

WE NEED A MIRACLE GOD !

Lord, we need a miracle!

I can remember it like yesterday. Dave had left for work, the kids for school. I was standing in front of the mirror in our bathroom, tears streaming down my face saying, "How did I get here again?"

The first seven years into this nine year marriage were good. Dave had adopted my son from my first marriage and we had a daughter together. A happy family. Things changed pretty quickly when drug testing was adopted by companies. Dave had smoked pot for many years; now to be legal he switched to whiskey. But with it his personality switched too, from laid back and gentle to aggressive and angry. I'd grown up in a small town in the midwest in the 60's. I'd never even seen pot (I was pretty naïve) nor understood how it altered personalities. I just knew that after being severely wounded in that first marriage I was looking for someone kind and had found him in Dave.

So, "How did I get here again?" I felt overwhelmed by life and circumstances and someone else's out of control, dominating behavior. I was dying inside. I felt scared, helpless, and very alone. It wasn't just thinking of feeling such a failure the second time around in marriage. I really loved Dave with all my heart. I wanted my kind, gentle husband back-but not with the drugs or alcohol attached.

I'd grown up "in church" and had always truly loved the Lord. But my relationship with Him was mostly reserved for Sunday and special times of need. Two years before Dave & I got married, as a divorced woman who was in pain and denial of it's cause, I was in deep need of a Savior. I found Jesus in a real way. I realized He really is God and very much alive-and He loved me. I gave my heart to Him and asked Him to be my Savior. (As Lord would come later) My whole outlook on life changed when this happened, but I also met Dave soon after and mistakenly transferred my trust and focus for happiness to my knight in shining armor who swept me off my feet with sweet little bouquets of flowers and his soft spoken ways.

When we got married we moved out west. Nine years into our marriage we moved further west. I lost my church support, prayer partner and ministry. Oh, I was excited about the move at first. I had struggled so badly with perfectionism and my business career was destroying me because I couldn't ever say no. So this was a great career move for Dave and I was free. But Dave had to start his job five months ahead of us joining him and his loneliness was overcome with more and more constant drinking. All that time alone took him over the edge into alcoholism. We'd talk on the phone daily and I felt the aggression and hostility toward me begin then and was totally confused. What was happening to my husband. A year later the alcoholism was full blown.

I'd received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit a year before we moved and it was the most powerful experience with God. His Holy Spirit spoke to me and guided me and taught

me beyond my wildest imaginations. I couldn't get enough of all He had to give. Now, standing in that bathroom, I felt His love come to hold me while my tears burned down my face. Then His wisdom and counsel began to speak. I started to keep journals of my prayers and hurts I poured out to Him; and His answers, scriptures and direction.

Dave was very angry and constantly threatened divorce. The move had been very costly, plus our home we left had not sold yet. The huge financial strain added to all the other issues. He regularly would tell me that as soon as he had the money together he "was out of here; I'm getting a divorce; it's over".

In my heart the Lord told me that He was not in divorce. He taught me that He is a loving and powerful God AND that He could heal anything-if I would trust Him and follow His guidance. I set up an appointment with a Christian counselor hoping for practical steps. I told him about Dave's aggression and intense anger; the hurting and hateful words that pierced inside my heart and guts. I told him about his hostility toward our teenage son and how both he and our little daughter would go to their rooms and I'd go to the den when Dave came home, hoping to avoid another scene. He said I had to think of myself and the children and I should leave Dave and start over. (How interesting! Almost the same words that I'd been told when I sought another Christian counselor in the first marriage years before- obviously this was not the right answer!!!) God had something better for me. I left the counselor's office and sat in my car on the street crying. The Lord spoke to my heart and said "That is man's advice, not Mine. Go home and start praying!" That started a period in my life where I spent hours each day on my face praying and listening so my heart got more and more tuned in to His. One day He spoke to me and said "I have things planned for you that you can't comprehend." I felt my spirit soar and thought He was just talking about us being happy again. God always has much more in mind than we do.

