



Episode 3-5: Aging Biblically

Resources:

Books

[Second Forgetting - Benjamin Mass](#)

[Aging with Grace - Susan Hunt and Sharon Betters](#)

[Heaven - Randy Alcorn](#)

[The Glory of Christ - John Owens](#)

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: Welcome back, JJP listeners. This is Janet here once again with Jocelyn.

Jocelyn: Hey, friends.

Janet: And a very good friend of mine, Amy Baker. And I'm so excited that she's here because she's gonna talk to us about a topic that I don't know that a lot of us want to think about, but we all really need to think about.

Jocelyn: Absolutely.

Janet: And we're gonna talk today about a biblical view of aging. So, Jocelyn, I got to hear Amy speak on this and this was her first question in the training that I had. And I would love to get your thoughts on it.

Jocelyn: Okay.

Janet: So what words come to your mind when you think about aging?

Jocelyn: Okay. Well the first thought is dread, because everyone, like, everyone complains like, oh, my body is not working. All they talk about is their bodily functions. They're going to the



doctor and like, you know, the expectation that things are gonna start to be broken. or the thing that I'm most afraid is losing my mind.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Like the thing that I value most is being able to think about Jesus and the thought that I might begin to speak something heretical when, all of my life as an adult I've loved him.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Or like, some hard things happened to my father-in-law when his wife died and he got defrauded of a bunch of money by some schemers who scammed him.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: And so like losing your ability to think or your ability to function well or just, you know,

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Like losing your hearing. . That's a hard thing cuz sometimes when you lose your hearing then you don't have good, coherent thoughts and you get really depressed.

Janet: It's very isolating.

Jocelyn: It's really isolating. So, I mean, when I think about aging, honestly, nothing great comes to mind.

Janet: I know. Or we think about being alone.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: Life passing you by and you're still there. It's interesting you said about losing your mind. That's always been my biggest fear. Is not knowing what I'm doing. And I think, as a believer, at least I know it's temporary.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: And that does give me hope.

Jocelyn: And having to have my family take care of me and being a burden.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And things like that.



Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: You know, just, you don't want, you don't want hard stuff for your family.

Janet: So all the listeners are going, I'm so glad,

Jocelyn: So encouraging.

Janet: We're here . This is great. So with that in mind, Amy, why did you ask that question to begin with? And then why did you decide to write and research on this topic?

Amy: So I think many of us, if not most of us, tend to view aging only through the lens of suffering.

Janet: Well, that's what Jocelyn just said. Yeah.

Amy: And all those fears that you just named Jocelyn, they are not irrational fantasies. They're fears because we've observed them happening to other people.

Jocelyn: Absolutely.

Amy: And those fears are really powerful. So I think we need to be alert to and prepare for the physical challenges we may encounter.

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: But I also think we need to prepare for the way our hearts may be challenged. Aging may bring suffering. And if we don't have a sound theology of suffering, I'm concerned that we'll be in danger of losing sight of the sweet fruit of suffering that produces. God so tenderly purifies us and reshapes us into a radiantly beautiful picture of our beloved savior.

Janet: And who doesn't want that?

Jocelyn: Absolutely.

Janet: And we want that.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Amy: I know. Also, while suffering may be a facet of aging, there are other facets

Jocelyn: That is good to hear.

Amy: of aging. What if our work for higher years have simply been prepped for the most important years we're gonna spend as an adult. When we retire or become empty nesters, we still



have gifts, we still have passions, we still have skills that have been entrusted to us by God. God still has good works prepared for us to do.

Janet: You know, it's so interesting that you say that, Amy, because I remember when I first was about to become an empty nester, I was speaking at another church. And an older woman picked me up and was asking me whatever, and then she said, you're about to be an empty nester. You're entering a luxurious season of life. Nobody had ever said that to me. I'd heard, I'm sorry. It's gonna be lonely. You'll have to re figure out your identity. And a lot of those things are true, that there were losses because I love my children. But to hear her as an empty nester who was probably in her seventies or eighties telling me, You're entering a luxurious season.

Jocelyn: That's so cool.

Amy: That's so encouraging, isn't it?

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: So I wonder what it would be like if, when we thought of aging, what we thought of was people going from strength to strength, as Psalm 84 talks about.

Janet: Wow.

Amy: Or being green and full of sap like psalm 92 talks about. Or adorned with splendor like Proverbs talks about.

Jocelyn: That's so cool.

Amy: I don't want us to miss any of the delights that are ahead of us.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: I really love thinking about some of the promises God especially has for us as we age. One of the passages that I've been meditating on lately is the second half of Psalm 36 that talks about how we drink from the river of God's delights. And how just seeing his radiant beauty is something that fills us with pleasure.

Janet: I love that.

Amy: I love that too.

Janet: On a more, I mean, maybe it's more practical as far as thinking about what are, what's a promise that I'm seeing or a way that as I'm getting older, I'm seeing something that's better even in my ministry and my discipleship, because God has allowed me to walk through a lot of seasons so far. I have a hearing with people I didn't used to have. And I find that. I even had



somebody, I was trying to help them, help someone else, and she said, but that's different. They'll hear that from you. Well, she's a lot younger. And the truth is the truth. Don't let people despise your youth. But there is a privilege that comes with aging if we're growing in wisdom with it, that has impacted my ability to minister.

Jocelyn: Brian and I are both 45 and we have, you know, 20 years of professional life left in us if we retire at 65. And he was just saying the other day how cool it is to be one of the people in the circle that has a tiny little bit of wisdom to share.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Like 20 years of experience professionally under his belt, and more ahead and he has something to contribute to the conversation. It's really,

Janet: yes.

