

# 10 DIFFICULT RELATIONSHIPS TO BEWARE OF

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To beware is to be careful, to be cautious, to be wary, and to think twice. These ten difficult relationships can succeed, and do succeed, but have greater potential to fail than any other because of their peculiar nature. The purpose of this teaching is to enlighten you about them and share with you some wisdom that can help you if you have found or do find yourself in any of these circumstances.

## 1. **Having a relationship with someone you may have to develop in ministry.**

God could give you a wife you may have to develop in ministry e.g. TL Osborn, Billy Graham etc. Everyone you meet and intend to go into marriage with is an ideal partner. We fall in love with what we see and discover later what we are supposed to get. What you get maximally is determined by what you are able to provoke out of the person you marry. If you were given a finished product from day one, it will be stale at some point. It is when a couple lives together, and grow together that they discover more and more the uniqueness of the person they have married. The method of God is to save the best for the last. The last best thing about the person you will marry will take years to come out, and is probably best for your relationship.

The difficulty in this kind of relationship is that there is the tendency for the man to be overbearing and faultfinding. This has caused serious problems to many relationships. This kind of relationship sometimes becomes tiresome to the woman as she gets tired of being corrected and told of what she is not doing right and what she needs to do. Sometimes, it makes the woman to lose self-confidence as she has to depend on the man to suggest, approve and decide for her most of the time. In some cases this kind of scenario leads to rebellion from the woman who is tired of being told what to do and what not to do.

Wisdom and patience is required to make it in this kind of relationship. Instructions, counsel and correction must be given in love and patience. Much space and time must be given to your partner to absorb and reform or develop new skills. Much care must be taken to make sure that your intentions of upgrading your partner does not backfire and ruin your relationship.

## 2. **When you pray for a marriage partner for a long time and finally get someone who is not exactly what you are looking for in a life partner.**

God has great plans for you, but so does the devil. And because marriage is pivotal to success in life, you cannot afford a satanic sabotage. It is important for marriage to be high on your agenda of prayer long before you meet the person you are to marry. It has also been discovered that sometimes people who have prayed for a long time get married to people they don't really love may be for any of the following reasons:

- a. Impatience – they couldn't wait anymore so they got involved with the available.
- b. They focused on material possessions rather than the character and personality of the person.

- c. They got carried away by the beauty, handsomeness and figure of the one they met and never cared to find out what the will of God was, and by the time their eyes opened, it was too late.
- d. They allowed themselves to be pressured into marrying the one they were not convinced was the right person either by their parents, family or friends.

Once a bad choice has been made, the price has to be paid. Living with the one you know is a mistake or a wrong choice is not funny at all. It takes a lot of work to adjust and finally fall in love with the same person to make the marriage work. If such a relationship has not been sealed in a marriage ceremony, I will advise a separation, but, if it has been solemnized, you have to accept the challenge and make the most of the situation. Here is how:

- When we make mistakes and acknowledge it in the presence of the Lord and ask for forgiveness and divine intervention and help, God usually turns the situation around and give a testimony. Acknowledge your mistake and ask for forgiveness and help and God will start work on your situation and soon things will get better.
- Develop a positive attitude towards your partner and believe that with God's help the two of you will make it till death separates you.
- Occupy your mind with loving thoughts towards your partner. Always remember that love and hate are the direct result of the thoughts that dominate the mind of a man. If you will deliberately focus your mind on the good things in your partner and shun the wrong things, love will rise and take over your being and the relationship will succeed. You can love the one you previously hate through the same process. Choose what to think about your partner. Think thoughts that will build love and trust for him or her.
- Give much of your time thinking good thoughts about your partner. The more thoughts you think about a thing or person, the more its power over you. Since the goal is to generate love, think more good things about him or her. Focus your mind on the good things he or she does to or for you. Visualize both of you have a good time together. Visualize both of you living happily and having much fun with each other and your children. If you continue this for a very long time, your love will be so strong that you won't remember your initial dissatisfaction of the choice of living your life with him or her.

