



BECKY THOMPSON  
OF SCISSORTAIL SILK

# LOVE *Unending*



REDISCOVERING YOUR MARRIAGE  
IN THE MIDST OF MOTHERHOOD



Praise for  
*Love Unending*

“Becky Thompson is the real deal. In her book *Love Unending*, she does not write about lofty theories for building a marriage but rather practical tools that we all can use. I love her honest, down-to-earth style! She writes to those of you who are trying to rekindle the love with which you started your marriage as you’re raising children. Even though I don’t have young children in my home, I loved the twenty-one-day challenge! This book is for all of us who want to have a passionate, love-filled marriage!”

—HOLLY WAGNER, pastor of Oasis Church, founder of She Rises, and author of *Find Your Brave*

“Too often and too easily I take my husband for granted, and inevitably our marriage suffers, which is why I’m so grateful for Becky’s latest book, *Love Unending*. Her words of wisdom and grace equipped me with twenty-one daily (and doable!) ways to be intentional in loving my husband *in light of* how I have first been loved by God in Jesus Christ. I found myself overwhelmed with gratitude for the wonderful qualities in my husband that often go unnoticed. This book was a gift to our marriage.”

—JEANNIE CUNNION, author of *Parenting the Wholehearted Child*

“This book convicted, inspired, and challenged me and had me laughing, all at the same time! Becky beautifully walks us through

the real-life issues of marriage that anyone can relate to, while offering a life raft to higher ground. As a wife and mom, I found the daily readings were just the right length for my schedule, and I can honestly say, if you take the time to do the daily challenges, your heart toward your husband and your marriage will be greatly impacted!”

—JENNIFER TOLEDO, pastor of Expression 58 Church,  
president of the Justice Group, and author of *Children  
and the Supernatural* and *Eyes That See and Ears That  
Hear*

“*Love Unending* is a wellspring of life for the weary mom who believes she doesn’t have enough energy to keep passion alive in her marriage. Becky articulates the struggles we all face every day as we strive to balance loving our children and husbands well. Sharing personal stories of her own marriage, Becky relates to every mom and wife, encouraging us and challenging us to keep on loving. This book will convict your heart in the deepest way, reminding you of the significance of pursuing an intimate relationship with your husband, despite the demands of motherhood. Whether you have little ones or older kids, you need to read *Love Unending*! I am confident that it will speak to your heart, inspire you, and encourage you in ways you didn’t even know you needed! This book is going to radically impact marriages everywhere!”

—JENNIFER SMITH, author of *The Unveiled Wife* and  
founder of UnveiledWife.com

“The most difficult thing about marriage is the people. When two sinful people enter into one holy covenant, it can be messy. *Love Unending* offers the reader prayerful steps to take toward her husband in a world that constantly pulls families apart. If you’re looking for practical marriage encouragement, this is it!”

—KRISTEN WELCH, best-selling author of *Raising Grateful Kids in an Entitled World*

“The first time I met Becky, I knew her books would be as real and passionate as she is. She embodies these very qualities you see on the pages of *Love Unending*. As a mother and also a wife of thirty-six years to my precious husband, I have been challenged by this book to be more intentional about my relationship with my mate. The chapters on listening intently and touching purposefully caused me to dig deep and look at my intentions. Thank you, Becky, for this gift of love to the body of Christ.”

—CYNDY MOORING, copastor of Celebration of Life Church, Baytown, Texas

“In *Love Unending* Becky answers the very real question so many women wrestle with: How do I balance motherhood and marriage well? With grace, humility, and hope, Becky uses very personal examples to guide us to the answer, which is, of course, always found in Christ. In this book we have the opportunity to learn how to fall in love all over again each new day, as each new day builds our forever.”

—LAUREN CASPER, author of *It's Okay About It*

“If you are a busy mom struggling to keep your marriage a priority, this twenty-one-day journey is for you! With transparency and encouragement, Becky shares the struggles moms face to keep their marriages strong in the midst of motherhood and shows how making one simple decision can impact your marriage today.”

—RUTH SCHWENK, founder of TheBetterMom.com and  
coauthor of *For Better or For Kids* and *Pressing Pause*

“When you are up to your eyeballs in diapers and dishes, in homework and housework, sometimes you forget to peer over the piles and notice that man you married—the one quietly standing there, blending unassumingly into the background. *Love Unending* will take you on a deliberate twenty-one-day stroll back down memory lane. There you’ll discover anew the love you once felt for your husband loooooong before the first kiddo stepped onto your household terrain. This inspiring book—part memoir and part personal journal, tied neatly with a big bow of biblical encouragement—will guide you gently as you endeavor to become the believer, wife, and mother God desires you to be.”