Jocelyn: It's cool to be kind of an older person.

Janet: It is.

Amy: One of the ones I love is this beautiful promise in Isaiah 46 verses three and four where God says, I will be the same until your old age, and I will bear you up when you turn gray.

Jocelyn: That's cool.

Amy: I have made you and I will carry you. I will bear and rescue you. And I just love how that in this passage, God specifically calls out old age.

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: It's a promise that he specifically makes to people who are entering their later years. And it just is so typical of our God, isn't it?

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: Just tenderly to say. It's okay. It's okay. I still love you. I'm going to carry you. I am gonna be the same. I'm not gonna become Oh, what? They're ancient .

Janet: Yeah. I'll help someone else now.

Jocelyn: Somebody young and vibrant.

Janet: Yeah. And I think it's a recognition that God knew that we would need promises like this. Because it would be hard.



Jocelyn: Yeah. Especially that I will bear you part. Think about, I mean, there are a lot of things that we have to think about that start to fall apart as we get older. And it's nice to know that God promised to bear us in those.

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: Yeah. God has a plan and purpose for every period of life, doesn't he?

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Amy: It's not like he ran outta steam and couldn't come up with any ideas for what to do with his people when it came to how he would use them for his glory when they got old. I mean, he didn't say. Well, I'm really, I'm not sure what to do with old people, so they just need to hang tough and eek out an existence until death.

Janet: And yet, you know what? That's what our world does.

Jocelyn: It is they, they're disposable at a certain age.

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: And instead we find this encouragement to people in old age, Psalm 92 verses 14 and 15. They will still bear fruit in old age, and they will stay fresh and green proclaiming the Lord is upright. He is my rock and there is no wickedness in him.

Jocelyn: That's so cool.

Janet: I know.

Amy: I long for women of all ages to be able to look at the future with that kind of confidence and hope without being consumed by fear.

Janet: Yes. Because I do believe many of us fear not being fruitful.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: And to know no before the Lord that fruit may look different. But we will be fruitful into old age. That is beautiful.

Amy: It is sweet.

Jocelyn: That's neat.



Janet: You know, I know that when I heard you before, you talked about the issue of forgetting as we age. Can we talk about that fear?

Amy: Yeah. As we mentioned, you both talked about that being

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: A fear.

Amy: Yeah. And it's a fear for me as well. I think one of the common fears of aging is that we're gonna experience dementia or Alzheimer's. My mother lived the last years of her life with dementia, and I'm anticipating that God could entrust that to me as well.

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: But whether we have dementia or not, we're all prone to forget.

Janet: Well, that's the truth.

Jocelyn: That's helpful to remember because I get, I'm really hard on myself when I forget. Like, oh my goodness, what's wrong with me? What's wrong with my brain? Why can't it hold on to things?

Janet: Or I think, wow, my grandmother was like that and then she had dementia. So is that what this is?

Jocelyn: Automatically gonna happen to you.

Janet: What's happening? Yeah. Is that what's happening right now? Yeah.

Amy: So whether we have dementia, whether we have senior moments, or whether we are a young person who aging is far off on the horizon, we all forget.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: We forget God's faithfulness in the past.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Amy: We forget his presence in the midst of trials. We forget his promises for the future. But here's what I find especially sweet, God's grace does not depend on what we do.

Janet: Praise the Lord.

Amy: Including our ability to remember.



Jocelyn: That's so helpful.

Amy: So even as our bodies decay and our minds fail us, God still lavishes his grace on us. He still meets our needs according to his glorious riches. He will still carry us. So no matter how much we forget, God's never gonna forget us. He'll never leave us. He'll never forsake us. In his book, *Second Forgetting*, and I would encourage anyone who may have a family member who is struggling with Alzheimer's or dementia. This is a great resource.

Jocelyn: I just bought this book to read to help my mom think through this.

Amy: I really like it.

Janet: We will definitely have a link for that. In our show notes.

Amy: The author, Benjamin Mass, refers to a statement JI Packer made about the comfort we have in being known by God. And he quotes Packer, and Packer says: what matters supremely, therefore, is not in the last analysis, the fact that I know God, but the larger fact which underlies it, the fact that he knows me. I'm graven on the palms of his hands. I am never out of his mind. All my knowledge of him depends on his sustained initiative and knowing me. I know him because he first knew me and continues to know me. He knows me as a friend, one who loves me, and there is no moment when his eye is off me, or his attention distracted from me, and no moment, therefore, when his care falters, Packer continues. And he says, this is momentous knowledge. There is unspeakable comfort in knowing that God is constantly taking knowledge of me in love and watching over me for my good. So, Jocelyn, I just think about what you said as we started about just the fear of not being able to remember, and just the sweet comfort of that could happen to me. But, God still knows me and it's not dependent on me being able to remember him. He remembers me. Doesn't that just make you wanna fall at his feet and say, God, I adore you.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Amy: I adore you.

Jocelyn: And especially it makes me think, and I know that book, *Second Forgetting*, was written for family members, for someone who's struggling. And I was thinking as you were saying that, that's something that would be helpful for my family to know if I started failing. Because we have this conversation at home even though I'm only in my forties. Cuz we all joke about how much I forget. Like they all know that I'm really afraid that if I lose my mind, I will function like I don't love Jesus. And it will be helpful for them to have that thought in their mind as they process me and my aging. This is not dependent on me remembering God, this is dependent on God remembering me.

