

## Episode 4-23: Thanksgiving Episode

### Resources:

#### Books

[A Shepherd's Look at Psalm 23 - Phillip Keller](#)

[Heaven Rules - Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth](#)

#### Sermon

[Born Again to a Living Hope - Brent Aucoin](#)

[Working to Please Christ and Not People - Aaron Birk](#)

#### Handout

[Read Through the Scripture Challenge 2024](#)

### 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, welcome back listeners. This is Janet once again with Jocelyn.

Jocelyn: Hey friends.

Janet: And we are here being very thankful for many things and thought that we would start with just some things we're thankful for in our own families or private lives before we get started in our Thanksgiving episode.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: So for me, no one will be surprised to my number one thankfulness is I have a granddaughter. Did you guys know that?

Jocelyn: Shocking.

Janet: I probably never talk about her or show you pictures.



Jocelyn: I was going to say, or show pictures or videos.

Janet: But I have an adorable granddaughter who is learning, she's one year old, and she's learning our names, our Hebrew, Saba and Safta. And so Brent is Ba. And I'm Ta right now, that's all she can say, but we get to see her several times a week and I am loving getting to love my boy's little girl. So that's very special.

Jocelyn: That's precious.

Janet: What else am I thankful for about a private life? Let's see, my daughter said I have to mention that I'm thankful for her. And I am. It is very fun to have adult children that are, that we're close to. We try to have family dinners once a week and doesn't always work, but we try to do that. And just having a family that enjoys being together, I am not thankful enough for having adult children that I actually just love to be around. So, and our own marriage, we've been married 30 years this year. We were just talking about the fact that, it's been a hard season for us personally and ministry things. But just recently we were at a marriage conference sharing our testimony, and Brent was sharing how his pattern is that when things are heavy, if he's fearing and worrying, especially ministry things, he has a tendency to withdraw and become critical and unthankful. And then I, on the other hand, my pattern is that I want to be seen as amazing and appreciated. So when he withdraws, I make it all about me and get my feelings hurt. As we were sharing our testimony, we were just both amazed as we talked about it later that evening, that it is a very hard ministry season and those things are not happening.

Jocelyn: That's so cool.

Janet: Not that they never will. Not that they, but we were just like, do you realize we're not living out of those right now. We're closer than we've ever been. He is more thankful. We are working on things together. And I just think that was not the case for many years, but just grateful for the work of God in our lives.

Jocelyn: And it's encouraging for all of us, normal people, not pastors and their wives that you've been married for 30 years. And this is the first year that you can see it not happening. Oh good.

Janet: I think over the years it's gotten better, but I would say at least consciously to go, oh my word, it's just not even a thing right now.

Jocelyn: That's so exciting.

Janet: So yes, very, very encouraged by that.

Jocelyn: So much to be grateful for.

Janet: How about you?



Jocelyn: Well, this year God transitioned me more fully back to work.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And also more fully back to school. So I finished out a one year assignment that I had with a local company that I was helping to do some redevelopment for and then got more into school studying a second career. And Brian is also back to school because he needed a new career because his body is just not hanging in there.

Janet: Yep. Yep.

Jocelyn: In his first career. And so he made a big, big jump back into school full time and they didn't take any of his old associate's degree credits. So he gets to start all over.

Janet: Wow.

Jocelyn: And so I'm studying a topic that I really love and have been fascinated with for like a decade. And he's studying something that is giving him hope for his future. And it's so fun to study together.

Janet: Who would have thought you'd be empty nesters studying together.

Jocelyn: At the kitchen table or at the dining room table. Just like in our early marriage when we were both in college then it's great. And Haley and Matthew are doing really good. They've been married a year. They're doing so good in their little home. She's working on finishing up her degree and Matthew is happy in his field of work. Shelby's a sophomore at Purdue. Studying interior design and this year she moved into Faith West Student Housing where she is doing so good. We're loving watching her thrive.

Janet: She's enjoying it there?

Jocelyn: She's loving it.

Janet: Yay!

