

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, KUMASI

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

MARRIAGE AS A MINISTRY: AN EXAMINATION OF PASTORS'

MARRIAGE IN THE LIGHT OF GENESIS 2:18-25

PROJECT WORK

(LONG ESSAY)

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DEPARTMENT OF THEOLOGY

JUNE, 2023

MARRIAGE AS A MINISTRY: AN EXAMINATION OF PASTORS'

MARRIAGE IN THE LIGHT OF GENESIS 2:18-25

BY

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**A LONG ESSAY SUBMITTED TO CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project work report is the result of my own original research except for sections of which references have been duly made and to the best of my knowledge no part of it has been presented to this University College or any other institution for the award of a degree.

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Date:

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the Holy Spirit who gave me wisdom to come out with this great work and my mother, Miss Grace Otchere this is for you to show how grateful I am to have as mother. Secondly, I dedicate it to my supervisor Rev. Prof. Yaw Adu-Gyamfi in (Christian Service University College - Kumasi) further I dedicate this work to the people who morally and financial support me. I love you all and may God Richly bless you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All glory be to God! For the precious things he has done! I wish to express my beautiful gratitude, beyond measure, to the Holy Spirit for the grace, protection, provision, direction, knowledge, wisdom given to me for the successful completion of my four years Bachelor of Arts degree in Theology with Administration course at the Christian service university college in Kumasi. My appreciation also goes to my HOD Dr. S. B. Adubofour head of department theology for his careful supervision guidance and suggestions; to him I say great work!! Sir may God bless you. I would like to acknowledge all the lectures in theology department, Christian Service University College. Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge my Supervisor Professor Yaw Adu-Gyamfi for his advice. Last but not the least, I cannot forget myself for the effort and boldness I built to do the work. God Richly bless you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	i
DEDICATION	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	v
CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
1.1 Background of the Study	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
1.2 Statement of Problem	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
1.3 Research Questions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
1.4 Aim and Objective	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
1.5 Scope and Focus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
1.6 Research Methodology	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
1.6.1 <i>Methods of Data Collection</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
1.6.3 <i>Data Analysis</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
1.7 Literature Review	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
1.7.1 <i>The Purpose of Marriage</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
1.8 Significance of the Study	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
1.9 Organization of Chapters	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
CHAPTER TWO: A BRIEF STUDY OF MARRIAGE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GENESIS 2:18-25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
2.1 Introduction	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
2.2 A Study of Genesis 2: 18-25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
2.2.1 <i>The Creation of Woman</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
2.3 Marriage	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
2.3.1 <i>Biblical Information</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12

2.3.2 <i>Types of Marriage</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
2.3.3 <i>Marriage as Divine Institution</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
2.3.4 <i>God's Ordinance for Marriage</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15
2.4 Conclusion	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15
CHAPTER THREE: DISCUSSION ON PASTORS' MARRIAGE	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
3.1 Introduction	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
3.2 Covenant in Marriage	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
3.3 New Testament Typology of Marriage	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
3.4 Causes of Pastors' Marital Problems	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
3.4.1 <i>Difference in Social Background</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
3.4.2 <i>Sex in Marriage</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
3.4.3 <i>Poor Communication</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
3.4.4 <i>Growing non-Christian Assault on Traditional Concepts of Marriage</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	19
3.5 Effects of Pastors' Marital Problems	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20
3.5.1 <i>Physical and Psychological Effects</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20
3.5.2 <i>Spiritual Effects</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20
3.5.3 <i>Social Effects</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
3.5.4 <i>Extramarital Relationship</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
3.5.5 <i>Divorce</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
3.6 Conclusion	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	23
CHAPTER FOUR: MARRIAGE AS MINISTRY	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
4.1 Introduction	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
4.2 The Word Ministry	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
4.3 Preparation for Ministry and Marriage	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	25
4.4 Marriage as a Ministry	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	26

4.4.1 <i>Pastors' Marriages as a Primary Tool for God's Ministry</i>	...	27
4.4.2 <i>Pastors' Ministry to their Spouse</i>	... ..	27
4.5 Growing of Marriage	... ..	28
4.6 Conclusion	... ..	29
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	... ..	30
5.1 Summary of the Study	... ..	30
5.2 General Conclusion	... ..	31
5.3 Recommendations	... ..	31
BIBLIOGRAPHY	... ..	33

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The world we live in now is full up of challenges. This doesn't mean that one cannot have something good or better in live. There is the possibility of achieving what one wants, except that it takes a careful mind to handle issues carefully. Many Christian ministers, though are doing well in ministry, are facing challenges in their marriages. Marriage is a covenant between two matured individuals. Every marriage has challenges; God calls us from different homes and countries with the individuals own personal challenges.¹

These challenges in marriage can be handled because ministers believe that challenges in their ministries can be endured by the power of the Holy Spirit. In the same way, ministers should know that they can endure marital challenges through the enabling power of the Spirit. The question is what are the challenges ministers face in their ministry and in their marriage? Ministers believe that challenges in ministry are very special in that they are from God to build them, but they see marital challenges as from the devil. However, God established marriage and he had a good reason he initiated it in the life of man. Due to marital challenges, many ministers have broken the command of God in marriage. Because of this some people fear to embrace this institution founded by God.²

¹ Lisa B. Story & Thomas N. Bradbury, "Understanding Marriage and Stress: Essential Questions and Challenges" *Clinical Psychology Review* 23(8), (2002): 1139-1162.

² Jeffry H. Larson, "Innovations in Marriage Education: Introduction and Challenges" *Family Relation* (2004): 421-424.

