

FOREWORD BY BESTSELLING AUTHOR **CRAIG GROESCHEL**

HEALING YOUR MARRIAGE

WHEN TRUST IS BROKEN

UPDATED & EXPANDED

FINDING FORGIVENESS
AND RESTORATION

CINDY BEALL

WHAT READERS ARE SAYING
ABOUT FINDING HELP IN
Healing Your Marriage When Trust Is Broken

Thank you for your book *Healing Your Marriage When Trust Is Broken*. It was something I needed to find hope in my situation. —AMY

Thank you for having the courage to share your life. —KIM

Thank you for showing me that life keeps going, but that it gets so much better. —MANDIE

God is definitely working through you and Chris, your story, and your family, to touch people, to bless people. —STEPHANIE

I can't imagine not having the hope you provide to hold on to. —LYNETTE

I've just read your first five chapters and am blown away. We serve an awesome God. —CHASE

In reading your story, I can't tell you how much you have helped me. Particularly your comments on how you have learned to trust your husband. —STACIE

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to the institution of marriage. —JOY

Your story has been such an inspiration to me and has helped me through the hardest time in my life. Thank you for everything you have done. —SERENA

I'd like to thank you for your testimony. It has been a great encouragement to my wife and me. —JASON

Just wanted to thank you and your husband for setting me on the course of recovery. —SARAH

Your book saved my marriage. —LORI

Your book has been a miracle in my life. —CHRISTOPHER

God used your ministry to save two lives from falling into the pattern of the world. —JEREMY

Without your book, who knows how long it would've taken me to process as much as I have. It's only been two weeks, and I feel renewed. —CRISSY

Thank you for sharing your story. It has given me and my husband faith to believe again for full restoration in ministry and marriage. —JESSICA

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HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS
EUGENE, OREGON

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Cover by Studio Gearbox

Interior design by KUHN Design Group

Cover photo © autsawin uttisin / shutterstock

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Healing Your Marriage When Trust Is Broken

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Published by Harvest House Publishers

Eugene, Oregon 97408

www.harvesthousepublishers.com

ISBN 978-0-7369-8472-0 (pbk.)

ISBN 978-0-7369-8473-7 (eBook)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Beall, Cindy,

Healing your marriage when trust is broken / Cindy Beall ; foreword by Craig Groeschel.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-7369-4315-4 (pbk.)

1. Marriage--Religious aspects--Christianity. 2. Sex addiction--Religious aspects--Christianity. 3. Adultery. 4. Pornography--Religious aspects--Christianity. 5. Trust--Religious aspects--Christianity. I. Title.

BV835.B357 2011

241'.667092--dc22

[B]

2010050358

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Printed in the United States of America

21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 / BP / 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



*To Craig and Amy Groeschel and Jim and Beth Kuykendall.
Without your belief and influence in our lives, we wouldn't have
a healed marriage, this book wouldn't have been written,
and thousands of couples wouldn't have been impacted.*

Thank you. You'll always be our heroes.



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FOREWORD

by Pastor Craig Groeschel

It's hard to believe that it's been almost 20 years since I heard the heart-wrenching news. When Chris Beall, our new star worship leader, confessed to me that he'd been unfaithful to his wife, Cindy, I could have vomited on the spot.

Overwhelming emotions flooded my heart. Shock. Disappointment. Anger. Sadness.

Questions pelted my mind like hail smashing against a sidewalk during a storm. How did this happen? Why didn't I see it? What am I going to tell our church? What will Cindy do? Will their marriage survive this blow?

I'll never forget seeing the deep and seemingly unrecoverable hurt in Cindy's eyes when she discovered the devastating truth.

Behind the scenes, we did the only things we knew to do. We prayed a lot. We cried a lot. We read a lot of Scripture.

We gathered the elders of the church to consider how to move forward. Our top goal was to minister to Chris and Cindy and help them decide what to do next. Chris's actions obviously disqualified him from his pastoral role.