Janet: Such comfort in that.



Amy: Excellent. Yep.

Jocelyn: When it comes to aging, one of the things that we often think about is concern about finances. So what are some of the ditches that we could fall into about finances? And how could we avoid those ditches?

Amy: Yeah, I think there are two common ditches when it comes to this area of finances and retirement and that kind of thing. We have this fear of running out of money. The two ditches that I see are failing to be a good steward and prepare in advance for what's ahead. The other ditch is looking to savings and possessions for security. So let me try to flesh that out a little bit and let's talk about the that first ditch of failing to be a good steward and prepare in advance for what's ahead. I think Proverbs gives us some direction in this. Proverbs points out that small choices can make a big difference. Now, in Proverbs, we see that illustrated both negatively and positively. So let's think about the negative first. In Proverbs 24 verses 33 and 34 we're told, a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come on you like a bandit, and scarcity, like an armed man.

Janet: Wow.

Amy: Little choices according to God's work can have a significant impact. Small choices may lead us to a place where we don't wanna be. And if I make poor little choices now I might face poverty later.

Jocelyn: That's super important to remember.

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: But I love that Proverbs also gives us the balance on the other side, that small choices can result in blessing. If we go to chapter 13 of Proverbs, verse 11 says, he who gathers money little by little, makes it grow. So we see those little choices again, but now it's a commendable thing. It's a thing that's like, oh, okay. It's not like I have to have some big windfall to in order to be able to have enough to retire on. If I seek to trust God and save a portion of my earnings now, doing it little by little, God may be pleased to make it grow beyond what I expected.

Jocelyn: So we shouldn't really hope to inherit a bunch of money from a rich uncle or win the lottery.

Janet: Guess I gotta change how I'm praying. But I do love that because it goes back to, I mean, biblical principles of faithfulness. God just is asking us to be faithful in this area.

Jocelyn: Yeah.



Janet: He's not saying, make sure that you're saving thousands every month. He's saying, be faithful.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: And I think

Amy: Exactly.

Janet: That's a beautiful thing.

Jocelyn: And don't ignore the financial side of the future.

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: There will be a financial side of the future.

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: Yeah. But you may work hard to save little by little and may still find yourself in a position where you couldn't cover your living expenses.

Janet: For sure.

Amy: According to a 2020 report produced by the Council of Aging, the daily cost of a private room in a nursing home is \$290.

Jocelyn: Wow.

Amy: So that comes out to almost \$106,000 annually.

Jocelyn: Oh my word.

Amy: And it wouldn't take most of us very long to run outta money if we needed to pay expenses like that. So that's why it's so important that we don't fall in the ditch two, which is looking to savings and possessions for security. In first Timothy 6:17 through 19, we find this instruction, which I'm sure you're familiar with, command those who are rich in this present world, not to be arrogant, nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain. Amen, right?

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: But to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way, they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.



Janet: Wow.

Jocelyn: That's such a beautiful passage. I love the rich and good deeds part.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: Yeah. So I think there's a several principles in that passage that can help us avoid ditch two.

Janet: I would agree. I think, thinking about number one, I just look at the temptation to, if I have a lot of wealth, it will be natural to put my hope there. And maybe even become stingier than I might if I didn't have much. And I know I'm not gonna have enough anyway.

Amy: Yes.

Janet: So it's almost like kind of counterintuitive. If I don't have much, I can be generous cuz I'm not gonna have enough anyway . But if I think I might have enough, then I'm not giving you a dollar. Because that could grow, you know? So I think, and God doesn't give us the option of not thinking about our finances, but he says save and I think be generous. So you know, does my budget show that I'm saving? And does my budget show that I'm rich in good works? Including generous with my money.

Jocelyn: I think about so many people who talk about their retirement years as the time where they're gonna live luxuriously because they've scrimped all of their life to have, you know, multiple millions of dollars to do whatever they want. So their whole retirement is just incredibly self-focused. And so they're finding their security in this lifestyle that they've planned for themselves from those savings. And how often do we find people getting to a certain age and their health is dramatically changed.

Amy: Right.

Jocelyn: And All that money that they saved now is just pointless for them. It doesn't provide the great retirement that they thought they were gonna get out of it.

Amy: To tag team on what you were saying, Jocelyn, I think it puts tremendous pressure on people to worry about what if the stock market crashes.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: Or what if somebody scams me and I lose all my money?

Jocelyn: Yeah.



Amy: Or something like that, because now that I've got some saved, now I've gotta make sure I don't lose it.

Janet: Right.

Amy: And so this passage,

Jocelyn: It owns you. Yeah.

Amy: It just helps us, doesn't it?

Janet: I love the phrase at the end that you read because it's, when I get that way, I'm missing out on life that is truly life.

Amy: Yes.

Janet: I love that.

Jocelyn: And also what it says, layup treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age. Like we're actually investing in our eternity and our enjoyment of heaven, by the way that we spend money now and into our aging period of life.

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: Yeah. So if you want an investment where you don't have to worry about the stock market crashing.

Jocelyn: Yeah. Nothing's gonna ruin that.

Amy: Yes.

Janet: Yes. Invest it in heaven. Yes.

Amy: And then you think about Ecclesiastes 5:10, that warns us, whoever loves money never has enough.

Jocelyn: Isn't that the truth?

Amy: Whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. The

Janet: Yes.

Amy: author of Ecclesiastes said. So you know, you think about, well, how much money is enough and you've probably heard that for John D. Rockefeller, the answer to that was just a little more.



