

EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN MARRIAGE AND MINISTRY

(An exposition on the Life of Pastor Dr. Mrs.
Agnes Omotayo Adeyeye)



**AGNES OMOTAYO ADEYEYE
ABOLAJI TOSIN SUCCESS**

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FOREWORD

Glory be to God in the Highest for this rare privilege to write a foreword to a book in honour of my darling wife. In writing this, it is difficult to know exactly where to start because of the things that we have both gone through in our Thirty-five (35) years of marriage. Our first meeting was at a friend's house in Ilorin, and it was love at first sight. This may be difficult to believe but it is true. It was a period I was at the Kwara State Polytechnic studying Diploma in Law and she was just completing her Secondary education. After my Diploma in Law, she was now studying for a National Certificate of Education (N.C.E) at the Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin. I continued to seek admission for a Degree in Law (L.L.B.) at various universities but to no avail. On one particular occasion, I came back from Jos, dejected because I was not admitted that particular year and I told her to look for another man to marry since all my efforts to get a university education seemed abortive. She replied 'Joel, I am not marrying Degree, I am marrying you.' This message struck me and I have not forgotten the sentence to date. It is worth noting that many times there is a disagreement between us, the Holy Spirit brings it to my memory and it calms me down.

We were not born again before we married, but about three months after our wedding, Bishop Wale Oke held a programme at Circular Hotel, Ilorin and there we surrendered our lives to Christ on 19th February 1988. Since then, our lives have not been the same. There were so many defining moments in our lives, but I will only share a few:

One is the miracle of cooking with petrol, thought to be Kerosene. When our first child was just about three months, and while

living at Queen Elizabeth School (QES) Compound, my wife was cooking and she noticed that the kerosene was getting finished and immediately sent a lady who was living with us to buy Kerosene at the nearby filling station. She came back in a jiffy with the stove still on, my wife started pouring the 'kerosene'. She alerted me that the colour and the smell were quite different from Kerosene. At her insistence, I went to look and smell the 'Kerosene' and noticed that it was not kerosene, but petrol. I immediately called the girl and I accompanied her to where she brought the 'kerosene', behold the attendant was selling petrol to a car from the same nozzle that she used to sell the supposed kerosene to the lady. On coming back from the filling Station, we brought the stove outside the house and continued to cook with it, without it exploding. It was the following morning that we started smelling petrol! From this moment onward, any time we were facing challenges in our family, we used to challenge God, that He changed petrol to Kerosene in our family, there was nothing he could not do!!! With this God has made us overcome challenges.

Two, when we were both married and now undergraduates, she was at Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, and I at the University of Maiduguri and nursing our first child then. There was a time when both of us were on holiday. My mother-in-law was with about two or three of my wife's siblings still living at QES then. It was getting to about 7 pm and there was nothing to eat for about six or seven of us at home. I was lying down with my wife and I stood up without telling her where I was going. While still walking that day, I challenged God that I have been married for about five or six years then and that there has been no night we went to bed on empty stomach. I asked God to take away shame from me because of my in-laws that were with us. Not quite fifteen minutes or so, I just met a friend who gave me money

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and from there I took a taxi to Oja-Oba, Ilorin and I brought yams. When I came back home, my wife asked how I managed to do it. I just told her that she should go to the kitchen immediately and prepare food.

Three, early in our marriage, God opened my eyes to see some unique attributes in her especially concerning our education. She was the first to get admission into the university after our wedding. She was in her 300 level or so in ABU. Before she came home on holiday, I got admission into the University of Maiduguri. God opened my eyes that my destiny is tied to her destiny. Immediately after she finished her first degree, I collected forms for her for the Master's Degree programme at the University of Ilorin. We had an agreement that she must do it then while her Department/Faculty was still at the Mini Campus of Unilorin. I told her that since we were living in QES, and on occasions where there would be no transport fare to board a taxi, she can pass through the General Hospital (University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital) and come out at the second Gate of the Hospital, which is nearly by the entrance of the Mini Campus, which she did several times. Immediately I completed my first degree and since God has used her to open the way, I also proceeded with my Master's Degree in Law (LLM).

Upon the completion of her Master's degree, I went on an assignment at Abuja, and on coming back, I told her that what I ought to give her as my Abuja gift would be used to purchase a form for her PhD degree. This is exactly what I did. As she was pursuing her PhD degree, I also gained admission for my PhD degree to study law, which by the grace of God I have completed.

Words won't be enough to quantify her level of submissiveness to me at home with her material and financial substances. At a point in

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CHAPTER ONE THE BIOGRAPHY

The biography of Pastor Dr. Mrs. Agnes Omotayo Adeyeye is worth examining as it is a pointer and model to many women in ministry and Christians in general who are battling with one challenge or the other. It is no gainsaying that life usually comes with its hurdles at every stage of significant importance. When we consider life from the back to the front, we will discover that a man's life is dependent on the God-factor and if you remove the God-factor from the life of a man, such a man is nothing but **nothing and emptiness**. It is now of topmost priority to examine the life of Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye, a life that has experienced storms and mighty wind yet remained because Christ Jesus was and still is her stronghold, fortress and refuge. The biography, therefore, is discussed under her early life, marital life and ministerial life. It is also important to note that the account given in this chapter was from an eyewitness account –Pastor Dr. Mrs. Agnes Omotayo Adeyeye, was interviewed in person to source for the detailed narration presented in this chapter.

Early Life

Pastor Dr. Mrs. Agnes Omotayo Adeyeye was born into a royal family on the 8th of February, 1963 in Kabba –the royal family of Joseph Arokoyo and Hannah Ebun Olorunisola (Nee Alemayo). Her birth was a miraculous one as the mother survived poisoning during her pregnancy. The pregnancy was not up to a month old yet when it was discovered that she has been poisoned. Her mother was to leave the village along with her husband. A while before they left, the people

in the house found out that someone brought in food for her but they thought it was the food prepared at home only for them to discover that a woman in the neighbourhood came the following day to ask for the plate of the food. That was when it clicked that her mother had eaten something she wasn't supposed to eat.

Following the poisoning incident, her mother migrated to join her husband at his workstation and at this place she began showing some symptoms which include severe stomach ache and vomiting. She vomited the poison on a Sunday morning, it was reddish, and then she was taken to the hospital where a series of tests were carried out on her by some white men in Jos at that time. They confirmed it was 'poison' but they couldn't tell what type of poison it was. Despite this, the wonder was that the pregnancy was still intact, safe and unharmed in her womb.

Pastor Dr. Mrs. Agnes Adeyeye while still young and in secondary school, had an unforgettable experience that she said have defined her career path. It happened that while she was in Form 4 at that time, she was alone, reading her books as usual. She had always hated the subject –CRS (Christian Religious Studies) because she doesn't always perform well in it. So as she was reading, she heard the voice of God so clearly, saying “you are going to major in CRS.” She didn't take the revelation seriously and back then she was a Commercial student and the best student in Accounting in her class. She hoped to become an accountant later in the future. Pastor Dr. Mrs. Agnes Adeyeye noted that “the experience remains unforgettable because it did set the pace for what happened to me afterwards career-wise, even though I didn't pay attention to what God had told me.”

After her secondary school education, she joined the Nigeria Customs Service but left not long after because she wasn't pleased

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with the customs i.e. the way of life in the service. She started working just for a short time and then applied for the Nigeria Certificate in Education, at Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin where she was interviewed and admitted into the newly accredited/established courses and department –Christian Studies/Music. Her experience during the interview session was no doubt God's divine ordinance. On the day of the interview, as she was preparing to be interviewed someone from the panel just shouted, "She would be good in that department, let her go there" and that was Christian Studies, the same course God had earlier instructed her to study during her secondary school days but failed to give total attention to then. She wept after the scenario at the interview because she had no interest in the course. She finished as one of the best students in the department and she furthered her education at Ahmadu Bello University (A.B.U), Zaria, Nigeria. Here again, she came out with a second-class upper. I viewed these as God's perfect plan to bring His people to His rightful path.

She had contributed to the academic environment through various publications such as **home-based** (*Moses Leadership Style and Lessons therein for Leaders in Churches of 21st Century; Natural Resources Management and Sustainable Development in Nigeria regarding Genesis 1:26-30; Social Conflicts and Christian Marriage: The Redeemed Christian Church of God*); **national** (*Religion, Feminism and Homosexuality: Lessons for the 21st Century Nigeria; Adolescent Morality and the Concept of Religious Thinking from Childhood*) and **international** (*The Church's Moral Obligation Towards Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria; A Theological Impact of Coronavirus Pandemic on the Redeemed Christian Church of God Kwara State Province*) publications. She had altogether eighteen (18) publications which cut across home based, national and international

publications. Some **major conferences** she had attended include; the 3rd Biennial International Conference, University of Ilorin; the 40th Annual Conference of the Nigerian Association for the Study of Religions (NASR) the University of Port Harcourt; the International Conference on the African Pentecostalism (ICAP), the University of Ibadan, just to mention a few.

Marital Life

It is evident from all indications that the story of Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye right from the inception as a child shows that God is a mighty God, too wise for a mistake and too strong to fail to protect His favourites. The journey of her marital life started when she got married on the 19th of December, 1987. After her wedding, on that same day, she travelled with her husband to his hometown. On their way, they stopped at a filling station to get their car fueled and all of a sudden the station caught fire. It was so sudden that the driver quickly made a turn and raced out of the filling station. This was no doubt an unforgettable experience of God's inexplicable love and immeasurable Grace over her life.

She had her first child Busayo Adeyeye, through a Cesarean Delivery in 1989. Then she got pregnant for her second child in 1993 and as usual, went for medical check-ups. The day of delivery was getting so close and the Doctor told her that if she didn't fall into labour that same day, she should come with her things to the hospital the next day. She spoke with her husband about it and the following day she took her things to stay at the hospital ready for delivery. After a while, the doctor told her that the baby was no longer breathing. She strongly and prayerfully rejected it and decided to leave the hospital. A doctor friend took her back to the maternity and asked for a recheck by

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another doctor. He ran a check on her and confirmed what the first doctor had said to be true i.e the baby inside her is dead! And even a scan was carried out again and it was still the same result. She carried the pregnancy for another two weeks, praying and trusting God but the dead fetus was later evacuated. A woman who carried a dead fetus could have several implications such as severe blood loss or develop an infection of the womb but God saw her through, as she had no implications. While she was still at the hospital, one of the nurses who were assigned to her, gave her some medications to be used that day instead of a whole full week. She didn't know much about medicines and medications but she and the nurse had quite an intense back-and-forth as she refused to oblige. Thanks to God, a senior nurse overheard their arguments and entered, she explained to her that the junior nurse asked her to swallow those drugs and through the intervention of the senior nurse she didn't take the drugs.

In 1996, she had another pregnancy, the devil wanted to take her life but God proved Himself as the Almighty and again she had the baby through a Cesarean operation. After the delivery she returned home; she had a sensation that the whole house was spinning. It was a frightening situation that continued for two weeks denying her sleep. She was just staring as she could do nothing. She said, "I remember vividly, a woman God used for me, Mrs. Grace Mosugu. She helped me to bathe the baby and cooked for me while I was passing through this difficult experience."

On a fateful day, she slept off by an occurrence she described as powerful. One Dr. Oyebola had given her a music cassette and decided to play it. While listening to it, she slept for the first time in many days! The song was in Yoruba and the lyrics went thus, "*Tale ojulo, olorun mi tale o julo, eyin ti eda aye ati orun. Ega jo kelo, olurun*

mi... " which can be translated to mean: who is comparable to you, O God? You, who created the earth and heaven, you are greater than mountains, O my God. Ab initio, she had taken a series of drugs and injections but they failed to make her sleep. Fortunately, she slept because of the song of praise. This explains that the weapon of our warfare is not carnal but they are mighty through God.

There was an experience that happened a few years after her marriage. There was a young lady who stayed with her and was on the bridal train during her wedding ceremony. She ran errands for her at that time. One of those few times, she was sent to buy kerosene in front of Queen School for cooking instead she unknowingly got petrol. Unknown to Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye, she poured the fuel into the stove which was still burning. She discovered that as the kerosene was being poured, the colour was different to what normal kerosene looks like. She quickly called her husband to check. The husband after verifying called her to confirm what she had bought but the only response was that she bought "*epó*" (fuel) in Yoruba. Her husband went to the filling station to confirm what she bought, while she took the stove outside with petrol still in it and was still burning. The food was already cooked by the time her husband returned and was informed to have gotten petrol instead of kerosene! She immediately emptied the stove's tank and washed it thoroughly. After all this, the girl that bought the petrol started crying. Not long after this incident, the smell of petrol filled the whole house for a very long time. She viewed all these as the plan of the devil but God took preeminence of which she glorified the Lord.

Spiritual Life

Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye was born into a Catholic family where she was baptized and did matrimonial rites which were parts of the seven sacraments which she had fulfilled. The matrimonial ceremony took place at Taiwo Isale under the supervision of Revd. Father Kelly. She met her husband when he was serving God in the Anglican Church but at a point, while they were courting, he started following her to the Catholic Church but that stopped one day when one particular woman suggested that both of them should be attending the Anglican Church.

In the search and desire to grow their Spiritual life, she and her husband attended a Christian gathering hosted by different men of God such as Bishop Wale Oke,(the current president of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN)), Pastor Emmanuel Oset, Pastor Olu Peters, amongst many other ministers of God. They were richly blessed by the meeting and they decided to start attending the nearest church of one of two pastors who preached in that very meeting – Pastor Emmanuel Oset or Olu Peters. After the necessary findings, they landed at the United Missionary Church of Africa Theological College Chapel (UMCATC) along Ajase-Ipo, road, Ilorin, where they worshipped God. The church grew and God helped them with a fellowship. “There was a meeting called 'Couples Koinonia', hosted by Olu Peters. It was one of those meetings that made me grow closer to God,” she echoed. In the year 1996, there was a crisis in the church that caused some people to move to another Church –the Chapel of Redemption. They were meant to follow those who went there but it happened that they stayed aloof and decided not to go anywhere until they have prayed about it and were sure of God's leading. Then one of

those days, her husband came back home and mentioned that he has found a church that they should start attending, and it was the Redeemed Christian Church of God. It was the parish very close to their house.

After joining the Redeemed Christian Church of God, one of the biggest things that happened was the Lekki 1998 Holy Ghost Congress which birthed the move of God in Africa. The whole world stood still in awe of what happened then at Lekki Beach along the Atlantic Ocean in Lagos, Nigeria. She and her husband did their workers-in-training and became workers for the Lord in the church. When their first pastor saw their consistency and insisted they become workers. He specifically mentioned that she should be in the choir while her husband should serve in the Sunday school department. In 2003, they came home to meet a letter of transfer to a new church in RCCG as a Pastor –The Wind of Change Parish.

They went to the church, and on getting there discovered that it had no pulpit and no member at all, hence they entered and prayed. They even went to the regional headquarters to carry a pulpit. Suddenly, some days later, they received another letter the following Sunday to pastor a new church –Bethel Parish. They pastored that church through the help of God for eight (8) years from 2003 - 2011.

Other churches they pastored include;

- Bethel Parish, Sawmill, 2003-2006
- Solution Centre, 2006-2014
- Higher Ground Parish- 2014-2022
- City of Refuge, Adewole, Ilorin, November 2022 – to date

She interpreted all these moves as the hand of God; they got the transfer letter to start at the Wind of Change Parish “which signified that God had changed our spiritual status then only for us to be

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transferred a few days later to Bethel Parish which means the House of God, to Solution Centre and then to Higher Ground Parish, which was indeed a higher ground where God did greater things with us and helped us achieve greater feats to his Glory.”

It was in this parish –Higher Ground that her first son got married. She and her husband also got their PhD degrees. Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye noted that she believed in her heart that there is no other God like YAHWEH. Therefore, she concluded by singing this beautiful song of inspiration which goes thus;

This is my story, this is my song
Praising my saviour all the day long
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my saviour all the day long.

