

Family Clinic.1

by Gbile Akanni

Gbile Akanni emphasizes the critical importance of maintaining a godly and transparent marriage among clergy as a foundation for strong ministry and faithful witness.

Duration: 1:43:25

Scripture: Malachi 2:4-16

Topics: "Marriage", "Faithfulness", "Christian Ministry"

Description

In this teaching sermon, Gbile Akanni addresses the vital role of clergy marriages as foundational to effective ministry and church health. He highlights the biblical mandate for priests to maintain integrity in their homes, underscoring how failures in marriage can cause others to stumble in faith. Through a careful examination of Malachi 2, Akanni challenges ministers and their spouses to contend deliberately for their marital vows and to serve as transparent examples for the church and future leaders.

Transcript

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Telephone numbers 0703 03636 59, 0703 76811 98. Email address lsmedia@livingseed.org or visit our website at www.livingseed.org. Let us sit back and listen as the servant of God brings forth the Word of Life. I'd like to welcome you to the family clinic in line with our team for this year.

The apex clergy contending for the fifth. I also want to say the apex clergy contending for the family. You know that marriage is also a relationship.

And this relationship is first with God himself. Before it is at the interpersonal level. If we have right relationship with God, it will reflect on our families.

And all that we have been hearing is that something is very wrong with the church. And that is also the reason why something is very wrong with the families in the church. I believe that when people begin to live right with God, they will even begin to live right with each other.

And this family clinic, we will be looking at how we can have both right relationship with God and right relationship with one another. So you are welcome. And I believe that as we sit at the mirror of God's

Word, we'll be able to see things that we need to put right in our relationship both vertically and also horizontally.

May the Lord bless you as you be part of this clinic. Thank you, sir. We would like to thank God for the privilege of our coming back in our family clinic.

Can I please check all the men that have come with their wives? Can you please rise and let us take inventory of our meeting again? Yeah, all the husbands that have come with their wives, please stand up and use your second hand to bring up your wife. Thank you very much. We appreciate your coming.

We feel that for the clinic, we always will require the couple to be together. We appreciate you. Please help us to appreciate them with a good hand.

We welcome you. Praise the Lord. Thank you very much.

The Lord bless you. We appreciate your being here. We want you to please be free.

And we want you to please enlarge your heart as we go ahead in the course of this family clinic. Let us pray together. Our Father, we thank you for your love and your faithfulness to us.

We thank you for bringing us to another clinic. We thank you for your great purpose for our homes. And we thank you for what you set up the Christian home for, and particularly the home of your servants.

We want to plead with you this moment that you will send forth your wisdom to us. We are talking about contending for the faith. But we realize that the first place of contention is the home.

We realize that if every home is standing well, the ministry will be strong. If our home and our matrimony is standing without any fault, we will go places, we will achieve much with you. So Lord, when we talk about contending for the faith, we realize that we cannot ignore the contending for the faith in our home and in our matrimony together.

And then together as a couple, contending for the call that you have placed on our lives. So Father, we ask that you give us further insight and release your grace upon us deliberately. Cause us to advance in our discussions and the issues you want us to trash this time, Please Lord, let it become enriching to our homes and to our ministries.

Thank you for hearing our prayer. In Jesus Christ's name we have prayed. Amen.

Amen. Our clinic's focus for this time is contending for the faith in our home as a couple in ministry. And we will endeavor to look at the need for us to contend very, very deliberately for the oneness of our marital relationship.

In a generation where everything is working towards pulling us apart. How do we contend for the maintenance of the vows that we made to God and to each other in our marriage? Because we have entered a time when marital vows are treated lightly nowadays. We have come to a point where when the Bible said marriage is honorable in all.

How so many, many things are happening that dishonors marriage, that treats marriage as if it is not sacred, and that undermines our marital commitment. So we will be looking at how do we stand together as husband and wife in different areas where we need to resist the enemy in every aspect. So that it does

not intrude into the purpose of God in our home.

It does not intrude into the purpose of God for our calling. And it does not intrude into the discharge of our ministerial assignment as God's servants. Finally, how do we also contend for the faith such that our matrimony, our marriage as apex leaders continue to be a worthy and a living specimen.

For the marriages of our clergy, junior clergy, and for the marriages of the entire denomination where God has made us leaders and overseers. These are the things we want to attempt to deal with this time. Now there might be different issues, issues of how do we handle family finance, communication, discussion.

How do we handle the peculiarity of aging marriage. How do we cultivate friendship with ourselves in the midst of everything else. So that our companionship, our relationship continues to grow stronger and the wine of our marriage does not become watery.

These are the issues that we are looking forward to discussing and seeing how God can give us wisdom in the course of this period. Before I will ask my wife to help us read some few passages, I would like also to generally say that God's commitment to our marriage, to our matrimony is very, very critical. We have read passages but I still wish we can read a passage together again to underscore what we were looking at before we take issues of discussion.

Because every time I look at God's commitment to the marital vow, it gives me a lot of concern. That could it be that the devil will want to first of all fight the Christian home in order to dismantle or disintegrate the church. Could it be that if the homes have not functioned the way they should, all the things that God wanted the family to do, all the provision that the family must have provided in building up, in raising young people, in raising children, in raising church members.

If that has scattered, could that be where we needed to focus on? We can't be talking about general families if we do not have a home that is a specimen that we can be talking about. So I will ask my wife to turn to help us read the Malachi passage. Malachi passage, we read it almost every time whenever we come.

But this afternoon we are going to read it with some deliberateness. Malachi chapter 2 and we would like you to help us read from verse. Because the entire chapter 2 of Malachi was speaking to the priesthood, was addressing the priesthood.

And when you look at what God has spoken about the priesthood, what the priest should be. And how it went on and on and it ended on the matter of the marital relationship of the priests. You know, before we could take this scripture and read it and apply it to every husband and wife.

But I found that the context of this passage itself is dealing with the matrimony of the priests. It's talking about the priests. So that's why I want us to read it again in that context.

And honestly discuss what this meant for the ministry of the priests. And for the ministerial performance of those of us who are standing on the altar. So I want you to please help us read and read from verse 4 and take us on until we get to verse 16.

