

## Episode 3-3: Helping Wives of Ungodly Husbands

### Resources:

#### Books/Booklets

[Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy - Mark Vroegop](#)

[Gospel Primer - Milton Vincent](#)

[Gentle and Lowly - Dane Ortlund](#)

[Help! I'm in a Painful Marriage - Carrie Foldberg](#)

[Marriage, Whose Dream? - Paul Tripp](#)

[God Empowered Wife - K. B. Haught](#)

#### Podcasts/Lectures

[Understanding and Developing Trust in Regard to Human Relationships - Nicolas Ellen](#)

[Unjust Suffering - Joyful Journey](#)

#### Article

[Peace Be Still: Learning Psalm 131 by Heart - David Powilson](#)

[Helping Wives Respond to the Silent Treatment 1 - Andrea Lee](#)

[Helping Wives Respond to the Silent Treatment 2 - Andrea Lee](#)

[Helping Wives Respond to the Silent Treatment 3 - Andrea Lee](#)

#### Website:

[Vision of Hope](#)

### 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: Hello there listeners. Welcome back. This is Janet once again with Jocelyn.

Jocelyn: Hey friends.

Janet: And today we're gonna talk about a topic that is, is heavy, but I think it's one that enough of us are dealing with that we just need to talk about it.

Jocelyn: Yep.



Janet: You know, I have the privilege of talking with a variety of wives and at least some of them are struggling with, can we just say it ungodly husbands?

Jocelyn: Yep. It's a hard reality.

Janet: Yeah. It might mean that he's unsaved. It might mean that they just have different priorities. It's not really oriented around Christ. He may claim Christ and then not live that way. He may be unsaved, a professing Christian. Either way, very unkind. Anywhere from selfish and insensitive to what might now be called abusive, which I know is a loaded term. So I wanna say for this episode, , I'm not focusing on abusive husbands. Not because that doesn't matter, but because that's just not the purpose of this episode. So please don't listen to this episode through that grid.

Jocelyn: Yep. Don't hear you saying something you're not saying.

Janet: Exactly. What I do wanna help us think through is how do we give hope and help to a wife who wants to honor God in a marriage that's painful. I decided to do this in the second person as if I'm talking to those of you in that situation. And if your situation is different, these principles actually apply to many unjust situations.

Jocelyn: I'm glad we're talking about this, even though this is a really heavy and difficult topic, because you know what ,the truth of it is, every marriage has hard points.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And God uses marriage to make us more and more conformed with the image of Christ. So although not every person can say, my husband is just downright, ungodly. All of us will have to handle situations in our marriages that are tough.

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: And I assume that so much of what you're gonna talk about would apply in those situations too.

Janet: Yeah. And outside of marriage, we're all gonna be in situations where we have to deal with ungodly people.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: Some of whom are family and we love some of whom we work with, but regardless, how do we respond to that ungodliness? It just has a special level of pain within the marriage. So we're talking about that.

Jocelyn: And we're not trying to say that we are not ungodly,



Janet: No way!

Jocelyn: Where there are two ungodly people in each relationship.

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: So this is especially pointed to someone who is really suffering.

Janet: Right. And that's a good point. We are all sinful. What I'm saying here is what if the reality is you want to grow and your husband does not?

Jocelyn: Yeah. That's such a hard spot.

Janet: What do we do with that?

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: And I think because of that, the first thing we have to say is it's painful.

Jocelyn: It is painful.

Janet: And we don't wanna start with, well, Jesus is with you. You know, all things work together for good. Regardless of the level of sinful behavior that's exhibited by your husband, there was some dream of some kind, most likely, that you had when you were thinking about your future marriage. And this is not it.

Jocelyn: Yeah. That's hard to accept.

Janet: So take some time to lament. There's a reason a third of the Psalms are lament Psalms. God's given us a way to take our pain to him. We've mentioned this book before, but we do highly recommend Vroegop's book *Dark Clouds and Deep Mercy*.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: At least the first four chapters, they're gonna give you a framework for how to talk to God about your pain. You know, a lot of us are just not comfortable being that honest with God.

Jocelyn: Yeah. It feels very weird to be that upfront.

Janet: It does. But I really believe if I'm not, I will handle it unbiblically.

Jocelyn: Because if I'm not honest with how this situation is really affecting me, then I can't ask God for help in the middle of how it's really affecting me.

Janet: Yes. So then I'll do it in other ways.



Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: It'll come out in other ways. You know, if you are talking to another woman, I have prayed laments for women in front of them, just to model what that level of humble honesty looks like. And this is not an entire episode on Lament, but we just can't skip over the reality that that's gonna be imperative.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: You have to be able to take your pain to the Lord, It's real.

Jocelyn: Absolutely.