CHAPTER TWO CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

This chapter sets out to achieve an understanding of the basic concepts as they have been used in the book. This is important to do as the origins of the words used are traced and the writer's perspectives of the words are clearly expressed in this chapter. It is necessary to say that the words used such as woman, equilibrium, marriage and ministry are not new to us but it is expedient as the writer, to explicitly clarify the terms not in the world's point of view alone but also in Nigerian usage and practice. The words used are not independent of one another as they form the nucleus of the study hence the need to clarify the terms in general view and the writer's point of view. The words to clarify in this chapter are woman, equilibrium, marriage and ministry.

Women

The term 'women' is the plural of the word for woman and it can further be divided into "wo and man". "Wo" by deduction, is a prefix added to the word man. It can simply be interpreted as womb, within, inside, oven, part, etc Man, on the other hand, means the human race, person, and mankind. When both "wo and man" are added together it becomes 'woman' which means "from man's womb," "inside man," "within man," and "part of man" among many others. The submission above on the clarification of the term woman is the writer's opinion derived from the biblical narration of the word woman. The confessional statement of Adam in Genesis 2:23 states:

Then the man said, this at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." (Gen. 2:23, NKJV).

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The affirmation above was a statement made by Adam, the first man, in the acknowledgement of the Woman as one of his ribs. No doubt, *she shall be called Woman* was the first biblical instance and origin of the usage of the word, since the bible is a historical, religious, political and sacred document. Hence the usage of the term 'woman' to mean that *she was taken out of Man* became authoritatively used in the world today and in particular with reference to the Christian circle. This notion has been generally accepted even in developing countries and in the African context hence the treatment of women as subordinates, sub-section and or sub-man in the society.

In the naming of the woman, it is important to state that African culture can simply be traced down to this period in time, in the ancient history of the world and the biblical context. Names are important in African society. Africans give names to their children based on circumstances and or situations surrounding the birth of a child. The act of naming in African society is not limited to the child alone, rather, it is encompassing as names were given to situations, diseases, places, and happenings, among many others, yet these names become what is being used today. It is quite interesting that naming was found in the Genesis account as the bible recorded that;

Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to man to see what he would call them. **And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name.** The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field.... (Gen. 2:19-20, NJKV).

And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. No doubt that the names man called every living

creature remains till today. Similarly, Man in this contemporary age gives names to diseases and all kinds of situations and the names remain so. For instance, Ebola Virus, Corona Virus, Headache, Food, Bandits, and Unknown Gunmen, among many others are names given to diseases, food and insurgents in our society and these names remain what they are called. The name 'woman' no doubt falls into the category of Adam's naming ceremonial rite as he named every creature when they were brought to him, so also did he name 'woman.' African naming ceremony is a good example here to showcase the importance of ceremonial rites in the biblical world.

A woman is an adult female human. Before adulthood, a female human is referred to as a girl (a female child or adolescent). The plural 'women' is sometimes used in certain phrases such as "women's rights" to denote female humans regardless of age.¹ From the examination of the word woman above, the idea of a woman being a second-class candidate, a lesser or weaker vessel and most importantly man's helpmate or subordinate has engendered the marginalization of women in Jewish tradition. In present-day society, women are looked upon as the weaker vessels and are alienated from performing political, religious and economic functions in some strategic positions in society.

The Gospel has been a liberating force in the ancient world, challenging old and established traditions rooted in human prejudice. The Scripture affirms the equality of men and women, both created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and their position in Christ (Gal. 3:28). Women are usually regarded as second-class citizens among the Jews. This is as Eckman noted that according to the Jewish tradition, women could never be a part of the count needed to establish a synagogue. But Luke cited both men and women who were baptized

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and persecuted and who contributed to the growth of the Church in Acts 5:14; 8:12.² Also, Ayegboyin and Ishola in *African Indigenous Churches* noted that one of the distinctive features of African Indigenous Churches is the elevated position accorded to women. According to them, women are encouraged to participate in the ministry of the church. They provide opportunities for leadership and the exercise of authority for women who usually outnumber the men that attend these churches.³ From various indications, women are given roles to play in churches today as different from the traditional belief of women's alienation. Omoyajowo and Barret noted that women hold leadership positions in the Church such as Reverend Mothers, Lady leaders, Mother-in-Israel, Superior Mothers, Praying Mothers, Lady Evangelists, Women Church Planters and so on.⁴

Equilibrium

The word equilibrium according to *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, is a state of **balance** between opposing forces or actions that is either static (as in a body acted on by forces whose resultant is zero) or dynamic (as in a reversible chemical reaction when the rates of reaction in both directions are equal. Equilibrium contains a root from the Latin *libra*, meaning “weight” or “balance”. As a constellation, zodiac symbol, and astrological sign, Libra is usually pictured as a set of balance scales, often held by the blindfolded goddess of justice, which symbolizes fairness, equality, and justice. Equilibrium has special meanings in biology, chemistry, physics, and economics, but in all of them, it refers to the balance of competing influences.⁵

Fararo remarked that the concept of equilibrium has a general meaning that has been specified in various contexts of theoretical analysis both in the natural sciences and in the social and behavioural sciences. Intuitively, a system in the world is thought of as in an equilibrium state if there is no inherent tendency for it to change apart from external disturbances. It is usually added that such a state is stable if, for a sufficiently small disturbance produced by some external cause, it tends to return to the equilibrium state. For instance, an egg can be made to stand still on one of its ends but such a position is an unstable equilibrium state.⁶ From the view of Fararo, it can be deduced that the word equilibrium has a general meaning which can be applied to every work of life, this meaning, however, can be independently used at different phases of life to mean the same or different things. What is called stability, balance or uniformity varies according to the situation that the word is being applied. It is, therefore, an undeniable fact that the word equilibrium means to bring about equality, peace, harmony and a balance between two opposing features.

The term equilibrium was used to show the relationship and balance between marriage and ministry. Equilibrium in this study is used to show the harmony, peace, oneness and balance that can be achieved between a marital and a ministerial life contrary to the present situations in Christendom. In our present-day society, ministry is placed over marriage and there is little or no cordial relationship between the two phases of life. Dogmatically, some who professed they are ministers of God have failed in many ways to bring unity and balance between their ministerial and marital lives. Equilibrium does not only entails harmonization but understanding the difference and identifying the similarities of the two opposing sides before bringing

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them together under the same canopy for growth, development and progress.

One thing is sure about the concept of equilibrium and that is measurement and evaluation. Before a true understanding of the word equilibrium can be achieved, it is necessary to see equilibrium as measurement and evaluation. From time immemorial, people had engaged in measuring one type of thing or another such as land, clothes, foodstuff (rice, gari, beans) and characteristics (intelligent quotient (IQ), attitudes and preferences).⁷ Measurement is involved in answering the questions such as, how many of the arithmetic problems were solved by students? What is the performance of students in RCS 228? All these are asked in order to know how to solve a problem by identifying the problem and proffering solutions to them.

Balancing is important in our daily activities as Christians. We must reach a level of measuring our lives with the standard of the Word of God to see if truly we are still on the right track or not. A man's life is a house of many structures of which marriage, works or occupations and even ministerial calling are components of it. However, bringing about peaceful coexistence of these different sections of life is important to a Christian journey. Some so-called ministers of God have derailed from the word of God as they engaged in divorce, sexual immorality, pride, unyielding and lack of concentration for family duties as women and mothers at home. Due to ministerial calling, some women have left their husbands and abandoned their children, among many other things. I looked into all these atrocities as nothing but sins against God. There are ways to bring about equilibrium in our lives, especially between marriage and ministry as a woman. These ways are later exposed in the subsequent chapters of this book.

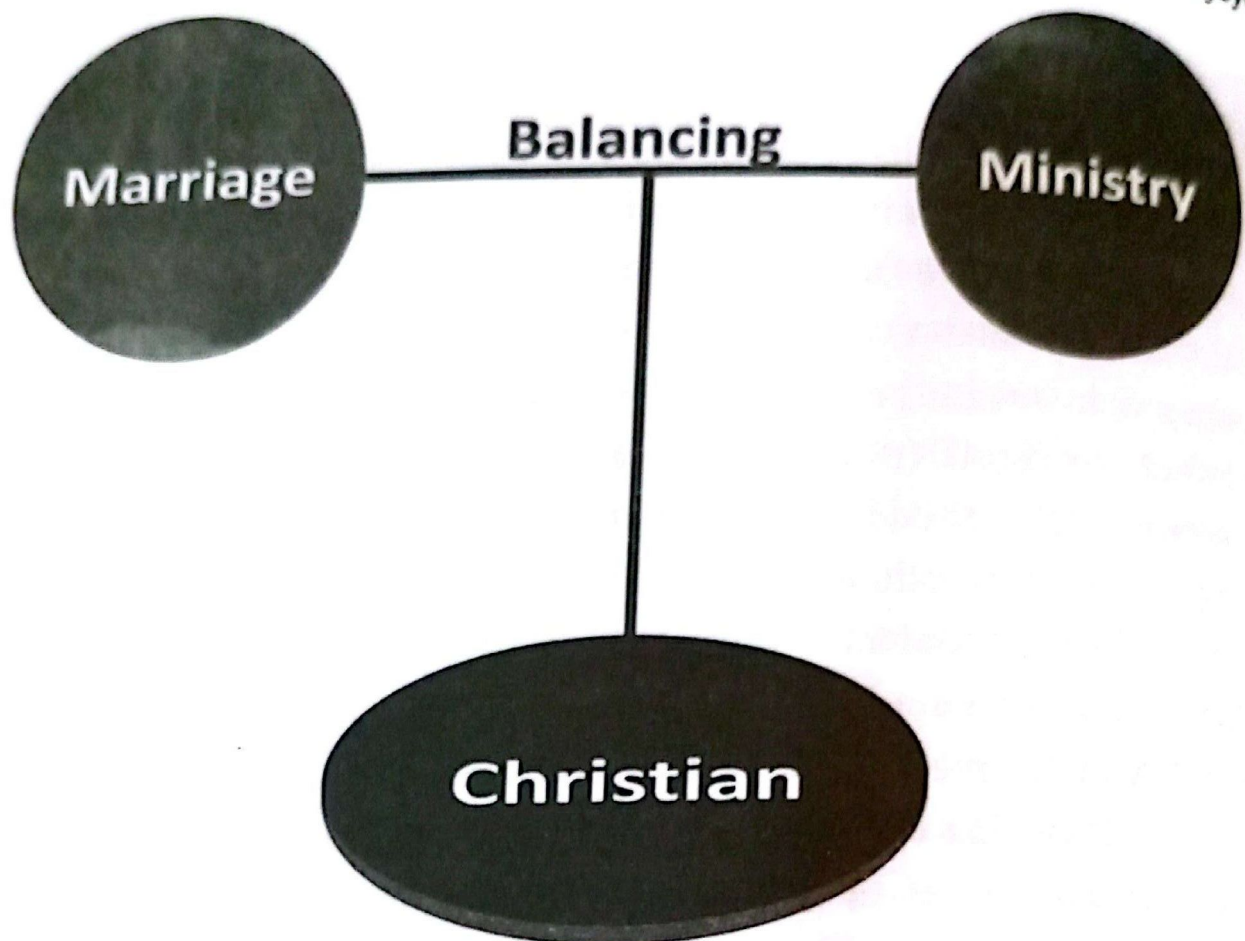


Fig. 1. An Equilibrium Scale showing a balanced marriage and ministry

Marriage

Marriage is a union of two or more people that creates a family. Marriage is the first institution created by God. God made the first man, Adam, but declared that it was not good for Adam to be alone. Marriage is a legal union between a man and a woman to become husband and wife. Marriage is the solemnization into the holy estate of matrimony. It is an association and coming together of people not more than two, usually male and female, and not male and male or female to female, from different families of the same or different ethnic backgrounds to become one. A man and a woman are not acknowledged as being husband and wife until marriage has taken

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place. Marriage was God's initiation and this took place between Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.⁸

The essence of marriage in a typical African society cannot be underestimated as it remains a place of importance in the rites of passage. Marriage depicts the union not only between a man and a woman alone but between the family of the man and the family of the woman. The traditional belief of marriage is that marriage consummates two individuals regardless of their flaws. One of the important steps in marriage is acceptability by the family of the bride and the groom; this goes a long way in intermediating whenever any conflict arises between the couples. A Yoruba adage says, *Iyawo buruku se fe, ana buruku ni ko se ni*, translated to mean, a bad wife may be married but an evil in-law cannot be managed. Though from the Yoruba perspective, it can be deduced that in marriage, one can manage a bad wife but not bad in-laws. However, my submission on this as a Christian is that both the bad wives and bad in-laws are not to be married because they may be a hindrance to a successful ministry and Christian life. A man's life may be miserable if he commits an error on who to marry likewise the life of a woman may be in jeopardy if she misses the right choice of God concerning her life. Hence, the need to seek the face of God in marriage becomes vital in choosing a life partner.

Marriage is a life-long partnership enterprise. It is an institution that not only guarantees long life, peaceful life and a blessed home, but if not taken with seriousness can ultimately lead to dangers which can lead to loss of life and relationship with God. Most times, people rush into marriage without knowing the gravity of marriage and what it really means. In my submission, a successful marriage starts with Christ, allows Christ to rule, and remains in Christ till the end. One

thing that has become common in our contemporary world is the fact that incidences of divorce are on the rise. Ministers of God are not exempted, as many divorce cases are found among the so-called preachers of the Word. At times, one begins to wonder if was there no concrete agreements, resolutions or understanding between the couples before going into marriage. But one can only conclude that most people rush into marriage because of pressure. "Let me marry because others are doing it," "the brother has money and with this, he can take care of me," "the sister is of good character she will be a good wife, etc, etc. All these reasons are good to a reasonable extent but are not perfect to be marriage driven. However, a true marriage must be Christ-centered.

Makinde opined that the practice of marriage in ancient time has taken new dimensions as exposure and civilization is inevitable. He asserted that:

Marriages before today were neighbourhood affairs. People stayed in their locality much more than they do today. As a result, marriage was contracted among the local people. Today, matters have changed a great deal due to travel and education.⁹

In the view of Makinde, it is not wrong to say worldly exposure has led to many downfalls in marriages as this exposure leads to unfaithfulness, arrogance, pride, lack of submission and love getting cold among many others, between husband and wife. Education is good, in fact, education in secular knowledge is of positive impact on lives but in the context of marriage, education on marriage is good but has been lost in today's generation as many youths or couples are no longer patient to learn and understand what marriage really entails. According to Daugherty, marriage was so holy

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in the beginning, that even when a man and a woman came together as husband and wife and was discovered that the wife had been unfaithful before marriage, she was publicly stoned to death by the people.¹⁰

In the beginning, the concept of marriage was without fault. However, in the Scripture, there are many tragic stories about families. It shows the devastating effects of sin on the family. Adam and Eve sinned, and Adam responded by blaming his wife. God created the first family with Adam as its head and Eve as his helpmate. These became the first family and the origin of all the other families on earth. Adam, the male, was responsible for the decisions made in the family. When he made wise decisions, his family prospered. When he chose to disobey God's rules, his family and all the families originating from him were seriously impacted.¹¹ They parented two male children, and one of the sons killed the other. Abraham, God's chosen man, married two wives, breaking God's design, and he eventually kicked one wife and her child out of his house.¹² Abraham wasn't perfect, yet God was able and willing to use him to bring great blessings to the world through his family.

Marriage leads to family and it is the first step in building a home. There is no church without a family, hence marriage stands at the centre of the family and the church as God's institution. In the world today, confusion has set in as many try to understand marriage in the context of wedding. This is rather incorrect as marriage is more sacred than a wedding. A wedding is just a composite of a whole, marriage. I will liken the wedding to the official ceremony of marriage as the day of Pentecost can be seen as the opening ceremony for the birth of the Church. What last long is not the wedding but marriage, hence, marriage is a life-lasting choice which has a lot of impact on the life of a man. To some marriage is physical. This is wrong as marriage

is Spiritual, Sacred and Holy because it is not only the union of a man and a woman to become husband and wife but a union between two destinies and two spiritual entities. It entails physical and spiritual fellowship. It is both a physical and spiritual contract. This implies that signing the marriage certificate on a wedding day isn't the end of a marriage because marriage cannot be confined to certificates and rings hence the sacredness of marriage is embedded in God's ordinance and establishment. Therefore, what God has joined together let no man put asunder (Matthew 19:6).