With the weekend approaching, I knew that I'd have to make some

sort of public statement. Unfortunately, church leaders often fail to navigate the rough waters of moral failure successfully. Churches are often mortally wounded following this type of public failure.

Without knowing quite what to do, I simply decided to tell the truth.

“Chris betrayed his wife and will no longer be serving in his role as our worship leader.” Without going into detail, I compassionately explained that one of our brothers had fallen and that, as a church, we’d do everything within our power to help his marriage heal.

We agreed to pray for the miracle of restoration for this family. I talked to our church about the Hebrew word that is translated as *restore*. The word *shuwv* literally means “to be made better than new.” “With Christ’s healing work,” I declared by faith, “one day Chris and Cindy’s marriage could be better than new.”

The next Sunday, Chris and Cindy Beall walked into church and sat side by side as the wounded but loving church embraced them.

This was the beginning of the arduous uphill climb to put a broken marriage back together. Through Chris and Cindy’s counseling, tears, hard work, perseverance, courage, accountability, and raw, self-abandoned forgiveness, God has done what only He can do. He has made the Beall family better than new.

Two decades later, Chris is serving in one of the most important roles of our church. He oversees the pastors of close to a dozen Life.Church locations. Cindy also serves as a leader for the YouVersion Bible App.

In all my years of ministry, I’ve never known another couple who has helped more marriages than Chris and Cindy.

My wife and I have the greatest love and admiration for Cindy. This book is the most honest journey of healing I’ve ever read. Cindy bears all without pulling any punches. Her transparency will win you. Her courage will inspire you. Her story will change you.

If you’ve faced betrayal and wonder if healing is possible, this book is God’s gift to you.

Craig Groeschel
Pastor of Life.Church

HOPE CHANGED ME

If you are reading this book, chances are you are staring at an obstacle so big and so wide and so high that you don't think there's any hope. But, with God, there's always hope. Hope changed me. The notion that God could use anything He deemed necessary to resurrect a woman—and subsequently, a marriage—kept me going. At a time when I could have stayed underneath the shade of my discouraging circumstances, I didn't. I believed in a God who said He could make all things new, even if I had no idea how. So, I chose hope.

Healing Your Marriage When Trust Is Broken was published ten years ago—nearly a decade after I received a confession of unfaithfulness from my husband, Chris. And this rerelease is to give you further insight of the fruit, maturity, and healing 20 years after that confession. You'll draw even more encouragement as I offer updates on some of the couples' journeys and insights at the end of each chapter under the "20 Years Later" heading. I also added a new closing chapter, which I pray will be a helpful offering to encourage your next steps after you read this book. All these additions boil down to this truth: I can't wait to give you hope from this point in my healing journey.

Maybe you picked up this book and you're afraid of what it will challenge you to do—face your doubts, battle your fears, perhaps even

restore a relationship that feels unrestorable. You have no idea if you have the courage to even try. That's okay. Take some of mine. Because if there's one thing I hope and pray for, it's that you'll receive the hope and strength you need to embark on this journey. As you read my words, may some of my courage be transplanted into your heart, soul, and mind. Before you begin, I'd like to offer some words that nourished me from *Streams in the Desert*:

Call back, and tell me that He went with you into the storm; call back, and say He kept you when the forest's roots were torn; that, when the heavens thunder and the earthquake shook the hill, He bore you up and held you where the very air was still.

But if you'll say He heard you when your prayer was but a cry, and if you'll say He saw you through the night's darkened sky—If you have gone a little way ahead, oh, friend, call back—'twill cheer my heart and help my feet along the stony track.—L.B. Cowman¹

As someone who's been on this journey for 20 years, this is me, calling back to you to tell you what God did for me, in me, and now through me. He heard every prayer, He caught every tear, and He handled every doubt. He was with me, close to me, comforting me, carrying me, and rebuilding me into a whole person. He made me better than new.