In the Old Testament, the life of the people God used is pictured as something important, so they endured marriage challenges. However, today when a minister goes through hard times in their marriage, they relinquish. Marriage is an obligation which the couple must work out in the same way they work on their calling. Because of this situation some measures have to be taken to find solutions to challenges in ministers' marriages if marriage is seen as a ministry.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Marriage has become so complicated. The higher rate of pastors' marriage problems, it has become necessary to find out what has led to this situation. According to Konstantine, marriage is no longer the sacred institution it used to be, for it has been observed that among the people of today, marriage is not seen in terms of lifelong union with indissoluble character. Currently, some people see marriage as contract which can be terminated at any time whenever the parties decide. This lack of appreciation of marriage in its God-given nature and character has led to divorce and separation cases. Many marriage counselors have reported that they have handled several cases of divorce and separation of pastors' marriages. Marriage issues have become big challenges in contemporary world; and pastors' ones are very problematic. God ordained marriage as he did with ministry and blessed it, so why all these problems? Pastors and the leaders in the church must have good marriages for unbelievers to learn from them and come to Christ, but it appears that the leaders are being abused in marriage. The consequences of marital problems and divorce among ministers are what has pushed me to found out the cause or causes of problems in pastors' marriages. Therefore, the study seeks to investigate the causes of pastors'

marital breakdown in light of Genesis 2:18-25 with the assumption that marriage is like a ministry.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions sought to examine and provide answers to pastoral marital challenges are as follows:

1.3.1 Principal Question

1. The main question this study seeks to ask is; what is marriage as a ministry in the Light of Genesis 2: 18-25?

1.3.2 Secondary Questions

2. What is marriage base on Genesis 2:18-25?
3. What is ministry?
4. What causes marital problems in pastors' marriages?
5. How can the causes lead to divorce?

1.4 Aim and Objective

1.4.1 Main Aim

1. The main aim the study seeks to achieve is marriage as a ministry in the light of Genesis 2:18-25.

1.4.2 Secondary Objectives

2. The study seeks to further examine what marriage is based on Genesis 2:18-25.
3. To analyze what ministry is.
4. The study seeks to also investigate the causes of marital problems in Pastor's marriage.

5. Finally, the research is seeking to examine how these causes can lead to divorce.

1.5 Scope and Focus

This study is confined to Genesis 2:18-25, even though there are many texts in the Bible that relates to marriage and divorce. This research is centered on pastors therefore; the focus of this research is looking at marriage as if it were like a ministry work of God that needs proper preparations.

1.6 Research Methodology

The study employed two methods in obtaining data. First is the qualitative and exegesis. The qualitative study focuses on the commonality of the number of pastors who have experienced divorce by examining their view of their experience. This approach helped the researcher to discover the extent to which divorce amongst pastors' marriages have gone. An exegetical approach is an in-depth inductive examination of the text of scripture, where by the exegete systematically applies established hermeneutical tools to discover the meaning and implications of a biblical text. This method helps to make enquiries into the original Hebrew text to drive the original meaning of the text (Genesis 2:18-25). The text was examined by using the historical-critical method.

1.6.1 Methods of Data Collection

The study was conducted by conducted using the secondary method involves the use of publications such as journals, books, articles and other unpublished works as well internet sources.

1.6.2 Data Analysis

The researcher has interpreted and analyzed the information obtained by the qualitative approach. This method is based on quality of information from books, journals and article that are relevant to this work. The data that was gathered was analyzed thematically.

1.7 Literature Review

This section contains an overview of some writers who have discussed significantly about marriage and divorce. According to Jim Newheiser, in his book, *Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage*, marriage is a lifelong covenant of companionship between a man and a woman that is established under God and before a community.³ Where does marriage originate from? Sociologists claim that marriage is established by pragmatic and economic reasons. Maggie Gallagher affirms that marriage is a union that creates kinship obligations and sharing of resources between men and women.⁴ When a man and a woman accept to live together without the consent of both parents it is not marriage; before marriage will be marriage both parents must come to agreement of it.

1.7.1 The Purpose of Marriage

Many people do not know the purpose of marriage. From the society I live, people think that marriage is for pleasure. According to the Bible marriage has two main purposes; first is procreation and second is companionship between man and woman. In Genesis 2:28, God blessed the man and the woman and told them to be fruitful and multiply. Newheiser has stated that some people are determined that they are probably

³ Jim Newheiser, *Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage* (New Jersey: P & R Publishing, 2017), 5-13.

⁴ Maggie Gallegher, "What is Marriage For? The Public Purposes of Marriage Law", *Louisiana Law Review*, vol. 62, no. 3 (2002), 774.

gifted to be married, so they are ready for marriage.⁵ This made him asked this question, “Are you ready for marriage?” Some people want to be married simply because they can have their desires for sexual fulfilment met and companionship, which I affirm that it is very true. According to Newheiser, a man or woman who are enslaved to lust may think marriage will solve their lustful problem. But insecure woman and man are not ready to be married.

Divorce, according to Gift Tiharihani Baloyi, “is the final and legal dissolution of the marital bond between two partners.”⁶ In the mosaic covenant, divorce is initiated by man and he must give his wife a certificate releasing her from obligation so that another man can have the right to marry her. But in this contemporary world divorce can be initiated by women. For Newheiser, divorce ends a marriage. Church denominations also have their personal view about divorce. The Roman Catholic Church believes marriage is a sacrament of the church so it cannot end in divorce; those who involve themselves in divorce are considered guilty of sin. “God hates divorce” (Mal 2:16). The effect of divorce is that it breaks the covenant made before God and the community and it harm the children’s life.⁷ Divorce is a great sin before God. Now marriage couples end up their marriages without thinking about the consequences it would bring on their lives, and they have forgotten that marriage covenant is unbreakable bond. Some people also think the Bible allows divorce. But in the New Testament Jesus told them Moses allowed it because of their hardness of heart. God did not approve of divorce.⁸ Divorce psychologically and emotionally affects the life of both partners. Unfortunately, divorce issues are all over in our

⁵ Newheiser, *Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage*, 5-13.

⁶ Gift Tiharihani Baloyi, *Factors Influencing Resilience in Men after Divorce* (London: University of Pretoria, 2011), 34.

