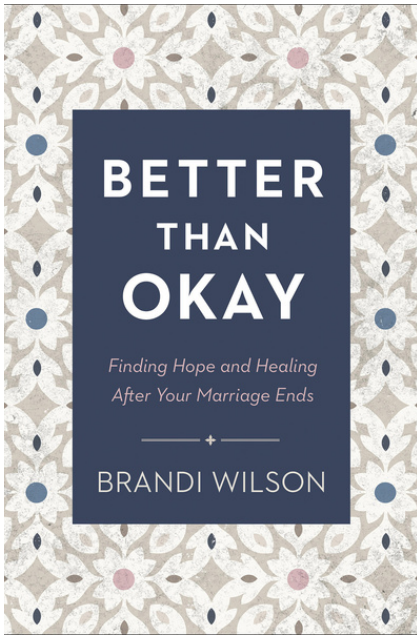




DIVORCE IS NOT THE END OF YOUR STORY BRANDI WILSON HELPS WOMEN FIND HOPE & HEALING AFTER MARRIAGE ENDS

New book, *Better Than Okay*, Arrives July 2023



BLOOMINGTON, MN (March 20, 2023) – **Some seasons of life seem more difficult than one human should have to bear.** For **Brandi Wilson** that season was 2016, the year her husband – a megachurch pastor – walked away from the church and their family. As her 20-year marriage dissolved, Brandi also lost her church community, her dreams for the future, and a huge part of her identity. She and her three boys began a new journey marked by deep grief and suffering – but also hope, freedom, boldness, and peace. Today Brandi thanks God for the redemptive healing in her life and reassures other newly single women that they are not alone. *Divorce is not the end of the story.*

Brandi Wilson’s new book, ***Better Than Okay: Finding Hope and Healing After Your Marriage Ends*** (Bethany House, July 11, 2023), recounts how she confronted grief and heartache head-on and learned how to rise from the pain. Filled with insight, empathy, and laugh-out-loud humor, ***Better Than Okay*** shows it is possible to move forward with hope after divorce.

“***Better Than Okay*** is not about why my marriage ended. It’s about what God chose to do in me as I chose to begin again,” writes **Brandi Wilson**, who co-leads *Leading and Loving It*, a non-profit for women in ministry. “God has transformed the pain and loss into a healthier new life for me and my sons. Divorce wasn’t the end of our story, and it won’t be for you either.”

Six years after divorce, Brandi’s heart and home are filled with renewed joy, confidence and strength. She is passionate about walking alongside single moms and divorced women as they navigate parenting and life. ***Better Than Okay*** was designed to encourage and empower women who find themselves in the transition of divorce. Brandi helps readers to:

- » **Embrace hope for the future** as they are released from the grip of grief
- » Discover God’s truth and **experience His healing redemption** in their suffering
- » **Unlock their heart from the shackles of shame** and move forward in freedom
- » Develop a **bravery that helps them dig deep** when they wonder if they can keep going
- » Establish fresh boundaries to **create a healthier new life and new family**
- » **Move forward with peace and discernment** as they navigate life’s unexpected transition
- » Replace insecurity with **renewed boldness and confidence** in who they were created to be
- » Experience a **fresh breath of strength** when they’re overwhelmed with weariness

“Walking through a divorce is annihilating, even when you’re surrounded by a loving support system,” writes **Brandi Wilson**. “I empathize deeply with what you’re facing, and I also want to pour a healthy dose of encouragement into your hurting heart. You will survive your divorce and come out stronger. You will, I know it in my bones.”

Better Than Okay helps women navigate divorce with greater confidence, peace and discernment. Brandi addresses the questions regarding their newly single lives, including:

- » Will I always feel this lonely - will my heart and soul ever start to heal?
- » Will my kids be okay spiritually?
- » How do I get back to feeling grateful after so much loss?
- » Am I selfish to prioritize time with friends?
- » Who am I really, now that I'm not a wife?
- » Should I answer all my kids' questions about their dad?
- » How do I know if I'm ready to start dating?
- » Am I a bad Christian if my grief tastes like tears and sounds like swearing?

Bethany House will launch **Better Than Okay** with a national publicity campaign and a targeted digital marketing plan. *Leading and Loving It* (leadingandlovingit.com), a women's ministry Brandi Wilson co-leads, will support the book launch with digital marketing to their social media community as well as communication to their database of church leaders across the world. The in-person event in October will also be designed to continue promotion **Better Than Okay**.



Bethany House has been publishing high quality books for over 50 years. From humble beginnings as a publishing ministry for a missions organization, they are now a division of Baker Publishing Group, one of the top Christian publishing houses. Bethany House seeks to uplift readers' families, faith, and free time with our library of industry-leading fiction and bestselling, Christ-centered nonfiction. Their nonfiction encompasses a variety of subjects, including Christian living, family resources, theology, heaven, and many more. Baker Publishing Group publishes high-quality writings that represent historic Christianity and serve the diverse interests and concerns of evangelical readers. For more information, visit bakerpublishinggroup.com.