Janet: And in that, be able to land on reveling in the character of God. When we're suffering, a lot of times one of the things that will surface is any wrong views we have about God.

Jocelyn: That's true.

Janet: If you're gonna trust him in a painful situation, if you're gonna really be willing and want to pour your heart out in a lament to him, you have to really know how beautiful he is.

Jocelyn: Because I will not be that vulnerable with someone who I believe is just gonna flick me around or squash me.

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: And if I understand his true character, I will be willing to be open with him.

Janet: Yes. Yes. So do you see God as transactional? What do I mean by that? You mean if I do right? He will bless. and if that's how you view God, and you know what, you might pass a theology exam that wouldn't say this.

Jocelyn: But functionally that might be true.

Janet: Yes. How will you know that? Well, do you think, what am I doing wrong? Because if God's gonna bless me when I do right, what am I doing wrong. Or I'm mad at him. I'm doing my part. and he's not doing his.

Jocelyn: Yep.

Janet: Or do you maybe see him as impossible to please? He's always disappointed in you. Because if you see him that way, you're not gonna run to him in your weakness and pain.

Jocelyn: No. No. Because if you're weak, then he would just squish you.



Janet: Right. Or is he Santa Claus? I mean, he's really nice. He likes to give you gifts, but he's kind of weak.

Jocelyn: Can't do much about your pain.

Janet: Right. You're gonna need to understand that he's trustworthy. He's good. He's committed to your good. He's powerful and worthy of your trust, and in those moments, even in my own life, I really like to review the Gospel Primer. Especially part two, that actual narrative gospel. Such good reminders. It's short, it's concise, and there's so much good truth in there about what God is like. When I'm struggling, long compound sentences are sometimes too much. I need short.

Jocelyn: I like that book because it's nice little brief paragraphs about a topic.

Janet: Yes. And when I'm struggling, that's sometimes all I can do. Yep. But what I need in those moments is truth. Gentle and Lowly. Another great resource. It's just longer. So take some time, acknowledge your pain, and if you're uncomfortable doing that, recognize you may need to really think about your view of God.

Jocelyn: Absolutely.

Janet: With that foundation, which I know I'm going fast. That that may take a long time.

Jocelyn: That's, that's not like a one and done process.

Janet: Yes. But with that foundation, then I can say, how can I learn how to love God and love others in this painful situation? And I think it's really important in the middle of that, begin with the end in mind. Take some time to think about how it could look. What would it be like to be in this situation, and in the middle of it, not because I got out of it, in the middle of it, I had joy, peace, and an increasing love and gratefulness to God.

Jocelyn: That sounds like a really good plan. I would like, I would love if in the middle of my situations I was rooted in joy.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And rooted in peace and increasingly loved God.

Janet: Because we think. That'll all happen when he removes this hard thing.

Jocelyn: Right. When it's done.

Janet: Yes. It seems unbelievable. I really wanna help you see that that is God's good goal for you. It's not dependent on your husband.



Jocelyn: That's so helpful because some marriages are in situations that don't look likely to change.

Janet: Right. And that's not where my hope is. What an unsafe place to put my hope.

Jocelyn: Yeah, yep.

Janet: Many of us know the familiar verses in Romans 8: 28 and 29, that God causes all things to work together for good, for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose, and that his purpose was to conform us to Christ. Well, then let's just think through what it would mean to be conformed to Jesus in this situation. Hebrews 12: 1 and 2 says this. Therefore, since we also have such a large crowd of witnesses surrounding us, and who is that crowd? It's all the people he just talked about in Hebrews 11 that testify to God's faithfulness. Then let us lay aside every hindrance and the sin that so easily ensnares us. Let us run with endurance the race that lies before us. How? Keeping our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. For the joy that laid before him, he endured the cross. Despising the shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Jocelyn: It's so helpful to know that we don't have to invent what this looks like to go through something this hard and do it correctly. We have someone

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: Who endured unbelievable suffering and was completely faithful to God.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: In that process.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: So we're not asking women in very difficult marriage situations to dream up what this could look like and accomplish it. We're asking them to look at the person who has already demonstrated how to do it.

Janet: Yes. Yes. So it's learning how to keep our eyes on Jesus that's gonna give us endurance. And to realize, like Him, you can learn to despise or to think little of the shame, and instead have joy.

Jocelyn: And I think that's helpful because there are situations when you're married to an ungodly person that are very embarrassing.

Janet: Yes.



Jocelyn: And make you feel ashamed.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And it's helpful for us to know that the goal is not to never, ever, ever have those situations. The goal is to learn to think about them like Jesus did.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And to endure them the way that he did.

Janet: And he thought little of them in comparison to the joy.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: So how do I get there? Well, what are some of the hindrances? Well, initially it just may involve some wrong theology, which is in part a wrong view of God. And in part can be a wrong view of unjust suffering.