I was so encouraged. My heart felt stronger. But things got worse after that, not better, as I had expected. Dave always continued to work and provide but also drank every moment he wasn't working. One night he was raging at me so I left the room. Then I could hear him quietly talking to our little four year old daughter. She was crying. I got upset, demanding to know what was wrong. He snapped at me about his right to talk to her without me there and left the house. I held her and she told me daddy had told her he was divorcing mommy and wanted her to live with him but she didn't want divorce.

Dave had grown up struggling with a loner attitude and not having received much show of affection a child needs. As he grew up friends introduced him to the drug scene and everything got stuffed and numbed.

A perfectionist and an alcoholic together was a mess. But God's plan was to change our hearts and lives forever. I dug deep into allowing the Lord to speak to me and heal areas of woundedness buried inside. I grew up with fear and worry being exemplified as normal. Also, two years with a physically and emotionally abusive teacher in grade school had created a person striving for acceptance through perfectionism. It ran my life and obviously was not working. I had to release many fears to Him and it wasn't easy.

One day I found a small book to read that focused on insights to help a troubled marriage. The man said if your spouse is 90% of the problem and you are 10%, focus on your 10% also, not just their 90%. I can't believe it but I actually threw the book across the room. I just wanted God to fix Dave. But it kept coming back to me when I'd pray and I gradually let the Lord into those places in my heart that I needed to look at and give to Him.

I heard a teaching on the radio one day about perfectionism. I didn't know how bad it was till the ministers teaching helped me see from God's point of view. I am so grateful for the Lord healing those attitudes and memories.

I learned to pray and listen for the Lord's voice to tell me what to pray, what to say to Dave and when to keep quiet; regardless of his words toward me. I was growing and changing.

It is difficult for me to express how close I got to the Lord. He truly became my Best Friend. My Powerful Encourager. My Teacher. My Lord. I truly believe that a fulfilling relationship with your spouse begins with your heart and love and life first turned to your relationship with Jesus! As God draws you to Him your view of your spouse and marriage shift to be seen through His eyes and your first desire becomes to love God and walk according to His precepts, because you know deep inside they are right. He began to plant scripture in my heart. He told me how much He loved us both and asked me to quit shot gunning prayers from my emotions and to focus on Dave's opening his heart to ask Jesus to be His Savior; and Lord of his life. He showed me to pray the scriptures of hope and life and believe His Word is truth. I believed Him! I had grown so close to Him through this year and a half that I knew He was worthy of my trust.

I filled 13 of those little journals you can buy to reflect your thoughts in. I poured out my heart to the Lord, I read the Bible and asked Him to give me verses to write in the journals that were promises to me of His good plan for Dave and me and our family. For verses and stories of His faithfulness and encouraging words to fill me with hope to sustain me. He "always" did.

Life was hard. One weekend afternoon I was trying to stay quiet and out of harms way praying in the den. Suddenly the door burst open and Dave stood there and in an angry rage shouted, "And don't tell me about the devil. This is all your fault." He then left, slamming the door. I was in shock and then realized. Prayer is working! I had never mentioned the devil to him. The enemy had exposed himself !

But I still let stress and fear get the upper hand from time to time. One morning, after a particularly tough evening the night before, I listened to my emotions as they poured out their needs and reminded me the Lord had not answered my prayers yet. My logic took over and I "decided" I would pack suitcases for the kids and myself. When they got home from school we'd leave for our old home and when Dave got home from work he would get a note from me saying we weren't leaving for good, that I didn't want a divorce, but couldn't stay in this situation right now. Had to have time to think; I needed

some peace. My brain (or the enemy) said “Wow, this will do it. You have been so patient to pray and believe and to walk out godly ways with him. This will shock him into seeing how he is destroying his family and he will come immediately to get you and say how sorry he is for this whole mess.” I went to the garage to get suitcases. I had a plan! The law firm would have rehired me immediately and our home there had not sold yet because the market in the late 1980's was horrible. (We had the amazing financial stress of carrying two mortgages).