Malachi chapter 2 from verse 4 to 16. Then you shall know that I have sent this commandment to you, that my covenant with Levi may continue, says the Lord of hosts. My covenant was with him, one of life and peace.

And I gave them to him that he might fear me. So he feared me and was reverent before my name. The law of truth was in his mouth and injustice was not found on his lips.

He walked with me in peace and equity and turned many away from iniquity. For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge and people should seek the law from his mouth. For he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.

But you have departed from the way. You have caused many to stumble at the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says the Lord of hosts.

Therefore I also have made you contemptible and base before all the people because you have not kept my ways but have shown partiality in the law. Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously with one another by profaning the covenant of the fathers? Judah has dealt treacherously and an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the Lord's holy institution which he loves.

He has married the daughter of a foreign God. May the Lord cut off from the tents of Jacob, the man who does this, being awake and aware. Yet who brings an offering to the Lord of hosts? And this is the second thing you do.

You cover the altar of the Lord with tears, with weeping and crying. So he does not regard the offering anymore nor receive it with goodwill from your hands. Yet you say, for what reason? Because the Lord has been witness between you and the wife of your youth with whom you have dealt treacherously.

Yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant. But did he not make them one, having a remnant of the spirit? And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.

For the Lord God of Israel says that he hates divorce. For it covers one's garment with violence, says the Lord of hosts. Therefore take heed to your spirit that you do not deal treacherously.

Thank you very much. That's a very general passage I wanted us to draw issues with as we begin to look at the matter of contending for our home. The matter of laboring as husband and wife to maintain the purity and the divine purposefulness for setting up our marriages.

And I want us to discuss this evening, even though all the principles we want to discuss could have been applied to any Christian marriage anywhere. But the peculiarity of the marriage of the priests, of the men of the clergy. How peculiar it is and what are the serious issues that we have to highlight so that the purpose of God is not discredited.

Number one, I wanted to just highlight a few things so that as we raise issues for discussion, I want us to be discussing from the perspective of who we now are. Who we are. Now we are just talking about TEDCO, the theological educators.

I hope you know that whether we want to recognize it or not, the marriage of a theological educator is supposed to be a model for all the theological students that they are training. Because where else do we expect them to learn while they are going through training how a minister ought to be married? I don't know how you understand what I'm saying. Are we expecting these children to go and learn marriage from the television? If we are talking about holistic spiritual formation, is it not going to be a very critical aspect?

So when we were proposing what to do as part of spiritual formation, we talked about effective family life that we needed to deal with such a cause.

But you see, if you are going to teach a course on family life, you know the first problem you are going to look for is where do you get lecturers? And the condition will be that their homes are transparently correct. Am I right? That in the midst of the class, you should have brought his wife in. Or you should have asked the student, come to my house and let's see what to do.

If we are talking about grooming people to go and stand out there, many of us, we know there are many brothers who are intactly married when they go into politics. I hope you know the first trouble is that their marriages are scattered. Strange women go in.

Our father-in-law was speaking in the morning of Abuja marriages. Do you understand Abuja marriage as he was talking about in the morning? So all of these challenges that God is expecting that it is the clergy that he wants to use to deal with it, if those problems are now located in his own marriage. How terrible will it now be? That's why we have to be talking very deeply and practically with ourselves today.

Whatever God will lead us to do. But I just want to raise an outline very quickly. Now, did you notice that in verse 7, verse 7 I just want you to see an outline.

Say, for the priest lives, should do what? Should keep knowledge. And they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. Did you see that very grave responsibility? That the priest lives, should keep knowledge.

And that the people should seek the law at his mouth, because he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts. He is the representative of the Lord of hosts. So which means, the first challenge I'm seeing there is that, all interpretation of biblical values and principles must be brought from the mouth of this priest, this clergy.

And if the Bible is demanding this heavy thing from him, if he lives, will keep knowledge. If he's going to have a wife, that they could stand together in ministry and their mouth is not porous. Their lies does not betray the truth.

Sometimes you see church members say, well, I like the pastor but his wife, I don't want her to put her mouth in my matter. And they say, look, it is the man we engaged, not his wife. I don't want the wife, because I know what she can say.

So, because the husband wants to be faithful to the work of God, what does he have to do with his wife now? The trouble of, how do I have a wife that cannot sit and stand with me in the call of God, that God has given me? How do we manage that? How do we contend with that? And how is it that people are supposed to come and seek knowledge from my mouth? And they cannot come to my house. And I will not be afraid of what they will discover. I don't know if you understand what I'm talking about.

So, it means then that whether we know it, we like it or not, the minister's home, even though it is a private affair, once you have come into this priesthood, your home is no longer your private affair. It has become a public, and everybody is looking at it and saying, let's see what their home looks like. So, how do we contend for our marriage in a way that without pretending, and without trying to cover up our home actually is a space where men could come and seek knowledge from our mouth? That's one matter I'm talking about.

How do we contend to maintain a home that is transparent, a home that is worth people coming to look into it, a home where they can come and seek knowledge and that they will not be disappointed, because that's part of our ordination. That's the first outline that we are going to be talking about. What must we do as clergy at our level to make sure that our marriages is being prepared as a platform to answer serious, deliberate questions from the flock that God has asked us to provide answers to their challenges? How will our home be made ready for that? How are we going to, between me and my wife, live such a life in matrimony that we are also conscious that we are not just living for ourselves, which is the first primary thing, but we are also living as a specimen for the Word of God not to be spotted, to be blamed, for the doctrine of our God to be adorned, and for the ministry that God has brought us into to find further expression because of our marriage.

These are the first matters that I'm raising, and my wife will be talking to it, and then the Pope will be making input, but if there are issues you want to contribute to that, we will be raising it as we go on. Now, God was complaining about this particular set of priests. He said, you are departed out of the way.

You have caused many to stumble at the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi. Look at three allegations.

Those three allegations are so heavy that I thought that in this clinic, we must be talking about how do we contend in our home to maintain the faith that God brought us to defend. Number one, say, you are departed out of the way. You have caused many to stumble at the law.

You see, it's a very heavy matter that the people that we are talking about, even if they just stumbled in their lives, it's simple, but that when they stumble, what are they? They stumble at the law. That means the word of God that could have corrected them has become valueless to them simply because they found fault in the life of the priests, which means for me, if I were an ordinary church member, and God is not putting me on the platform of ministry, if I make my mistakes, it will be my mistakes. Am I right? But because now I've come to the height of ministry, God has lifted you up to a place where people see you.

