



New Beginnings Marriage Ministry

Living Joyfully and United as One

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one." Matthew 19:5-6a

**Al and Becky Dowden
Married February 25, 1984
Houston, TX**

New Beginnings: How did you two first meet?

Becky: At church in the singles & college department. It was my first time to go to Champion Forest Baptist Church. I had been away at college and my parents had joined the church. Al had seen me at the movies the week before, but I hadn't seen him. He told his friend when I walked in that I was the girl from the movies and he came and sat down behind me and introduced himself. We went on our first date the next week.

New Beginnings: What did you love about the other when you first met?

Becky: I loved his devotion to God, his loving & kind nature, and his positive outlook on life. I remember thinking I had "come home" on our very first date. I was not looking to get married anytime in the near future so I couldn't believe how strong my feelings were for him.

Al: Everything! I felt, deep in my heart, that this was a major connection. I felt like I had "come home" to her beautiful heart.

New Beginnings: What do you love about the other today?

Becky: The same things, plus how he loves me so unconditionally. God has blessed me with such a loving husband. I truly see God's love shining through Al. He has a strong commitment to stay connected to God and that makes all the difference in our relationship.

Al: What do I love about Beck? I could write for hours... She's real. She's beautiful inside and out. She's the things that I'm not: she lives from her heart and I have a difficult time feeling my heart. She has no sense of denial; I live too much of my life behind that veil of denial. Her realistic thought patterns balance my unrealistic ideas. We balance each other out. She's the most loving person I've ever known. I came from a family that is not all that loving. I have learned so much about love from her life's example. She is the most real and honest person I've ever known. I came from a family that avoided all conflict and used the tool of dishonesty to make conflict avoidance easy. Beck has guided me to grow so that I am now an honest person.



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New Beginnings: What strength do you bring to the marriage?

Becky: A dependency on God & good communication skills. Like most women, I want to always express how I feel and ask Al a lot of questions. Sometimes this can be annoying to men, but I think it is something God gave us to help men better understand us and themselves. I always want Al to get to the bottom of his own feelings and actions. He's such a good guy because he is always willing to try.

Al: My main strength is that I am willing and able to work on the parts of my life that need work. She sees me as I really am instead of me seeing myself as I want to be. She helps me awaken my heart and our love for each other motivates me to work very hard on that. I am a very optimistic and strong person which helps me guide our family when we encounter difficult times.

New Beginnings: How would you describe your marriage today?

Becky: Very happy. After 25 years, we have a very deep love for one another. We continually work to stay emotionally connected with each other and that pays great dividends.

Al: I would describe our marriage as one in a lifetime. We work on ourselves individually and our marriage every day. Our connection is something that we deal with every day.

New Beginnings: What role does God play in your marriage?

Becky: We couldn't make it without Him. Marriage is hard (all relationships are) and people need a source of love & truth to keep them anchored and loving.

Al: God is everything in our marriage. He put us together. I could write for hours about this. We could not live without God in our individual lives and our marriage.

New Beginnings: What scripture verse best describes your marriage?

Becky: Jeremiah 29:11. We believe we are living out a big part of the plan He has for us through our marriage to one another and through it He prospers us with love & growth.



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New Beginnings: What tips do you have for other couples striving for a lasting and loving marriage?

Becky: To maintain a close connection to God so they can forgive, love, communicate, and give to one another. We can rely on our abilities in these areas because we will never have enough to give. We have to know our real source and work to stay connect to God so He can fill us with these things.

Al: My tip to others...again, I could write for hours: Respect each other. Live your life for the other person and not yourself. Don't have separate hobbies and interests. Other than God and your children, your lives together should be the most important thing in the world. Make the quality of your connection with each other a life or death issue. Other than our relationship with God our relationship with our spouse should be the most important thing in the world. Pray, write in your journal; work on your "issues" every day of your life. Make your goal every day to open your heart and improve your connection with God, your spouse and yourself.