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: We've done a whole previous episode on that. We're gonna list that in your resources. but wrong theology regarding suffering is gonna really hinder your ability to grow.

Jocelyn: Absolutely. Yep.

Janet: I remember walking alongside a good friend who was in a very painful marriage, and her husband was behaving in very ungodly and cruel ways, and I came home after seeking to encourage her, and I told my husband, I know, I know I need to help her to trust God and to not be bitter. I know I need to help her look at any logs that are in her own eyes, but I'm so angry.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: It's not fair. He's sinning. She's suffering. And now I'm struggling with my own bitterness.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: And I remember him helping me see that this was her moment to shine. We all say that we wanna be conformed to the image of Christ. Well, this is it.

Jocelyn: That was the moment.

Janet: He was the suffering servant and all of his suffering was unjust.

Jocelyn: That's helpful to remember. He never suffered anything that he deserved.





Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: All of it was unjust.

Janet: Yes. And his willingness to endure this is what saved us.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: So when she chooses to trust God in the midst of clearly unjust suffering, she shines the brightest and has a great platform to declare the glory of God. When I understood that, I was committed to helping her do it well.

Jocelyn: That's so helpful for those of us who are loving someone who's in that situation.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: Like we don't wanna just patronize them or tell them it'll soon be done. What we can do is give them courage to live in that moment well.

Janet: Yeah. And my temptation was how do I help her out of it? She should not have to live with this.

Jocelyn: How do I get this to be finished?

Janet: Yes. How do we end it? And I think, no. Do we pray?

Jocelyn: Of course.

Janet: Of course.

Jocelyn: That's an appropriate prayer quest.

Janet: But if God's allowed her to be in it, do I trust God enough? There's my theology, there's my view of God. Do I trust his heart enough that I can know this is what's best for her soul and I wanna help her do it well.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: I know I'm touching on some deep topics here, and I am not doing them justice. What I want you to see, these are the things that will hinder your joy and you're gonna need to spend a lot more time meditating on the role of suffering and how God uses it. God's heart in the middle of it. But there are other hindrances to our joy. Painful circumstances in marriages also unearth what is driving me that's not Jesus.





Jocelyn: And it becomes so painfully clear because our heart just gets squeezed right up and we get to see our ugliness right in front of our eyes.

Janet: Yes. Yes. So we're talking about idolatry. I've already said we need to acknowledge how painful it is. But at the same time, I really do believe your joy and freedom will come from seeing any idolatry to lesser things, so that your hope will be in greater things. I don't believe what keeps a suffering person from joy is their suffering. It's their sin. That's what's keeping them from the abiding joy of Christ, even in the suffering.

Jocelyn: And so many times the suffering exposes the sin.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: That we're willing to commit. When life is enough hard, like when it's hard enough, our heart gets squeezed hard enough. We get to see what's actually in it, and sometimes it is idolatry.

Janet: Many times. Yeah. And what that can do in that moment is help us move from viewing life horizontally. How it should be here. I'm doing my part, why isn't God doing his? All of that. Now I am forced, as previous pastor used to say, Pastor Goode. It crowds me to Christ, and I'm forced to look vertically. None of this is intended to communicate that you are the problem. The hope is that even when your husband's living in ungodliness, God is still at work. Your husband may not be willing to grow, but that can't stop you from growing.

Jocelyn: That's a relief and helpful. Cuz it sometimes feels like, I'm pressured into handling things a certain way because of the circumstances. And what we know from scripture is that's not true.

Janet: No.

Jocelyn: We're never in a situation where our only choice is to sin or to respond idolatrously.

Janet: Or that I have to be miserable.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: His behavior can't keep me from growing even in joy.

Jocelyn: Which, you know, really does just shine the glory of Jesus Christ because who but God could make

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: you have joy in a situation that is very difficult.



Janet: To the world that's not even possible. Well, what are some of the idols that might surface? Well, you're facing the death of a dream, at least for now. We don't know the future. Growing in an eternal focus will put your good dream into perspective. You'll be able to lament a good dream without being completely devastated, but only if you're looking to eternity and keeping your eyes on Jesus.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: Otherwise, it will surface the idolatry of your marriage.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: I don't wanna minimize your pain. But it can be helpful to realize, as you mentioned earlier, Jocelyn, all of us as husbands or wives, we have to die to the ideal marriages we envision.

Jocelyn: Absolutely. Because the ideal marriage was meant to satisfy us here and now.

Janet: Yes. Yes. I remember a wise friend at a wedding shower saying contentment was learning to allow God's reality for my life to be my dream.