Your mistakes is no longer your mistakes. Your own mistakes will cause many to do what? To stumble at the word of God. They will not just stumble, they will stumble at the word.

The word of God will become less and less honorable before their eyes simply because of a fault in your own life. So when I'm talking about contending for the faith, as a home, it now became more serious. That it is not just enough that you and your husband could just quarrel.

It's okay. When you are not here, you could have quarreled. But now that God has brought you to where you are, every cough that comes out of your mouth says something to people.

So how do we contend for the faith in such a manner that we are saying, not my matrimony, we make men to stumble at the word of God. How do we undo that as wives and husbands? These are issues that I'm raising as outlined from that passage. Now, you have corrupted the covenant.

That became more serious. The covenant of priesthood. The covenant behind our ordination.

Say you have corrupted the covenant of Levi. You have made the covenant for your ordination. You have corrupted it.

It is no more pure. The covenant is destroyed. I saw that as we have been talking about clinic, marriage and all of that, it's okay.

But now because of who you now are in the purpose of God, it becomes an urgent matter to ask, how do we handle this in our relationship? May the Lord not allow that verse 9 to become our portion. Therefore, I also made you contemptible and base before all the people. I don't know whether you know that that is the greatest punishment for a man of God.

I don't know whether you get me. Look at that verse 9. Do you know that is the worst thing that could happen to a man on the pulpit? Do you know that a man on the pulpit, money is not crucial to him? If I have no money in my pocket for two weeks, it's no problem. But how terrible it is that each time you want to stand up to pray or to preach or to announce, what is he talking about? Let him go and sit down.

You are not interested in all these empty stories. The honor of a servant of God is critical for his ministry. Is it critical for his ministry? That when you stand up and say, let us pray, and people say, the man of God is praying for me.

How terrible it is that when you say, don't lay hands on me. I remember we have brought people here and we want to pray for people and we lay hands. And I just said, let the resource persons come and help us lay hands.

Because I didn't know the matter. I saw a man that hands were to be laid on him. And as he noticed that it is this man that is coming to lay his hands, I saw a drama.

He was dodging like this. He was making sure that that man's hand is not on his head. I was surprised.

Later on, he sent a note. He said, sir, we did not come to peace house for some of these people that you are asking to lay hands on us. We know them.

This is a man that has cheated me. And me and my wife, we almost scattered because of his action. How can he come and lay hands on my head here? That's not why I came here, sir.

I don't want his hand. That's why I was running away. Please, if you don't want to lay hands on me, leave me alone.

It's better for me not to have a hand lay on me than to have this kind of hand. You know, how contemptible a man of God could become. And that was more serious.

But as all this was going on, I was thinking that maybe God would be mentioning something else. Until we now came to that verse 13 and he said, and this is another thing you have done. The matter of your marriage.

So let me ask my wife to please open this discussion, first and foremost. With the sense of responsibility of where we now stand in God's work. In ministering the word of God.

And in standing before people who must come to seek knowledge from our mouth. How do we approach our marriage so that it does not fail God? How do we contend for the relationship between a man and his wife? You see, I would have loved to say how will a woman work so as to enjoy her husband. But now because the matter is more than enjoyment.

There's a greater gravity why our marriages must be correct. Let me ask you to start making input into that as we move on. Thank you.

The first thing I note is the fact that sometimes the problem is foundational. Because if we start looking at the problem from the top, we may not really get the root of it. The problem, the reason why a minister's marriage could become a stumbling block to the people that they are ministering to.

Could be a foundational issue. For example, the fact that there could be either a misunderstanding or a lack of knowledge of the purpose of marriage itself. Because if this purpose is not understood, you will discover sometimes the woman may tell the man, you are the one God called, he didn't call me.

So do your thing and let me do my own. After all, we are married and we can go on. I didn't say I will leave you, but you are the one God called, he didn't call me.

That's a misunderstanding of the purpose of marriage. Because right from the original concept of marriage, right from the beginning, God created marriage not just for childbearing, but for the purpose of God on the earth to be fulfilled. Because the man and his wife were the first fundamental theme in the fulfillment of God's purpose on earth.

From the book of Genesis chapter 1 verse 26, 27, and 28. When God finished creating the whole earth, the theme he handed his work on earth into their hands. It's a couple.

So marriage was fundamentally created to do God's work. It's not just for enjoyment, it's not just for childbearing. It is for the purpose of doing God's work.

And again, chapter 2 also emphasized that. He said, it is not good for this man to be alone, I will make a help meet for him. You don't need a help where there is no work.

So marriage is fundamentally for the work of God. And if there is this understanding, then both of them will stand to see to it that the work for which God brought us together must succeed. But when there is a dichotomy of an understanding of this fundamental purpose of God for marriage, then it brings a problem even in ministry.

I've seen even some of the vows in some churches also have seen it. That this issue, I've seen marriage is meant for producing children, is meant for companionship. But I hardly see that the road that is meant for the work of God.

But this is it, right from Genesis. I think if God helps us to understand this original purpose of God for marriage. There will be no dichotomy of the woman doing her thing and the man doing his own thing.

And then their home will not be the kind of sample that God wants it to be to the congregation. And when the congregation wants to see a correct marriage, they will just discover quietly that dichotomy because of maybe lack of understanding or misunderstanding of the original purpose of God for marriage. So I felt often times the problem is foundational.

Alright, alright. Thank you. You have raised a very fundamental issue.

That maybe the first thing we need to resolve, honestly speaking. Is that even before our children, before our self pleasure, God's intention is that this couple that he has brought together is for the purpose of his work on earth. And that the wife must not fail to know that I am being brought into this man's life as a help,

meat, for him to fulfill a divine mandate on earth.

And if this is not agreed upon, we might be pulling in different directions. And I see no matter how fundamental that issue looks, we need to look at one another one more time and say look, we have married now for 10 years, we are married for 15 years, we are married for 30 years. Thank God for all that we have done.

