

Every Young Woman's Battle

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My History with this book:

This book originally came out in 2004 after the “Every Man’s Battle” series came out...as was typical in fundamentalist religions, materials often came out for men first and then the same men would author (or sometimes co-author) books for women based off of what they wrote for men. I read this book several times in my early 20’s and as I re-read the book this time I caught myself with looks of disgust on my face many times. On the one had it was clear to me how things I would have missed before were fodder for even more dangerous teachings. It reminded me how dangerous purity culture is and how many external authorities people were required to have that dictated every area of their lives.

As I began reading the book for this review I was struck that despite having read EYWB many times, I had never read the “adult” version. Ever. I wondered why. However, after just the first chapter it struck me that the reason I never read “Every Woman’s Battle” was because I wasn’t married and therefore wasn’t considered—by myself or others in the church—an actual, real woman. Sure my chronological age was recognized but my value only went so far and my womanhood was only partial because I was not a wife and a mother. As I was reflecting, I quickly remembered the messages I believed about how dangerous I was—a woman of marrying age who was single and because I didn’t have a direct spiritual authority in the form of a husband, I always ran the risk of striking out on my own which always meant that I would seduce, manipulate and coerce men into sexual relationships (with a primary target of married men). It was quite humbling to recognize, as I read this book, how little I valued myself simply because I was a single woman.

A couple notes before we get started:

This is a first edition copy of this book, which came out in 2004.

Like all of the other books I have reviewed thus far: the information that I share, both in my own commentary as well as excerpts from the book may be triggering—regardless of your gender or how you were socialized. Please take the time that you need to work through this review (it will be saved in my highlights) and use whatever caution is necessary in reading this information.

Introduction

Full disclosure: this is the very first page of the book and what I found so amusing about it was that they criticize the culture for how women are treated and yet the objectification and harm of women is the result of so many purity culture teachings. The introduction, written by one of the authors of “Every (Young) Man’s Battle” talks about how non-Christian men don’t see women as people but rather as objects. And yet his book for me (as well as many times throughout this

book, and MANY other purity culture books) speaks of women as objects and property. The hypocrisy is glaring.

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Many times throughout this book there are definitions of words and acts. While on the one hand this is nice so that the author can make sure everyone is on the same page, I was, again, struck that this was not a part of the counterpart book, “Every Young Man’s Battle”. Upon further reflection it occurred to me that the reason is: women are taught NOTHING about themselves sexually and are thought to be, at least to an extent, sexually stunted even in terms of their knowledge. While this is quite literally true, this is a reflection of the culture and their goal of keeping women child-like and innocent.

One other quick note on the page is the idea that viewing pornography ALWAYS leads to masturbation and that you cannot masturbate without using pornography or some sort of other image (despite accounts later on in the book of many women sharing that they used masturbation for self pleasure, stress release and relaxation, all of which never included using pornography)

Personal story: I was incredibly sexually inhibited growing up in my cult like religion. I was interested in things like sex, puberty, relationships, etc., but my mother was so ashamed to talk to me about them that in third grade she handed me a book and told me to read it (this came after me thinking the word “puberty” sounded funny and giggling which seemed to set off something in her that made her unable to say the word or continue reading the book). I never spoke with her about anything sexual after that point. I had NO idea about masturbation—that it was a thing or that women could engage in it until well after high school (yep, super sheltered...because even the earlier purity culture books didn’t address stuff like that; it was too scandalous). The first time I came in contact with masturbation as a concept was in reading “Every Young Man’s Battle” and was thoroughly disgusted. I still had no idea that women did it. Even after reading this current book I was fairly oblivious. I was a youth leader at the time and was a leader on a local missions trip (hello, colonization!) and a mother of one of the middle school students approached me as her daughter was loading her bags up in the van to share with me that she had caught her masturbating several times over the last couple months (for the record, this very developmentally appropriate, which I also did not know at the time) and asked that we keep an eye on her to make sure that her daughter was with someone at all times so that she didn’t engage in the sinful behavior. She also asked that I share it with the rest of the youth leaders so they could be aware of I too. Regretfully, I did (including the male youth leaders). I remember being terrified of the thought of having to confront this girl as well as disgusted at the vile thing she was doing. Y’all...I was TWENTY THREE when that happened...talk about being severely sexually stunted!

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Here we see just plain wrong (and harmful) messages about engaging in non-married sexual activity: that it will never bring you love and acceptance, that women can’t enjoy non-committed sex and that only men are wired to enjoy that. Not only are these messages false but they continue to paint incredibly inaccurate pictures of men and women that become embodied and in

many cases, lived out. Everything here is prescriptive: there are rules for every situation all under the guise of “God’s best”.