And I believe He will do the same in you. So, receive this courage transplant, friend, and watch God do a work that you never would've imagined.

WHEN THE WALLS COME TUMBLING DOWN



You never forget the day that changes your life forever. The day that turns your heart and your family upside down. But when that day begins, you don't realize it's anything out of the ordinary.

It was February 19, 2002, and my husband of nine years, Chris, and I were just getting settled into our new home in Edmond, Oklahoma. He had come out six weeks earlier on his own to begin his ministry with Life.Church as the worship pastor of the Edmond Campus. I had stayed behind in Memphis to wrap up the sale of our home there. But now we and our almost three-year-old son, Noah, were happily back together under one roof.

On this morning, while Chris was at the church, I was doing the usual stuff that nesters do. I unpacked boxes, fought with bubble wrap, and put away our belongings in the kitchen, the bathrooms, and the rest of the house. I was enjoying the process and thought how good it was to prepare our new home for this new life we had prayed about so fervently.

And then Chris came home unexpectedly at 9:30.

I was about to ask why he was back from work so soon, but the worried expression on his face stopped me from saying anything. He

asked if we could talk. The request sounded so formal and distant that my heart raced as I quickly and silently got Noah settled in front of our TV with a Blue's Clues video and inched my way along a narrow path around stacks of boxes and toward Chris. My mind was spinning in anticipation of what might come out of his mouth.

Had one of our parents died or been in an accident? Had the church changed their mind about adding Chris to the staff?

Chris motioned me to the newly purchased sofa, and we sat down together. I tried to look into his handsome green eyes for reassurance. But those amazing, clear eyes that had captivated me the day we met years before were now downcast. I waited for him to reassure me that all was well in this new life. But instead of words of comfort, the man I had prayed for as a young woman, long before I knew him, was about to share news that would alter the course of our lives in unimaginable ways.

THE PRAYERS OF A YOUNG WOMAN

I first prayed for my future husband while I was serving as a summer missionary on a Native American reservation in Wyoming. Although this ministry experience would become one of the best challenges and inspirations in my life and faith journey, the day I had to say goodbye to my mom at the Austin, Texas, airport was an unhappy one. The cute denim jumper with the cheery sailor collar I wore did little to dress up my sadness at having to leave her and my home to be 1200 miles away for 11 weeks. It felt like a world and a lifetime apart.

The first couple of weeks proved to be difficult. My tear-stained cheeks initially put a damper on the adventure. But eventually I understood that I needed this time to grow up and learn to rely on God.

And I did.

I learned a lot about the woman I would become. I not only learned to lean on God but also discovered that I had a voice and something to say and something worth sharing. I learned that not all things make sense when you follow Christ. And I realized it's okay to not have an

answer for everything. In fact, it's actually more authentic and appealing when you don't.

In the midst of my time of learning about God, about others, and most definitely about myself, I had a longing in my heart for true love. The kind of love that would lead me to say to someone special, "I want to spend the rest of my life with you." And I wasn't the type of girl who had to have a boyfriend on her arm at all times. For one thing, I was taller than most guys my age. This is hardly an asset for a young girl's dating potential. I also possessed an independent spirit, and I liked the freedom I was experiencing during this stage of life.

Still, this longing for true love grew. I would be turning 21 soon, and although there isn't a guideline or time frame that says young women should fall in love by this age, I definitely wouldn't have pushed the opportunity away. *If* it was the right guy, you understand. *My* right guy.

One particular July night during that summer mission, I stared out at the beautiful mountains bathed in sunset's glow and began praying for others and for my future husband. At that moment, the idea popped into my head—thank You, Holy Spirit—that maybe I should pray for my husband's salvation. So, I did.

I prayed that my future husband would have the character, personality, talents, passions, and even the looks that matched up with the list I made about the man of my dreams. I didn't think I was asking for much. Just the moon, the stars, and everything in between. Why not, right?

