



Episode 3-23: Thanksgiving

Resources:

Books

[Praying the Bible - Don Whitney](#)

[Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God - Tim Keller](#)

[Experiencing God in Your Work - Joe Carroll](#)

Sermons

[Choosing Teachers Wisely by Considering Their End - Faith Church](#)

[Hope Because of the Testing of God - Faith Church](#)

Transcript:

Jocelyn: I don't just need to feel better. I need the truth. And ultimately that will make me better.

Janet: I just want to make it as totally simple as possible for ladies to see that the Bible is really applicable to their everyday life.

Jocelyn: When they understand theology, the application flows out of it quickly with joy.

Janet: It is a journey, but even the journey itself is joyful when I'm doing it, holding the hand of my savior and trusting him all along the way. This is the joyful journey podcast, a podcast to inspire and equip women to passionately pursue beautiful biblical truth on their journey as women of God. When you choose truth, you're choosing joy.

Janet: Well, hello. Welcome back. This is Janet here with Jocelyn.

Jocelyn: Hey there.

Janet: And for this episode, we get to say happy Thanksgiving.

Jocelyn: Happy Thanksgiving. We're so excited to celebrate the holidays with you, our listeners.

Janet: Yes. So what do you think? What are we going to talk about today?

Jocelyn: Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens. Bright copper kettles and warm woolen mittens, brown paper packages tied up with strings. These are a few of my favorite things.

Janet: You should write a song.

Jocelyn: I should, I should start singing. So to celebrate Thanksgiving this year, we're gonna... be talking about a few of our favorite things, and we're going to hit it with our four favorites.



Janet: Okay.

Jocelyn: We're going to hear from each other about our four favorites from 2023. Our favorite book, our favorite sermon, our favorite song, and our favorite biblical passage from this year.

Janet: And you must know how much I hate "our favorite."

Jocelyn: I know.

Janet: Do I have the favorite? So what you're going to hear from me is something that was meaningful.

Jocelyn: Here's my top five.

Janet: I don't know if it's really my favorite, but it'll be something that's meaningful for me.

Jocelyn: Let's start with hearing from each of us about a book that we each read in 2023 that was meaningful to us. Why don't you start, Janet?

Janet: Okay, well, I'm going to tell you my first book that was meaningful. It's the biggest story ABC book.

Jocelyn: Oh, why is that meaningful?

Janet: Because it's a board book for my new granddaughter to learn her ABCs and learn about Jesus at the same time.

Jocelyn: Oh, that's a great favorite book.

Janet: I have read the whole book. I could go from A to Z in a board book.

Jocelyn: You should write a book review.

Janet: There was one letter that I didn't think he did a great job with. But other than that...

Jocelyn: Ah. Really?

Janet: Well, cause he, it was a silent letter.

Jocelyn: That's not fun.

Janet: I know. I was like, gnat for G. That was cute. That was funny. So I was like, Oh, it'll be gnat. But it's an excellent book by Kevin DeYoung. But one of my favorites, but this year I've really been challenged about Prayer. I read a book earlier this year on prayer that I really liked



that was an easy book called *Praying the Bible* by Don Whitney. And the bottom line is pray the Bible. It's kind of gives it away.

Jocelyn: It's a great summary.

Janet: Exactly. And then he talks about how to do that and that, and his premise is, well, I'm going to read you a little quote from, cause I thought, yeah, that's, I think that that's helpful for those of us, if I'm not the only one that struggles in the area of prayer. He says, if you're seeking to live under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of God's word, the Bible, confessing known sin and fighting the lifelong tendency to sin instead of excusing it, then the problem of boredom in prayer is not you, rather it's your method. So that's his premise, is that prayer is boring because we just repeat the same things over and over because we're not understanding how to use scripture to keep talking to God. And then when you do, there's a lot to say. So that was helpful. And then I started reading Tim Keller's book on prayer, *Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*. And it's, if you know Tim Keller, you're going to get a lot of history. You're going to get a lot of people's perspectives from different generations. And I found it really helpful to understand what's going on in my own heart. One of the things he says is there is a longing in prayer that is never fulfilled in this life. And sometimes the deep satisfactions we're looking for in prayer feel few and far between. Yes, yes. And that's just part of it. And then he goes on to say, if the goal of prayer is a real personal connection with God. Then it's only by immersion in the language of the Bible that we will learn to pray, perhaps just as slowly as a child learns to speak.

Jocelyn: That's interesting.

Janet: And so it's a really good book. And thinking through, it's like, yes, it's going to be hard. Yes, it's a journey and a skill and it's a language that you're learning, but be immersed in scripture. And then he gives Luther and Calvin and several other guys ways that they think about prayer and how to develop that area. So, for me, the bottom line is, there's a lot of principles that I want to put in practice and I need to slow down. I don't slow down well. So, those books have been helpful to me and I'm hoping will continue to help me to slow down and develop that intimacy with God, instead of just wishing it were more intimate.

Jocelyn: I love the title of that Timothy Keller book. What's the whole title?

Janet: *Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*.

Jocelyn: That's so cool.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Prayer. *Experiencing awe and intimacy*. I love that. Awesome.



Janet: How about you?