⁷ Newheiser, *Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage*, 5-13.

⁸ McLuhan, *Marriage and Divorce, God's Call, God's Compassion* (Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1989), 23-24.

present day. However, what has made it so difficult to do is the collision and disgrace attached to it. It involves many difficulties including the loss of friends, family, financial instability and disapproval from the public.⁹

The rate of which divorce of ordained pastors of God in Ghana and worldwide is climbing is high. God hates divorce and scripture is also against it. One thing is when a leader falls the followers also join him. This is one area of life where more harm has been hurting souls especially ministers of God themselves, marriage, divorce, and remarriage. I have seen hearts broken and divided homes of religious leaders.¹⁰

The purpose of this work is not to judge any pastor but to let the church know that issues of divorce is not limited to just the members of the church. Some ministers have experienced marital challenges and divorce. First is Archbishop Nicholas Duncan-William. He is the founder of Charismatic Movement, which started forty years ago in Ghana and other part of West Africa. He is the General Overseer of Action Chapel International with headquartered in Accra, Ghana. He first married to Rev. Francisca. He divorced her in 2007 and remarried to Rosa Whitaker, the CEO and President of the Whitaker Group in 2008. According to the writer, the archbishop said he married his first wife consciously at that time, he did not know anything about marriage.¹¹ The second divorcee minister is Rev. Owusu Bempah, whose issue is very hard to believe. It is believed that he had been married for at least three times. According to him, it was his wife, Madam Justine, who filed for divorce some years back. What brought about their divorce was a misunderstanding between both. The other divorcee minister is Pastor Chris Oyakhilome, the president and founder of

⁹ J. D. Clark, *Marriage and Divorce: What Does the Bible Really Say?* (Seven Pillars, 1983), google.com, accessed 23rd May, 2023.

¹⁰ <https://gh.opera.news>, accessed on 20th May, 2023.

¹¹ G. W. Bromily, *God and Marriage* (Michigan: Blue Skies Print, 2000), 21.

Christ Embassy in Lagos, Nigeria. He divorced Madam Anita Enhodghe in February 2016 after 25 years of marriage.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study has four main significances. First, religiously, this research helps all ministers in churches who are facing marital and divorce problems in their churches to know how to handle such issues to prevent them from doing anything unbiblical. Socially, this study serves a guide to prevent the causes that bring about divorce in pastors' marriages.

Importantly the exegesis done in this study area offers further insight into the biblical teaching on marriage and divorce. Academically this research serves as a reference material and adds to knowledge concerning the concept of marriage and divorce using biblical text. Finally, this work helps in promoting seeing marriage as a ministry among the pastors in general.

1.9 Organization of Chapters

This study has been divided into five chapters. The first chapter composes of the general introduction, background to the study, research methodology and methods of data collection, sampling procedure, data analysis and literature review, significance of the study and organization of chapters.

The chapter two focuses on the historical background of the study of Genesis 2:18. The chapter three focuses on the discussion of main issue. Chapter four is the analysis of the data finding from the respondents on the concept of ministry and Pastors' marriage as ministry. The fifth chapter deals with the summery of the study, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

A BRIEF STUDY OF MARRIAGE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GENESIS

2:18-25

2.1 Introduction

The chapter discusses marriage from the perspective of Genesis 2:18-25. It begins with a brief study of Genesis 2:18-25 as the beginning of the institution of marriage. The chapter then looks at marriage with reference to Genesis 2:18-25 and other biblical references.

2.2 A Study of Genesis 2: 18-25

According to M.G. Luhan, God ordained marriage to exist in the spirit, heart and minds of his children. Alexander Henning indicates that Gen 2:18-25 forms part of the so-called Yahwistic creation narrative.

2.2.1 *The Creation of Woman*

In Genesis 2:18, the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” Interestingly, it is God who determines that it is not good for man to be alone; there is no indication that Adam himself was dissatisfied with his situation. The phrase, “I will make a helper” indicates that God purposes a solution for Adam’s situation. This helper must be equal to Adam and suitable for him. The Hebrew word for “suitable” means completes.¹² Thus, God assigns Eve as a helper to the man, not only that but also the woman as a companion to assist the man to live (v. 21).

¹² Walter A. Elwell, *Baker Commentary on the Bible*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book, 1989), 435.

So, the Lord caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; this is the method God used to create woman and while man was sleeping, God took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Man's rib implied Adam happiness which was missing. God created human nature in the person of Adam and God himself formed woman from one of Adam's ribs (Hebrew word side). And brought her to him. This shows that Adam did not take the initiative of taking the wife to himself, but he received her as offered to him by God. What Adam said when he saw her indicates that when he woke up from deep sleep, he found someone equal like him. "This is now bone of my bone" means that he has obtained a suitable companion who is equal like him.¹³ "She shall be called 'woman' for she was taken out of man"; this is where subordination came in to show that woman is expected to subordinate to man.

The creation of woman brought about marriage. God cares for man, and his fatherly concern for Adams comfort and because of the pity he has for his loneliness he resolved to provide society or family for him. The purpose God had in mind for creating woman, was to be man's helper in his struggle of life.¹⁴ In addition, God created woman to help man in his moral sympathies, and also to assist the man in the daily needs of his life and join him in his worship of God. Lastly loneliness is not good, woman was created by God for man's comfort. God made man sleep and took his ribs to made woman, God did not take head but ribs so that man might protect her from his heart and love her. The Creation of woman brought marriage and procreation.

¹³ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15, Word Bible Commentary* vol. 1 (Waco, Texas: Word Books Publishers, 1987), 876.

¹⁴ John Calvin, *Commentary on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 333.

