

Volume 1 No. 1

Christian Women MIRROR

THE MAGAZINE THAT BUILDS GODLY WOMEN

PREPARE

TO BE

Preferred



CONTENTS

From the General Superintendent

2 From the GS

God is Interested

3 Cover Story

5 Feature Piece

God's Partner for your Life

8 Health Tips

Skin (Secrets of a Glowing Skin)

8 The Bible through the Year

9 Tracts of Life

Keep Yourself Pure

9 Quotable Quotes

9 Did You Know That

8 Bible Quiz

9 Corporate Prayers

10 The Virtuous Woman

Look Forward to it

13 Child Training

Bear It in Mind

Many single women rush into marriage because of parental pressure, age, societal demand, infatuation, physical appearance, educational attainment or social status of the partner, even when he is not God's desire for them. Some become frustrated, sad or desperate when other women around them - probably younger than they are - are getting married. In these emotional states, they may stop waiting for God's perfect choice of a husband for them, and marry the next available man they can find. However, they do not realize that God is interested in their marital life.

If you have reached a marriageable age but still unmarried, do not be perturbed or despair of life. Being single does not imply that something is wrong with you or that you are a failure in life. Though a cloak of negativity blankets those who are not in relationships in some societies, singleness is not some sort of plague. Stop walking around with question marks over your head.

Know this: if you are a Christian, God has not forgotten you. Your own time will come. What counts is not how early or young you get married, but how successful your marriage is. So, take heart because God has great things in store for you! God wants you to be married even more than you desire it. He has not created you to be alone; He has made you for companionship. The Bible tells us He created humans male and female because of marriage (Genesis 2:18; Matthew 19:4-6). So, He has made a man for you, who is the bone of your bone. Besides, the man He intends for you is a man of God who will not play games with your emotions. He will honour, love, respect, and cherish you. God loves you so dearly and wants the best for you. So do not settle for less.

If you have fallen to the trap of the devil and gotten involved with the wrong man, or you are on the verge of doing so, plead for God's forgiveness, repent sincerely, and then move onward.

God Is Interested

The Scriptures says God has good plans - including marriage, in His timing for you (Jeremiah 29:11; Isaiah 34:16), and they will materialize in your life despite past mistakes. Just put your faith in God no matter your circumstance, knowing that His delay is never His denial. Do not allow the enemy or what people say to overwhelm you with fear, rejection or hopelessness. Focus on God and trust in His plan for you. His Word is more reliable than any marriage book on the bestseller's list or what any marriage counsellor says.

A word of caution though - do not shoot yourself in the foot by having unrealistic expectations for marriage. Do not be deluded by images of perfection in the media, the fad that good looks is what it takes to attract a man. Perfect looks are good, but will not bring the perfect man or lead to a perfect marriage. God is the perfect matchmaker. The man He has for you will find you attractive without makeup or plastic surgery. Moreover, do not leave God out of your marriage plan because the devil is whispering to you that being a single Christian woman is a miserable existence. Do not believe his lie. Only stay with God, and He will fulfil His plans in your life.

PREPARE TO BE *Preferred*



Jasmine crashed into her bed in utter despair. She sobbed profusely wondering why her life had taken such a sad turn. She had thought that by now she would have been married, or at least be in courtship. Sadly, this was not the case. "Oh Lord! What is happening to me?" she half-screamed and half-cried with arms raised in despair. "I cannot continue like this, Lord. I need a way out," she said amid sobs. After sobbing for a while, she sighed heavily. "Why has no suitor come for me? Is something wrong with me? Am I not beautiful? Am I not a child of God? Or is this a test of my faithfulness to Him? What exactly is the problem with me?" she asked herself in quick succession, her wet eyes gazing into the ceiling as though it held the answers to her questions. "Please Lord, have mercy on me!" she prayed, before relapsing into uncontrollable tears.

Jasmine could be described as an accomplished bachelorette. At twenty six, she held Bachelor's and Masters' degrees in Human Resources; she was an assistant Human Resources Manager in a reputable manufacturing company. Besides, she also owned a fashion design outfit that has more than ten people in her employ. Sad to say, she was not a likable young woman. Though wealthy, intelligent, elegant and an acclaimed Christian, she was arrogant, brash and a snub. Besides, she was reserved, uptight, and led a solitary life. Her social life was practically nonexistent, and many people thought she was withdrawn and uncouth because of her social status. They felt her wealth had got into her head. Her parents had grave concern about her behaviour, and often chided her for being a bad cook too. Jasmine never watched her mother cook in

the kitchen which could have enabled her to acquire the requisite cooking skills, and never attempted to read recipe books or consult experienced persons. Moreover, she seldom participated in church activities. These shortcomings contributed to her delay in marriage.

Her cell phone suddenly beeped while she was still in bed. It was a Short -

Messaging Service (SMS) from Mrs. Banner, a member of her local church, reminding her of the upcoming marriage seminar slated for the following day.

Jasmine rarely attended such seminars, but this time, she reluctantly decided to attend. At the meeting, the guest speaker spoke on the need for preparation before marriage. Jasmine was stunned by what she heard because she never thought you needed any special preparation before getting married. Through the seminar, God enlightened her as to why she was yet unmarried - her character was unbecoming of a Christian. She realized her wrongdoings and started to work on her character and attitude.

Most women have a picture of a fitting age when Mr. Right will come by with a wedding proposal.

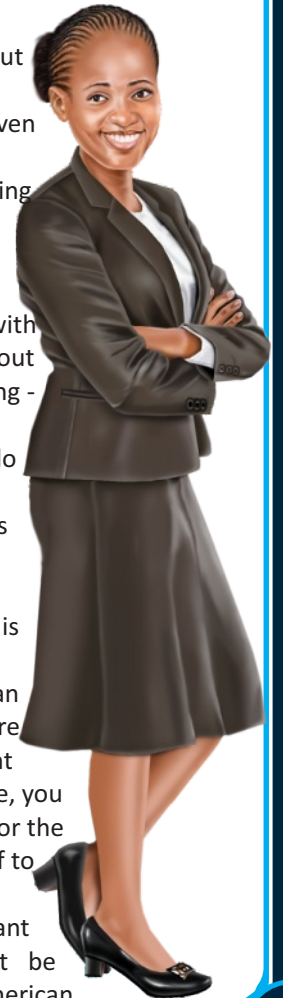
Jasmine shared that viewpoint too.

