



**MADISON
PREWETT
TROUTT**

Bestselling author of
Made for This Moment

THE LOVE EVERYBODY WANTS

What You're Looking
For Is Already Yours

Foreword by Audrey Roloff

**SNEAK
PEEK**



**SAMPLE
ONLY**

**UNCORRECTED
PROOF**

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For Is Already Yours

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FOREWORD BY
AUDREY ROLOFF



WATERBROOK

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This book is dedicated to my husband, Grant Michael Troutt. I am so proud to be yours, but I am even more proud of the man of God you are. Thank you for always pointing me back to the greatest love of all: Jesus. I love you forever!

FOREWORD

If you've picked up this book, my guess is that your heart desires a love that's characterized by all the "un's": *unquenchable, undivided, unconditional, unlimited, unending*. It's in our human nature to long for a love like this, but it's not in our human nature to live like we already have it. And the truth is, we do. You do. You are already loved by God more than you could ever possibly imagine, and there is nothing you can do to make him love you any more or less than he does right now. Even if you never love him back, he will keep loving and pursuing you. There really is no greater love than this.

Imagine you are in a dating relationship where you are so in love with your boyfriend and you are pursuing, encouraging, and desiring to love, serve, and respect him, but he never

shows you any love in return. You'd probably dump him. And I'd hope that you would. Love runs weary when unreciprocated. But not God's love. He loves you better than any human ever could, with all the "un's," even if it's never reciprocated. There is a verse in the Bible (1 John 3:1) that says, "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" That is what you are. A child of a God who lavishes his love on you so deeply and fully. So, you want that kind of deep, real, lasting, intimate, faithful, trustworthy, forever kind of love? As Madi so beautifully portrays in these pages, *what you are looking for is already yours.*

Back in 2020 I happened to watch an episode of Madi's season of *The Bachelor* with some friends and was immediately intrigued by Madi. There was a joy, peace, and confidence that she carried in a chaotic and, dare I say, unhealthy environment that set her apart. While all the girls seemed to be searching for love, it was evident that Madi *lived* loved. I could sense her love for God before she verbally expressed it because I share that same love. And when you know that love—God's love—you can't help but see it in other people.

As Madi's *Bachelor* relationship was publicly displayed on TV, I felt a nudge to reach out to her because I had also dated a boy in front of millions of viewers. For context, my husband grew up on reality television, so our dating relationship, our wedding day, and even the early years of our marriage were on public display to be both praised and ridiculed. The unconventional position I found myself in came with its own set of struggles that were unrelatable to my friends, which left me

feeling isolated. My heart felt for Madi as I remembered that season of my life, so I reached out to her on social media and asked for her address, hoping to mail her a little encouragement. Thankfully she responded, so I sent her a little package of goodies.

A week or so later, I got a message from Madi saying that she was so blessed to receive the goodies. Since then, it's been a joy to grow in friendship with Madi and to cheer her on as she boldly and gracefully shares truth to a generation so consumed by lies—something she does so beautifully in the pages that follow.

If you've picked up this book in hopes of figuring out how to find the perfect spouse, this is not it. And, might I boldly add, there is no such book. But what I am so excited for you to discover in these pages is the practical wisdom for pursuing healthy relationships, the comfort of hearing hard truths from someone who's been there, the deeper understanding that will come from asking the hard questions, and ultimately a deeper understanding of how infinitely loved you are by God.

In the words of Martina McBride, “This one's for the girls.” And not just the girls who have ever had a broken heart or wished upon a shooting star or loved without holding back or dreamed with everything they have. This book is also for the girls who have felt the pressure to prove or perform to earn love. For the girls who have allowed shame, fear, guilt, doubt, or comparison to hold them back from experiencing true love. For the girls who are single and confused by the dating world and not sure what to even be looking for in a man of integrity. For the girls who are dating someone but aren't sure if it's the

“forever” kind of someone. For the girls who want to start their marriage on a healthy foundation but don’t have a healthy example of a loving relationship to learn from. And for the girls who desire a love story marked by the “un’s.”