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Here we begin to see the messages of how damaging sex before marriage is: it leaves you broken, irreparable and unable to have a fulfilling relationship with your future partner. It is taught that sex before marriage always leads to significant emotional baggage that will haunt you for the rest of your life (never mind what your spouse will think and how they will be able to carry an amount of righteous judgement toward you!)

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Because purity culture is more than just “don’t have sex before marriage”, as the author confirms quite blatantly here, we also see how it extends into all areas. The author divides sexual purity up into: body, mind, heart, and spirit and spends the rest of the book dissecting what each of these categories entail as well as giving a lot of rules...event hough she just lists them as suggestions or recommendations. The author “gains” credibility because she did everything the “wrong way”. This is a huge tool of purity culture: they have individuals who didn’t wait to have sex share their relational woes and hardships that all point back to the moment they started engaging in sexual activity. The goal is that their story will demonstrate how dangerous pre-marital sex is. Finally, this section here also addresses what’s called the “slippery slope”. As we have seen in other books, sometimes the slippery slope is merely LOOKING at someone you are attracted to. While this author seems to be a bit more liberal in some areas, she is still quite conservative in most ways as she suggests that even women craving male attention is part of the slippery slope as the woman is prone to fantasize and rehearse what she would want to happen which, according to the author, inevitably will make it happen (she discusses this further later on in the book)

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The author spends almost an entire chapter promoting her idea of purity of body, mind, heart, and spirit—and this is what makes purity culture such a mindfuck: the amount of rules and all encompassing nature of this lifestyle with literally no way out of it for most people. The consequences for not buying into this is a lifetime of dissatisfaction with your spouse here on earth (assuming someone would even want to marry you) and the likelihood of eternal conscious torment in the afterlife. The author, in no uncertain terms says here that any compromise in body, mind, emotions and spirit will impact your sexual integrity and your marriage as a whole—that intimacy (whether physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual) with any man who is not your husband is a lack of sexual integrity and will rob you of sexual wholeness and fulfillment.

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Like most of the other purity culture, which are disproportionately written for women, here is where we start to see the emphasis placed on the woman's role to ensure that the things they do, say, and wear are in the best interest of the men they come in contact with.

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As we dig deeper into the book, the author lays out several myths that women believe and act upon that are not in line with what purity culture teaches; things like: you can dress however you want (you can't) or that all flirting is ok (it isn't). Again, these are very prescriptive teachings and begin laying a foundation for tearing down the reader's sense of self, including their sexual identity, to replace it with a very strict set of rules. In this section, Myth 4: that "guys want basically the same thing from dating relationships that girls want" is a severe reduction of both men and women. The author is drawing on the book *Every (Young) Man's Battle* to suggest that guys actually only want sex and will "give" love and relationship in order to get it. Women, on the other hand will "give" sex in the hopes of being able to get a relationship. This is a concept that is common in non-purity culture environments as well but what purity culture lacks is any sort of accountability for men. For instance, in this section we see a man who pressures and coerces his girlfriend to sleep with him (because why wouldn't he? He's a man, it's just what men do!) and then the woman is blamed and told that she should have "known better" if she wanted to avoid his pressures.

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It's a widely known rule in most fundamentalist religions that men and women can never just be friends. Some sort of affair will always happen. This section reiterates that saying not only that if men and women are friends it might lead to sexual danger but that if a woman confides (emotionally) in a man that he will likely use that information against her to try and get her into bed. It's incredibly diminishing to men to suggest that they so severely lack self control that they couldn't even practice tenants of basic human decency towards women.

Personal story: I have some really amazing guy friends...many of them who came out of the same cult like religious backgrounds I did...and of course one of the things that we had to deconstruct was the "Billy Graham Rule" (aka the "Mike Pence Rule") that said that a man could not be alone with a woman in public or private who was not his wife. In the church I grew up in, practically that meant that there ALWAYS had to be a third party around (unless in the case that the male pastor was counseling a female parishioner...then they could be alone...and we wonder why so many pastors exert sexual control over their parishioners?!?) Fast forward to several years ago I get a text from one of my married male friends (who's wife is also a very close friend of mine) asking if I wanted to grab dinner since she was out of town and he was flying solo for the week. Going out to dinner with him was normal—it's just that his wife was always there. My gut reaction was an internal dialogue in which I wondered if I should text his wife to make sure it was ok. I stopped myself, however, trusting that my married friends could make their own boundaries and decide how to handle friendships and outings with individuals who were not their partner. My friend and I discussed this out of dinner—both of us acknowledging how ingrained

these fears are—even joking how remarkable it was that we didn’t want to tear each other’s clothes off right then and there!