Such women make a lot of fuss about 'ideal' wedding outfits, seasons (winter/summer), guests' list and even consult bridal experts for wedding planning. They opine that the wedding day would be the turning point of their lives which will culminate into a happily-ever-after scenario.

Sad to say, they get overwhelmed with planning the utopian wedding without investing in the most important thing - preparing themselves to become a 'wife of worth'. Like Jasmine, they do not realize that special preparation is a pre-requisite to winning a man's heart or becoming a 'beloved and prized wife'.

The beautiful thing about marriage is that when you give it your all both before and during the union, you can live "happily-ever-after." So if you are a single woman waiting for Mr. Right and want to have a blissful marriage, you must prepare yourself adequately for the marital life; that is, prepare yourself to become a wife. The importance of preparation before any significant venture or event in life cannot be overemphasized. A foremost American

So if you're a single woman waiting for Mr. Right and want to have a blissful marriage, you must prepare yourself adequately for the marital life; that is, prepare yourself to become a wife.



You need to pay attention to your physical readiness for marriage. Know the basics of simple personal hygiene, be a good home keeper, possess an enviable character like the Proverbs 31 woman, be diligent, and shun laziness.

President, Abraham Lincoln, said, *"If I had eight hours to chop down a tree, I'd spend six hours sharpening my ax."* Athletes prepare before the main event. Professional speakers do it. Musicians do it. Event planners do it. Even newscasters in the media do it, and so marriage is not an

exception.

Successful people always prepare themselves for whatever venture they embark on. Preparation is not always fun. In fact, sometimes the hours may seem long and you might not feel like you are making any progress. Yet, success comes from preparation. The hours you spend preparing make for more positive, uplifting, and successful hours in the time when it counts; for *"There is no short cut to achievement. Life requires thorough preparation,"* says George Washington Carver.

As a bachelorette, your preparation for the marital life must be all-round—spiritual, emotional, social, and financial. In our illustrative story, Jasmine did not prepare herself for marital relationship; hence, she experienced some delay in getting married. How do you prepare yourself for marriage, and in what specific areas do you need preparation as a single woman? The following discussion will address these crucial aspects.

Spiritual Preparation before Marriage

To avoid delay in marriage, marrying the wrong man or to ensure a blissful marital life, you need to be prepared spiritually. Since marriage is a God-ordained institution, it is more of a spiritual union than physical. Therefore, spiritual preparation is of utmost importance. First, develop an intimate relationship with God, for you cannot enter a successful covenant with a husband if you do not first have one with God. A relationship with God begins at conversion—acknowledging that you are a sinner (Romans 3:23), confessing your sins to God, repenting of them and accepting Jesus as your Saviour and Lord.

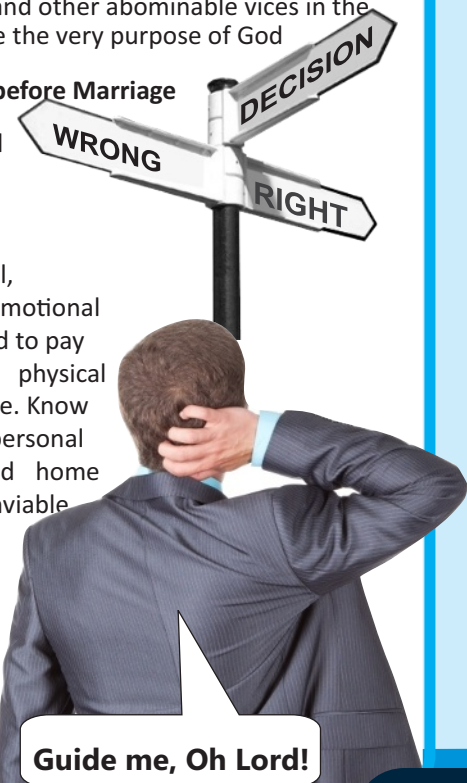
If you have taken these steps to salvation already, then make your relationship with God intimate by developing your spiritual life. Cultivate spiritual maturity while waiting for Mr. Right. Seek biblical wisdom, study God's Word, read good Christian literatures, develop a life of prayer,

be dedicated to God's service and trust Him to give you an ideal husband. Yes, the ideal husband comes from God. He is that man God reveals to you as your future husband. Human beings are complex and very difficult to understand. Only God knows everyone inside out (John 2:24). He searches and knows the heart of all humans (Jeremiah 17: 10), and He alone knows who is ideal for you. As earlier mentioned, He instituted the marriage union, and He is the only one that can help you make a good match. He is the peerless matchmaker (Genesis 2:18, 21-24; Mathew 19: 4-6). This is why you must depend on Him to make the right choice for you. But remember, you must be sincere with Him. Do not hide an idol in your heart and expect to be guided by God. An idol in your heart is that man - Christian or non - Christian — you have already decided to marry based on your own standards. In Ezekiel 14:4, God says, ***"Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart . . . I the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols."*** Marrying the man you have idolized will not give you a fulfilling and joyful home. So simply entrust your choice to God and you can count on Him - His choice will be the best for you. Moreover, as a Christian woman believing God for an ideal partner, you should shun seeking a partner through the social media.

Hebrews 13:4 tells us ***"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers Godgers and adulterers God will judge."*** God instituted marriage for the happiness of humans and the prevention of sexual immorality and other abominable vices in the society. Do not negate the very purpose of God for marriage.

Secular Preparation before Marriage

Aside from spiritual preparation, there is also the need for **s e c u l a r** preparation—physical, financial, social and emotional preparation. You need to pay attention to your physical readiness for marriage. Know the basics of simple personal hygiene, be a good home keeper, possess an enviable character like the Proverbs 31 woman, be diligent, and shun laziness. Being a good cook is also



Guide me, Oh Lord!

