

EVERY WOMAN'S BATTLE: DISCOVERING GOD'S PLAN FOR SEXUAL AND EMOTIONAL FULFILLMENT

“At one time, I was having extramarital affairs with five different men.”

The opening sentence of Shannon Ethridge's new book is an attention-grabber. But Ethridge, a writer, speaker and lay-counselor, is never one to pull punches. She considers herself an advocate for sexual integrity, and she's always ready to tell it like it is—which is exactly why Ethridge wrote ***Every Woman's Battle: Discovering God's Plan for Sexual and Emotional Fulfillment*** (WaterBrook Press, July 2003). Just as the best-selling *Every Man's Battle* (WaterBrook Press) challenges men to address the sexual temptations in their lives, ***Every Woman's Battle*** challenges women to live sexually and emotionally pure lives—and identifies stumbling blocks that keep women from this goal.

Shannon Ethridge shares that the “extramarital affairs” she referenced in the book's opening sentence were not sexual in nature, but emotional. Each man—a coach, a teacher, a former boyfriend, a friend and a movie star—possessed qualities that drew her to each one and away from her husband, causing her to see her husband in an unfavorable light. According to Ethridge, this dangerous life of fantasy and comparison, which many women consider harmless or normal, is the first step in compromised sexual integrity. Only through God's healing love was Ethridge able to overcome habits that robbed her of the intimacy—with God and her husband—she really desired. It is her own personal journey that serves as both motivation and example in Ethridge's campaign for a sexual revolution—a campaign that surprisingly begins with women.

Winning the war against sexual and emotional temptation, Ethridge asserts in her new book, is essentially a heart issue for women. She writes in ***Every Woman's Battle***, “While a man's battle begins with what he takes in through his eyes, a woman's begins with her heart and her thoughts.” Ethridge has observed that women often find themselves unintentionally caught up in destructive relationships or sexual activities as they seek to have their emotional needs met. Ethridge writes, “When a woman gives her mind, heart, and soul away, her body always follows. The four are intricately connected.” Through personal stories from women across the country and stories of the author's own struggles, ***Every Woman's Battle*** defines these four unique components of female sexuality—mind, heart, soul and body—and helps women safeguard each against sexual immorality that can ultimately destroy relationships with husbands, husbands-to-be, and with God.

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Although Ethridge realizes a Christian woman's sexuality is often considered a taboo subject, making it difficult to discuss with either a husband or other confidants, she hopes this book will open the topic for discussion in Christian circles. Shannon Ethridge focuses on five areas of sexual challenge for the readers of ***Every Woman's Battle***:

- The Battle is Particular to Women: Understanding the complexity of sexuality and understanding women's unique struggle with emotional integrity;
- The Battle is Waged With Misinformation: Recognizing the myths about sexuality that dominate our culture and how they affect a woman's sexual integrity;
- The Battle Can Be Controlled: Realizing your tendencies to look for love in all the wrong places, whether this is a physical, mental, or emotional battle for you;
- The Battle Can Be Won: Reconnecting with your husband (or connect with your future husband) so that you can enjoy the sexual and emotional fulfillment God intends for marriage;
- The Battle is the Lord's: Avoiding placing unrealistic expectations on your current or future husband and connecting with the only true source of fulfillment.

Ethridge also offers a new defense against sexual myths she has identified in her thirteen years of speaking and counseling with women. She has seen how women tend to underestimate factors in their lives and the effects that they can have on relationships, which confuse the issue and make sexual integrity far more challenging. Women, she claims, often find one or more of the following issues a personal challenge in the area of sexuality:

- Comparing herself or her husband to other people;

- Media, such as movies, television shows, books, music and websites;
- Fantasies about others during love-making;
- Fantasies about a future spouse if her husband were to die;
- Masturbation;
- Emotional sexual temptation and the guilt that often leads to the physical;
- Assuming she is alone in her sexual struggles and that other women would judge her.

Shannon Ethridge discusses each of these issues, offering Biblical guidance as well as practical direction on how to overcome obstacles to sexual and emotional fulfillment.

Over the years, Ethridge heard many publishers say that women wouldn't be interested in a book on sexual issues, so her book idea remained unwritten. Meanwhile, Ethridge watched *Every Man's Battle* climbing to the top of the best-seller lists as it addressed sexual temptations for men. "Many of these issues aren't just common to men, but to women also," she thought. "They simply manifest themselves differently!" Soon Ethridge met Stephen Arterburn, founder and chairman of New Life Clinics, and author of the best-selling *Every Man Series*. Arterburn had been hearing from women who wanted a book to help them with their own struggles: "When I heard Shannon's story and met her, I knew she could write this book," he comments. "Shannon's heart had been healed as she embraced God's plan for sexual and emotional fulfillment. Her openness, wisdom, honesty, and integrity will also help other women discover lives of sexual and emotional integrity."

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Every Woman's Battle: Discovering God's Plan for Sexual and Emotional Fulfillment is the latest title in WaterBrook Press's successful *Every Man Series*, which has sold almost 500,000 copies since 2000. The series simultaneously landed three titles on the CBA Best-Seller list for trade-paper nonfiction (July 2002) and has spawned church study classes and men's conferences across the country. In addition to the best-selling titles in the series, other products include workbooks (such as the *Every Man's Battle Workbook* and *Every Woman's Battle Workbook*), audio books, Bible studies and more.

Shannon Ethridge is the founder of Women at the Well Ministries, which helps women struggling with sex, love, and relationship issues, and is a popular speaker on these issues at churches, on college campuses and at youth ministry events. She is certified by the Baylor Institute for Sexual Health and has participated in the National Leadership Summit on Abstinence in Washington, D.C. Ethridge has a passion for instilling sexual values in children at an early age, challenging young people to embrace a life of sexual purity, ministering to women who have looked for love in all the wrong places, and challenging all women to make Jesus the primary love of their lives. She and husband Greg have been married for 13 years and live in East Texas with their two children, Erin and Matthew.

WaterBrook Press (www.waterbrookpress.com) was launched in September 1996 as an autonomous religious publishing division of Random House Inc., the largest publisher in the world. Since the release of its first books in February 1998, WaterBrook's publishing program has grown dramatically and now includes such best-selling and well-respected authors as Dr. Dan Allender, Steve Arterburn, Kay Arthur, Jerry Bridges, T. Davis Bunn, Dr. Larry Crabb, Nicky Cruz, Os Guinness, Liz Curtis Higgs, and Jane Kirkpatrick. With the purchase of Shaw Books in 2000, WaterBrook has added the rich resources of this outstanding line, which includes the Fisherman Bible Studyguides. WaterBrook Press is committed to publishing a broad spectrum of books that provide Christians encouragement, support, and challenge in every aspect of life.

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EVERY WOMAN'S BATTLE
Discovering God's Plan for Sexual and Emotional Fulfillment

By Shannon Ethridge

With foreword and afterword by Stephen Arterburn

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