Janet: Crazy.

Jocelyn: How could you live that way?

Amy: Especially when you think that at the peak of his wealth, Rockefeller had a net worth of about 1% of the entire US economy.

Jocelyn: That's unbelievable.

Janet: I don't even know how to think about numbers that big.

Amy: , yeah. He owned 90% of all the oil and gas industry of his time. So one pundit said, compared to today's rich guys, Rockefeller makes Bill Gates and Warren Buffet look like paupers.

Jocelyn: Oh my word.

Janet: Wow.

Jocelyn: That's unbelievable.

Janet: And he needed a little more. But aren't we all that way? Just may not be.

Jocelyn: Yeah, definitely.

Janet: With whatever I'm idolizing it's always just a little bit more.

Jocelyn: Absolutely.

Amy: Yeah. Whoever loves money never has enough. Yeah. So riches aren't, obviously, are not the most important thing to have. Wisdom and understanding are much better to have than money. Proverb 16:16. How much better to get wisdom than gold, to choose understanding rather than silver? Isn't that just a, you know, we hear Ecclesiasties, this is meaningless and then it's like, but here's something that's not.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: Here's something that's not meaningless.

Janet: And what a great way to help guard my own heart from the love of money, is am I growing? Am I prioritizing wisdom like gold? And am I, the phrase that we like to use around our house is frugal with ourselves so we can be generous with others. Crown Financial Ministries, I think does a great job of that mentality that if you want to be protected from idolatry of money, get used to giving it away.



Jocelyn: That's cool.

Janet: I love that. I love that idea.

Amy: I do too.

Janet: Okay. Let's ask about a little different area, Amy. How do you deal with the reality that we're just not as productive and fruitful in the ways that we're used to? Like I know even in my own life I used to be able to multitask far more than I can now. My husband graciously says It's cuz I have more on my mind. I'm just not convinced that's the truth.

Jocelyn: He's so kind.

Janet: I appreciate the thought. That was so kind, but I'm like, honey, I can't remember like two sentences ago what I just said. So I know that that can happen for a lot of reasons, but. I don't feel already that in some ways I'm as productive as I used to be.

Jocelyn: And that's scary.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: That's scary.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: Yeah. Well, just to repeat, God has a plan and purpose for every period of life, and he didn't run outta steam. It's not like, okay, old people, well, they'll just need to grit their teeth and make it through until heaven. God makes it clear that there is purpose for every period of life. We still have purpose in old age. Old age provides an opportunity to display that I'm still living to show how beautiful God is.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: That's powerful.

Amy: And for those of us who have had long working lives, our purpose for living can get tied to our careers even

Janet: Easily.

Amy: Without us even realizing it.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Amy: So when we retire, It can be easy to lose our sense of purpose.



Janet: Yeah.

Amy: But when we're living to show how beautiful God is, we may discover that our work for higher years have simply been prep time for the most important years that we're gonna spend as an adult.

Janet: So that's the second time you've said that and you need to say it like probably five more times for me. Because I really realized, that's not how I think. I think it'll be okay because God will still be with me. But I don't know that I ever once on my own thought, the most important years are coming when I don't have to work for hire. But I mean, it makes sense and it's actually incredibly hopeful.

Amy: I know and there's something else that I just can't wait to get to, to tell you, but like, I,

Janet: Uh oh. We have to wait.

Amy: I gotta tell you something else first. So when, when we retire, retirees often have a wealth of knowledge, of wisdom, experience that they can now offer for free.

Jocelyn: That's really cool.

Amy: And for some that may mean they're gonna go to another country as a missionary, but for others it could mean they stay right in their communities and they tutor children after school who come from disadvantaged families.

Janet: How fun would that be?

Amy: There may be some who are gonna travel the world to share their skills as a ministry to show how our great king cares for his creation. But others might do it just by going as far as their computer and they use Zoom to provide biblical counseling for hurting people who have no counselor near them, who's equipped to offer true help and hope from God's word. So just the lady that said you're entering ,what was it Janet?

Janet: Luxurious.

Amy: Luxurious. That now I get to offer my skills.

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: Maybe for free to people and just the delight that that gets to bring, that, that ties in with that being generous that we were just talking about. Yes. Just doesn't, just like, Oh,

Janet: oh. It makes me excited.



Amy: I know. So, but if that's gonna happen, we need to be planning for that just like we're planning financially and preparing for it. So here's one thing we may not think of, but I think is really important. Our planning for our older years should also include plans for younger people to step into leadership roles that we have. This is good for me. It's because, and maybe for you guys too, I love what God has entrusted to me, and I love getting to do what he's entrusted to me and the thought of letting somebody else take over and do that. That doesn't just naturally thrill me.

Janet: Excite my soul.

Amy: It doesn't. It doesn't. But it was so helpful. Susan Hunt and Sharon Betters wrote a book entitled *Aging with Grace*. And in that book, Susan Hunt points out as we age, the way we serve our church is usually different from the way we served in younger years. When our roles and responsibilities change, will we be resentful of younger women who replace us? Ding, ding. I mean, that was just so, it's like I needed to hear that. She continued, will we criticize the changes they make?

Jocelyn: Ooh, I need to think about that one.

Amy: Or will we be sap? The blood of a tree that carries nutrients and energy to these buds as they're forming? And then her, her co-author, Sharon Betters, gave this beautiful illustration of that. Sharon Betters said, My husband Chuck was 21 when he became pastor of a small church. Because my childhood pastor's wife taught a Bible study. I thought I should too. Every week, five elderly women sat at our table and let me teach them. Who did I think I was? Yet they loved and encouraged me, listening as though I knew what I was doing. They were life-givers, she says.