Continued on page 15



GOD'S PARTNER FOR YOUR LIFE

Anyone considering marriage should understand that it is for mature adults only.

Our physical, spiritual, emotional, and social maturity contribute tremendously to marital success.

Regrettably today, many believe physical maturity is the only criterion for marriage, laying emphasis on age and physique. However God places a high premium on the spiritual life, emotional stability and development including social interaction and relationships.

Prior to marriage, as a Christian woman, there is need to acquire discipline, temperance, industry and selflessness. You must also be determined to make necessary adjustment in your relationship to withstand challenges and ensure a successful marriage. So you see, marriage is not meant for kids but for adults with all-round maturity.

Be careful not to rush into marriage because of parental pressure or in lieu of parental control. On the other hand, do not choose your spouse based on good looks, a fat bank account or prestigious family background.

Moreover, do not marry a non-Christian for whatever reason. If you give attention to all these principles, your marriage will be blissful and God-honoring.



Perplexity of a Single Status

Mathew 19:10 reads, *“His disciples say unto him, if the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.”*

Similar to the words spoken by Jesus’s disciples, today, some people advance the same argument as an excuse for avoiding marriage. They believe the marital union is bedeviled with many problems - satanic attacks, problematic in-laws, childlessness, rebellious children, a partner’s infidelity, insecurity, financial squabble between partners and other related issues— and to avoid these problems, they decide not to get into a relationship. Some resolve to remain single so they can dedicate themselves to their career or the service of God. However, Jesus declared that only those who are celibates either by nature or dedication can remain single (Matthew 19:11-12). As a single woman, your decision about your status should not be determined by apparent delay in finding the right partner, evasion of marital challenges or the choice of celibacy by someone else. Celibacy is a gift from God.

A decision by some to practice celibacy may be due to the fact that some of their body parts are underdeveloped, genetic infertility or impotency. Their action could stem from the knowledge that they cannot fulfill marital obligations towards their spouse. Therefore, it is important not to emulate anyone because your knowledge about the reason for their choices may be limited. So, if you have no grace for celibacy, trust God for a life partner, and He will surely give you a suitable one; *“for it is better to marry than to burn,”* says the Scriptures.

Preparation for a Satisfactory Selection

Proverbs 18:22 says, *“Whoso findeth a wife [or husband] findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.”*

Proverbs 19:14 rephrases this statement:

“House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife [or husband] is from the Lord.”

These Scriptures reveal that God is the matchmaker. He is the one

Remember, God loves you. And as a loving Father, He will not deny you what is good. He is a bountiful giver. Therefore, trust and obey Him; He'll give you a perfect husband.

who gives the perfect life partner. However, before He chooses a marriage partner for you, He will first consider your life, f u t u r e , temperament, disposition and everything that will m a k e y o u compatible and ensure your

happiness in the marriage.

God knows all virtuous persons. They are in His custody.

You cannot get one outside His counsel. As a single Christian woman, you need to go to Him in purposeful prayer and ask for the virtuous man that will be your husband. This is the only way of finding and knowing the man that is suitable for you to marry.

God will give you a virtuous and compatible husband if you let Him be the matchmaker. He honours those who have intimate relationship with and are dependent on Him. He respect those who respect Him and appreciate those who appreciate Him.

So what do you do for God to select the perfect man for you? In other words, how do you know God's perfect choice of a husband for you?

(1) Accept God's plans for your life as revealed in the Bible. Acceptance of His already revealed plans for you and obedience to His Word will encourage Him to reveal other plans He has for you, including marriage.

(2) Pray in faith and be constantly open to God.

(3) Recognize God's voice when He speaks to you.

Some people assume that God only talks with humans through dreams or visions. God is not stereotyped. He speaks to men in different ways, including via peace of mind or a deep feeling of love (not lust) for a partner with respect to marriage. Recognize how He speaks to you, and obey His voice.

(4) Learn to be neutral. Do not have an idol in the heart (Ezekiel 14:3-4).

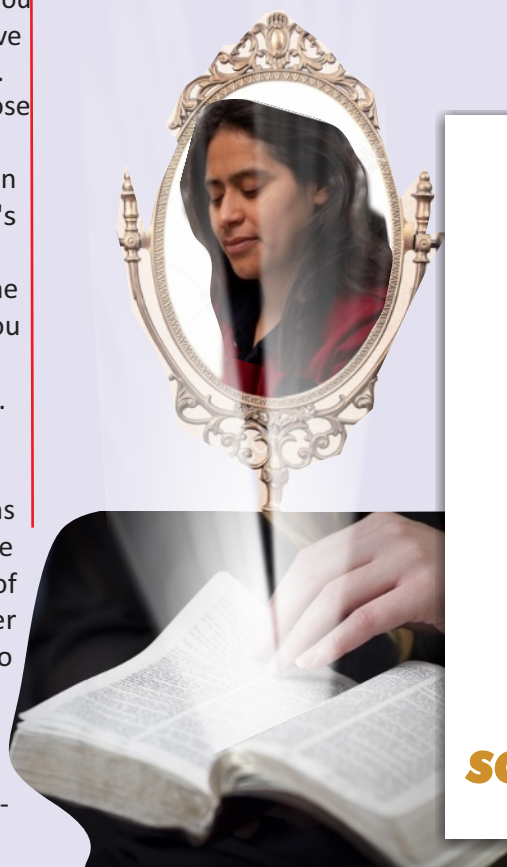
(5) Abstain from every appearances of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

Perception of Spiritual Guidance

God may be talking to you right now about His marriage plan for you, but like young Samuel in 1 Samuel 3:4-5, you cannot decipher His voice. Samuel misconceived His voice for that of Eli. How do you recognize God's distinctive voice and not misconstrue it for that of the devil or assume that your mind is playing tricks on you? In other words, how do you perceive divine guidance in marriage? Well, you do that through:

- (1) Inner witness of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 30:21).
- (2) The restraint of the Holy Spirit (Acts 16:6-7).
- (3) Revelation through dream (Acts 16:9-10).
- (4) Divinely-arranged circumstances (1 Samuel 9:16-20).
- (5) Divine insight in the Word of God (Psalm 119:105, 130).
- (6) Peace of mind (Philippians 4:7).
- (7) Deep feeling of love for a man (Song of Solomon 8:6-7).
- (8) Spirit-guided counseling and confirmation by godly leaders (Luke 1:34-47).