But have we achieved the very purpose for our matrimony? Are we satisfied that yes, after all we have tried to live together? Have we together contributed to the very reason why heaven has set us apart? Because you know I was noting that whereas in the scriptures, other persons who are not Levites are actually allowed to marry certain category of people. But a Levite's marriage was much more strict. For example, a Levite was not allowed to marry, he was not allowed to marry somebody who was not a virgin.

Even if somebody's wife died, you could marry any other person, but a Levite must not. The reason is because the sacred call on his life was demanding a marriage that is beyond reproach. A marriage that you cannot say because of something happened somewhere.

God was very strict about the marriage of the Levites because of the call of God on his life. So the first issue she was raising which I want us to look at is, have we discovered husband and wife as we are sitting here that honestly speaking, your marriage, apart from every other thing that we have attributed marriages for, was deliberately created by God for this work of God to be completely fulfilled on earth. If we can note that, our contending for it will become more focused.

You will now know that you cannot leave your matrimony to either wobble or scatter and you think you are doing ministry. You will now know that the first place to contend is to say, look, this marriage must fulfill the divine purpose of God. Do you want to say something on this before we push a little ahead? It's true.

One must come to term with the fact that God has given him a work to do. And that in doing this work, you need help. And that your spouse is that help that God has packaged and has brought to you.

So you cannot actually function effectively if this person that God has brought to you is actually not a contributor to this work. And I discovered that even as a minister, you know our members, even when you have not really said anything, at the end of the service they will be thanking you for doing nothing. Because they want you to feel good.

But your spouse, who is part of this work, and the person that God has brought to help you do this work, is the one that will draw your attention to any lapse as far as ministry is concerned. So for me the first thing is to accept that the person that is my wife is actually the person that God has sent to me to help me with my work. So I need to give her a listening ear.

Right. Thank you very much. Can we go on? Or you want to say something on this? Or we can just go ahead? No, there is something small that kept worrying me.

As we read from verse 13, I mean right from verse 4, I have never taken time to look at it from that place. And from verse 13 God is saying that they are even asking that why is God not accepting their offering? So that a person, a man, a minister can be sinning and he doesn't know that he is dealing treacherously with his wife. But he doesn't know that he is doing wrong.

And God is refusing to accept his offering and he doesn't know the reason. So for me the foundation here is not only about his marriage. I wonder whether there is a foundation in the Lord Jesus.

Because the person that has a foundation in the Lord Jesus has the spirit of God. And should hear God when he has gone wrong. The spirit of God should be grieved.

And his spirit should be grieved. But he is going on with everything as if no problem. So for me it is a big problem.

Because it reflects to me back to Cain and Abel. His offering was not accepted. Instead of crying out to God, we brought offering.

Why didn't you accept my offering? Show me what is wrong with me. He became angry. God told him to watch it.

He didn't watch it until he killed his brother. Right. Is it possible? You want to say something? You want? Okay, add.

Before I add my own. Let's go ahead. You know, this issue of not understanding the purpose of God right from the beginning.

Is a matter that affects many, many ministers' homes. And causes this pulling apart so much. That the work of God is not as effective.

It may be effective, but not as effective as it should be. If the two are putting all their heads together. With one common focus, one common purpose.

And I saw a little thing. Because when the Lord began to talk about the marriage like this. And he is talking about dealing treacherously.

Putting each other away. And God says he hates putting away or he hates divorce. I just began to see this fundamental problem.

Excuse me. So, you know, I saw that it was the same kind of problem. That was between Adam and his wife.

That made the devil to find a soft spot. For the woman. To come and bring the temptation of food to her.

I wonder why the devil did not come to the man. And then I wonder why it was food that Satan brought. The heart of that woman must have been lusting for food.

She must have been pulling apart because of food. Looking for food. And James chapter 1 says a man is drawn away by his own lust.

When he is enticed. The devil will not tempt you with what is not your lust. He won't tempt you with what is not your desire.

So in Genesis chapter 3 when the devil came to the woman. To bring the issue of food. That woman must have been looking for food.

Instead of looking for what is the purpose of God for their marriage. She must have been pulling apart. In one way or the other looking for food.

And I saw that most of the time the lack of effectiveness in our homes. As men and women of God. Is this pulling apart for looking for food? The woman is saying my children.

I don't want my children to suffer hunger. You can go and be doing God's work. Let me look for food.

And once the heart is drawn away like that. The devil meets you in the corner. And you don't know when you fall flat.

He can come at any point. At that point of looking for food. Because that's the lust of the heart.

It's important as women for us to focus on the focus of our marriage. We won't die for lack of food. We won't die.

If it is God that sends you to another field. Maybe field of business or something. And it is still part of the work.

That's okay. But if it is a matter of looking for food. Because of fear.

Fear of our needs. Fear of the future. Of our children.

That is making us to pull apart. And the woman is in Ilona. The man is in Abuja.

Staying alone. How will the congregation learn what marriage is? Just because we are pulling apart. Because we don't understand that primarily our marriage was ordained by God for the work of God.

Anything that runs contrary to that must be rejected. Any job that will separate us from our husbands. Must be rejected.

And we will not die. God who called our husbands and called us. He knows how to provide for us.

He has not failed us all these years that we threw away our own jobs. Some of us had to refuse lucrative jobs. But being posted to a far away distance from our husbands.

And I had to tell them no. No matter how lucrative that job may be. If it will be at the expense of the purpose of God for me and my husband.

And for us to stay together. A way with that job. And I was ready to suffer for it.

So you know the fundamental understanding of the purpose of God for our marriage is very critical. In this issue of contending for the faith in our home. The devil is always at the corner.

And once he sees a loss, a desire in our heart for something that is apart from the purpose of God. He goes for it. Right.

You remember the bishop said. Part of the strategy of the devil, the enemy. Is that he waits for us at certain joints.

Do you remember? And one of the joints where he specializes in waiting. Is at the joint of marriage. And so the first thing we want to press this afternoon first among ourselves is.

Could we re-examine. As we are sitting here. Have we accepted.

That this primary purpose for which God. Has created our relationship as husband and wife. Is for the purpose of this calling.

And that we must be careful not to be pulling apart. And that whatever it is that is making us not to be able to stand together. Bonding together.

Liberating together. To bring increase on to what God has called us to do. We need to speak into it.

As part of our contending. For this faith. That God has called us to do.

