

**FAITH. FAMILY.
FULFILLMENT.**

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The **CLARITY** you need for
the relationship **YOU WANT**

CHRIS & SUZANNE VESTER



BMD Publishing

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YOU WANT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Dedication</i>	<i>vii</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>xi</i>
 Meet the Vesters	 1
 1 Steve & Laura Weatherford	 11
<i>Keeping Life from Getting in the Way of Your Marriage</i>	
2 Chadd & Brooke Wright	35
<i>Teams, Drugs & Grace</i>	
3 Derrick & Ilya Golden	55
<i>Triggers, Trauma, Tragedy</i>	
4 Jordan & Carolyn Reese	69
<i>Who's Filling the Empty Seat at Your Table?</i>	
5 Dustin & Alana Bookhout	85
<i>Marriage in Action</i>	
6 Brent & Erin Weidemann	101
<i>From Cancer to Kids & the Creation of the "Bible Belles"</i>	
7 Jeff & Ali Wendt	117
<i>Grief is a Season, not a Life Sentence</i>	
8 IV & Bené Marsh	135
<i>Let's Talk About Sex</i>	
 Final Thoughts	 153

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to you...

*You, the person we haven't met
You, the person that needs an encouraging word
You, the person that is struggling through hard things
You, the person that just got good news
You, the person that feels overwhelmed
You, the person that just got engaged
You, the person that is grieving a loss
You, the person that is praying for a miracle
You, the person that is searching for HOPE
You, the person that God loves so much
You, the person that was meant to be right here, right
now, reading this book
You, this book is dedicated to you*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. To our family and family of choice - you are the reason we will go far. May the Lord bless you and keep you always.

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Finally, we would like to thank Bruce Corris and his colleagues. We appreciate your attention to detail and for taking the time to get to know us and our hearts for this project.

INTRODUCTION

There have been times over the years when someone has said to us, “Gee, you have such an interesting story. Have you thought about writing a book?”

Our answer has always been, “No, but thank you for the nice words.”

While we do enjoy sharing our story with others, and it seems to have an impact on people, we’ve never felt it was enough for a book, at least not one that people who don’t know us might be tempted to read.

Then we realized, there’s something far more important we can share. It’s our mission. Our belief that when you have faith in your life, anything is possible. A better career. A better relationship, whether that’s with your spouse, your kids, your employees or co-workers.

In other words, a better life. So, then we thought, “Well, how can we share that with others? How can we help others experience what we’ve experienced? How can we help others

see that with the three pillars of Faith, Family and Fulfillment, you have the foundation you need to build the relationship you want?”

That isn't easy. There are a lot of obstacles in your way. There are many challenges to finding the right path to follow.

As we thought about it, that's when we said, “Okay, this is a reason for a book.” Yes, our story can be part of it, but we really need to share other couples' stories. Couples who have experienced success in business and in life, but who have also experienced challenges.

Above all, couples who, like us, have faith in their life. In a very significant way.

We began interviewing couples like that, and while we already knew these couples, it turned out there was a lot we didn't know about them. Hearing them talk about their successes and the obstacles they had to overcome to get there was eye-opening for us. We learned how similar we are, and how we all relied so heavily on faith to get us through the tough times and help us get more out of the good times.

We're so grateful to them for letting us share their stories, including the parts of their stories that were difficult to share. In some cases, they may be tough to read. But you will get so much out of each and every one.

Whether you're not in a relationship, struggling in one, or have a great relationship, this book will help you build a better one. This is the book we were meant to write, and we hope it's the one you were meant to read.

MEET THE VESTERS

This may be our book, but our story is just a small part of it. This book is really a vessel for others to share their stories, and show you what's truly possible in marriage, in business...and in life.

But before you hear their stories, we do want to briefly share ours, just to give you a sense of who we are and what led to this book, because we think if you know that before you hear from the couples we interviewed, you'll get more out of those conversations. We hope you'll get as much out of them as we did.

SUZANNE'S STORY

I grew up in Mount Pleasant, North Carolina, near Charlotte. It's a very small town, just two stoplights, but it was a great place to grow up, especially for a close family like mine. We lived across the street from my grandparents, and next door to my great-grandparents until they passed. I was in a high school graduating class of 132 kids.

I loved it there, but when I left for college, I never went back. I graduated from North Carolina State with a degree in psychology and worked in that field for a bit, but when Chris and I got married and moved back to his hometown, there were no jobs for me. I had always been into wellness and health and physical fitness, so I shifted gears. I have a master's degree in applied nutrition and I'm working on my PhD in Naturopathy, so one day we'll be Mister and Doctor Vester.

CHRIS' STORY

She's better looking and smarter than me. I grew up in Nashville, North Carolina, a slightly bigger small town. We had three stoplights. But my high school was much larger than hers. I had a graduating class of 365. Just like Suzanne, my family was close. My grandparents were our next-door neighbors.

It was a very rural area, and my dad was a farmer until I was eleven, but then he made a big change to white collar work, doing insurance sales. I also went to NC State, which is where we met, and graduated with a business degree.

By then my dad had gone from the insurance business to the car business and I was working for him. I worked my way up from washing cars when I was 17 to eventually running the company with him.

THE ROLE OF FAITH

Faith has always been important in our lives. Chris jokes that he was born on Super Bowl Sunday, 1972, and he was in church with his parents the next Sunday. It was always part of

Suzanne's life as well. But it has become more of a pillar over time.

In fact, we've often said it's the reason we're still married. Life does not always treat you kindly, and you have to have something far bigger than yourself to unload all the things that get thrown at you. Faith has become that very critical, very intentional, very strategic aspect of our lives.

Many of our struggles have their roots in a bad decision we made in 2000. We bought a business, and it turned out we had been sold a bill of goods. Chris bought it from a friend, and he was misled. Within days, Suzanne realized we were in trouble. That deal caused us a tremendous amount of financial strain, which led to disagreements and bitterness and resentment. The ripple effect grew. But we survived, with help from faith-based counseling that drastically shifted how we saw our marriage and saw life in general. It gave us a biblical view of how to overcome things, and while it wasn't the end of the struggles, it led us to a way to overcome them. Whenever we have struggles of any kind we can think back to those sessions and think about what we learned.

We were also tested by a health crisis. Just before our second anniversary, Chris was diagnosed with testicular cancer. Imagine being a newlywed couple, thinking about having a family, and being told, "No, you can't do that now. You may never be able to do that." But neither of us ever felt Chris wasn't going to be okay. We just knew our story wasn't done yet.

Obviously, he survived, and eventually we did have that family. We have three daughters. In fact, we learned we were

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