Remember, God loves you. As a loving Father, He gives bountifully and will not deprive you of any good thing. Therefore, trust and obey Him; He will give you a perfect husband.



**The
PICTURE
of
your
FUTURE
is in
the
SCRIPTURE**

Reach your World
with these **NEW**

TRACTS





HEALTH TIPS

SKIN

(SECRETS OF A GLOWING SKIN)

Skin is the largest organ of the body. It provides a thin, but effective barrier to billions of health threats called pathogens, which harm the body and make a person ill. If the skin is not well taken care of, it becomes dry, rough and chapped, providing an opening for pathogens to sneak past it. The skin performs three major functions: protection, sensation and temperature regulation. It protects the body against sun damage, dehydration, bacterial invasion and physical injuries. In terms of sensation, it keeps the body cool, warm and insulated and further enables it to feel heat, pain, pressure and touch. The skin releases sweat from the body and regulates blood flow to extreme regions of the body like the limbs. From the foregoing, you would have noticed that extreme temperatures can cause damage to the skin. Besides, beauty cosmetics are harmful

to the body and extreme uses may result in organ failures such as the kidney and liver. Studies report that lipstick for example, contain lead, a carcinogen and neurotoxin which affect the nervous system adversely and triggers a cascade of reactions in the body. Whatever your skin type, you need to take proper care of it by eating right. The skin needs the right nutrients to fight off damage to the body and to glow. Eat lots of vegetables and fruits, and drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration. However, avoid processed and low nutrient food such as French fries, snacks and carbonated drinks; they are unhealthy. In addition to good and healthy food, do exercises, get enough sleep, avoid prolonged sun exposure, and the use of natural skin products alone is recommended. These are the secrets of a glowing skin.

The Bible

through the year

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. 1 Kings 1-2 | 9. 1 Kings 17-18 |
| 2. 1 Kings 3-4 | 10. 1 Kings 19-20 |
| 3. 1 Kings 5-7 | 11. 1 Kings 21-22 |
| 4. 1 Kings 8 | 12. 2 Kings 1-2 |
| 5. 1 Kings 9-10 | 13. 2 Kings 3-4 |
| 6. 1 Kings 11-12 | 14. 2 Kings 5-6 |
| 7. 1 Kings 13-14 | 15. 2 Kings 7-8 |
| 8. 1 Kings 15-16 | 16. 2 Kings 9-10 |

Vol 1 No. 1

Bible Quiz

1. He rejected his parents' counsel and went ahead to marry a heathen. Who was this person? Cite a Bible reference to support your answer.
2. ***"Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them."*** Where is this promise found in the Bible?
3. She was a widow from an idolatrous nation, but she chose to follow the Lord, abandoning her idols and keeping herself pure. She became a progenitor of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who was she?
4. "----- ***setteth the*** -----: ***he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the ----- dwell in a dry land.***" Fill in the missing words and cite the reference.
5. Mention two qualities of the Proverbs 31 Woman?

Answers to Bible Quiz will be in the next edition, Volume 1, No. 2

The Bible

through the year

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 17. 2 Kings 11-13 | 25. Micah 1-4 |
| 18. 2 Kings 14-15 | 26. Micah 5-7 |
| 19. 2 Kings 16-17 | 27. Nahum 1-3 |
| 20. 2 Kings 18-19 | 28. Hab. 1-3 |
| 21. 2 Kings 20-21 | 29. Zeph. 1-3 |
| 22. 2 Kings 22-23 | 30. Haggai 1-2 |
| 23. 2 Kings 24-25 | 31. Titus/Philemon |
| 24. Obadiah/Jonah 1-4 | |

Vol 1 No. 1

Did You KNOW That...



Hot weather makes the sweat of the human body to cool itself through a biological process known as evaporative cooling.

Weather has a great impact on our daily life, just as our daily activities affect it. It dictates the choices we make every day such as the clothes we wear, the activities we engage in and our travels.

Most of our activities affect weather negatively. Emission of harmful chemicals into the air, for instance, increases the temperature of the planet, reduces the quality of oxygen in the atmosphere and raises the mortality rate of wild and aquatic animals.



Corporate PRAYERS

“... for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5)

Praise God for

1. His steadfast love and tender mercies towards you
2. The salvation of your soul as a young woman

Pray for

3. The revelation of God's divine will in marriage for bachelors and bachelorettes
4. The grace to serve God faithfully while waiting for His divine will
5. The grace to abstain from evil and keep yourself pure before marriage



Quotable Quotes

“However, in God's timing, He does sovereignly choose to bring a husband and wife together for them to accomplish together what they couldn't have accomplished apart.”

— David Boehi

“Marriage is an exclusive union between one man and one woman, publicly acknowledged, permanently sealed, and physically consummated”

— Selwyn Hughes

“Marriage is more than sharing a life together; it's building a life together.”

— Norman Wright

“Many pray, 'Lord send me a husband or a wife,' but few pray, 'Lord prepare me to be a husband or a wife'”

— Leanna Mae Sexton

“In marriage do thou be wise: prefer the person before money, virtue before beauty, the mind before the body; then thou hast a wife, a friend, a companion, a second self.”

— William Pen



KEEP YOURSELF PURE

Holiness is God's nature. It is the very essence of His being. His holiness sets Him apart from all His creatures, and He calls everyone that professes to be His child to this life of holiness. 1 Peter 1:15-16 says, “**But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.**” God demands holiness in every aspect of life, including marriage. This is the prerequisite for enjoying His blessings here on earth and later, in eternity. Before or while married, He expects us to preserve the sanctity of marriage and keep ourselves pure. “**Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge;**” the Holy Scriptures warn (Hebrews 13:4). Ignoring this warning will attract unpleasant consequences.