While our brother has noted. We are going to move a little further. But as sister said.

Could it be that. If somebody is doing something and he didn't know. God is saying.

I cannot receive your offering. And can you imagine if God refuses. To accept the offering of an apex leader.

All the people that he is leading. Are they not in trouble. They are unfortunate.

You know the picture used to be very strong with me. Whenever I went to the church. And I saw when all offering are gathered.

And the ushers who collected the offering. They will bring it. And the priests.

That stands here. Will collect it. And then he will bring it to the altar.

And hand it over to the senior priests. Who will now stand before God. And when I lift it up and say father.

These are the offering of your people. Let it be acceptable unto you. And oh Lord pronounce your blessing upon the people.

Rebuke the devourers on their behalf. In the name of God the father. The son and the holy ghost.

Unless the majesty was lifting it up like that. Get out from here. I can't receive anything from you.

Go, go, go away from here. All the people that have brought their offering. What happens to them? They are unfortunate.

So this, this is a critical issue. If to say you are just representing yourself. It will not have been matter.

But here you are. All the congregation. They are waiting for you to pronounce the benediction.

Over their offering. You are the one that God has ordained to pronounce the blessing. You know when you go reading the bible.

And you see what God told the priests to do. That when people come to the altar. There are certain blessings that it was you.

Who is to pronounce it. And until you pronounce that blessing. The people can't go.

Because nothing has been placed on their lives. And now the bible said. God no longer accepts.

The offering from your hand. And you say why? Why is God not taking all these things? He said because I am a witness. I was taught that.

God is not looking at the outward thing you are doing here. God is keeping at your bedroom. Say I am a witness.

Between you and the wife of your youth. With whom you are dealing with. Without being sensitive.

He said treacherously. So my own question was. Is it possible that ministry could even dull the heart.

Of a priest. To the point that. He is no more aware.

Of what he is doing to his wife. Is it possible that we could be so obsessed. With the work of God.

To the extent that. The woman in our home. In our lives.

Is actually crying to God against us. But because you are busy here and there. She is weeping.

I just returned from a country. And you know I finished a meeting. And everything was looking nice.

And I was about to leave. And the wife of the pastor. Said sir can I talk to you? He said I don't usually talk.

And in fact I don't know how even to talk. Because we are here. You can't talk to anybody.

I am a pastor's wife. But I am tired. I am tired.

But I have to behave in the church. As you see I am laughing. But I am tired.

I am dying inside. I drew my chair. I said to her what it is.

So I found that. The wives of men of God. They are in their own class.

And they have their own challenges. And if your wife. As I am talking now.

If your wife were to come to the altar. And started ruling on the altar. Oh God.

Deliver my marriage. How will you feel? You will feel so embarrassed. Say what is it? What are you crying about? And I saw you going for counseling.

For what? What did you tell them? What are you saying? What's wrong with our marriage that you are making noise? You want everybody to. You see that's the trouble. That's the trouble.

God said I am a witness. So thank you for noting that. Going back to foundation.

Going back to the purpose of our marriage. Not pulling apart because of what we should eat. Or what we should drink.

I want us to move forward now. Do we still have a bit of time? Yes. I want us to move a bit forward.

What must we deliberately do? I want us to get to that point. What must we deliberately do? To make sure that the integrity of our marriage is upheld. That if God comes to look into the secret place.

He will not see anything that will make him to reject our prayers. Because to me now what I am seeing from here. Is the fact that what God is more interested in.

Look at me and you now. We are wearing a uniform here. Are we wearing a uniform here? That's wonderful.

There are many people that have uniform like this. But their matrimony is no uniform. Their heart is no uniform.

They only wear this for ceremony. But God is not interested in this uniform now. What is he looking at now? He is looking inside.

He says I am a witness. So I want us to go on please. How do we discuss.

Oh thank you. How do we handle the fact of the secret place of our matrimony? How do we ensure that where God is interested. We do not fail at that point.

I have known now that as ministers. Your sitting room. You can make it nice.

When you are going to church. You can even introduce your wife and say this is the first lady of this church. Hallelujah.

You see. You can even you know. Make her to look nice when we are getting there.

Make sure your face is ok. All the way you are frowning. I don't like it.

People will be asking what is wrong? Is there anything? Let's relax. You can do all of that. But let's go away from that.

Let's talk practically. What do we do to make sure that our inner private aspect of matrimony is actually worthy. And groovy.

And advancing. And attracting God's presence and God's glory. To me.

I thought we should deal with that more deliberately this night. Isn't it? Let's leave the superficial outside. Let's talk about inside.

How do we make sure that truly speaking. The oneness we profess on the outside is inside. How do we ensure that by the grace of God.

If God should look down from heaven. He will not see anything. That he will look at and say between you and your wife.

You are not doing well. And you are trying to lead my people. No.

How do we do that? I will make two suggestions. And then I will again start with you. And then I will go on.

Now. My first proposal was. If we realize that.

One thing that will hinder God. From answering our prayer. Is our matrimony.

And is as equal as going to commit sin. Isn't it? If we recognize that. It means then that.

The instruction. That God gave to the husband. In Ephesians chapter five.

Said. Let the husband see to it. That he loves his wife.

As himself. Let every husband see to it. I look at it as if.

So if my matrimony is critical. For my life. If it is critical for God.

To even receive ministry from my hand. If it is critical for God. To answer the prayers I pray both for myself.

And for the work of God. And for the color of God on my life. It means it must be a priority.

It means then that. Matrimonial harmony. Oneness.

Is something to labor to achieve. At all costs. And to refuse to go anywhere.

Until it is done. Which means. Whatever it would take.

To make sure that this relationship. Is kept intact. Is kept.

Above reproach. And this is not first. So that people see it.

But that genuinely. So that when God looks and says. Yes I can put a pass mark on your relationship.

I felt that the first thing was to make it my priority. That if I'm going to please God. This home.

Must be in his. Top. Priority.

In my understanding. And what would that mean? It means then that. All the instructions.

That I saw God giving. Say husband. Because you are the head of your wife.

You know. And he said as Jesus Christ. Love the church he gave himself for her.

So that he may sanctify her. He might bring her up. And present her to himself without blemish.

I felt that. As leaders. Now I'm just talking to you as leaders.