Jocelyn: Thriving in an environment that has the covenant of Christ, but it's just built on community.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And just seeing her blossom with friends and people to hang out with is just so cool. We just have a million things to thank God for. He has provided for us in ways that are unbelievable, working out ahead of us, and so over the next three years as Brian finishes up his education and he begins interviewing for his next career. It's almost certainly going to include us



moving out of state. And we're super tempted to think like, okay, I need to pre-plan. I need to prepare. I have three years to get my house cleaned out and sell it. And like, how am I going to make that happen? And so anytime we're tempted to second guess or worry in advance, all we have to think about is all the things that God has done way ahead of when we even realized it. Preparing us in advance and then meeting our need in the second that we had the need. It just makes us so excited to see what God is doing.

Janet: And it's so hard to remember that.

Jocelyn: It is.

Janet: You know, but it's so true. I love that, that each of us can look back and say He was faithful each step, and then our heart goes, yeah, but what if He's not? You know, so then we have to get to go, no, we get to wrestle that.

Jocelyn: I'm finding that the older I get, the easier it is to very quickly trust God. Like He's proven Himself a billion times. I don't have any doubts as to His character. I mostly have doubts to whether I'll be able to handle whatever He has planned for us, but I have no doubt.

Janet: He would be there for the grace for that too.

Jocelyn: Yeah. Of His character.

Janet: Oh, that's awesome.

Jocelyn: So let's think today about some ways that we can be thankful when bad things happen. So, you know, it's easy to be thankful when things are great and easy, but let's think about when it's hard. And so for me, I've just been really trying to consciously thank God for many undeserved blessings, many, slash, they're all undeserved blessings. And so when I realized that nothing is deserved, everything is a good gift from His hand. It just helps when I'm conscious about it and on purpose about it. It really helps me when I think about the character of God, like I mentioned, and how reliable and faithful He is. Fundamentally, like no matter what my circumstances are, it doesn't change a thing about His character and He is ultimately reliable and faithful. And so when bad things happens, thinking about His character helps me be able to process the pain and hurt a little bit more quickly.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: I think often about Lamentations 3:31-33, and I'm gonna read it for us. It says, for no one is abandoned by the Lord forever. Though He brings grief, He also shows compassion because of the greatness of His unfailing love for He does not enjoy hurting people or causing them sorrow. And I've just really been leaning into looking forward in times of pain to have eyes to see what God is doing is accomplishing through the suffering.



Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: He doesn't love to hurt me. He doesn't love it when it's hard. He chooses to do what is best. And so I'm just really confident in Philippians 1:6 that God who began the good work within you will continue His work until it's finally finished on the day when Jesus Christ returns. So that makes me really excited to see what God will unfold.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: Because we walked through the pain. And like I said, I've just, I've lived long enough now to see some life cycles. Like things just happen in cycles sometimes and to see God is performing growth and He's performing an improvement in. Why is that situations that just look nearly impossible? So it makes me excited to know one day I'm going to look back on this rough patch and see with greater clarity what God was up to. But I'm comforted to know that I don't need to know in advance what God is doing to be confident that He is doing good.

Janet: I love that. And you know, I don't always get there immediately.

Jocelyn: No, me neither.

Janet: It's a beauty of church community, a family, like being able to call you and say, okay, I know and then you can remind me and I can remind you. Because in the suffering, it's supernatural to go there, but we can and remember those things. I love it. I'm finding growing in my trust in his character, not the outcome.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: In very specific ways is helping me to grow to be thankful, not for bad things. I don't say, thank you, that this is horrible.

Jocelyn: That'd be weird.

Janet: Right. But I can be thankful in bad things. Do I really believe He cares for me? This is a verse that comes back to me a lot and I have memorized it and I cannot find a version that's not awkward. Romans 8:32, He did not even spare His own son, but gave Him up for us all. How will He not also with Him grant us everything? Do I understand that? I know we say it, but do I believe that? Do I understand? He already did the hardest thing. He didn't spare His own son. He orchestrated that His beloved son would be murdered, tortured, horrifically killed, naked, and ashamed. Why? Because the father and the son loved us, loved me. If He's done that hardest thing, how can I not believe He's going to do whatever's best for my soul? None of this is hard for Him.

Jocelyn: Yeah.



Janet: He's already done the hardest thing. I read, A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23.

Jocelyn: I love that book.

Janet: And I'm not going to get the quote exactly right, but he was talking about when it says, even though I walked through the valley of the shadow of death. And what he says is that in reality, as a shepherd, they do have to walk through these valleys that are treacherous. And he says, do I realize that after I've walked that valley and I'm in the table land and I'm looking back, I will see that He took me the gentlest way possible to get me to the table land.