Jocelyn: We should just probably embroider that on all of the towels that we give at wedding showers. Because you know what? Only God knows what he has planned for this marriage.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And how it's going to unfold. And not a single marriage has 100%. Problem-free existence.

Janet: No.

Jocelyn: Every single one is gonna have hard stuff in it.

Janet: But again, if my theology and view of God is he loves me so much, he only allows into my life what's good for my soul, then whatever he allows, that's my dream.

Jocelyn: It's good for your soul so It's is my dream.

Janet: That's now my dream. Yep. And I think it's important to realize this came from a woman whose husband was not a believer.

Jocelyn: I think that's helpful because she understands what she's talking about.



Janet: Yes. So when your dream marriage then becomes your primary goal, how, what are some indicators that maybe it's moved to idolatry? Am I nagging a lot? He has to change. Am I trying to control him? Because this has to change. I will find a way to get this marriage. If that's true for you, maybe the Lord is surfacing, this good dream has become idolatrous.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: Some other idols, frequently we're gonna see protection or security or safety. And is it wrong to want protection and security?

Jocelyn: I can see what you mean though that in that it's your version of protection or your version of safety.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: I want it to look a certain way.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And that's what my heart is going for.

Janet: Right. So when I'm clamoring for it on this earth, that is such an unsafe place to put my hope, and now I'm facing that reality. God may be again crowding you closer to Christ. Learning what it means to have security, but to have it in Christ. To have your soul protected and to know that's better than what you were trying to get in your marriage. Whatever God gives you is better. You could do a biblical word study on security, safety, refuge, protection. I've had several women do that. And each time I've had them come back and say, number one, I didn't realize how much God talked about that in the scripture and how much he talked about it in reference to my soul.

Jocelyn: And the way that the scripture talks about it is that we are safe. Yes, we are secure, we are protected by God.

Janet: Yeah. So then, you know, thinking about how does what God offers compare to what I wanted and why is what he's giving me better? What are some indicators that maybe that protection and security has become my primary goal instead of just a nice desire? Well, I may be withdrawing to avoid pain. I will not be hurt. I may start looking to other relationships to give me what I'm missing. I may start saying things like, okay, if I can't change him, I can minimize the pain and I can get the need met elsewhere. This can then fall into the biblical framework of vain imaginations. Well, what could that look like? Well, maybe it's a lot of time on social media either comparing or reinventing myself. So I look differently. I'm gonna live in a little fantasy world. Maybe I'm gonna read romantic books. Don't even get me started on what I think of any of those things, where I can dream of the perfect husband. That's not helpful to anyone, but especially if you're in a difficult marriage. Hallmark movies, come on. Maybe I'm gonna start



looking at other marriages at church. And longing for what I think they have, realizing they're not stamping the issues in their marriage on their forehead either.

Jocelyn: Right. Right.

Janet: All of these things have one thing in common. They're very horizontal. None of that is looking vertically. And then they lead to the belief that everybody else has it better than me, and then I'm gonna end up in the: if only I had whatever, then I'd be happy. Now, let me contrast that with the stewardship of our bodies and promoting our own physical safety. It's actually honoring to God to not put yourself in a position where your physical safety is at risk. Not just for stewardship of your body, but also because it's not even loving to the other person to put them in a position where they'll sin in that way. So if you have any physical safety issues, talk to authorities, talk to your pastors, get to a safe place. What we're talking about here is that protection that I want to feel safe. I want emotional safety. I want to not be hurt. I want to feel secure, and that Jesus offers that in a much better way.

Jocelyn: We just want all of our listeners to understand that if you're in a physically unsafe situation, it would honor God to seek safety, and to get authorities involved.

Janet: Yes. What other idols can surface? So it's really hard to say this, but I do think we have to consider if maybe part of what's adding hard to what's already very hard, is a belief that you deserve better than this?

Jocelyn: Eh? I can identify. I mean, it sounds so bad to say I'm entitled to have good things, but you know what? That is often what my mind thinks.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: You shouldn't have to go through this. Come on. This is not fair. This is hard. This is a hard one.

Janet: And I think it's hard because we don't wanna make it sound like you're not in a hard situation.

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: Because you are. But you add your own hard to the already hard. When I add to it, you deserve better than this.

Jocelyn: I shouldn't have to deal with it. Yeah.

Janet: Yes. And I relate to that personally.

Jocelyn: Yeah, me too.



Janet: And the beauty is God will meet you there.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: He does not say, I cannot believe you're thinking that way. . Praise God. How will I know if I'm there? Well, is there a lot of anger and bitterness? I shouldn't have to deal with this. Is there vengefulness? Is there a lot of jealousy and envy? Is there a lot of anger at God or others that you think have better marriages even though they're not as godly as you? In all of these, there can be a temptation to use tears and threats or manipulation to get what you believe you need and deserve. But I just wanna say to you, as long as you're living out of your idolatry, you're really gonna stunt your own ability to handle the real and difficult circumstances you're in.