### **3. Intending to marry someone whose physical appearance doesn't seem to appeal to you or turn you on.**

Appearance matters. Marrying someone you will not be proud of is not advisable. Marrying someone whose appearance does not turn you on is laughable and a vote for a failed marriage. He or she doesn't have to be the most handsome or beautiful to turn you on, but, must be such that appeals to you. It is important you acknowledge the fact that the looks of a person matter in love and relationship. Daily you will meet people whose looks excite and attract your attention. If you marry someone who does not turn you on, there is the tendency that you will abandon that person for another who attracts you later. Since you are only intending and you have not taken the vow of marriage yet, I advice you think twice and get out if your partner doesn't turn you on.

### **The challenge**

1. Distraction when someone attractive passes by or comes around.
2. Difficulty and reluctance in introducing you partner to friends and colleagues.
3. Spending less time with each other.
4. Distance between each other.

Whatever reason for chosen the person you have chosen, always remember that if the person's appearance does not appeal to you or excite you, love for the person will be weak. And when love is weak, the marriage will not stand the pressures of marriage. To get the best out of marriage, marry someone who turns you on.

#### **4. Falling in love with a new convert to Christianity.**

Courtship with a new Christian is like trying to build a skyscraper under a six inch slab. While the person may have physical and emotional maturity, yet the missing ingredient, the spiritual dimension is pivotal to the success of a relationship, and therefore at such times a delay becomes necessary. Making the growth of the new convert your priority and not the wedding will be your best approach. This of course will require a skillful maneuver as you change roles from a person in courtship to the one following up a new convert and spouse to be. It is not going to be easy, unless it is of course by divine instruction as in the case of Joseph and Mary.

The difficulty is in giving priority to building the young believer with the overcoat of a spouse to be. Many times, strong love emotions will not allow this to be. And when you relate with a young believer you may likely make fornication your lifestyle. It is advisable that the young believer grows up to become a mature believer before marriage and wedding is done. A mature believer will always succeed more than a new convert will. A mature believer will apply the principles of God's word in his marriage more than a new convert will.

- 5. A relationship that is match made by your parents or pastor.** When matchmaking goes well, everyone rejoices. When it goes wrong, the matchmaker is blamed. Match making has worked for a number of people and has not worked too well many others. The only problem is that people go into marriage on the recommendation of the one they trust and not because they truly love the person and have seen what they are looking for in a man or woman. My advice is that you take your time to understand the person you have been introduced to and be sure you can cohabit together happily. If you discover you are not compatible, walk out without fear of offending the one who introduced or trying to match make you. Remember, you are the one getting married and not the matchmaker. In as much as you want to please and not to offend your matchmaker, you must make the right choice of a life partner or you will live the rest of your life in misery and pain regretting your choice.
- 6. Rushing into marriage with a total stranger.** It is good to build some level of relationship with a person before proposing or accepting a proposal. It is not right to get married to someone you do not yet know enough to say, "I know him and understand his kind of person; I am convinced I can cope with him". It takes time to know somebody to the point of making a final decision on marriage.

The dating period is a time when friendships are built. It is the bridge from the known to the unknown. No conclusion should be drawn because both are making up their minds, but if after five dates the man has not made his intentions known, a godly and wise woman should begin to get herself together and pull herself back.

I suggest a minimum of six months courtship before marriage. Bear in mind, six months is small and not enough, but will give you some information to work with. You need to give yourself adequate time to get to know the person you are in relationship to be able to make a final decision for or against marriage.

- 7. A relationship between two extremes.** When God brings together two extremes, it is in order for both people to begin to move from their extremes towards each other. We are attracted to people for two reasons. The first is the points of our similarities, they confirm the things we already are and known about ourselves – that draws us to them. We are also drawn to people because of what is opposite of us that is in them. They have what we always wanted but could never become. The extrovert is always attracted to the introvert; and outgoing woman finds herself in a relationship with a phlegmatic man. She loves his quietness and his careful calculated steps in making decisions, because she cannot continue to stand her own hasty decision making. Yet again, she cannot stand his phlegmatic nature all the time.

