



Married to Boaz:

The First Year

By Rebecca Horner

Focus Verse

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8, NIV).

Introduction

"A perfect marriage is just two imperfect people who refuse to give up on each other."

-Unknown

Before I got married, I was an independent, self-reliant woman, priding myself on not needing a man to make me happy. However, I was fooling myself. I wanted to be married. I desired a soul mate that would share my life and my love of God. So, I prayed and waited on God to bring me my "Boaz," and He did. I never thought marriage would involve so many changes and challenges, especially in the first year. Being married to "Boaz" was not the fairy tale happily ever after I hoped to experience.

When I first met my husband, he lived in a different state over fifteen hundred miles away from me. We were friends first, meeting unpredictably. Eventually, our friendship unfolded into love. When we confessed our love for each other, we knew we wanted to start a life together. However, a long-distance relationship was something I wasn't expecting.

In November 2010, Mathew asked me to marry him; I was on cloud nine, but now we had to decide which state would be our home. He lived in North Dakota, and anyone who's ever lived in North Dakota knows the summers are brutal, and the winters are worse!

My family moved to Seattle when I was eight years old, and I moved to Oregon in my twenties. Being a Pacific Northwest girl, I enjoyed the four seasons. I didn't like the idea of moving to a new place with no fall or spring,

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just hot and humid summers and long, cold winters. I understood that love comes with sacrifice, but at that moment, I didn't want to leave my family and the church I'd been a part of for over twenty years. I didn't feel comfortable moving so far away. My husband decided to take the instructions in Genesis 2:24 literally, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife." He moved to Oregon when we became engaged. We got married fifteen months after we first met.

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers a multitude of sins." (1 Peter 4:8, NIV)

Communication

In our first year of marriage, we experienced rough patches, especially when learning how to communicate. The first year was the most difficult. It was like starting a new job. Adjustments included sleeping arrangements, work schedules, intimacy, finances, housekeeping, and learning how to lead and how to follow. There were a lot of changes and compromises.

As with all marriages, we had highs and lows, but the first year was an adjustment phase in our new life together as husband and wife.

"God's Word is the perfect guidebook for marriage, and those who live by His Word will reap the blessings that obedience brings."

– Darlene Schacht

While I was adjusting to my new role as a wife, it was hard. I loved my husband, but we were bringing two very different worlds together, cohabitating and trying to build a life together. I struggled to communicate my needs assuming my new husband could read my mind. When he couldn't, I would think, *he should know me by now; why can't he understand my needs? Was our marriage a mistake?* However, God helped me see that even though we struggled with communication and blending our life, He brought us together for a reason.

After much prayer and tears, I realized my husband was trying. I had been too focused on what a perfect marriage looked like to see he was hurting too. It got easier, but it still took time.

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Genesis 2:24, KJV)

Life Reflection

What adjustments do you need to make for better communication with your spouse?

Dealing with Disagreement

Every time my husband and I disagreed, it made marriage difficult. One of the things that we decided before we got married was that we would never bring up who said what about who in the marriage.

Resist complaining to a friend or your mother about your spouse because when you argue, you may carelessly tell your husband what this person said about him. You will likely have a bigger issue in your marriage **because you allowed an outside opinion to create an inside problem.** You could destroy the trust you have in each other.

“Great marriages don’t happen by luck or by accident. They are the result of a consistent investment of time, thoughtfulness, forgiveness, affection, prayer, mutual respect, and a rock-solid commitment between a husband and a wife.” – Dave Willis

When I got married, I thought marriage would be effortlessly amazing, with no arguments, and we would build a life based solely on our love for each other. I learned that marriage takes work, a lot of work, and compromise. I didn’t think I needed to change at all. My husband does accept me for who I am, but I needed to give him grace because, just like it was an adjustment for me to learn how to be a wife, he was trying to learn how to be a husband.

Life Reflection

What safeguards can you put in place today to avoid having an outside opinion create an inside problem in your marriage?

Respect

The problem was that I was expecting so much from him and was unwilling to give in return. Respect was one of the things I didn’t give him early in our marriage. But, to have a good marriage, both the husband and wife need respect.

Sometimes a person loses respect if they do or say something hurtful or disrespectful, but respect is critical for your marriage to survive. **Love will help you, but respect will build a strong foundation.** You need love, but love can't enter the picture without respect. Respect is essential for growth. If you don't respect your husband, he won't respect you, and it will cause darkness to enter your marriage.

We made many mistakes in the first year of our marriage, but God kept us together. I learned that our differences, which sometimes caused stress when we were getting to know each other, could bring us closer as a couple and closer to God.

Life Reflection

List the differences between you and your spouse that cause stress. Beside each stressor, write down a way you could compromise.

Tips for Surviving the First Year of Marriage

Married life is hard work, but it's also rewarding to know you are spending the rest of your life with your soul mate. Marriage is not something to be taken lightly; it requires sacrifice, compromise, forgiveness, self-control, and selflessness. The Bible describes the roles of husbands and wives in Ephesians chapter five:

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Ephesians 5:22 KJV

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Ephesians 5:25 KJV

- **Learn how to truly love your spouse.** “*And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity*” (I Corinthians 13:13, KJV).



- **Divorce is not God's desire.** You will not survive any relationship if you can't work out your differences. Understand that marriage is based on your love for each other but, most importantly, your love for God. *"He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so"* (Matthew 19:8, KJV).
- **Show respect, especially to your husband.** How can you respect God's authority if you don't respect your husband? *"Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband"* (Ephesians 5:33, KJV).
- **Learn how to embrace each other's differences.** *"Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"* (Matthew 19:6, KJV).
- **Communicate good things.** *"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers"* (Ephesians 4:29, KJV).
- **Being married is not all about intimacy;** it is also about love and respect. Intimacy is a gift to be enjoyed, not to be focused on or used as punishment. *"Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency"* (I Corinthians 7:5, KJV)
- **Know each other's love language.** My husband's love language is physical touch, and my love language is acts of service. Understanding how your spouse feels and expresses love can help you better understand their needs. *"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you"* (John 15:12, KJV).
- **Connect.** Take time every day to ask how your husband's day went. It will help you to connect better. *"The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife."* (I Corinthians 7:4, KJV).
- **Always say "Sorry,"** even if you are both wrong, make peace, not war. *"And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand"* (Mark 3:25, KJV).

**Marriage is a blessing when you're serving God with someone
that loves Him as much as you do!**

The Bible states, “*What God brought together let no man separate*” (Mark 10:9). We live in a world where marriage is quickly dismissed and often defiled. Let’s fight for truth, let’s fight for our marriages, and most importantly, let’s never give up on each other. You’ll look back fifty years from now and think, *wow, the first year was hard but worth it* because you put God first and chose to love, despite your struggle.

Isn’t it good to know that God brought you together for such a time as this? So, hold on; it gets better down the road. Enjoy the ride and focus on the future you will build together.

“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses” (I Timothy 6:12, KJV).

Book Recommendations:

Beating the Marriage Busters, L. Coon Sr.

God’s Design for Marriage: Secrets to Love, Joy and Peace in Marriage, Carol P. Clemans

Sheet Music: Uncovering the Secrets of Sexual Intimacy in Marriage, Kevin Leman

Getting Ready for Marriage Workbook (Revised), Jerry D. Hardin, Dianne C. Sloan

The Five Love Languages, Gary Chapman