

OVERCOMING THE ENEMY THAT BATTLES YOUR FAMILY

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Every day we are engaged in one kind of warfare or the other. Life is full of battles that must be won. In marriage, couples have conflicts with each other, their weaknesses, in-laws, third parties and enemies. You can't wish them away. Your prayers cannot stop challenges from coming to you. All we need is to learn how to deal with them when they come.

James 4:7-10

7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

NIV

Submit to the word and will of God. Determine to obey the word of God in all areas of your life and at all times. There can be no successful resisting of the devil when there is no submission to the will and word of the Almighty. What you are not convinced of, how can you resist the temptation to disobey it? You must first agree that what God has said is correct and worthy of your obedience. So when tempted by the devil, you can resist. The Lord Jesus Christ succeeded here on earth because he made up his mind to do the will of God at all times no matter what.

Heb 10:7

7 Then I said, 'Here I am-it is written about me in the scroll- I have come to do your will, O God.'

NIV

Submit then to God and resist the devil.

Your mind must be made up to accept God's will about marriage, and determine to make your marriage work. Resist the devil when he attempts to make you deviate from the law and principles of God for successful marriage. Resist the devil firmly and he will surely flee from you. Cleanse yourself from all the evil behaviors and character in your life. When you do this, your marriage will stand the test of time.

STEPS TO OVERCOMING THE ENEMY THAT BATTLES YOUR FAMILY

1. Recognize that life is full of battles and challenges.

Challenges always come to man. No matter what you do (good or evil), they do come. You can't wish them away; neither can you pray them away. Accept this fact and get prepared for them. Challenges are not a proof of sinfulness, though some may come as a result of our sins and mistakes in life. The righteous also go through challenges. The Lord Jesus Christ went through challenges. Don't panic when one comes your way.

2. Analyze the nature of the problem, conflict and enemy that confronts you.

An understanding of the nature of the enemy and conflict you are facing will help you to know how to face the enemy and win. Seek an understanding from the Lord who knows all things. Do not be in a hurry; take time to seek an understanding of the situation before action is taken.

James taught us in the Bible to be quick to hear and slow to speak. The reason is that we need an understanding before we reply or respond, otherwise, we will react or respond foolishly and complicate matters.

James 1:19-20

19 My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, 20 for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

NIV

Jesus taught us that we would seek him and find him when we seek him with all our heart. Seek to unravel the mystery of the problem.

3. Be sincere enough to look at yourself and own up to your faults.

Each time there is a conflict; we tend to look first at the other person involved in the conflict rather than ourselves. Jesus taught us to first look at ourselves and first remove the plank in our eyes before we can look at our neighbour and remove the little speck of wood in his own eyes.

Matt 7:1-5

7:1 "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. 2 For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. 3 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 4 How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

NIV

Each time there is a problem in your marriage, first, take a good look at yourself and find out if you're the cause, before you turn to your spouse. By so doing, you don't chase shadows but deal with the real thing. Own up to your faults as you identify them. Stop shifting blame. It does not help anybody or any marriage. If you are man enough to do something, be man enough to admit it and apologize. Be sincere with yourself and your spouse. Insincerity has destroyed a lot of marriages today.

Addressing your personal problem is very vital if your marriage must work. Divorce is not the way out. If you live your present spouse and marry another without dealing with your personal weaknesses that are responsible for the constant conflicts, you will still meet with the same problems in your next marriage. The earlier you deal with them now the better for you. Except you change, the situation will remain the same no matter where you go or whom you marry.

4. Self is the greatest enemy man has.

Stop looking elsewhere. Look at yourself first. Your greatest enemy is not outside but inside you. It is called self. It is self that opens the door for the enemy to enter a man's life. If you live in accordance with the will and word of God, the devil cannot penetrate into your life. If your ears are not open to gossip for instance, the enemy cannot poison your mind against your husband – the suspicion will not be there.

- Remove the log in your eyes before you see the speck in your spouse's eyes.
- It is our weakness and faults that break the hedge around us and open the door for the devil to enter our homes.
- The door you open allows the devil to come in. The door you close keeps the devil out of your life and marriage
- There are many doors to a man's life and relationships:
 1. Your mouth (what you speak).
 2. Itching ears for stories and gossips.
 3. Your character and behavior.
 4. Your temper.
 5. Bitterness and unforgiveness.
 6. Evil thoughts.
 7. Evil or bad company.
 8. The TV programs you watch.
 9. The books and literature you read.
 10. The music and things you listen to.
 11. The places you go to.

If you can discipline yourself very well, you will shut the devil out of your life and marriage.

5. Before you start binding the devil and blaming outsiders, deal with each other's weaknesses, and close the door against the devil.

Until your own obedience is complete, you have no right to bind the devil.