It becomes a priority. And I wish that you won't postpone it. Because.

If church is depending on your prayers. And your prayers can hang. Because of this.

I hope you then know that this relationship. Has a serious impact. On all that we have been talking.

Concerning even the body of Christ. If that would be the case. It has to become.

What? The first priority. But I found that to achieve that. To achieve that.

There is need. Deliberately. Deliberately.

To go back to what the Holy Ghost. Had been saying from the scripture. As we have been reading it.

That's my first. I'm coming out of this now. This evening to say.

Since what God will be looking at. That is at home. In the sacred place.

I'm a witness. I'm a witness. When others are not there.

I'm a witness. When you're dead with her. Harshly.

I'm a witness. I saw it. I felt that this night.

Maybe it will be critical. That as husbands. We must be careful now.

Because this matter. Is no more just. My daughter is my marriage.

If she likes. If she likes. No.

If she doesn't like. No. It goes beyond that now.

It means this home. Has become a great help. Or a great impediment.

To what God needs to do. That will be my first. Proposal.

What is my second? Is to work at it. Is to build this matrimony. Deliberately.

Now that I know. That there's no way I can go without my wife. As far as God is concerned.

Now that I know that. Even if I'm doing. Somewhere.

They will say. Where is she? In the scheme of things. Where is your wife in all of this? Now that I know.

That this is going to be. A prerequisite. Then I need to settle down.

To build. And maybe the process of beauty. As a matter of contending.

To maintain. The integrity of our matrimony. And to maintain the.

The. The. The space that God has created for it.

We will be talking about that. In a more critical detail tomorrow. But can we agree together.

That this is a critical issue. As husband and wife. And maybe we should invest prayer.

For one another. And say God. Wherever we have neglected each other.

Wherever I thought I could pull away. While you are doing your own. I wish wives would be able to say to.

Husbands tonight and said look. I didn't know the gravity. Of my relationship to this extent.

I didn't know that God brought me. Into your life. For this matter.

I told me I'm just my yard. Father. Bind us together to fulfill our purpose.

I was thinking that. Maybe if we will start. By investing prayer.

On each other deliberately. And then maybe we will have a space to ask. What is it that stood between us.

That we have not knocked off. Is there anything that was irritating. That made you say okay well.

Since I can't fight. But just be your own I'll be my own. That itself.

Does not satisfy God's intention. God is saying. I want this couple to be one.

That's why I joined them together. Now you don't have your living Bible here. You do.

Please help us read. That same passage from the living Bible. Let's read it one more time.

Then I will hand over. For further comments. And then our coordinator.

If you will take questions. In the audience you can. Or some contribution.

Because I know there are senior. Men who have been married for years. And they may have something to share with us.

Mark Malachi chapter two. That you read. From living Bible.

Can you help us check. From that verse thirteen. Verse fourteen fifteen.

And let's see how it sounds. Malachi chapter two. Verses thirteen.

To fifteen. Yes. And this is the second thing you do.

You cover the altar of the Lord. With tears. With weeping and crying.

So it does not regard. The offering anymore. Nor receive it.

With goodwill. With your hands. Yet you say.

For what reason. Because the Lord has been witnessed. Between you and the wife.

Of your youth. With whom you have dealt. Sorry I'm reading.

New King James Version. I'm afraid. Because I was saying.

It's not sounding new. Sorry. Living Bible.

Yes. Living Bible. Yet you cover the altar.

With your tears. Because the Lord doesn't pay attention. To your offerings anymore.

And you receive no blessing. From him. Why has God abandoned us? You cry.

I tell you why. It is because the Lord has seen. Your treachery.

In divorcing your wives. Who have been faithful to you. Through the years.

And keep. You were united to your wife. By the Lord.

In God's wise plan. When you married. The two of you became one person.

In his sight. The two of you became one person. One person.

In his sight. And what does he want? Godly children from your union. Therefore.

Guard your passions. Keep faith. Keep courage.

In God's own sight. You became how many person? One person. As far as God is concerned.

He only sees one person. And if this one personality. Is being severed.

It is not possible for you. To go on with that terrible scar. So I thought that it would be necessary.

To settle down. And build this. And now.

I'm seeing the gravity of it. I'm saying that beyond all the other appeal. Appeal of all.

Enjoy your husband. Enjoy your wife. And all of that.

Thank God for that. But what we are dealing with is beyond all of this now. The destiny of the entire church.

Is hanging. On your own relationship with this woman. That God has given you.

If you will pull apart. And stand apart. Your husband can become nothing.

He will run up and down in life. He will not arrive anywhere. And if he is not arriving anywhere.

Even yourself you are going nowhere. You are not going far. Heaven will keep saying.

I'm a witness against you. Whatever you are doing. You are not going far.

You may even try to gather money. That money will scatter. So you want to say something on this.

Before he will ask. If there are questions. We have some few more minutes.

Alright. Sir. If there are input from the audience.

We can take. Alright. Thank you.

Thank you sir. I want to give this as a testimony. Go ahead sir.

Separate us. Even as at that time. I have not entered into ministry.

But after some time. My wife got a job. And she was posted.

To another town. We were living in Ejobode. And she was given an appointment.

To go and resume at Hilaru. And because we have decided it. My wife called me from Abekuta.

Where I got the letter. And she said. The thing did not click.

I said. But we were called to come and receive letter. He said the letter said.

It should go and resume. At Hilaru. We contacted the people.

We thought could help us. To change it. They could it.

And then we. We stood on our decision. That nothing will separate us.

Thank you. God who call us. Can help us.

After three months. We were called. That she should come and receive.

His letter of transfer. A job that. She did not even.

Report. She did not resume. But she was called after three months.

That she should come and. Receive letter of transfer to Ejebode. How that happened.

Till tomorrow. And it was paid. For the three months.

If you will honor God's word. Are you hearing me? There's nothing God cannot do. To defend our matrimony.

Maybe the biggest issue. Is that many never. Recognize the gravity.

Of their matrimony. Maybe that's why we thought salary. Is enough.

As a reason to separate us. Or a job. Or anything.

What God. Therefore has joined together. Let not man.

Let's take that kind of decision. Thank you for your testimony. So your wife is ever by your side.

Abby. Except that you didn't bring her. To this meeting.