Jocelyn: Because they're real.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And they're difficult and you need all of your brain power without having energy sucked away by sin to deal with the real and difficult circumstances.

Janet: Yes. So when I'm then able to see more clearly, because I'm not being controlled by my idols. Now I can fight the right things. Now I can fight biblically. So the first thing I'm gonna have to fight is my sin.

Jocelyn: Absolutely. Cuz it's gonna pop up all over the place.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: The harder your heart gets squeezed, the more you're gonna see what's in there.

Janet: Yep. There's a variety of situations and issues and complications that are gonna arise when you're in this situation. And then sin complicates things and it's very confusing.

Jocelyn: Sin always makes everything take longer to resolve and take more energy to resolve.

Janet: Yes. And some of it's not your sin. I get that. You have an ungodly husband. It's already hard to do what's right.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: It's even harder when you don't even know what is right.

Jocelyn: Yeah.



Janet: And that's how confusing it truly does get. And then you're not gonna have the wisdom to creatively solve that actual confusing problem if you're also blinded by your own sin.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: But once you've taken the log outta your own, then you can humbly approach God and ask for the counsel and the wisdom to biblically respond to the myriad of questions that are gonna happen.

Jocelyn: There's gonna be a lot of questions.

Janet: Yes. And you're gonna need people to help you.

Jocelyn: You're gonna need all of your mind to think through those problems.

Janet: Yeah. So we're gonna fight sin and we're gonna fight for joy. Earlier I said, his behavior can't keep you from growing even in joy. And that is truly supernatural. And that's only possible if you're fighting the right way. Well, what is the way that we need to fight? Second Corinthians 10:3-6 says this, for although we live in the flesh, we don't wage war according to the flesh, since the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but are powerful through God for the demolition of strongholds. We demolish arguments and every proud thing that's raised up against the knowledge of God. We take every thought captive to obey Christ, and we're ready to punish any disobedience, once your obedience is complete. We're gonna fight on our knees. And we're gonna fight to demolish any arguments that don't agree with God. And we re, we remember and remind ourselves, Ephesians 6:12 and 13, our struggle is not against flesh and blood. It feels like it's against my husband. And your husband is behaving ungodly. I'm not saying he's not. Your ultimate struggle is against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil spiritual forces in the heavens. Because your husband is being deceived. For this reason, take up the full armor of God so that you may be able to resist in the evil day and having prepared everything to take your stand.

Jocelyn: It's helpful to remember that the real enemy is sin.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And our husbands, when they're acting ungodly, are deceived by sin, thinking that it's gonna give them what they want. It's gonna satisfy them.

Janet: Right. And they're wrong.

Jocelyn: They're wrong. But it's helpful to remember that he's not my enemy. Sin is the enemy.

Janet: Yes. Well, let's get practical. That's nice. What do you do?



Jocelyn: Yeah. How do we go there?

Janet: What is the path that I would say, what is your path to joy? Well, first I have to commit to God's agenda, not mine. So I'm working on my idolatry that's gonna keep coming up, cuz my agenda might be, how do I change my husband? How do I get outta pain? How do I not deal with this? I'm gonna commit to God's agenda. I'm gonna focus on what is wise and loving, because now I'm working on constantly getting the log outta my own eye, we can receive God's wisdom on the best path forward. I love David Powlison's article on Psalm 131, Quietening a Noisy Soul. It's so helpful to see the superiority of God's agenda and the quietness of soul it brings. I will link that article, and that would be one just very practical step to take. Read that article. I would also say, seek your pastor's counsel. You don't need to do this alone. Frequently husbands will tell their wives they can't talk to their pastors. It's not unsubmitive for a wife to go to her pastor anyway.

Jocelyn: I think that's so helpful to hear. Because, I am a member of my church and my pastor is shepherding me.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And I need his help to think through something that's hard like this.

Janet: Yes. And it feels so isolating when my husband is behaving in ways that are ungodly and then saying to me, no, I don't wanna go get help with you. And No, you may not talk to anyone.

Jocelyn: It's further isolating.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: And that's not appropriate.

Janet: That's not of God.

Jocelyn: He has no authority to limit you from seeking pastoral care.

Janet: Right. So your husband does not have the authority to forbid you from talking to your pastor. And I would say this, it's an act of love for God, who loves righteousness, and it's an act of love for your husband who may need the love of church discipline for the sake of his soul.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: So let me repeat that. It is not unloving. It's loving to God because it's righteous. It's loving for your own soul because God's given you that. It's loving to your husband to go and talk to your shepherd. Maybe he's a professing believer. Well, one reason for you to talk to your pastor





is that if he's a member of a biblical church, his behavior, if it is sin, needs to be shepherded by his pastor.