2 Cor 10:6

*6 And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.
NIV*

You cannot be at fault and be binding the devil and pointing accusing finger and expect God to back you up. It will not happen. God will only respond when you are in obedience. Be sure you are in obedience before you start looking outside yourself and your spouse.

6. Firm decision will deliver you from repetition of evil and crisis.

Sometimes, we Christians pray too much. We pray when what we need is a decision. Decide to do away with what is causing trouble in your marriage. Decide to please your partner. Decide to stop what your partner has been complaining he or she does not like and want to see.

7. Cut off from those that need to be cut off from.

Every unprofitable relationship to your marriage, family and career should be broken. There are some people you don't have to continue moving with if your marriage is to work. From such, separate. Move with those who will enhance your marriage and contribute meaningfully to your

life. Avoid gossipers and those who are in the habit of giving counsel that are not according to scripture.

8. Make changes where necessary without hesitation and delay.

Change is part of life. It is a sign of maturity and that one is growing. Change is a proof that one is teachable. Change is a proof that one is aware that his or her life is affecting negatively his or her spouse and loved ones and desires to see them happy rather than sad. Change is a continuous exercise.

Prov 29:1

A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed--without remedy.
NIV

Change, when necessary and without delay. Don't wait to be told before you make a change, for it is a sign that you are alive in the relationship.

9. Bind the devil and destroy his works.

Having dealt with all that needs to be dealt with, then you can now address the spiritual power that is behind the problems. If you do this at this time it will work.

10. Fast if necessary.

Fasting with intense prayers is also needed to ease the tension in the home and bring about a change in the lives of all in the marriage. Fast only when it is necessary. Remember that when you need to make a decision, fasting is not the answer. But change requires prayers and sometimes fasting.

Matt 17:21

21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.
KJV

Acts 14:23

23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.
NIV

Uphold your spouse in prayer because change is sometimes difficult especially when it has to do with an age long habit. Fast and pray rather than complain and quarrel. Quarreling does not solve problems or change anybody or anything, but heart felt prayer does.

11. Determine to keep the devil out by living in such a way that the door will not be opened for him to come in again.

Live holy and clean from all evil. Live in accordance with the word of God. Practice the principles of God concerning marital success.

Matt 24:28

28 Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather.

NIV

Luke 17:37

37 "Where, Lord?" they asked. He replied, "Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather."

NIV

If sin is in your life, demons will be attracted to you. If you live free from sin, demons will be far from you while God will be close to you.

12. Make effort to strengthen your relationship by working on the areas of your weakness.

Make yourself strong in the areas where you have been weak. Work on yourself with determination. When you fail, don't give up, just continue until you win.

1 John 1:9

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

NIV

13. Add fun and laughter.

Go to places that will excite both of you. Ease the tension in your lives and home through fun and laughter. Make it part of your family life. Make jokes, watch comedies, visit places of interest that will remind you of the good old days when you first met. Work hard at making your marriage work.

14. Sex unites and bonds together.

Sex is a binding agent. This is the reason God wants humans to marry as virgins, so that the souls of the two people concerned will be bonded together such that whatever they see in life will not be able to separate them. Multiple sex partners will scatter your soul (will bond you to many people); this will make it impossible for you to be faithful in your marriage. Use sex to strengthen your relationship.

Many marriages where sex is seldom practiced have more problems and breaks up faster than the marriages where sexual relationship is alive. Sex is permitted only within marriage, anything outside of that is sin.

15. Paint and carry in your head a picture of a crisis free marriage.

Pursue daily this vision for its actualization. Believe it is possible, for all things are possible to him that believes.

Mark 9:23

23 "If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes."

NIV

Mark 11:24

24 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

NIV

CONCLUSION

If you will do all these, you will experience marital bliss. May God bless your marriage with peace, fun and laughter, understanding and cooperation, finance and material things, and with godly children that will keep you thanking and praising him forever in Jesus Christ name.

WORD OF WISDOM

- 1. Men and women are more than noticeable difference. Understanding and responding to these deeper differences is important to building a good marriage.**
- 2. Marriage is life – your life. Take it serious.**
- 3. Selfishness is a killer of relationships. Eliminate it before it will destroy your love life.**
- 4. Associate with right people – heavenly minded people and you will not be influenced negatively.**
- 5. Your marriage can complete your life or complicate it.**
- 6. Your marriage will either elevate you or pin you down.**
- 7. Marriage is not as easy as it appears from the outside. It takes hard work and determination to make it sweet and enjoyable.**
- 8. Marital bliss is a working and not a spiritual gift.**
- 9. Your marriage requires your best and you're all to succeed. Give it all you have.**
- 10. It takes love, understanding, selflessness, humility, sincerity, courage, faith, hope, prayers and positive thoughts and actions to blend two different people from two different backgrounds into one.**