—KAREN EHMAN, Proverbs 31 Ministries speaker and *New York Times* best-selling author of *Keep It Shut: What to Say, How to Say It, and When to Say Nothing at All* and *Listen, Love, Repeat: Other-Centered Living in a Self-Centered World*

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LOVE  
*Unending*

REDISCOVERING YOUR MARRIAGE  
IN THE MIDST OF MOTHERHOOD



WATERBROOK



## LOVE UNENDING

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*For my husband, Jared.  
A long time ago, I promised  
to love you with all that I am  
and all I ever will be. This is my journey  
to live out those words every single day.*

*And for our children, Kolton, Kadence, and Jaxton.  
May you always know that your home is built  
on Love unending.*



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## *Introduction*

# *The Secret of Love Unending*

*I*f you were eight months pregnant, you probably wouldn't consider it a blessing to live an hour and a half away from the hospital where you would need to deliver your baby. But I did, because that's what brought me to my parents' house that night—the night I found out my dad's secret.

My parents live about fifteen minutes from the hospital where I would be delivering my third child, Jaxton. The hospital has a neonatal intensive care unit, and due to some personal risk factors, we knew a NICU stay might be likely. I didn't want to go into labor and have to make the long drive to the hospital. I need to mention that I live in the middle of northwest Oklahoma, and there are mostly fields and two-lane roads between my house and Oklahoma City. I had this fear that I would deliver my baby in the middle of nowhere next to a wheat field with an audience of grazing cows nearby. So it seemed like a good idea to take my other two

## Introduction

children—Kolton, who was four, and Kadence, who was three—and stay with my parents as my due date got closer. My husband, Jared, had to stay home and work, but he was prepared to come running the minute I called and said it was time.

My dad and I were the only two people in the living room that night. It was about nine thirty, and my mom was putting my two little kids to bed in her guest room. As I sat there with my dad, I couldn't help but reflect on everything that had led to that moment.

It had been an exhausting eight months. I had not only been growing a baby and taking care of my family. I had been growing an online women's ministry, through all forms of social media, with a million monthly readers and forty thousand followers across the globe. I had been keeping up with thousands of e-mails and messages while also trying to keep up with two busy preschoolers. Every area of my life had felt overwhelming some days.

I hadn't planned to take on the enormous responsibility of caring for the hearts of so many women online, but God wasn't surprised. He knew exactly what would happen when I sat down at my computer eight months earlier. I thought I was writing a simple letter on my blog to other overwhelmed women struggling to balance the responsibilities of being a wife and a mom. But God knew I would wake up the next morning to find that my post had been shared around the world, forever changing lives (my own included). He knew my online readership would go from a thousand followers to forty thousand in just a few months. He knew that nearly ten

million people would read those words and say, “I feel the same way.” And God knew what they would need next. He knew they would need to know my dad’s secret.

I had received countless messages from women saying, “Yes, I struggle to be both wife and mom. But what do I do about it? How do I balance both? How do I remember to be a wife when it takes all I’ve got to be a momma?” I wanted to give them a simple answer. I wanted to provide a solution that would change their marriages and restore their hope. But I didn’t have it. I didn’t know what to tell them, because I was struggling myself to figure out how to keep the love in my marriage fresh. But as I looked over at my dad that night, I thought maybe, just maybe, he could tell me what to do next.

My dad is one of the most patient men I know. Actually, he is *the* most patient man I know. I have never heard him raise his voice to anyone, including my mom and my sister and me. He forgives quickly. He loves deeply. And he is always rational and purposeful with his words. Most of what I know about God and His love for me, I learned from and experienced through my relationship with my dad.

This is why I knew I could trust my dad’s advice about marriage. It is because of the way he has treated my mom for nearly forty years. I can’t think of a single time my dad was angry with my mom for more than a few moments, and I can’t think of a single time he was mean. He has always been a wonderful example of a

## Introduction

godly husband and father, and I have always been able to go to him for advice about anything. I remember sitting in the living room looking at him that night and saying, “Dad, what do I tell them? How do I help these women rediscover their marriages in the middle of everything else? How do I help them fall back in love? What do I say to the women who feel as if too much time has passed, who fear it is too late?”