Jocelyn: Absolutely. And it's so confusing and difficult in the middle of that, that you need someone outside of yourself to help you think through all of those details.

Janet: Yes. And God provided for that.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: I love that because we're tempted if I don't do that, I'm gossiping to my friends, because I need someone to talk to. God told me what to do.

Jocelyn: Yep.

Janet: And your pastor is very possibly gonna give you a woman in the church to walk through this with you as well?

Jocelyn: Probably, yeah.

Janet: In an appropriate way. I'm gonna have to learn what it means to practice biblical love, which I'm gonna say takes a great deal of courage.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: There is nothing passive, weak about biblical love. Because biblical love creates an environment that makes it easy for the other person to do the right thing. That's what biblical love. In Genesis, we're told that as wives were to be helpers or ezers, e-z-e-r, for our husbands. The best help we can be is to encourage righteousness in our spouse. We can have compassion on their sin and weaknesses, but we don't appease or avoid.

Jocelyn: I think that has been helpful for me as a wife to understand is that it is loving to lovingly address issues as they come up.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: Avoiding is not loving. And appeasing is not loving. And in the past, I would've believed that just giving in or just not talking about it would have been to be loving. But it's not.

Janet: No.

Jocelyn: It's not because it's not helping my husband to pursue righteousness.

Janet: Yes. And I've stopped using the phrase as wives, we want to please our husband.



Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: Not because it's wrong to please your husband, but because ultimately we're commanded to love our husband.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: And please Jesus. Sometimes what pleases my husband is ungodly. He wants me to affirm his sin.

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: He wants me to say it's okay, honey, when it's not okay.

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: So if I think I need to please him, I will feel the need to appease or avoid. Instead, I need to love. What do I mean by appeasing? In the moment it might be easier to just change the subject. Or he's being really ungodly in front of the kids and so I say, oh, that's okay honey. That's all be alright. And that seems easier. But you know what you're doing? You're encouraging him to stay on a destructive path. Whether or not he's a believer, you can express concern over the path that he's taking and for where that path will lead.

Jocelyn: The hard part for me is not controlling the situation to try to force my husband to do what I believe is the right thing. So I can express concern over the path that he's taking without taking control of the path.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: That's hard.

Janet: It is.

Jocelyn: Because someone outside of the tension or stress of that situation might possibly see it a little bit more objectively, and it's so easy to say, and because of that, I'm just gonna make sure we take the good path.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: That's not helpful.

Janet: No, it's not. But what I'm asking someone to do is supernaturally hard and courageous. Because I'm saying you're gonna have to kill any idol of, I don't want pain or hurt, because I'm going to ask you to walk towards someone and it might make him angry.



Jocelyn: Yeah, it might.

Janet: Now, again, if we're talking physical, we're not talking about abuse here.

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: But I am saying that if my husband is behaving ungodly, and I say,

Jocelyn: I'm concerned.

Janet: Truly out of concern for his soul.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: Not nobody talks to me that way. But truly, you know what? That doesn't honor the Lord and I'm concerned about the path you're on. He may say, well, who in the world are you?

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: I'm asking you to walk toward killing that idol, because you love him.

Jocelyn: Walk toward uncomfortable conversations.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: That you know are probably not gonna make him super happy.

Janet: And God may grant him repentance. But if not, it's giving him an opportunity.

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: To repent because I'm not allowing the destructive path he's on to go well.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: That's love, and it's hard. So I can't appease. And I can't avoid. Which is when he is like that, I just get the kids, we all, no, you may need to get your kids and go in another room. I get that.

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: But I can't just avoid it all the time and never deal with it. And if you think about it, appeasing and avoiding, they're both rooted in thinking about me.

Jocelyn: Yeah.



Janet: I don't want the pain. That's why I've gotta deal with that idolatry before I can move forward. My focus has to be how do I represent God's values and God's character? Because my goal is to love God and love my husband, and we all have to agree God does not appease or avoid my sin.

Jocelyn: It's so hard the application of this is so challenging because this is also balanced with the fact that we don't need to jump on every single time our husband does something sinful, because we are his helper. And so sometimes that means comforting in the middle of his stress, and sometimes that means confronting in the middle of a,

Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: Of a sinful situation. So it is super challenging to be able to say in the middle of the application of this, it will be my goal to neither avoid or appease.