As Madi says, there is a better way to approach our desire for love that is hardwired in our hearts. And it’s this—that we must look to God first, learn to see ourselves as he sees us, and only then will we be ready to love whoever God brings into our lives. When you pursue a real relationship with God and allow him to fill you with the joy, peace, freedom and love that only he can, *that* is living loved. And that love is infinite and it’s available to you now. As you read this book, I hope you see just how real, healing, transforming, and beautiful that love is—and that you not only see it but also experience it. *I hope you realize that what you are looking for is already yours.*

—AUDREY ROLOFF, *New York Times* bestselling co-author of *A Love Letter Life* and founder of *The Marriage Journal*

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**THE
LOVE
EVERYBODY
WANTS**

1

LOOKING FOR LOVE

Searching in All the Right Places

We love *love*. We love the rush that bubbles up inside when we think about it. We can easily be swept up. Obsessed. Infatuated. We are hardwired for connection. We want to be seen, known, and, yes, loved. We want to be chosen, to be valued. Maybe you could even say we are made to love. But it doesn't take a PhD in the psychology of modern romance to know that finding deep love and connection is, well, not easy.

I know this has been true for me. Want a sneak peek of the real conversation going on in my head when I started to write this book as a single woman?

How many more wrong ones until the right one?

Is there something wrong with me?

Do I settle for good enough?
What if no one else will love me?
What if I end up alone?
What if I get hurt again?
Why is it so hard to let go?
Am I hard to love?
Am I enough?
Ugh, why can't relationships be easy?
*How many more breakups until I finally get the whole "till death do
us part"?*
How many more tears and fears until peace and joy?
Will I ever be happy?

My guess is I'm not alone in constantly asking these questions. We're glued to our phones, social media, and dating TV shows. We're bombarded with images of love and relationships and sex and happiness and weddings and influencers who seem to have picture-perfect lives. But so many of us feel alone and confused. We're asking, *Why hasn't love panned out for me? I'm tired of not being chosen.*

I know it might come as a surprise to some that I struggle with this—but I do. You may know me from season 24 of ABC's *The Bachelor*, which aired in 2020. You may have read my first book, *Made for This Moment*. Or maybe you have no idea who I am, but you're desperately hoping to hear something refreshing and helpful on the topic of love. Something that goes beyond "Don't have sex until you're married" and "Wait on God's timing." Though I've tried to put both of those pieces of advice into practice myself, I know that some-

thing *more* is needed during the in-between. We need something greater than a list of rules so that if we do meet our someone, we're ready for them.

Trust me—I did plenty of dating “Madi’s way” and ended up with regret. I wound up hurt and feeling either like I was being rejected or like I was wasting valuable time and emotions. I’m not perfect and will never claim to be—just ask my friends and family! But I *have* suffered to the point that I was willing to do something different in order to find peace and joy. I stopped searching for love and instead started at the foundation of love itself—by learning to bring my longings to God and to accept and love myself first.

By the way, I think it’s worth mentioning that loving yourself doesn’t always look how culture and social media make it look. It’s not just about posting workout selfies or getting massages with girlfriends. More on that later, but another goal of this book is to encourage you to look beyond what you see online and on TV. Not just about love, but about people’s lives. Those are such one-dimensional portrayals of reality. I should know—people are always shocked when they get to know me and see that I’m just as insecure, just as tired of dating, and just as worn out as they are. I *was* anyway. What happened in between the worn-out and where I am now?

That’s exactly what I’m going to tell you.

But first let me say, there are no simple answers to questions on dating and marriage, mostly because our hearts are funny things, and people aren’t always simple. A quick internet search reveals plenty of people eager to dish out oversimplified relationship advice. But here’s what I want to tell you: I

think there is a better way. A deeper way. A way forward that sets our hearts in order and helps us see our longings and experiences in a new light.

And before you think I'm setting out to write a "how to get a boyfriend" book, you should know that's not the goal. I want to show you how to look to God, see yourself, and find deep love amid our culture's shallow ideas about romance.