I first saw Chris Beall at a barn dance in November 1991. We couldn't take our eyes off each other. He wasn't the best dresser, nor did he have a model-perfect smile, but he held my gaze with those intoxicating green eyes. I was smitten almost immediately.

Almost.

It would be a few more months before anything actually began between us. He started frequenting the Baptist Student Union on our campus for our Wednesday lunches. Within a few weeks, at one of those lunches, he asked me for a dinner date the following Monday. I didn't have to agonize with anticipation for five days. Instead, he came to my church on Sunday and invited me out to lunch with a group of

friends. There was so much excitement and “I can’t believe this is really happening” in the air that, by Sunday evening, we found ourselves sitting on the balcony of my apartment eating mint chocolate chip ice cream and talking about life, family, and mostly about Jesus. And I found out something special about Chris that evening: He’d been a Christ follower for less than a year, and the date that he gave his life to Christ was July 7, 1991—the summer that the Holy Spirit led me to pray for my future husband’s salvation.

Big sigh.

I knew with every part of my being that Chris Beall was the one for me. I knew it beyond a shadow of a doubt. I knew it in my knower and felt it in my feeler. But what I didn’t know was that the very next day he made a down payment on my wedding ring.

Ten months later, on January 9, 1993, we became husband and wife.

We were so madly in love with Jesus and each other that we were certain we’d conquer it all. We never would have guessed that the road we’d travel together over the course of our marriage would be anything but bliss.

Love was completely blind in our case. It’s a good thing, because little did I know that around year nine, we’d get our sight back.

CONFESSION

I sat down next to Chris on our new couch, and as he began speaking, my throat went dry and my eyes stung with hot tears. Even though shock was making it hard for my mind to make sense of the words and phrases and sentences, my heart and soul took it all in with great sorrow. Chris wasn’t communicating the news that someone we loved was hurt. He was confessing that he, the person I loved most in the world, had hurt and betrayed me in the deepest way.

Chris had been unfaithful.

I was now trembling from head to foot as my mind continued to spin with disbelief. I felt nauseous as the confession continued. He had been unfaithful with more than one woman. In fact, he had been with

many women in many different places over the course of the past two and a half years.

While I listened, the very real physical pain of a heart breaking took me by surprise. And as I struggled to keep breathing, Chris forced himself to speak the last part of his confession through trembling lips: One of the women was pregnant, and he was pretty sure the baby was his child.

He kept his eyes on me. He didn't look away for a minute, even when my face clearly changed. His eyes were tender, and I could tell he was devastated by watching me. He didn't reach out for me right away. He seemed to be in shock that he was actually confessing. Then, as the reality set in of what his news was doing to my heart, he began to cry.

Many angry thoughts could have rushed through my mind at that point, but the unfathomable absurdity of this surreal, frozen moment in time triggered one thought over and over, "You have got to be kidding me!"

He was definitely not kidding.

He sat there just waiting for me to respond. I was stunned and couldn't make sense of what had just happened. I sifted through emotions and terms for emotions. It was none of them specifically and all of them collectively. Bewildered. Stunned. Shocked. Overwhelmed. Befuddled. Floored. Jolted. Nauseated. Sickened. Disturbed. Crushed. Dismayed. Paralyzed.

Ticked off. And that's putting it nicely.

The truth is that I still can't tell you to this day how I felt in those first few moments. What I can tell you is that I was keenly aware that my world as I knew it was forever changed. I woke up that morning a relatively comfortable housewife and stay-at-home mom, and within a couple of hours, I became a seriously damaged woman with a marriage on the brink of destruction.

We had both made vows to forsake all others for the rest of our lives. I had kept my vow. He had not. Even when the distance between us grew, I kept mine. He had not. Even when other men showed interest in me, I kept mine. He had not. Even when days came where I didn't even want to spend time with him, I kept mine. He had not.