Jocelyn: That's helpful to remember in the minute. There's not a better way He could have done it.

Janet: Yes. It's not like He chose the hard way.

Jocelyn: This was the gentlest.

Janet: Yes. As hard as it is.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: It's the gentlest to accomplish what's best for my soul, to accomplish getting me to the place where if I knew I would want to go. You know, and so that has been really, that's part of His character that I've been clinging to that I don't have to know what all the other paths would have been and go, oh, you're right.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: I just need to believe Lord.

Jocelyn: I approve, Lord.

Janet: Yes. Yes. Stamp of I will follow. But I think the other thing, you know, cause we are in a heavy season right now and whenever there's really difficult, painful things. There are many people affected by them. And that one of the things about God that has been really an anchor is that whatever is happening, God is at work in each person affected by it. That's amazing. Like with God.

Jocelyn: It's unbelievable.

Janet: It is. There's no collateral damage. God isn't going, I needed to work on this person, so sorry, you kind of get the fallout.

Jocelyn: You have to be crushed.





Janet: Yeah. It's like, no, every person that's affected by any difficult thing, God is uniquely designed that for the good of their soul.

Jocelyn: It just makes you realize like God's absolute transcendence is so much bigger and above all of us.

Janet: And because I can't imagine it, I can't even try to make sure that what I want to happen in just your life would happen. Much less everybody.

Jocelyn: I can't even do it in my own life.

Janet: I know. So sometimes it's almost like I can't believe that because I can't really imagine it, but it's true. He's not a man. He can do this. And so I just think, praise God, you know? So if that is true Or better because that is true. Because I know He's already done the hardest thing for me. Which means He's only going to do what's best for me. And I know that He's so big, that nobody is collateral damage that He forgot about. And He's using it for the good of everyone. Then I don't need to try to, as a friend said to us recently, just make sure you're not opposing what God is allowing. Even when it's hard, if God is allowing it, your job is not to oppose that and try to keep a bad thing from happening.

Jocelyn: That's a very good perspective.

Janet: I know. Because I was like, oh, I think I'm very close to that. Like, because I see it as a bad thing.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: And because I love people. I don't want bad things to happen. And it's like, I don't know.

Jocelyn: God is allowing this.

Janet: If God is allowing this.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: We need to respond rightly, do all the things, but I don't need to oppose it because that's His heart. None of the people affected by anything are outside of His control. And I can rejoice in that. And I can be very, very thankful that that's true.

Jocelyn: That's so helpful.

Janet: So maybe another question and these were questions that when we got together for our annual meeting, that our team was like, these are things we'd like you to address so that's how we pick these questions, by the way. What is something you're thankful for from a resource? Boy,



so many things went through my head. There is a specific sermon that I've had the privilege of hearing many times because my husband gives this sermon. And when we travel and do conferences, frequently this has been the sermon that the Lord has had him give and for good reason and I'm a slow learner. Each time I hear it, I'm like, oh my word, that's so good. But it's called, "Born Again to a Living Hope". And we'll have a link to it in the show notes. In it, he defines trials as the stripping away of something we love. Not necessarily a bad thing, you know, but when a loved one dies, that is a trial and it strips away something we rightly love, but it isn't our ultimate love and I love that. Or at least it shouldn't be and how I respond to that stripping away sometimes reveals it was more important to me than my Savior and then He's graciously letting me see that so I can realign.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: So in a difficult season that we were in we started making a list after this sermon, when we went back to hotel room, we always get this, we're traveling. I'm like, okay, we're in a trial right now. So let's make a list of what our current trials are stripping away from us.

Jocelyn: That's good.

Janet: And, you know, it could be selfish things, but it could also be good things. And then we made this list and then it was like, okay, there's a lot on here when we looked at it that would explain why we're grieving.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: Like, oh wow, there are good things that have been stripped away from us. Certainly idolatrous things as well that, you know, stripped away my desire to look amazing or whatever, but a lot of good things and it was okay. So we were able to talk about it. We kept this list so we could go back to go, you know, why is something really hard right now? Go back. Look, it's stripping this good thing away from us so we can grieve that and that's okay. But then we went on and we made a list of how God was using this trial to refine us. Like He doesn't just strip away, as you said, in Lamentations, He doesn't enjoy causing pain. He does it for a good reason. And we're in a broken world, that's part of what happens, but He's also refining. And so we listed out specific ways, based on what good things are being stripped away, what are specific ways it's refining us.