Janet: Right. And to realize the premise of this session is this isn't a man who loves God, who still sins. That's, that's the best anybody's ever got. In me or anyone else. This is, my husband has a pattern of living ungodly. So how do I do that? And it requires great strength and trust in God, which is a reminder of why we started with what's your view of God? You can't do this if you don't understand the heart of God. You'll need to lovingly talk to him about sinful behavior with the goal of his good. You're gonna have to walk towards maybe unkind words, maybe uncomfortable, maybe anger. At any time you think you're unsafe, you have an obligation, not just an option, an obligation to contact the governmental authorities who were created for those who won't control themselves. That is loving. You're really gonna benefit from a mentor to come alongside you. And your pastor can help you determine who would that could be. They're gonna be able to help you love your husband well. Because like you said, it's gonna get so confusing.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: There's gonna be daily decisions. That it's like, now am I being overly sensitive? Was that just not even a big deal? If there's a woman who's walked this path well, oh, she would be invaluable to you. It's very painful to have this level of conflict within your home, and it's so tempting to appease or avoid and to tell yourself you're being compassionate and loving.

Jocelyn: Yeah. It is

Janet: You'll need

Jocelyn: it is really hard.

Janet: eyes outside yourself. And through it all, fixing your eyes on Jesus. We began with the end in mind. And now here we are. Keep your eyes on Jesus. Let's read this passage now in 1 Peter. When we think about wives of ungodly husbands, our minds quickly go to one Peter 3:1 which



says, and you wives, therefore. Well understandably, that is specifically to wives of ungodly husbands, but it starts with therefore. Which means before I can talk about that passage, I have to marinate in the verses right before it. Well, what preceded therefore wives, it's first Peter 2 :22-24 about Jesus. He did not commit sin and no deceit was found in his mouth. When he was insulted, he didn't insult in return. When he suffered, he didn't threaten, but entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that having died to sins, we might live for righteousness by his wounds, you have been healed.

Jocelyn: That's beautiful.

Janet: Oh, what a beautiful picture and a response to unjust suffering. And this is the passage that leads to telling wives how they can do this without fear. Well, let's break it down a little bit. First of all, no matter what was done to him, Jesus never responded in sin. Your husband may provoke you and it will be easy for you to sin, but you have the help of your savior who understands, and you don't have to respond sinfully. Think about just that, the platform that is for the power and glory of Christ. In the past, you may have responded sinfully to what he did. But as you begin changing, He may notice that and wanna know what's different. And now you get to shine a spotlight on Jesus.

Jocelyn: And it's gonna be really interesting as you apply this, because there are situations that are gonna come up in your marriage, and you may find that you reacted so quickly that what happened automatically was a sin. And those different instances will help you to see where you need to keep growing.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: So he was able to handle every situation. Without sinning, you won't be.

Janet: That's right.

Jocelyn: And every single time you do sin, it could, it's an opportunity for you to address an ongoing growth issue.

Janet: Yes. Yes. Because again, no one can stop you from growing.

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: And that will be your platform for that. It also says Jesus was not deceitful. Which means we need to make a commitment not to lie, not to be deceitful, even when it's very uncomfortable.

Jocelyn: Oh, and it will be very uncomfortable.

Janet: Yes.



Jocelyn: And the temptation to lie will be very strong because it would smooth things over.

Janet: Yes. A great way to appease or avoid it.

Jocelyn: It does smooth things over.

Janet: Leaving a wrong impression on purpose as a way to avoid tackling a hard problem, that's deceitful. You're most likely the closest person to your husband, and your willingness to walk toward hard things with truth and love and tenderness can be very redemptive.

Jocelyn: I think that would be important then to pray that God would help you to speak the truth in difficult situations in a loving way.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: As those situations come up. So that you'll be committed to truth.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: In opportune moments.

Janet: It also says that he didn't return insult for insult. And boy, can a wife of an ungodly husband relate to that. But just imagine this, Jesus is on the cross. He's totally humiliated and exposed before all of the people. He's there because we need him to be there. He's there because of his love for those watching. And then we read this, matthew 27:39-40: those who passed by were yelling insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, you who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself. If you're the son of God, come down from the cross. If I'd been on the cross, oh, I'd have come down. I don't even have to wonder what I would do. I'd have totally come down and I would've shown them how powerful I was. I would not let them mock me like that. If he had, and even if they'd believe, wow, you really are the son of God, they'd have still gone to hell cuz nobody paid for their sin. So in extravagant, undeserved love, while they mocked, he stayed there.

Jocelyn: What an example for a wife in an ungodly husband situation to stay there.

Janet: Yeah.

Jocelyn: Undeserved, extravagant love.

Janet: Yes. And then Luke records, this is actually what he. Jesus said, Father, forgive them cuz they don't know what they're doing. Wow. That heart, I don't have that heart naturally.

Jocelyn: Yeah.



