

Feb/Mar 2025

# GrowInGrace Marriage Newsletter

Issue No. 4



## *Life Lessons I'm Learning* *by Laurie*

*Nothing says "Happy Valentines Day" like a ride in an ambulance the day before at 3 AM. When Aaron came to the ER room, my Boy Scout (be prepared) had clothes, boots, and my coat. He also had his Bible, another book to read, plus my purse, cell phone and charger. What a guy! ♥*

*We got home around 7:30 AM Thursday morning. I slept most of the day, and when I did get up, Aaron made me tea & toast and back to sleep I went. Friday, Valentines Day, I was still extremely tired and found out I had an acute reaction to Reclast, an infusion treatment for Osteoporosis.*

*"Why am I sharing all of this?," you might ask, well, because this is real love. Aaron putting my needs before his. Doing dishes, making me several cups of tea, and refilling my water cup. Making a fancy dinner of boxed mac & cheese (yes, they actually have a vegan version). It was the perfect comfort food and it warmed my heart.*

*Don't get me wrong, I love getting romantic cards and gifts, but what I needed right then was my husband to be my hero. To care for my needs and to love me unconditionally, because he wasn't getting anything in return from me except a "thank you."*

*When I initially wrote this, I was told the side-effects I was experiencing would probably last 3-5 days. As time went on, new side-effects kept coming and going, and now, almost 3-weeks later, I'm still dealing with issues, and Aaron is still putting my needs before his own. This is the Christ-like behavior we should show to our spouse all the time.*

*This is my challenge to you .. look for ways that you can put your spouse's needs before your own, and see how it blesses you. You'll be glad you did! ♥♥*



## Featured Podcast - Family Life Today -

(Feb 14, 2025)

Dave & Ann Wilson feat. Brian Goins and Shaunti Feldhahn

### Ditching the Marriage Fantasy Suite

[<listen to the FamilyLife Today podcast>](#)



Have you ever found yourself being disappointed with your spouse because they don't live up to your expectations? Marriage fantasies can lead to unmet expectations and disappointment. Today's guests discuss replacing those fantasies with grace and understanding, which can create a stronger, more fulfilling relationship.

Secret 6: **Factual Fantasies:** How to Get Yours - Not all fantasies are created equal, in fact, one kind is the leading cause of unhappiness in marriage. But how do you avoid pitfalls and pursue contentment with your spouse? Listen in — [Married with Benefits podcast](#) Jul 18, 2024

## FOR WOMEN ONLY

### “Don’t Mess With My Man”

[I Do Every Day <link>](#) 2/7/25 by Sherri Oehme

When my husband and I married, I couldn’t think of one person who disliked him.

But after a move and a new job, he began coming home talking about “Jim”, who never missed an opportunity to criticize the fresh ideas of anyone younger and less experienced than him.

My man was getting upset, and I was too. It wasn’t long before Jim and I became enemies—and I hadn’t even met the man!

When my other half hurts, my first reaction is to enter into battle with whomever hurled the stone— Read on [<link>](#)

#### Coffee Date

Visit a bookstore with a coffee shop. Get cozy in the travel section. Husbands, ask your wife to describe her dream vacation: location, activities, length of stay, etc. .. Now, wives, it’s your turn to listen to his...

## FOR MEN ONLY


### I Love Me. I Mean You.

[I Do Every Day <link>](#) (2/12/25) by Ryan Guinee

My wife was working a double shift the next day. The kids were down, and there was a green light for some “me time.” Couldn’t ask for more on a weeknight. This night was different though.

She’s a new mom—again—having to do new mom things, and couldn’t do all the things at once. So I packed her lunch and dinner. I wrote a little love note and stowed away the plastic bag of food in the fridge. Took all of 15 minutes and the task was done.

She sent me this text the next day ... Read the full article [<link>](#)

 Receive the 'I Do Every Day' email daily [<link>](#)

**YADA**

Hebrew: To know intimately

In Marriage: We see the good and bad about each other and keep moving closer

#### Love in Action!



*The next time you see your spouse doing something that’s not on top of their list of favorite things, come alongside, let them know you appreciate them and lend a hand ♥*



#### Couples Corner

We’re in your corner praying for your marriage

Please pray for us as we move forward leading this Marriage Ministry



#### Contact Us:

Publisher: Laurie Eckard  
[laurie.eckard@gmail.com](mailto:laurie.eckard@gmail.com)  
Cell: 440-669-5540

Sr. Editor: Aaron Eckard  
[aa.eckard@gmail.com](mailto:aa.eckard@gmail.com)  
Cell: 216-832-9666

# Your Marriage is Your First Ministry

@healthyrelationshipplug (Instagram) - Relationship & Marriage Videos

Many people see ministry as preaching, leading, or serving in church, but the truth is - your first ministry starts at home. Marriage is not just about love and companionship; it's a calling.

If you're married, the way you love, honor, and serve your spouse is a direct reflection of your faith. How you treat them speaks louder than any sermon you'll ever preach

## 1. God Entrusted Your Spouse to You

Think about it - out of all the people in the world, God gave your one person to do life with. That's not random; it's intentional.

- How you speak to them matters. Do your words build them up or tear them down?
- How you serve them matters. Are you meeting their needs or just expecting yours to be met?
- How you forgive them matters. Do you extend grace or hold onto grudges?

Your spouse is not just your partner - they are your God-given responsibility.

## 2. Public Success Means Nothing if Your Home is in Shambles

Many people pour their energy into work, church, and helping others, but their marriage is struggling. What's the point of being admired outside if your spouse feels neglected at home?

- You can be a great leader in church but be emotionally absent at home.
- You can be a successful business person but fail to make time for your spouse.
- You can serve everyone else, but leave your spouse running on empty.

Your first ministry isn't to the world - it's to the person you vowed to love forever.

## 3. Your Marriage is a Testimony

People don't just listen to what you say - they watch how you live.

- If you preach about patience but snap at your spouse, what does that say?
- If you talk about love but don't show it at home, what message are you sending?
- If you serve others but refuse to serve your spouse, what example are you setting?

Your marriage is a living testimony of God's love. A strong, loving marriage is one of the most powerful ministries there is.

## 4. The Enemy Attacks Marriage for a Reason

Why do you think the devil fights marriages so much? Because he knows that a broken marriage weakens everything else.

- It affects your peace
- It affects your children
- It affects your purpose

When a marriage is weak, it's easier for the enemy to create division, bitterness, and distractions.

That's why protecting your marriage should be a priority - not an afterthought.

## 5. Your Marriage Reflects Your Relationship with God

Ephesians 5:25 says, "Husbands, love your wives just as Christ loved the church." That means marriage is a reflection of God's love.

- When you choose grace over resentment, you reflect God.
- When you choose commitment over convenience, you reflect God.
- When you choose love over pride, you reflect God.

A thriving marriage is not about perfection - it's about two people constantly choosing each other, even on the hard days.

## Takeaways

Your marriage is not just about you and your spouse - it's about honoring God through how you love each other. Before anything else, tend to your first ministry.

Because if you win everywhere else but fail at home, have you really won?