Verse 24: “Therefore man shall leave and join himself with his wife the purpose of this to become one flesh”. The word “leave”, in transitional interpretation, suggests that the man moves from his parents and establish his family elsewhere. Usually Israel society is patrilocal, that is, the man lives in his parents’ home. So, it was the woman who left her parents’ home and to join her husband. To every marriage the first principles is to make one: “They become one flesh”. This denotes blood relation; they will be as one flesh and bone. This creates a connection between man and wife in which they relate to each other as brother and sister are.

This verse implies that the marriage union has at least three characteristics. First, it is an exclusive man-woman relationship (‘a man ... his wife’) which is publicly acknowledged at some social event (‘leave parents’). Second, it is permanent (‘cleaves to his’) and third, it is consummated by sexual intercourse (‘they will become one fresh’). So, ‘marriage is an exclusive heterosexual covenant between one man and one woman, ordained and sealed by God, preceded by a public leaving of parents, consummated in sexual union, issuing in a permanent mutually supportive partnership, and normally crowned by the gift of children.

Verse 25: “The two were naked, and they felt no shame”. This affirms that the couple notice their nakedness, and they were not ashamed, like young children unashamed at their nakedness. The institution of marriage and motherhood started when God created woman.¹⁵

¹⁵ Michael. J Albrecht and Thomas P. Nass. *An Exegesis of Genesis 2:18-24: In Light of the Current Discussion on the Role of Man and Woman*. Michigan District Southwestern Conference, Pastoral Conference, Otsego, Michigan, February 24, 1981. Accessed at essays.wisluthsem.org. Accessed on 17th May, 2023.

2.3 Marriage

2.3.1 *Biblical Information*

Marriage is in all societies a recognized and regulated human institution. But it is not a human invention. Christian teaching on marriage begins with the joyful affirmation that marriage is God's idea, not ours. It was instituted by God himself in the time of man's innocency; it was adorned and beautified by Christ's presence when he attended the wedding at Cana; and it symbolizes the mystical union between Christ and his church. In these ways God has shaped, endorsed and ennobled marriage. True, he calls some people to forgo it and remain single in this life (Matt 19:1ff; 1 Cor 7:7), and in the next world after the Resurrection it will be abolished (Mark 12:25). Nevertheless, while the present order lasts, marriage is to be 'honoured by all'; those who 'forbid people to marry' are false teachers who have been misled by deceiving spirits (Heb 13:4; 1 Tim 4:1ff). Moreover, because it is a 'creation ordinance', preceding the Fall, it is to be regarded as God's gracious gift to all humankind.¹⁶

Classical theology has followed the biblical revelation in identifying three main purposes for which God ordained marriage as in Genesis 1 and 2. The first, God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him' (1:18). Thus, God intended marriage for the mutual society, help and comfort that the one ought to have of the other both in prosperity and adversity. As Jack Dominian shows, husband and wife can give each other 'sustenance' (supporting and cherishing one another), 'healing' (for married life is the best context in which early childhood hurts

¹⁶ Jack Dominian, "Marital Breakdown" *Religious Studies* 6(2) (1970): 29-33.

may be healed by love), and ‘growth’ or fulfilment (stimulating each other to develop the individual potential of each and so become a mature person).¹⁷

Secondly, marriage is intended to be that reciprocal commitment of self-giving love which finds its natural expression in sexual union or becoming ‘one flesh’ (2:24). Thirdly, the command to the male and female was ‘Be fruitful and increase in number’ (1:28). So, the procreation of children has normally headed the list, together with their upbringing within the love and discipline of the family.¹⁸

These three needs have been strengthened by the Fall. The mutual support because of the sorrows of a broken world, sexual union because of temptation to immorality, and the loving discipline of family life has become all the more necessary because of the waywardness of children. But all three purposes existed before the Fall and must be seen as part of God’s loving provision in the institution of marriage.¹⁹

The higher our concept of God’s original purpose for marriage and family life, the more devastating the experience of divorce is bound to be. A marriage which began with tender love and rich expectations now lies in ruins. Marital breakdown is always a tragedy. It contradicts God’s will, frustrates his purpose, brings to husband and wife the acute pains of alienation, disillusion, recrimination and guilt, and precipitates in any children of the marriage a crisis of bewilderment, insecurity and often anger.²⁰

2.3.2 Types of Marriage

Every country has types of marriage which govern by law. Patricia and Asara specify the types of marriage in Ghana. They give three: Traditional marriage,

¹⁷ Dominian, “Marital Breakdown” *Religious Studies*, 29-33.

¹⁸ Kenneth O. Gangel, “Toward a Biblical Theology of Marriage and Family Part One: Pentateuch and Historical Books” *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 5(1) (1977): 55-69.

¹⁹ Gangel, “Toward a Biblical Theology of Marriage and Family Part One”, 55-69.

²⁰ Gangel, “Toward a Biblical Theology of Marriage and Family Part One”, 5-69.

Islamic marriage and Ordinance marriage.²¹ First, the traditional marriage is also known as Customary Marriage. This marriage differs from country to country and from tribe to tribe. In Ghana, Customary Marriage is conducted by both families of the man and woman. Both would be couple have to agree to marry each other; then the two families would give their approval. The parents would receive the bride price after which the marriage becomes valid. In Akan society, the bride price is in the form of alcoholic drinks and money from the groom.²² The approval of the parents and acceptance of the bride price make the marriage customary. Second, the Islamic marriage called in Arabic “nikah”, is officiated by an Imam. The practice of polygamous marriage is instituted in Islam because the Law of Mohammedan allows it. Lastly is the Ordinance marriage also known as Church Marriage.²³ Before this will happen, the couple would first marry under the customary law. After the performance of the customary rites, the pastor blesses the marriage customary and legally accepted. In Ordinance Marriage the man is permitted to marry to only one woman, and the woman is also permitted to marry to only one man. The man cannot marry to another woman unless he has divorced the first woman. Thus, this marriage is monogamous, which, according to Newheiser, is legally accepted by God and most countries.²⁴

2.3.3 Marriage as Divine Institution

The beautiful institution created by God is marriage and this is for man and woman only. The wonderful union by which man and woman are made one. This institution was found early in Genesis where human history begins. God blessed this institution

²¹ Patricia Druper, “African Marriage Systems”, *Ethnology and Sociology* 10(1-3), (1989): 145-169; E. V. Asara, *The Child in the Family* (Accra: Salt and Light, 2008), 12.

