**REGIONAL MINISTER’S TRAINING PROGRAMME OF REGION 22.**

**TOPIC: HANDLING CHALLENGES PECULIAR TO PASTORS FAMILY.**

**TEXT: EPH 5:21-31; 1 PET 3:1-7.**

**Introduction:**

Challenge(s) of marital life does not exclude the pastor’s family because they are not respecters of any family globally; if care is not taken marital challenges can hinder our heavenly focus. We thank God for giving us the ways by which the pastors (as people of God), filled with the Holy Spirit and word of God can handle the peculiar challenges facing them from time to time. By the grace of God, we are going to exploit the counsel of God to treat this topic, since HE is the one who has instituted marriage and aware of what challenges that pastor’s family are facing, He has manual just like manufacturer of vehicles has manual to repair any fault developed by such an automobiles. May the Lord release upon us the wisdom to manage our homes in Jesus matchless name?

**Meaning**: Challenge(s) are the problems of life found in marriage that can hinder the blessings that God has packaged to be enjoyed by His children in their respective homes. These challenges are common in pastor’s family.

**THE PECULIAR CHALLENGES AND HOW TO HANDLE THEM**

**Below are some of the challenges and how to handle them:**

1. **Balancing the Family Affairs with the Church Affairs**

The pastor and the wife must act according to the instructions from God through the Bible while working for Him (Eccl. 3:1, 1 Cor 10:31)

* There is time for everything. Time management is important. Husband must have time for the wife and children by listen to them, discussing and solving pending issues. There must be time to plan for the future of the family.
* This period must not disturb the time to pray, study the Bible, preparation of the sermon either at home or Church office for the effectiveness of the ministry.
* The husband and wife must know and understand their roles/duties and the appropriate time to do them. Husband pay attention to both wife and the children simultaneously, because children need both God protection and human attention.

1. **Smooth and Godly Relationship**

Godly and cordial relationship must be the order of the day between husband and wife for a perfect ministry and for fulfilment of God promises.

* Matt. 18:19 - husband and wife are supposed to be in agreement for the backup of the Almighty God in their activities, it hastens the spiritual activities.
* 1 Pet 3:7 - they are both heirs of God, following this commandments will lead to answer of all their prayers (at home, Church and anywhere) without doubt this type of relationship will lead to ministerial achievements while forgiveness and forgetting the past offences will lead to unprecedented signs, wonders and miracle in the Church and Ministry.
* 1 Cor. 7:5 – Excellent sexual relationship will promote their love, subdue the power of stress and also lead to free flow of the Holy Ghost residing in them. But there must be moderation in all things, there must be time for embracement and time to refrain from embracement for spiritual upliftment (Eccl 3:5).

1. **Raising up Godly Children together without Stress**

Training of children must be a joint effort of both. In nurturing the children, the voice of both parents must be one. Discipline of the children by the two of you will go a long way in shaping their lives.

It is a pity that Mrs Eli and Mrs Samuel voices were not heard in their home throughout the period of their children misbehaviours and corruption attitudes both at home and in the Church (1 Sam 2:16-17 & 22; 8:3-5).

* Gen. 18:19 – The father must follow the example of Abraham in the training and nurturing together with the wife, father must create time for his children at home, play with them, take them out and pray with them.

It is possible for pastor not to see the child/children in a day, Schedule your time of praying, studying and soul winning not to clash with the time of playing the role of a parent.

Take note: For children in the boarding house, please, know how to bridge the gap of the time they were away from home. Let the vacation period be exciting, take them out and buy them gifts and check excesses in their lives.

* 1 Tim. 5:8: Both of you must be involved in their education, clothing, feeding and all other things.

1. **Integrity both at home and Church**

There must be transparency in all things, integrity either make or mar a minister. In summary, your yea must be yea and your nay must be nay (Matt 5:37). Don’t pretend outside what you don’t do at home (both). Don’t be a chameleon minister; there must not be hidden agenda between the two of you. Be truthful to one another and trust each other including the neighbours (Eph. 4:25)

Let your moderation be known to all men including your spouse (Phil 4:5) because the Lord is at hand. Stop doing father/mother Christmas outside at the expense of your children’s school fees or their well being.

1. **Handling financial issues with understanding**

Trust and honesty must be in operation in dealing with one another. Lack of trust can lead to a serious disaster at home. There must be openness to one another, no hidden agenda in every facet of couple’s lives (Gen 2:24, Eph 5:33) Adam and Eve, both were naked and they were not ashamed (Gen. 2:25; 3:10-11), There should not be any secret in between the couple, you are one in all things.

1. **The interference of the in-laws (from both sides)**

It is a pity that many young pastors and wives are still ignorant of the counsel of God on “Leave to cleave”. In Gen. 2:24, the Biblical standard for marriage is the relationship between a man and a woman. No other persons love must superseded that of your spouse in handling any affairs in your home. Beware of third person influence either parent, siblings, friends of both of you. Apply wisdom in dealing with all your in-laws, so that your home will not be hijacked by the enemies of peace.

**COUNSEL ON HOW TO HANDLE THE CHALLENGES.**

1. The Trinity can help us to solve any problem confronting our homes through the counsel from God that instituted marriage. His words can give solution to all problems; His word (Bible) is our manual and compass.
2. Both husband and wife need the wisdom of God in dealing with one another. 1 Sam 25- Abigeal, Pro. 14:1.
3. Let the husband love the wife unconditionally and the wife to submit to her husband without any condition – Eph. 5: 21-25.
4. In handling the finances problem, let the wife be **“helpmeet in deed”** by finding something to augment or support what is coming in from the husband’s end, especially the full time husbands.

Let your moderation be known to one another and don’t do anything that is more than your capacity or pockets.

Gen. 2:18 – God says owe no man anything except love. Don’t go to the extent of buying on credit, just to be like others (Rom 13:8; 2Cor 10:12)

1. Put the in-laws in their places and let there be agreement of what to do for them that will not cause problem between you. Show your love to them. No hostility and show them the light.
2. Remember you brought your children to the World, do everything for them that will not cause you regret over them.
3. Don’t allow your relationship to affect the Church negatively, Be aware that the Church of God is greater than any individual, home or group of people.
4. Both of you must have spiritual Mentor that can correct your faults (Judges 18:5)

**CONCLUSION.**

Above all, ensure that your family platform is being used to prepare all of you in the family and members of the Church for Heaven.

Fear God and keep His instructions concerning marriage, He will take care of all you commit into His hands. God bless you, your spouses, children and all that concerns you in Jesus name Amen.