Jocelyn: Well, I read a book called *Experiencing God in Your Work* by Joe M. Carroll. And as a disclaimer, I've never heard of this dude before. I found this book one night when I was laying in bed, not sleeping. I just went on to hoopla and I was like, I need something to read. I want to see what God says about work. Let's just see if there's some work and God book on here.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: So I literally pulled it up and I was reading it being like, okay, it's probably gonna start getting wonky soon. And so I would read a page and go to the next page. I was like, that wasn't wonky. And I would read more and I'd be like, This stuff is really good and I, I just was, every page was so encouraged. I kept waiting for something to be wrong with it and I was like, there's nothing wrong with this book. This book is great. So it's written by a businessman who has worked for at least 35 years in commercial real estate leasing, which I was like, Oh, this is not like who I normally get theology from, but it was packed with theology. He said he had a gap between his desire to experience God in his work and then really actually experiencing God in his work. And so he had all these fears and anxieties and difficulties, and he was talking about working in the real estate business during the late eighties and nineties when it like some big bad stuff happened in the business and it was very stressful. And so those work problems exposed how he had this underdeveloped theology of work and had an immaturity of living out the gospel as it related to his work. And he just saw this glaring need. And he wanted to integrate his faith was with his work. Which is so refreshing because sometimes when you read a book that's written by a theologian, it's like they're writing to other theologians like

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: It's like seminary book, which is lovely and wonderful, but it's not where the majority of Christians live.

Janet: That's right.

Jocelyn: The majority of Christians live in the workplace. And so he wanted to learn how to integrate his faith and his work in a completely secular environment. And one thing, you know how I hate this, one thing that I appreciated is that he really didn't want to be weird about it. I've told you, it's like my one goal for my kids. Please don't be weird. So here's a quote from the book. It says Jesus' life and teaching created spiritual upheaval in people's lives. His faith expressions genuinely and routinely engage with those around him. Is this not the type of faith experience we long for? A faith that experiences no dividing line between Sunday worship and Monday work. A living faith that ends practical atheism in our work and authentically connects us with God, while working with others in a culturally relevant manner. I just love that.



Janet: Well, that's exactly what we want.

Jocelyn: I loved that because I don't want to just be a theologian and I don't just want to be an anonymous worker. I want to be one authentic person no matter where I am. So it tells the story about how he met some other guys who were trying to be really serious about integrating their faith into their work, but they were all different seasons of life, they were different professions, but they each had this super deep conviction that God had created work to be a spiritual endeavor. And so they started meeting together and then they started praying together and they wrote a 10 week curriculum that debuted in 1984 in his office conference room. And soon Bible studies started multiplying in conference rooms all over San Antonio where he lived. And the topic was biblical leadership for excellence. And it was like saying, how can we be Christians who work for the glory of God? But do amazing work in a secular environment.

Janet: I mean, if we're going to do it for the glory of God, we should be striving for excellence.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: I love that.

Jocelyn: So his goal was just to invite other people on this quest and really look for ways to have ordinary activities of work turn into this experience of a true spiritual union with God, which is already true. We just sometimes don't apply it there. So I was reading this book after we realized I needed to go back to work outside of our home in a paying job. And at that point in the year, I was just rethinking my whole career path because I just didn't know what to do. And it was really practically a blessing to be able to read through this book. So here are some of the main points. Work was given to humans as a gift. Work was given to be a blessing. God said it was good to work.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And we work as a reflection of a God who works and really enjoys both his work and the product of his work Which I thought was so cool and Romans 1:20 tells us we can clearly see the invisible qualities of God through his work, his creation. And so we have to understand that work is a vital part of God's nature and God works because he enjoys working and it reveals what God is like through God's work. We're privileged to learn what he's like. His work reveals his character and what he does reveals to us his heart and his purposes. It's through his work that we can know God and God works for the sheer joy of it, which is so counter-cultural. Like, what?

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: So, he goes on to say, work is a significant and critical part of God's design for man. God placed within each of us the need to work. As a result, work is integral part of our God



designed DNA. While work is not to be our life, God intends for work to be a vital component of our life. We don't live to work, but work is to be an important part of living. So a lot of people these days view work as a curse.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Like the goal is to work as little as possible for the most money as possible, so they have the most days off as possible. I think it really contributes to some of the depression that people are feeling because they're thinking what's going to make them happy is the opposite of what God made to make them happy.

Janet: Well, and when you read that, depending on how you view life, you could be thinking, that's totally unrealistic. My work is hard. I'm working with people who are mean. There's backstabbing. But in all of that, if my goal is represent God, bring order to chaos, show his values, I can do all of that with joy.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: My joy doesn't come from having a problem free environment.

Jocelyn: Or the dream job.

Janet: Right. Right.

Jocelyn: One of the things that I thought was really cool was that he talked about how work has eternal significance. And then he went into this. One of the things I like about this book is it's not super heavy. Like there's a lot of great illustrations and it's easy to read. He went into this long description of how Jesus had a career before he ever went into full time ministry, which I had never thought about before. I knew he was a carpenter.

Janet: Right

Jocelyn: he was 30

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: By the time he started his ministry. He would have been probably at least a decade into his career.

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: And so he went into great explanation about how part of what Jesus did as a carpenter was see needs and meet them. And he met them through his work. And then it talks about how,



you know, obviously his ministry was to come just declare the beginning of his kingdom train disciples, train apostles, and then finish the work of salvation.

Janet: Right. That was the main work.

Jocelyn: That was the main work. But he did other work.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: That was a blessing,

Janet: which also means he understands

Jocelyn: yes, absolutely

Janet: when our work is hard cause I'm sure his was too.