He and I knew that my desperation to find an answer was about more than my pregnancy hormones. It was about saving marriages and healing broken families. It was about giving honest advice to husbands and wives before many even realized they needed help. It was about helping women just like me turn toward their husbands when they feel that so many other things are pulling them away.

What my dad said next changed my life. Sitting across from me in his wingback chair with a late-night cup of coffee in his hands and with the only light coming from the lamp over his shoulder, he leaned in as if to tell me a secret.

“Becky, just tell them to do what I do,” he whispered.

I was curious. What secret had my dad been keeping for the last thirty-seven years?! What was his trick to keeping love and joy and peace in his heart all the days of his married life? *What do you do, Dad?* I thought, but he continued before I had the chance to ask.

He looked over his shoulder to make sure my momma wasn’t coming, and with a twinkle in his eye and a sly little smile, he whis-

pered, “Every day when I wake up, I tell myself it is the first day I am married to your mom.”

He waited for me to catch the truth behind his words, and he flashed a grin when he saw the light bulb come on for me. He nodded. It was as if he knew I was beginning to understand how powerful it would be to live that way. How transformative. How revolutionary.

“Becky, if every day I wake up and tell myself that it is the day I married your mom, then it changes everything. She is just my bride. She is the woman I fell for, and she doesn’t have to prove a thing to earn my love. It’s a new start every day. There isn’t a yesterday full of hurt or offense. There isn’t a need for forgiveness. There isn’t anything I need to overlook. There isn’t a list of things I’m ‘counting’ against her. There isn’t a chance for space to separate us or for us to feel as if we are an old married couple. It’s just new love every day.”

And there it was. My dad’s secret.

The love that my dad shows my momma is an endless sort of love. A love that doesn’t seem manufactured. It is limitless, but I had never understood it. I had never understood how he could love so effortlessly, forgive so easily, and live so joyfully. But the reason was right there in front of me—spoken out loud for the very first time. For the last thirty-seven years, my dad has daily made the decision to live as if he were a newlywed—and that attitude has made all the difference.



## Introduction

That night I sat up for a long time after everyone else had gone to bed. I couldn't stop thinking about my dad's words and my relationship with my husband. For so long I had been busy with everyone and everything else. I had needed help with our kids, but I had wanted it my way and on more than one occasion had resolved to do things myself to get them done "right." I had pushed Jared away without realizing it, and as he withdrew further, I was frustrated that he didn't seem to love me the way he used to. I was mad about little things that seemed to build up into much bigger things. I was hurt by little ways my husband made me feel as though he didn't value my work or my time. And I was tired. I didn't know how I was ever going to give any more of myself when I felt as though I was already giving everything I had.

To be honest, I wasn't sure we could ever again experience what we had when we first fell in love: that newness of what it meant to be fully caught up in each other. I wasn't sure I could be the best wife when I was so busy trying to be the best mom. On top of it all, as I thought about my dad's advice, I realized I had been waiting for Jared to love me first. I had been waiting for him to be affectionate or compassionate or considerate so I could respond. I had asked myself over and over, "Why doesn't he just . . ." I kept thinking how I wanted Jared to change.

The answer my dad had given me for the women who read my blog ended up being what I needed to hear the most. My dad's advice was for me just as much as it was for anyone else. But I wasn't

sure I wanted to love my husband as I did on the day we married. On our way home from the ceremony, I think we argued about where we were going to stop for gas. For me, the time when love came easiest was long before marriage. Love came easiest in the very beginning of our relationship. I suppose that is why they call it falling in love. It doesn't take much effort.

If I wanted to challenge myself to love my husband the way my dad loves my mom, I had to go back to the beginning—the very beginning. I had to go back before kids, back before marriage, back to those early days when it all began.

Truly, time and children have a way of changing every area of our married lives. But what if we could rekindle that fresh sort of love? What if we could love our husbands first? What if we could change the climate of our marriages by treating each day as though it were the first day we fell in love? We might not be able to go back to the beginning, and we might not even want to. The lessons we have learned in the time that has passed are invaluable. But what if we could couple the lessons we've learned in our married lives with the acts of love that came so effortlessly in our early days of courtship? What if my dad's secret is just what we desperately need?

For the next twenty-one days, you and I are going to remember how we felt and what we did when we first fell in love with our husbands. Armed with my dad's advice and my own experiment of living out his words, I will guide us step by step as we realize that walking in love can be far more beautiful than falling in love.