²² David H. Olson and Blaine J. Fowers, “Counselling and Therapy for Couples and Families”. *The Family Journal* 1(3), (1993): 196 -207.

²³ M.L. Fauzi, *Actors and Norms in an Islamic Marriage* (2019), pdfs. Semantic scholar.org

²⁴ Newheiser, *Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage*, 5-13.

because it was established by him; it wasn't Adam nor Eve. Marriage is the first institution Satan stood up against by using one of the persons the institution was created for. However, the fall of man could not crush this institution. This institution was something different in the mind of God and a picture of something unique in the future. The scripture proves that God blessed this institution; that is, he ordained it as a holy. That why Jesus said let no one separate what God has joined. Therefore, according to scripture, marriage is a divine institution established by God.

2.3.4 God's Ordinance for Marriage

The first wedding ceremony of marriage was officiated by God. God gave the couple some laws. The first law was that the man shall leave his father and mother and be united to his wife and that no one should separate. God made it known to them that none of them nor family, friend or anybody has the power to separates what he has joined together in marriage. There is a covenant that binds them together, nobody has the permission to break that bound. The word "unite" means to glue. It indicates that no one can come between the man and his wife. Thus, before marriage one was with their family but after marriage it is the man and his wife who have become one just as God did at the beginning.²⁵ Another law is that the man should love his wife and the wife should submit to her husband (Eph 5:22-25). Love is the key that opens the door to marriage and maintain marriage for love bears all things and endures all things. Loving one another is the ordinance God gave them.²⁶

²⁵ M. M Kis, Accessed February, 2019 - adventistbiblicalresearch.org.

²⁶ R. Benne, *Philosophy and Canon Law* (2020), 7-21, - ceeol.com.

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter the study examines Genesis 2:18-25 about the story of the beginning of marriage. It has discussed biblical information of marriage, the creation of woman, types of marriage, and marriage as a divine institution.

CHAPTER THREE

DISCUSSION ON PASTORS' MARRIAGE

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter attention was given to a study of Genesis 2:18-25. The chapter addressed issues such as the creation of woman and marriage as a divine institution. In this chapter the focus shall be a discussion on pastors' marriage. Attention shall be given to causes and effects of pastors' marital problems. Space would also be given to New Testament typology of marriage.

3.2 Covenant in Marriage

In every marriage there must be covenant. It is the covenant that properly defines the marriage as marriage in the eyes of God and man. There is a difference between a Contract and a Covenant. The term covenant means an agreement between two parties. A contract is a written or spoken agreement between two or more parties. Covenant goes beyond contact so in marriage there is no contact but covenant (bond). This bond is established through sex; without sex in marriage there is no covenant. The covenant between Yahweh and Israel is used as a metaphor for marriage. Similarly, there is the metaphor of the covenant between Jesus and the Church. Traditional marriage ceremony and wedding before the community and the Church underline the fact that marriage is more than a legal document between two individuals. The purpose of this is to show that the community knew that the couple have accepted to be in that covenant.

3.3 New Testament Typology of Marriage

The New Testament describes the relation between the church and Christ as marriage. It is needful to ask what the church means in this context. Figuratively, the Church is called the Bride of Christ (Rev 19:7-9; Eph 5:21-33) and Christ is declared the Head of the Church, His Bride. Jesus is the perfect husband to the church and the head of the Church. Paul shows what Jesus did as a head and husband of the church: he directs, protects and guides the bride. He is also the savior of the church and loves his bride. Because of his love for the church, he gave himself out for her. The needful thing the bride must do, is to submit to her husband who is Jesus. There is a covenant between Jesus and the church and that covenant holds the church and no one can break that relationship.²⁷ This picture of marriage relationship between Jesus and the church is the same in human marriage.

3.4 Causes of Pastors' Marital Problems

The causes of pastors' marital problems in this discussion are based on the research I have done. According to the research conducted, both the pastors and their partners are the cause of the problems. Most Christians believe that pastors do not face marital problems. In addition, they know that only conflicts, alcoholism, domestic violence and unfaithfulness are the only cause of marital problems but that is not the case.

3.4.1 Difference in Social Background

Difference in the social backgrounds of pastors and their partners is part of the causes

²⁷ A. Rudrum, "Narrative, Typology and Politics". In Henry Vaughan's "Isaac's marriage". *Connotations* Vol. 11/1(2001/02). Accessed in <https://www.connotations.de> 24th May 2023.

of their marital problems. Both couple come from different families or tribes. This background affects their character. For instance, the high level of their parents' education will influence them. Similarly, the poverty of their parents will influence them.

Such backgrounds have created and continue to create problems in the marriages of pastors.

3.4.2 *Sex in Marriage*

Sex before marriage and sex outside marriage are sin before God but sex between married couples is not sin. Indications from Christians show that sexual problems are a challenge to a greater of number of Christians in which pastors are also victims of this issue. Some pastors, in their former life, thought that sex is sin. But sex creates intimacy in marriage. Most pastors' wives complain that their partners find it very difficult to even disclose and communicate openly to them about how they feel about their sex life. Lack of romantic play time is lacking in most pastors' marriages and so create a lot of problems in their marriages.

3.4.3 *Poor Communication*

Poor communication is one of the causes of the problems in pastors' marriages. This happens in many areas of marriage life. Lack of communication is the biggest reasons marriages fail. Unresolved conflicts create problems in marriages and make couples struggle because of lack of communication in their relationship. Those who experience this find it difficult to manage sexual intimacy and children. Good communication creates space for both couples to share their thoughts and feelings, and express their needs to each other. Lack of communication can happen in all relationships including pastors' and if this is ignored, it can lead to bigger issues for

couples such as blame, relationship anxiety, and resentment in marriages that can lead to divorce.