Jocelyn: Yeah. So it was just such a great book. One of the big things that I loved about this was that he says his main point in this book was that we reflect God's image through our vocation, which is what we do. We reflect God's image through our virtues, which is how we do it. And we reflect God's image in our volition-- for whom we do it. So work from a biblical point of view is whatever activity a believer pursues in the sight of God for the glory of God to the benefit of others. And that was really, really helpful because at this point of the year, when I read this in the spring, I was processing going back to work after being at home for 10 years.

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: And I found like I was created to work, to find joy and satisfaction in working, and I shouldn't worship my job, or find my identity in my job, or overvalue it or undervalue it. And it was helpful when I realized that literally, literally, all of the work, all of my time, is valuable.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: All of it. Some of my work is paid and some of my work is unpaid. And I literally changed my vocabulary. I've not said anymore my volunteer work or my, like my garden work or my at home work. Like I work, some of it is paid and some of it is unpaid. It's just work.

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: All of it is work. And none of my work should give me my identity. All of my work reveals my identity. And so as I transitioned back to paid work, it wasn't more valuable or less valuable than all the unpaid work that I had been doing for my family, for my church. It was just work. Sometimes it's paid. Sometimes it's not paid. All of it is valuable and none of it makes me



who I am. I am his and he created me to work for him as a gift of love, reflecting him because it's just the venue where he gets to be seen and understood through me.

Janet: So at this point, you've been back to work for a while.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: And a couple of different jobs. So How has it impacted you?

Jocelyn: So I've been back to work almost six months now and I keep looking at myself and asking myself why are you not stressed out yet? Why are you not overwhelmed? When are you going to crash? But I keep finding that when I do the next work thing that God has for me, paid or unpaid, reflecting his virtues as a gift for him, I've thankfully been able to be a lot more balanced than I had previously. Even in my unpaid work at home, I just get into a kick and I'm less tempted to make my work who I am. It's just I'm working one job. I'm getting paid for it until I go home and I work my other job where I don't get paid for it. But ultimately I am his, he is mine and he created me to do cool stuff for him all day long.

Janet: And what I love is you're working paid and unpaid and both for the Lord, but even more specific, both out of love for your family.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: So I do my paid work out of love for my family.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: And love for the people now that you work for, but making that decision out of love for your family. The things I do that are unpaid, I do out of love for my family, my church family and my nuclear family. It's all motivated by the same thing.

Jocelyn: And it's just so cool. Like my first job was a temporary job and it was really hard and I was super grateful that I didn't have to work there the rest of my life, but it was very helpful at the time. And I was reading this book when I worked there without any promise that I would get the job that I have now, which is much more in line with my skillset. it was really encouraging to me. Like you can think about even a hard job in a right way.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: And even a job that's not like fulfilling or a great career, it's just a job that helps pay the bills. And it was like really applicational. I can do this job to reflect God.

Janet: Yes.



Jocelyn: Even though I don't really like going to work every day.

Janet: Because there are other image bearers around me this is it right now. And I want to do it with excellence for the glory of God. And that's awesome.

Jocelyn: I thought often while I was at that first job, like I am doing this to be a blessing. Literally, I'm doing this job because I want to bless my boss.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: And I would pack these boxes and I'd be like, I really don't care about this product that I'm dealing with, but I really care that when the person opens this box, they're like, wow, the way that she packaged this was a blessing. Like, look at this stuff, not falling all over the place. So the book is experiencing God in your work by Joe Carroll. And I just want to say, read us with discernment. I literally have never heard of him before. I'm pretty sure he works for navigators. So I found it on hoopla when I was laying awake in the middle of the night, not sleeping cause I was having issues that made me not be able to sleep. So just read it with discernment and, you know, be careful, but it was a great blessing of a book.

Janet: Excellent.

Jocelyn: So our next topic is our favorite sermon from 2023. So what is a sermon that impacted you in the last year, Janet?

Janet: Well, those questions are so hard for me because there are so many and my memory is so bad, I always have to go back and look at my notes.

Jocelyn: Oh, yeah.

Janet: Or I can't even remember. But one of the sermons that we had in the fall was called choosing teachers wisely by considering their end. And we're going through second Peter as you know. And so false teachers and Knowing their end and it's tempting to just be angry with false teachers. And one of the things that I got from the sermon was be sobered by their end and actually care about them.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: Now it doesn't mean I should fall for it. And I love that he starts the sermon by going through Psalm 73, which is one of my favorite Psalms to teach and work through for someone that ultimately understands the goodness of God, but is totally distracted by seeing the evil people around him prospering. So he goes through that and that's really a helpful thing. But then he goes into second Peter, and talking about false prophets in one statement, in that passage, second Peter 2:1-3, their judgment from long ago is not idle and their destruction is not asleep.



And thinking, I should be sobered by that and that's one of his main points, be sobered by God's judgment on the unrighteous, instead of just self righteously angry. Get over myself and actually be concerned about their end when they're living that way. And when they're teaching that way, and they're bringing destruction on themselves. But then he goes on to say, be amazed by God's rescue of his people. And in that same passage, you see the difference from the world around Noah and Noah. And fascinating that the Bible in this passage talks about Lot because I don't look at Lot and go, righteous Lot. But the scriptures call him righteous Lot.

Jocelyn: Isn't that crazy?

Janet: I know. And then as he explained it in the sermon, his status before God was righteous just as mine is, but my behavior isn't always. And that because of that orientation toward God shown in part by it said Lot was really disturbed by the evil around him. Now he didn't do anything about it, but the heart inside that was disturbed by that and God's gracious compassion to rescue him. Not because he was amazing. But because he had an orientation toward God at least. So that was really helpful. But then my favorite, what really I came away with because I'm involved in a variety of situations right now where righteousness is not evidently winning the day in this moment. And that's hard. And part of that I'm counseling other precious people in my life who are not experiencing that either. And his point number three was be encouraged because God knows how to make things right in the end. And I loved that. And to think because of that, he says, remember that because the Lord will make all things right in the end, often your role today is simply to return good for evil. And I was thinking to myself and without fear.