You must go and repent. I went to a place. And they asked me to bring you.

Thank you. Thank you for the message. Mine is a question.

There are ministers. That are even staying with their wives. 24 hours.

And they have never been separated. Is it not possible to have some ministers. Who have.

The kind of a Hosea family. The kind of a Hosea family. Hosea.

Yeah. And if we have such a minister. Should she or she.

Abandon the ministry. Simply because she has a kind. Or he has a kind of Hosea family.

You know mama is a theologian. That's why she has taken us. To theology.

Of Hosea's marriage. But mama. I want you to remember that.

What Hosea's. Marriage. God was using it.

As an illustration. Except if we can prove. That this marriage.

You are describing. Is a divine illustration. To point something about God.

That's when we should settle with it. But if normally. A marriage.

A minister's marriage. Is a contradiction. To the truth.

He wants to preach. The Bible general concept. Is that that man.

Should leave that. And go and. Settle properly.

I don't know whether. If we have ever done it. The kind of thing that God will do.

Imagine that. We were to do something and. We sent a man back and said.

Because your wife. Is not. Positive towards this.

Go back home. Wish he got back. The wife said.

Why are you not? I said. No. They have rejected me.

He said. Why? He said. Because.

You are not going with me. The woman said. No.

No. No. No.

No. How can I stop God from using you? He said. Well.

You have stopped it. But I'm here. Let's.

Whatever happens to us. Let's do it together. The result was that the woman became restless.

And came begging and said. Please. I will not delay my husband.

Wherever he's going. I must go with him. What will I get? If I have a husband.

That is living under the rejection of the almighty God. You know. God works in diverse ways.

But if we say. Just go. Just go on.

The gap will continue to increase. If it's the man. If it is the man that is saying that is on his other way.

I will normally say. Wife. Go just submit to your husband.

Maybe your immediate ministry is that man. Until God will help him up. So.

If we have such challenges. Let us look at it in its own context. The context is very important.

The context of Usia's marriage. May not ever be the same context. Because.

Here was Usia. A man that God was wanting to work with. And God was working with him.

And God said to him. Go and marry. A Goma.

A Harlot. That I may. Show the children of Israel.

If it is God. Using our marriage as an illustration. That's okay.

But we must never jump at that conclusion for any marriage. It's very important. If there is a challenge. Let's own up with it and say. God this is my challenge. Solve this problem for me. If we go to God deliberately. God can handle it. And in these last days. God is speaking to us by his son Jesus. All right. All right. And in this end time. God is speaking to us by his son. Let's hear what Jesus Christ is saying. It's more important. Than anything else. Let's pray that the Holy Spirit. Will give us wisdom. At each point when we meet. Such conditions. Praise the Lord. The last one. It has been overtaken. Thank you God. Thank you very much. The Lord. Yes quickly. I think we have time for three more. If they go straight. Just speak loud. If they didn't get you. Thank you very much sir. My only say. Question two. Sometimes. You. One will get called into the ministry. Working together. And you will discover that. Along the way. Just as somebody pointed out. A job opportunity. Comes up. And. One of the couple is insisting. On continuing with the job. Even though. It is pulling. The family apart. Against the dislike. Of the other partner. As you try to put pressure. To see. To bring understanding. Explanation to bring understanding. You do not even. And sometimes. At a point. When. The other partner. Thinks that. That job is. Actually more better than. The calling. And you are wanting them. To support. Now in such cases. If the person is deciding to back out. Sometimes. They can speak it clearly. Sometimes they show it in action. They are no longer interested. What do you do? Thank you sir. What do you do? This is a very critical issue. Isn't it? Now. You have already touched. A fundamental issue. And the fundamental issue. Is the fact that. She.

Has not seen. The call. And.

Neither her faith. Had been shifted to him. Who has called.

Her faith is in that thing. Three things I will ask you to do. Go.

And wear your. Short necker of prayer. Is not a matter of discussion now.

Go. And enter. What do I call it? The short necker.

Of prayer. Go and hold God's hand. And say God.

Help me. It is the help of God. That will solve that problem.

When you begin. To cry to God. To release you.

From this distraction. God knows how to do it. That's the first thing.

I was going to ask you to do. Don't treat it lightly. The seriousness of it.

Is that this thing may affect. Your destiny. It may not allow you to arrive.

Where God wants you to go to. But the problem of it. Is that even that job.

Is not going to give anything. It's going to block your blessing. You need to cry to God and say.

Lord deliver us. Secondly. You need to.

Stand as a man. I'm sure what. If it's your wife.

What she's bothered about. Is lack of assurance. Is the fact that she's not sure.

If she followed you. Her life will be careful. She's wondering.

If I were to go now. And I throw my life on your hand. When my need come.

Will you be there? Only God can solve that issue. Because an issue of assurance. That assurance.

Which where maybe. At the beginning. You should a level of.

Irresponsibility or lack of care. At some certain point. And she said.

If I say I will wait on this man. He may return me one of these days. You need to look more at that.

And begin to plead with God that. If that came out of lack of faith. And lack of assurance.

Because of some. Past omissions. You know sometime.

As a husband. Your wife is so sensitive. To how you undo things.

At critical times. And notices that. You left her to fend for herself.

At a particular time of need. And then she said. Oh.

Let me. Fend for myself. Because I don't know what this man.

Will do to me tomorrow. Do you know that. If she could trust your.

Transparency. That when you had 10,000 Naira. That's all you brought.

And said this is the money we had. Go and manage it for us. If she's the one that bought.

Your shirt for you. Even if there was going to be a job. She will say to my husband.

This job is coming. How do we take it? And if you say no. Let's trust God.

God is going to help us. God is sending us to somewhere. Let's go there first.

Let's see what happens. God will help us. There are things like that.

There are times that we may be telling a wife. Go and drop your job. And he's asking a question.

If I drop my job. When I want to buy the undies. That a woman needs.

Do you ever understand? Very soon you'll be counting. You'll be counting. Money in my hand and saying.

Did I not give you money last month? I'm tired of that. And you said. How do the family finance? Let's see how God will help us.

Could it not have turned things around? So while we are looking at this. Going to prayer. Check your own level of responsibility and care.

Check it. Look honestly. Look at how you stood.