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There are many myths and destructive teachings about masturbation in this book but this one is one of my favorites...in this section we read a story of a girl who is “addicted” to masturbating and holds significant shame for this, most notably because she comes from a good home with stable parents and gets good grades in school. The implications of this are ridiculous and astounding.

Secondly we see that masturbation is categorized as a (sexual) sin that the devil will try to tempt you with and that we are to praise god in a special way if we are not tempted with the sin of masturbation!

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Something that I have touched on before (and is actually backed up by research) is the correlation between purity culture and r*pe culture. Here we see it plain as day. This section is about the dangers of online dating (it should be noted that in 2004 when this book was published, online chat rooms, dating sites, etc., had only been available to the public for less than five years. I would imagine the authors felt they were on the cutting edge and getting ahead of the game here. And while there are certainly many problematic things that can happen in chatrooms, it should go without saying that it is ALWAYS the fault of the perpetrator when assault occurs). Here we see the story of a young teenage girl who creates an alter ego in an online chat space as she discovers and explores her sexuality. An older man (12 years her senior...it’s definitely illegal, y’all) begins chatting with her, meeting her for sex and eventually murders her. However, the authors do not focus on the fact that the young girl was sexually abused, assaulted, r*ped and murdered (or that it was the older man’s fault for this)...nope. They focus on a “how dumb can you be? Of course this could happen to you...if you put yourself in this situation, what do you expect?” Not only is this common purity culture rhetoric, this is r*pe culture rhetoric. Through and through.

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The beliefs that women put themselves at risk and in harms way by what they do, where they go, who they interact with or how they dress is such a prevalent theme in purity culture that the authors continue this conversation with a list of tips that women can implement to avoid being sexually assaulted and r*ped. Now to be clear, I am all for being aware of one’s surroundings and taking safety precautions...most people outside of heterosexual, cis-gendered, white males are very aware of this and take extensive precautions to prioritize their safety. But do you want to know the actual best way to avoid r*pe? DON’T FUCKING RAPE SOMEONE. That is it. There is nothing that any person could or could not do that would ever warrant blame or ownership in being r*ped. This is not an issue up for debate...and yet, in purity culture it is. So lets just let that one sit for a bit...

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Moving on...there is a strong, overt emphasis on the importance of women knowing their role in a relationship: they are not the leader or the pursuer. They are to wait for the man to chase them lest they be sinning because they are outside of their god ordained role. Though research is never common in purity culture books, the authors make sweeping statements many times throughout the book and pose them as facts. Here we are told that women are more predatory than their male counterparts. There is so much wrong with this. First it literally acknowledges the purity culture teaching that men are predators. Second, it suggests that women as predators are worse than men as predators (as if this is a competition?) Finally, do you know why women are now considered predators? Not because they are committing sexual assaults. Nope. It's because they are taking back their power over their body and their right to express their sexuality how they see fit—which might mean that they initiate relationships and sex with men (or anyone). In short, purity culture teaches that feminism = predator. Cool, cool, cool.

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Is it really a purity culture book if they don't spend at least one chapter discussing modesty? The authors start out with the statement that "you teach people how to treat you". On the surface I agree with this—to an extent. What I mean is that in some situations the way we act or what we allow does give others an indication of what is ok or not with us. For instance, if we set boundaries and then don't hold those boundaries when someone pushes at them, they start to learn that it's ok to do this. (However, it should be noted that the person who is pushing the boundaries also identifies themselves as pretty disrespectful and potentially a person you may want to reevaluate your relationship with, especially if the behavior is repeated!) So yeah, there is some truth to this statement. BUT...this does not take away personal responsibility from anyone and this is where this book and purity culture miss the point. Teaching others how to treat you is a common statement used in regards to women's modesty. Women are told that the way they dress is an indicator of what they think of themselves, what they will allow someone to do to them, and how they want to be treated. This is another area where it is comparable with r*pe culture in that one of the first questions a woman is asked in both purity and r*pe culture, if they are assaulted is "what were you wearing?" ...because if you were wearing anything other than a baggy turtleneck sweater and skirt down to your ankles with thick tights underneath and a sweatshirt tied around your waist, it's likely that the clothes you wore enticed a man, got his "sexual juices" flowing and he couldn't resist.