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: I don't have to think, it's not fair. They're getting it. God sees. God cares. God will make it right. And on the one hand, I can be very, very comforted by that and free to just love and not feel like they're going to win. Also I can be very sobered by that and let that have me begging God for their repentance instead of God's vengeance on them. So that was just a powerful sermon for me this fall. How about you?

Jocelyn: That's helpful. Well, my favorite was a sermon that we had on first Peter 4:12 through 19. I think it was like in the end of April or so. Oh yeah. It was the end of April. And Pastor Aucoin taught on how we have hope because we are tested by God, which I was like, what?

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Like that just threw me for a loop. And so we were right in the middle. This was when life was the hardest. It was very excruciating. And what I thought was going to be my future, I realized was not going to be my future. For the foreseeable future and it wasn't what I had planned and



Janet: Yes. And it was a good plan that you had.

Jocelyn: it was a good plan

Janet: not what's gonna happen

Jocelyn: and it was not what God had planned. And also at the time, like I just shared about work, like I was rethinking my whole career path because I had thought I'll just be a stay at home wife, mom for the rest of my life. Like I'll just do busy church stuff. And so I was scrutinizing my own self and feeling like, all this pressure to figure stuff out. And the sermon taught us that the process of being scrutinized is good for us. And that we need to set our faces toward scrutiny so that we can be found out. And we need to know whether we are the real deal or whether we're big fat fakers. And I thought that was so helpful to set our face towards scrutiny, to not be afraid of it.

Janet: And yeah, and I think when he talked about that and he talked about, you know, when it comes to your doctors, when it comes to your pilots, we want them to be tested.

Jocelyn: Yes. We appreciate scrutiny.

Janet: Yes, we want them to be scrutinized. Oh, me too? No, no, no, no, no, no. That's for them. So that was.

Jocelyn: And theologically, we know the passage where like, you know, metal is refined in fire.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: You know, we know all that.

Janet: But not me.

Jocelyn: No, like, theoretically. So this was the point, one of the points that was so helpful. He said, God will bring testing on his children. That is an expected part of life. And the passage says, do not be surprised, which I was like, Oh yeah.

Janet: We're always surprised.

Jocelyn: Why am I always shocked? It's not strange. It's not unexpected. Like literally it says expect it. So we've already lost the battle. If we're shocked when it comes to trials and suffering. And one of the things that was helpful was that he was explaining the passage that says, judgment begins with the household of God. He's

Janet: Wow, we're first.



Jocelyn: I know. He starts judgment inside of the house of God to prove that we are his. And so the other thing that was helpful was he said, testing will be fiery and fire burns. And it purifies. And it was just so, so helpful. He also said that God will sift and refine his children's true allegiances. This is a quote from the sermon. He said, your identity and faith in Christ will be tested. I want you to recognize that God is not so concerned about your engineering skills that need to build good buildings, but he will test how you function as a Christian in your engineering profession. Do you bear the name of Christ and do your work with Christlike values? Doctors, God's not so concerned that you have the wisdom of the greatest physician, but do you have the wisdom appropriate to a Christian doctor to handle relationships with Christlike compassion and care? Factory worker, God is not so concerned that you have the ability to be the fastest assembly line person. But do you bear the name of Christ and function like Christ would on that assembly line? Same is true for a Christian husband, Christian parent, Christian school teacher, Christian pastors, and God will do what is right through the testing was the summary.

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: You can trust that God is not going to mess you up by going through this testing. So it's interesting that I wasn't yet starting in my first job when I heard the sermon. I started like two weeks later. And that first job that I had, that temporary job in the summer was so hard because it was the first time I had worked around non Christian people in almost 30 years.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: Like 25 years, at least. And so I was shocked at how easily I was tempted to sin and to think sinful thoughts and like the people around me cussed like sailors it was just a different environment that I've worked in since a long time. And it was interesting to have this sermon on my mind as I was faced with weird temptations that threw me off.

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: You know, like why am I even thinking this way? So

Janet: I'm being tested.

Jocelyn: I know. When I originally heard the sermon I pretty much, I'm pretty sure I cried the whole way through it, but it was really helpful and really empowering. Like, okay, why are you walking around like a flabby baby? Like use your muscles. Like God is going to test you. Why are you so shocked? And every time you have to pick up a dumbbell, like, come on, work up your muscles. It was a great sermon. And we'll link both of those sermons

Janet: Yes. We will.



Jocelyn: In our show notes. And we hope that you enjoy listening to them in the way that we do.

Janet: And I love just being able to do that. For one thing, when you talk about a sermon, you remember it better.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: But also all the women listening to this have also heard great sermons that we haven't heard. And they can listen on these links and hopefully benefit from the truths that we benefited from. But they can also have these conversations with their friends about the sermons that are impacting them.

Jocelyn: Yes. Absolutely.

Janet: I love that.

Jocelyn: All right. So let's think about a song that was meaningful to you in 2023.

Janet: I love how you've not used the word favorite. Way to go.

Jocelyn: I'm so afraid to. I don't know how to do favorites.

