

"Old Paths" Baptist Ministries

Testimonial by Sharon Bliss

I met Bob in August 1961 after I had graduated from high school. I was attending college in Chula Vista, CA and Bob was attending college in San Diego, CA when we met. Bob was on active duty in the Navy. I had made up my mind that I was not going to get married until I was out of college and I was never going to date let alone marry a sailor. But a year after we met we were married. We have been married over 45 years. Although Bob was raised in a Christian home neither of us were saved when we got married. We were both very busy, too busy to allow God in our lives. Bob got out the Navy a year after we were married and we planned to live in the San Diego area. But ... After 3 months Bob decided to return to the Navy. I had never planned to become a military wife but that is what I became.

The first 8 years of our marriage we were always stationed where we could be together. Then the Lord saw fit to separate us, and for the first time Bob was away from his family. God used that and some other things to help him see his need for salvation. In January of 1970 he trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour. He started writing me letters about what had happened to him, and The Lord starting working in my life to help me see that I also needed to be saved. In August 1970 I trusted Christ as my Saviour.

It was then our marriage became much stronger and our love for each other and the Lord grew stronger. God helped our marriage so much. We claimed (**Genesis 31:49 ... *The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.***) whenever we were apart. Bob made 5 major cruises and all the pre-cruise deployment work-ups to go with the cruises the last 12 years of our career. God called Bob to preach just 2 years after we were saved so he preached aboard ship and in different foreign ports. I had never planned to be a preacher's wife, and yet, I became one. I got to send Bibles to the ship when someone got saved and had the chance and privilege of being able to minister to the wives that were left behind.

We loved being in the military and God used that time in our lives to help us grow. God always gave us a church to attend. He always gave Bob places to preach. Some churches we truly loved and some we'll call, 'real learning experiences for us.' We truly learned that Romans 8:28 and 29 are real.

Romans 8:28-29 -*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* ²⁹*For*

whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

We learned as a husband and wife and family to adjust and trust the Lord.

Proverbs 3:5-6 *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. ⁶In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.* We are now living in our 18th home and are in our 10th church.

I thank the Lord that He saved Bob first. I saw such a change in his life, and I can truly say he does live what he preaches. In 1972 (We had been saved about 2 years), when we were stationed in Atlanta, Ga. Bob was very busy in the Navy and the church we attended so I decided that I was being terribly neglected and that I was going to pack my bags and our two children and go back to CA. So when Bob got home one night I told him my plans. He did not get angry he just said, "I tell you what lets go in and pray and if you still want to leave then we will talk about it." We are still together. God is still teaching me many things. It is easy for us military wives to become very independent and self-reliant rather than relying on the Lord. It is an area I have to work on all the time.

In 1982, God worked things out for us to get out of the Navy and go to Bible College. I certainly never planned to become a Pastor's wife but after a few years of preparation, that is what I became. So for over 14 years I learned a lot more. Once again through some difficult and some great times we grew closer to the Lord. So I have been a preacher's wife for 38 years and can truly say God has never failed us or forsaken us. Don't ever give up on your marriage or forsake the Lord.

There are some things I have learned and would like to share with you:

There Are Some Real Pitfalls In Marriage

1. Over spending can be a real problem and is one of the most common problems in marriage.

Always discuss your spending and family budget with your husband. Do not get caught up in spending money that you don't have. Finances can cause lots of stress in a marriage. *(Sometimes, military wives have to learn how to manage finances in a hurry)*

2. An out of order house can cause a lot of stress and friction.

Be a domestic engineer and don't let your home be neglected. Take advantage of the many helps that are available to you today, books, magazines, TV home shows, and other ladies' ideas.

3. Discussing your family problems with others and not your own husband.

Don't discuss your personal problems with others. You and your husband discuss them and work them out together. As my husband teaches, have "*bylaws for the in-laws.*" We mother-in-laws need to learn to let go, and let God teach our children once they are married. We need to be available not a meddler. If you feel that you need help or counsel, go to your pastor first for advice.

4. **Keep your selves pretty for our husbands.**

Ladies our husbands see and have contact with lots of other women today. Do your best to stay attractive for your husband. You can be clean, hair fixed and attractive when he comes home.

5. **Disagreements in disciplining our children.**

Do not undermine your husband with the discipline of your children. Discuss your discipline plan together privately and do not ever let your children know you do not agree with your husband in some area. You need a united front when raising children. It does not matter weather they are adopted, stepchildren, grandchildren or children naturally born to you they all come with a sin nature and will do what is necessary to get what they want. Don't put your children above your husband. This is an area that can cause real problems in a marriage.

Some Other Things We Have Learned

1. **HAVE AND KEEP A FORGIVING SPIRIT.** God has taught me to work on having a forgiving spirit.

Colossians 3:13 *Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.* Ladies don't ever go to bed angry with your husband. Whatever the problem is it always seems much bigger in the morning if it is not resolved the night before. Don't let the devil get a victory!!!!!!

Ephesians 4:26 *Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:*

2. **BECOME A WIFE AND HOMEMAKER FOR THE LORD.** It can get tiresome to clean each week and then when you look around the house needs cleaning again. I learned to claim Col.3:17 and clean the toilet or floor or whatever for the Lord. **Colossians 3:17** *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*

Use a timer, set it when doing laundry and get your clothes right out of the dryer. Fold them and put them away quickly, and you will save yourself time and energy. My husband is really good about helping me if I need help. But, he had to learn that it is still manly if he helps his wife. In our parent's generation men just did not do household chores. Today our society teaches women don't need to do household chores if they work out of the home. Ladies, men still like a neat home. It does not have to be spotless but clean and homey. The Bible still says we are to be keepers at home. **Titus 2:5** *To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.*

Use that timer, set it and have everyone in your family work for just one hour and you will be surprised how much you will get accomplished. It is

pleasing to The Lord when we obey His Word . God will bless you and your home if you live in obedience to His word.

3. **BE THE WIFE GOD WANTS YOU TO BE.** It has been said, "*If you treat your husband like a King, he will treat you like a queen*" It is really true. Ladies don't correct your husband in public, be polite to him as you want him to be polite to you. Be available for your husband to go places, to talk, to be a friend if he needs it and keep the romance in your marriage.

Marriage can indeed be, "*a bit of heaven on earth*" if we will allow God to direct our lives

*presented by
Sharon Bliss*