My view is that marriage is of two types: Christian and Non-Christian Marriage. Though, many scholars, preachers and philosophers have given a long list of types of marriage. In Nigeria's context, marriage is classified into Islamic marriage, Christian marriage and Traditional marriage. However, this study appreciates that the two types of marriage are Christian marriage and Non-Christian marriage which encapsulate the purpose of my diagnosis.

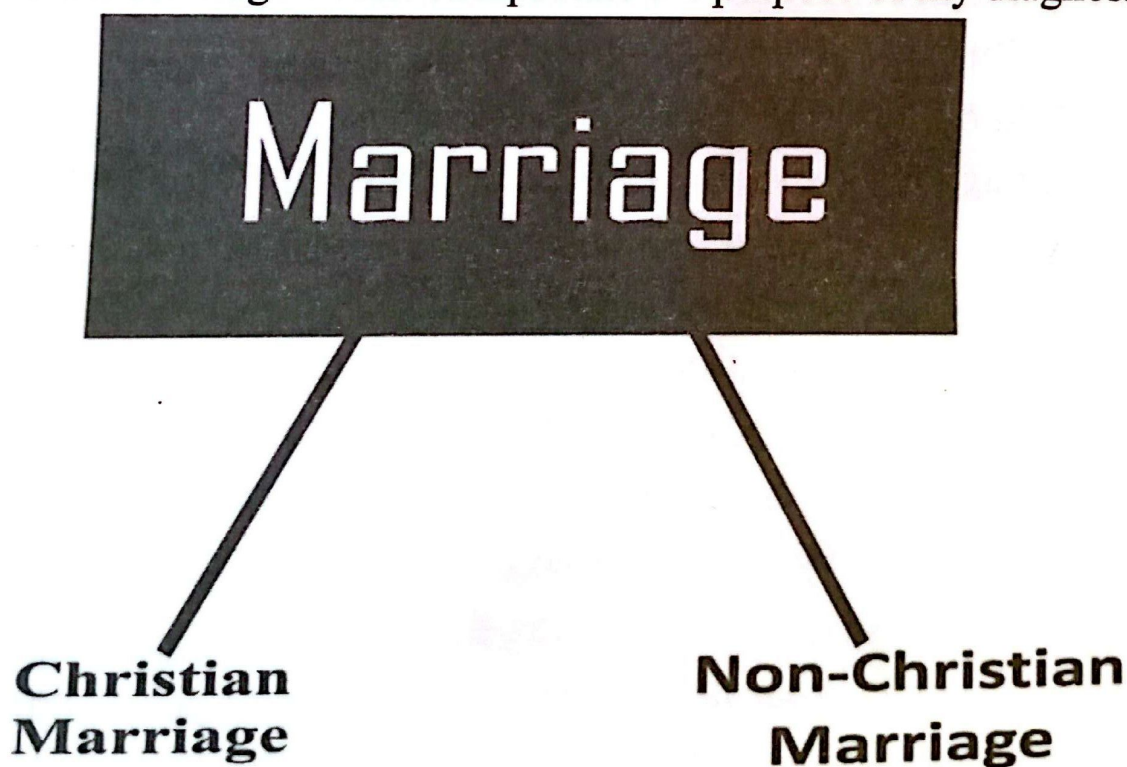


Fig. 2. Types of Marriage

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The above figure is my analysis of the type of marriage which shall be made evident presently. One fact is clear about marriage and that is fusion or union. It is the fusion between two opposing sides; male and female, physicality and spirituality with the sole aim of making them one. The scripture talks about marriage as being the union between Christ and His Church. Hence, the concept of marriage is far beyond ordinary and has a great impact on the lives of believers.

Ministry

Ministry is service to God; we were created to serve Him as the Creator, Lord, Savior and Judge. That's why we are here on earth – to do His bidding. As Isaiah the prophet said to God when he was called to ministry, "Here am I, send me" (6:8).¹³ In the above view, the ministry is seen as our service to God and the purpose of man's creation. Hence, it suffices to say that man's relationship to God in doing His will and his readiness to answer the call of God is what ministry entails. This definition is apt since it opens man's understanding to be in unity with His maker and the steps needed to maintain constant fellowship with Him – obedience.

The common New Testament term for the ministry is *diakonia*, and along with it we find *diakonos*, which means "minister," *ho diakonon*, meaning "he who ministers," and *diakonein*, "to minister." All these words have very extensive application within the New Testament and are by no means restricted to denote service within the Christian church; even when so restricted, the words are used in a great variety of meanings such as discipleship in general (John 12:26); service rendered to the church because of the "gifts" bestowed (Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:5), and therefore, all kinds of service

(Acts 6:2; Matthew 20:26); specifically the “ministry of the Word” (Ephesians 4:12), and most frequently the “apostleship” (Acts 1:17; 20:24; 21:19; Romans 11:13); services as feeding the poor (Acts 6:1; 11:29; 12:25), or organizing and providing the great collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem (Romans 15:25; 2 Corinthians 8:4,19, etc.); and services as those rendered by Stephanas (1 Corinthians 16:15), by Archippus (Colossians 4:17), by Tychicus (Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 4:7) among many others.¹⁴

Etymologically, ministry is derived from *Ministerie* which means “the office or function of a priest, a position in a church or monastery; service in matters of religion,” from Old French *menistere* “service, ministry; position, post, employment” and directly from Latin *ministerium* “office, service, attendance, ministry,” from *minister* “inferior, servant, priest's assistant.”¹⁵ From the etymological point of view, ministry means two things, ministry as an individual function as a priest and ministry as a profession or an office. The concept of ministry can be narrowed to the concept of the word minister, minister from an etymological point means man consecrated to service in the Christian Church, an ecclesiastic;” also “an agent acting for a superior, one who acts upon the authority of another,” from Old French *menistre* “servant, valet, member of a household staff, administrator, musician, minstrel” and directly from Latin *minister* (genitive *ministri*) “inferior, servant, priest's assistant” (in Medieval Latin, “priest”), from *minus*, *minor* “less,” hence “subordinate” (from PIE root *mei* -“small”) + comparative suffix *-teros*.¹⁶ It can be thus deduced that a minister is God's messenger who acts based on God's instruction to His people. A prophet is a messenger of God who ministers to God's people. To this

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end, a minister is both a noun i.e. noun in the form of a person and a verb in the form of an action or deed.

Ministry is popularly used in our contemporary society to mean Church, Christian groups, individual's calling and professions. Some people's profession is their ministry for example running an orphanage or less privileged homes. In this case, the person might have been led by the Spirit of God to do so and by extension becomes what he/she does for a living and trusts in God for provision. However, the reason(s) for people's engagement in ministry has been contrary to the initial purpose and plan of God. In this view, I will first define ministry as a God-given assignment. After the creation of man, God gave man an assignment to carry out in the Book of Genesis;

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth (Gen. 1:28, NKJV).

God gave man an assignment to have dominion over all He had created. This is the first instance of ministry in the bible as God commissioned man into doing His will and obeying His command and thus making man a responsible being to Him (God). God-given assignments did not stop with Adam, rather they continued with Adam-kind or mankind as this continue through to the time of Noah. Noah preached repentance to the stonehearted people to return to God and the inevitable arrival of the deluge which was to come. However, he was mocked and insulted as the people continued feasting. This doesn't deter him from the ministry (assignment) God had given to him. He forged ahead to complete the ark as directed by God and was saved from global destruction.

Ministry is a calling and a gift. As ministers of God continue to spring up, it is no gainsaying that some professed to have the call of God upon them hence their eventual launching into ministerial work. This can be seen in the case of Amos who was called from being a shepherd to a prophet, Samuel and even kings such as Saul and David were called by anointing into the kingship in the ancient Israelites community. One thing is sure about the call of God upon His people in the Old Testament era and the task or assignment given to them ushered them into their ministerial assignment. David was seen in the category of a talented artiste in the Old Testament. His engagement with harps and flutes made him have access to the tormented king, Saul. 1 Samuel 16:23 states that;

And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him (1 Sam. 16:23, KJV).

It is no doubt that David was a talented and gifted harpist who used this great talent in the service of God through ministering to the tormented King Saul.

Another important personality to be discussed is Joseph. Joseph was gifted with dreams and their interpretations. He ministered to people through his gift of interpretation of dreams and was rescued from prison due to his gift. The Bible says the gift of man paves way for him (Proverbs 18:16). From this indication, it is safe to say that, "ministry is in form of a calling and also in form of a gift".

Ministry is an office. There is no doubt that a ministry can be seen in terms of the discharge of duties and the office a man holds. For example, the teaching and the ministry of the early apostle almost led to problems due to the discrepancies between the Jews and Hellenists

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in the early Church and this made the apostles take a proactive step before things went down the rail (Acts 6:1ff). The selection of the deacons was an established ministry based on supervision, feeding and appropriation of the relief materials in the Church. In other words, it can be said that the ministry of the deacons was initiated due to the inappropriate and unjust treatment of the Hellenists in the early Church. Since then, the office of the deacon became important in the development and progress of the church as revealed in the later chapters of Acts and, by extension, in our world today.

Ministry is not a business enterprise as some would take it to mean today. To some, the best way to get employed in an increasingly high unemployment country like Nigeria is to venture into ministry either to be pastors, evangelists, prophet, teacher or even apostles, all in the name of making ends meet and meeting up with the financial requirements of their family. A ministry without God is a tool in the hands of the devil. The devil uses the avenue of the ministry to win souls for himself and the expansion of his kingdom. Men seek power from the underworld, the world in between and the terrestrial forces in order to perform magic, gimmicks, and tricks to expand their so-called ministry. Due to these hungry ministers and backsliding Christians, the ministry which ought to have brought glory to the name of God is now being used to bring glory to the kingdom of Hell.

Jesus commissioned the twelve apostles in Matthew 10:5 to propagate the good news first to the lost sheep of Israel. In a bid to fulfil his God-given assignment here on earth, Jesus chose for Himself ministers who will go and act according to His instructions. Ministry is not what must be done under the influence of what a man has said, i.e you do not go into ministry if you are not called to do so. This is because the dangers therein are enough to make a man die without

fulfilling a God-given mandate concerning his life. It is of note to say here that the apostles never started the great commission until the Holy Spirit descended upon them (Acts 2:1ff). The infill of the Holy Spirit gave the apostles power, courage and a sense of direction towards the task ahead of them. When Christ is on the journey of a man's life, the journey, though characterized by storm, wind, tempest, troubles, conflicts and disasters will not be allowed to overwhelm such man because Christ is on the journey.

The erroneous impression that most Christians have about ministry is that ministry can be done anyhow since it is for the sake of Christ and to fulfil His will. This should be corrected even as heavenly-minded Christians, that our God is a God of orderliness (Gen 1:1ff) and He will not jeopardise His standard for any reason (Isaiah 59:19). We have to be conscious of what we do all in the name of expanding God's kingdom. In the pursuit of propagating the gospel, we must maintain that God is Holy, Righteous and Just and as such, Christians must not take the ministry the way other ventures are taken or organized. Rather, the structure, organization and instruction in the ministry should be tailored after what God had commanded. It is important to note here that there are various kinds of ministerial callings which include healing ministry, teaching ministry, music ministry, ministry of the handicaps, children ministry, and counselling ministry, among many others. These are ministerial assignments where Christians can function for God through the propagation of the gospel.



Fig. 3. Different Kinds of Ministry

The diagram above shows the various ministries that exist in Christendom. From the diagram, it can be concluded that God is the centre of all ministries, hence ministers of God should allow God to show Himself manifest in the ministerial assignments given to them and not replace the centre of their ministry with themselves or something lesser than God.

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An exposition from the Old Testament

The Old Testament accounts for women's leadership roles and engagements at various strategic levels. It portrays to us that women have been playing prominent roles in the nation of Israel even before the Egyptian bondage as far back as the period of Eve in the Garden of Eden, through the period of Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachael, among many others. The influence of women can be felt in different segments of society such as political, economic, social and religious areas. It is important to reiterate that a woman is the pillar of a nation. For example, God promised Sarah that she would become the mother of nations in Gen. 17:16 and also confirmed that there were two nations in Rebekah's womb (Gen. 25:23). No doubt that the first woman on earth who became the mother of humanity was Eve as recorded in the Genesis account (Gen. 4).

The history of mankind is not completed without the role of women being identified. One would wonder that the scenario in the house of Isaac between Esau and Jacob had an existing origin in the remarkable role played by Rebekah. Rebekah's support for Jacob paved the way for the successful deceit of Isaac into blessing Jacob as he thought that he was Esau. God used women in carrying out His assignment. It can be said that God is not gender biased i.e. He works with anyone and everyone in as much as such individual releases themselves to His will. The mother of Moses no doubt played a significant role in Israel's escape from Egypt. Jochebed, the mother of Moses, was his birth mother, wet nurse, and even tutor as Moses continues to grow in the Pharaoh's palace.

From the Old Testament exposition it is important to discuss the following women of reputable influence as they are, at one point in time, ministers of God in the discharge of one responsibility or the other:

Sarah is one of the important women in the Old Testament era that was given a task to complete –she was to bear the covenanted child (Isaac) and assisted Abraham in His God-given assignment. It can be said that when God called Abraham, He at the same time commissioned Sarah as expressed in Gen. 17:15-16

And God said to Abraham, as for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai but Sarah shall be her name. I will bless her, and moreover, I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall become nations; kings of peoples shall come from her (NKJV).

From the verses above, it can be deduced that by extension of the call of Abraham in Gen. 12:1ff. Sarah was called by God and, as God promised to bless Abraham and change his name, God's blessing was also seen as applicable to her. Sarah was not without an assignment (ministry) but was promised a son. Sarah, by God's fellowship with Abraham, was called into the ministry. God chose Sarah and not Hagar to bear the covenant child, hence when Ishmael was born God never withdrew His promises to Sarah. Sarah was hospitable as a minister and a minister's wife. She recognized the importance of hospitality as she happily prepared the meal for the three men (visitors) as Abraham instructed her. Nevertheless, she recognized Abraham as lord (1 Peter 3:6) and was recorded to her as humility. Thus Peter advises women to take after her submissiveness and humility as wives at home. Most times, Christians especially ministers fall into this error of going into the ministry without their

spouse. For example, when God calls a husband, the wife should be ready to show support and not discouragement and be ready to be of great help to the husband even as he yields to the calling of God. Likewise, the husband should see it as a point of duty and that their wives (and by extension their families) should not be left out in the God-given assignment. Peter in 1 Peter 3:7 noted that *"husbands, live with your wives in understanding way, showing honour to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered"* (NKJV). Peter told the husbands to honour their wives by recognizing that they are heirs with them in the grace of life and making their prayers effectual. These attributes can be seen in the life of Abraham, he reckoned with Sarah in her decision on Hagar and Ishmael and also understood that Sarah is his only legal and approved wife by God as she becomes an heir with him in the grace of life. However, the long-lasting promise of God that was to come through Sarah came to fulfilment when Isaac was born; Isaac here means laughter or great joy. This is because his birth will usher in God's perfection and fulfilment of the covenant He had with Abraham and also terminate the long barren history of Sarah.

The role of Sarah cannot be overlooked in the sustenance and continuity of the Abrahamic covenant through Isaac. Other women in this category include Rebekah, Rachael and Jochebed. It is important to note that women form the nucleus of every society. Women were mostly in a subservient role, but several women are mentioned as leaders and prophets of Israel, including Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Deborah (Judges 4:4-5), Esther (Esther 4:15-17), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14) and Athaliah (2 Chronicles 22:10-12).¹ There is no doubt that these women served God in one capacity or another and they can be referred to as women ministers.