Jocelyn: That's really a great idea.

Janet: It was so helpful, but that was from that sermon and I've heard it many times and I will listen again. It just takes trials and unjust suffering and puts it in the context that the scriptures do and so that resource was really helpful for me.





Jocelyn: We, Brian and I just did something like that too, not for this wonderful godly reason. I was like, because I am so sad. I feel so sad every day. And I was one day I was like, I think I need to just talk about it. So we had made an appointment to talk that night and I just started listing all day long, like things that were going on. And at the end of the day, I was like, no wonder I'm sad.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: There's a lot happening.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And a lot is really hard. And some of it, like you said, is good things that can no longer happen.

Janet: Right. And we grieve that.

Jocelyn: It's just sad.

Janet: It is.

Jocelyn: It's just sad.

Janet: It is. Yeah. A book that I would also highly recommend is called, Heaven Rules. We'll have a link in our show notes, but it's by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth. She's going through the story of Daniel with the emphasis that heaven rules, which he says in the book. I've read it in the past. My husband and I are reading it together now. Our pastor's wives are also reading it together and we get together and talk about it. And in it, it's the opportunity to remember that no matter the trial, heaven really is ruling. We don't need to panic. We don't need to be overwhelmed. We're all going through trials and there is such hope here as we study the life of Daniel and thinking about Daniel living as a hostage his whole life, serving pagan kings, and a king he was serving who destroyed his home and killed his family. Like, I can't even imagine that level of trial.

Jocelyn: Especially serving with such excellence.

Janet: Yes. The one who did that, just recently Sight and Sound, does these plays and they did Daniel and they showed it in the theater and we went and watched it.

Jocelyn: Oh, that's cool. I didn't know that. Yes.

Janet: We saw it probably two months ago, and the theater and we were like, you know, we have our own trials going on and so watching that, it just came to life for me. It's like, oh my word, like he really lived that.



Jocelyn: For his whole life. For decades.

Janet: It wasn't like a week, or a month, or even two years. It was not five years. It was not.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: And to go heaven rules over all of that, all of that. So when he was surrounded by other leaders who were jealous of him and wanted him dead, so he's serving a pagan king well, which makes all the other pagan rulers hate him. So now they're all trying to kill him. Where was his refuge? It wasn't at least I know I have what. It wasn't at least I have my 401k if I lose my job, you know, cause I admit those are the thoughts go through my mind. It's like if we ever lost a job, well, we have this. Well, you know, if my, I've done this with my family. If my family ever lost a job, they just come live with me. Well, should they probably, but that's not the refuge. Like, I just tend, what was his? Heaven rules. He talks to the most powerful human on the planet who could kill him in a heartbeat. And he says, by the way, you only have any power 'cause God gave it to you. Wow. But when I know that's true, I can take a deep breath. So I highly recommend that resource. How about you?

Jocelyn: There was a sermon in October that Pastor Birk preached on work and pleasing God, which you and I have already talked about. I love the idea of working for the glory of God.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: It's something that I think about a lot. But this has been a much more difficult transition to this new season of work and school for me than I imagined it would be. I thought I would be fine and I've worked full time before and I could do it. It was a rough transition and Pastor Birk shared the sermon with us in that difficult transition time. It really helped me think on another level about how to think about my work. And I just remember leaving that sermon feeling so encouraged to do the hard stuff that I was doing and have no option but to do.

Janet: That can feel trapped.

Jocelyn: It feels heavy because in this season when my husband is at school, our budget depends on me.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And that's a new has never happened in my entire life before.

Janet: Now you're understanding the weight he's felt.

Jocelyn: Yes. Now I understand why his life has been so heavy for so many years, but it's been really helping me to obey with an attitude of reverence as to Christ because who we work for



impacts how we work and my awe for Christ will influence the attitude that I have as I work. And so I need to change the audience that I'm working for. Which it is true that I'm supplying the financial needs for our family right now. And I'm trying to serve my, I have multiple bosses right now. I'm trying to serve my boss as well, but my audience is the Lord and His opinion matters the most. And we're working in His presence before the audience of the one and only creator God. And it's only by faith in Christ that I can enjoy working out my salvation in all kinds of work because ultimately I'm serving the Lord and He's the one who I love and adore. And so I labor and I obey because I revere Christ and because I revere His reputation, which is so much less pressure than like working because I need my boss to think well of me or working because I need to make sure I don't lose my job.