## Introduction

Each day we will discuss one area of marriage that has likely changed since our first days of being in love. We are going to examine some of the thought processes and behaviors of those early days and see how to continue them now that we are moms. We will cover topics such as speaking kindly, connecting intentionally, and forgiving quickly. There may be days when you think, *We are doing so well with this already!* Celebrate these days! Keep being intentional in these areas as you recognize the importance of connecting in these aspects of marriage. On the other hand, there may be a few days when you think, *Wow. I didn't even realize I felt this way. I needed this reminder.* While the topic for a particular day might not fit your situation perfectly, each one has been designed to remind you of a specific area that has the potential to be better today. Each day is a chance to change your perspective and love your husband intentionally.

As I completed this process, I confess there were days I did not want to try anymore. I was tired. I was still consumed with everything else required of me, and the last thing I wanted to do was remember how great things used to be—or celebrate a husband who I felt was the problem that day. On those days I remembered that this process is about more than just reflecting, because anyone can look back. It is about refocusing our intentions and moving forward.

At the end of each daily read, you will be challenged to walk deeper and deeper into love with your husband. I will ask you to

make a few predictions about how you think the day will go or to respond to a few questions. Then we will pray together and prepare our hearts for the challenge ahead. As you complete each day, I hope you will return to the chapter and use the prepared space to journal some of your thoughts and reflections, documenting your progress along the way. As you move from day one to day twenty-one, you have the chance to document exactly what God does through this process. I sincerely believe you will be glad you did!

Friend, there are many routes we can take into our future, but if we want to experience a love unending, we might just have to go back to the beginning. We may have to start fresh daily as we wipe the slate clean and treat our husbands as though it were the first day we fell in love . . . for the next twenty-one days. And perhaps when we have finished this journey together, we will fully understand the secret to rediscovering marriage in the midst of motherhood.



## Day 1

### Greet Lovingly

Greet one another with a holy kiss.

2 Corinthians 13:12, NASB

How did you meet your husband? Maybe through mutual friends? Or in school? Perhaps it was in the middle of a crowded bar.

Jared and I met at the mall. Now, before you imagine some cheesy exchange of telephone numbers in the middle of the food court, let me clarify. We actually swapped digits inside a shoe store. So, clearly much more romantic.

At the end of my freshman year of college, I took a job working at one of those freestanding kiosks that sell clothes shipped in from Los Angeles, and Jared worked at the shoe store right next to my cart. Every day I went to work hoping that he was working too. I wanted to get to know him more because, well, *he was so handsome!*

## Day 1

Do you remember how you felt in the beginning of your relationship with your husband? Do you remember how much you wanted to spend time with him? How much you looked forward to being together?

Jared and I loved spending time together so much that six months after we first said hello, I answered yes when he asked me to marry him. We wanted to spend all our time together . . . forever.

Now, ten years into forever, I find it easy to forget how much I adored that sweet guy in the beginning. Time has a way of fading those first moments. What about you? Take a second and look back. Can you recall those memories and those feelings? Can you remember how much you looked forward to seeing him after you had been apart?

Every day we overlook so many opportunities to show our husbands that we love them. We don't do this intentionally. We are simply preoccupied with everything else going on around us. Greeting each other is often one of those missed opportunities. How did you greet your husband when you first fell in love with him? If he came over to pick you up for a date or just to spend time with you, did you get up to meet him? Or did you keep doing whatever else you were doing?

My guess is you didn't ignore him. In fact, you probably hugged him. You might have even kissed him. But whatever you did, he likely never doubted that you were happy to be with him again, even if you didn't say those exact words.

As time goes on, the excitement wears off. Some days we are so caught up in our routines that when we do look forward to seeing our husbands come home at the end of the day, it is because we are more interested in their help than their hearts.

I realized this a few years ago when Jared was late getting home from work one day. I should explain first that not only does my husband have a job that often requires him to put in extra hours or to work out of town, but he also is the mayor of our small town and a volunteer firefighter. In addition, he is the media coordinator at our church, overseeing the lights and sound and everything else that ensures our service is broadcast online. Let's just say he gets home late many nights—if he gets home at all. I don't remember what caused him to be late this particular night, but I know I had spent all day taking care of a sick baby and a clingy toddler. It was one of those “Let's see if I can make dinner with one arm and a baby on my hip” kind of nights. The house was a disaster, I had a million things I needed to get done, and I was exhausted. My patience was running thin, and, really, I was just *done*. Have you ever had a day like that? Maybe after a difficult day at work, you just wanted to rest when you came home. Or maybe it was one of those days at home when you desperately needed a break.