Miriam

The personality of Miriam was introduced to us in Exodus 2:1–10 as the sister of Moses who hid to see who and what would happen to baby Moses as he was laid in a basket placed beside the Nile River. Many commentators identify her as Miriam. Two genealogies listing Moses, Aaron, and Miriam as the sole children of Amram support the identification (Num 26:59; 1 Chr 6:3). She first appears by name, however, in the crossing of the Red Sea (Exod 15:20–21). Trible further buttresses that she was “prophet Miriam, Aaron’s sister,” and she led Hebrew women in singing, dancing, and playing the drums.² Miriam played an important role as she worked alongside Moses in the religious practices of the Israelite community.

It is highly remarkable to say that Miriam worked as a prophetess. Though the meaning of the term *prophet* is here indeterminate, Miriam is the first woman ever to bear it. She thereby, becomes the archetype of the female prophetic tradition, even as Moses became that of the male (cf. Deut 34:10). Contrary to the impression that her one stanza song by the Red Sea (Exod 15:1–18) is but an abridgement of the lengthy song attributed to Moses (Exod 5:1–31), historical and literary studies show that the latter version is itself the Song of Miriam. It belongs to a corpus of women’s traditions that include the long Songs of Deborah (Judg 5:1–31) and Hannah (1 Sam 2:1–10).³

As one continues to read through the Bible, Miriam was seen to question the behaviour of marrying a Cushite woman (Num. 12:1). Though, in this regard, she was also accompanied by Aaron in criticizing Moses’ marriage. This argument escalated to a show of legitimacy and call of Miriam versus that of Moses as stated in Num. 12:2; “And they said, has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses?”

Has he not spoken through us also? And the LORD heard it." The passage here shows the clear intention of Miriam and Aaron as ministers in the vineyard of God. However, God was unhappy with this evil act. Truly, God called Moses and validated His call in Numbers 12:6-8. God chastised her for not honouring Him in the life of Moses. God saw pride running through the actions and deeds of Miriam and Aaron and was visited with leprosy. Women ministers need to understand that God hates arrogance and resists the proud. He frowned at Miriam who, though being a woman minister went beyond her boundary in accusing Moses whom God had chosen to be leader over her and the entire congregation of Israel. Hence, don't say because God has called you as a woman and have the call of God over your head and be disrespectful.

Deborah

Deborah was the known prophetess and female judge in the ancient Israelite community. She was introduced to us in the opening verses of Judges 4 when Deborah was already a judge, resolving disagreements brought to her while she sits under the "palm of Deborah" (Judges 4:5) in the hill country of Ephraim. She is identified as *eshet lappidot* (4:4), which may mean "woman of (the town) Lappidoth," "wife of (the man) Lappidoth," or "woman of torches" (that is, "fiery woman" or even "pyromancer").⁴ She is a spiritual personnel as well as a political figure in the form of a judge, one who administers justice, dispenses order and establishes the truth in any given case laid before her. One would be amazed by the courageous act put in place by Deborah as a woman who God had sent to bring deliverance to the Israelites who had been under the oppression of Jabin, king of Canaan as he reigned in Hazor.

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The story of Deborah is indeed a light in the darkness as it conveys a great understanding of balancing marriage and ministry. One would get an insight into this from the short passage about Deborah in Judges 4 and 5. *She was the wife of Lapidoth*, which signifies a lot in scholarship, as some would regard *Lapidoth* as a place rather than an individual. However, this study shall consider the use of wife as expressed in the biblical narration of Judges 4:4, hence, that she is a wife means that she must have a husband therefore indicating a woman who has a home and husband to be submissive to. She was not only a wife at home but a mother figure in the Israelite community as was a judge at that time. The ministry of Deborah shows a lot in trusting God and waiting upon His promises at every stage of our lives. The Bible expresses the comment of Deborah in Judges 4:6-7; *"...Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded, 'Go and deploy troops at Mount Tabor; take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun and against you I will deploy Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude at the River Kishon; and I will deliver him into your hand? (NKJV)."* The fearful Barak could not face the already defeated Sisera because of fear of defeat and death. Deborah remarked that God already gave victory to Barak as He is not only sending Barak to face Sisera but has mapped out the strategies involved in it. The prophecy of Deborah came through as not only Deborah followed Barak to the battlefield but the death of Sisera came to reality through the act of Jael (Judges 4:21).

Esther

Esther was one of the women who lived during the captivity era. God already had a plan for His people as the future holds danger and calamity for them, He thus prepared Esther for the task. The book of Esther is one of the books dedicated to women in the Bible. The second that is woman-centric in the bible was the book of Ruth. God used Esther to save the Jews from the coming and, seemingly, inevitable danger orchestrated by Haman. Esther was the wife of a pagan king Ahasuerus and at the same time a Jewess. She understood from the intonation of Mordecai that death awaits her if she failed in her duty of saving the Jews in Shushan. Esther must have been moved by the word of Mordecai in Esther 4:14; *"For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this (NKJV)."*

Esther becoming aware of the need to save the Jews in Shusan thus voiced to Mordecai in Esther 4:16; *"Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shusan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish (NKJV)."* The command of Esther shows a great deal in taking responsibility and allowing God to make use of her at that confusing moment. It is important to note that it was courageous for Esther to meet the king when she did, but God was indeed without a doubt with her. Let me say here that, when God sends a man, He is always there for backups. In fact, He has always been there even before the man reached the destination. This goes along with praises rendered in Yoruba to wit,

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Oun ni a ran ni nse fa ya ti, translated to as, 'The One who sends and never back off'.

Esther was a wife, a woman and a mother at home and to the entire kingdom of Shusan, yet she never abandoned her God-given assignment. She took a bold step and her remarks of "*If I perish, I perish*" is no doubt akin to that of a dying man who writes his will as he passes away gradually. Esther knew the implication of going to the king yet she was ready to face the consequences. Now one thing I want us to understand here again is that Esther as a wife and queen employed wisdom in meeting with the king as she cautiously planned her steps, Esther 5:1; "*Now it happened on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, across from the king's house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the house (NKJV).*" This I regarded as the first step in meeting with the king as a queen of the kingdom. Esther went on in verse 4 of chapter 5 demanding to prepare a banquet for the king. This was, no doubt, another step taken to see that she does not fault her marriage with her ministry. One would have been familiar through history that maids in the palace are responsible for cooking the king's meal but then again, as a wife at home, Esther planned to prepare the banquet, not for the king alone, but also for the king's favourite servant –Haman. Esther's wish was granted by the king in Esther 7:9; "*...Then the king said, Hang him on it. (NKJV)*" Haman was hung on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai.

Huldah

Huldah, the wife of Shallum ben Tikvah was one of the seven prophetesses mentioned in Tanach who lived in different times. These seven prophetesses were: Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Abigail, Huldah and Esther. Huldah was a true helper (*ezer*) in that she came to the aid of her king and nation, using her intellectual and spiritual gifts. She helped these leaders understand the Word of the Lord, and as a result, Josiah instituted a massive purge of idols from every part of Judah's territory. Based on Huldah's teaching, all those living in Judah were saved from imminent destruction.⁵ Mindel opined that Huldah lived in the time of the reign of Josiah in Jerusalem (3285–3316). It was during this time that the spirit of prophecy came to her, and she became known as a prophetess. This was also the time of the outstanding prophets Jeremiah and Zephaniah. Mindel cited the Midrash, Jeremiah prophesied in the streets of Jerusalem, Zephaniah delivered his prophecies in the synagogues; and Huldah had a school for women in Jérusalem whom she taught the word of God insofar as it pertained to Jewish women, mothers and daughters.⁶

Huldah's role in the interpretation of the discovered book of Law and the eventual reformation in Judah was of great importance as it opened the door to another era of peace and fellowship between God and His people. Huldah prophesied that;

Thus says the LORD, Behold, I will bring disaster upon this place and upon its inhabitants, all the words of this book that the king of Judah has read. Because they have forsaken me and have made offerings to other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands, therefore my wrath will be kindled against

this place, it will not be quenched, But to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall you say to him, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Regarding the words that you have heard, because your heart was penitent and you humbled yourself before the LORD, when you heard how I spoke against this place and its inhabitants, that they should become a desolation and a curse and wept before me, I also have heard you, declares the LORD. Therefore, behold, I will gather you to your fathers, and you shall be gathered to your grave in peace....” (2Kings 22:16-20, NKJV)

The above is the prophecy of Huldah concerning Judah during the reign of Josiah. She showed clearly that God was first in her ministry by giving an undiluted message of God and mention can be said of her recommendation through the approach of Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah, who all came to her for interpretation of the book of Law.

An Account in the New Testament

The New Testament era was remarkable for its audience and record given to women. Women are not the subjects of ridicule. Rather, they are signs and wonders that show God’s divine presence among men regardless of gender. It is important to reiterate here that the woman is from man’s ribs and this does not prevent a woman to have a smooth relationship with God or to be used in God’s vineyard. This was the situation as the forerunner (John the Baptist) of Jesus was to be born of a woman named Elizabeth who had been long barren. Upon the announcement of the coming of Jesus through Mary, Mary

made haste to visit her relative, Elizabeth whose pregnancy was six (6) months old. The account of Luke 1:1ff shows that God was to make Himself known to the world through women. It is however important to note here that the women –Elizabeth and Mary were of good conduct, God-fearing and faithful to God. Yes, Grace found them but they were indeed icons worthy of emulation.

The narration of Luke 1 shows two sets of people that exist in the society, the married and the unmarried, the fruitful ones and the barren, the minister's wife and a layman's wife etc. It shows that God has no respect for position in making His plans come through. He chose a barren woman who would have given up on life and also an about-to-be housewife to show His supremacy over mankind. Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist and Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ became important figures in the New Testament who did not only display God's love for humanity but God's choice and intent about gender.

Eckman noted that many women financially supported the ministry of Jesus and His disciples and ministered to Him personally (Matt. 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41). The Gospels usually depict Mary, sister of Martha as seated at Jesus' feet, an honour normally given to men. Several women had the immensely important distinction of bearing the news of Christ's resurrection –a quite remarkable honour in light of strict Jewish teachings on valid testimony. Not only were women involved in the ministry of Jesus, but they participated in the events at Pentecost (Acts 1:14). Since the narrative in the Upper Room continues into Acts 2, we must assume that women present were likewise filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (2:1-4).⁷ The submission of Eckman cannot be denied as it is evident in the Scripture. It can safely be said that women were also present in the

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Upper Room. This can be seen in Acts 1:14; *"All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and his brothers (NKJV)."*

It is therefore paramount to dwell briefly on other women in ministry with particular reference to the New Testament period:

Tabitha

The book of Acts which was traditionally believed to be written by Luke the physician recorded a brief but detailed account of Tabitha. The book of Acts 9:36-43 contained the account of a disciple whose name was Tabitha translated as Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. This implies that Tabitha was called into the ministry to cater for those who are in need and to help the widows around her. The disciple, Tabitha became ill to the point that she passed on. Due to her acts of charity, the other disciples lamented and wept bitterly and, upon hearing that Peter was in Lydda, sent two men to him. Acts 4:39 states that; *"...All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them (NKJV)."* This indicates how committed Dorcas was to her ministry. It is important to note here that, God didn't give us money to keep for ourselves alone, He has blessed us so that we can bless others.

We must reach a turning point in our lives that we will begin to worship God the more with our substance. Prophet Haggai in his book remarked about how the people of Israel after their return from Babylonian captivity failed to rebuild the temple and were reluctant about it due to the high attention given to their ventures. Haggai expressed in Haggi 1:2-4; *"Thus says the LORD of hosts: These*

people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord." ...Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your panelled houses, while this house lies in ruins? (NKJV)." It must become a reality for us as Christians to set God first in all things we do and be true to His assignment. God worked through Peter that day and the dead Tabitha became the living Dorcas. The remarks of the widows and other disciples about the deeds of Tabitha show a great sense of responsibility which women can take up in the vineyard of God.

Luke indicates that Tabitha took God's commands about society's most vulnerable seriously. ("Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor." Zechariah 7:10. See also Deuteronomy 24:17, 20-21; Ezekiel 22:7; James 1:27.) Looking after the marginalized is one of God's characteristics, too, for God is shown in Psalm 146:8-9 as lifting up those bowed down, watching over the alien and sustaining the fatherless and widow. Tabitha's lifestyle can be related to the characterization of the good wife from Proverbs 31:10-31. Both display phenomenal energy. Both extend help willingly to the poor (Acts 9:36; Prov. 31:20). Both are proficient in needlework (Acts 9:39; Prov. 31:13, 19, 21, -22, 24, 25). Both seek to do well and undertake their activities within the context of faith (Acts 9:36; Prov. 31:12, 30). The lives of both women show they were "doers," each putting their feet to her faith.⁸

Lydia

Lydia and Paul first met outside the gates of Philippi, a city in Macedonia, now part of modern Greece. Lydia lived and worked in Philippi, dealing in textiles coloured with the purple dye for which the region was famous. Her wealth allowed her to live independently in a spacious house. She was also a religious seeker. Though she was a

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Gentile by birth, Lydia worshipped the God of the Jews. When Paul saw her, she was with a group of devout women who gathered to pray at a place by the river just outside the city.⁹ One thing that is amazing about Lydia is that she never allowed her background to put her back on the ground. This is because of her gentile birth and having known the prejudiced hatred between the Jews and the gentiles she still believed in God not as a Jew nor as a gentile but as a believer. We must understand that God is merciful and gracious to everyone not minding their birth history or their conditions. God's love is unconditional and inexplicable.

Lydia did not only believe but showed her household about Christ. She was a woman of good virtue and great importance as she shows women today the importance of family even in the Christian journey. She showed her family Christ whom she believed and they were baptized. Lydia went on to show hospitality even as she attempted to accommodate Paul and Silas at her home. Lydia was successful both in her professional work and in her social or spiritual work nurturing the nascent Greek Church. Most likely the knowledge and connections she cultivated as a trader helped her in her church work, and vice versa. In Lydia, we see a woman whose skill and interest are not confined to one limited area. Indeed, we see that both her position in commerce and her knowledge of faith made her uniquely qualified to spearhead the Church in Greece.¹⁰ Lydia's home became the place where the congregation that developed in Philippi gathered for worship and fellowship.¹¹

Priscilla

Eckman noted that one of the remarkable women of the New Testament was Priscilla (Prisca). She and her husband, Aquila, early converts to the faith, were banished from Rome. They became intimate friends with Paul, with whom they shared hospitality and the craft of tent-making (Acts 18:1-3).¹² One thing becomes evident within the first three lines of Acts 18 and that is a couple being introduced together in ministry. This couple remains at the centre of every discussion when discussing the Christian family. This is because of their understanding of Christ which was not only displayed in their words but in their actions.

Priscilla is often thought of as a tentmaker, but clearly, she was many other things in her lifetime too: a businesswoman, a refugee, a travelling evangelist, and a church planter. While we often hear stories about complex men in the Bible, in Priscilla we see that women too are multitalented, multifaceted, and capable of working in a variety of different environments.¹³ In Ephesus, Priscilla and Aquila, established a church in their home (1 Corinthians 16:19). During the Early Church, many Christians would hold church in their homes. Throughout their ministry, the couple exemplified kindness, hospitality, and hard work, no matter where God plants them.¹⁴ Laden opined that Priscilla is not to be acknowledged as a mere patroness or supporter of men in ministry, rather she was a coworker and minister alongside Paul, and the most frequently mentioned woman who worked with him to spread Christianity. Priscilla played such a significant role in the New Testament that later readers were uncomfortable with her prominence as a woman in the Church. Priscilla and Aquila took Apollos aside and enhanced his instruction in the way of the Lord (Acts 18:24-26).¹⁵ The role of Priscilla as a

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submissive wife and minister of the gospel can be seen as achievable contrary to the ways things are done by 21st-century women ministers. As women ministers we must know that the ministry God gave to us is not to destroy our homes as some have even divorced because their husbands are not on the same spiritual level as they are. In fact, submission as a virtue of a good wife is no longer evident in the lives of many so-called women ministers who felt that since they are now ministers amidst thousands of congregation and many come to them for counselling they, therefore, stopped being submissive to their husbands. They see their husbands as one of the men who run after them, take their bags and bow to them whereas, the ideology of the husband as the head of the family does not stem from the cultural basis alone, rather it is biblically correct to see the husband as the head. 1 Corinthians 11:2 corroborates the idea of men's headship in the family thus stating that; *"But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God."* It is worth noting that Priscilla played an important role in her ministry as well as her marriage.