Janet: I can't control all of that.

Jocelyn: I can't control that, but I can work to revere Christ and His reputation even motivates me to have hope when I sin or fail or when I displeased the Lord in my work. Pastor Birk shared this really cool quote that Martin Luther said about diapering babies. It was like he was saying about how he leaves his other work to go home to his most important work. It was a really great quote, but a part of it says this, what then does Christian faith say to this? It opens its eyes, looks upon all these insignificant, distasteful, and despised duties in the spirit and is aware that they are all adorned with divine approval as with the costliest gold and jewels. And it was very encouraging and helpful to me because I'm not loving every single task that I do right now, but it is all necessary because we have long range plans. And it's been helpful like even when I'm doing the things that I don't love, I'm doing it in a way that it is adorned with divine approval. And so it was just so encouraging to me and helpful and praise the Lord, it's not as hard as it was in September and August.

Janet: Good. Good.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: And it gives it all though, hope and purpose.

Jocelyn: New level of joy. Yep. So, the next question is what is something you learned from a trial that you were thankful for? And I'll start with this and this is just kind of a continuation of my last sentence. But this semester has been really difficult for our family. Like all four of us, original Wallaces, I know one of them is a different last name now.

Janet: But she's an original Wallace.

Jocelyn: She's an original Wallace. We're all in college full time. And the two Wallace's that still live at her house, Brian and Jocelyn, are also working a lot of hours. And it was a huge transition for Brian to go back to school after being out of school for almost 25 years. Just think.



Janet: That's a long time.

Jocelyn: It's a long time. Think about when was the last time you thought about Algebra or Chemistry? And suddenly it's now his full time job to care intimately about Algebra and Chemistry.

Janet: No, thank you.

Jocelyn: And there's just a couple of other things in our life that have been extremely difficult and much more time consuming than we had thought they would be. And I'm so thankful in this period of trials that Brian and I have each other for support.

Janet: Oh, that's beautiful.

Jocelyn: It has been really helpful. Like there was a time, like I shared a couple minutes ago, I realized like I'm feeling really sad every single day. I can see my tendency to depression tendencies slipping back into my life. And I thought, this is a new leaf. I thought not hiding. I am not denying and I am not isolating.

Janet: Look at you, which is different. Isn't that wonderful? Look at the Lord growing us.

Jocelyn: And so I just asked Brian, like, first of all, I just asked, could you please pray for me because I'm seeing sadness in my life. And I'm not going to stop doing my life because I'm sad.

Janet: And you brought it to the light.

Jocelyn: I brought it to the light. And he said he would. And then he was like, what can I do to help you? And I was like, oh, I don't know. How do you help me with my sadness? So I said, I think I probably should just tell you everything that is on my mind. And he was like, yeah, that's pretty good idea. So I started this note on my phone with everything that was on my mind and I knew we were going to talk about it, so I just added to it all day long. When it got to the end of the day, I realized, you know what, I'm sad because there's a lot of sad things happening.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And it's an appropriate emotion for this period of our life. And on top of it, there's a lot of pressure from a lot of different things. And so it was really great. After I shared my list, literally, this is well, let me say I started my list by saying, I don't necessarily need you to fix anything. I just think I should share it. And after I shared my list, he thanked me for talking to him. He didn't try to solve a single thing. Although if I needed him to, he would have been willing.

Janet: Certainly.



Jocelyn: But he just said, I understand why your life is really hard and I can see why you're sad and it was helpful just to be able to talk without fearing him being upset with me or taking it personally if that would be harder. If he was like, cause honestly, some of the things I was sad about directly related to this position I have in life, supporting our family financially, and he could have made it all about him, like making it all personal.

Janet: Well, fine. I just don't do that.

Jocelyn: Well, or like, I can't believe that I can't believe I made this decision for our family to go back to school. And I'm like, I just need to be able to say what's on my mind without anyone taking it personally.

Janet: And what a beautiful picture though of Christ too.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: That we can bring everything to Him.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: And He cares. And Brian was a shadow of that for you.