3.4.4 Growing non-Christian Assault on Traditional Concepts of Marriage

Another cause of marital problems is the growing non-Christian assault on traditional concepts of marriage. As an example of changed attitudes towards marriage is what George and Nena O'Neill's have said in their book entitled, *Open Marriage: A New Lifestyle for Couples*. They confidently declare that monogamous marriage is obsolete, and urge their readers to replace an 'archaic, rigid, outmoded, oppressive, static, decaying, Victoria' institution with one that is 'free, dynamic, honest, spontaneous, creative'. They refuse to glorify either traditional marriage or motherhood, and regard partners as equal, independent individuals who enjoy complete and unfettered role reversibility.²⁸ If each partner comes to regard marriage as primarily a quest for his or her self-fulfilment, rather than as an adventure in reciprocal self-giving, through which parents and children grow into maturity, the outcome is bound to be bleak. Yet it is this self-centred attitude to marriage which is being canvassed by many today. Here is an unabashed quotation from the book *Divorce: How and When to Let Go* by John H. Adam and Nancy Williamson Adam. It appeared in the June 1982 issue of *New Woman*:

Yes, your marriage can wear out. People change their values and lifestyles. People want to experience new things. Change is a part of life. Change and personal growth are traits for you to be proud of, indicative of a vital searching mind. You must accept the reality that in today's multi-faceted world it is especially easy for two persons to grow apart. Letting go of marriage – if it is no longer good for you – can be the most successful thing you have ever done. Getting a divorce can be a positive, problem-solving, growth-oriented step. It can be personal triumph.

²⁸ George and Nena O'Neill, *Open Marriage: A New Lifestyle for Couples* (New York: Evans, 1972). Cited in George F. Gilder, *Sexual Suicide* (New York: Quadrangle, 1973), 47ff.

Here is the secular mind in all its shameless perversity. It celebrates failure as success, disintegration as growth, and disaster as triumph.

Not only is the Christian view of marriage as a lifelong commitment or contract now a minority view in the West, but the Church is in danger of giving in to the world. For among Christian people, too, marriage is no longer as stable as they used to be, and divorces are becoming almost commonplace. Even some ministers divorce their spouses and remarry, while retaining their position of Christian leadership. In this area also the Christian mind is showing signs of capitulating to secularism. The dominant worldview seems to be one of selfish individualism.

3.5 Effects of Pastors' Marital Problems

The causes of pastors' marital problems have effects on their marriages. The effects can be physical and psychological, spiritual and social.

3.5.1 *Physical and Psychological Effects*

Problems in pastors' marriages affect their physically and psychologically; they affect their peace. Thus, marriage problems affect pastors mentally. According to Wakefield, this refers to what is known as mental disorder and this is the failure of a mental mechanism to perform a natural function for which it was designed by God. Disorder as "unexpected distress or disability" in the mind and heart. This makes them approach God with fussing minds; some pastors are mentally unstable because of the problems in their various home.²⁹

²⁹ J. C. Wakefield, *American Psychologist* (New York: Quadrangle, 1992), psycnet.apa.org 24th May 2023.

3.5.2 Spiritual Effects

Marriage is a permanent, binding, life-long commitment. When divorce comes in it influences the spiritual life of the minister. It is a very painful process to endure, which their relationship with God might be affected by their marriage problems. Pastors are called to shepherd the flocks of God and when the pastor is not spiritually sound, how can he concentrate on the work. Most ministers are no more growing as they used to be because some think they have broken what God said they should not.

3.5.3 Social Effects

Marriage problem can affect all aspects of one's interaction being it spouses or friends and family. We are social being so when interaction with men is attacked by problems, we cannot have socialization. All these lead to divorces in pastors' marriages. In some cases, people might cut you off, and not all couples can really stand this, because publicly they usually face being cut off by friends and they become very annoy when they find themselves in social events.

3.5.4 Extramarital Relationship

Another effect of marital problems is extramarital relationship. Extra-marital relationship is a married man or woman in sexual/romantic relationship with another woman or man who is not his/her wife or husband. It is a common knowledge in Ghanaian society that many pastors are involved in extramarital relationships because of the problems they have in their matrimonial homes.

3.5.5 Divorce

One other effect of marital problems is divorce. Gift Tiharihani Baloyi defines divorce as "the final and legal dissolution of the marital bond between two partners."

Divorce affects the psychological and emotional life of both partners. Unfortunately, divorce issues are all over the place in our present day. However, what makes it so difficult is the collision and disgrace attached to it. Divorce brings many difficult situations including the loss of friends, family, financial instability and disapproval from public. The rate of divorce of ordained pastors of God in Ghana and worldwide is climbing high. God hates divorce and scripture also is against it; one thing is that when a leader falls the followers also join him.

Unfortunately, some Christians, including pastors, quote scripture to allow divorce. The first scripture is Deut 24:1-4.

Deut 24:1-4

If a man marries a woman who becomes displeasing to him because he finds something indecent about her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, ²and if after she leaves his house she becomes the wife of another man, ³and her second husband dislikes her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her and sends her from his house, or if he dies, ⁴then her first husband, who divorced her, is not allowed to marry her again after she has been defiled. That would be detestable in the eyes of the Lord. Do not bring sin upon the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance.

