

I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!

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There comes a time in a man's life when he loses his patience, and feels he has had enough and cannot bear anymore pain, and he cries out deciding to down tools and walk away. Many have walked away from their jobs because of what they experienced and the mental and emotional pressure that was associated with their experience. Some have walked away from God because they think God has not been favourable to them and had disappointed them when they needed Him most, or has not brought the desired change or progress they sought. Some have walked out on their families because they feel they disappointed them and cannot have them as family members anymore. They think it is better to be without a family than to have such people surround them as a family. Some have walked away from their marriages, ending it abruptly, because of the pains of marriage. Some have in the process complicated their lives and cut their destinies short. Some have moved from "frying pan to the fire" as they thought that their action will bring a solution, not knowing it will only complicate their situation.

It is true that sometimes our experiences contradict our expectations in life from the people we relate with at different levels and different places, and there is a level to which a man can bear and he will give up. However, God does not want us to be overwhelmed by evil experiences to the point we surrender to the situation and walk out of our loved ones and marital vows, jobs, family and others. The grace to bear with our loved ones is resident in each person and is activated through faith and positive thoughts about our loved ones and relationships with them. As long as your thoughts are clean and positive, more energy will be received and activated to bear and continue to love, but when a man's thoughts becomes evil continually about the experiences of his life especially his marriage, his energy level will begin to go down, and his ability and willingness to continue in the relationship will start dyeing very fast.

In relationships we face many unpleasant experiences that leave us broken and discouraged about our lives and marriage, we wonder if it is worth continuing or we should call it quits. Giving up hope in your marriage is not the best option when faced with a challenge. All in marriage must keep hope alive, for hope encourages and gives energy to keep putting in your best until situation changes for the better. **There is no worse death than the death of hope.** When hope is dead in a marriage, the marriage is dead and will need the resurrection power of the Lord Jesus Christ to bring it back to life again.

There are many factors to the death of hope in a marriage. We are going to consider a few things that kill hope and things that can revive hope in marriage.

THINGS THAT KILL HOPE IN MARRIAGE

1. **When the reason for marriage is not genuine – not for love but for some wrong and selfish motive.**

Whenever the reason for marriage is not genuine love, it will not be too long before the effect start to weigh heavily on the marriage. When that starts, the

marriage starts to crack and fall apart. Jesus taught that there is nothing that is hidden that shall not come to light. Hidden agendas don't stay hidden forever. It will come to light someday. Circumstances will bring it out, and when that happens the marriage suffers terribly.

Matt 10:26

26 "So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known.

NIV

2. Building marriage on wrong principles outside the word of God.

Foundations determine the height, weight, strength and durability of the building of every marriage. Building outside the word of God is building on the wrong foundation. The Christian marital vow is to build according to God's ordinances till death separates the couple. A life or marriage built on the principles of God cannot fail but succeed. The word of God instills the fear of God in the heart of man and moulds man to become what God in Christ wants him to be. Without the word of God living and working in the heart of the couple, hope will be lost after many unpleasant experiences have taken place. Don't build on what your friends tells you, or what your family tells you, but on what God tells you. The word of God is the truth.

Matt 7:24-27

24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

NIV

John 17:17

17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

NIV

3. Unwillingness to change evil character that causes your partner pain and sadness.

Many do not like change and do nothing to correct themselves. It is essential that you the married acknowledge your weakness and failures and admit your wrongs and change, if not for any other thing, to make your spouse happy to be with you. You cannot continue to cause your partner pain and claim to love him or her. Love seeks to please and not to cause pain. Refusal to listen to the complaints of your spouse and change what needs to be changed kills hope in marriage.

Eph 5:25-27

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

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Rom 8:29

29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

NIV

4. Selfishness and self-centeredness on the part of one or both partners.

Self is the major problem of man. It is the root of all evil character. In relating with God and man, self has to be dealt with or else failure will be the end result. Selfishness and self-centeredness will bring you always in confrontation with your spouse. If it is not happening the way you want it, you start a fight. Love is self-less. It puts the interest of your loved ones ahead of yours. If you allow true love to control you, marriage will be exciting and hope will remain alive in the heart of your spouse.

1 John 4:10-11

10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

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5. Focusing on the negative happenings in your marriage especially the evil and offensive character and behaviour of your spouse.

What you focus on gives you energy or drains your energy to love. **It is essential you know that your focus determines your direction.** Focusing on the wrong happenings in your marriage and the evil character of your spouse will drain your energy to love and want to continue your marriage.

6. Negative thoughts about your spouse and the things that you don't like in your home and marriage, and sometimes in comparison with what is happening in other people's lives and marriages.

Thoughts are living forces that determine the direction of your life. Thoughts give birth to words, generate emotions and determine decisions and actions. Thoughts determine moods in a man's life. You feel good because you think good thoughts. You feel bad because you think bad thoughts. If you therefore, focus your thoughts on the negative things in your spouse and marriage, it will overwhelm you and produce negative feelings, words and actions towards your spouse and marriage. The more negative your thoughts about your spouse and marriage, the

less your desire to continue your marriage. Your hope for your marriage died or is dying because your thoughts about your spouse and marriage are very negative. Change it and hope will come alive again.