Jocelyn: And so, it was refreshing to be in this position in our marriage, which has been a lot of work to getting to this place, but saying like, I am able to share honest thoughts and he did not take it as an attack. And so what I'm learning is just new levels of being on the same team as my husband, which is wonderful. We can just allow each other to struggle in real time and not take it personally. And also not expect perfection every single second, we're just allowing space for the Holy Spirit to be the one that convicts when that's needed. Participating and encouraging each other at moments when we're struggling and genuinely just being a safe place for each other to allow our weaknesses to be exposed, but also to be supported. Like you can't be supported unless you know what's going on.

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: And so, I don't think we've ever been more unified and I'm so, so grateful.

Janet: That is so beautiful. I love that. And that's so encouraging. Like, it wasn't always like that.

Jocelyn: It wasn't.

Janet: But God's way works when we work through the hard and we don't avoid it and we get the help when we each need it. And I love that. I love that. God is using and allowing that hard, even to draw you and Brian closer together. Especially when you don't make the goal, how do I not have hard, but how do I honor God in it? And now we can encourage you.



Jocelyn: Especially like you said, like, I forget exactly how you just said it, but we're not opposing the thing that God is doing. You know, like it's hard because God allowed it to be this way and we're not saying, no, no, God, you got to stop. We're just saying, okay, it's hard and it hurts and in the middle of it.

Janet: Let's help each other.

Jocelyn: Let's help each other.

Janet: That's so beautiful. I look at that and my mind just says, this is the gift marriage is supposed to be. And I know everybody listening, our marriages are not perfect, but they are better than they've ever been.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: And not everybody listening has that, but there is hope because we didn't have it either. But God's way really is best. So I love that. Oh, and so for some of us, the hard is not just what we're going through. The hard is that we don't have that to go home to. And even then, God is right there with arms open and we can pray for God to give taste of that companionship and whatever way is best for our soul. And I have seen God do that. If it's not in my spouse, He will provide what's best for my soul in the way that's best. I would just echo your sentiments. I've mentioned what happened when we went to that marriage conference. When we were reviewing that back at the hotel later, what we've recognized is we're in an incredibly painful season and we're talking, we're praying, we're crying, we're encouraging each other, we're operating as a team, and we're just showing each other a lot of grace. Like something would happen and I would say, oh my word, I didn't even think about it. I'm sorry. And he's like, no honey, it's okay. Like we're just, it's just not what it has been. And it's sweet to see that and to recognize it's bearing fruit specifically in light of a painful trial instead of in the absence of one. How about, let's say, I think, one of our last questions here. What are some ways to cultivate gratitude during a busy or difficult season? Well, I mentioned earlier we'd made a list of the ways that God was stripping away things, a list of how He's refining us, but the longest list that we have started and we try to add to it frequently ways that we've seen God go before us in this specific difficult season.

Jocelyn: That's cool.

Janet: It's good to look back and say, hey, He parted the Red Sea. Hey, He did this in my past. He did. That is very, very good. But what we're choosing to do right now is when there's something that we're like, I don't see a way and then God makes a way.

Jocelyn: Yeah.





Janet: And you go, oh my word, God made a way. Now tomorrow I tend to forget that and just go, oh my word, I don't see a way. And then, so we were like, no, we're making a list of everything that we have seen when you say, when you mentioned earlier, God goes before, so I'm excited. Well, I'm not always remembering that, so I'm not always excited. And so to say, no, we're going to remember. So we've got a long list and there'll be times we're talking and I'm like, do I need to add to the list? Yes. Or there's times when I will say, hey, do you think I just need to stop and read the list out loud? Let's just read the list out loud and remember and calm our souls that way. Because it's just easy to forget. So we review it and we keep trying to remember, not assume that we'll remember it all. We review it and we just keep adding to it.

Jocelyn: That's a great idea.

Janet: So that's been something that we've been doing.

Jocelyn: That's cool. I have been trying to cultivate gratitude during a busy or difficult season by just looking for genuine things to be thankful for in the middle of hard times, not just waiting to do it later, like in the minute saying, thank you for revealing my sinful desire just now. Thank you for doing that. Thank you for exposing our weaknesses. Thank you for making it clear to us that, wow, you don't have it together. Thank you for refining us. Thank you for this pain that you're using to shape me. Thank you for giving me Brian in the middle of this. Thank you for how you're shaping Brian right now, even though it's killing me to see him hurting so much. Thank you for glorifying your perfection by giving us this imperfection. Thank you for giving us this food to eat today so that we can have strength to get up and do this exact same hard thing again tomorrow. Thank you for promising to have this situation under your good control and then practically, it's also included a little less time on social media and maybe being a bit more careful than usual about who I follow or who I friend or who I watch reels from because bad company corrupts good character.