Janet: And my daughter's sitting here, so I have to be honest. I guess I should be anyway, but it's just very obvious right now. So me and technology, especially when it comes to like Spotify, we're not best friends. So I never know who sings what or what it's called, but I love Sunday worship. Like I love Sunday worship and then the rest of the week I'm like, I have no idea how to find that song again.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: I don't know. What was it called?

Jocelyn: I know.

Janet: And I don't even know. And then Karis does all of her work to get me on Spotify and says, click here. And I have to tell you the last time she did that, I clicked there and I can only get the song list from the week months ago. I don't know how to get the updated song list. So, it's hard for me to answer that, although I can tell you I love the songs we sing. But I was recently at a TGC conference, City of Light was there. And so they, put the names of the songs on the lyrics, so I knew the name. And there are several that were good, but I benefit from and need the reorientation in worship music that orients me to big picture, what God is up to, and mostly just God. And so that's why I love Sundays because that's what our worship service does on the singing side. But their song, Only a Holy God, is up there for me. I won't call it my favorite because I don't know what a favorite is, but



Jocelyn: it's up there.

Janet: And I'm just going to read some of the stanzas, because here's one thing I'm learning that worship music does for me. It forces me to slow down. Because if I was reading this, I'd have read that paragraph fast and moved on with my life.

Jocelyn: So it's like the theme of your year, slow down.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Slow down, Janet.

Janet: And I'm like, what is it about Sunday worship? My son says, I always know mom, you're in the front row and the worship team loves because I respond to music and I'm frequently crying. And I'm like, I'm not that way when I pray. Why? Because I'm in a hurry.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: I'm really struggling to learn how to slow down. Music forces it.

Jocelyn: Because you have to follow the notes.

Janet: It doesn't like, I go, I know that line. Come on. Let's go to the next one. I know that line.

Jocelyn: Speed singing.

Janet: Yeah. So I don't, I don't put it on one and a half speed when I listen to songs. So thinking through the words, who else commands all the hosts of heaven? Who else could make every King bow down? And I'm thinking, I just heard a sermon recently on Exodus where, when they were after the 10 plagues and right before the parting of the Red Sea, when Israel has already seen the power of God, but they think it's over and they're all excited. And then they, it says they look up and they see the army coming at them. And, but who else makes every king bow down? And the point he was one of the points in the sermon he said, they looked up, but they didn't look up high enough.

Jocelyn: Oh, interesting.

Janet: And they didn't look at the one who had to look down on the army.

Jocelyn: That's interesting. Wow.

Janet: And I love that.

Jocelyn: wow, that's very visual.



Janet: Yes. And I, so I love that visual to think the army is way below him. So we need to not look at our armies. We need to look up at the one who has to look down on that. And so that was my visual and I think who else could make every king bow down? Who else can whisper and darkness trembles? And then it's certainly it's come and behold him. And I'm like, slow down, Janet. Behold him. I know these truths, but they don't impact my heart if I don't slow down, and massage them into my heart. And Tim Keller talks about that a lot. What are the ways that you're massaging it into your heart? And that prayer should be that. And I want it to be. But right now, music does that for me because it slows me down. Who else could rescue me from my own failing? Who else would offer his only son? And I look at my children. I wouldn't. Who else invites me to call him father? So And then, come and worship the Holy God over and over. Come and worship the Holy God. And I think when I slow down and meditate on the God that's that powerful, I told the ladies I was with at the conference, it probably took me a full day at the conference to reorient around the bigness of God. Not focused on all the incredibly hard things going on in my life right now So that then I can come back and look at those things from a different perspective

Jocelyn: What a great conference for you then.

Janet: It was.

Jocelyn: I'm so glad you got to go.

Janet: How about you? What's one of your favorites?

Jocelyn: I also struggle to have a favorite song because I'm like you. My family laughs Every time I try to sing a song without lyrics in front of me, because I don't know the words.

Janet: I know.

Jocelyn: Even if I love it, I don't make the, I just have to make them up. I just make up words that go along with the music. And my family is like, literally you are so terrible at this. They can hear a song one time and be like, got it.

Janet: Oh no, not me.

Jocelyn: Yeah. So. I also was very happy when they started doing the song sheet, like, here's the songs that we will be singing on Sunday. And then be like, what was that song? Oh, I'll look at the song sheet. I have a link now. So this is not one that we sing in worship, but I love it. It's called You Have Made Me Glad by Charity Gale. And here are some of the lines. I'll give thanks to the Lord and sing praise to your name, O Most High. I'll declare your love in the morning and your faithfulness by night. For you, O Lord, have made me glad. I will sing for joy at the works of your hands and rejoice at what you have done. I'll give thanks. I will trust in you, Lord, for I



know that you're on my side. I can rest. I can rest. I won't be defeated. Lord, you are the strength of my life. And

Janet: I can rest. I love that.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: I can rest.

Jocelyn: And the thing is, you think the words for this song are going to be like because of the words you think that the sound is going to be like a lullaby. It's like a party song. It's awesome. So I already shared, like, we had some hard stuff that happened this year. And when those difficult things happened, we purposely decided to handle each one with as much faithfulness as we could in the moment. And we just saw God moving in some just literally miraculous ways time after time. And this song became our theme. Like this really hard thing happened that we were just like aghast. How in the world did God do that? And like, literally the feeling of my heart was like, I have to sing. It's amazing. And so you, we played the song and just rock out to it. And so it was cool to have different moments. Like, wow, God just did something amazing. You have made me glad it's just so cool.

Janet: Yes. Yes.

