

GETTING ALONG WELL

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Marriage is all about relationship. How well you get along with your partner will determine how sweet the marriage will be. Relationship involves understanding of one another with the intent of getting along well. Information about your partner is not to be used against him or her, but to use it to better your marriage. You use information about your partner to aid you in getting along well with each other.

“Likewise, you husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour to the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” (1 Peter 3:7)

Knowledge is very powerful and useful in all relationship. Without knowledge, a lot of blunders will be made. Offence is inevitable when knowledge is absent. Ignorance makes one stumble. In fact, the word of God declares that ignorance is the real reason why marriages like other endeavours of man fail.

“My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge...” (Hosea 4:6 KJV)

When a spouse lacks knowledge of his or her partner, then destruction of the marriage is inevitable. The devil is not the real culprit when a marriage fails. God declared it is ignorance, which is a product of man’s unwillingness to study his, or her spouse to know all there is to be known. The school of success in marriage demands that couples take out time to diligently search out all that is necessary about their partners in order to get along well.

We are enjoined to walk with one another according to knowledge. What I know that offends my spouse should be avoided because I already know that it offends her. What I know that she loves, I should endeavour to do more to create the peace that is required for my marriage to flourish. My knowledge about my spouse’s temperament and character is supposed to equip me on how to respond to her rather than react. Two wrongs cannot make a right. With understanding, things work better. To get along well therefore, I need to work with knowledge I have about my spouse, and not just push it aside. It is dangerous to know something and not use it. The bible calls it sin.

“Anyone who knows the good he ought to do and doesn’t do it, sins.” (James 4:17)

When one sins, he bears the consequences of his sins. Getting along well demands that both parties make effort to please one another and avoid offending each other. This can only be possible if we walk with each other according to knowledge.

“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sins.” (1 John 1:7)

Walking in the light of what we know enhances fellowship. Just as you cannot fellowship with somebody in total darkness, so you cannot fellowship with your wife or husband successfully without light (knowledge). Darkness is a symbol of confusion. To relate in total ignorance of

your spouse and what he or she is expecting of you will bring confusion. And where there is confusion, destruction is inevitable. To disregard what you know about the personality you are married to is foolishness and an invitation to crisis.

Your spouse is not like any other person you know or have known in time past. It will be fatal for your marriage when you attempt to relate with him or her the way you related with the other fellow. Character, habits, desires, likes, dislikes, philosophy, vision, temperament and expectations differ from person to person. This you must take into account when you want to compare your spouse with another. In fact, the scripture teaches that it is not good.

“We do not dare classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise.”
(2 Cor. 10:12)

Treat your spouse as a unique person that he or she is. Look at your peculiar case and walk in knowledge to make the relationship a worthwhile venture. Do all that is necessary to get along well.

BASIC STEPS TO GETTING ALONG WELL

1. Agree that you need a good working understanding of the person you are married to.

Courtship time is never enough to get to know your partner well enough. Do not forget that people are constantly changing in character, behaviour, tastes and desires. What used to be your husband's hobby or best food could change with time. This understanding will keep you busy studying and re-studying your spouse. There are times in marriage it seems you no longer understand the one you are living with. This is a sign that your partner has the tendency to always change. God designed it so, to keep us busy learning and re-learning about our spouse, and make the relationship to be dynamic and challenging; and help us not to take our marriage for granted.

2. Create ample time to study and observe your spouse.

Acquisition of knowledge is serious business. Give it time, and it will yield for you marital bliss. We learn by observation, meditation, solving problems by asking questions about the problems, and studying books about marriage and human behaviour. Give it time, and it will yield for you priceless dividends.

3. Determine to apply what you have discovered about your spouse and how to relate with him or her.

Knowledge possessed and not used is a wasted knowledge. It is sin as we saw earlier.

4. Exercise self-control on your part.

Relationship is all about give and take. Much as you are expecting your partner to bear with you, you must be willing to make some concessions. You must be willing to give away some rights and some privileges to make for peace and some smooth running of your home. In the face of provocation or offence, manifest self-control and the love of Christ that covers a multitude of sins.

5. Listen to complaints of your spouse about you.

It is important that couples listen to one another and accept each other's explanations when they are given. It is also important that admittance must be made of wrongs done. It should not be explained away. Corrections must be made when necessary. The feelings of your partner must be taken into account.

6. Work on yourself to improve your own life.

As much as you are expecting your spouse to change in certain areas, you also must make effort to change in areas of complain for permanent peace to reign in the home.

7. Practice forgiveness as quickly as you are offended.

Forgiveness is the healing balm of relationships. Without it, no relationship will survive. No matter the offence, forgive as God through Jesus Christ forgives you.

8. Concentrate on what pleases your spouse to heal the wounds of the past and steady your marriage.

9. Have a vision of a beautiful home.

Keep it in view and pursue it with all your heart. It will come to pass.

10. Separate yourself from any relationship that you have that is having a negative influence on your marriage.

Friends are influence. Those who speak into your life matter a great deal to your marriage. Those who speak into your life mould your future. Those who influence your actions are building your character negatively or positively. Watch it.

11. Prayerfully handle all matters in your marriage.

Look up to God to help you relate with your spouse, especially when it is difficult for you. The Holy Spirit is our teacher; he will teach you how to tackle your peculiar situation. Look up to him always. Never take laws into your hands. Never stop depending on God for help. Pray regularly for your spouse to become like Christ daily. It will help.

WORD OF WISDOM

- 1. Your thought towards your spouse determines how you relate with him or her.**
- 2. Respect is a product of our mental assessment of our spouse. A lack of it reveals a bad mental picture of your spouse.**
- 3. The atmosphere you create determines your experience.**
- 4. Don't give your ears to gossip. What you hear repeatedly, you will eventually believe. Please read proverbs 26:20-28.**
- 5. Never allow what people say about your spouse to form your opinion about him or her.**

- 6. Never allow what people say about you to change your scriptural opinion of yourself. You are who God says you are. You have what God says you have. You can do what God says you can do.**
- 7. Never allow what people say to change your godly principles upon which your marriage and relationship is built.**
- 8. What you think of your partner is more important than what people think about him or her.**
- 9. Like the soil to seeds, so also the mind to words.**
- 10. Give your mind to what will enhance love, unity, happiness and celebration in your home.**
- 11. Guide your mind with all diligence. *“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the well spring of life”.* (Prov.4:23)**