It goes without saying how problematic it is and yet this is a common trope of purity culture. I cannot tell you how many book studies and youth group sermons I taught talking about how girls were at fault for the ways guys thought about them and what they did (in their mind and action) because of the way they dressed. There were always far more rules for what was appropriate women's attire than for men. The focus was always on ensuring that the girls weren't making the boys stumble.

Later on in the book they share a story of a girl who was a camp counselor and wore clothes that were considered immodest. She was literally assaulted, multiple times, in public by various male counselors, even after she asked them to stop. When she reported them she was told "If you dress

like a cute little plaything and present yourself as a toy, then boys will want to be boys and play with that toy!” Y’all, I cannot make this stuff up!

Personal anecdote: I agonized over what I wore. Especially after reading *Every Young Man’s Battle* and began to understand the inner workings of the male mind, I was absolutely disgusted with and terrified of men. I should have owned stock in those singlet under shirts (which everyone in my religious group affectionally called “wife beaters”...which was supposed to be hilarious...) I would often wear 2-3 of them underneath any shirt I wore to ensure that there would be no way that anyone could see through my shirts, that my bra straps would show or that any cleavage would be present. I did this for 15+ years. I was so scared that the way I dressed would make someone stumble, lust after me and sin that I purposely bought clothes several sizes too big.

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At the end of the modesty chapter the author gives an invitation to “clean out your closet”. Quite literally the reader was to go through their clothes and get rid of any clothes that did not meet the criteria that she set forth (you may remember activities similar to these from Dannah Gresh’s books). I can say that I did the closet clean out on more than one occasion because I always wanted to be careful to make sure that every piece of clothing in my closet honored god and honored my bothers in christ.

Personal Story: As I read through the various rules that the author set forth I found myself rolling my eyes a lot...laughing at how absurd they were. But when I got to the “Jeans and Pants” section, my tone shifted as I remembered some incredibly painful experiences with my own family in which I was made fun of for wearing certain items of clothing. My dad is the real life version of Michael Scott—including all the horribly inappropriate comments that are made rather ignorantly and without the intention of harm. However, I learned a long time ago that even though I know this about him and it helps me not take his comments seriously, I can still acknowledge that they hurt. I remember many experiences where I would reach to grab something or bend over and I would hear my dad yell something like “is that a 1972 quarter in your back pocket?”...it was his way of suggesting that my pants were too tight (and like I mentioned before, they never were...I rarely bought clothes in my actual size, buying them instead a few sizes bigger). I would get deeply embarrassed and ashamed...any backlash I had was severely punished. Worst of all, it taught my brothers that it was ok for them to do this/say this to me too—even in public. All of my brothers, at varying points, took my dad’s lead and asked me similar questions. So when I saw that the author wrote out a similar question as a litmus test in regard to if your clothes were modest or not, it definitely struck a chord.

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Multiple times throughout the book, prior to this point, the author has focused on the dangers of flirting. While she recognizes that there could be some types of innocent flirting, she draws strong lines in regard to what is innocent and what is moving into manipulation, seduction and trying to control a man. This chapter is exclusively devoted to flirting and she begins sharing three stories with her readers...as you can see here in this story (and one of the other stories) this

is clearly assault. And rather than this being pointed out and the appropriate party being blamed, the author again suggests that this is a normal response from a guy who's "sexual juices" you have gotten flowing.

Also, can we just talk about the enormous amount of time the author uses the phrase "sexual juices"?

Page Break Explainer

There is a large gap in the book that I skipped over between the last slide and this next slide...not because there wasn't bad stuff...there was! It was atrocious in fact...it was literally that I had to do zero slides on it or like 400. The amount of toxic micro-teachings and statements was so rampant that I didn't know how to break it down into a concise way. The basic gist of it is this: the author gives a prescription for what you are and are not allowed to watch, listen to, and read. She is relentless against any form of sexual media, suggesting that women are easily lured in by romantic storylines that cause them to think up their own stories and then act them out in times of self-pleasure or with other people. She gives several lists of evaluation and essentially suggests that only christian media is acceptable.

