best of friends and constantly work on strengthening their friendship in the relationship.

Conclusion:

Love is made up of a physical and emotional attraction that is rooted in a complex interconnected web of emotions that ultimately cannot be explained. Love is patient, kind, long-suffering (1 Corinthians 14: 4) and should be the foundation of a relationship. Love is a mystery that cannot be completely analyzed. Love can exist between people who are attracted to each other because they have a lot in common and enjoy doing similar activities which make hanging out together enjoyable.

Also, love can exist between people with distinctly opposite personalities and may be in a relationship that is just as strong as compatible individuals.

Back to the genesis

If love is logically constructed on physical attraction or an object of attraction, such love often ends when that object or physical endowment of attraction is gone. If you are engaged to your partner because of the physical beauty, what happens when s/he shrinks in beauty?

BLACK MARRIAGE

What determined or is determining your choice of that marriage partner?

Is it logical or magical?

Thank goodness you now have an insight into what purpose in marriage means and you have learned about how to decipher the right partner whose dream and purpose will key into yours as a help-meet. We have also discussed how vital love and friendship between partners are in a relationship.

Modus Operandi

MODUS OPERANDI of searching for a partner

To whom it may concern

Dear brothers,
Please use "trafficators" before you park. (The sister needs to see it coming).

Obey the feminine traffic lights. If green, grimly approach. If red, readily reproach your move.

Dear sisters,

Follow safety rules before crossing the line into the engagement. 'Look left, look right, look left again' because your Mr. Right may be on the left.

Never take a one-way relationship. The love must be on a dual carriageway between both of you.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Over speeding kills, it is better to be late than to be an early victim.

Take Time on the express road because it is a highway to a broken heart.

Know him/her before you express your feeling completely.
Use the honk (warning) before overtaking to avoid undue

BLACK MARRIAGE

collusions in engagements. Communication is vital and key. Don't compare or compete with other vehicles (engagements).

Understand the one you drive and service it always.

Check the gauges (of the relationship) always and never ignore any warning signs.

Use only heavenly prescribed oil to keep the engine (of the relationship)

running and active.

MODUS OPERANDI of love

Boy likes girl, girl plays stubborn, but the boy never backs down but earnestly pursue after the girl until she says Yes! Viola!

This is the 'love' chase as we know it, but is this truly the formula? Must consent be gotten through or after 'pressure'? What is the true measure of love?

What is love?

To some love is a magical phenomenon while to others love is logical but both definitions agree that there is an ethical route to love. Sincerely, I cannot give a grand definition of what love is but I want to attempt a synopsis of what love is and is not. Don't mind my play on biblical verses

Note: I am not laying down any rules but "by showing how eager others are to help, I am trying to find out how real your own love is" (2 cor 8:8).

The source of love:

1 Timothy 1:5

"The purpose of this order is to arouse the love that comes from a pure heart, a clear conscience, and a genuine faith".

1 John 4:7

BLACK MARRIAGE

"Dear friend, let us love one another because love comes from God"

Galatians 5:22

But the Spirit produces love, joy etc.

From the above passages, I can logically deduce two things. First is that true love comes from a "pure heart and conscience" and a fake love comes from an impure heart and conscience. The second thing is that love operates, dwell and is produced in and by the spirit.

The question however still remains; can persistence (which is a subtle form of coercion) bring about a clear and genuine love? Is persistence needed to establish a true love affair?

Colossians 2:2

"I do this in order that they may be filled with courage and may be drawn together in love and so have the full wealth of assurance which true understanding brings".