

## Married ... But Single (Part 1)

Written by U.S Immigration News  
Monday, 04 February 2013 23:54 -

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“I am just so tired of being alone in this marriage!”

I looked up sharply to see these two women conversing only to realize that they were completely oblivious of anyone else standing by. The thing that stirred my interest was the metaphor in the simple statement of frustration uttered by the lady. Alone in a marriage ... hmm!

The definition of marriage according to the Holy Bible is the union between a man and a woman whereby the man leaves his father and his mother and ‘cleaves’ to his wife and the two of them become one. In studying about marriage in the different cultures of the world, it is also seen that there is uniformity in the purpose of marriage – that is, for companionship, procreation, partnership, pleasure and everything that connotes unity, be it in happy or sad times. There are many marriages that defy the meaning above. Many homes have become so divided that they are a sorry copy of the original plan. As you read this, I pray that you will be stirred up in your spirit to get the best out of your marriage relationship because that is the thought of God towards you.

Let us examine the different areas of activity in a typical marriage relationship like work, friends, hobbies or social activities, in-laws, communication and child rearing... sometimes, plain infidelity. The way we handle each of these, mostly determines how close or how far apart a couple will be.

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### ***Loneliness because of Career or Work Schedules;***

Being alone while married can make it seem like you are actually single. Men and women many times have different choices of career. There are times when the two are involved in the same business or work in the same office or have the same career. Some women stay home as full time housewives to take care of the children and the home. There have been cases where men have stayed home too to take care of children and other things while the woman goes out to work. Some spouses' work entails a lot of travel locally or internationally. The onus in this is that there must be some form of activity to bring income into the household. Should these avenues of getting our daily livelihood separate the husband and wife? How do the hours spent apart or together affect the relationship between a husband and wife? Does it cause them to drift apart or does it bring them closer?

In everything that a couple does, there must always be a consciousness that there is someone that they are accountable to, other than God – each other. You cannot be so in love with your work that you forget that important person in your life that craves and deserves your attention.

### ***Filling in the blank spaces of loneliness caused by Work schedule***

A husband or wife who is so engrossed in their own life and career to the exclusion of all else, risks creating a camouflage of a marriage because what is happening is that even though they are married, he or she is really living a single life. The other party now has to find someone or some activity to cover the vacuum left by their spouses' insensitivity. These could be the children if there are any in the marriage or it could be some other relationships. Committed Christians mostly spend this time doing church activities in which the husband or wife as the case may be is usually missing. This is dangerous for the preservation of the marriage.

I understand that some situations concerning jobs cannot be avoided because of the set up of the society that we are in. Immigrants have to work outrageous schedules to keep body and soul together but each couple can work out a plan whereby they do not loose themselves to the system. (We'll talk more about this later).

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I challenge each party in any relationship that has gone lukewarm to start first to pray to God for insight on how to bring back the fire into their marriage. They should also take positive actions to woo back the neglected spouse because the backbone of any marriage is found in the '**cleaving**'

which means that we need each other in very specific ways. When it seems like you do not seem to need the person in your life anymore, it is time for a surgical operation for the marriage. Many men do not even remember to call during the day because the justification is that they are working to bring money into the home.

The devil they say usually finds work for idle hands. The partner of a spouse who is too busy to talk to them either becomes very quiet and depressed or finds someone to talk to sometimes becoming a busybody in other people's matters. The atmosphere in such a home is usually very oppressive because emotional separation is present. Sometimes also the internet becomes the third party in the marriage because the wife usually competes for first place with the internet.

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