Janet: And I'm already struggling. I'm vulnerable.

Jocelyn: Yeah, I am vulnerable. So and it's also included an absolute moratorium on grumbling or complaining because that is cancer in an already difficult situation. And so we just, we've just been quick to call it out, like, okay, we're not complaining. We're not even starting it because it's already hard enough and that's going to make it harder.

Janet: That's so encouraging and convicting all the things to hear you say that because even with just each other there's this temptation of going you understand.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: So I know I shouldn't feel this way, but.

Jocelyn: Yeah.



Janet: And then let all the complaints come out.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: And we want to be honest and say I'm struggling so it's not like we fake but we don't spend 30 minutes just going on about our complaining and then wonder why we feel the gross heaviness like and I love that you and Brian are both doing that.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: What a gift that you get to help each other with.

Jocelyn: It's nice that we don't have to fight against it at home.

Janet: Yes. Yes.

Jocelyn: So we have been really enjoying our annual challenge of reading through the Bible with all of our dearest friends, our Joyful Journey Podcast listeners.

Janet: I realize you only have a month left, but I guess if you haven't started, you could read really fast.

Jocelyn: You could do it. So Janet, what is something that you are thankful for from the annual challenge?

Janet: Number one, just the structure of being in the word regularly, basically every day, but I'm not going to tell you I've never missed a day, but regularly in the word and not just reading certain passages that might, that I think will give me comfort when I'm struggling in a trial.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: I was thinking, I remembered one Sunday morning, I was particularly sad and anxious that morning and I knew it. Brent goes in early. He's already at church and I was praying and it was like, sometimes I get stuck in this, I should pray until I don't feel sad.

Jocelyn: Oh.

Janet: You know, like I shouldn't be.

Jocelyn: Might not ever happen.

Janet: Exactly, or I shouldn't be anxious. And so I need to pray, give it to the Lord. Well, I'm still anxious. I need to pray more. But what I find is even my prayers are all just about what I'm anxious about. So I'm still thinking about only what I'm anxious about.



Jocelyn: Yeah. Yeah.

Janet: So, and then I thought, I just said, you know, Lord, right now my mind is not all the places it needs to be. I'm bringing it to you. I'm just going to do my reading plan. Like it seemed like I should get my mind in a good place before.

Jocelyn: Before the reading plan.

Janet: But it's like I'm trying and my mind is still not in a good place and I just need to read.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: And I started reading and I happened to be in the Psalms, "happened", and by the fifth Psalm, which were not about my situation, but they were about God and things that He's doing and what He's like and people going, I was, I remember it because I came to the end of the fifth Psalm and I'm like, I can't wait to get to church and pray and sing. I want to be with everybody and sing. We have an amazing God. But if you had asked me where should you read today to help you, I think it would have been about don't be anxious.

Jocelyn: Yes. Yes.

Janet: Because I'm anxious. I'm going to read about.

Jocelyn: Would kind of still be about you.

Janet: And it, yes. So I just thought, okay, whatever else is going on with me, I'm just going to read your word and think about you. And having the challenge where I need to be in the word has just provided me the structure to do what I, what my soul needs anyway.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: And that's not the only time that I've done that. That's been really, really helpful.

Jocelyn: That's so cool.

Janet: I think also, you know, post election.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: We can just be thankful whatever else happens. We serve the true King, regardless of the country that we're a citizen of, just like Daniel. I go back to the book, Heaven Rules, and that stability. So between that because I'm getting the big picture of who God is all through the Bible, and then just getting my mind off of me and onto who God is and how that's reoriented me, it's



just reminded me the importance of reading all of scripture, not just the parts that I think are going to be helpful to me. How about you?

Jocelyn: Well, it's really funny because I was beating myself up because I was trying so hard to like read my portion every day on the day.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And my brain just does not handle that well. Like I can't remember what I just read. And if I only read two chapters, I don't know what's going on. It takes me the whole time I'm reading to, so I just gave myself freedom to read as long as I want. And so I've just been reading long, long, long. chunks of scripture.

Janet: Love it.