Jocelyn: So I appreciate music. I appreciate that I don't have to name my favorite song often because. You know, I don't even remember the lyrics. Oh, goodness. So we're going to close out this portion, our four faves with a reflection on some passages of scripture that were really meaningful to us in 2023. How about you start, Janet?

Janet: Yeah, again, that's really good. I read through the Bible and I'm reading through some friends and, and that's been really good. And again, I find at the moment I'm like, oh, that's good, but I keep moving. And so then I don't remember it. So it's been helpful to me are some of the passages that we memorized.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: Because those keep coming back.

Jocelyn: Me too. Me too.

Janet: And I'm like, wow, okay, the Lord knew. And either that just means these are just the right ones that I needed or more likely when I memorize something.

Jocelyn: It sticks.



Janet: It's a meaningful thing, you know, because all of scripture is meaningful. But for me, the one that we memorize Psalm 89: 14 to 17 has also my favorite word hewed in it, but righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne. Faithful love and truth go before you. Happy are the people. And I'm like, okay, what led to their happiness? And at least in part, meditating on the righteousness and justice of their God, who is full of hewed and truth. And I think, okay, Janet, again, slow down. You don't even need to keep reading. Just think about that. How does the fact that your God is righteous and justice affect your heart's stance in really hard things? How does the fact that what comes out of him is not just truth, but hewed, faithful love and truth. And connected to the sermon I mentioned, he's going to make everything right. How? Because he's righteous. If righteousness and justice are his foundation and hewed and truth are what come out of him, I can take a deep breath. So no matter what is going on, just even those first few lines have been a balm to my soul.

Jocelyn: And you know what I thought was so funny about that is Psalm 89:17 is my literal favorite passage in the whole entire Bible. And when we memorized that one, I was the one that chose that one.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And my favorite passage for the year is one that you chose.

Janet: It's my favorite passage, probably in all of the Bible.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: That's what you chose.

Jocelyn: So Psalm 37:3-7. I was like, okay, cool. That's a great one. You chose two passages to memorize. I chose two. And I like the one that we are, we're working on lately, Psalm 90. Like, I don't know that I would have ever looked at that chapter and been like, let's memorize six verses out of that chapter. But they're so cool. I would have never like, myself just been like, let's meditate on these. I loved having a perspective other than mine. So Psalm 37: 3 through 7 was the passage that was the most meaningful to me this year. Trust in the Lord and do good. Live in the land and cultivate faithfulness. Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. And so this year was really good, but in. was really hard, especially the first half of this year, man, it was hard. And we had to face some tough facts as a family and we had to make some difficult decisions. And I remember in the middle of those moments thinking, I do not know what to do right now. I literally do not know what to do, but here's what I will do. I will trust in the Lord and keep doing good. Because I was like, I, like there's literally, something has to happen and I don't know what should happen. And the only thing that I can do is trust in the Lord and I can do good even though I don't like this job.



Janet: And cultivate faithfulness.

Jocelyn: I can cultivate faithfulness even though I don't know what's going to turn out. So I don't know how we're going to handle this, but I do know. We are going to dwell in this land and cultivate faithfulness. Like we're going to do the thing that we can do, even though we don't know what it will look like as it unfolds.

Janet: And we can know confidently that pleases God.

Jocelyn: Yes. I don't see a way out of this situation, but I'm going to commit my way to the Lord. Like, it was so helpful. I just, I remember thinking at the end of that scripture memorization challenge thinking like, I am so thankful I had to memorize that passage right now because it came to my mind so, so many times. What's cool is that what verse six says is true, when we're faced with difficult situations, trusting God, leaning into faithfulness, he brought forth righteousness and the situations unfolded just like he planned in ways that allowed us to deepen our love and trust of him. when I focused on handling them without idolatry, I was filled with joy in the midst, and we worked and we waited. So it wasn't like I will be full of joy when I am done with the wait. It was like I was filled with joy as I did what was faithful, he produced righteousness and it was just cool. We learned. Like, you learn to slow down. I learned to work and wait, like we learned this year to simultaneously work and wait, which is like, how in the world do you do that? Like you don't stress out, you don't get out ahead of God, and you also don't lag behind. But you work and wait. You work and wait. And you watch his faithfulness and his goodness unfold in front of you and he fills you with joy.

Janet: Amen.

Jocelyn: It was amazing.

Janet: That is so beautiful. You know, it's funny. And then we look back and go, Oh, I totally see what God was up to. But in the moment,

Jocelyn: not in the moment.

Janet: It's like you're the Israelites in front of the Red Sea.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: I have no idea that he's going to part it. I just, all I see is there's no way out.

Jocelyn: One of the things that was really helpful in those moments was because I've been loving Jesus for many decades now, I was able to say, I do not know what God is doing, but I know he's doing something and I know it is good.



Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And so like previously and when I was younger, I would like my faith in God would be shaken in moments like that. Like, does this mean God is not actually good? Like what

Janet: Or is this punishment?

Jocelyn: What if he's messing with me?

Janet: What if he's messing with me?

Jocelyn: Like. What if that's the kind of God he is? And so trials would make me doubt God. Well, like this year, I didn't, I never doubted God. I was like, cool. Show me what you're doing, please.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: But it was like,

Janet: this hurts and I don't know what, but I know you,

Jocelyn: but it was like I so trust God that whatever he's doing, I trust that it's good. And in the end, I'll be like, that was the wisest thing you could have done.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: And so it's helpful in the moment to be like, I know one day I'll look back on this and understand it. Maybe on earth, maybe in heaven, but I know it will make sense.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: I love Thanksgiving. Like I'm not really a huge decorating person. Like really not.