Three points need to be clarified about this legislation. It neither requires, nor recommends, nor even sanctions divorce. Its primary concern is not with divorce at all, nor even with certificates of divorce. Its object is to forbid a man to remarry his former spouse, if he has divorced her, since this would be ‘detestable in the eyes of the Lord’. Another scripture cited is Matthew 19:3-12. But critical study of the passage shows that Jesus endorsed the permanence of marriage. He declared the Mosaic provision of divorce to be a concession to human sinfulness. As Gordon Linsey shows *hardness of heart* “is a biblical phrase that refers to a stubbornness of one’s will, a callousness of feeling, a stone-like fixation on a person’s own self-

concern at the expense of God and the other person.”³⁰ As Hard-heartedness stands in contrast to warm-heartedness, expressed in gentleness, humility, compassion, openness and flexibility. A warm-hearted person *feels* with other people, feels their joy and their hurts, instead of closing them out of his or her emotions.

So, here Jesus pinpoints the real reason why many marriages end in divorce. The deep emotional reason is the inflexibility, the intransigence, the insistence of having things one’s own way in the relationship that leads ultimately to irreconcilable conflict. The two partners in the marriage become so entrenched in their own hurts, anger, and demands that they find it impossible to work out their problems in a way that keeps them together.³¹ In sum, it is imperative to state that Jesus called remarriage after divorce ‘adultery’; he only permitted divorce and remarriage on the sole ground of immorality. It is also needful to point out Paul’s teaching on divorce in 1 Cor 7:10-16. Here he gives authoritative, apostolic instruction. He echoes and confirms Jesus’ prohibition of divorce. Paul permitted divorce after a believer has been deserted by an unbelieving partner.

3.6 Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter on the main issues ordained ministers face in their marital life. This chapter considered issues such as covenant in marriage, cause and effect of marital problems and divorces.

³⁰ Gordon Lindsey, *Jesus and Divorce*. <https://thebibleisinmyblood.wordpress.com/tag/rabbis-shammai-and-hillel-on-divorce>. Accessed on 24th May 2023.

³¹ Lindsey, *Jesus and Divorce*.

CHAPTER FOUR

MARRIAGE AS MINISTRY

4.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapters we have looked at marriage from the perspectives of Genesis 2:18-25 and have discussed the pastor's marriage. Clearly those pastors' marriages are in trouble. There are possible causes to these problems and there are effects. This chapter attempts to discuss marriage as ministry. Thus, if pastors will approach marriage the same way they approach ministry, there will be less marital problems.

4.2 The Word Ministry

According to J. Clyde, the calling is a dedication to human welfare which indicates a divine grounding of the ministry. It is God who calls a person in his ministry and all acts of ministry are finally accountable to him. The word "ministry" is not for only pastors. "Ministry" in Greek, is the same word for "serving tables", so the word totally means service. According to Baker, the biblical notion of ministry is service rendered to God. The goal of ministry is the edification and exaltation of individual's growth into maturity in Christ. Ministry is the expression of God's various gifts to his people, and it is portrayed in the servant-leadership of Christ. In the scripture, we see some types of ministries operated by people. This includes the service of priest and Levites in the Old Testament and the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers in the New Testament.

The purpose God calls people is to go and serve others by giving them the word of God. The first ministry a pastor was called into is marriage. Although some people do not

see marriage as a call, it is a call. In fact, the earliest ministry of man is marriage. It was initiated and officiated by God just as God initiates and officiates people into ministry. The roles pastors are called to play are not only to be done in the church; they are to perform those roles and duties in their marriages as well.

4.3 Preparation for Ministry and Marriage

Based on the research I have done on marriage, one thing that is lacking is preparation before marriage. According to Obialor, there are two kinds of preparation for the ministerial work. First is theological preparation and second spiritual preparation. Ministers spent four years to get training from theological seminary to better their calling. Jesus used three years to prepare the disciples for the ministry. This is important because it helps the minister to understand his calling. It is the foundation upon which he builds his ministry and understands his gift. Spiritual preparation includes time with God in prayer and fasting to hear from God's as to how to go about the ministry. The second preparation has to do with learning to be psychologically and emotionally fit in order to solve life's problems and personal issues.

Unfortunately, pastors have ignored preparation towards marriage. If pastors would give preparation towards marriage chance as they give to preparations towards ministry, there would be less problems in their marriages. Various church denominations have established counselling schools, but these are short courses of one month or so. Thus, the preparation is not enough to prepare the person for marriage to withstand marital challenges that might arise. The challenges marriage couples face, including pastors, are as the result of lack of improper preparation. One responsibility of parents is to educate their children about marriage and make them ready for it, but parents fail to do so. The first ministry of every human being is marriage and good preparation must be done before entering that institution. Most of

the problems in marriages in our days is lack of preparation. The researcher notices that physically, emotionally, and psychologically they lack preparation.

4.4 Marriage as a Ministry

For pastors to have balance life of ministry and marriage has become a problem; it is very difficult. Marriage and ministry, each has its own demands. Mostly it is the marriage that suffers. Pastors do not know that marriage is also a ministry ordained by God and so should be properly worked on for their marriages to be fruitful and meaningful. God initiated marriage which is the first ministry field, and its aim is to pursue not to be maintained. Ministers have refused to accept that they are called into marriage, and so it should be their first priority. Some pastors believed that it is better for their marriage to suffer and have good ministry, which is not true. In the previous chapter it has been indicated there that some pastors faced divorce because of lack of certain things in their marriage. The ministry has its own demands. Pastors devote themselves to accomplish their purposes in ministry but ignore the demands of marriage. Pastors should know that the needs of marriage should be top on the priority list because they are called into marriage first and then second into ministry.

Every minister of God has a covenant with Christ, which strengthens them to endure all the suffering they face in ministry. In marriage, the pastor has a covenant with his or her partner. This covenant should not be broken. But pastors seem not to be committed to this command of God. Whatever problem that comes in marriage life endurance must work. Whoever is after the marriage his purpose is not to dissociate marriage, which has been ordained by God himself from the ministry. Pastors should know that their good marriage will lead to better ministry.

