

MORE
THAN A
Ring

CONCISE EDITION



EDWARD AGYEMAN

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More than a ring- concise edition

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CHAPTER 1-MARRIAGE

Marriage is a dream for most people if not all. However, before one gets to the state of marriage; a relationship needs to develop as an initial process.

When people form a relationship, I believe many hope for the relationship to evolve into marriage, although at times it doesn't.

Marriage is honourable, a Holy institution that honours God. Therefore it is important that anyone entering marriage has a better and a genuine understanding of it before one gets involved.

A lot of the time in our modern and very social society, most consider and think of their

wedding day and not the marriage; therefore failing to prepare for the union they are about to join. It is imperative that knowledge and understanding is gained about what marriage is so that every individual desiring marriage will have a right approach towards it.

One needs to consider that marriage is more than the ring put on the finger of a spouse; it is so much more than saying I do. When the right factors are considered with regards to the approach to marriage, the right relationships can be considered and birthed as mentioned earlier.

What is Marriage?

Marriage according to the biblical and Christian belief/foundation is the Holy union between a man and a woman for God's purpose. Consequently, marriage is not considered a union between the same sex, if so, man would not be able to honour God.

When God created man he blessed him to be fruitful and multiply. Procreation was a core part of the union between Adam and Eve - they are the first example we have of marriage. As a result, marriage between the same sex cannot be considered as such; it is an abominable act. In as much as society is redefining our views and expectations of marriage it is important to remain solid on God's idea on marriage. An institution from and by God; it is imperative we perceive God's word not from bills passed by legislatures or any person or groups in authority.

Marriage is sacred and cannot be toyed with or trampled upon. The principles of God govern not only marriage but the laws within our society. This alone shows us the magnitude of His greater presence we conditionally live in knowingly and unknowingly.

For a believer it is important to recognise and consider a union with a fellow believer. Choosing to marry an unbeliever is contrary to

the teachings of Christ; therefore it is important to recognise marriage as a holy union.



CHAPTER 2 - UNDERSTANDING **MARRIAGE**

Marriage is a union for life till death brings a separation. It is not like friendship where you can choose to disown, cut communication. It is aimed to be a lifelong decision and pledge; union of faithfulness to one spouse. It must be understood as a believer once you are married, divorce is not on the menu - not for a minute can it be perceived as an option. Again marriage is for life.

Marriage is a Commitment

Making a decision to spend the rest of your life with a person is a union of commitment; this is a decision of loyalty regardless of the challenges that comes your way.

Marriage is a call to faithfulness

A call to faithfulness means being persistent to your vows and what the scripture teaches about marriage; it requires full faithfulness not partial. Therefore you must ensure that through the different emotional changes and stages you may go through you remain faithful. You must be faithful in all things towards your partner. Aside from being faithful not to commit adultery you must be faithful in your finances, and every area of your personal life.

Marriage has Challenges

Every marriage under the sun, has its own unique challenges from time to time. It will be a misconception for anyone desiring to enter this holy institution to think that marriage has no issues and problems. When one faces challenges in their marriage one shouldn't think that they would have been better off with someone else; the truth be told another partner would also come with their own issues and there will still be challenges. As a matter of fact, as individuals we have our own set of

concerns so any one you align with will also have to deal with it.

Marriage gives you a taste of your actions towards God and His response.

One of the unique lessons marriage will reveal to you is your behaviour towards God which will become vivid through some of the hurt and offence your spouse may cause. During martial challenges and dealing with your spouse can highlight how we also fall short before God- when wronged; you are required to forgive them. For instance, we love God but we do sin against Him and just as He forgives. We are called to extend that same grace to our spouse.

Marriage is based on love

Love must be clearly understood to enable one to be able to walk in it. Love is not a feeling but a decision one makes and chooses to be faithful to that decision. When we say we love God it is evident that our love is not based on feelings – if it was, it would be unstable

affecting a union. Our walk with God comes with challenges and trials yet, regardless of the afflictions we still abide in Him and endure in Christ. Such approach is what is applicable to marriage. It is a conscious decision to exhibit all that is numerated about love in 1 Corinthians 13. A conscious decision to love regardless of emotional state is imperative

Marriage is work

Marriage requires much work and effort. This is a joining of different upbringings, different economic circumstances and many other factors. It will take some work for a couple to see the manifestation of oneness in their union. The work allows couples to iron out differences to see eye to eye and also deal with challenges that comes their way.