Because the truth is, finding the love everybody wants isn't nearly as complicated as we've made it. In fact, the Bible tells us pretty clearly how love works in Matthew 22:35–39—my inspiration for writing this book:

One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

First and foremost, we must set our hearts right with God, know the depths of his love for us, and believe that his words about us are true. Then comes the often-difficult work of learning to love ourselves. When we get those two relationships where

they should be, only then can we start to talk about loving other people, whether that's cultivating a deep community of friends, better relationships with family, or a romantic relationship—all three of which combine to create a healthy support system.

If you want to use a tried-and-true metaphor, imagine your life as a house. Your relationship with God is the foundation. Your relationship with yourself is the framework and walls. You can't start adding furniture and decorations before the foundation and walls are in place. I mean, you can try. But you won't be successful.

The message of this book isn't that the ultimate finish line in life is to find a spouse and live happily ever after or that in order to be happy or have purpose, you have to find your person. It's not my intention to help you get married off. My goal is for you to understand that while we aren't made to go through life alone, we can't expect to have thriving friendships or romantic relationships until we've established our relationships with God and with ourselves.

What if we *never* find the person we're searching for? Does that mean we can't be fulfilled? I remember being young and praying, "God, I trust you in everything, but I'm kind of hoping that singleness is not your will for my life." Why is that? Why do so many of us connect marriage with wholeness? The truth is that as I've grown older, I've experienced the ways building meaningful relationships with God and with ourselves leaves little room for loneliness or unfulfillment.

On the search for a deeper understanding of love, we all must work through the clichés and shallow ideas we've come

to accept as truth—ideas like, *If I just had a significant other, I would feel whole* and *I have to follow my heart above all else*. While there are obviously wonderful aspects of being with another person, these ideas aren't the fullest expression of God's love and calling for us. That's not to say we should ignore our emotions. That would be unrealistic—impossible, even. But we can't be controlled by our emotions either.

These clichés can make their way into our hearts and influence how we think things should be. We often think we're owed love the way the world defines it. In light of that, each of the following chapter titles is a common phrase related to dating and relationships that has become ingrained in our vocabulary through social media and culture. I want to help you examine these ideas and evaluate the truth of them. And in doing so, I believe we can arrive at a deeper understanding of what God says about love, because it's only by embracing this understanding that we can experience peace, joy, and wholeness without fear for our future.

In this book, I'll lay out some of the issues we're facing emotionally and spiritually, addressing everything from social media relationship trends to biblical insights into God's ideas for marriage and identity. Together, we'll tackle love, faith, dating culture, and personal worth in a refreshing manner. Beginning in chapter 2, you'll find QR codes embedded at the end of each chapter. These links will direct you to short videos and other digital resources covering a range of topics—things like the essentials I look for in a relationship, playlists for when your heart is hurting, and words for seasons of waiting. My prayer is that as I share my experience, you'll be encouraged

no matter where you are in life.

When we can learn to see relationships with God, ourselves, and others in whole, holy, and healthy ways, our hearts will stop

We're made for love, but it takes work to get these loves in order.

looking for love in the wrong places. We're made for love, but it takes work to get these loves in order. But believe me when I say, it's possible to know the love of God. It's possible to love—and maybe even like—yourself. It's possible to navigate the matrix of relationships with confidence and hope. It's possible to look out to your future with joy—because you were made for love.

PROOF OF PROMISE

When I started writing this book, I was single. Again.

But at some point during this publishing journey, I met someone. *My* someone. Grant. He came at the perfect time—God's time. You'll hear more about Grant as we walk through these chapters together.

I don't claim to have mastered my relationship with God or with myself, but I have learned a few invaluable lessons on the way. I've learned that those connections must be my priority. Not just while I'm single, but throughout my entire life. Not just because it's those connections that best prepare me to take on the title *wife*, but because that's how we're wired to live our most meaningful and joy-filled lives.

Wife! What?!

I know. I'm just as shocked as you are. But then again, I'm not.

We're all looking for the same kind of love. But my goal is to show you that the love everybody wants is already ours.