Standing in the garage, as I reached up to get the first suitcase off the shelf something happened that didn't fit my plan. To this day I have never forgotten the power and intensity of what occurred. The Lord, whose voice had been so gentle and guiding, was very forceful and very strong. I remember every word as if it was yesterday. He said to my heart “DON'T YOU DARE TOUCH THAT SUITCASE. YOU GO BACK IN THE HOUSE, GET DOWN ON YOUR FACE AND CONTINUE TO PRAY LIKE I TOLD YOU.” I literally could not move. I don't know how long I stood there. I was in total awe and fear of the Lord. Not fear like being afraid but deep worship of His power and majesty and for who He is. The God of the universe is able to do anything. We are to trust and obey.

Sometime later I quietly went back inside. The resolve in my heart now was something I'd never experienced before. It was letting go; dying to self and following the Master. Life didn't change; Dave didn't change, but it didn't matter. God was God! I didn't have to do it. (Later Dave told me because he struggled with a loner spirit from childhood, he would not have come after us. Loner's don't pursue; they stay alone. My plan would have backfired; God's didn't!)

About 2 months later our son approached me very shyly. He loved his adopted dad but Dave had taken much of his anger out on this teen. He told me he had contacted a Christian pastor in our old home city. He sent our son a brochure for a Marriage Retreat being held where we lived. It was only focused on couples with big problems. I prayed and the Lord said to show it to Dave and ask him to go. I "knew" in my heart this was it. I obeyed the Holy Spirit's direction and Dave threw the brochure in my face with choice words with it. That hurt badly. I waited a few days and presented it again; same reaction. I put it in a drawer and forgot it. A week later, just one week before the date of the Retreat, I was getting ready to leave for church and the Lord told me to present it to him one more time. “Oh, I can't Lord. It's so humiliating.” But I obeyed and laid it on the table by his drink and left the house without a word. When I returned he came into the bedroom and said “Ok, I'll go. But only to prove to you I am not an alcoholic and you are the problem. When we get back then I am getting a divorce; I'm really leaving.”

My heart soared with hope and joy. Circumstances weren't different but God was moving. I called to reserve our spot and was told we had gotten the last reservation available. No accident. The lady who answered could tell by my voice I was in need. She asked if she could pray for me and my marriage. As she prayed with me over the phone tears ran down my face, but they were tears of hope. This was the first time anyone else had prayed for me in a long time; it had just been me and The Lord.

We arrived at the conference hotel Friday night and I could feel hope there in all that was shared in the opening session and just knew Dave would respond when we got to our room later. But he was still withdrawn and angry and stayed far on his side of the bed. I cried myself to sleep; fear told me I'd heard the Lord wrong. The next morning he seemed the same. After a presentation talk late in the morning, we were told to go to our rooms and spend some time talking. Dave was totally silent on our walk and as he opened the door I felt so heavy. I walked into our room discouraged and hurting. After a few seconds I realized it was very quiet and he was not sitting down or moving around the room. As I turned around to look at him my angry, raging husband was standing in the room crying. His eyes and whole demeanor were totally different. He looked at me and asked me to forgive him for all the horrible things he had done; for all the ways he had hurt me and the kids; for all the words. He said "Please help me." I was stunned and yet my heart was singing. This really was it!! The Lord had answered my prayers. I told him I could not help him but I knew Who could."

Was this really happening? Could this be "the moment" I'd been praying for? It was! We sobbed in each others arms for a long time and I told him of all my prayers and all the Lord had done to help me see things I needed to change, how He had given me strength to believe for him, and how very much He loved us. There was much asking of and giving forgiveness. After a time we got down on our knees together, in that hotel room, and my husband invited Jesus into his heart. We cried and asked the Lord to be in the center of our hearts and marriage. Then we told the Lord that we were His and He could do anything with us that He wanted to. It was a miracle!!! "The" miracle!!!

The Word says that God's ways are far above our ways. He can do far more than we can imagine. Dave walked out of that hotel that weekend healed of alcoholism. He has never had another drink and never had a desire for one. That was twenty nine years ago at this date. A huge miracle!! ! Not long after that weekend of surrender, our house sold in our old home state and the financial relief was great. Another miracle!!! Dave's heart was soft and loving and he desired our marriage to be new and covered by the Lord. More miracles!!! It was like a waterfall cascade of miracles from God!