Janet: Yeah. I'm not either.

Jocelyn: I just don't get into stuff that way. But I love Thanksgiving because I really like being forced to look back on the year. I don't love getting all emotional, but I really love purposefully remembering all the things that God's done for us and also to declare it, to verbally set aside time to notice what he's done. And so I thought one way that would be fun for us to close out this episode is to just do some rapid fire popcorn praises. Like what are some things that God did this year for you, for your family, for your church? What are we praising God for? What happened all year long that now at the end of the year, we're like, Oh my word. Look at what God did in 2023.



Janet: Yeah. And I'm not good at looking back and Honestly when I think about that there are many things I cannot say.

Jocelyn: Oh, yeah.

Janet: Because they're not my story.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: But that I've had the privilege of being a part of. And just recently and just thinking I'm not in a position to share that but I will say this when you have the Sobering, humbling privilege of being on the front lines with some really hard things, you also get to see things that God does. And so

Jocelyn: And don't you think it's cool because you can't talk about it? It's like the only thing you can do is praise God about it.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Like you can't take any glory about it. You can't take any credit. Like it's literally because your mouth is tied, the only thing you can do is talk to God about it.

Janet: And that's a good way of thinking because I think, boy, I want to praise him in front of other people, but I really can't talk about it, but I can tell you this, God went before and did things that we were amazed by. And just recently. And so I, I have several of those that I was thinking about and was like, in the midst of the hard, I move on to the next hard in my mind, instead of looking back and going, look what he did, look what he did, look what he did.

Jocelyn: And the scripture, the scripture is just. full of God's commandments to remember.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: It's helpful to know that. Like God wants us to remember what he has done for us.

Janet: And he has to tell us to remember because we don't.

Jocelyn: Because we go onto the next thing.

Janet: Yes. I would say my most obvious blessing from this year is my granddaughter Ari. So God gave us a beautiful granddaughter, and what I can easily take for granted and shouldn't is now a daughter, son, and daughter in law that I love my relationship with them and they have been so sweet. And my daughter in law does what she is intentionally seeks to include me,

Jocelyn: awe, that's so nice.



Janet: Which is incredibly kind because you know, that's a season that's a lot of upheaval for a family. So, I'm incredibly grateful that she is growing, she is doing well, she's crying on schedule. They're not probably so grateful for that, but we know that that's good. So we had that. God allowed my husband and daughter and I to take a trip to Egypt, Jordan, and Israel.

Jocelyn: That's so cool.

Janet: And so for one, it was a really sweet extra time with my daughter, and my husband made this comment, it's hard for him to understand how anyone can go to Israel, see the factual evidence that's coming out every year. They're finding more. Every time you dig just about, you find evidence of the Bible, it's just your faith is strengthened. So that just the reliability of his word.

Jocelyn: That's cool.

Janet: So in addition to being able to be in Egypt and all of that with my daughter. My son and daughter in law went with my husband and I to New Orleans for a work trip.

Jocelyn: That's cool.

Janet: So as a family, we got to minister together. That was really cool.

Jocelyn: That's cool.

Janet: Thinking about which I can't again get into a lot of detail, but I have some incredibly godly amazing ladies that I serve with. And when I look at where our women's ministries are, where the podcast is, pastor's wives, seminary wives, lots of areas where I get to minister, but I'm not doing it alone.

Jocelyn: That's so cool.

Janet: You know, from people with the seminary who take care of all the furniture that comes in and then give extra to the seminary. It's just so many people that tirelessly serve and are mature in Christ. And I can take that for granted, but that is such a blessing. I mentioned going to the Gospel Coalition Conference with some friends, being challenged as we studied the book of Exodus, and then City of Lights, God Exalting Worship, having for me a Sunday morning worship service like three times a day for

Jocelyn: How lucky. That's awesome.

Janet: Three days was like Wow.

Jocelyn: City of Lights.



Janet: It takes me a while to slow. And so that was really good. Getting to read through the scriptures with a couple of friends and the way we're doing a reading plan, it's on YouVersion, so you have to write your thoughts, and hearing the thoughts of each of them. And I was thinking just recently, I've watched their faith change over the year.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: That's cool.

Janet: Sometimes it's hard to see him at work in my life, but I can see him at work in the lives of others.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: You know, so that's very fun. I got to travel a lot this year and it's always amazing to me how God is at work in other places. And it's not like ours is the only place.

Jocelyn: We have a corner on the market.

Janet: We have a corner on the market.

Jocelyn: They love Jesus too.

Janet: And they're really growing and they challenge my faith. And so that's exciting. I have had several people this year tell me how God's using the podcast to help them and they are women on the front lines. So if our small work here in any way strengthens women who are on the front lines of ministry doing the hard work of being involved with other people in a broken world, wow,

Jocelyn: especially

Janet: That's just amazing.

Jocelyn: Especially in closed countries where they don't have a lot of fellowship that has been really encouraging to me. Like, wow, we get to speak into their life when they don't have very many other people speaking into their life.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: That's Cool.



Janet: Undeserved privilege. Yes. So lots of answered prayer. And then I just thought, just on a fun thing, I've really enjoyed our little deck garden.

Jocelyn: Oh, that's so sweet.

Janet: We've had more hummingbirds this year than normal. We've had more birds that I know nothing about birds, but they're really pretty

Jocelyn: They're cool.

Janet: And there's different colors. I'm like, well, that's a really bright yellow one. I don't know what that one is. But it's been fun to watch that and to just enjoy the creativity of God.

