

Married but Living Single.

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Truth be told, many marriages are under tremendous pressure and couples are growing apart as a consequence. Lack of fulfilment and discontent has become the new norm from the blissful covenant that marriage is meant to be. Marriage ought not to be as such.

Further truth be told; no marriage is immune to challenges. The grass always seems greener THERE...but work on yours to green it.

WHAT LEADS TO SINGLENESS IN MARRIAGES?

Several factors, when not carefully addressed, may render couples to live in lonely marriages. Among the many factors, below is a condensed list of possible causes (in no order of importance):

1. When limiting beliefs from your past are playing part of in your marriage;
2. When the couple is not deliberate and intentional about making time for one another;
3. When the marriage relationship has become transactional. It's no longer about the happiness and togetherness of two individuals in the marriage;
4. When couples hide behind social media for companion, especially when screentime creeps into the bedroom;
5. When bedrooms are turned into boardrooms;
6. When couples are chasing competing visions, interests and purposes;
7. When emotional, physical and other intimate interactions are being rationed by either spouse;
8. When the discipline of children is skewed towards one parent;
9. When the need for one another is eroded by marital challenges;
10. When free, honest, open and transparent communication is dwarfed;
11. When you need to book appointments to communicate with your spouse;
12. When you are fighting your battles by yourself;
13. When you are still searching and your eyes are all over the place while married;
14. When you are drinking water from wells and cisterns other than your own;
15. When the couple belong to different denominations and/or religions.

The list is not exhaustive though.

ASSESSING YOUR MARRIAGE

Marriages are called to be fruitful in all areas. To assess the fruitfulness of our marriages, let us consider the parable of the sower. The seeds are representing the various aspects of the marriage covenant (love, communication, trust, intimacy, etc.) and the soils representing how the couple receive and nurture the seeds planted in the marriage.

The seeds that fell by the wayside equates to marriages wherein couples always had hardened hearts towards one another but continued to marry for “wrong” reasons. The seeds in these marriages are eaten by life’s challenges before the couple would leave and cleave to become one flesh.

The marriage on rocky ground signifies a covenant where the couples welcome it with excitement. Usually, such a marriage lacks substantial roots to support against life challenges. The commitment is shallow and the couple is looking for the first justification to break the covenant.

The third type of marriage is sown among thorns. The requisite seeds (love, communication, trust, intimacy, etc.) exist but they are soon choked by the worries and superficial pleasures and delight of life, thus yielding no fruit. These marriages succumb to external distractions with ease.

The final marriage is sown on good soil and yield much fruit. In this marriage, the couples are drinking from the same fountain, worship the same God, raise their children together, and run the same vision. There exists an evident cleaving between the couple and together they withstand the storms of life.

FIGHT OR FLIGHT

Take away the dross from silver, and it will go to the silversmith for jewellery. Most marriages have potential for rescue provided the couple put in the commitment for transformation. Couples on the brink of divorce can fall in love all over again with the right support, the right tools and the right mindset.

Rather than resorting to fight or flight, couples can stay present and engaged with each other to face the Goliath confronting their covenant. Be of one mind and observe the challenges from the same lenses. Doing this, couples are able to address the conflict together, without creating more damage by attacking each other. In a place of openness and forgiveness, conflict can end up becoming a vehicle for closeness in marriages.

BUILDING A STRONG MARRIAGE

In computer science, we were introduced to the slang, “Garbage In, Garbage Out (GIGO)”. This applied to marriage, it expresses that the results or quality of your marriage depends largely on your input into the marriage covenant. Change your input in order to expect a better output. We should advocate for open platforms where marital challenges are openly discussed, without prejudice.