7. Developing a hatred for your spouse through storing of bitter experiences in the heart and refusing to forgive.

Forgiveness heals hurts and relationships. It keeps it alive and exciting. Storing bitter feelings and experiences in the heart is laying foundation for the collapse of your marriage. The result of such practice will be the rise of hatred from the hip of bitter feelings stored within you.

8. Developing love for another outside your spouse.

The day you start looking outside your spouse and start developing feelings for another is the day you signed the death of your marriage. As the love for another is getting stronger, your love for your spouse will be getting weaker and weaker till it dies completely. Some go out because the home is not as expected - there is no more satisfaction from the relationship. Some go out because they are weak and loose morally. Whatever be the case, adultery is evil and cheating on your partner will kill your marriage. Developing love for another outside your spouse will kill your marriage. Don't let it happen. Stop it now.

9. Allowing wrong people to counsel you and weaken your love for your spouse.

Everyone who speaks into your life is directing your thoughts, inspiring your words and conversation, and stirring you to act in a certain way. Counseling prepares you to have a certain experience. So if it is a wrong counsel, it will create the wrong experience. Many get counsel from those who are not qualified to counsel them. Anyone who has failed in marriage and is still not married is not qualified to counsel you in your marriage except you want to end up where the person ended up in his or her marriage experience. Anyone who is not sound in the word of God, and his or her marriage is not exemplary should not counsel you on marriage issues. Wrong counsel will lead to wrong words, actions and experiences.

10. Allowing your family or friends to poison your mind against your spouse.

It is true that we cannot cut off completely from our families because we are married, but we have to be careful how we relate so the biblical injunction that we leave them to cleave to our spouse is abided by. Your family must not dictate the decisions and happenings in your marriage. If you allow that, your marriage will bleed. Many marriages have crashed or suffering under the weight of family influence on one of the couples. Do not allow your mind to be poisoned by your family against your spouse.

11. Allowing a big gap in communication to develop between you and your spouse without making a strong effort to bridge the gap.

When communication gap is allowed to develop in a marriage, many things start to go wrong. It is very important that we all keep our watch and make sure that we

don't allow communication gap to exist. Keep nothing from your spouse. Answer questions and give explanations when they are required by your spouse, for it will save your marriage. Clear issues on time and hinder the devil from taking advantage of the situation to create misunderstanding, and keep your love life active. When communication gap is permitted, complications will always come into your marriage. Be willing to talk things over it will help you more than harm you.

DON'T GIVE UP

Eccl 9:4

4 But for him who is joined to all the living there is hope, for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

NKJV

A quitter never wins and a winner never quits. Don't give up on your marriage. Just as a living dog is better than a dead lion, so you are better than the ones whose marriage has failed completely. You can still make things work out well if you and your spouse can follow some of the counsel I am about to give you now. If you quit this marriage and later go into another one, and you meet similar or a different kind of challenge, what will you do? If you keep quitting, how many marriages will you have been into before your death? Every relationship has its own challenges. Face this one and overcome it.

1. Stop focusing your thoughts on all the wrong things your spouse is doing, all the bad things happening in your marriage and to you since you got married to your spouse. Focus on the good things your spouse is doing and the good times you have had together. Remember that your thoughts breathe life or death into your marriage depending on what you are thinking about. To generate energy to love your spouse, think positively towards your marriage and spouse no matter what happens. By a deliberate decision of yours, think positively about your spouse and marriage always. Keep doing it and never stop.
2. Forget the former things and focus on what you believe God for about your marriage. See change in your spouse's attitude, behaviour and character. Stop seeing things getting worse. See things getting better with every passing day. What you see motivates you and energizes you to put in your best to see its actualization. If you see things getting worse in your mind, it will discourage you. If you see things getting better it will motivate you to keep your marriage, and to put in your best to make it work.

Isa 43:18-19

8 "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. 19 See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.

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3. Visualize a wonderful and exciting tomorrow together. Do not let what has been to stop you from hoping for a better marital experience.

4. Give yourself to serious praying for yourself and your spouse.
 - Pray for healing of the hurts in your hearts from the painful experiences you have had together.
 - Pray for deliverance from evil behaviour and character for both of you.
 - Pray for a new and better attitude towards each other and your marriage.
 - Pray for grace to start afresh with a growing love in your hearts for each other.
 - Pray for grace to forgive and overlook offences, and to keep focusing on what will keep love flowing in your hearts for each other.
 - Pray for compatibility and openness to each other.
5. Resolve to build your marriage on the word of God and nothing else.
6. Attend marriage counseling together with your spouse to get help.
7. Attend marriage teaching sessions, seminars or retreats to get refreshed and gain insight on the principles of successful marriage.
8. Buy books on successful marriage and read it with passion, and apply what you learn from them.
9. Cut off from wrong people that are influencing you negatively.
10. Break any adulterous relationship you already have with another, and determine never to cheat on your spouse again.
11. Never consider separation or divorce. Focus on making the marriage work.
12. Daily, speak positively about your marriage. Keep prophesying what you want to witness and experience in your marriage, spouse and children.

Prov 18:20-22

20 From the fruit of his mouth a man's stomach is filled; with the harvest from his lips he is satisfied. 21 The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit. 22 He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD.

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