Jocelyn: That's so cool. So cool.

Janet: That's so cool. So cool.

Jocelyn: Well, God gave our family wisdom about me going back to work.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: That was something positive. God gave me a great summer job to ease back into workforce while I was looking for a permanent job. That was a blessing. He gave me a new, more permanent position that I really love, and that has been -- it's cool to be able to enjoy what you do.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: And know that you're using some skills you have.

Jocelyn: One thing that Brian and I've been saying lately is like, it's weird to be the old people. Like we're the old people with all the wisdom. Like we've lived a couple of decades and we have some things to say.

Janet: I know.

Jocelyn: It's pretty cool.

Janet: Yeah. Wait till you realize you're the grandma. Yes.

Jocelyn: Our daughter Haley had a great summer internship, which confirmed that she likes her major, which was like,



Janet: Thank you, Lord.

Jocelyn: This is awesome. Thank you, Jesus. There's been a lot of money invested in something if you don't like it. And then she got engaged and married this year to a man that treasures her. Like we always. We just keep commenting like, I never knew that God would make someone that would fit you so well and you would fit him so well.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: My other daughter, Shelby, graduated from high school and we went on an awesome senior trip to Maine and then she started college. And God just provided for her college expenses in a miraculous way. I wish I could say the story but it's just like, oh my word, what did you do God?

Janet: Only God.

Jocelyn: That was unbelievable. And he also provided for her spiritual and emotional needs. Just in a really tender way as she adjusted to moving out and going to college. It was a rough transition. And it's been cool to see God working. And Brian and I are loving our empty nest days. We have loved every stage of parenting, but we really enjoy having adult children.

Janet: Who don't live right there.

Jocelyn: It's great.

Janet: Sorry Karis, but there is joy in that.

Jocelyn: There is benefits and my health is the best has been in several years.

Janet: That is so good.

Jocelyn: I am so thankful. I'm really enjoying my studies.

Janet: Because you're back in school.

Jocelyn: I'm back in school and my group of friends and leader care group has been a huge blessing. I don't even know. We were trying to count up the other week. How many months have we been together? I think that we've probably been meeting for a year and a half now.

Janet: Because I thought it was even during COVID.

Jocelyn: Because I thought it was even during COVID.

Janet: I think you started during COVID, which would be even longer.



Jocelyn: That's crazy. That blows my mind. But we have been meeting together and praying together every single month for years. I've never done that before. It's, it's amazing having friends that know your stuff, pray for you. And then you don't have to be like each other's best friends every minute of every day. Like you have faithful friends who are an underlying structure of your life. It's so cool. The mom to mom and the Bible study ministries that I supervise are going really well. And one thing that's really encouraging this year is like, I don't do a whole bunch of stuff anymore because I'm supervising other people who are learning how to be leaders. It's so cool.

Janet: It is.

Jocelyn: Like we have a teaching team, we have a leadership team. It's amazing to stand back and watch them do it. And this one was the way that I came up with these praises. I actually pulled my calendar up and I just went through every single day of the year because I

Janet: sure

Jocelyn: everything I did is on my calendar. And I was struck as it happened, I was also struck, but as I was looking at my calendar, I was struck at how many deaths there have been in our church family this year.

Janet: A lot.

Jocelyn: I have never been to as many funerals as I have this year. And a lot of them, and it probably is because I'm getting older, but a lot of them were my friends. Like, they weren't just random old people that were at the end of their days, like

Janet: That you never knew because they were shut in. These are friends.

Jocelyn: My friends died, and we, we got to celebrate their life at funerals, but it was grievous. There was, it was grievous. And Every single funeral was a reminder to pay attention to the path my feet are walking on. Because not that I want to have a funeral where we look back and rejoice over my life, but it was like life will end as we know it. And you want to make sure that it was valuable and it was well spent. and my last thing that I'm thankful for is Brian is really enjoying being a Deacon. And he likes it when I help him by being a deacon's wife.

Janet: How fun.

Jocelyn: Like I go do stuff with him. Like we write little cards to our deacons list people. We pray for them at suppertime. It's like, Oh my word, we have a tiny little flock to love.

Janet: That is so great.



Jocelyn: It's so cool. We're really enjoying it. As we've looked at the future, we're like, Okay. We, some changes are coming and our schedule is going to look a little different. So we've been thinking like what things can come out of our schedule because we have to cut things. He's like, well, I'm not cutting D in a deacon. I love being a deacon. It's like, great. I love it too.

Janet: What a fun experience to just reminisce and think about 2023 from the perspective of God's faithfulness and just the amazing way God has provided and unfolded tailor made to what our souls needed, which is different for each other. And you know, who would have known that it would have turned out like this. And if you'd told me up front, I might not have liked some of it, but when I see it and the fruit of it, I'm reminded that God knows what he's doing.

Jocelyn: I couldn't have planned a better year. It has been a great year full of blessings. So our favorite things are all puppy dogs, unicorns, rainbows, and fairy tales.

Janet: Okay, well maybe not. But some of our sort of favorite things we got to talk about today, and hopefully this will spur our listeners to do that too.

Jocelyn: Yeah. My favorite things this year have been theologically rich sermons, books, and songs that have bolstered my faith and really equipped me to live a real life, which is, you know, that's what we want. Real living. Authentic vulnerability in the middle of a sin cursed earth and a sin cursed body. And I'm thankful that we have an end of the year, that we look back over the year and say, you have done great things.

Janet: Amen.

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