Jocelyn: It made me get way ahead cause I wanted to know how the thing turned out. And so I finished ahead, but it was helpful to make that realization about me and how I read scripture as I prefer to read in big chunks and there's nothing that says you have to follow a reading plan. We only read two chapters a day. That's right. Read the Bible. Read it in a way that connects with you and helps you understand it because that's the point is understanding. So I was feeling super sad and worried and I happened to be in the middle of the gospels right then. And it was just like Jesus was speaking directly to me in the Sermon on the Mount and the parables and the teaching of the scriptures and teaching the disciples. So this one day I woke up super sad and I went through my getting ready for the day routine super sad and I prayed with Brian and I was sad and I left the house and I was sad and I listened to the gospels for an hour and a half sad and then I left for work from the gym and my car has this annoying. Auto play feature that makes your play your phone play as soon as you get in the car and start it. And it, it turns on and sometime my phone just gets stuck on a thing like whatever it was playing to just get stuck on it. And that day it got stuck on Luke 18, one, three, and that day was weird because I had a lot of errands to run, which were in and out of my car. single time. I got it's like eight times. I got in the car. I had to run somewhere real quick. It just auto played Luke 18, one through eight. And I was like, Oh my goodness, it's starting again. But I was really tight. So I didn't have a chance to even shut it off. So all day long, let me tell you what I heard. This is what Luke 18, one through eight says. One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up. There was a judge in a certain city, he said, who neither feared God nor cared about people. A widow of that city came to him repeatedly saying, give me justice in this dispute with my enemy. The judge ignored her for a while, but finally he said him. To himself. I don't fear God or care about people, but this woman is driving me crazy. I'm going to see that she gets justice because she is wearing me out with her constant request. Then the Lord said, learn a lesson from this unjust judge. Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don't you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will grant justice. to them quickly. And when the son of man returns, how many will



he find on the earth who have faith? And I was just like, okay, God, I get it. Eighth time of listening to it. This is what I took from that. God wants me to be relentless in my prayers to him, crying out to him for rescue and relief until I wear him out. And that is what I needed that day because God just made it play. Over and over and over.

Janet: I love that. I love seeing God's good providence at work for, for our good. It's beautiful.

Jocelyn: So the 2024 challenge was so fun. We've been hearing from people all year long that they've been participating and they, God has used the scripture in their life at all levels. opportune moments to either prepare them or help them deal with something really hard. And so it's been so cool to listen to people talk about it.

Janet: Can I just add, so if you read through the scriptures this year and you're not sure what we're talking about, for anyone who's read through the entire Bible, at whatever point you finish, we just believe you. You don't have to prove it. We're just going to believe you. Let us know. We just have a little something that we want to send you. Um, and probably in January, it'll be after the end of the year when everybody can let us know. Just a little something to congratulate you that we got to do it together.

Jocelyn: Yeah. And so we're very excited about the 2025 challenge. We've been chatting about it and we're pretty, pretty stoked for what's going to happen. So I just want to encourage you, listen, at the end of the year, we'll have an announcement about what the 2025 challenges and we are very excited for you to join us in that.

Janet: Excellent. Okay. Well, thank you, Jocelyn, for sharing what you're thankful for and just that we had the opportunity to think about a good God that we are grateful for, even in times that are hard.

Jocelyn: I'm just thankful that we have Thanksgiving once a year because it kind of forces us to purposely think like, what did God do this year and what should we be thankful for? And it's just, it's a good reorienting of our minds.

Janet: Yes. I love it every year. It's good for me. So thank you. And thank you, listener, for listening with us.

To keep from missing any future episodes, please sign up for our newsletter on our webpage [faithlafayette.org/JJP](https://faithlafayette.org/JJP) From there you can also subscribe to this podcast on Apple, Google, or Spotify. You can also visit us on our Facebook page or Instagram at Joyful Journey Podcast. If you have questions or comments for us, you can email us at [joyfuljourneyquestions@outlook.com](mailto:joyfuljourneyquestions@outlook.com). Joyful Journey Podcast is a ministry of Faith Bible



Seminary. All proceeds go to offset costs of this podcast and toward scholarships for women to receive their [MABC through Faith Bible Seminary](#).

Host Janet and her husband, Brent, also speak at a variety of conferences as a way to raise money for the seminary. If you want to look at what they offer or book them for a conference, [go to their website](#).