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Angela Blackston
photo by Chris Fritchie



The Fight of Your Life

By DeAnn Daley Holcomb

NO MATTER IF YOU HAVE been married for 50 plus years or if you are just about to take the big leap as newlyweds, most couples discover that it takes more than saying “I do” to reach wedded bliss.

To the marriage rescue is Angela Blackston of Frisco, a published author, motivational speaker, wife and mother. Ms. Blackston, director of member services for the Frisco Chamber of Commerce, recently published a book by the name of *Fight for Your Marriage*. In her book, Ms. Blackston shares how any couple can regain trust, commitment and love in their relationship. Her Christian-

based book identifies biblical messages of hope, encouragement, restoration, healing, faith and love along with a twelve-step plan to help strengthen the reader’s marriage.

After experiencing what Ms. Blackston describes as serious marital problems, Ms. Blackston along with her husband, Allen, wrote the book to not only show couples how to make a marriage work, but as a couple, it allowed them to seek the healing, cleansing and restoration of faith they needed to improve their own marriage. *Fight for Your Marriage* was released in print in November 2006.

“The sad part is that we fight for so many other things, we fight for our rights, we fight for our children and our animals but then why is it we don’t fight for our marriages,” Ms. Blackston said. “That’s the way society is. You just quit and you don’t try to work on your marriage or work together. When we get upset we are so quick and ready to walk out the door and say ‘It’s over.’”

Ms. Blackston started writing her book in 1998, when she and her husband were going through a rocky time in their marriage. They were living in Pennsylvania and Ms. Blackston was working in the governor’s office.

“...we fight for our rights, we fight for our children and our animals but then why is it we don’t fight for our marriages...”

“It was a crazy time and we were ready to shoot each other and I knew I had to do something,” Ms. Blackston said. “At work I had a woman who came to me daily and told me of her different marital problems and I felt God tugging at my heart and saying that I needed to share what I discovered with others.”

The couple attended a Christian leadership conference and that single event sparked the beginning of the healing process as they worked to put their marriage back together.

“At the time no one knew he was sleeping in the basement,” Ms. Blackston said. “We were both smiling, going

around acting like everything was fine, but it wasn't. The speaker at the conference called my husband and me to the front and touched something in both of us. Then the singer got up and sang about what had been going on in our marriage; we were both standing in the middle of the aisle crying and rocking each other."

Ms. Blackston said the words in the song were written on the spot and portray the truth of so many marriages.

"It starts out with, 'I see a fence with a woman on one side and a man on the other and I see the rocks you are throwing at each other,'" Ms. Blackston said. "By the end of the song the entire congregation was crying and supporting us and it was so powerful."

Attending the conference inspired Ms. Blackston to finish her book.

Through prayer, Ms. Blackston knew that not only was she going to do whatever it took to save her

marriage, she wanted to share her struggles and triumph with others.

"They were things that God showed me throughout my 18 years of marriage that I needed to do to fight for my marriage and that is where the title of my book came from," Ms. Blackston said. "I had to look at my role as a woman and a wife and make my marriage work -- not blame my husband for everything. I looked at what I needed to do to improve and make the marriage work."

Ms. Blackston adds, "I look at what God had to say as far as our purpose and how in the beginning when He created us, He created us to be one and it was not His intention for us to be separate."

Blessed with two children, Ms.

Blackston said she was more determined than ever to build a stronger foundation for her marriage.

"I know if I had not fought for my marriage I would not be where I am



The Blackston Family

today because there was a point where I was ready to say, 'give me my support check and you go your way and I'll go my way,'" Ms. Blackston said. "That was not God's purpose and I think the biggest problem is there is not a true life-long commitment in marriage. If we are committed to each other, we are willing to do whatever we can to make it work. You stick it out."

In her book Ms. Blackston developed a twelve-step process with advice on how to strengthen your marriage and restore your relationship. She presents the message in a way that simulates a title fight in the sport of boxing. The first step, or what Ms. Blackston calls Round I, is the need to "Guard Your Heart."