Phoebe

According to Eckman, another woman in the New Testament of great significance to the Church was Phoebe.¹⁶ She came into light in Paul's salutary passage of his epistle to the Romans (Romans 16:1-2); *"I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and help in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and myself as well (ESV)"* The few verses about Phoebe show how great she has been helpful to Apostle Paul

during his journey. Note the two words Paul used to describe her. In the church, she was first, a **servant** which was translated according to the New Living Translation (NLT) as a **deacon**. Paul uses the term deacon or servant for only five people in his letters: himself, Tychicus, Epaphras, Timothy, and Phoebe. Whatever he and the other three men were doing as deacons, we can assume that Phoebe was also doing in the churches. Paul then uses a second word to describe her as Patron which in the New King James Version she was called helper but the Greek word in Paul's letter was *prostatis*. According to the lexicographer Thayer, the first meaning of that word was "a woman set over others." The Greek word was in the feminine form of the masculine word *prostates*, usually translated as leader. It referred to "one who preaches, teaches, and presides at the Lord's Table." Obviously, Phoebe, the businesswoman, was more than merely a helper but also she was a leader of the church in Cenchreae.¹⁷

When we talk of women of great reputation in the early church, Phoebe was one of them. Her display of sense of responsibility, ready to be in the service of God as a servant or deacon and also showing love and concern as she renders help to the poor, the needy and even to Apostle Paul himself, one would wonder that this is indeed a great attribute displayed by women in the early Church and the propagation of the gospel. Paul commended the work of Phoebe as nothing but a diligent servant and minister in the vineyard and thus recommended that the Church of Rome should welcome and assist Phoebe in whatever she may need from the church. The name Phoebe comes from the Greek word *phoibos* which means "radiant." It has a long history in mythology, literature, and religion.¹⁸

The four unmarried daughters of Philip the Evangelist

There are two passages that indicate the functioning role of women in the early church. These passages are Acts 21:9 and 1 Corinthians 11:5. The first instance of Acts 21:9 introduces Philip the evangelist as having four daughters who were “prophetesses.” The four prophetic sisters of Phrygia, better known today as Philip’s daughters, are prime examples of a rich history of female leadership that has been hidden in the shadows of history. Women’s roles of leadership in the early Christian church have all too often been obscured and require diligent searching through available sources to reconstruct their roles. Though the bible did not give details of the functions of Philip’s daughter but much was discussed about them in the extra-Biblical account.¹⁹ Papias is known to have written one of the earliest histories of the Christian church’s beginnings. Among the authorities Papias relied upon were Philip’s two daughters, who he knew personally i.e. in the extra-Biblical account according to Papias, he knew two of Philip’s daughters. According to Eusebius, Papias described how people would travel long distances to hear the two sisters tell their stories of the early church.²⁰

From Paul’s instruction in 1 Corinthians 11:5, it would seem that Philip’s daughters were not exceptions, for Paul’s instructions about women’s head coverings occur in the context of women “praying or prophesying” in the worship service. This may perhaps have been accounted for the reasons for the invisibility of the women’s ministry other than what was said of them in Acts 21:9. Whatever the nature of these ministries, women gifted by the Holy Spirit exercised notable responsibilities in the early church.²¹

Other women

According to Eckman, other women of the New Testament who fulfilled pivotal roles in ministry as such include Euodias and Syntyche and Julian, among many others.²² Euodias and Syntyche as recorded in Phil. 4:2-3 were identified as fellow workers; *"I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have laboured side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life (NKJV)."* Marg cited that John Chrysostom (349-407), who became the archbishop of Constantinople believed Euodia and Syntyche were leaders in the Philippian church, and he compared them to Phoebe, a woman minister (*diakonos*) in the church at Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1-2). In his 13th Homily on Philippians, he wrote:

These women (Euodia and Syntyche) seem to me to be the chief (*to kephalaion*) of the Church which was there, and (Paul) commends them to some notable man whom he calls his "yoke fellow"; (Paul) commends them to him, as to a fellow-worker, and fellow-soldier, and brother, and companion, as he does in the Epistle to the Romans, when he says, "I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a minister of the church at Cenchrea" (Romans 16:1), (*Homilies on Philippians*, 13).²³

From the above excerpt it can be deduced that Marg quoting John Chrysostom believed that Euodia and Syntyche were chiefs of the Church at Philippi. This, no doubt, showcases the important seat

occupied by women in the Church during the early years. It is of note to also mention. Tarn and Griffith noted that;

If Macedonia produced perhaps the most competent group of men the world had yet seen, the women were in all respects the men's counterparts; they played a large part in affairs, received envoys and obtained concessions for them from their husbands, built temples, founded cities, engaged mercenaries, commanded armies, held fortresses, and acted on occasion as regents or even co-rulers.²⁴

The submission of Tarn and Griffith show that women are usually seen as men's helper in achieving great things in life and particularly, the Macedon. They serve as important figures in society as their roles include receiving envoys, obtaining concessions for their husbands, building temples, founding cities, engaging mercenaries, commanding armies, holding fortresses and acting on occasions as regents or even co-rulers. It is indeed a great privilege and a wonderful thing to note pertaining to the immense contributions of women in the New Testament Era. One thing is sure about these women; they were of good reputation as Apostle Paul became their recommender to the Christian body and particularly the church. It is therefore worthy of note that women in ministry have been able to manage the affairs of their families alongside the ministerial assignments given to them.

Conclusively, Eckman opined that women thus played a decisive role at the beginning of Christianity. Their work complemented the duties of men and involved some leadership responsibilities.²⁵ They were church leaders, prophetesses, Paul's fellow workers, and companions in the ministry, among many others. The study of women in ministry in Biblical times is evident in our

understanding of ministerial assignments in our contemporary churches as women are seen as church planters/leaders, heads of units, Lady-Evangelists, Pastors' wives, and Teachers among many others. It is expected as believing women to be upright in their God-given assignments and also their marriages.

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CHAPTER FOUR DIFFERENT MINISTERIAL CALLINGS FOR WOMEN IN OUR CONTEMPORARY CHURCHES

There are different ministerial callings for women in our contemporary churches. These callings differ in the responsibilities assigned to them. Women dominated the churches as they outnumbered the men folk. In fact, some of these churches were and are being established or co-founded by women. Omoyajowo has a long list of such founders in Nigeria.¹ Women's areas of calling include, Lady Evangelists, Women Pastors/ministers, Faith Home Mothers, Pastors' wives, Gospel Musicians / Choristers, Ushers, Youth Ministry, Children ministry, Marriage guidance and counselling, among many others. This indicates that women play important role in the church and or ministry. This chapter however considers in a brief some of these areas of calling.

Lady Evangelists

An evangelist proclaims the gospel. Fatokun noted that all serious-minded Christians in the early Church saw evangelism as a must-task, certain individuals were characteristically called "evangelists" owing to their special exhibition of evangelistic gifts.² The work of evangelism is usually in the sending forth of the early disciples to propagate the gospel as directed by Jesus. Luke 9:1ff recorded that Jesus called His disciples and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases. He also sent them forth

to proclaim (evangelize) the kingdom of God and to heal. Luke's account and other gossellers show that the work of evangelism is to bring good news to the people.

Women's roles in the work of evangelism cannot be denied as they serve as a major catalyst to the propagation of the gospel and the growth of the Church. In our congregations today, women outnumber the men and they take an active part in our services. Women partake in evangelistic activities such as the distribution of tracts, preaching to people and also committed to the things of God. In fact, in mission fields, women do turn out for this great assignment. They are seen taking active parts in the mission or evangelism unit of the Church. Women also evangelize through songs, such are called lady evangelists as applied to Evangelist Bola Are, Kemi Oge, and Deborah Adeleke, among many others.

Women Ministers

In this category, women ministers include women pastors, reverends and or prophetesses. Women function in the church as agents of continuity and progress. I make bold to say here that there is no 'congregation without women'. This implies that in every congregation there is always at least 10% of women in attendance which is not always true because studies have shown that women outnumber men in the church. Women pastors head churches and even plant churches. Examples include Bishop Margaret Idahosa, Reverend Mrs Tope Ogunnoiki, Rev Helen Ukpabio, Prophetess Mary Olubori, and Rev Esther Ajayi, among many other prominent women in Nigeria Church. For this book, we shall consider three of the aforementioned women

Rev. Tope Ogunnoiki

Reverend Mrs Tope Ogunnoiki is the presiding minister of Grace Ville Chapel International in Ikeja. She is very popular and even if you don't know her, one thing that will attract you to her is her pleasant smile and style of dressing. She is one woman that cannot be rubbed off in the style sector and as much as she has a panache for looking good so also, she knows and understand the depth of the word of God. She has worked hard to become one of the best that she can be for her parishioners, inspiring and motivating them in their faith. She is very prominent online and her church has become one of the most sought-after for young and old especially women who love to listen to the word of God and who also want frequent turn around in their lives.³

She features as a great women preacher who is a powerful speaker and inspiring thinker. She heeded God's call for over 13 years and pastors a vibrant church in the heart of Ikeja. Graceville Chapel is a church with a mandate (by God) to embed God's word in the hearts of people. The church was founded in 2006 and its mission is to touch the world with His power. The church started its humble beginning in an event hall, Memorable Gardens, Ikeja in 2006. After 2 years, they moved to Cheers Hotel where they spent about 7 years. In the year 2015, they moved to their permanent site on Awolowo Way, Ikeja. The church has grown in leaps and bounds over the years. Reverend Mrs Tope Ogunnoiki is a fervent preacher who has deep knowledge of the word having attended bible schools and a series of bible teachings under the tutelage of Pastor Enoch Adeboye and Bishop David Oyedepo. She has also trained many pastors who have joined the vineyards of God in their respective areas.⁴

Rev. Abimbola Esther Ajayi

Esther was born on April 2, 1963, in Mushin, Lagos Nigeria. Before dedicating her life to full-time ministry, she excelled in the corporate world as a successful businesswoman. She is a white garment clergy and philanthropist. She is the founder of the Love of Christ Generation Church, C & S (Iya Adura), London. She has touched and changed many lives through her ministry and humanitarian foundation.⁵ As a humanitarian and philanthropist, she has made a significant contribution to the work of the church physically, financially and spiritually across many denominations and many continents. She holds the title of Matron and financial supporter in more than 50 churches in Nigeria and other countries of the world. She is also a Grand/ Life Matron to many charity organisations and various Non-Government-Organisations across many communities in Africa.⁶

According to Sunkanmi, "Esther Ajayi's divine calling to start a ministry was an interesting one. Esther narrated that she always had dreams of having a bell and a big Bible in her hands. She dreamt of sending people out of a church that has gone fetish and cleansing dirty altars." Her journey into ministry kick-started in 1997.⁷ In the submission of Gabriel, the Lagos centre of the church was inaugurated on September 5, 2021, and consecrated by Pastor Enoch Adeboye and other anointed ministers of God in Christendom from different denominations. The first congregational service was held on September 12, 2021. There was a celebration at the Love of Christ Generation Church, Cherubim and Seraphim, Lagos earlier this year as the Church celebrated 15 years of divine ministration by Rev. Mother Esther Abimbola Ajayi.⁸

Prophetess Mary Olubori

Prophetess Mary Olubori is one of the leading prophetesses in Nigeria. She and her husband, Pastor Israel Ayanfe Olubori, co-run their 24-year-old Rock of Salvation Apostolic Church (ROSAC Worldwide) and Havilah Mountain of Fire, at Amuloko-Akanra Road, Off Lagos Ibadan Expressway, Ibadan.⁹ Since the birth of Rock Of Salvation Apostolic Church Prophetess Mary Olujuwon Olubori under the direction of the Holy Spirit and the support of Pastor Israel Olubori has embarked on many crusades that have given birth to many branches on three continents. Her church has been one of the most sought-after by many celebrities because of her gift of prophecies.¹⁰

It is crystal clear from all indications that the rate at which people are coming into ministry these days is so alarming and this can be expressly seen in the way people are building churches all over the country. In a typical Nigerian society, you can hardly walk a mile before seeing different churches or denominations built side by side and on the same street. The concept of ministry should not be limited to owning a church. A church is not what you can own, you may own the building but that building is not a church until it houses believers for worship. Jesus Christ was so clear when he said 'My Church.' My Church here is not the church built with physical structure, but rather the body of the 'called out ones.' The Church here refers to those who have been purchased by the redeeming blood of the Lamb and have been singled out from destruction. Jesus went further to assert that, the gate of hell will not prevail against His Church. This is a clear intention that the Church which Jesus called His' will face tribulation, storms will arise but they will remain strong and rooted because the storm will never prevail against His Church.

Faith Home Mothers/Midwives

Faith Home Mothers are called *Iya agbẹbi* among the Yoruba tribe of Nigeria and particularly among the Christ Apostolic Church. They can also be called midwives in another related term. They are women who are experts in the child delivery process and caring for the nursing mother. The word "Midwife" originates from the old English word mid "with" wife "Women". While the profession has changed in many ways through the centuries, the concept of being "with women" has remained the same. Midwives pride themselves as being women-centred, individualized care for patients and their families. Midwives are specialists in the normal processes of pregnancy, birth and the postpartum period.¹¹ To some extent it is commonly viewed that midwifery is a profession to earn money and money alone whereas on a deeper and closer look, it is more than just making money. It is a ministry to some and a way to contribute to the growth of the Church.

Under this category of women's role in ministry, two midwives, Mrs. Makinwa Omolara and Mrs. Adetunji were interviewed to unveil their contributions to the ministry so far. It is important to note here a woman can be in ministry as a helper and can also chair a ministry as one who has a God-given vision.

Mrs. Makinwa Omolara

Mrs. Makinwa is a mid-aged woman who attended Osun State Polytechnic, Ire where she did her National Diploma (N.D) before she was called into ministry. After the call, she went to Faith Home Ministry (Midwives) which belongs to the Christ Apostolic Church at Ede where she completed her two years training course. She entered into ministry in the year 2010 when she gained admission into the Osun State Polytechnic, Ede, for her Higher National Diploma. She

has worked in several places such as Christ Apostolic Church Oke-Igbala, Ejigbo, Osun State, Lagos State and now Ilorin, Kwara State. Her experience as a mid-wife shows that there are challenges in the ministry even if called by God.¹² Christians to this end, must be aware that the ministry is not a place of bread and butter or frivolities, rather, it is a place of service and service to God alone through carrying out His plan, will and instructions.