For weeks I just walked around with my feet barely touching the ground. I couldn't quit smiling and praising God. I told Him how much I loved Him and how grateful I was and how Awesome He was! I felt like giggling; it was so profound to receive His love and powerful answers to my prayers. But I learned something very, very important too. A few weeks into our new life I was home alone and still smiling and all of a sudden this weird little thought just came from nowhere; it seemed and crept into my mind. The voice said "Is that all he has to do?" I stopped and stood there. It came again. I thought to myself, "what does that mean?" Then the voice said to think of all of the bad memories, and all the hurtful things that had been done and said, and then he goes on one weekend trip and says I am changed and please forgive me and that's it? I could "feel" the emotions coming at me and the doubt wanting to challenge my reality of the past few weeks. I praise God forever and ever for what he did in that moment. The Holy Spirit spoke to my heart and said "Stop. Do not entertain this. It is the devil. He has tried to

destroy your marriage from one direction and it failed; now he is trying through getting you to not forgive and go forward." I knew His gentle strong voice well by now and I immediately told the devil he had to leave and could not destroy our marriage, period! He left! I felt the joy and peace come back into my heart and knew I was on God's right path. I thought of when I had been forgiven by the Lord and found Jesus to be my Savior. He didn't beat me up with condemnation for all of my sins. He convicted me of them and showed me I had been on a wrong path but then forgave me. Just as I was to do with Dave.

We started small little prayers together and were growing in healing and our walk with the Lord but we really didn't have a clue how to have a healthy marriage God's way. God made marriage so it stands to reason He would have a plan for how to walk in it and experience joy. We just didn't know how to do that. Sometime after that weekend a friend invited us to a Graduation evening for a 2=1 married For Life class. We started our Married for Life class shortly after signing up and life has quite literally never been the same. So this is what marriage is to look like! This is God's plan! This is how we get there! WOW! It was amazing. Praise God!! I found that the Lord had sovereignly planted His Covenant design for marriage in me and had also shown me how to love Dave as He did, not just through my emotions. We eventually knew it was the Lord's desire for us to be trained to serve in this ministry.

So for twenty eight years, at this writing, we have poured our hearts into seeing the Lord's mighty power change lives, hearts, marriages and families forever, for His glory! It never gets dull or routine.

It happens in Married For Life classes around the country and around the world, in every culture. (at this writing in over 95 countries and the course translated in 45 languages). Through 2=1 there are many couples whom God has raised up and spoken His truth and life about His awesome plan for marriage, that are pouring that life into other couples. So many marriages are transformed and blessed by Married For Life classes. Every class is a miracle. Many couples come teetering on the edge of divorce. Some of them have one spouse who wants to try and one who barely says yes to coming. Some couples come just because they get along "ok" but know there is more and don't know how to get it. Some couples have a good marriage but are wise enough to realize that God's wonderful plan has even more. We've seen pastors and leaders and missionaries receive greater unity and strength for their marriages, to enhance what they do. And couples who go to work every day, care for their kids and become joy filled and blessed families!

We are honored to be a part of that. (This is what He meant years ago when He said to me "I have things planned for you that you can't comprehend.")

We needed a miracle God! Thank You, Lord, for Your miracles!!!
But He was not done.....

Part 2-More Great Miracles

The miracles were not over when we came to 2=1 to go through the Married For Life Course. We wanted healing and to know God's plan so much and there were many, many things the Lord poured into our hearts and marriage through the course. It is so full of life and power to change that it is difficult to put into words. Eventually, as we kept growing and got more healing and unity, as we said, the Lord impressed upon our hearts that He wanted us to join this ministry and be trained, equipped and taught so we could turn around and be a blessing to couples as we had received. It was an amazing gift from God and we wanted everyone to have it.