Jocelyn: That is so cool.

Janet: I love that.

Amy: It is. And to think about I could be a life giver. That that helps change my perspective from, I'm not gonna get to do the same kinds of things that I have been doing. Now I become a life giver. Now I become somebody who encourages others.

Jocelyn: I have to tell you a story about you, Amy.

Janet: Uh Oh.

Jocelyn: That I was, the first time I was ever invited to speak at a conference was with you at the BCTC when I first started working at Vision of Hope. You asked me to teach with you. And it was so empowering cuz I was so afraid. And then ever after that, any time I ever taught when you were in the audience, I knew that you would be sitting there smiling hugely at me. And as I



was feeling nervous and feeling like, oh my word, I forgot everything I've ever learned about Jesus or the Bible. I would just be teaching, trying to be faithful, remembering all the things I had to remember and looking in the audience. And there would always be you smiling in encouragement at me learning how to do it. It was so encouraging.

Amy: Oh, you just think about God's grace in using clay vessels. And how sad, if I would so regret not doing what I've enjoyed doing in the past, that I would fail to see God has got important things for me, us to do in the present.

Janet: Yes. I love that. Cuz it is so natural when I've done something for a long time and I've loved doing it, and maybe doing it decently well. And then somebody else does it. I can naturally just be very critical in my mind. Like, okay. Well, I would understand. Well, they don't. Instead of realizing I have a new job, I'm now their cheerleader. I'm now their supporter.

Amy: Yeah.

Janet: I can help them stand on my shoulders and do better than I ever did. Like I get to do that now.

Amy: Yeah. And just taking joy in that role.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: And understanding how important it is. I mean people did that for us when we are starting, I mean, we were once

Jocelyn: Absolutely.

Amy: the people taking over from other people. And they were gentle and kind and patient with us, and, and I think I just took it for granted. And there they were being very, very godly people and not saying, Amy, you idiot, give this back.

Janet: Well, and think, and for some of us we're remembering not everybody was. And we don't wanna be that person. We know what it was like when we were new.

Amy: Yeah.

Janet: And we felt like we didn't measure up. And do we wanna do that to somebody else?

Jocelyn: Right, yeah.

Amy: Yeah.

Janet: You know?



Amy: Yeah.

Janet: Yeah, that's good.

Amy: So I love the way that Sharon betters just ended that, that little illustration saying they were life givers.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: They were life givers.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: So Every moment of life is significant.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: And the gospel imperative to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ doesn't have an age limit. It doesn't have an expiration date. There are always ways that we can become more beautiful representations of our beloved.

Jocelyn: That's so helpful to remember because I actually never thought about the fact that I would grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ more and more and more and more, and never stop. Because in my mind, when you start not remembering things, you will stop.

Amy: All right, so let's be a radiant picture of Jesus to the next generation.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: Let them look at us and say, you know, I, I know she's sad since her husband died. Or, I know she misses having her children around. Or, I know it's hard using a walker, but look at her. She does not lose heart. Though outwardly, she's wasting away, inwardly she's being renewed day by day. She's preparing for an eternal weight of glory. She has her eyes fixed, not on what is seen, but what's unseen. She understands that the things that are seen are temporary, but the things that are unseen is eternal. And here's the part that I just, it just, it just, it just makes me wanna fall at God's feet and, and, and, and worship him. If God sovereignly prevents us from the kind of active involvement we used to enjoy, that means we have become indispensable members of the body. If God does entrust me with dementia, it means I'm becoming indispensable. It's like

Janet: What?

Jocelyn: What does that mean, Amy?

Amy: Yeah. What 1 Corinthians 12:22 on the contrary, those parts of the body that seem be weaker are indispensable.



Jocelyn: That's insane to think about.

Amy: I know. It just. Doesn't it make you just like, God I, words can't express how worthy and beautiful you are if you decide to entrust me with dementia I, I just became indispensable. It's just so upside down. That's our king's way of doing things. Yes. It's just so upside down and it's just,

Jocelyn: It reminds me actually of something Janet told me when my mother-in-law was dying. She had a long, you know, A couple year battle with cancer, and at the end she was staying alive, but her mind was just taken over by cancer. And also lots of toxicity effects of the pain medicine she was on. And it was a very painful way to watch someone die. And she was holding on to life, but it felt purposeless. And I remember talking to Janet at that time and saying like, why doesn't God just allow her to die? Like why? Why is he making her hold on like this? And all I could think about was the pain that she was going through. And what Janet said that was so helpful was like, God is using her to refine you right now. And he's using her and her life to refine Brian and your marriage. And you're talking about important deep theological things that without this context may not have come up. And so, so many important things got discussed because of the way that my mother-in-law failed. And I never would've thought about her as indispensable in her weakness, but her weakness was making us have to face theological truths.

Amy: it's just so beautiful. It just makes me wanna cry. Just thinking about it. It's just so beautiful.

Janet: Only God.

Amy: Right, yes.

Jocelyn: So aging makes the reality of dying come front and center. And that's, you know, that's a hard thing for a lot of people to think about. What are some ways that we should think about that?

Amy: Well, let me start out with the hard part first. For some, the way they should think about death should be with fear. Because Hebrews two indicates that those who don't know the Lord, they live all their lives in fear of death. And praise God that that does happen, because we should be in fear of death if we don't know the Lord.