At the time of her own peculiar needs. Sometimes it may be. Needs coming from her side.

That you did not pay attention to. And they started saying. If you were working now.

You won't be begging your husband. To come and visit your mother. Why don't you do something? You are not divorcing him.

But do something. Think, think, think. It's not every time.

You have to depend on the husband. They have put a division between you. These are the issues to look at.

If you look at it. God will handle it. The last thing.

Be gentle with it. It might not allow you yet. To go to the height of the call.

But wait for God to do it. God will handle it. Praise the Lord.

Mom, you want to say something on that? Alright. Where is the next one? I saw a hand. Alright.

Okay, we'll take him. Then you will be the last person. Okay.

If he is the last person. That's okay. Because he is the one that gives us time.

Alright. The people at the back. Quickly bring your questions.

So that we move. Thank you very much, sir. I just want to give a rider.

To the question my brother asked. Which you have. Partly answered.

I. Suppose. Or how do you handle the issue of. Frequent transfer.

In the face or in the. Attempt to. Actually move with your spouse.

To. Whichever station you are transferred to. And the transfer is coming.

Frequently. She gets to a station. Gets a job.

After a while you need to move. And she will have to go with you. And she gets to another place.

After a while. Probably gets a job in that station too. And after a while there is need for another transfer.

How do we handle that? So. I was going to say. When the children of Israel.

When they were traveling. In the wilderness. Going to the promised land.

How did they travel? Have you ever thought about it? Did you notice that if they came somewhere. And the cloud settled. If it settled for three months.

They were there for three months. If the cloud moved. The third day.

They were ready to move. So how did they leave? You can see that they had to depend. On manna.

That God sends from above. I think. Let's get to the baseline.

Take away your eyes. From jobs. Fix it on the call of God.

If there are things that your wife can do. If she must do something. Things that are portable with her.

Whenever she is going. Allow her to do it. Are you understanding? If it is compatible with your call.

If it is not. Let the two of you agree. That the reason for our marriage.

Is for this ministry. And wherever God sends us. We will go.

Nothing must keep us behind. Nothing must tie us down. If you agree with God that way.

There is nothing. They are giving you in that civil service. That God will not give you much more.

It will help your ministry. To come to the heights. That God wants it to get to.

So permit me to suggest. Please live like. Traveling pilgrims.

Prepare your mind for it. In fact the one I thought. You were going to talk about.

Was children. Changing schools. That could have been.

Even a martyr. But. I have looked at several missionaries.

As God was moving them. From one place to another. They started to do homeschooling.
For their children. When they are at that stage. When they have come to a stage.
Where we could send them. To a boarding house. Fine.
That is part of one reason. Why Peace House. Decided to begin to.
Help ministers. Who have to go here and there. Where their children may not have.
A proper. Education. We take them in.
And trust God that they will be helped. They will be built. So that their parents.
Can serve God. Without distraction. And they also.
Will have learned to appreciate. The ministry of their parents. So I will suggest that.
You please. Recognize that you will move. When the cloud moves.
And cause your wife to begin. To believe God for that. That may be.
The way forward. If she must walk at all. Right.
Any other more. Before we take our. Yeah.
We can take you. All right. So we take you now.
Because everybody. Has a finished. Okay.
Yeah. All right now. Yeah.
Okay. All right. So Baba.
We're finished for tonight. Praise to the name of the Lord. Let me say this quickly.
Sometimes. Actually. The agitation.
For wanting a job. Like you said. It is because of the.
And fear. You know. Distribution of.
The family income. It may not be directly. Her own needs.
But probably she has. Responsibility. Where she is coming from also.
And nobody is attending to that. So that puts pressure. On her.
So. I think. The council is that.
We need to look inward. We need to find out why. That position is being taken.
So that we solve it from the root. The Lord will help us. Tomorrow will be another day.

We believe that. What we have had today. We'll ponder on them.

And then when we come. We'll continue to build. We'll request.

Our mother to. Also pray for us. As we run up.

Shall we pray together? Our father we thank you for the. Challenge. That you have raised.

With us today. Even in our homes. For us to be able to contend.

For the faith. Even in our homes. We discover.

Oh God. How the enemy. Is also wanting to.

Put his battle front. In our homes. Using different challenges.

We discover. Oh God. That in many homes.

We have actually. Gradually strayed. From the faith.

But Lord you are. Speaking to us. To come back.

And let the contention. For the faith. Start with us at home.

Father we ask this night. That all the challenges. You have raised.

With us. You will grant unto us help. To be able to resolve them.

In the name of Jesus Christ. Lord where there are. Misunderstandings.

Where there is. Lack of understanding. Of the purpose.

Of God for marriage. Where there is. A lot of.

Problems with God. Accepting our offering because of. Problems between us.

And our spouses. Father we are asking this night. That you will visit us.

In a new way and resolve. Each of these difficulties. In the name of Jesus Christ.

We pray Lord. That. Our homes will stand.

For the truth of the word of God. We will be men and women. Spouses families.

Who stand by the word of God. Defending the truth. So that the people coming behind.

Will be able to see. Samples of Christian homes to follow. Help us oh Lord.

In the name of Jesus Christ. We ask Lord. That by our homes.

The word of God will be adorned. Your word will not be blasphemed. Please help us we pray.

Just have mercy on us. We don't want. To run our homes.

As the heathen do theirs. We want to depend on you. We want to follow Jesus.

Father we pray. That you will help us. We ask oh Lord that your hand.

Will be strong upon our families. In the name of Jesus Christ. Help us that the devil.

Will not have any upper hand. In our homes. In the name of Jesus Christ.

Help us that we will win. Our battles at home. We ask oh Lord.

There are not many homes. For the church to look up to. As the correct Christian homes.

Father we pray that our homes. Will become those samples. That you are looking for.

Help us Father. We commit ourselves to you. Those whose spouses are not here.

We pray that what you are teaching us. You will go ahead of us. And speak to them.

We pray Lord that you will make. This understanding easy. In the name of Jesus Christ.

Tomorrow we will continue. We are praying. That you will prepare us.

And you will help us oh God. That what you want us to learn. We will learn it.

We will not be tired of learning of you. In the name of Jesus Christ. Thank you Lord for hearing us.

In Jesus name we have prayed. Amen. Amen.

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