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**YORUBA TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE COMPARED WITH
PAULINE TEACHING ON MARRIAGE**

**AN ESSAY PRESENTED TO
THE FACULTY OF**

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**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to investigate Yoruba traditional marriage compared with Pauline teaching on marriage. In order to achieve this, this essay has been subdivided into four chapters. Chapter one which is the introductory part of the essay dealt with the following: statement of problem; the purpose and scope; methodology; definitions of operative terms and biblical background of marriage.

In chapters two and three this essay examined the Yoruba traditional marriage and Pauline teaching on marriage respectively under the following sub-topics: concept of marriage, purpose of marriage, choice of a marriage partner; preparation for marriage: courtship; wedding ceremony; the relationship between the couple; the place of sex in marriage and finally, divorce.

The fourth chapter dealt with comparison of Pauline teaching on marriage with Yoruba traditional marriage. Here again, the question is not to determine which one is better but to examine the good practices from either side, and then encourage them to be emulated.

In conclusion the writer made his observations known and gave some useful recommendations to be emulated.

CONCLUSION

The institution of marriage is as old as humanity. It has been a part of human existence since the dawn of recorded history. It was not a programme made by man, but it was originally designed and executed by the almighty God Himself in the garden of Eden. The Lord said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." (Gen. 21:18.NIV).

The researcher had made it clear in this essay that marriage is an institution established by God Himself. The writer had also tried to examine critically the concept of marriage in Yoruba society as a union of two families. While the concept of marriage in reference to Paul's teaching is that of individual marrying each other rather than the two families involved. The writer believes that none of these concepts should be abused. Where the two families involved they should not embarrass their sons or daughters while getting marry. Also where the individual marrying each other, the two individual should not treat their families with contempt or disregard, because what is sure is that nobody exists without the family.

The writer had also tried to examine the biblical background of marriage. Both Old Testament and New Testament and Pauline teaching on marriage, all emphasized monogamy and not polygamy. While Paul teaches monogamy, a typical Yoruba will not see anything bad in polygamy. However, P Oyeyiola Prefers one wife to two, According to him "it is easier to be faithful to one wife than to two wives and he believes that one wife one problem but two wives two problems".¹

¹ Interview with S.A Oyeyiola Ogbomosho: Papa Adeyemon Papa Adeyemo Ogbomosho 19. December 2001.

Also a portion was devoted to the problem of divorce. Here the writer found out that, it is not the will of God that a home should break. It is important to note that God who established the institution can never be a party to its destruction. The Bible says what God had joined together let no man put asunder (Mk. 10:9). The Paul's ideal was held to be one man and woman together for life not for a period but for life. While Yoruba traditional marriage allows or permits divorce in some cases. However divorce should be prevented. Husband and wife are advised to stick to one another for life. Paul's teaching on marriage needs to be emulated as it reflected the original intention of God's ideal marriage.

In choosing marriage partner it is important that the right choice for the right person at the right time is made. The man or the woman should allow God to choose for them. Either the two individuals or the families should allow God to choose a partner for each other. But still, the researcher believes that it is not completely wrong for the parents with their rich experiences to help in choosing a partner for their sons or daughters. Parental guidance is necessary but not to be in forced on them. Further still, the writer also dealt with purpose of marriage, choice of marriage partner; preparation for marriage; courtship; wedding ceremony; the relationship between the couples and the place of sex in marriage .

Finally, both traditional marriage and Pauline teaching on marriage are good. Whether out of two things one must be better is not the question, what we need ^{to} do is to examine the good practices from each side and then emulate and encourage it. The writer believes that the traditional marriage is not hundred percent bad. However, when there is a conflict between the two concepts of marriage, the Pauline teaching should be encouraged because it is biblical. Since the bible is God's word it should be used as standard. No culture should influence the bible but the bible should influence the culture.