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**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF POST MARITAL COUNSELING
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR YOUNG COUPLES**

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5.2 CONCLUSIONS

Wright opines that marriage is one of God's greatest schools of learning- it can be a place where husband and wife are refined. The rough edges are gradually filed away until there is a deeper, smoother, and more fulfilling working and blending together that is satisfying to both individuals. But that takes an incredible amount of time, energy, and effort. (Wright 1992 9)

In our relationship with our Lord, the gospel accepts us where we are, but it does not leave us there. The Christian life is to be one of dynamic growth in which “we are to grow in every way into him who is the head, into Christ” (Eph 4:15). Paul also prayed that Christians will experience a relationship in which “your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment” in order that you may know how to choose wisely in the important issues of life. The New Testament is growth oriented, and the inspired writers often rebuke Christians for not continuing to grow after accepting Christ as their savior.

Marriage especially those who are young in it should experience growth as they move through the changing circles of family life. Because our relationships are personal, the growth process is neither automatic nor always upward. For most marriages either young or old, there are peaks of enrichment, plateaus of routineness, and valleys of despair as we experience the normal joys and crises of family living continuing growth does occur.

But growth does not happen without effort. David Maces speak from over forty years of marriage counseling experience when they point out that “the development of a really good marriage is not a natural process. It is an achievement.” One of the essential qualities of a good marriage and a rewarding family life is to continue to grow in love, in understanding, in acceptance, forgiveness, and in creative ways of maintaining the vitality of the relationship.

Here, then are some of essential qualities of good marital relationship in Christian marriage: authentic love, shared joy, mutual respect, expressed forgiveness, accepted grace, and continuing growth. When the patterns of marital interaction are infused with these qualities, life in the home can be rich, rewarding, and joyous.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the fact that marriage is a reality I strongly recommend that thorough prayer and guidance for the young married couples and the intending couples should be offered in our churches. Also a good counseling section should be conducted by our church ministers, this will enhance drastic change in marital relationship. Young married couples with divers' challenges should not be shy to see the minister for proper marital counseling.

Couples should always organize retreat once in a while in a peaceful environment it could be organized where they could get together and be closer to each other than ever before in order to rediscover, renew, as well as strengthen their first love. Young married couples must exhibit the spirit of commitment to make their home a pleasant one.

The importance of home needs more emphasis in the church the church minister and family committee should prayerfully decide what they need to organize at different and specific time to meet the needs of couples in the church. The church could organize family week where the importance of home should be stressed. Marriage enrichment for the young married couples should properly teach.

The conferences and associations could organize seminars on home for the young married couples. Special awareness programs on home should be encouraged in our seminaries. The Christian education department- Sunday school, training ministry and even Nigerian Baptist magazine should always have home especially the young married couples at heart in their teaching and publications. During convention

in session, there should be special emphasis on the home and for the young couples. Our theological schools should make marital counseling a compulsory course of study for all student pastors.

Therefore, I strongly recommend that each couple should take their prayer life seriously and they should have room for family altar in their respective home. That individual should device a means of making their marriage a pleasant one. And above all whenever there is a marital challenge among young married couple they should know how to consult God in prayer who is the author of the home.