

# MISTAKES WIVES *Make* IN MARRIAGE

AND HOW TO REMEDY THEM

An open notebook with a gold pen lies on a wooden surface. The right page of the notebook has handwritten text in cursive. To the right of the notebook is a white cup of tea on a saucer. In the foreground, two gold wedding rings are visible. The background is a light-colored wall.

*Recognizing  
Harmful  
Patterns and  
Rebuilding  
with Wisdom*

**KEREN KANYAGO**

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## DEDICATION

To every woman, young or old, striving to glorify God in her marriage. I pray that the wisdom nestled in these pages will inch you closer to becoming the wife God created you to be.

To my sweet daughters, Samara and Zanna: may the Lord guide your steps through every phase of your lives and grant you wisdom when the season of marriage comes.

And to Daniel, thank you for your unrelenting love, care, encouragement, patience, and humor. You have written the pages of our marriage with the ink of Grace.



Keren Kanyago  
Christian Writer

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## **PREFACE**

This heartfelt book was born out of personal reflection as I yearned for a godly, thriving marriage, while unknowingly holding on to attitudes and patterns that sabotaged my efforts. It outlines 6 mistakes that wives make and offers biblical wisdom on how to remedy them.

This book is not written from a pedestal of perfection, but from a posture of humility and grace. It was birthed by the desire to see God glorified in all facets of a believer's life - including marriage. In these pages, we explore common mistakes well-meaning wives make in marriage, not to condemn, shame, or discourage, but to invite illumination from the infallible word of God.

At the same time, we acknowledge that some issues in marriage are deeply rooted and call for greater attention. This is especially where sexual immorality, physical abuse, intense emotional abuse, and other persistent, destructive behaviours are prevalent.

And although no marriage is beyond repair, matters of such gravity may need the help and support of a marriage counselor, a professional therapist, a spiritual leader, or a trusted, mature Christian couple.

Further, this book does not imply that wives are solely responsible for the challenges in their marriages. It takes two to tango, and husbands also have their share of mistakes, which is a topic for another day. This book, however, focuses on the role of wives.

I pray that we will all be stirred to embrace scriptural wisdom as the primal building block for our marriages.

## INTRODUCTION

I felt a tug to write on this subject years ago, and I was floored. “Me of all people?” I cackled. I felt immensely incapable of writing on such an esteemed topic. Having been married for about 5 years, I was barely muddling through marriage, surmounting one challenge after another. I therefore disqualified myself, stashed the idea very far away, and moved on.

But as years peeled away, I found my writing niche in marriage and parenting. I spent oodles of time crafting articles on how God would have spouses conduct themselves in marriage. The realization that marriage is a picture of the relationship between Christ and the church hit me like a ton of bricks.

As sure as I knew my name, I knew that God intends for marriages to work - thrive even. See, God does not create dysfunctional institutions. During creation, he looked at all he had made and saw that it was good (*Genesis 1:31*). He gave himself a pat on the back and nodded in glee. His creation rocked!

And while God, on one hand, is devoted to creating good and functional institutions, we know who is devoted to wreaking havoc in the same institutions - the devil. That looks to me like his full-time job. Jesus taught that while He came to give us life in abundance, the enemy comes to steal, kill, and destroy (*John 10:10*).

Undoubtedly, one of the places the enemy thrives in his havoc-wreaking mission is in marriages. It is a very fertile ground for him. Yet marriage was authored by God. It is God who looked upon lonely Adam and pitied him. He then caused him to fall into a deep slumber and made a woman from his rib. God wanted man to enjoy companionship, and that became the origin of marriage.

*“That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh”*  
(*Genesis 2:24*).

So if marriage was a good God-ordained thing, why was I struggling? Why was I simmering in resentment towards my husband? Why were we perpetually embroiled in conflict? Why did I feel unloved and sometimes downright ignored? Where did the spark in our marriage trail off to? Where exactly was the good thing in our marriage, save for the two beautiful daughters we had been blessed with?

As discontentment spread its tentacles in my marriage, I tried to snuff it out the best way I knew how. Unhappy about something my husband did? I would huff and puff, raising my voice, giving him a slice of my mind. In the heat of the moment, I did not hesitate to use mean words. Viscous pressure-cooked words.

Yes, me. Born again, Holy Ghost filled me. I wouldn't allow myself time to sit with my emotions. I attacked my husband instantly with piercing words. Thorn-studded words.

Granted, I knew in my heart of hearts that I was missing the mark. I was aware that the word of God warns against giving in to anger, which does not produce the righteousness of God (*James 1:19-20*). But I trudged the path of disobedience and self-gratification without batting an eye.