About Brandi Wilson



Brandi Wilson is an author, coach, and speaker who has been in leadership for more than a decade at *Leading and Loving It*, a non-profit created to empower women to love life and ministry. Brandi has helped plant two churches and is passionate about walking alongside single moms and divorced women as they navigate parenting and life. Her latest book is ***Better Than Okay: Finding Hope and Healing After Your Marriage Ends***. Brandi lives with her three sons in Nashville, TN. More at lovebrandiwillson.com.



Better Than Okay: Finding Hope and Healing After Your Marriage Ends

By Brandi Wilson

Available July 11, 2023, from Bethany House / Baker Publishing Group
ISBN 978- 0764241413 | Paperback | U.S. \$18.99 | 208 pages

Review copies and interviews available: pamela@mmpublicrelations.com, 615-294-5073

Suggested Questions for Brandi Wilson

*Divorce is heartbreaking for any family, but divorce can be uniquely brutal for the family of a pastor. Six years ago, **Brandi Wilson**'s husband walked away from his pastoral role as well as his wife and three sons. Now Brandi has written a book for Christian women currently facing divorce, entitled **Better Than Okay: Finding Hope and Healing After Your Marriage Ends.***

- ✔ Brandi, you're just six years past your own devastating divorce, so writing this book can't have been easy. You courageously revisit the darkest time of your life in order to offer hope to other women facing divorce today. Why did you choose to write ***Better Than Okay*** at this time?
- ✔ Can you share an overview of what your life was like before your divorce? What did you lose immediately when your husband abandoned your family, and what did you lose more gradually?
- ✔ On the flip side of that question, what did you gain once your divorce was final? How has God protected and provided for you over the last six years?
- ✔ Christian churches have historically criticized members who divorce. Was that your experience? What do church leaders need to understand about destructive marriages and divorce?
- ✔ Divorced women, especially moms, sometimes struggle with the question of 'did I do the right thing?' after a divorce. Have you experienced that personally? What would you say to a woman who is second-guessing her decision to divorce?
- ✔ What wisdom do you share with parents who are eager to minimize the impact of divorce on their children's hearts? These parents basically want to know if their kids will be Better Than Okay – so how have you helped your sons process the impact of divorce?
- ✔ Shifting from married life to being single again can feel shocking – and it can be lonely. What suggestions do you have for managing loneliness that stems from divorce?
- ✔ Grief is a journey we each walk through individually. What have you learned about facing grief that threatens to overwhelm you? Where did your strength come from on your darkest days?
- ✔ What do you wish you could say to younger Brandi as she sat in the middle of her broken marriage and broken dreams?
- ✔ What resources do you recommend for women facing divorce? How can church leaders better support single parents and their children?

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Excerpt from *Better Than Okay*

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You're Not Alone & You're Gonna Be Better than Okay

I think it's fair to assume this is a book you never expected to need. To put it bluntly, it's the book I never wanted to write. The first thing I want you to hear is I'm sorry. I'm sorry for your heartache. I'm sorry for your shattered dreams. I'm sorry you're putting the pieces of your life back together.

Next, I want you to know you're not alone. Walking through a divorce is annihilating, even when you're surrounded by a loving support system. Your heart is broken, your marriage has ended, your next steps are unknown, yet the lives of the people around you continue as yours is falling apart.

If we could, I'd sit across from you at a quaint little coffee shop in my hometown and listen to you share your disappointment, hurt, fear, and anger. The opportunity to sit across from you and say "me too" would be a gift. To hold space for you to share how you arrived at this undesirable title of "divorced." Since we probably won't get that opportunity (though if you're ever in Nashville, let me know), I'm going to do my best to pour my "me too" into the words on the following pages. To create a book that doesn't give a cookie-cutter formula for moving forward, but the story you get to create by taking your best next step. While I might not know you, my heart aches for you and what you're walking through.

Feel all those emotions, friend. Tell me how you never walked down the aisle expecting to divide your household items a few years later. Admit how you never had children to parent them part-time based on a court-ordered parenting plan. Share your disappointment, frustration, and anger.

While I empathize deeply with what you're facing, I also want to pour a healthy dose of encouragement into your hurting heart. You will survive your divorce and come out stronger. You will, I know it in my bones.

There will be days you don't want to get out of bed. Days you feel like nothing is going right in your life. Days the grief hangs heavy over your slumped shoulders. And also. There will be days when you begin to see glimpses of yourself again. Days you recognize how far you've come. Days you celebrate the hope you begin to feel. Days when tears don't roll down your cheeks, and (believe it or not) you catch yourself laughing again.

I'm sorry these are the circumstances that introduced us, but it's an honor to be on this journey with you and to write a book that whispers hope into your heart once again.