We were so excited because the couple who would be our overseers in 2=1 confirmed they too felt the Lord wanted us to join the ministry and be trained. But there was one area that needed to be addressed. Had we truly in our hearts received the Biblical revelation that marriage is a covenant. It is referenced a number of places in God's Word. (Malachi 2:14,16, Proverbs 2:17, Hosea 3:1-3 and inferred in the beginning when in Genesis 2:24 it says "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.") And if God's Word is true that marriage is a covenant then divorce is a sin and so is remarriage. (See 1 Corinthians 7:10-11)

We had so very many things we had needed to learn and to grow in regarding our marriage that I think we focused so much there during Married For Life that we either missed this or I had sloughed it off because "my story was different". I had to get that divorce! It was a horrible situation I had been in. I was even counseled by a Christian counselor to do it so I thought I had God's ok. I was blessed beyond words that the Lord had done mighty miracles to bring Dave to Him and to heal our marriage but that "thing" in the past was best left there-in the past. Yes, I had received the teaching on covenant, I understood covenant, I thought. But...

The couple told me I needed to spend time with the Lord and ask Him and allow Him to minister His healing truth to my heart. I am embarrassed today to say this but I told them I would be happy to do that because since I had stood and prayed and labored with the Lord to see Dave's and my marriage saved and healed, that the Lord and I had gotten very, very close and I'd be happy to talk to Him about it. Of course, I knew the Lord would give me the right words to share with this couple so that they would then understand that I was right and my situation was different.

So the next day Dave left for work and the kids to school. I was alone with the Lord. I confidently sat down to sit at His feet as I had done many times and to feel His love and closeness and hear Him speak to me. So I told Him this couple just did not understand that my story was horrible and my past marriage and divorce different and therefore necessary and justified-right Lord?

All of these years later, even today, I am still amazed at the Lord's kindness, His gentleness, but His firm response. It was like having a major, huge file downloaded all at once. Have you ever done that and watched the green line progressing across your

computer monitor and the percentage at the top growing larger till it hits 100% and says the download is complete? That is the closest I can come to describing that time with Him.

I got it. I saw it. The revelation of the pure sanctity of the marriage covenant the way the Lord instituted it. God is not in divorce! Jesus told the Pharisees in Matthew 19:8 that it was because of the hardness of their hearts that divorce happened and that "from the beginning it was not so." Many use verse 9 to justify divorce because of a spouses infidelity. But if that is true, that it's an "out", then we must all rip the entire book of Hosea out of our Bibles. God used Hosea's marriage and his wife's infidelity, to show God's faithfulness in covenant.

Here was the really tough part. I love the Lord with all my heart. It is my desire to honor Him in all I do. I take my relationship with the Lord very seriously. That does not mean we don't have funny times and enjoy some good laughs. It means my commitment to Him and desire to walk in the life of His Word is strong. This was a huge blow. I felt so condemned. I couldn't believe I had missed it. This was huge!

But something else was also happening at the same time. I felt old thoughts of anger and hurt come into my head. Old feeling, like a victim of circumstances. Lots of memories I had repeated in my heart to justifying my view, to validate my feelings and the divorce became clear. Some people talk about a past divorce. Not me. I had buried it and wanted it left that way. And had told myself I was "OK". I truly did not know, consciously, that this was deep inside of me.

I fell on my face before the Lord and started to repent. I asked forgiveness and to please help me. To heal my heart. To get rid of all the condemnation and justification. I did not make any excuses any more. I had sinned, period. I needed the Lord's forgiveness.

I love the Bible. It is life and it is truth. I leaned heavily on 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

It sounds like a clique but I literally felt like I had lost a thousand pounds and until that day I didn't even know I needed to. I felt like a new person. I was free from bondage and lies!!!!

More life giving verses that fit that day **"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."** John 8:31-32

I truly mean this; that after the day I received Jesus as my Lord and Savior, that day I repented has been the most profound experience in my life of receiving God's grace. So many use the term grace as a way out of, or around, dealing with things they need to repent for. I received God's great grace in speaking truth to me so that I could repent and truly go forward. I realized I had to look at myself, not just the circumstances. I had to

take responsibility. I had allowed my heart to get hard because of hurt and so divorce was acceptable. That is what Jesus was trying to tell the Pharisees in Matthew 19:8.

I could hardly wait for Dave to come home that evening. We talked for a long time, with me sharing the miracle of that day. God was so good. Dave immediately saw it. He also saw that he needed to repent before the Lord too. For marrying a divorced woman. We both repented for remarriage. Not our ongoing marriage, but the act of making that choice; contrary to God's Word.