As a single woman preparing for marriage, it is crucial that you abstain from sexual immorality so you can enjoy God's blessings in your marriage. Don't give your heart away to a man you haven't married. In your dealings with your intended spouse, don't spend too much time alone with him or visit him at ungodly hours. Do not meet behind closed doors or stay the night in his apartment. Do not rationalize that it is

Continued on page 12



The Virtuous Woman



LOOK FORWARD TO IT

I sat at the balcony, with my chin in my hands, brooding over the past. Every first day of October brings hurtful memories of my past and fills me with mixed feelings of regret, depression, pity, fury and resentment, because it was my wedding anniversary—which has become a failed marriage five years after. Then, I was young, naïve and arrogant, and rushed into marriage thinking I had what it takes to make a relationship work. “I’m educated, intelligent, smart, calculative, and cute. What else would a man want in a woman?” I often asked myself. But I could not have been more wrong. These are not prerequisites for a successful marriage. My wedding was extravagant because that was what I wanted, but the fanfare lasted for merely two weeks. Just after the wedding, the relationship immediately turned sour and eventually hit the rocks seven months later. It barely lasted a year. In retrospect, I made a lot of missteps. It all started when my husband often complained about my cooking and inability to keep the home tidy comparing me to his mother and siblings. I detested that. In retaliation, I undermined his personality, mocking him for stammering while conversing and for his little education. I arrogantly told him that he was lucky to have married a woman like me, because I was not his intellectual equal.

“I married you because of your wealth, and nothing else,” I often lashed out at him. We quarreled over almost everything. In my pride, I shut him out and gave him the cold shoulder even when he tried to get my attention. I was sarcastic, intolerant, and saucy. We kept at bickering for about four months until I suspected he was cheating on me. That of course, aggravated the problem. I confronted him about his infidelity

which he blatantly denied. We had a big fight over the issue, and he told me to let the matter lie. But of course, I did not. I was determined to get to the root of the matter, so I located the house of the woman I suspected he was having an affair with, and picked up a fight with her. My action infuriated him further, and for the first time in our marriage, he raised his hand against me. As a result of the battering, I suffered a miscarriage.

I was mad at him because my hopes that my baby would fill the vacuum in my life had been dashed. After being discharged from the hospital, I filed a report against him for assault and battering. Subsequently, he appeared in court and was heavily fined. Although my husband could have been imprisoned, the judge exercised leniency so he could support me while I recuperated. Well, to make the long story short, few weeks later, he filed for divorce, and I watched on helplessly as my marriage dissolved.

My life is full of regrets. If only I could set back the clock, I would do things differently. But it's no use crying over spilled milk. Today, I watch young women being excited about getting married, and the question I ask myself is, “What do they really look forward to in marriage? Are they really prepared for marriage? Well, the ball is in their court. Hmmm, there is a great deal to look forward to in marriage: the warmth of love and intimacy, the beauty of friendship and companionship, and the awesomeness of procreation. The anecdote described above does not in any way depict God’s ideal plan when He inaugurated marriage. Marriage is a beautiful experience, and it is only natural for every single man and woman to look forward to it.

Marriage is a serious business too. It’s not all merrymaking or bed of roses; you need to work at it in order to experience its bliss. You need to prepare adequately for the relationship before you get into it. Never rush into it as the narrator above did, if you do not want to have similar regrets.

People spend years in the college and university to prepare themselves for a vocation or a career, but do not see



marriage as a big deal. Yet, marriage is for life, except one of the spouses passes on. Marriage is actually a big deal. In fact, it's a life-time vocation or career for which there is need to acquire the requisite experience in order to make it work. Marriage has been described to mean many things by people from different walks of life.

A prominent preacher, for instance, described it as a battlefield. He analogized it thus: "You don't learn to shoot a raffle on the battlefield, you do your learning before the battle begins. You do not prepare in marriage; you prepare for marriage. Because it is better to remain single than to get married and be praying to become single again."

The question is, how prepared are you for marriage? Actually, when people say they are preparing for marriage, they mean they are actually preparing for a wedding.

Without mincing words, a wedding is only a ceremony that lasts some hours, no matter how elaborate it is.

A wedding is not synonymous with marriage. Marriage is a life-time commitment which involves sharing one's life with another person from a different background, possessing different idiosyncrasies and perhaps outlook about life. It's more than sending out invites, buying clothes to wear, compiling a guests' list and entertaining them. It entails being a helpmate to your husband, raising a family, keeping a home, and parenthood; and that is no child's play. These are serious issues that could bring conflict in marriage. It is profitable to learn them before marriage, not when you are in the relationship.

Ready to learn what it takes to have a successful marriage?



Below are questions that will test your preparedness. If your answers to them is in the affirmative, then you are set, but if otherwise, you are not ready. If your answer to some are in the affirmative, but negative to the rest, you need to work on the negatives. You may also need to improve on some of the areas you have scored yourself a positive.

(1) *Do you truly love God?* Genuine love for God or lack of it determines the quality and success of any relationship. You cannot love your husband genuinely if you do not love God supremely. The Scriptures admonishes, "***Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself***" (Matthew 22:37-39).

Loving God means you live a life free of sin and obey His Word (John 14:21, 23). If you love God, you will do all He commands for your husband and children when you get married.

(2) *What's your emotional life like?* When you are confronted with a challenge, how do you handle it? Do you pray about it, face it head-on, or cry? When you are corrected about something, do you become withdrawn and cry over it? There are lots of challenges in marriage. Training yourself to develop a tough skin will enable you to tackle them when the time comes. So if you are lacking in courage now, how would you tackle those problems?

(3) *How many books on marriage have you read?* A preacher once advised singles to read at least 15 books on marriage prior to entering into a relationship. It is necessary to acquire basic knowledge about what lies ahead and such can only be obtained by consulting resources or an authority on the subject. As we have said elsewhere in this publication, the Bible is the authority and best resource material on marriage. Spend time to read it.

