

BATTLE CRIES

**FOR THE HONOR
OF THE VOW**

*THE **CORE**
OF EVERY SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE*

By Robert Cossick

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To Kathy, my wife and best friend, I love you with all my heart.

To Wes, Krissie, and Allie, daddy's pride and joy. I am very proud of you.

To Christopher Whinton, my good friend, advisor, and wingman.

To all my friends who provided valuable feedback on the many drafts of this book. Your time and contribution is greatly appreciated.

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Is This Your Battle?

*I know I made a vow to love and cherish my wife,
but I'm sick of this marriage, there's no hope of
restoring it, and I want out!*

For years, I've coached men in their marriages. Unfortunately, many of these men were contemplating divorce or had already been served divorce papers, having said or heard words similar to those above. These men were at the point similar to what a distance runner refers to as "hitting the wall." Runners know this point well; it's where they feel that physically and mentally they can't go any farther. Their system breaks down, their stride and rhythm are off, and everything begins to fall apart. Hitting the wall happens because warning signs were ignored or fundamental principles weren't maintained. At the wall, a decision must be made: regroup, make

adjustments, and move forward or give up and walk away.

Just like a runner who has hit the wall, the men I coached had been heading toward the wall for some time. They didn't make the effort to prevent it or they didn't recognize and act on the warning signs. In many cases, the wall seemed to come up fast, and they hit it hard. When they reach this point, the wounds are deep, and the wall between them and their wives is usually thick. Hitting the wall in marriage brings you to the same decision as that of the runner: regroup, make adjustments, and move forward or give up and walk away. Giving up doesn't fix anything; it only postpones the pain and ensures a future crash into the wall. Moving forward, however, gets you past the wall and back on track.

Has your marriage hit the wall? Is it heading for one? The following questions can help with this assessment. Score the below statements using the following scale:

1-Never; 2-Seldom; 3-Half the Time;

4-Usually; 5-Always

- I love spending time with my wife.
- My wife respects me.
- I look forward to arriving at home.
- My love for my wife is stronger today than when we got married.

Although every marriage can improve, a score of three or less in one or more areas may indicate you've hit the wall or are heading for one. In that case, know two things:

- You're not alone. Other men are and have been where you are.
- Your marriage can survive this. I've seen it, and you can experience it.

To that extent, incorporated are real life conversations and examples from interactions over the years. All names have been changed, of course.

Your Marriage Can Be Fixed

“Your marriage can be fixed.” This is a bold statement by today’s standards and one that will be maintained throughout this book. I strongly believe your marriage can be fixed, if you’re willing to regroup, make adjustments, and move forward and you’re willing to fight for it.

This fight is for more than just a short-term fix; it’s about getting to the root of the problem and attacking it. It’s about honor and integrity, and a fight where victory will require commitment, discipline, focus, and determination.

No Hope

No hope of restoration, a phrase often echoed by men in struggling marriages and followed by any number of reasons why they believe it to be true and why they conclude divorce, is their only option. To understand their conclusion, you must first understand *hope*.

Hope

Merriam-Webster defines hope as “to desire with expectation of obtainment.” The key word, *expectation*, invites one to make a choice. You can either expect that something will be obtained or expect that it won’t be obtained; the choice is yours. When you choose to believe there’s no hope of restoration, you’re choosing to *expect* your marriage to fail. It comes down to a simple choice. Will you choose to expect your marriage to fail or will you choose to honor your commitment and expect your marriage to recover?

A Critical Choice

Choices are made hundreds of times a day from simple to complex, minor to significant. One of the most significant choices you made was to marry your wife. The significance of that decision was symbolized with a ceremony, and your commitment to honor that decision was sealed

through your wedding vow. *For the Honor of the Vow* drives deep into that commitment, the core of your marriage. It challenges you to strive for a great marriage, to never give up, to expect to succeed, and inspires a willingness to change.

A survey of divorced couples conducted by the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative found eighty-five percent of those surveyed indicated that the lack of commitment was a major contributing factor to their divorce¹. Included in the study was a survey of currently married persons who had gone through a period when both believed their marriage to be in such serious trouble they had contemplated divorce. Ninety-two percent of these couples said they were glad they chose to work things out and were still together. For these couples, recovery started with a choice to get through their problems and to rebuild their marriage. You, too, must choose or, more specifically, *expect* your marriage to be restored. Anything short of this leaves the trump card of

divorce in the deck. If divorce is an option, it will likely get played as soon as it gets tough.

Expecting your marriage to recover means you're throwing out the divorce card as an option. It also means you're going to get serious about rebuilding your marriage and winning back your wife. Getting serious starts with getting honest, so let me start by being honest with you.

No Hidden Agenda

For the record, I'm not a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, counselor nor a minister. I'm simply an individual who's fed up with the rise in divorce and the devastation it brings.

My point of view comes from years of teaching a married couple's Bible study class in my church and from interacting with many husbands in troubled marriages who either walked away from their marriage or decided to stay and fight for it.

I've seen through these men the devastation that follows a divorce, and it drives my passion for reaching husbands before the damage becomes irreversible. To a greater extent, from those who chose to stay and fight, I've come to understand and have committed myself to teaching:

Your marriage can be restored

Your marriage can have passion

You can have a thriving marriage

It should also be noted, my wife and I are celebrating our eighteenth year of a thriving and passionate marriage.

The goal of this book is to inspire you to make a choice to:

Get serious about the fight for your marriage,

Believe that you can revive the passion, and

Expect that you can build or rebuild a strong marriage for the years to come.

You can do this!