Mrs. Makinwa commented that the ministry is not only for the support of the church but also to help in building herself as a woman of faith as she has encountered different situations and experiences of women who came for child delivery. She expressed that the delivery process may be tedious but one thing is crystal clear and that is the involvement of God in the ministry as she said joyously that it is the Lord's doing. In the ministry of midwifery, there are some challenges she has encountered including non-payment of due by those who came to deliver, the unpreparedness of deliverers in terms of material things needed for the mother and the child, etc. As a woman of great passion for the work of God and not money-centered she played her role and even let them go. One thing I must commend her for is that some of these situations of non-payment of dues do affect her salary yet she continues doing the work of God in Joy.¹³

In an interview session with Mrs. Makinwa, she disclosed that apart from being a midwife in the ministry, she is also a pastor's wife.¹⁴ At this juncture I was amazed by how tedious things would have been. She is not only in ministry as a person who had a mandate but also as a helper to her husband who is also in the ministry. Here, I will say that ministry is not for the lazy ones but for the diligent and righteous ones. These traits can be found in the lives of Deborah the Judge, Ruth, and Esther, among many others who not only displayed

this at strategic points in biblical times but also lived it as Jews. A Christian should not see diligence, gentleness and righteousness as an act of dullness but rather as ways of carrying out God's intention for the world. Christians are the books the world is reading and the mirror that brings reflections upon the way and manner people behave. Remember, the early disciples were first called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:9) not because they were Jesus' followers alone rather they lived the life of Christ, a righteous and holy life. Mrs Makinwa brings to a conclusion two important factors that have helped her to balance ministry and marriage. They are the help of God and understanding between herself and her husband.¹⁵

Talking about the help of God here, David understood that man cannot help him in overcoming life challenges (Psalm 121:1ff). Tucker and Grant opined that psalm 121 has at least two timely and timeless aspects of the text: Yahweh as helper and maker; Yahweh as guardian and keeper. Both explore the character of the Lord about the confidence the psalmist has for his fraught journey. Psalm 121 invites people to consider the source of their help. Of course, God is that source, "but to speak it is one thing, to believe it is another. The psalmist assures those who pray this psalm that we do not walk alone—the Maker of heaven and earth journeys with us as our helper".¹⁶ Here Tucker draws our attention to a reminder from John Ortberg, "Scripture alternates between hair-raising risks and assurances of impregnable security. And when we look at the lives of great followers of God, we see this combination of breath-taking risks with an almost brazen confidence of being safe in God's hands."¹⁷ Hence, the position of Mrs. Makinwa can be clearly understood as one who has ultimate confidence in God as her helper in her Christian journey.

Mrs. Adetunji Ruth

Mrs Adetunji Ruth Iyabo was born on the 19th October 1960 to the family of Mr. & Mrs. Tade Benjamin at Jos. She entered into the ministry as soon as she completed her two years course in midwifery in 2009 at Faith Home Ministry (Midwives) which belongs to the Christ Apostolic Church, Ede. She is happily married to Elder Adetunji and is blessed with five children of which one of them is late.¹⁸ Mrs. Ruth is a deaconess at Christ Apostolic Church Chapel of Glory Districts Headquarters, Amilegbe, Ilorin. She is an active member of the church who had played a significant role as the head of different units. As a midwife, she launched into ministry by serving under Christ Apostolic Church where she serves as the Faith Home mother who took care of pregnant women and deliver them safely during labour, and care for nursing mothers, among many others.

Mrs. Ruth got a place in her vicinity where she used as *Ile-Agbebi* translated as Home of delivery after moving out from Christ Apostolic Church Chapel of Glory, Ilorin. She encountered so many challenges in the ministry which include defaulters, pressures of moving out from the initial place of delivery, and little or no assistance during delivery among many others. As regards her family, Elder Adetunji was supportive of his wife's ministry. He understood the nature of the wife's ministry which involves taking. In fact, baba created a room for her in the apartment building in order to ensure the continuity of his wife's ministerial assignment.¹⁹

Pastors' Wives

Many people normally think that pastors' wives are not part of the ministries but in a more practical sense, they are also involved.

Pastors' wives play significant roles in their husbands' ministries. In fact, let me say here that a pastor or minister of God who comes dishing out the word of God must have the backing of God and his wife. For a man to have a balanced life whatsoever, be it in the ministry or not, such man must be at peace in his home hence the role of pastors' wives in their husbands' ministries. If you ask many pastors' wives if it was in their plans or prayers to marry a pastor. Most of them will answer no. This is because the role you have to play as a pastor's wife is almost or similar to what the husband (pastor) does. Many of our sisters today are not ready to be pastors' wives. Some will say if a pastor comes to them to ask for their hands in marriage, they will deny such a pastor. The conception is that pastors' wives usually suffer and also have huge responsibilities to bear in their husbands' ministries.

It is instructive to mention just a few great men of God in Nigeria and Overseas who are spotted with their wives at different crusades locations. Pastor Enoch Adejare Adeboye of the Redeemed Christian Church of God used great words of encouragement for his wife, Mummy Foluke Adeboye, in her seventy-four (74th) birthday earlier this year 2022. In the message, he expressed glamorously the love he had for his wife and no doubt, this love cannot but come from a man who has great peace of mind and support from his wife. Part of the message states:

"You are not just a woman, you are a system, a portal and a light bearer. On the occasion of your 74th, I pray that my God will elevate you and continue to take you from Glory to Glory in Jesus name".²⁰

The wife of Pastor W.F. Kumuyi of Deeper Christian Life Ministry also falls into this category. Esther Folashade Kumuyi can be regarded as a woman of great support to her husband and his ministry as she is always seen side by side with Pastor Kumuyi in almost every one of his crusades. For example, Pastor Kumuyi and his wife were spotted coming out of an Air Peace private jet in Ilorin, where he was welcomed by Pastors and members of the Deeper Life Bible Church for the Ilorin crusade. Likewise in Abuja, he and his wife were present at the crusade ground. All these are pieces of evidences that pastors' wives play a significant role in their husbands' ministry.²¹

As a pastor's wife, you must realize that the ministry of your husband is also her calling. At times, the pastor may be having ministration somewhere far away, the wife must see her husband's calling as her calling and thereby provide every necessary support be it spiritual, emotional or even physical. In our immediate churches, we can easily trace that pastors' wives are seen as 'Mummy Mission' or 'Mummy G.O.' They are the number one women in their various churches or assemblies; they also head some important positions in the church leadership in their capacities as the pastors' wives. They assist their husbands in the discharge of roles and maintenance of the home. One thing you must understand and be ready to accept as a pastor's wife is that you have a great role to play in the ministry. The Garden of Eden serves as a very good example here, Adam is the head of the family but Eve failed in her responsibilities to her husband i.e. providing necessary support even in obeying the instructions of God. Rather, Eve's insensitivity to Satan's antics made her lose the already-established relationship between God and mankind.

Marriage Counselors

Most times the ministers of God in Nigeria serve as marriage counsellors to the church or ministry they head. Since pastors' wives, more often than not, are the head of women in their various churches, they also perform the work of a marriage counsellor and help other women in bringing peace to their families. However, these women are not just counsellors because they are pastors' wives and they must do so, rather, some are called into it. Marriage counsellors are those who counsel others on how to live in harmony with their husbands but also live by the standard of what they teach. The value of a marriage counselor is to be an example to other Christians who come to them for counselling. Marriage counselling is not meant for only those who are planning to get married but it is also important for those who already have an established family.

Women must eradicate the mindset that limits them in active participation in ministry as it is ignorantly accepted by a majority of women. Women are important in ministries. They start up ministries, and are also supportive of their husbands who are in ministry. As a woman, our role model should be Jesus first and other faithful women in the scripture who did great exploits for God. In Nigeria for example, most preachers are usually seen along with their wives in ministrations, on signage, posters and handbills, among many others, depicting that there is the support of either the wife or the husband in the ministerial assignments depending on who received the vision or the call. Women ministers should not be oblivious that in ministry there are challenges and not a bed of roses. Trust in God and obedience to His commandments are key to ensuring smooth running in the ministerial assignments committed to your hands.

Gospel Singers / Choir

A gospel singer proclaims, teaches and shows others the way of Christ through singing. They are God's vessels in His vineyard to bring many souls to repentance. This is similar to a female choir member in the church. They are responsible for singing praises to God, thus, it is believed that when people sing in the church, God comes down to work mightily amidst the congregation. Gospel singers use their voices to convey their passion and beliefs. They perform as solo artists and in groups. Gospel singers perform live in churches and concert settings and some record their music in studios.²² Most gospel singers we have today started from being choir members in the various churches they belong to. In this regard, a choir is also one that ministers to God and man. A singer ministers to God because songs deal with rendering spiritual hymns and praises to God and also ministers to man in the sense that the songs rendered are to meet the heart of man and make them a changed person.

One of the Ministries of Song is that of a gospel singer. The gospel is the good news about Jesus Christ, thus a gospel singer sings the goodness of Christ and the love of God to mankind through His gift to us. There are several gospel singers in our contemporary Nigeria society today who are doing great exploit for God. Some of them include; Bola Are, Mercy Chinwo, Bisi Alawiye, Osinachi Kalu, Blessing Ngozi, Yetunde Are, Funke Bada, Kemi Oge Popoola, Chioma Jesus, Ada Ehi, Deborah Temitope Adeoye, Bunmi Akinnanu Adeoye, Shola Allyson just to mention a few.

Evangelist Dr. Bola Are

Evangelist Dr. Bola Are was born on October 1, 1954, to the family of Elder Babayomi and Mrs T. A. Babayomi who hail from Erio, Ekiti State, Nigeria. She had her primary education at Christ Apostolic Church (C.A.C) Primary School Erio, Ekiti, while her secondary education was at Christ Apostolic Church (C.A.C) Grammar School at Efon, Alaaye. After her secondary education, she went on to Ibadan Polytechnic, to study accounting, but deferred the admission to focus on her singing ministry. In July 1985, Bola was awarded a doctorate in music by St. John's University, Missouri U.S.A. The vibrant and spirit-filled singer was trained by four major Christ Apostolic Church prophets – Apostle Ayodele Babalola, Prophet Babajide, Prophet Akande, and Prophet T.O. Obadare. While growing up, Bola Are spent most of her time on the mountain and receives her inspiration from the Holy Spirit.²³

Bola Are got married in 1977 to the late Pastor J.O. Are and is blessed with children. Her children are singers and musicians. Bola Are Gospel Foundation International which aimed at catering for the needs of the less privileged in Nigeria was founded in 1995. Her recording studio, School of Gospel Music International was founded on 7 July 1990, to give gospel musicians a platform that would lead them in the way of the Lord. She knew she would serve the Lord at a very young age and pursued it. Her parents told her that she started singing a few days before her first birthday, which made her considers herself a born singer.²⁴

Mama Bola Are has sang a lot of songs some of which include Hallowed Be Your Name, He Has Given Me Victory, Lift Jesus Higher, Efi Ope Fun Oluwa, Adura Owuro, When Jesus Says Yes, Ta Lo Dabi Re, Tire Ni Oluwa, Jesus is a Mighty God, Eyin Oba Ogo,

Messiah Is The King Of Kings.²⁵ Bola Are has contributed to several lives through her songs and this is indeed meaningful contribution to the expansion of God's Kingdom here on earth. One thing I will like to reiterate here is that, discover your purpose, and know the reason for your existence. Bola Are knew that she would be a gospel singer and she pursued it and, as a woman, she is using her voice to serve God.

Mercy Nnenda Chinwo

Mercy Nnenda Chinwo was born on September 5, 1990, in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. She is the fourth of five children in her family (First daughter). She lost her father at a very young age. She is married to Pastor Blessed Uzochikwa who is from Delta State, Nigeria. Chinwo released her first single, "Testimony" in 2015 and "Igwe" a year later in 2017. Mercy Chinwo is a Gospel music Minister. She got married in Port Harcourt to Pastor Blessed Uzochikwa of Water Brooks Church Lekki on the 13th of August 2022. A year after winning *Nigerian Idol*, she landed her first film role in Yvonne Nelson's film, House of Gold where she acted as Lucia, starring alongside Yvonne Nelson, Majid Michel, and Omawumi among others. The film *House of Gold* won Best Picture at the Ghana Movie Awards and Best Ghanaian Movie at the 2013 City People.²⁶

Bisi Alawiye

Evangelist Shindara Olabisi Alawiye-Aluko (JP) was born on 23rd July 1971 to the family of Alfa Abdul-Kareem and Revered Ap. Mother Alawiye from Ilesa, Osun State, Nigeria. She is a ministry vessel unto honour and an Oracle of the Almighty God who is anointed with a mandate to pronounce the year of liberty to the

captives. Evangelist Bisi Alawiye is a Yoruba gospel music minister and astute artiste whose dexterity in eulogising the name of God is vast and deep-rooted. She is also the founder of the Bisi Alawiye Aluko Concepts Ltd, a gospel music production outfit. Prophetess Bisi Alawiye attended the Oranmiyan Memorial Grammar School and then proceeded to study Accounting at the Osun State College of Education, Esa-Oke. After her insatiable quest for intellectual acumen has been doused, a divine higher call propelled her to produce her first album titled Lana-komi in the year 1999. Since then, she has not relented on her oars as she keeps waxing stronger in evangelizing the gospel of Christ through music.²⁷ Some of her songs include; **Amin, Awole, Ojo Ayeye, Baba Eshin Dara, Lana Komi, Ma Ronu Mo, Alagbawi Mi, Eri Ailopin, I am that I am, Owo Nla.**²⁸

Osinachi Kalu

Sinach was born on the 30th of March 1973 in Lagos state, located in the western part of Nigeria. She hails from Ebonyi state, which is located in the Eastern part of Nigeria. In her family, she is the second-born daughter among seven children. Her full name is Osinachi Kalu, and her stage name is Sinach. She completed both primary and secondary education in Nigeria. She then attended the Port Harcourt University, River State which is also located in Nigeria. She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Physics. She got married at a beautiful white wedding to Joseph Egbu in June 2014. Sinach's husband is a pastor at Christ Embassy Church commonly known as Pastor Joe.²⁹

She started singing as a young girl to family and friends. Singing was among her hobbies, and she enjoyed doing it. However, her father did not support her to venture into the music industry. He feared that being a musician would not have any monetary benefit.

Singing was a spiritual gift to her, and she dreamt of singing inspiring songs to a multitude while she was young. At a tender age, she joined the choir at her local church Christ Embassy. The general overseer of the church pastor Chris spotted her singing talent and made her a senior worship leader. Later, she developed into an international worship leader serving under Christ Embassy Church.³⁰

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CHAPTER FIVE CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE AND MINISTRY

A Bird's-Eye view on Christian Marriage

The Christian marriage is a God-ordained institution which was first established, organized and executed by God in the beginning –the Garden of Eden. God was concerned about Adam not having a partner and hence found him a suitable mate in the person of Eve (Gen. 2:21-22). Marriage is as old as man himself for at the inception of man, marriage originated. Marriage is a design plan of God to ensure that mankind works to fulfil His mandate. God, the originator of marriage, formed the woman from the man's rib and covered that part of a man with flesh (Gen. 2:21). It is crucial to say at this juncture that, marriage in respect to Genesis account was to show God as the originator of marriage and many other things on earth as portrayed in Genesis creation account. However, marriage has lost its place among many so-called believers today.

Marriage precedes family. Marriage is the fusion of two opposite gender who live together as husband and wife and not as husband and concubine. It is imperative as Christians to live our lives in accordance with the laid down structure of God if thoroughly we are heavenly-minded. In our contemporary society, family comes first before marriage. On this occasion, people tend to be living as a couple even before doing the necessary things a Christian needs to do before becoming a family. Marriage entails understanding and love, and from there transforms into the concept of familyhood. However, many Christians have missed it because they placed family before marriage. I am not talking about knowing the family of your spouse before

getting married but I mean getting involved with your spouse sexually is what married people do and not what waiting, unmarried or intending couples do. We must, by all means, learn to wait on God when it comes to marriage in order to ensure a safe landing for us in our marital life. It is the extension of marriage that leads to family. Family is now the group of individuals or persons who are related by blood. In the case of family, the marriage union leads to having a bond through blood. However, Christian marriage is the replica of Christ's marriage with the body of believers who truly believe and obey His commandments.

The life of a Christian must be the life of Christ and not his. There must be a difference in the way a Christian thinks, acts, communicates and behaves other than the way the world does. This also entails having a Christian marriage. The word **Christian marriage** is the combination of two words, **Christian** and **marriage**. A **Christian** is a believer who lives his life in the pattern of Christ, one who has been redeemed, believes in Him, and remains faithful to Him alone. The early disciples no doubt were first called Christians many centuries ago in the city of Antioch (Acts 11:9) because believers then lived a scriptural and replicated life of Christ thus the name Christian. Marriage, on the other hand, means above all, union or fusion. Therefore, Christian marriage means the union of believers. In a Christian marriage, the husband and wife must be Christ' followers, anything outside this may endanger the family.

