

Changed People

I grew up wanting to get married and live happily ever after, just like Cinderella. When Charlie proposed to me, I carefully laid the groundwork for my dream. 'I'm going to put you first in my life,' I said. 'Will you put me first in your life?' He said he would.

But as soon as the honeymoon was over, Charlie's courting stopped. He wanted to focus on his career. I felt disappointed and left out. For the next 12 years, I courted him, trying to get him to love me the way I wanted to be loved. But the harder I tried, the more he pulled away.

The fairytale ended

I grew depressed as Charlie's career skyrocketed. I was excited for him when he began training to go to the moon. However, I was more looking forward to it being over. Inside I was thinking, 'when this is over, he will put me first.'

But he didn't. He had a workaholic impulse. He pursued a list of goals and I was near the bottom. I considered divorce, but I wondered if any man could love me the way I wanted to be loved. Was there even such a thing as the perfect marriage? It didn't look like it anymore.

Looking for fulfillment

I began to look for things to fulfill me. I tried a career, church work, volunteering and helped the needy. Nothing worked. I even tried drugs. When the marijuana didn't work, I thought, 'maybe there *is* no purpose in life. You just live and die, and that is all there is.'

I began to think about suicide. **I was married to a famous man, had a nice home, healthy children, plenty of money, and yet I had no hope.**

Our church hosted a "spiritual renewal weekend." Charlie and I listened as guests told first-hand stories of how Jesus had made a difference in their lives. They claimed that Jesus answered prayer—something I had never seen happen in my life. They had love and joy.

Since I had tried everything else, I decided to try God. I didn't know if He was real or if Jesus was the Son of God, I just didn't want to be in charge of my life any more.

A satisfied love

I started looking to God for fulfillment. I began praying for things, and I got answers! It would happen again and again. I was convinced God existed and that He answered prayer!

With God's help, I was freed of my anger. I learned how to love Charlie unconditionally whether he loved me back or not.

Today, God comes first. He has taken away my depression, healed our marriage and given me a reason for living. **Life is not a fairy tale but God's love has satisfied my deepest hunger for meaning and purpose in life.**

Credit – Dottie Duke