Marriages demands you bridle your lust

Lust signifies a strong desire for anything God forbids. However, we do tend to quickly only associate lust with sexual sins but lust is a broad term. Any conduct which dishonours

God and the institution of marriage must be dealt with by an individual. In marriage one cannot flirt with another, spend frivolously, and importantly commit adultery. One must seek to daily bridle their lust towards everything and anything God prohibits and also threatens your marriage.

One woman for life

Marriage does not permit you as a man to change females when you get bored with your wife like shirts. Once you are joined to a woman, is for life.

One man for life

Once you commit in the union of marriage as a woman to a man. You must understand that it is that one man for life and you cannot change a man like your heels.



CHAPTER 3- FORM THE RIGHT RELATIONSHIP

As previously mentioned the union of commitment cannot be entered in lightly; the right relationship is crucial particularly with the challenges that will come.

The cost of making an error of a choice of a life partner can be dear. However, the grace of God is made available. Relationships are delicate and therefore one cannot afford to rush or make certain fundamental errors, because its consequences can be severe.

Avoid forming a relationship because of:

Age

Do not be quick to form a relationship because you are getting older. Due to this

factor some people have been quick to form a relationship without being cautious. Marriage is for a purpose and to glorify God, therefore one cannot use age as a factor as that will make one vulnerable.

Frustration

Some people have prayed and waited and now are at the point of frustration. One being frustrated does not help or give one the peace of mind to clearly make a sound decision of a partner. Frustration can impair ones vision and judgement.

Pressure

Do not rush to form a relationship because there is pressure from family or friends. Life is not a competition. If you rush due to mounted pressure from family and friends it can cost you an avoidable error. Deflect pressures through wise counsel than to rush into a relationship.

Insecurity

You absolutely cannot jeopardise your life at any expense. Once you know that you suffer from insecurities it is imperative that you deal with such issues or else it will impair your judgement of a life partner. Insecurities disadvantage a person because it puts them in a place where they are vulnerable and gives power to the other. Most people have suffered great ordeals because of insecurities.

Relationships and a marriage is not a competition or race if you witness your loved ones getting married and you are still not; it is not a reason to be in haste to look for a relationship and as a female accept any proposal. Again, not only are relationships or marriage not a race or competition, life isn't; compete with no one, stay focused and, look onto God.

You need to learn to exercise patience and form a relation with the right person. In as much as marriage has challenges it will be so much rewarding and worth your while if you marry the right person.

As a single or someone in a serious relationship or considering marriage; I'm sure you would have questioned who is a right person for me. It is fair and worth being asked.

Since the scripture teaches that there is no fellowship between light and darkness, it is therefore important for individuals to acknowledge that the formation of a relationship essential to be with a fellow believer. Know that you cannot form a union with an unbeliever. I must add that by believer I am not referring to people who are attendees at church but, rather an individual who has surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The distinction needs to be drawn because there are many within the church who attend

church regularly but do not have a relationship with God.

Fundamentally, forming a relationship with a fellow believer entails establishing the individual is born again. You need to marry an individual you know that you can decide to love in the union of marriage, share both the good and bad moments with, one who has become a friend, shares a common focus or purpose. These are important factors to consider.

Sometimes people have only considered the religious status and turned a blind eye to other important factors and in as much as they are both Christians; leading to a breakdown of marriage.



CHAPTER 4- IS THERE A RIGHT PERSON?

As a minister and teacher of God's Word, this is one of the frequently asked questions I face from counselling and conducting relationship seminars. This is a fair question and deserves an answer.

The truthful answer to the question is yes. Permit me now to explain - you need to consider that not everyone you meet can be a spouse. You are unique and not every person can appreciate and be supportive of the visions and aspirations you may have for life. Having said this; there is a right person out for you somewhere.

In Genesis 24, when the chief servant of Abraham was sent, he prayed specifically for God to lead him to a woman for Isaac. Upon

seeing Rebecca, he pleaded for confirmation. You have to realise that in this life, not every person has what it takes to champion you to greatness and fulfilment but there is a right person whom God can and will use.

I sound this caution that as there is a right person for you; be weary as there can also be a wolf in sheep's clothing, pretending to be the right person for you - never be hasty in your decision making. There are people who can disguise themselves and gain your trust and later in life cause you pain and harm. Hence like Abraham's chief servant sought confirmation from God.

In another light, you can be fearful and doubt ever meeting the right person either through bad experiences, stories heard and other factors but I can encourage you that through the leading of the Holy Spirit you will definitely meet the right person and you will be able to identify them.

Guard your ways so that you do not fall into the hands of predators. The devil does not

only work unseen but sometimes manifests and carries his agenda through people. The devil detests marriage and good relationship that are founded on Jesus. So for your sake, be vigilant and pray and be patient so that you can make the right decision to be with the right person.