WHEN THE WALLS FALL DOWN

I was deeply wounded by the truth about the lies that poured from my loved one that morning. I ached not only for me but also for the new church that had hired and embraced Chris. For our son. For our families. For our friends. As the walls of the life we had built came tumbling down, hard realization after hard realization, I felt them crush the foundations of our shared life and the dreams of this new chapter we were entering.

Can you relate to that kind of letdown? Destruction? Betrayal? When the walls have fallen down with such force that you could not breathe beneath the pressure of the debris or see beyond the dust of the rubble?

My spirit was broken that morning. My heart was shattered. Thoughts of moving forward in life or taking positive action would have sounded absurd had anyone been there to suggest them. I could barely conceive of moving my body from that place on the couch. In fact, the only reason I was able to stand up and move was that the impulse to step away from Chris was so strong. I wanted to be as removed from him physically as I felt from him emotionally in that moment. I had never, ever felt so alone.

If you are feeling alone, know that I am here to journey with you, and so is God. He already desires to make you whole, even as the pieces of your known existence seem to be scattered to every corner of the universe. If the walls have tumbled, and you cannot recognize truth from lies in the remains, know that God's grace and power to transform your life are right there in the midst of the debris.

Hold on to your belief in redemption.

I kept mine. Please keep yours as we walk together toward healing.

20 Years Later

When I think back to this day in history, I don't have any sadness. I bet that surprises you. It does me too. Yes, I remember it, but it feels so far off. The heaviness of it no longer weighs me down. And the only thing I can attribute to this is what my mentor, Beth, told me many years ago: "You know when you've healed from something when you look back on it, and it's just a fact."

How does someone heal after such devastation? How do you get up from the pit you were thrown into? How do you get back to normal? Is there an actual normal? When this magnitude of a devastating event comes into your life, you really have two options: run away from God or run to Him.

Running away from God could feel like the right choice when you're smothered in pain. He's the miracle-working God you've learned about and followed. You've tried to live the right kind of life, and yet, in this terrible storm, you find yourself asking, "Why didn't You stop this, God?" But when you choose to run from Him, you've just given yourself a double portion of pain—the pain of the event and the pain of being far from God.

Running to God feels a bit unnatural, doesn't it? Like you're running back to someone who could have prevented this wretched thing you're experiencing. But when you're feeling the worst pain and betrayal you've ever felt is the absolute best time to run to God. Running to God and allowing Him to comfort you is when true healing and understanding begins.

As hard as it was, my healing journey happened because I stayed close to my Jesus, pressed into the pain, and grieved. With each moment of grief, I was simultaneously healing. Of course, I didn't know it at the time. But looking back, I realize that with every tear that fell, every word that was shouted, and every appropriate question that was asked of my husband allowed my shattered heart to become whole again.

Curiosity may have gotten the best of you, and you may be wondering about the baby that was born. He was born about five months after

Chris's confession to me. After several months and DNA testing, it was confirmed what Chris and I already knew in our hearts: Chris was the father. While his entrance into our lives was not planned or expected, he has been an incredible joy to us. His heart is kind, his spirit is sensitive, and his presence is comforting. (More about the blessing of his life in chapter 6.)

Grieve well, and trust Jesus. There is hope. There is always hope.

YOUR HEALING JOURNEY

1. Has your spouse ever caught you off guard with a heart-breaking confession? If so, what was your initial response?
2. Have you ever had to make a confession that you knew would break your loved one's heart? What finally helped you break your cycle of lies?
3. Have you ever received news that altered your life in a dramatic way? What was it, and how did you handle it? If you are able, take yourself back there mentally and allow God to bring healing as you grieve what you lost and as you journey through this book.
4. What happens when we bottle up our emotions and choose not to deal with them? Do you know people who do this? Has this been you? How can you become more able to share or express your emotions?
5. Discuss ways you can remain committed to your marriage even when you don't feel like it or when circumstances have caused a lack of connection between you and your spouse.