Aside from books, study the lives of experienced Christian wives in the Bible and contemporary times, or seek counsels from them. Some of them are right there in your local church. Moreover, you should attend Christian seminars on marriage.

(4) *Can you manage a home?* Never say, "I'll cross the bridge when I come to it." Get on the bridge right away. Learn how to run or manage a home. Know how to cook delicious meals. In fact, learn how to prepare different indigenous and cross-cultural dishes, because food can

People spend years in the college and university just to prepare themselves for a vocation or a career, but don't see marriage as a big deal.

Genuine love for God or lack of it determines the quality and success of any relationship

become an issue in some marriages. You should also learn to clean up and declutter your home, make purchases, and store groceries (See Proverbs 31).


(5) *How much have you invested in your character?* Have you taken time to objectively assess your character and the areas you need to work on? Mark this - your character is your inner beauty, and of course, the real beauty of a woman. The Scriptures say, ***“Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.”*** Character is the real you; appearance is just the façade you show to people. Your character reflects your morality, attitude and lifestyle. If you are loud and abrasive; rude arrogant; sassy or sarcastic, then you cannot have a good relationship with a husband. To have a successful relationship, you must be chaste, lovable, meek, tolerant, courteous and polite. You must also be unselfish, gentle, and kind. Having a sense of decency coupled with good judgment (Proverbs 11:22) makes it possible to win a husband’s heart. It also comes in handy when handling matters relating to fidelity and money among several others, which often triggers conflicts in the home.

(6) *Do you communicate effectively?* Effective communication oils the wheels of intimacy, friendship and family life. Therefore, it is crucial to cultivate these skills. Learn to listen to and understand people, and be tactful in your response to them or in what you say (Proverbs 15:1; 16:23;

Colossians 4:6). This does not happen overnight. Make a deliberate effort to improve this area of your life. Besides building relationships, effective communication also helps to resolve conflicts when they arise and allows you to express your needs and feelings adequately. (7) *Are you sociable?* You must be sociable, cheerful, humorous and inviting to members of your local church, your colleagues in the office


and your neighbours. A little humour and little light-hearted word here and a little chat there makes people lightened up and happy. It wins them over to you. Put on this attitude anywhere you go including your matrimonial home.

(8) *Do you have a gainful employment?* In today’s world, the husband is not regarded as the sole breadwinner of the home. This implies that the wife should also contribute to the financial needs of the family. Shun passivity or dependence on social security allowances. Diligence at what you do will lead to financial independence which is a virtue men usually cherish. Therefore, choose wisely. Now its assessment time - what did you score? If you got a pass mark, aim for excellence. Peradventure you scored poorly, do work harder.

You will get there in Jesus’ Name. 

Continued from Centrespread (Tracts of Life)

alright to be in his company anytime as long as you do not engage in inappropriate sexual behaviour. Guard and watch your heart, emotions and actions. Don’t be carried away by his gifts, his profession of undying love for you or whatever you think you feel for him. Let God’s command to “abstain from all appearances of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:22) be your watchword. And remember - sexual immorality goes beyond the physical act (Matthew 5:28). Steer clear of all illicit relationships, especially subscribing to all forms of dating websites. Keep yourself pure by taking heed to scriptural warning about impurity and infidelity in marriage. Marriage is a sacred union, and you must endeavor to keep it that way. Study and meditate on God’s word daily. It will constantly renew your mind and keep your feet from the path of sin (Psalm 119:11). The Psalmist asks in Psalm 119:9, ***“Wherewithal shall a young man [or woman] cleanse his [or her] way?”*** and gave the appropriate answer in the same breath: ***“by taking heed thereto thereto according to thy word.*** More so, pray that God will give you the husband He has in mind for you. God is the matchmaker and will give you the husband that suits you. Do not run ahead of Him or choose by yourself. If you run ahead of Him or pressurize Him to let you marry the man you prefer, He’ll let you have your way, but that would not augur well for you. Moreover, do not put off praying and preparing for marriage. Once you attain adulthood-18 years and above - start praying for God’s guidance in marriage, and let your preparation be in earnest. A man of God once said, *“When you wait until you are famished before you ask for food, you’ll end up eating improperly cooked food because you won’t have the patience to allow it to be cooked evenly, and that is injurious to your health.”* If you wait too long, for whatever reason, to start praying and preparing for marriage, you may stumble in the area of purity.

Finally, note that purity of life begins at the point of salvation. Maintaining a pure life is not possible without being a born-again Christian. So if you have doubts about your salvation or are definitely not born-again, stop reading this magazine for a moment, kneel before God, confess your sins to Him, repent of them, accept Jesus as your Saviour and Lord and then begin to live the Christian life in accordance with the Bible. 



Bear IT IN MIND

GILD TRAINING



The interview was almost over when Liz tuned in the radio to listen to her favorite program; *Turning Point*. Recognizing the voice of Kim Saunders, her favorite radio presenter, she quickly settled down to enjoy the program.

Kim: Sorry, I can't help but wonder how you came about this school that prepares bachelorettes and young married women for motherhood. What exactly gave birth to this innovation?

Clara: My personal experience and those of my three friends made me realize that someone had to do something like this. As young women, we had twisted ideals about marriage and motherhood, and we carried them into marriage. For instance, we felt that though we were married, nothing had changed; we could still live the glamorous life we lived as singles.

We were obsessed with keeping in shape, looking young and beautiful. We did some awful stuffs to stay in shape. I took to alcohol to burn up fat in my body; Mary became addicted to slimming pills; Cindy took to dieting; and Paula hired a personal gynaecologist who helped her with child delivery as well as a child minder to look after her kids because she didn't want to go through the stress of birthing and nursing children. What was the outcome of those naughty behaviours? Well, I became childless due to binge drinking; Mary mothered two deformed children; Cindy died during childbirth (Autopsy report showed she died of severe malnutrition); and Paula lost her husband and children to the child minder. (She paused for a moment and then continued brokenly.) It was at that point I surrendered my life to Jesus and realized we were not only vain but also very foolish.