Janet: And let that motivate us.

Amy: Yes, let that motivate us to cry out and to turn to him.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: But for those that do turn to him, Jesus came to deliver us from that fear. And as a believer to die is gain. And the older we get, the more excited we can be that our joyous future is getting closer and closer and closer. So aging gives us the opportunity to look forward to heaven with greater passion. In 2 Peter three verses 13 and 14, Peter says, but in keeping with his promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new Earth where righteousness dwells.

Jocelyn: Yes.



Amy: So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless, and at peace with him. I, I think Peter may have believed the best a little bit, more than I actually live up to. He says, since you are looking forward to this, and I can't say that I've always been there. I am looking forward to this. I need to look forward to it. I think there's some looking forward to it, but since you are, he says, since you are looking forward to this, it's like, okay. Thanks Peter.

Jocelyn: One of the ways I think about that is I'm totally looking forward to being dead. I am not looking forward to the process of dying. Because that's so scary to think how is my body gonna be rent from my soul? And one of the things that helps me is God has not given me that situation this moment to deal with. And when he does, he'll give me the perfect amount of grace to handle that dying, my body dying situation, without sinning. So I can trust him for that then. And I don't have to predict that I'll know exactly how to handle it right in this moment. Cuz I don't have to face it right in this moment.

Amy: But you can be taking little by little steps to prepare yourself, your mind for how do I respond to suffering in the future. So that when you get there, he hasn't given you dying grace right now, but you're well prepared for that when it does come.

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: And I think one of the ways that we prepare for it is that we begin to not focus on what's temporary. We're looking forward to what is eternal.

Janet: And I think you're right that aging naturally, if we're thinking and if we know the Lord, it does result in that. And I, it makes me think of when my son was real little and I don't even remember if he knew the Lord yet. He was really little. But he said basically he didn't really wanna go to heaven because he was happy here. And I think, you know, I don't fault him for that.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: We didn't get upset about it, but I remember thinking, but the older you get and the more you actually understand what life is like here, it gives us reason to look forward to heaven, even more, where righteousness dwells. I'm like,

Jocelyn: I love that verse.

Janet: Bring it on when you have seen so much unrighteousness.

Jocelyn: Absolutely.

Janet: So it made me grateful that at his little age he hadn't seen a lot of that.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: But I understand that as we age, it's an opportunity.

Amy: Yeah. Where righteousness dwells.



Janet: Yes. Yes.

Amy: Where righteousness dwells.

Janet: So along with that, then, okay. I think we're all gonna say Heaven's better than hell. Whatever we think about both, either of them. We kind of know that. But what about, I mean, but is it better than here? And as we get older, here's not so great. Is it gonna be boring? Are we gonna float on clouds? Are we gonna play harps? Are we just gonna sit and do a one long worship night?

Amy: Yeah. You know, a view like that doesn't make heaven seem all that exciting, does it?

Jocelyn: It doesn't.

Janet: No. It makes me hope. It doesn't happen for a long time.

Jocelyn: Right. It sounds, that sounds super boring to sit around in a cloud playing a harp. That is not fun. I don't wanna play the harp.

Amy: Randy Alcorn's book. Heaven has been a great help to me in this. I've read that book more than once, and each time it has stirred up my appetite for heaven so strongly I can just hardly wait to get there. So can I read you something that Alcorn says in that first chapter of Heaven?

Jocelyn: Sure.

Janet: Do it.

Amy: Alcorn says, many people find no joy at all when they think about heaven. A pastor once confessed to me, whenever I think about heaven, it makes me depressed. I'd just rather cease to exist when I die.

Janet: Wow.

Amy: Why I ask. I can't stand the thought of that endless tedium to float around in the clouds with nothing to do, but strum a harp.

Jocelyn: I don't wanna do that.

Amy: It's also terribly boring. Heaven doesn't sound much better than hell. I'd rather be annihilated than spend eternity in a place like that.

Jocelyn: Can I just appreciate that man's honesty? Because I think a lot of people think about that view of heaven.

Janet: Yeah.

Amy: I agree. That's one of the reasons why I wanted to read this to you.

Janet: Yes.



Amy: And so Alcorn asked, where did this bible-believing seminary-educated pastor get such a view of heaven? Certainly not from scripture, where Paul said to depart and be with Christ was far better than staying on a sin-cursed earth. As you just said, Jocelyn, my friend, was more honest about it than most, yet I found that many Christians share the same misconceptions about heaven.

Jocelyn: Yep.

Amy: And then Alcorn continues. I agree with this statement by John Elridge when he says, nearly every Christian I have spoken with has some idea that eternity is an unending church service. We've settled on an image of the never-ending sing along in the sky. One great hymn after another forever and ever. Amen. And our heart sinks. Forever and ever? That's it? That's the good news. And then we sigh and feel guilty that we're not more spiritual. We lose heart and we turn once more to the present to find what life can give. Alcorn then asks, but what if we thought of heaven as a place where we could do meaningful and pleasurable things with enjoyable people? Would we lose heart if we understood what the Bible says about living in a resurrected body and being with people we love on a resurrected earth with gardens and rivers and mountains and untold adventures?

Jocelyn: I can't wait for that.

Janet: I was like I could get behind that.

Jocelyn: That sounds great. And not with a messed up body. Can you imagine hiking without a messed up body?

Amy: Yes. Alcorn says that trying to develop an appetite for a disembodied existence in a nonphysical heaven is like trying to develop an appetite for gravel.