I knew that Jared likely had a long day too, but, truthfully, his level of fatigue was the least of my concerns. I just wanted him to come home so I could tag out for a minute and not be in charge of everything in my world. I planned to hand the baby to him as soon



as he walked in the door so I could do something crazy for myself . . . like make dinner with two hands. I watched the clock for hours that night, desperate for it to finally indicate that help would walk in the door any minute. As the time got later, I started looking out the window, hoping to see his truck turn onto our street.

The funny thing is, I used to look out the window for his truck when we were dating too. I just looked with a different sort of expectation. I was eager to see him, to spend time with him, to hold him, to be near him. I was looking for *him*. Now I feel as if I am mostly looking for his help.

I wonder if this is ever true for you too. Has the way you look for your husband changed? I think our husbands sense the shift in how we look for them and, consequently, in how we greet them.

Most of us have the opportunity to greet our husbands at least once a day. Some of us stay at home, and others of us head out the door to work before our husbands are even awake. Some husbands come home every night, and others work out of town, work the night shift, or are deployed overseas. But no matter our circumstances, at some point we all get a chance to greet our husbands after we have been apart.

Growing up, I watched my dad come in the front door at the end of his day and walk straight to my mom, put his hand on the small of her back, and give her a kiss. If my sister and I ran out onto the driveway to greet him at his car or hugged him as he walked through the door, Dad would always hug us and then head directly

for my mom. He didn't sit down or change out of his work clothes or check the mail before saying hello. Mom came first, and she still does.

I want you to think of the last time you greeted your husband. Did you race to the door and greet him with a kiss? Did you let the kids get to him first while you stayed back changing a diaper or cooking dinner? Did you shout from the other room, "Hey! Glad you're home! Can you help me start bath time?" Or perhaps your husband gets home before you, and you are the one walking in the door at the end of a long day. How did you say hello when you saw your husband for the first time today? Now, how does that compare to the way you greeted him when you first fell in love?

How we greet our husbands can set the tone for how we will interact the rest of our day or evening together. Letting your husband know you are happy to see him—not just ready for his help—is the perfect way to start experiencing love unending.

### TODAY'S CHALLENGE

The next time you have the opportunity to greet your husband, do what you would have done when you first fell in love with him. Maybe that means walking away from cooking dinner to meet him at the door and give him a hug. Maybe it means waking up and telling him that you love him and missed him while he was away. Or maybe it means getting to the door before the kids so you can

## Day 1

be the first to welcome him home. Think of the anticipation you used to feel when you knew you were going to spend time with him, and then use that memory to show your husband just how happy you are to still be with him today. If your husband works out of town or you won't see him today, consider how you answered his phone calls when you first fell in love. Answer the phone as you would have then. Sometimes we have to remind our hearts how we used to feel so we can get out of our routines and reignite the romance.

Take a few minutes to predict how your husband will respond when you greet him. Do you think he will be suspicious? Enthusiastic? Or do you think he will even notice your efforts?

*I think my husband will . . .*

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## *Greet Lovingly*

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### TALKING TO THE FATHER

Lord, thank You for being a God who rises to greet me. Thank You for not turning Your back on me but always being eager to spend time with me. Help me remember to show the same kind of love to my husband. Help me show him that I value his heart and not just his hands. Help me show him that he is wanted and welcome. Above all, Lord, fan the flame of love in my heart so I can live fully in the promise that Your love for us and through us is everlasting.

Thank You in advance for the grace to begin this journey of loving my husband as if it were the first day we fell in love. I know You will be faithful to help me in this journey and to transform my heart as I commit to walking in love with my husband daily. I acknowledge that I can't do any of this without You, and I thank You for caring about my marriage and promising You are with me. I love You, Lord, and I commit this process to You. May You be glorified through it all. In Jesus's name I pray. Amen.

## Day 1

### REFLECT

Describe what happened when you saw your husband. Did it feel awkward? It might take a few days for this interaction to feel normal, but that is why we will repeat this challenge daily for the remainder of our journey. Every time we greet our husbands, we have an opportunity to let them know they are wanted and welcome. Let's take advantage of that daily.

*When I saw my husband . . .*

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*Greet Lovingly*

*Here is how my heart feels today . . .*

[illegible]

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