Kim: If you could turn back the clock, what would you have done differently?

Clara: I would have chosen the path of godliness; embraced what God has called me to be in life—a woman and a mother—refrained myself from the naughty adventures, which destroyed my home and life, and prepared in every way I could for the marital life.

Kim: What would be your last word for bachelorettes and young married women out there?

Make it clear to your child that there's a boundary between a friend and a parent, and he must respect and listen to you regardless of how close the two of you are.

Clara: If you're single or just got married, please bear this in mind. Motherhood is a calling. It's not a hobby or a rock-bottom job for those who aren't ready for it, but a God-given ministry. So there's a need to prepare your mind, body, emotion, intellect and resources for this serious task that shapes your future and that of your family, the church and the society at large. I believe if you're a godly and informed mother, you'll

nurture your children in a godly way which in turn makes for a better society.

Kim: In summary, you're saying we need godly mothers to make our world a better place to live in.

Clara: Yes indeed! Godly women should see motherhood as a God-given ministry as well as a serious task, and prepare themselves for it.

Kim: (Addressing the listeners now) I believe the message is clear. Go all out to prepare yourself for marriage and motherhood as a bachelorette, so that you won't fail as a wife and mother, and you won't fail God and the society. Keep a date with us same time, same station. Stay blessed (She signs off the program).

As Kim signed off the radio program, Liz, a bachelorette herself, understood the message.

We ask these questions if you're unmarried. "What kind of mother are you planning to become?" What preparation are you making for motherhood? The following discussion should help you prepare yourself to become the mother God wants you to be to your future children, if you accept the moral. The discussion should also be of interest to you if you're an expectant mother.

Understanding the Concept of Motherhood

Although motherhood revolves around women's capability to reproduce, it goes beyond childbearing to how you should behave as a woman, and more specifically, how you should raise children. Most dictionaries define "motherhood" as the state or experience of giving birth to and raising a child. It is the state of being a mother; maternity and the qualities of a mother. In fact, the modern meaning of the word is parenting a child, which suggests you may not be the biological mother to the child. You may adopt a child and raise him; that is, nurture, care, love, groom, and empower the child (Titus 2:4). If you are a bachelorette, a married woman or an expectant mother, you should prepare yourself for motherhood. You should learn and possess the qualities of a mother.



Now, what are the qualities of a mother? Whether your baby is on its way or all grown up, you may want to know some lovable qualities of a mother. A child is a parent's prized possession, and should be cared for in that way. Be or learn to be the mother God wants you to be by finding out the qualities of a great mother.

One, a great mother is *affectionate*. Showering your child with love and attention is one of the unique qualities of a mother. Children desire affection and attention. In fact, sometimes children who misbehave do so to get attention. It is important to build a strong loving relationship that will last a lifetime with your child, starting from when he is a newborn. Showering a child with affection and attention affects his attitude, character, actions and practical contribution to the family. Parents unwittingly become frustrated and lose their children to outside influences when they allow their relationship, career and personal struggle to have a stranglehold on them. Allowing such distractions make children vulnerable to corrupting influences.

Two, a great mother *cares for her child*. The worst feeling a child can have is abandonment. If you work full-time, be careful. Ensure that you do not only shower your child with extra love, but also make a great effort to show him your care.

Talk about his school. Look at the homework he is given from school. Guide him to complete his homework, especially if he is preschooler or in the primary school. Take him out on weekends. Read Bible stories to or have a devotion with him before you prepare him for school or bedtime, and say nice things to him such as "I love you," "thanks you," "you did great, keep it up," and "God bless you." I know you may need that extra hour of sleep after a long day at the office, but your child is a priority too.

Three, a great mother is not *overbearing*. While you want to love and care for your child, you should not be overbearing. Don't be that mother who comes into her child's class in high school with a lunch bag in the middle of an on-going class saying, "Handsome, you forgot your lunch." If you don't want the child to resent you, don't embarrass him, especially in front of his mates, and give him some space. While children need you in their lives, they need space as well. Independence is a crucial part of growing up.

Four, a great mother is *fun to her child*. Take interest in your child's life without trying too hard. Find out what he likes or what children love these days (not harmful things, mind you) and do it for him.

Five, a great mother *sets rules for her child* and stick to them. Help your child understand that a boundary exists between a friend and a parent, and that he needs to respect and listen to you no matter how close you are to each other. Your parental mandate requires you to discipline him when he violates set rules.

Authority figure is what a parent is supposed to be.

But don't forget to commend or applaud him when he does what is right and good.

Six, a great mother is a *good listener*.

Every child needs someone to talk to, and get advice from. Be that person your child can comfortably approach.


Also, a great mother is *relatable*. In addition to being a good listener, be relatable. Do not just give advice based on what you want him to do; endeavour to put yourself in his shoes. Understand his peculiarities and advise accordingly using personal life experiences where relevant.

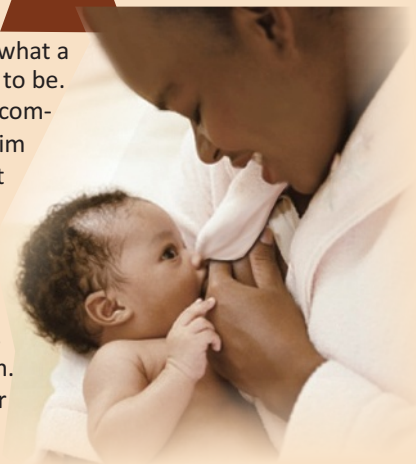
Finally, a great mother is a *role model* to her child. From birth, children look up to their parents for everything, including behaviour. So be what you want your child to be. Speak, dress and act appropriately before your child. The ultimate purpose of Christian mothering is to train children to live a godly lifestyle. Therefore, model the Christian life before your child.

Preparation for Motherhood

First and foremost, singles and even married women need to be aware that God commands that biological children should be obtained in the confines of the marriage union (heterosexual monogamy). The view that it is old-fashioned does not invalidate God's Word. His disapproval on having children outside wedlock cannot be altered (See Romans 13:9; 1 Corinthians 6:18).