We were so excited that the Lord had blessed us once again with another miracle that brought new freedom and much healing.

None of us can go back and undo the past. No one can. But we can go humbly to the Lord and repent and receive His forgiveness and restoration and then from that day forward our marriage was truly blessed and walking forward in God's wonderful plan.

Over these many years we have been able to share this with many couples in that situation and see them pray and receive God's healing. Numerous times they have told us later of the "difference" they could feel in their own hearts and in their marriage. Once, years ago, one man gave it a good description. He said they loved each other and were right there together but it was almost like there was a piece of Plexiglas between them. You can see each other but there is just "something" there that needs to be removed. They repented, and it was gone.

We tell couples to think of it this way. As we said; you can't go back and undo the past but you can sincerely pray to the Lord for forgiveness and cleansing and then declare and establish that this date (whatever that date is) as of this date our marriage is in alignment with God and His Word because of the cleansing blood of our wonderful Savior, Jesus Christ.

Over the years we have had a few couples who have been divorced and are remarried insist very adamantly that "Our marriage is ok; because God brought us together". Some were very upset. It is not enough for the Lord to minister healing and forgiveness to them; He has to have approved and orchestrated their marriage. I wondered about this years ago and asked the Lord why someone can be told they sinned by telling a lie, or by stealing something and they will receive it and repent. But that same person being told God did not put this marriage together and some get defensive. Either marriage is a covenant and is binding till death or it is not. The Lord showed me that it is because marriage is so very holy to the Lord that flesh rises up to defend something it does not want to deal with. Just like I had initially. Ephesians 5:32 ends a beautiful description of marriage and the husbands and wives roles. In this verse Paul says "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Our marriages are to be a picture of Christ's relationship with His bride. Jesus does not divorce us when we sin, or aren't perfect. I don't know about you but I am so grateful for that. So deep inside flesh there is a need to justify by saying God brought us together. I had a vision once many years back of being on my knees, sitting at Jesus' feet. I loved it and then realized Dave was on the other side. I thought that meant it was the Lord's approval of our young

marriage. See, God did this! But years later, after we had repented and our hearts were open the Lord spoke a quiet word to us both. The vision was really a symbol of the woman at the well that Jesus talked to who had been divorced and He was leading her into truth. We have to be very careful not to misinterpret.

One of the awesome and amazing things about the Mighty Lord we serve is that you would think we were doomed to some second class marriage after all of this came out. But God is not only a forgiver but a giver. His heart is love. He is for His children, even when we mess up and need to be cleaned up. One teaching we had received in 2=1 was the story of Joshua and the Gibeonites. (See Joshua Chapters 9 & 10) We won't go into the whole story here but Joshua was a mighty man of God; His leader to bring His people into the Promised Land. But Joshua was not perfect. He allowed himself to be fooled into making a covenant with a people who were totally against the Lord and all He stands for. These people knew if the covenant was made (since a covenant is not to be broken) that they could take advantage of Joshua. This was a covenant not in any way of God's choosing. But when Joshua realized what he had done, God's people had to honor it. Eventually a warring tribe came to attack the Gibeonites. They sent someone to Joshua pleading for help and protection. Joshua went to the Lord. God told them to go defend the Gibeonites. God rained down hail stones from heaven. Joshua declared that the sun would stand still so that he and his men could have the necessary time for victory. And God did it! That is mind boggling. Joshua 10:14 says "And there has been no day like that, before or after it, that the Lord heeded the voice of a man, for the Lord fought for Israel."

One day as I was studying this I saw a powerful blessing for us and for our marriage. God rained down hailstones from heaven and made the sun stand still for a covenant He did not want and was not asked about in advance. God forgave Joshua. Joshua's heart was truly for the Lord and stood in rightness to honor the covenant and God brought "miracles" to help them, just as He had done for me and Dave.

Not because God winked at our sin or it was not sin, but because we had allowed Him to speak His truth to us and had humbled ourselves to repent and receive cleansing and right standing with Him. (I John 1:9)

We sincerely ask that you hear our hearts. God is not in divorce. We did not understand God's plan and the truth of His Word till we were already married. If you are married please do not read our story and let your flesh and emotions tell you that you can go ahead and get a divorce and ask God to forgive you later when you get married again and it will all be ok. That is presumption and you set yourself up for deep consequences. Understanding the revelation of covenant empowers the miracles of God. When our hearts have decided to trust Him (He is worthy of it) and to submit all to Him and ask for His loving intervention on our behalf, He answers. Ask the Lord.