Janet: And the wife is not gonna have that naturally.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: But she has Jesus. Not only his example, she has the help of the Spirit. She has his help to change and he understands. And with the help of his Spirit, you too can pray for your husband even as he mocks you. But you're gonna need help to learn how to do this. Your world is gonna need to be reoriented more and more on your joy being found in the presence of God. Then you're gonna probably need to talk through with a mentor or a biblical friend, some statements that are frequently made to you, to help you think through God-honoring, honest, loving responses.

Jocelyn: That's really a helpful exercise. And that's not the same thing as holding someone's sins against them.

Janet: That's right.

Jocelyn: That's saying, I'm gonna think through what, as a standard tends to happen. So I'm quick on my feet to have a righteous response in those situations.

Janet: Yes. I'm planning for my righteousness.

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: Yes. If he's very controlling or manipulative, it's even more important to give factual data to somebody else of what's actually said, cuz you can get very confused about what's appropriate and what's not.

Jocelyn: Yep.

Janet: He may be twisting truth and it will be confusing. Having a mentor, it is not gossip to go to someone to help you be righteous.

Jocelyn: Right. To think through real realistic situations so you're prepared for them.

Janet: Yeah. It also says Jesus wasn't on the cross threatening, but was loving them. So we've already said love is not appeasing or avoiding, but encouraging righteousness. So we're not gonna threaten. We're not gonna say, oh yeah, if you keep doing that to me, you know what I'll... but it's not a threat to be honest. If you hit me or the children, I will need to call the police. That is not unloving. That's not manipulative. That is truth. That's righteous. Now instead, egging him on and saying, why don't you go ahead. Go ahead and hit me. I dare ya. I'll call the police. They'll lock you up. Okay. That's a threat.

Jocelyn: And that's totally unrighteous.





Janet: Right.

Jocelyn: That would be a completely ungodly way to respond to someone's sin.

Janet: Yes. But having someone else help you realize, the fact that I will not threaten does not mean I won't speak the truth.

Jocelyn: Right.

Janet: But instead, he entrusted himself to the Father. That's the only reason he could do all of this. He knew his father's character. He knew the heart of his father. He knew what his father wanted, and he knew he could trust him. It's pretty amazing that the example God gives us in this passage is Sarah.

Jocelyn: I know. I always laugh when I read that. Whose husband sold her to a harem. Twice.

Janet: I mean, not even just once.

Jocelyn: Yeah.

Janet: Twice. What allowed her to respond without fear? What must she have known about God? I love that in both of those examples, she was able to experience God keeping his word and being faithful to her and protecting her when her husband didn't. I just have to wonder if that's what gave her the ability to continue to be under the imperfect authority of her husband, because she knew the perfect God over them. And we know even more than she did. We know that Jesus came, and this whole example that I just read, he came and died for us. That should change us. So none of this means that you should passively accept his. It does mean now you can have a humble boldness, a confidence, a courage as you confront sin, but not out of anger for what you deserve. But out of love for his soul and love for righteousness.

Jocelyn: I think that has really changed the way I've talked to my husband when I, when there have been times that we need to have difficult conversations, it's not an attack on him, it's not a protection of my own interest. It's because I care about his soul.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: I love him and I want him to be able to answer to God well for his growth and righteousness.

Janet: And what a beautiful, when you have a husband who does love God and he's approached that way it, it helps him to do right. When you have an ungodly husband, it's another opportunity

Jocelyn: It is.



Janet: for him to see it.

Jocelyn: Yes.

Janet: As well. Then you can face each problem, biblical. Do you confront? Do you graciously submit? What's your pastor's counsel? Is it appropriate to bring in government officials? There's so much, and you're not gonna do any of it perfectly. But as you're growing to do it with that heart and with the help of your pastor, with the help of a mentor alongside, through all of it, you're gonna be growing to trust the one who went before you and loves you.

Jocelyn: And just to reiterate, this is gonna be challenging, and you're probably gonna need to have help. We encourage anybody who is married to an ungodly person to be seeking the shepherding of their pastor.

Janet: Yes.

Jocelyn: You need your pastor's help to think through this. And you'll probably need to be counseled along the way. So, speak to him early and often get his assistance as you think through this tough situation.

Janet: Yes. I've also linked some things that I've already mentioned, but also a variety of, booklets. One is called Help, I'm in a Painful Marriage. One is by Paul Tripp, Marriage, Whose Dream? And then there was a series of blogs helping wives respond to the silent treatment by their husband. So a variety of resources there just to continue to give you some encouragement to do right. And then to remember, Jesus went before you, and because of the joy set before him.

Jocelyn: This is really helpful information on a really difficult topic. I'm glad that we were able to talk about this, even though it's challenging. I'm glad that there are biblical answers for this difficult situation.

Janet: Yes, yes. So on that note, we pray that it will encourage you, either in your life as you face other difficult, painful situations, or as you love someone in that situation. And I hope you'll join us for our next episode as we continue on the journey together.

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