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In purity culture there are always about 47,000 hoops that you have to jump through before you are allowed to be in a relationship. Other reviews have discussed this at length. Interestingly, this is the first book that allows women a shred of autonomy for being able to decide if they actually want to be in a relationship with someone who is pursuing them and has gone through all of the rigamarole of being granted the appropriate permissions. However, lest we celebrate this as a victory for women everywhere, the author gives us yet another list of prompts that must be reflected on and prayed through in order to make the right decision. While I am certainly not against thoughtful consideration in the relationships we engage with, the amount of rules and restrictions that a woman (and man) must pass through to explore a relationship quite literally makes it mechanical, robotic and formulaic.

Page 147

Here we see a lovely little chart outlining the five love languages and appropriate and inappropriate ways that you can express each of the love languages. The list as a whole is quite funny (and though I'll talk about this more later, for those of you who cannot believe that full body hugs were "outlawed", here is the first instance in this book where we see that!) What I wanted to mention, however, is that as I perused this list I counted the things on the "appropriate" side that I engaged with (and NEVER engaged with any on the "inappropriate" side) and got in severe trouble for. I was constantly reported to the church authorities and other women who were "older and wiser" for trying to be genuinely kind and loving to my male counterparts (and I spread the love out equally not only between the men but also I was the same way with women!) It's important to note this because this highlights the utter subjectivity of the

purity culture, both in the rules as well as the interpretations. What it boils down to is that if a man things it was inappropriate, it was. And then it's ok to blame and punish the woman.

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Object lessons were common in purity culture, though they more aptly should be called Objectification Lessons. Many of you have probably heard people talk about the analogies...and it wouldn't be uncommon to think "no way, no one could REALLY be comparing a woman's sexuality to a hamburger or a flower or tape..." bless your heart. I thought it was important to share this page because we see in no uncertain terms a couple Objectification Lessons that were used to hammer home the purity culture points. In all of these objectifications it was assumed that your love, ability to connect, and intimacy were finite and that if you "gave it away" to all the wrong people you would not have any left for your future spouse.

Page 168

I literally yelled when I was reading this page...the amount of information that is so wrong (and therefore SO harmful) in this section is unbelievable. The author quotes "research" as a way of backing up her statements that teenage girls who engage in premarital sex are more likely to commit suicide than girls who are virgins, or that abortions can cause you to be infertile later on is seriously wrong. To be certain there are cases where an abortion procedure can go wrong (for various reasons) and have long term effects—just like any other medical procedure. Also, its is possible that engaging in sexual activity could be play a role in death by suicide—but to suggest that there is a correlation between premarital sex and suicide is incredibly harmful (and incredibly wrong!) The research that she cites in this section (and over the next couple chapters) comes from journalists, christian publications and a fundamentalist, conservative child psychologist (yes, I'm talking about Dr. James Dobson)—not from reputable research sources.

Page 176-177

Here the author goes for the biggest reach yet...the reason that your sexual abstinence is so important to God? Perfection. The author literally suggests that if you pursue abstinence you will have:

1. Perfect physical health
2. Perfect m mental health
3. Perfect emotional health
4. Perfect spiritual health
5. Perfect relational health

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Lest we don't take up enough time and energy policing ourselves, we are also encouraged to police our friends—making sure they don't cross the line, physically in public. Here we see, again, that full body hugs are warned against; side hugs and "A-frame" hugs are suggested as a

more godly alternative. Additionally, sitting on a guy's lap (especially facing him) is not ok, lying horizontally, draping your legs over him, etc...it always gets those sexual juices flowing!

Personal anecdote: though I can laugh at some of these wacky rules now, I was struck at how seriously I took them decades ago. What I was able to recognize is that due to where I was at in my life and the level of suggestibility I had, these rules became ingrained deeply and quickly. I believed these things (and lived them out) without question. It then made sense that if I did any of these forbidden things that my body had very adverse responses...not because the actual things were wrong, but because I was TOLD they were wrong (and the guaranteed consequences felt SO overwhelming) that this was my body's way of protecting me...adverse responses would make me think twice before I did it again, and usually would lead me to "repent" of my sins.

Page 197

Purity culture encourages people to get married young. Like very young. So young that the author suggests not having a dating relationship until you are a senior in high school so then you have a year at max to withstand sexual temptation and then you can get married. Purity culture advises against long term dating relationships (anything over a year is usually considered long-term) as they teach that the longer you date the more likely you are to give in to sexual temptation. And while that may be true (engaging in sexual activity) that is because it's a natural part of a relationship—not because of temptation.

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The book closes with the concept of "Becoming Mrs. Right"—and to really solidify this, the author interviews six...yes, just six...young men to determine what kind of qualities men are looking for in their future wife. There are, as usual, many problems with this but one of the most glaring problems is that the author polled six young men and created a list off of their answers and presented them as absolute truth that now hundreds of thousands of women believe they must achieve in order to be marriage material.