My ego (which I thought was in check all along) wouldn't allow me to respond to my husband in humility. The need to be right overrode my desire to submit to God's word. Backing down and having my husband seem like the winner in any tiff was not an option.

Strangely enough, I would easily extend grace and forgiveness to anyone else who offended me. Name them- my kids, the nanny, a neighbor, an errant motorist, a rude receptionist -anyone. Just not my husband, the one I was one with. On countless occasions, I would resort to the silent treatment.

These are a few examples of how I attempted to handle the challenges that bobbed up in my marriage in a carnal inept way. This only served to thrust my husband and me deeper and deeper into conflict. Resentment pitched camp in our home. Our friendship and chemistry dwindled. He felt unappreciated and disrespected. I felt unloved and taken for granted.

One thing was as clear as day- my attempts at resolving issues through my human wisdom were as futile as a pen without ink. They all went belly up, and I got extremely exasperated. I will be honest- deep down, I knew that I fell short as a wife.

*Proverbs 12:4* would constantly weave its way into my heart and prick at me.

*"An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones."*

I knew I gravitated more towards causing rottenness in his poor bones than being a crown. It made me crestfallen and restless. That was not the life I envisioned when I married him, with my eyes glistening with tears of joy. I knew I was missing the mark. I had exhausted all my tactics and achieved nothing. When the last missile in my ammunition failed, I waved the white flag.

I decided to retreat, lick my wounds, and figure out the way forward. I surrendered.

### **Reflection Questions.**

1. In what areas are you currently experiencing frustration in your marriage?
2. When dealing with these challenges, are you seeking healthy solutions, or are you being influenced by resentment?
3. Are the ways you respond to and resolve issues aligned with God's Word?

## He Seemed Unruffled

I will be honest, it bothered me a great deal that my husband did not seem overly perturbed by what I perceived as chaos in our marriage. The dude seemed to be taking everything in his stride as I simmered in discontentment. That irked me to high heavens and made me green around the gills.

Why did it seem like I was the only one bent on seeing our marriage change? Morph from being lukewarm to sizzling hot? From lackluster to out of this world? Didn't he care? Didn't he have marriage goals as I did?

Then this scripture bubbled to the surface of my heart and put things in perspective.

*“A wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears it down (Prov 14:1).*

It made perfect sense! Judging from the discontentment I was writhing in, it was obvious that God has deposited in women an insatiable desire to have thriving marriages and functional homes. This is not to say that men are not eager to see their marriages thrive. Wives, however, seem to have a greater intrinsic drive.

Multiple studies suggest that this disparity is because both parties approach relationships differently. While women have a high need for commitment and connection, men are more goal-oriented and focused on stability. They are more invested in conquering pre-determined milestones in the marriage.

So here I was, trying to bridge the rift I sensed in my marriage, yet my husband seemed unruffled for the most part. To make it worse, none of the things I was doing were bearing fruit. They say insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results - a quote attributed to Albert Einstein.

I therefore hung up my boots and surrendered - to God.

### **Reflection Questions.**

1. Do you ever feel like you carry more responsibility than your husband in making the marriage work?
2. If so, have you been able to communicate those feelings to him respectfully and openly?
3. Have you considered that you and your husband may have different understandings of what a healthy marriage looks like?

## I Surrendered To God

*“My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.” (Psalm 73:26)*

When all my tactics went belly up, I surrendered.

Fortunately, I surrendered to God. It matters who we surrender to when our lives are caving in because only God can fix the ugliest of messes. Despite our ignorance, mistakes, and disobedience, He is compassionate and full of mercy. I cried out to God and asked him to teach me how to be a good wife. Scratch that, a godly wife.

I had tried succeeding as a wife in my own way and flopped terribly. I knew there was a way God wanted wives to conduct themselves, and I was intent on learning it. I knew God's ways were different from my ways. I knew His ways were likely to be uncomfortable, but one thing was guaranteed - they were higher and grander. I couldn't go wrong becoming a wife, God's way.

I was eager to ditch my useless, inept tactics and embrace God's effectual and potent methods. I was willing to crucify my flesh and allow Christ to live in me. My monstrous ego and pride needed to be tamed, paving the way to a servant attitude and humility.

I sure knew bits and pieces of how God wants wives to conduct themselves in marriage, but I needed to know more. I did not have the full counsel of God regarding marriage.