Janet: True.

Amy: I love that picture. But in fact, God promises a resurrected life in a resurrected body with a resurrected Christ on a resurrected earth. Don't you love that?

Jocelyn: That's gonna be amazing. I mean, there's a lot about earth now that's amazing. Even under the curse of sin.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: Can you imagine in a glorified body, not cursed by sin earth? It's gonna be amazing.

Amy: I know.

Janet: It makes me think of the phrase that, I mean, I even hear unbelievers say. If there's something that's really great happening, it's like heaven on earth.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: And to go, actually



Jocelyn: it will be

Janet: it will be

Amy: Yes.

Janet: Heaven on earth.

Amy: Yes. Yes. Alcorn says, by calling heaven a new earth, God communicates, it'll be familiar to us.

Jocelyn: That's cool.

Amy: He says, if we can't imagine our present earth without trees and rivers and mountains and flowers, why would we try to imagine a new Earth without those features?

Jocelyn: My daughter loves sunsets. I've never met anyone that is always taking pictures as much of sunsets as my daughter. Can you imagine what sunsets

Amy: I know.

Jocelyn: on the new earth would look like?

Amy: Yes. She's not gonna be able to throw her camera down.

Jocelyn: She won't. We'll have to get lots of storage.

Amy: Alcorn also points out that we're told in Revelation 21, the New Heaven is a city. And cities have buildings and culture and art, and music and athletics and goods and services and events of all kinds. Cities have people engaged in activities, gatherings, conversations, work. Time will be available to pursue thoughtful aesthetic ideas to work for the sheer pleasure of it.

Jocelyn: Oh, my word. That's cool.

Amy: To please and glorify God by developing skills and abilities.

Jocelyn: That's gonna please my other daughter who wants to be an interior designer, and is constantly obsessed with making things work beautifully and fit together well. That's gonna make her so thrilled.

Janet: And then I wonder, does it mean that we'll all be able to develop those, like I can't draw at all. Will I be able to learn how to do that? How cool.

Jocelyn: Wouldn't that be so... You'll have all eternity to do that.

Amy: I know. I know. I just think about some things like maybe in heaven God will let me be in a choir.

Jocelyn: That would be so cool.



Amy: Nobody on earth would right now ask me to be in a choir, but like maybe God'll let me be in a choir.

Jocelyn: I also think I, I don't remember if it was in the Heaven book that I read this, but I remember when I was studying this topic years ago, like, the author was saying, maybe some of the reason that you have some of the desires that you do is because you have an eternal desire that God will fulfill in the future. But you have to decide in your finite years here on Earth, which of those desires will you hone and make useful. But you have an untold number of desires.

Amy: I know.

Jocelyn: And all of them could be pursued when you get to heaven because you'll have infinite amounts of time.

Amy: We're ready, aren't we?

Jocelyn: Yes.

Amy: So, and just as a, a kind of side note, something I thought about, it's like, a city is not needed if all we're gonna do is sing hymns for eternity. Because then all we would need would be one big meeting hall, right?

Janet: Right.

Amy: We don't need a city. We don't need anything else. We just need this one big meeting hall,

Jocelyn: lots of choir risers.

Amy: for us all to meet. So about this idea that heaven would be boring, you know, we aren't the ones who came up with the idea of fun and pleasure and delight. Every good and perfect gift is from above, and it's at God's right hand that we'll have pleasures forevermore.

Janet: I think that's really important to remember. The idea of fun and pleasure and delight are God's ideas. They aren't just things he allows because we kind of are weak and need that. Those are his ideas.

Amy: I know it.

Jocelyn: In Psalm 16:11 where it talks about at God's right hand is pleasure forevermore. When I learned that passage, reading that part of Psalm 16, I was really like rightfully rebuked to think that Christianity should be like a very feeling-less existence. Like. Following Jesus is supposed to be about pleasure. And I've recently been reading this book called The Glory of Christ by John Owens, where it talks about when we see Jesus the first time, we will be overcome with pleasure, that we don't know what to do with.

Amy: Oh, I love that.

Jocelyn: Isn't that amazing?



Amy: Yeah.

Jocelyn: Yes. I've really been conjuring that concept a lot.

Amy: Oh, I love that thought.

Jocelyn: And we don't..

Amy: I just have to stop and just think about that for a while.

Jocelyn: We don't give ourselves enough time to ponder the glory that is Jesus. And we're, we're like, yeah, he's cool. He saved us from our sins. But literally Jesus is pleasure. Isn't that amazing?

Amy: It is.

Jocelyn: And the glory of Christ will fill us with pleasure that we can't even comprehend.

Amy: I'm ready. I'm ready. And then another really sweet thing is, Freedom from sin will mean freedom to be what God intended. Freedom to find greater joy in everything. We get all the good parts and none of the bad.

Jocelyn: That will be such a relief.

Amy: All the good parts.

Janet: I don't even know how to think that way.

Jocelyn: I know cuz I, I'm constantly thinking like, check yourself, think about that. are you sure that honors God? Like how much of a percentage of my energy is taken trying to make sure I'm doing things the way that Jesus told us to do it? And if I didn't have to think about that part, and it just was natural, oh my word, a hundred percent of my energy could go to doing other stuff.

Amy: Yes. Filled with joy, eternal pleasures. It's not, that's not gonna be boring.

Jocelyn: No.

Janet: No.

Amy: That is not gonna be boring. We get all the good things. None of the bad. Heaven is gonna be familiar, but without the curse of sin. So we get a city that has all the advantages that you get in cities. But without the crime, without the pollution,

Jocelyn: That would be amazing.