Let me add that there is not only one person for you in this entire planet but there is always a right person for you. What I mean is this, should you have five people to choose one as a partner, it will certainly not be all five but one out of the five. However should you lose that person through eventualities of life such as break ups, family issues, death etc. It will not mean that you cannot get married rather you can meet someone else by God's grace. Hence I say, there is not only one person for you but always one right person for you.



CHAPTER 5- KNOWING THE RIGHT PERSON

It is crucial that you are able to identify the right person from the wrong person. Know very well that your success in life is also dependent on the kind of partner you keep and the marriage you go into. Therefore, knowing the right person to then decide is very relevant and crucial to enhance the fulfilment of your purpose to the glory of God.

First and foremost, you can identify the right person by you being the right person. You can tell a forged £20 note when you know what a real one should and be and look like. Consequently when you have sought to know God, knowing the right person for you is not a struggle. Sometimes because we have not subjected ourselves to the Word of God for a

transformation to take place, we become indecisive and our decisions are often impaired. Romans 12:1-2, reveals that when we have been transformed by the renewing of our mind we will then be able to attest to what the will of God is.

Seeking God will enable you to discern and will even assist your relationship with your partner. Without being transformed, even when the right person comes your way you may reject, abuse, and lose them. Getting connected to the right person is a success key to a long lasting marriage. You need to know God, so that when a man/woman who is not after God's own heart comes your way you can distinguish.

Also, you must consider the prospect of relationship and marriage prayerfully. Who you consider to enter a relationship with or consider marrying is one of the greatest decisions for you to make in life. It is important as a believer to prayerfully seek God's approval. You can couple your prayer

with fasting, to abase yourself in order for God's will to be established.

I must make you aware that it is crucial that you get to know God, without which I seriously don't know how you can distinguish the right person from the wrong person. When you get to know God and even have a relationship with him; it equips and sharpens your foresight. Foresight helps in your decision making and gives you confidence in the way of the Lord. For instance, there are men today who are rich but earlier in their lives experienced poverty. Their wives made the right decision to marry them then and today they are enjoying the privilege of riches. I am using this as an example to show you how foresight can cause you to overlook the present state. Also, foresight can keep you from harm's way by saying no to a person who might look right but is actually a wolf in sheep clothing. Someone physically can look like 'the one' but, by spiritual foresight you can tell they are not 'the one'

Finally, I want to stress on the fact that you ought to be right with the Lord to be in tune with His will. Also, don't put confidence in yourself but learn to acknowledge God. Remember, marriage is a lifetime commitment so knowing and being with the right person is essential.



CHAPTER 6- THE ISSUE OF **CHARACTER**

Character is key to every relationship and marriage and one must take thought to his/her character.

The 21st Century dictionary defines character as the combination of qualities that make up a person's nature or personality.

Have you got a character? The answer is an obvious yes for you and for everybody else on planet earth. One's character can either be good or bad, and our various habits are the reflection of our character. The character of a person is very important. It can significantly determine how far one can go in life, for it is the wings of an individual which identifies how high the person can fly and soar. God wants us

to bear godly characters that will help with our growing relationship. Galatians 5:22-23 numerates characters which I believe one need to possess. These are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control.

Why is God concerned about our Character?

A godly character is very important and essential for everyone anticipating a purposeful life. Relationships are built on Christ and our character contributes to the growth or demise of our relationship/marriage. If you have an ungodly character please be aware that you have set yourself up to destroy your future, or current relationship. It is therefore needful to address your character.

The character of a person I believe it is of outmost importance as it shows the quality of reception the individual can accord to God. Any relationship and eventually marriage demands and is dependent on character alongside other factors. God is gracious to bring someone your way but your character is

a contributing factor to the sustenance of a possible relationship.

Addressing Ungodly Character

Character is like pregnancy; it cannot be hidden, and will eventually become visible. To enjoy a decent, godly relationship, ungodly characteristics need to be dealt with. Your refusal to deal with your ungodly character can destroy your relationship.

If undesired characteristics have been spotted in either yourself or partner; it needs to be addressed appropriately. God graciously brings to your attention the behaviours that need His transformational touch. In such an instance you ought to co-operate with God to deal with it.

More Than A Ring, concise edition seeks to encourage and admonish the believer about marriage and relationships.

This book will challenge and spur every reader on to build right relationship and marriage that is strong enough to stand the test of time.

About the author

Edward Agyeman is a man with an undying passion for exalting Christ. He travels extensively speaking at churches, conferences and seminars in several countries. The ministry of Edward Agyeman has helped many in building their relationship with God.