God sometimes pair us with people who have the strength we don't have and the weaknesses we don't have. His intention is that we balance each other's lives and have a good and rewarding life. It is our duty to accommodate each other and allow each other to perform his or her duties in our lives with God's help. People of both extremes can cohabit in a marriage peacefully if we submit to each other.

- 8. When someone entered into a relationship out of pressure and not out of love.** Marriage can only work when it is entered into in and for love. Allowing family and friends to pressure you into marriage when you are not sure that you have found the right person for you is signing for a life of misery. Allowing circumstances of life to pressure you into marrying just a guy or girl that comes your way is not advisable. Lack of money, accommodation problem, no job, getting older, a troubled mother and family over late marriage and desire to have early grand children, could pressure anybody to making a wrong choice. But, don't do it. Don't be pressured into tying the knot with someone you don't truly love. Wait for the man or woman that will fit your kind of person and be happy in your marriage the rest of your life.
- 9. When you are in a relationship or married to someone who does not excite or challenge you mentally, spiritually and socially.** Marrying someone who does not excite or challenge you is condemnation to boredom. A boring marriage is a prison of some sort. You need a lively and exciting person for a life partner. You need someone who will motivate you in your life pursuits. You need someone whose presence makes you want to sing and dance. You need someone whose presence is fun and brings joy to your life. A boring person is not good for marriage. Exciting people make

marriage exciting. Look out for the one who will excite you and make your marriage a happy and lovely one. Lookout for someone whose words and manner of speech, character and behavior, appearance, and attitude to life excites you. Someone you are at peace with – you are relaxed in the presence of the person. Successful marriage is based on compatibility. Do not plan to manage but enjoy your marriage. Do not make the mistakes others have made in time past that they are ever regretting. Choose right and live right. Choose the right person for you and enjoy the rest of your life.

**10. Falling in love with a non-believer.** The Bible teaches that it is good that we marry someone of the same faith, and therefore, we should not marry a non-Christian. Even, among Christians, we should marry someone who believes in the same doctrines that we believe in to avoid conflicts and war in the house. If we see the same way (from the same perspective), we will live in peace and harmony and be successful in our marriage. The Bible teaches in the book of Genesis chapter 11 that having the same opinion and perspective on issues enhances unity which in turn brings success. To be of one mind, you need to have the same understanding. Because the people had one mind they were accomplishing their goal of building a tower that will reach the heaven and threatened God's plan for the earth. So, God had to come down and confuse their language and scatter them all over the earth.

*2 Cor 6:14-16*

*14 Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people."*

*NIV*

Do not marry an unbeliever. Do not marry just any Christian for not every Christian will fit your kind of person. Marry the one that will fit you. Let God help you find that fitting person. Marry the Christian who believes what you believe so you can be united enough to succeed.

Many years ago while on campus, a sister fell in love with an unbelieving man, and was advised by the leadership according to the above passage to walk out, but she refused insisting she will convert him. She was reminded that it was not her job but that of the Holy Spirit to convert people. They let her go with a warning that they will not help her when trouble starts. She failed to understand that a man's beliefs determine how he talks, behaves, acts and lives his life. After the wedding, problems started. She came back to ask for prayer, they told her to go and pray and convert him as she said she will. Later she came back again to complain that her husband has stopped her from going to church completely. They told her to go and submit to her husband and convert him. You can never be wiser than God. He in His infinite wisdom said we should not be unequally yoked together with an unbelieving person. Heed His advice and marry a same faith person. Wait till the

right person comes your way. He or she will surely come. Same faith person guarantees peace and harmony which are essential for a successful marriage. If you are in love with a non-believer right now, terminate the relationship and walk out to save yourself agony and pain in your future marriage.