Marriage is like ministry work because God ordained marriage while the angels witness its commission: go and increase in number. Ordination is a way of giving pastoral authority to someone who claims to be called by God. It is a great ceremony in which people come to witness the person's commission to occupy that position in the kingdom of God and the church. Here laying of hands is involved. This happened in act Acts 13, which tells us that Barnabas and Paul were commissioned for the work they were called by God. So, marriage is like ministry because it was ordained by God and officiated by him.

4.4.1 Pastors' Marriages as a Primary Tool for God's Ministry

Marital dissonance has been the greatest challenge that pastors are facing. Pastors can only have good ministry when they have good marriage. The reason being that the way they train hard to become pastors if the same additional level of training and coaching is done before they enter marriage, there would not be many problems. Pastors do not train for marriage, is it because they don't know the necessity of marriage to the ministry? Some pastors give up in marriages because they view marriage as a contract than covenant. How can a pastor divorce his or her partner and be faithful in the ministry? Having faithful marriage and strong marriage will serve as moral model for their church members. The love of God should be seen in the marriage for love bears all things. Properly training about marriage should be done before pastors could enter marriage, for marriage is a long-life bond which should not be broken.

4.4.2 Pastors' Ministry to their Spouse

The symbolism and visible union in the eyes of society is the pastors' marriages; their marriage should serve as moral model for the church. The first ministry work of the pastor is to his or her own spouse because they are one; whatever affects one affects the other too. Although both come from different homes and their backgrounds are

not the same, it the responsibility of the minister to teach his or her partner how to behave and conduct him/herself well. It is wrong to go out to preach and teach and fail to teach your own spouse who is your body. The scripture affirms that the minister must be able to manage his or her own family (1 Tim 3:4-5). Every minister's partner plays an essential role in the ministry, so if a minister fails to train his or her partner to become like him or her, it will go against his or her calling. Pastors should be refuge to their spouses.³² Pastors devote themselves for well-being of the flock, the same effort should apply for the well-being of their spouse.³³

4.5 Growing of Marriage

Marriage needs to grow. Before a marriage can grow, one needs to consider how to make it grow. Growth is something we all experience as we go through the seasons of our lives. Normally we assume that spiritual growth is only what is needed in marriage, but some other areas must be considered too such as emotional, physical and psychological growth, which some pastors have ignored. First married life must grow spiritually. After marriage each partner needs to continue to have personal relationship God. This relationship must be maintained at all costs. Observing personal and family devotions, attending church meeting regularly all help one's spiritual growth of marriage. Consistent and regular Bible reading and studies and spending time in private prayer should be at the top of the schedule each day for the growth of marriage. Second is the physical growth. This has to do with physical development aspect of the marriage where the couples should grow financially and healthy in their daily lives. Third, marriage should grow emotionally. The couple should grow in love, patient and self -control. Love is not jealous and does not get

³² W. B. Presnell, *Pastoral Psychology* (1977), academia.edu, 24th May 2023.

³³ C. L. Shehan, J Schultz & M. Wiggins-Frame, *Sociological Focus* (Taylor & Francis, 1999), 23.

angry quickly so the couple should grow in love for each other. Lastly marriage should grow psychologically. Whenever the couple face any challenges in their married life they should have that mental capacity to solve their own problem without reporting to anybody.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how ministers should take time to train themselves before entering marriage. In the same way they love to study and be trained for ministry, they should in the way, learn about marriage. The discussions have shown that the minister's healthy marriage has a positive influence over their ministry and vice versa.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The discussion in the previous chapter dealt with how marriage is like a ministry, pastors' marriage as a primary tool for God's ministry and the pastor's ministry to their spouse. This very chapter concludes the entire study and considers the summary of the study, general conclusion and some recommendations.

5.1 Summary of the Study

This study examines the challenges pastors are facing in their marriages, which affects both their lives, ministry and the work of God. Pastors are facing problems in their marriages because they have failed to see marriage is like a ministry, which needs properly training and coaching, and so end up finding things difficult in their marriages. Marriage is a first ministry God calls a man, so the sacrifice they invest in doing the work of God the same should be invested in their marriage. Good preparation should be done before getting into marriage. That is, proper counseling and teachings on marriage must be done. In the same way that ministers spend years in seminary and Bible school to be trained for the ministry, the same must be done towards marriage. Ministers should know that ministry is first marriage after which comes church ministry. Failure to hold this, has led to marital problems of ministers some of which have led to divorce. Pastors' marriages should be an example for the

church. The phenomenon of divorce by men of God has made some church members lose confidence in marriage.

5.2 General Conclusion

The first aim for this study is to find out the causes of divorce in pastors' marriages and what God has said about marriage and divorce. The researcher has identified the causes and challenges some married ministers are going through which shakes the foundation of the marriage. The second objective of the study sought to examine the biblical basis for marriage and ministry. The study concludes that both marriage and ministry have covenant that bond it, so ministers should handle their marriage with proper care for God hates divorce. The third objective of the study also sought to examine the causes and effects divorce can bring. The researcher identified that sex issues in marriage can bring divorce and it can also create physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual harm to the life of the victim. Lastly is why pastors divorce? The study has shown that marriage is as a ministry, God instituted and ordained it. The research found out that many ministers of God do not know that marriage is their first ministry God has called them and they will render account for that.

5.3 Recommendations

This study has been able to bring out the challenges which has led to divorce in some marriages of pastors. The difficulties are affecting the church members. Nevertheless, something can be done about the situation to improve pastors' marriages by managing

problems and bring harmony to their married life and individuals in the church. The following recommendations have been carefully made in line with the outcome of this research. First, the researcher proposes that marriage schools should be established for both married and unmarried ministers and also for church members by educating them on issues of marriage. This school of marriage will be a special training, coaching and teaching ground for marriage. Second, the researcher recommends that parents must teach and train their children and help them to know everything about marriage, where marriage can lead their life to and marry in the will of God to experience God's blessings. Third, the researcher proposes that the government should make marriage counselling a compulsory course in Senior High Schools for the youth to have proper knowledge, wisdom and understanding of married life.

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