Amy: Without the garbage. And I, you know, I think about this every once in a while I'd be like, just think about getting to be in oh, London or New York City and being able to go out at any time of the day or night, and you don't have to worry about being mugged.



Jocelyn: Not be mugged. Yeah.

Amy: Or you could. You could go in and you could leave your doors unlocked, and you don't have to worry about somebody coming in and robbing you or harming you.

Jocelyn: All people will treat each other the way that Jesus has told us to treat each other. It would be amazing.

Amy: I know, I know. In a city, I mean in a city. In a city of city of all places.

Janet: I know.

Amy: Yeah.

Jocelyn: Filled up with billions of people.

Amy: And that's not just true for us, getting redeemed bodies. That's true for all creation. The whole creation we're told in Romans has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth, longing for Christ to return. And when he returns, we're gonna be redeemed, but creation is gonna be redeemed as well. So all those things in creation that thorns and thistles.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Weeds. Tell me about the weeds.

Amy: Redeemed.

Jocelyn: That's gonna be cool.

Amy: Redeemed.

Janet: Tsunamis, all the

Jocelyn: hurricanes. Yeah.

Amy: Redeemed. So when the curse is reversed, it's not just good news for us. It's good news for animals and plants and stars and planets and everything else that we can see in this.

Jocelyn: That's so cool.

Amy: In this creation, it gets liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the same freedom that we are getting brought into. So, what about this idea that all we'll do is just worship God? That is exactly what we're gonna do, but our idea of worship is way too narrow.

Janet: Yes.



Amy: In 1 Corinthians 10:31, we're instructed to do all to the glory of God, whether we eat or drink or whatever we do. So in heaven, whether we're eating or drinking or working or playing, it's all gonna be an act of worship.

Jocelyn: Cool.

Amy: That is what we're gonna do in heaven.

Janet: Yes.

Amy: We are gonna worship for eternity and it's gonna be fulfilling, and we're gonna love it, and we're gonna enjoy it. Because God gives good things to enjoy.

Jocelyn: I'm so excited to worship God by eating in heaven. Because I think a lot about food. I spend a lot of my life cooking food for my family, and I can't wait to see what food in heaven looks like. Does it make you fat? You don't get gluttonous over it.

Amy: Right.

Jocelyn: What would it look like to enjoy wonderful delicious things?

Janet: But you truly enjoy it.

Jocelyn: Yeah. Yeah. Truly delicious things without any guilt. Without any sin.

Amy: Yeah.

Jocelyn: It's gonna be amazing.

Amy: I know. I know. We're ready.

Janet: So if we think about though, somebody may be listening to all of that and say, but what if I don't enjoy it now?

Amy: Yeah, that's a good question. You know, I am the queen of laziness and I can despise hard work. So telling me that in heaven I'm going to get to work, that doesn't appeal to my lazy heart. But the reason I don't enjoy it now, it's because of the curse of sin. I don't enjoy work now because of my sinful heart that says I want ease and pleasure and comfort. I don't want the work that I have to do to produce something. All that's going away. We get to be ourselves without the bad parts.

Janet: And I think we get tastes of that now. Because we all know if you've ever worked hard and accomplished something, how good that feels. And we all know, maybe we shouldn't. I won't say, I know, that when I'm completely focused on me, even if I get all the things that my lazy heart wants, I don't, at the end of the day, experience joy and fulfillment.

Jocelyn: Yeah.



Janet: So we already know.

Amy: Yeah.

Janet: It doesn't really work. And when I do discipline myself, how many times have I said I didn't wanna do that? And I'm so glad I did.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Amy: Right.

Jocelyn: When I am the queen of laziness. I generally feel very depressed at the end of the day.

Janet: Yeah, exactly.

Jocelyn: I got to sit around all day, and I feel super yucky about it.

Janet: And guilty and, and, but to think if I didn't have the curse of sin that made me fight the work in the first place,

Amy: I know.

Janet: I would just get the accomplishment and get to see that I got to be used of God to do something that mattered.

Jocelyn: And on the other side too is like, that I have these two ditches, the queen of laziness or making work my identity. Like because I accomplished this thing, it gives me ultimate value in some way myself. So either of those ditches are very depressing and horrible, and it'll be cool to be able to do work for the glory of God because He equipped me to do it, and he made me want to do it, like Philippians tells us. Like he made me have the desire to do the thing he wants me to do, and it brings glory to God. That will be so cool.

Amy: And to enjoy the whole process of that. Like for me, I like the end work product when I get to the end work product. Yeah, I like that. But the whole way through that work product often is just grit your teeth and make you do it. And just,

Jocelyn: That's how I feel about writing.

Janet: I know.

Amy: Yes, yes, yes. Amen.

Janet: I think all three of us,

Jocelyn: Yes.

Amy: Yes.



Janet: Do not enjoy the writing process.

Amy: Yes. But to think. That's going away. That even the process of it is going to be pure joy.

Jocelyn: That's gonna be joyful.

Janet: Joyful.

Amy: It's not gonna be like my joy is greater at the end because I gritted my teeth and got through it. That now my joy will be greater. No, it's like even in the process of it. Can you imagine liking to write?

Janet: No.

Amy: I mean it's unfathomable for us.

Janet: I just can't.

Jocelyn: I enjoy the process of writing being done.

Janet: Yes. Thank you for joining us, and I hope you'll be joining us again for our next episode.

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