

Foreword by Alyssa and Jefferson Bethke

JODIE BERNDT

Author of the bestselling *Praying the Scriptures* series

Praying ^{the} Scriptures for Your Marriage

Trusting God with Your
Most Important Relationship



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Praying the Scriptures for Your Marriage

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Foreword

Jeff and I recently celebrated our ten-year anniversary. I still remember our wedding day like it was yesterday, jumping up and down when the pastor pronounced us husband and wife, rejoicing that after all the years of waiting and praying for my husband, God gave me a man who surpassed my dreams.

Then I vividly remember a month into marriage, sitting on my bathroom floor crying and thinking, *What in the world have I done?* We had gotten into a fight, and I just remember thinking, *This isn't going to work.*

I'm sure most brides can relate.

Ten years into our marriage, if I were to sit down at a coffee shop with you, I would tell you with tears running down my face that it's so much better than I ever dreamed. So much harder, and so much better. We've gone through seasons of financial stress, pregnancies, grief, raising littles, moves, new business ventures, depression, and chronic pain. Dreams fulfilled, dreams dashed—and our hearts trying to



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stay awake and alive in it all. We've had seasons when we've felt like two ships passing in the night, when we're running at different paces, and when I've felt very alone. We've fought hard—with each other and for our marriage.

And now as we finish this lap of ten years, our marriage is so much deeper and richer than I could have ever imagined on our wedding day. With our honest confessions, hurting hearts, prayers, pain, and dreams, we've learned that these are opportunities to know one another better, to choose to be a team, to pursue one another, to honor each other, and to open up our hearts to each other and to the Lord and learn to know ourselves better. Because the truth is, we're not the same people we were when we said, "I do," and I'm thankful for that, but that can also be scary as we change and grow.

Recently, I felt the Lord give me an invitation to tenderly love my husband like no one else has. The Lord told me he has chosen me to be the one to love him—and it truly is a gift. Jodie's book couldn't have come at a better time for us. Not only do I feel like Jodie and Robbie are counseling us with love, tenderness, and laughter, but they're also providing us with the greatest tool—praying through the Scriptures for each other. This is the best gift for any marriage because only through the Holy Spirit and God's Word and prayer can our hearts change and choose the other person, love unconditionally, forgive generously, open up our hearts to them, and entrust God with our desires and hopes. He alone is the

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one who changes our hearts, opens our eyes, and fills us with hope as we wait on him and seek his face. Prayer is the glue in any happy marriage.

I wanted to meet Jodie when I first read her book *Praying the Scriptures for Your Children*—and then read it again, and again and began to keep all of her books by my bedside. She is deep and wise and has a treasure chest of Scripture hidden in her heart.

She once told me that when she's praying on her screened porch, she will sometimes reach out her hand because God's presence is so thick, she can almost feel it. That is the person I want to be thirty years from now—a woman who seeks the Lord faithfully, who has God's Word stored in her heart, and who is so full of joy and trust that it radiates out of me. Jodie is a gift to us all—a woman we can all learn from, but especially those who are a bit younger. She is the Titus 2 woman who teaches the younger women to love their husbands.

Read this book and then keep it by your bedside and pray through it regularly. It will transform your marriage and your heart.

A Note from Jeff: *I strongly encourage you guys to read through this book too! It was an immense gift to me, and here's why. I deeply desire to pray with Alyssa, but I often find myself falling asleep soon after we start (anyone with little kids will understand this) or struggling to carve out time for prayer with her as we go through our day. This book is ideal for praying*

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both with her and for her. It took out all the guesswork and is incredibly practical and helpful while also serving as a compass from a married couple who has traversed these terrains before. Even if you only use one or two of the prayers at the end of each chapter, you'll be taking a major step toward connection and intimacy, one that has the power to impact your marriage both now and in the years to come.

Thank you, Jodie, for fighting on behalf of our marriages by teaching us how to bring them to the throne room of God and giving us the greatest tool to develop a marriage that is full of love and tenderness—one that pursues a deep knowing of each other and displays the good news of Jesus to all onlookers. I pray that Jeff and I have a marriage that glorifies Jesus—to our kids and to the world—and is a legacy of a love that can only come from the Great Lover of our souls.

Alyssa and Jefferson Bethke