We praise Him and thank Him for loving us, forgiving us and correcting us. Today, as I write, we will be married 38 years in a few months. We love the Lord and each our dearly. We have a blessed and fulfilling marriage. One that is covered with the Lord's

grace, love and joy. We are not saying that life is some fairy tale. Couples thinking that can get skewed through movies or books, and set themselves up for dissatisfaction.

We have had challenges over the years. But because of God's truths in the Bible and the power of how they are imparted in Married For Life we have the tools to walk in victory. We had a huge house fire, so serious we could have died. It was a long and stressful ordeal. We prayed and the Lord led us through. There was a serious illness, loss of a job due to corporate downsizing. Growing and stretching in how to see things from each other's perspective.... We've seen so many miracles we could write about! The Lord has always been faithful.

The bottom line is living covenant commitment and fullness. We experience deep love and trust in our relationship. We love celebrating our anniversaries, and rejoice together in God's full love. Praying together and seeing God answer and feeling His love surround us. Times sitting together and laughing over a funny comedy. Our grown kids healed and blessed as we allowed God to heal and bless. We love to travel together and have been blessed to be storing up some awesome Memory books (and cool downloads we can view at a click). We have the joy of serving Him together in ministry as a team. Of always growing in honoring each others different personalities, interests and talents and also recognizing them as a gift from God. **The Lord is a Mighty God who does mighty things. And is also caring and compassionate in our time of need to bring true healing and truth and freedom.**
We needed a miracle from God!

Instead - God did many miracles!!!

For further revelation and Biblical marriage covenant understanding please go to this link and read two articles the Lord had us write a few years ago.

*Sponsoring The Culture Of Divorce

*He Never Changes

Epilogue:

We want to state that these miracles are not limited to one or a few couples. This has not just been one couples "story" or experience. There are many men too, not just women, who cry out to God to heal their marriages. God's power to heal and restore is all backed up in His Word and His principles on marriage are life giving. He created marriage and He has a wonderful plan, and instructions, for our marriages. It's in The Bible, not on tv sitcom's or what our co-worker says, or maybe not even what we saw at home growing up. Our problem is that usually when we marry it is like buying the most beautiful, fancy car you can imagine and then using an old beat up pick-up truck manual for instructions. Then we are surprised and disillusioned when it doesn't operate to our expectations. God wants to, and can, bless every marriage. The 2=1 Married For Life Course is the most anointed understanding of those instructions we have ever seen and millions of couples have also found that to be true.

Sherry Carder with Dave Carder
2=1 International Prayer Team Leader
2=1 U.S. National Team Leaders

A few powerful scriptures for encouragement and prayer.

Genesis 1:27-28
Genesis 2:24-25
Psalm 36:11
Jeremiah 29:11
Matthew 11:28-30
John 10:10
Psalm 3:3
Matthew 19:26
Deuteronomy 30:19-20
Matthew 7:7-11
Psalm 51:10
1 John 1:9
Psalm 19:8-14
Mark 6:34
Jeremiah 32:39
Isaiah 66:13
Psalm 138:4
Song of Solomon 4:9
Song of Solomon 7:10
Ezekiel 36:26-27
Luke 4:18-21
Psalm 91
John 8:31-32,36

In John 10:10 Jesus said:

"The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have *and* enjoy life, and have it in abundance [to the full, till it overflows]."

John 10:10 AMP
Amen!

Dear Lord,

We pray for all those who have read this story. That they have received encouragement and direction. That they will seek You and see Your great power and miracles on their behalf and truly know that every marriage is precious to You. We pray they can just go to You and humbly say Lord, I (we) are here. We need You to meet us where we are; and in Your great love for us to give us Your great revelations, forgiveness and restoration.

Dave and Sherry Carder
2=1 International Prayer Team Leader
2=1 U.S. National Team Leaders