"Your heart is the home of your body and the door to your marriage and it is very important to be careful of who you allow to open that door and come in," Ms. Blackston said. "You don't get

a 'How To' manual when you get married. I found my manual was the Holy Bible. It deals with issues of a woman and a woman's role and it looks at a man's role and responsibility and the importance of guarding my heart. I fell into the wrong trap so I looked to the Word to see what God had to say about being a keeper of my home and being the virtuous woman."

In *Fight For Your Marriage*, Ms. Blackston investigates other life experiences that you can use to make your marriage your first priority. During her research of marriage, family and divorce, Ms. Blackston said she was amazed at the high number of divorces, especially early in a Christian marriage.

"Getting married is easy, staying married is difficult and being

happily married is complex," Ms. Blackston said. "I look back at my family and I came from a large family with two brothers, a sister, several aunts, uncles and cousins. Even though we grew up in the church there was a high percentage of divorce even in my family."

Other important areas include being the keeper of your home and making your husband the first priority. Ms. Blackston said it is important to have your intimate relationship in its proper place and being able to trust one another.

"Making my husband my first priority was real hard for me," Ms. Blackston said. "I was the oldest in my family and I always took care of everyone. My husband as my first priority, giving him the respect

photo by Chris Fritchie

that I should and the importance of an intimate relationship; people don't realize how important all of that is in your relationship and in your marriage." Ms. Blackston describes submission as an important key to a successful marriage.

"Submission is a powerful word and in the Bible it means submit one to another," Ms. Blackston said. "It means when I submit to him he submits to me. You look at it like we are one and submission is actually an attitude that recognizes God as the decision maker and it means respecting each other and caring for each other."

She adds, "It's not 'You do what I tell you to do.' If we are committed to each other no matter what comes our way, we are able to survive the storm. I feel my husband is my keeper and my best friend and my husband feels the same way about me and we treat each other with the highest respect."

If you are talking more than you are listening, Ms. Blackston says your communication skills need some work.

"Communicating is so important and I was wrong to think my husband could read my mind ... If you don't communicate with your husband then he continues to think everything is OK..."

"Communicating is so important and I was wrong to think my husband could read my mind," Ms. Blackston said. "If there was something going on or something that was said that I didn't like, I didn't say anything. It created resentment and it started building and I should have told him how I was feeling. It's saying, 'Honey, I don't like you doing this and here's why. I really wish you would do this or I need you to do this.' If you don't communicate with your husband then he continues to think everything is OK and that's not fair to



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him.”

Ms. Blackston thinks as a couple you must deal with financial responsibility together. She also believes that your past plays a part in your present behavior and at some point in your life you have to make the changes necessary to find happiness.

“I am a product of divorced parents and I had a lot of insecurities because I never really had a father in my life,” Ms. Blackston said. “All I saw was my mother and father fighting so I truly believe that added to my insecurities and I know that my father never had a father in his life to help teach him how a man should be or how a man should love his wife or show her respect. However, there comes

a point in your life where you have to break that generational ‘curse,’ change your behavior and stop blaming others.”

In the last part of her book, Ms. Blackston explores having the heart of your husband and the final step she calls “knock out” time, where you stand firm in making your marriage a success and not let outside forces interfere with your family and goals in life.

“My heart is the marriage and family and that is all that matters,” Ms. Blackston said. “I see when the enemy tries to destroy the marriage and family and it is my desire to help women heal, restore their marriages and be able to move forward together as a couple and committed as one.”

Ms. Blackston volunteers as a motivational speaker for women’s groups and last February appeared at the International Women of Excellence conference in London, England, speaking about fear, marriage and hope. On her website Mr. Blackston offers his testimonial bi-weekly and they offer their time together to meet with anyone who is in need of restoring their marriage.

The Blackston’s work as Marriage Life Team Leaders for their church and are currently working on another book on strengthening marriage from more of a man’s perspective.

DeAnn Daley Holcomb is a freelance writer living in Plano.



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