The year 2016 was the year my husband walked away from our marriage. It was a doozy of a year, to say the least. A year I never expected to experience. Let me give you a quick glimpse into my life pre-divorce.

I married my college sweetheart. Very early into our marriage we planted two churches, the latter being Cross Point Church in Nashville, Tennessee. The church boomed in growth and so did my pastor-husband's career. In fact, the church spent numerous years listed as one of the fastest-growing churches in the nation. Nashville is a city of dreamers, young and old, and the church matched the environment and atmosphere of Nashville perfectly. As the church grew, it expanded to five campuses across Middle Tennessee.

In 2016, my then-husband announced that he was resigning from the church. His departure from the church and our family played out on the front pages of local, state, and national publications. The first paragraph of the news story in *The Tennessean* put it like this: "[The pastor], who founded Cross Point Church 14 years ago, said he resigned as senior pastor of the Nashville-area megachurch because he is tired, broken and in need of rest." Meanwhile, behind the scenes, I was dealing with some painfully private things that the readers of *The Tennessean* weren't privy to.

The narrative being repeated was about an overworked pastor who was burned out. The reality was I'd been sleeping alone, not by my own choice, for more than six months. In my heart I was sure my suspicions were correct; the brokenness went much deeper, trust had once again been broken, and I was experiencing devastating heartbreak.

And the reality is I didn't just lose my marriage and family unit; I lost my church family. The people I'd spent the last fourteen years leading and loving. The staff I shared a meal with every week at staff meetings and regularly invited into my home. The ladies whom I'd had babies alongside and raised our children together. The church that wasn't just a job or role to me, but a spiritual extended family that I loved and was honored to serve.

One Sunday I was at one of our campuses hugging people, and the next Sunday I was hiding out in my home telling my kids their dad didn't work at the church anymore. It wasn't just my marriage that unraveled. Life as I knew it had ended. I'm aware that my divorce was more public than most divorces are, but I've talked to enough women to know divorce always plays out in some public way for everyone, even if it's just in the neighborhood, the family, on Facebook, or under the steeple of your church. The unraveling of your family unit is traumatic, and it can often feel like all eyes are on you.

Because my divorce played out in public more than I was comfortable with, deciding to write this book took some time. Write it too soon and I'd be writing out of wounds, which isn't healthy for anyone. I decided to take some time to heal. Writing from my scars allows a level of empathy anyone walking through a similar situation deserves.

This book isn't about why my marriage ended. It's about what God chose to do in me as I chose to begin again. It's about mending broken hearts and stepping boldly into a new identity. This book isn't about what happened to my marriage—but about who I have grown into. This book isn't about what was lost—but what I've found. This book isn't about what was taken from me—but what remains. Better than okay is a life where you're not the victim but the victor.

As we walk this path toward hope and healing together, I'm going to occasionally include portions from my personal journal. Not only was writing a huge part of my healing, but the journal entries also give you a glimpse of what I was feeling and hopefully will allow you to feel a little validated in your own journey and emotions. *You're not alone, and you're gonna be better than okay.*

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Early Praise for *Better Than Okay*

“If you are at the end of your marriage or the end of your rope, my friend, Brandi Wilson is a worthy guide on a journey you never thought you’d have to take.”

- **Holly Furtick**, Elevation Church

“For the one ready to overcome, this book is for you. Brandi Wilson has written a wonderfully wise, witty, and grace-filled guidebook to healing, forgiving, and flourishing after life’s setbacks. With refreshing vulnerability, freeing truths, and practical tools, these pages reveal the beauty of the redemptive power of Jesus.”

- **Hosanna Wong**, international speaker, spoken word artist, author of *You are More than You’ve Been Told*

“Brandi Wilson was one of the first people to welcome my family to Nashville when we moved here thirteen years ago. Now, she’s inviting you to the table, too. Come get encouraged. Come get inspired. Come discover in her authentic, beautiful story that a life that is better than okay is always available.”

- **Jon Acuff**, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Soundtracks: The Surprising Solution to Overthinking*

“An amazing thing happens while you’re reading *Better Than Okay*. At first you are walking with the author through the depths and darkness of her personal wilderness. And then somewhere along the way, you feel a shift—that the author is walking with you through your wilderness. Brandi Wilson has been there and made it through to the other side. And what she has courageously and generously done in this book is return to the wilderness—the very place where you now are—and with honesty, compassion, and wisdom, Brandi serves as your guide on the healing journey to the other side, where hope and perseverance arrive to help you discover and recover peace and joy.”

- **Ramon Presson PhD**, licensed therapist and featured expert in the DivorceCare series; author of *When Will My Life Not Suck? Authentic Hope for the Disillusioned*

“It feels impossible to ever feel that you will be okay. Brandi’s friendship, prayer, and words were what helped me through my darkest times. This book is everything she said that helped me get to the other side, so I know you will also be better than okay because of this book.”

- **Jana Kramer**, country music singer and actress