In Christianity, marriage achieves a sanctity and significance which was not known in ancient times. The forgotten dignity of women was brought to light, and its value was acknowledged. Neither Roman nor the Mosaic laws accorded the wife the rights which were equally great and sacred with those upon man. In Christianity the wife,

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as well as the husband, has covenanted to perfect fidelity of the mate. The wife ceases to be merely the helper of her husband in this present life but is a fellow heir with him of eternal life (1 Pt 3:7 NKJ). Christian people need to recognize that in taking the name of Christ, they accept a different standard of marriage than that which is permitted by civil authority.¹ From the submission here, it can be deduced that a Christian marriage entails the journey of two believers (man and woman) into eternal life. Marriage is an institution where a man cannot graduate as he pleases. It is a covenant of both blood and water between a man and a woman to be one with the Lord and with no one put asunder. As a lifelong journey, Christians must be aware that challenges in Christian marriages are also visible and that these challenges have made many fall away from them.

The Christian family is a model and a measuring stick designed by God for the proper nurturing of the young, the companionship of the spouse the productive and the consuming unit, and support for its members in bright and dull moments. The Christian family is built on the foundation of the word of God. The lines, jots, and the piece of the scriptural truth are its guides. By then the Christian family is given directions and forms. The contemporary family has witnessed a lot of institutional problems, manifesting in divorce, separation, single parenthood, desertion etc. The Christian family cannot afford to mirror the decadence in the society. On the contrary, it is expected to shed light in dark places, to saltine the experiences of members, and to bring hope to a society that is disorganized and in disarray.² A man with more than one wife in his house can by no means love them equally. It is like the word of Jesus that, "no one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal the one and despise the other..." (Mt 6:24 NKJV). In

polygamous family, it is difficult to attain true love. Therefore, that Christianity demands that a man be monogamous and exhibit genuine love in his life is not an overstatement. The evidence of unequal by the man with many wives will engender jealousy, envy, and rivalry among the wives.³

A Christian marriage gives room for the rulership of Christ knowing fully well that Christ is the head of the Church (1 Cor. 11:3). The first requirement for the members of a Christian family is that they all be Christians, having a true relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Ephesians 5:22–26 provides the guidelines for husbands and wives in a Christian family. The husband is required to love his wife as Christ loved the church, and a wife should respect her husband and willingly submit to his leadership in the family. The husband's leadership role should start with his spiritual relationship with God and then flow to instructing his wife and children in scriptural values, leading the family into biblical truth. Fathers are instructed to bring up their children in "the training and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). A father is also to provide for his family. If he does not, he "denies the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8). So, a man who makes no effort to provide for his family cannot rightly call himself a Christian. This does not mean that the wife cannot assist in supporting the family—Proverbs 31 demonstrates that a godly wife may surely do so—but providing for the family is not primarily her responsibility; it is her husband's. The Woman was given to man to be her husband's helper and to bear children (Genesis 2:18–20).⁴

The husband and wife in a Christian marriage are to remain faithful to one another for a lifetime. God declares equality of worth in that men and women are created in God's image and are therefore

equally valuable in His eyes. This does not mean, however, that men and women have identical roles in life. Women are more adept at nurturing and caring for the young, while men are better equipped to provide for and protect the family. Thus, they are equal in status, but each has a different role to play in a Christian marriage.

A Christian marriage, foundational to a Christian family, follows biblical instructions concerning sex. The Bible counters the cultural view that divorce, living together without being married, and same-sex marriage are acceptable in God's eyes. Sexuality expressed according to biblical standards is a beautiful expression of love and commitment. Outside of marriage, it is sin. Children are given two primary responsibilities in the Christian family: to obey their parents and to honor them (Ephesians 6:1-3). Obeying parents is the duty of children until they reach adulthood, but honouring parents is their responsibility for a lifetime. God promises His blessings on those who honour their parents. Ideally, a Christian family will have all members committed to Christ and His service. When a husband, wife, and children all fulfil their God-appointed roles, then peace and harmony reign in the home. But, if we try to have a Christian family without Christ as Head or without adhering to the biblical principles the Lord has lovingly provided for us, the home will suffer.⁵

The Mayhem of unhinged Christian Marriage and Ministry

The dangers of unbalanced Christian marriage and ministry are rampant among us today. Before we consider the dangers, first let's

examine the **factors** that may lead to problems in a Christian marriage and ministry:

1. Sin

Sin is a network or channel that connected man to the devil. Sin is the horse that the devil rides into a man's life. This implies that when we swim in sin then the devil will gain access to our lives as Christians. Ever since the fall of our first parents and federal heads Adam and Eve, we have been in bondage to sin (Genesis 3), and thus that is why we naturally engage in every form of wickedness (John 8:34), there is no need of mentioning any (Matthew 15:19). However, as Paul tells us in Romans 6:1-23, this slavery is being removed by Christ, since If the Son sets you free you are free indeed (John 8:36). It is true, sanctification doesn't once and for all as all of us believers will perpetually struggle with it all of our earthly days till we reach safely home in Heaven (1 John 1:7-10, 1 John 2:1-6, Romans 7:15-20), nonetheless, our lives should be marked by growth in holiness and righteousness. Unfortunately, this isn't so for the church in Africa as we are noted to be gross sinners even by worldly standards. Just take a look in any media and day after day you will not miss any negative report about the church, more so the church leaders.⁶ The greatest weakness of a man is sin and with sin, many things would be affected negatively both spiritually and physically. It is important to state here that, a man's sin can affect his family and ministry.

2. Divorce

Divorce is one of the factors that lead to marital problems in the life of Christians. Divorce is one of the core vices that have posed a lot of challenges to humankind in different dimensions. This is true

in that, the problem of divorce is not just for Christians alone but for people from all walks of life.⁷ According to Jay, there is hardly a Christian family or society that does not know the pains of divorce directly or indirectly. He said, in the medieval era, homes were held in high esteem and the husband and wife stayed together to fulfil the plans and purpose of God for their lives. In recent times, divorce has become one of the greatest threats to society, for it destroys one of the most basic societal institutions, the family. The threat is even greater to Christians today because of its numerous problems associated with it.⁸ What will you preach as a minister of God who divorced his spouse? Indeed, Christians are the light of the world and the mirror of reflection for others around you, however, what life will you say you are living as a Christian who had divorced his spouse not once or twice? This kind of act poses threat to ministry and in many ways endangers the marriage.

3. Choosing of Wrong Marriage Partner

A Christian must be aware that a wrong choice of partner may lead to unbalanced marriage and ministry. Since it has become easy for young men to marry, many of them just choose their marriage partners without proper examination. It is however amazing that their refusal to consult either church leaders or parents has paved way for continuous conflict in the family. Naturally, marriage unites people but it also inevitably breeds conflicts. Conflicts between husband and wife are common all over the world and when they are creatively resolved, the marital relationship is strengthened. Tiv, like many societies or traditions in the world, do not marry with the intention of divorcing each other.⁹ Marriage is a life-long partnership where both the husband and wife remain together until death do them part. This has a

great implication for the lives of Christians generally because it didn't give room for divorce. Many Christians suffer domestic violence and some marriage partners are lukewarm to the things of God, in a case where the wife was called into the ministry and the husband doesn't take the ministry as important, it then becomes a bottleneck to the wife who must make her marriage work out and also her ministry not affected. Hence, in choosing a partner, Christians must be careful and allow God to choose for them. Marriage is not a place where you go in the morning and return in the evening, it is not a market so to say but a life-long trip where as soon as you commenced and joined in the Church before other believers, you are joined for life. That is why it is important to avoid being unequally yoked with unbelievers and also be watchful of destiny destroyers who are clothed in 'brothers and sisters' clothing.

4. Backwardness in the things of God

A Christian must be sure to consider his ways often to see if he is still in the faith or not. At times, a man is moving towards retrogression in the things of God yet not knowing because he failed to consider his life and ways. A person, in particular a woman, who is a minister of God before she got married, may be engrossed by marital responsibilities leading to backwardness in the God-given assignment. This is in no way a good omen to Christians who are after obeying the instructions of God. The fire and zeal for God burning in you were all of a sudden dying off, if care is not taken the devil will make such a person's life his sitting room. God at a critical time called Abraham into order (Gen. 17:1); "...*I am God Almighty, walk before me and be blameless.*" Abraham the father of faith, who heeded the commandment of God and left his father's house, obeying the

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instruction of God without doubt, now lose the strength to keep hoping for the promised child and at the advice of his wife, took in Hagar and bore Ishmael. Abram confidence in God reduces (backwardness) as he was convinced by his wife. This singular act poses a great challenge to his marriage and ministry.

5. Taking the other as less important

As a minister of God, you must not take the marriage or ministry as less important. Many ministers of God fall victim to this as they place one over the other and think of the other as not important. There is no doubt that this attitude will not only endanger the family but also it is a bad signal to the ministry. Let me try to be simple here, ministers are expected to be prompt and timely in responding to God's call and instructions but God is not the author of confusion that would want you to jeopardize your home over your ministry rather God would want you to balance both. Take for example, where was Adam in the Garden of Eden when the serpent (Satan) came to deceive Eve? One may safely assume that Adam was not with Eve at that particular time when Eve was deceived but was later shown to have eaten the fruit with him in Genesis 3:6. However, the argument here is that Adam failed in his responsibility to manage his marriage and ministry hence led to falling from Grace. A minister, be it the husband or wife, must give the marriage much more attention in order to avoid an abrupt end of such a union.

The mayhem of unhinged Christian Marriage and Ministry includes the following:

Broken Homes

One crucial damage that may have resulted from the unevenness in Christian marriage and ministry is broken homes. A broken home in this context is not limited to divorce but also includes living with your spouse unhappily. I quite believe that almost every marriage started on the basis of loving each other but eventually during the marriage, the husband or the wife may lose interest in the marriage due to one reason or the other, however, because either the wife or the husband as a victim here is a minister of God, will find it difficult to divorce as others would have done. In this case, decided to continue living with the wife or husband without relating to each other as husband and wife. This is what I called internal or secret divorce, this was also something similar to what Joseph the betrothed of Mary wanted to do (Matthew 1:19). So many ministers of God remain with their spouses under the same roof but are truly divorced.

Unfulfilled destiny

It is evident that when there is an unbalanced marriage and ministry it results in the non-fulfillment of destiny. We must realize that marriage is a mandate of God which must be carried out in all totality as a Christian and also the God-given special or specific assignments. Hence, I would say here that, both marriage and ministry are both God's mandate on the life of a man and a man is not passed because he fulfils one to the fullness and failed in the other. God needs 100% from us as Christians in carrying out his instructions concerning our lives. A man must carry out the commandment of God in all sincerity of heart; he must avoid having the conception of ministry

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first before marriage. If your ministry is progressing and your marriage is fading off then you haven't fulfilled destiny –God's mandate.

Ministry dies gradually

In a situation where the marriage and ministry remain conflicting, unbalanced and unhinged, it is no doubt leading to the gradual fading away of God's presence in the ministry. A christian must be one who has a personal encounters with Christ and lives the life of Christ daily. In living the life of Christ, he must be able to balance his martial life and ministry without leaving anyone out of his assignment. A man whose marriage and ministry are facing crises and pays no attention to them but instead keeps saying that at least his ministry is doing fine can be likened to a tree that is growing, when it got to a time, one side of the tree is dying off yet the other side of the still bearing fruit, how long do you think the tree will survive? How do you think you will cut off the dying side without destroying the tree itself? Don't think that because your ministry is progressing and people are sharing testimonies about your works then think less of your marriage. Your marriage and ministry are inseparable from your life, the more your marriage is dying off, the more your ministry loses power.

Unsure Salvation

Another mayhem or chaos of unhinged Christian marriage and ministry is unsure salvation. It occurs to me that most people who failed to balance their marriage and ministry are having salvation issues i.e. are they truly saved? Well, am not judging them here but am only saying that it continues to bring doubt to the minds of people if truly he or she is a minister of God. To some, the place of forgiveness

no longer exist in their lives as they find it very difficult to forgive their spouse, yet you see them on the pulpit preaching about forgiveness. Then it leaves one in doubt as to why are they leaving a Pharisaic lifestyle that is, the life of do as I say but don't do as I do. As a minister, you should be sure first about your salvation before you preach it to others. If you are not saved, how can you save others? What you don't have you can't give others too. A minister does not only prays, sing or lead the congregation but is also looked upon as a model to be emulated, before him, people bring marital issues yet he is still the same man who is unable to bring about equity between his marriage and ministry.

God's anger

Ministers of God who failed to bring balance between their ministries and marriages invite the wrath of God. There are many pieces of evidences in the scripture that shows that God was unhappy with His prophets, those who are supposed to lead and live by example. Take for example a common story we all know about and that is the family of Eli. Eli was a prophet and priest of God at Shiloh who lived a holy life but was visited with God's punishment because of his children. God will not let you off the hook if you failed to manage your marriage/home properly. The children God gave to you are God's gift, and heritage (Psalms 127:3) and you are to be accountable for them before God. A wayward child will not only affects your marriage/family negatively but will also destroy your ministry.

Devil's handiwork

It is important to reiterate that when there is unbalancing between marriage and ministry it leads to a chance for the devil to work in your life. Imagine the number of wayward children today; you will be shocked with the numbers of pastors' children among them. This happens because the father or mother who is a minister of God had failed in his or her parental responsibilities. All in the name of doing service unto God, many ministers of God failed to care for their homes, not knowing the physical and spiritual growth of their children. When they were busy casting out demons, healing the sick and teaching the word of God, the devil continues to redirect his handiwork or actions to his cold, home and not filled with God's Spirit. Some ministers of God would say that they are busy with the God-given assignment, forgetting that their family is part of their assignment. Having an unbalanced marital and ministerial life can pave way for the devil's manifestations in the lives of believers.

Notes and References

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CHAPTER SIX
AN EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN MARRIAGE
AND MINISTRY: AN EXPOSITION ON THE
LIFE OF PST. DR. MRS. ADEYEYE

Marriage on its own is a concept of broad discussion and cannot be exhausted literally. As one continues to make progress in life, different lessons and views are bound to come one's way regardless of nature – good or bad. On the same hand, ministry is a common topic in the circle of believers today. Whenever you see a fervent brother or sister, most likely you will see a ministry attached to him or her. This is because it is a common phenomenon that every true and genuine Christian is called to the service of God in His vineyard. The harvest is near and the labourers are few, leading us to believe that everyone goes into ministry because of the role expected to play as a believer and worker in His vineyard.

Both men and women are now rampant in the ministry as the ministry itself is the service of God through His divine call upon all and every person called Christians. However, as we have men and women in the ministry, there is most times, a misplacement of priority, an inferiority complex and general orientations of the roles and limits of women in our society. These three reasons are responsible for the breakage of homes and ministry in our contemporary churches today. It is not a crime for a woman to be called into ministry but how would she be able to manage the ministry and not affect her marriage negatively?

The life of Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye is worthy to expound as a model for bringing about equilibrium or balance between marriage and

ministry. As already noted in her biography, this section will now examine how she has been able to balance her marriage and ministry under the factors below:

Manage your Pressure very well

As believers, we are not immune to the pressures of life. But be it as it may, we need to understand that when pressure dominates our lives, it is not because we've lost the ability to trust in God, but rather because we are not equipped with the capacity to counter pressure. Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye encountered a challenge which she was able to overcome from her end. This was the case between her and a woman leader of the church. As a minister, she was appointed as a vice to assist the women leader in the discharge of the latter's roles and other assignments in the church both at the local, regional and national levels. The then women leader unknowingly to Pst. Agnes Adeyeye was unhappy with her being the vice until she was confronted with it. At first, she was calm upon hearing that from her, however, not quite long the women leader was ill and a group of women decided to visit without informing her (Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye). On their return, she was accused of not visiting the women leader who was ill. During this scenario, the pastor's wife (as at then) encouraged her not to be discouraged by the insults and accusations received but rather learn to manage pressure and accommodate insults as a minister.

Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye who was then a minister serving God wholeheartedly was faced with the dilemma of quitting but she was encouraged and able to pass through the pressure period through calmness, patience and counsel from godly people. One thing is clear in this case, if she had been impatient with her accusers, she would have been labelled as ungodly and a hypocrite, among many others.

This again would have escalated into her family because the issue as at then would have affected her striving husband who was trying to serve God in his capacity. As a pastor's wife, Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye was able to sort out some issues relating to time management and balancing her marriage and ministry by creating time to cook early when being engaged in programmes which may take hours and even a day and also she taught her children how to cook in order to avoid the pressure of cooking for the family.

In an interview session with Deaconess Ogunbiyi, she commented that Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye was a calm and gentle woman. A woman who even faced with unbearable situations still shows a heart of gold, smiling without being ruffled.¹ This no doubt shows that, Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye even when offended will still put on a smiling face to the offender and this can be said to be a means of managing pressure. Whenever you are angry or facing one challenge or another you must ensure to keep your calmness and value as an individual. Pressure is part of life and how you manage the pressure is important to come out of the pressure. This in relation to the life of Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye brings fruitful results in balancing of her life. And again, it must be noted that her life here means her ministry and marriage.

According to Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye, some of the things that can be done when faced with pressure include the following:

1. Accept that there is an issue on ground.
2. Take a conscious effort of whatever you feed your mind with.
3. Do not neglect the place of God (Philippians 4:6-7; Isaiah 26:3).
4. Make the word of God your companion (Matthew 11:28-30).
5. Expend your strength in thanksgiving.
6. Replace all negative thoughts with good and positive thoughts.

7. Replace doubt with faith.

8. Don't be too big to ask for help (Romans 12:4-5).²

Pastor Mrs. Agboola, the wife of the General Overseer of Faith Redemption Way Ministry, Ilorin, noted that one of the ways Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye was able to manage pressure through toleration. She went further to say, "mummy tolerates a lot, and there are some things which she tolerates of which I cannot tolerate."³ This, with clear intention, shows how tolerant she is both to people at Church and even in the family. When a wife or husband can no longer tolerate each other, problems are bound to occur. No one is perfect. At times, the husband will offend the wife or the wife the husband, but what is needed at times, is the ability to tolerate instead of complaining. When most of what you do is to complain, nag and be dissatisfied about your partner's behaviour, then the marriage is bound to hit the rocks.

Love

According to Bro. Korede, another key to balancing both marriage and ministry is dwelling in love. He asserted that "mummy is a lovable woman both to her family and ministry. She does not know how to distance herself from people. She likes bringing people together in harmony for peace to reign."⁴ Considering this submission it is wise to say love supersedes all human virtues. 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 give a clearer understanding of the efficacy of love to family and the church in general and thus conclude that the "greatest is love." The scripture also directs all Christians to God through the use of the word love as presented in 1 John 4:8, "*He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.*" There is no better explanation than to say God is love and when you show love to others you are showing them God. Since we are created in His image, we possess some of His

characteristics and one of these is the ability to show love. John 3:16, the loveable God, who is love, shows love by His deed of giving us His only begotten son for the salvation of our souls from Hell.

This attribute called love is evident in the life of Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye. Deacon Wole noted this fact through the display of the grandeur of love that she has for her family and the people around her. He further buttressed that, he was one of those sponsored while in the ministry, during his days in the Redeemed Christian Church of God School of Discipleship and this led to his ordination as a deacon. This would not have been possible without the husband's approval."⁵ It is love that can make a person who is not biologically related to you to cater for your needs and, in particular, your studies. However, this attribute was found primarily in her life; hence this type of love is the Love of Christ.

Giving

Giving is one of the ways Pst. Dr. Mrs. Agnes Adeyeye had been able to balance her marriage and ministry. Deacon Wole noted that mummy gives freely and, in fact, pays his fees at the school of discipleship and also food and other materials are freely given to members of the church and people around her.⁶ Pastor Sogo noted this as well when he shared with me how mummy took care of them during the birth of his child.⁷ Bro. Korede also commented how kind mummy is in giving and taking care of the home.⁸

Wisdom

We need wisdom to live a balanced life as Christians. Since it is possible to have knowledge without wisdom (the reason you will see so many brilliant fools on the street). But you cannot have wisdom

without knowledge. Wisdom is the application of knowledge. Wisdom is knowing the ultimate goal in any circumstance of life. Wisdom will help you see the bigger picture. The wisdom of God is so deep that no man can see its depth. In Daniel 2:21-22, Daniel was trying to describe the wisdom of God "He changes the times and seasons, he removes Kings and establishes Kings, He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding, He reveals the deep and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness and light dwells with him". As a pastor's wife, she understands her role and never approaches duties that were not allocated to her. On some occasions, if the husband is not around and there is a church duty, she doesn't go and discharge the responsibility that was not instructed by her husband, instead, she would advise that the assistant pastor should do the needful. It is clear from this angle that, Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye applies wisdom in dealing with issues that might have painted her as an arrogant, dominating and disrespectful wife to her husband, leading to an imbalanced structure of marriage and ministry. The wisdom and obedience she deploys at home were brought into ministry and the fact of being a wife was not removed despite being a pastor's wife who can do things freely as some would do.

Deacon Wole noted that mummy Adeyeye during church service would feel relaxed even when tarried in the church. He said, "Others might be bothered, but she will respond by saying that she had already packaged daddy's food."⁹ This, without a doubt, refers to the application of wisdom. Proverbs 14:1 says, "*The wise woman builds her house, but the foolish pulls it down with her hands,*" Mummy Adeyeye is always cautious by doing what is expected of her as a wife at home and also a minister of God. This is indeed an example of a wise woman who builds her house according to Proverbs 14:1. As Bro.

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Korede sharply noted, "I have never seen her argue with her husband before on any particular topic of discussion."¹⁰ From this point, you will see that many women in our contemporary society get into arguments with their husbands which eventually lead to fighting. I have witnessed different scenarios where arguments between husbands and wives led to physical fights and this is too bad to occur in a Christian family. Hence, it is the application of wisdom that made her to always know how to react in different situations.

In addition, wisdom makes you do things the way it is supposed to be done. Bro. Korede submitted that, "She is always meticulous about everything because she believes there is a pattern in which things should/ought to be done and also she had no interest in making her garment to be stained."¹¹ To be successful at home and in the ministry you need wisdom. Wisdom as a homemaker will help you to be prudent, and frugal and also be consistent in parenting. According to Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye, the following tips on wisdom are needed to serve as guides for Christians;

- We need wisdom for a long life of peace (Proverbs 3:2).
- Wisdom will cause favour to locate you both from God and Man (Proverbs 3:4).
- Wisdom gives health (Proverbs 3:8).
- Wisdom will guide you from making wrong choices.¹²

Most importantly as a wife, wisdom helps you to know when to speak and when to be silent. Wisdom helps you to know what to say to your husband when he is sad, frustrated, overwhelmed or even busy. Wisdom is a great tool everyone should desire to have.

Dealing with your Subordinate

In life, we find ourselves in various capacities whether to lead or to be led. To create an enabling environment for ourselves we need to learn how to deal with our subordinates because a relationship based on trust makes it easier for subordinates to discuss their challenges with their seniors. Also, good relationships with subordinates help to motivate them to work and also sensitize them on the awareness to increase their goals. Never be the type that is always quick to condemn people's services. Learn to show some level of appraisal. Set good examples for your subordinates if you want them to work hard by demonstrating hard work.

Speak by Faith

What does it mean to speak by faith? In simple terms, it means whenever you ask God for anything believe that you have it from the moment you ask. Moreover, aside from believing God, you need to verbalize what you are seeking from God by speaking the word of faith (Mark 11:22-23), but make sure whatever comes to your mind is according to the will of God. And where can we find his will? In His word The BIBLE. There are bible references to guide us through speaking by faith; Philippians 4:8; Matthew 21:22; Isaiah 55:11; Mark 11:23 etc. There is power in the words that we speak by allowing the words of our mouth to align with the word of God. Negative confessions may block the blessings that the Lord has appointed for us because we eat the fruit of whatever we say. Look at what the Psalmist says in Psalms 19 vs 14 *"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight O lord my strength and my redeemer"*. Make use of God's word in every situation of your life.

Listen to People

There are two major ways by which we can communicate well:

1. Ability to express oneself
2. Listening to others.

So many people can talk but when it comes to listening to others, they fall short. Listening to others helps them to understand your interest and this also make people comfortable with sharing their issues with you. Listening also helps to end conflicts because not listening to others frustrates them which may lead to conflict. Listening also makes relationships and friendships deeper because it gives room for greater trust and lesser misunderstanding. As believers we need to have listening ears (Proverbs 1:5). By listening to others, we show them our love. As mothers, wives, ministers, counsellors, sisters and daughters people will come to us seeking advice and we must be sure to listen to them, let them pour out their hearts and also ask probing questions to get to the root of the issue. When people know you care, you will have the opportunity to speak truth into their lives.

Humility

The definition of humility from the scriptures is simply the “fear of GOD” (Proverbs 22:4). Therefore, to be humble means having the same mindset as Jesus Christ. Humility helps us to create peace and unity with others, never be so high up that it becomes difficult for you to accept corrections, and don’t ever think that your thoughts and decisions are better than that of other people (Proverbs 3:5). The bible tells us in 1Peter 5:6 “Humble yourselves therefore, under God’s mighty hand that he may lift you up in due time”. Therefore, as people of God, holy and his dearly beloved we must clothe ourselves with

compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. *"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has grievance against someone, forgive as the lord forgave you, and over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity"* Colossians 3 vs 12-14.

According to Mrs. Ogunbiyi, Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye is humble despite her level of academics and other achievements in life. She commented that Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye is a PhD holder who you hardly notice she is a Dr. She is accommodating and humble before her husband and shows humility to everyone and this is as a result of her heart of humility.¹³ Humility helps us to be comfortable with our person in Christ Jesus. You can be a peacemaker without having to fight for your rights, Proverbs 15:1. Humility helps us to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit and not in our human strength. Humility as a leader helps us to serve God and at the same time serve others. *"Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart"* Matthew 11:29. Have you ever thought or noticed the reason Christ gave for learning of him? He might have said: *"Learn of me, because I am the most advanced thinker of all ages. I have performed miracles that no man else has performed. I have shown my supernatural power in a thousand ways"*, But no: the reason he gave was that He was Meek, and lowly in heart". The following are some of the characteristics of a humble person:

1. A humble person thinks better of others than himself.
2. A humble person praises God in times of trouble.
3. A humble person accepts reproof and correction.
4. A humble person accepts the condition God sees best for him.

5. A humble person complains about his heart, not his circumstances.
6. A humble person retains relationships
7. A humble person is not boastful
8. A humble person is grateful for everything
9. A humble person is not jealous
10. A humble person is not proud.

Pastor Sogo Agboola, the General Overseer of Faith Redemption Way Ministry, Ilorin, opined that Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye is a woman of great humility. According to him, Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye was so humble that as an usher, he looks forward to how she attended to issues without segregation and not minding whether she is the pastor's wife or not as many would be carried away by this title.¹⁴ Ministry should not be taken as an occupation or what you are forced to do like Jonah who was sent for the salvation of Nineveh but because his journey was from an unwilling heart, he sat under the tree expecting the damnation of the people of Nineveh. In the church today, the issue of humility is the major talk in family issues and marital failure. The wife at home no longer wants to remain wife, because she is having a ministry that she is now heading. When humility is lost, pride is exalted and when pride is exalted, fall is inevitable.

Understanding

This is one of the most important keys in every marriage and when this is absent, it leaves the home in chaos and confusion. Sis. Toyosi noted that Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye was able to manage her marriage and ministry with the help of the spirit of understanding. She went further to say that both "mummy and daddy" walk hand in hand together to make ministry and marriage a success.¹⁵ A popular bible

reference of Amos 3:3 which is summarized as "*can two walk together except they agreed?*" can be seen in the life of Pst. Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye as both she and her husband have lived together for over 30 years in understanding. One thing is clear about understanding; there can't be understanding to a great extent without transparency, truthfulness and agreement. Most families have been suffering because both the husband and wife have failed to live in understanding with each other and in a home where understanding is lacking. Such a home remains the habitation of confusion.

According to Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye, the following are some ways you can adopt to maintain balance in marriage and ministry:

1. Spend quality time together as a couple. We should understand that God instituted marriage and he wants to see it work.
2. The demands of the ministry can drain us physically and emotionally, therefore we must be sexually intimated with our spouses.
3. Communicate your likes and dislikes.
4. Be attentive to the needs of your partner.
5. Be prudent and financially cautioned.
6. Take out time to laugh together, it takes more muscle to frown than to laugh.¹⁶

In conclusion, the tool to maintaining a balance in marriage and ministry is to have a solid relationship with God. May we receive help to live a balanced life. The devil is all out to destroy homes that are built on the solid rock which is Christ (John 10:10) but we should not live our lives as ignorant believers. Stop imagining vain thoughts about one another. Don't live in confusion, ask questions about

whatsoever is making you confused. Speak out and pray about
whatsoever is causing the confusion.

Christian Home

1. God, give us Christian homes!

Homes where the Bible is loved and taught,
Homes where the Master's will is sought,
Homes crowned with beauty Your love has wrought;
God, give us Christian homes;
God, give us Christian homes!

2. God, give us Christian homes!

Homes where the father is true and strong,
Homes that are free from the blight of wrong,
Homes that are joyous with love and song;
God, give us Christian homes;
God, give us Christian homes!

3. God, give us Christian homes!

Homes where the mother, in caring quest,
Strives to show others Your way is best,
Homes where the Lord is an honoured guest;
God, give us Christian homes;
God, give us Christian homes!

4. God, give us Christian homes!

Homes where the children are led to know
Christ in His beauty who loves them so,
Homes where the altar fires burn and glow;
God, give us Christian homes;
God, give us Christian homes!

Notes and References

1. Oral Interview granted by Mrs. Ogunbiyi, A Deaconess at the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Higher ground Area Parish, Taiwo, Ilorin, through a phone call, on 7th January, 2023.
2. Oral Interview granted by Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye, A Pastor Mrs. at RCCG City of Refuge, Ilorin, at her residence on 7th January, 2023.
3. Oral Interview granted by Pastor Mrs. Agboola, the wife of the General Overseer of Faith Redemption Way Ministry, Ilorin, through a phone call, on 7th January, 2023.
4. Oral Interview granted by Bro. Korede Adeyeye, the son of Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye, online interview session, on 6th January, 2023.
5. Oral Interview granted by Deacon Oluwole Temitope, A Deacon at the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Higher ground Area Parish, Taiwo, Ilorin, through phone call, on 7th January, 2023.
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15. Oral Interview granted by Sis. Toyosi Abidoye, A Youth Leader at the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Higher ground Area Parish, Taiwo, Ilorin, through phone call, on 7th January, 2023.
16. Oral Interview granted by Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye, A Pastor Mrs. at RCCG City of Refuge, Ilorin, at her residence on 7th January, 2023.

About The Book

The book examines Women in Ministry: Equilibrium between Marriage and Ministry (an Exposition on the Life of Pastor Dr. Mrs. Agnes Omotayo Adeyeye). It gives a detailed account of the life of Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye from her childhood to the present year of her life. Other things it examines include the conceptual clarifications of the major keywords, women in ministry in biblical times, different ministerial callings for women in our Contemporary Churches, Christian marriage and ministry. An exposition of how to balance marriage and ministry are given attention on the account of the life and ministry of Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye.

The book does not only cover an account of Pastor Dr. Mrs. Adeyeye's life and ministry but is also insightful, inspiring and educating to ministers of God, students in the academic field of studies and the entire Christendom. Since it exposes the lives of women generally and talks about Christian marriage, it gives helpful knowledge on things that put families apart and endanger the future of the children.

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