While I am not going to go through each one in specific, I will list them all here and make a few comments with a few of them. The first one is, obviously, that she must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. However, a close second, as we see here is that she must take care of herself and have a positive self image. What does that practically mean? The men are all too eager to share. Mrs. Right need to be a woman who's weight is proportionate to her height, who has clean skin, well-skirt hair and nails and takes pride in the way she dresses and presents herself in public. (I wish you could see my face as I am typing this...this perpetuates so many stereotypes and unrealistic expectations.

- *Number 3* on the list is: she generally is a happy person and has a positive outlook on life
- *Number 4:* she exercises self-control on around other guys (the description here implies property/ownership mentality)
- *Number 5:* she is careful with money and can budget wisely...you are not to expect your parents to hand you anything on a silver platter so that you don't subconsciously put pressure on your husband to do the same (I mean hey, I am all for hard work and I am

also ok with parents supporting their children...but to have to be super careful about how much your parents can help you so that you don't pressure your husband to do the same is...interesting)

- *Number 6:* she has good relationships with family and has close friends (again, the priority of coming from a good home is very high in purity culture; women, especially, who come from broken homes are often thought to be dangerous, broken and not great candidates for marriage).
- *Number 7:* She is nurturing and would make a good mother one day (because the goal of EVERY woman is to be a mother—there are no other options)
- *Number 8:* she is supportive of what he wants to do with his life and encourages me (“More than anything a husband needs a wife to be his cheerleader” is the tagline for this one). Again, I am not against supporting your partner in many different ways. What I am against is the sole focus on the husband and the mandate the wife has (which can be seen in many other purity culture books) to ensure her husband's happiness over her own, at all times.
- *Number 9:* She has her own dreams and goals that I can help her fulfill (especially if these dreams can positively impact the family someday...and don't forget that it's the woman's job to give up her goals and dreams when it comes to having children. Purity culture teaches in no uncertain terms that the home and children are the woman's first priority)
- *Number 10:* She is adventurous and can enjoy at least some of my hobbies

This chapter ends with a cliché and yet super common trope about being god's Mrs. Right...that before we concern ourselves with being someone else's wife, we should be concerned with being god's wife and developing a relationship with him. (Yes, it's ok to grimace at this...it's very, very power and control-is)

Page 209

To strengthen that last point, the final chapter in the book focuses on falling in love with Jesus. It is not uncommon to hear women in purity culture talk about “dating Jesus”...while they wait for their husband. It's a rather pathetic way of trying to indicate that you are actually the marrying type because you are prioritize your relationship with Jesus over everything else. This passage in particular details a dream that the author has in which she literally marries Jesus only to discover that she has spent her life looking for love in all the wrong places. Now I can't be certain if she actually had this dream or not; what I can say is that I have heard iterations of that dream from many people. The sentiment though is that because of what Jesus has done (in this belief system it means that God the father allowed him to be murdered to pay for humankind's sin; those who believe this and in him get to go to heaven and if you don't then you go to hell). Later on in the book (page 214) the author blatantly says that when we prioritize our relationship with Jesus, we get the desires of our heart.

Personal story: This idea of prioritizing Jesus, dating Jesus, etc., was something I absolutely bought into. So much so that at age 19 when I feared that I was past my prime for marrying someone, I figured that I should take a year off of dating to focus only on my relationship with Jesus with the back seat goal that this would make me so attractive to a godly man that they

would not be able to resist me. It didn't work. However, it was not uncommon that I, and many others, believed that the reason for our long-suffering singleness was likely because we weren't prioritizing our relationships with Jesus (or some other sin we had committed that we were still being punished for).

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This book closes with a similar afterword as its counterpart, *Every Young Man's Battle*: what happens if you are a woman who is attracted to another woman?!? The author makes bold and sweeping, and incredibly inaccurate and harmful statements, that being a lesbian is rooted in family dysfunction, homosexual relationships being "seen" on various media platforms (she references the infamous Brittany Spears and Madonna kiss) and other advertising. She quotes the abdominal Dr. James Dobson as researcher and expert (neither of which he is) as saying unequivocally that there is no such thing as a 'gay gene' or that you are not born gay—this was a statement that Dr. Dobson made in one of his newsletters and not based off of research. Because they believe that homosexuality is a sin like any other, they strongly believe that you can be restored, that you should not give into "temptation" and they really push outlets like conversion therapy.