Preparation for motherhood should begin long before marriage or pregnancy. You need to prepare physically, mentally, emotionally, and of course spiritually. Understand that children belong to God, but He has given you the responsibility of being their caregiver. So as a potential or substantial mother (which every woman, married or yet to marry, is expected to be) you should be prepared and not shy away from that responsibility.

Pray and train up yourself to possess the qualities of a great mother described above. It may be helpful to read a few parenting books that will impact you with the qualities of a great mother and make you a role model to other mothers or intending mothers. The Bible, of course, should be the first of such books because it is the best-written parenting book you would find on any book shelf. Lastly, collaborate with experienced godly mothers around you, and read about successful mothers in the Bible and our contemporary times like Jochebed, Hannah and Susanna Wesley. God will bless your efforts tremendously as you bear these in mind. 



an important aspect of physical preparation. Learn how to cook both indigenous and multicultural delicacies and prepare delicious meals. Moreover, be neat and modest in your appearance. Cultivate and practice a good dress sense; ensure your hair is properly kept; and do not dress to reveal parts of your body that are meant to be concealed. Avoid worldliness, be chaste, and lead a lifestyle that befits a godly woman (Titus 2:4-5). And when any suitor comes around, be friendly, not impolite but let purity be your watchword.

Being financially prepared entails that you have a viable source of livelihood. The present day reality in the world is that men often prefer women who are financially independent. The global economic situation necessitates that both partners contribute to the financial upkeep of the family. Therefore, it is crucial that you have a gainful employment or acquire some profitable skills. Endeavour to obtain a formal education or acquire a vocational skill that will stand you in good stead to be productive. In this age, men crave for and actually need support, and being industrious and resourceful will make you an asset to a godly, responsible man. Surely, God will reward and endow you with an ideal husband because He loves and blesses industry but frowns at idleness and indolence. So do what will make your **“price far above rubies”** (Proverbs 31:10); that is, what will make you invaluable.

Besides the foregoing, the social life is one indicator that you are mature and ready to become a wife. The social life has to do with your relationship with others. Christianity is all about having good interpersonal relationship with God and others. By cultivating a good rapport with people, including the opposite sex, you may impact their lives positively and win them to the Lord. The Bible does not teach isolation from others but separation from sin. So do not lead a solitary life. Also, do not be uptight as Jasmine, or be arrogant, rude, snobbish, and disrespectful to people. Chastity or spirituality is not measured by being moody, avoiding or withdrawing from people, whatever their gender, and definitely not by being an uncouth person. As a Christian, God expects you to be sociable and have a sense of decorum. Be cheerful, accommodating, courteous and humble because it is your character that will either attract a godly and suitable husband to you or repel him. But do not let your being nice or sociable to men become a license for frivolity or sensuality. Keep yourself pure.

Finally, cultivate emotional maturity and be ready to confront any marital challenge you may likely face. Do not tear up or give up anytime you face a difficulty. **“Tough times don't last but tough people do.”** So be courageous and bold. Men love courageous women who can pray, hold God by His promises and confront either their personal or marital problems head-on, but are skeptical about women who are fearful or emotionally distraught when faced with challenges.

So you see, adequate emotional preparation is a worthwhile effort. You will be glad you did! 🐦



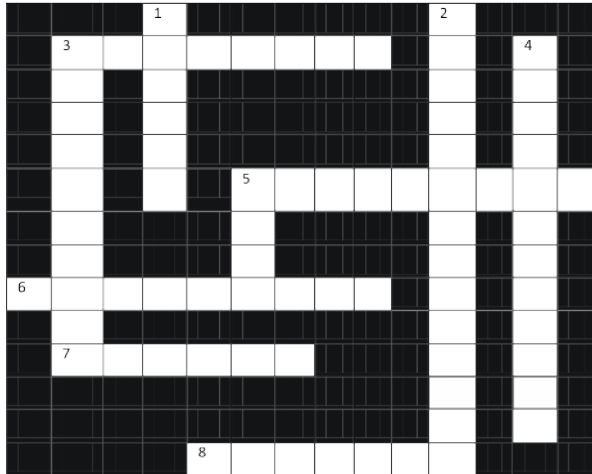
Comic of the Month



Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ANSWERS IN NEXT EDITION

CLUES

ACROSS

3. Holy matrimony
5. Chosen above others
6. Well-mannered
7. Longing
8. Get ready

DOWN

1. Request
2. Unfriendly
3. Parenthood
4. Young
unmarried lady
5. Undefined

REGIONAL CONTACTS

To Subscribe to receive magazine monthly, please contact:

Deeper Christian Life Ministry (DCLM)

National Headquarters

Address:

Boulevard Lambertmont 67,
1030 Schaerbeek,
Brussels, Belgium.

Email: info@dclm-be.org

Website: www.dclm-be.org

Contact Tel: +32468271579

SEARCHLIGHT

“You don’t marry the person you can live with...
You marry the person you can’t live WITHOUT”



STEPS TO SALVATION

(1) Admit that you are a sinner. “For all [humans] have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. . .[and] the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 3:23; 6:23).

(2) Repent now. “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. . .[for] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (Acts 3:19 1 John 1:9).

(3) Believe that God loves you and Jesus died for you. “God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

(4) Invite Jesus into your life through prayer of faith. Jesus says, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20).

For further help, please send an email to info@dclm-be.org

YOUR SPIRITUAL WELFARE IS OUR CONCERN.

Christian Women MIRROR

C **CHRISTIAN WOMEN MIRROR** Magazine. No part of this magazine may be copied or reproduced in any form without the written consent of the publishers. A stamped addressed envelope would be appreciated with any request to reprint articles or for information.

All correspondence should be forwarded to:
The Editor, Christian Women Mirror.

E-mail:
editor@christianwomenmirror.org

Website: www.dclm.org

Like us on our Facebook page:

Christian Women Mirror

ISSN: 1116-7653.



Mummy Abiodun Kumuyi
Founding publisher,
Christian Women Mirror.