*“For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God.” (Acts 20:27)*

So I resolved to bury my nose in the scriptures and dig out how the word of God expects wives to conduct themselves. I would work on myself first without checking over my shoulder to see what my husband was doing about our marriage.

I prayed and asked God to teach me His ways. See, there is a way that seems right to man, but its end is the way of death (*Proverbs 14:12*). I had trudged the path of human wisdom and reached a horribly dead end.

Here's a fact- human wisdom is a recipe for failure. A direct ticket. God wants us to use His precepts as the foundation for our lives. When we instead build on our ideas, opinions, impressions, hunches, theories, and overlook His precepts, we are building on sand. When the rains come and winds blow, our lives don't stand a chance. They cave in.

As you read this book, I invite you on a ride. This ride may be a tad bumpy as we expose some of the lifeless, inept tactics that you and I have used in our marriages- perhaps for years on end.

The old tired tactics that have seen us fester in discontentment for decades. We will pull the plug on the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness in God's sight. It's time to concede defeat, waive the white flag, and brandish a different weapon. A highly potent tool that has been available to us all along - the word of God.

### **Reflection Questions.**

1. Have you felt like everything you are doing to improve your marriage has failed?
2. Have you considered surrendering to God and His ways?
3. Are you willing to trade human wisdom for godly wisdom?

## The Treasure Hunt

While it's true that the scriptures have so much help for wives, we have a role to play. We cannot rest on our laurels and hope this help will automatically fall on our laps. We must intentionally rummage through the scriptures and dig up this invaluable help. If we succumb to laziness and indifference towards the scriptures, we will continue to waltz blindly in our marriages.

We have to search out these truths. You will rarely find useful minerals like gold, iron, coal, gemstones, and copper lying bare on the surface of the earth. They have to be mined. Someone has to extract them carefully, and it's the same with the word of God; we have to do some digging.

*“It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter.” (Proverbs 25:2)*

God doesn't necessarily spoon-feed us. He loves it when we spend time searching the scriptures, unearthing spiritual gems that, when applied, flip our lives around.

Not everyone steps up to this level, though. Not everyone will roll up their sleeves and start the search. But Kings do. It's their glory to search out a matter. Kings don't settle for mediocre lives. Not especially, while aware of potent resources at their disposal. They will move heaven and earth to lay hold of hidden treasure.

God is inviting us to step up as kings (or queens if you may). To roll up our sleeves and dig out every gem of wisdom nestled in His word. To mine His precepts and use them as the rock-solid foundation for our homes.

***"The Bible is not a newspaper to be skimmed but a mine to be quarried "- Max Lucado***

In *Matthew 13:44*, Jesus explained that the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid. Further, for joy over it, he sold all that he had and bought that field. Godly wisdom is priceless. It is precious and worth discarding all our human wisdom and ideologies to make room for it.

Laying hold of godly wisdom will need us to step out of our comfort zone. We will need to clamber over hindrances and push against resistance. Paul urged Timothy to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life (1 Timothy 6:12).

It takes a tussle to lay hold of godly wisdom. You have to go on a treasure hunt. In this book, I invite us to step up to the kingly realm as we search out these matters.

As I continued to search the scriptures, pray, research, and talk to many married women, I discovered a thread. I unearthed six common mistakes that wives make in their attempt to build great marriages.

Some of these mistakes are camouflaged as human wisdom. They appear harmless, mild, and downright innocent. However, when measured against God's word, they fall short. They yield no results in our marriages and only add fuel to the fire.

This book will blow the whistle on six common mistakes wives make and show us how to remedy them. So roll up your sleeves, dear sister, and let's catch those little sneaky foxes that have been spoiling our vineyards.



## **Reflection Questions.**

1. Have you been studying God's word diligently?
2. Have you noticed any inconsistencies between what the scriptures teach and how you have conducted yourself as a wife?
3. Are you willing to discard every human ideology and embrace the precepts in God's word?

Well, you've had a taste.

You've sat with me in the mess of those early years. You've seen me huff and puff, sling thorn-studded words, and resort to the silent treatment like it was going to fix anything. You've watched me wave the white flag and surrender, not to my husband, not to despair, but to God.

And now we are about to get to the good stuff.

Because once I buried my nose in the scriptures and started that treasure hunt, I unearthed six mistakes that were quietly wrecking my marriage. Mistakes I didn't even know I was making. Mistakes that looked an awful lot like wisdom until I held them up against God's Word.

I want to take you through every single one of them.

The full book is waiting for you. And trust me, you do not want to stop here.

Grab your copy at [wisdom-trails.com](http://wisdom-trails.com)

Let's keep digging.