

Transcript for the podcast “Worthy: Celebrating the Value of Women.”

Hosts: Elyse Fitzpatrick and Eric Schumacher

Episode 39 — Guest: Derwin and Vicki Grey

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Elyse Fitzpatrick 00:06

Welcome to Worthy, a Christian podcast that celebrates the value of women. Each week we'll bring you conversations with women and men on the value of women in the church, home and society. We won't always agree on everything, but we do agree that God is glorious, the Bible is true, and women are valuable, and respectful conversation on this topic is essential in our day. Welcome to the Worthy podcast. Here I am again with my co-author, co-host co...

Eric Schumacher 01:19

vid.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 01:21

Belligerent, co-belligerent, Eric Schumacher, and Eric and I are happy today to welcome some friends of ours. And so let me tell you about our friends. Derwin and Vicki Gray are with us today. And Derwin is the founding and lead pastor of Transformation Church, a multi ethnic, multi-generational mission shaped community, just south of Charlotte, North Carolina. Derwin and his wife Vicki, whom he met at BYU, there is a story there, have two adult children. Vicki is the Executive Director at Transformation Church. Derwin is the author of a number of wonderful books, including his latest, "The Good Life: What Jesus Teaches About Finding True Happiness". We will talk about that. And aside from being a former NFL player, he loves to swim in the ocean. So, welcome friends.

Derwin Gray 02:28

I do not swim in the ocean, and Elyse [inaudible], because they're sharks in the ocean, and they like dark meat, I would be their main course meal. [inaudible]

Eric Schumacher 02:45

But you are a fisherman, right?

Derwin Gray 02:47

I am a fisherman. I love to fish. I don't like to be food for fish.

Eric Schumacher 02:53

Have you gone fishing for sharks?

Derwin Gray 02:56

Why would I do that?

Eric Schumacher 02:59

To diminish their population.

Derwin Gray 03:02

No, I mean, sharks are cool. Like, they do their thing. I do my thing. Like, they can breathe in the water. I can't. Hence, that's why I stick to the beach.

Eric Schumacher 03:14

Alright.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 03:15

But Vicki, you go in the water.

Vicki Gray 03:18

I do go in the water, yes. Not very deep anymore because he's got me scared of sharks.

Derwin Gray 03:26

See, Caucasian people go in the water. When you go to the beach, black people don't get in the water. We stay in the shade, because our tans are already good. White people cook themselves like rotisserie chicken for the sharks in the water.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 03:47

Oh my gosh. I love that. Well, okay, friends. I had to say something about that Derwin. You knew I would, because we had long discussions before about sharks and going in the water, and I love the ocean. So

Eric Schumacher 04:04

I live in Iowa. We don't have we don't have water or sharks.

Derwin Gray 04:07

You guys swim in the corn in Iowa.

Eric Schumacher 04:10

Yeah, yeah. We swim in the corn.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 04:13

Swim in the corn. Okay.

Vicki Gray 04:15

[inaudible] our first time ever last month, and it was beautiful.

Eric Schumacher 04:22

Where were you at?

Derwin Gray 04:24

We were near, where were we baby?

Vicki Gray 04:29
Just driving through.

Derwin Gray 04:29
Have you ever heard of the Amana's Colonies?

04:32
Yeah, yep. Yeah.

Derwin Gray 04:34
Yeah, we went there. Our son speaks German, and he found out that that was a German colony. And we get there and he starts speaking to the people in German and they were like, wait, wait, no, no, no, chill. We don't know it like that.

Eric Schumacher 04:49
Yeah, yeah. It's a tourist trap.

Derwin Gray 04:53
It was fun.

Eric Schumacher 04:54
Yeah, cool.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 04:56
Okay, friends. Why don't you guys tell us a little bit about your faith journey and how you ended up leading a church together after meeting at BYU.

Vicki Gray 05:07
All right, I'll jump in. Yeah, so we did meet at BYU. I'm originally from a small town in western Montana. And no stoplights in this small town. That tells you how small it is. And, and then Derwin, obviously is from the city. He was from inner city, San Antonio, Texas. So a little bit of my faith journey is, my parents divorced when I was five. When my dad remarried, he married a woman in the LDS faith, and he became Mormon. And so I used to spend my school years in Montana with my mom, and my summers in Oregon with my dad. And I really never attended church until we were with my dad in the summer, and that was the Mormon Church, the LDS church. And so if someone would've asked if I was a Christian, no one ever did until I was probably, I don't know, 24, I would have said yes, because I am American. I am not Buddhist, I'm not Muslim. So by default, that makes me a Christian. But growing up where I grew up, there literally was more bars in my town than churches, I found out just this year, I found that there was one church in the town I grew up in, I didn't even know that, but there was four bars. So that's the environment I grew up in. Um, just be a good person, work hard, you know, pull yourself up by your bootstraps. And my God, I would say, would be achievement. I was an overachiever. I had to be the best at everything I did. And so therefore, that ended up serving me well. I was valedictorian in high school and college. I went to school on a combined academic athletic

scholarship, and was recruited by BYU, I was also recruited by some other schools, but I really wanted to go to an institution that had a lot of credibility when it came to my degree. And so that's how I chose BYU. I was on the track team there, and I threw the javelin. So if anybody gets out of line, I just get my javelin.

Eric Schumacher 07:24

Do you spearfish?

Vicki Gray 07:26

Yes, spearfish.

Derwin Gray 07:27

Listen, if we have got like shipwrecked on a remote island, we'd be okay, because Vicki could just javelin the fish.

Vicki Gray 07:35

Yes, yes.

Eric Schumacher 07:36

Yeah. That would have been fed by you.

Derwin Gray 07:40

Yes.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 07:41

What did you get your degree in Vicki?

Vicki Gray 07:43

So I double majored in...

Elyse Fitzpatrick 07:45

Of course you did.

Vicki Gray 07:47

Of course, I did. Yes. International Relations with a Spanish minor. And then I was a semester away from going to law school, when I said, I don't want to do that, and decided I would go into clinical dietetics totally different field. And so I added on another two years all year round, and I've been a registered dietitian. So the amazing thing about that, in God's sovereignty is at working as a dietitian, so we get married in college. I'll jump ahead for a minute. We were still unbelievers at this point. He gets drafted by the Indianapolis Colts, and he'll share that. We get to Indianapolis, and I'm working as a registered dietician in an inner-city health clinic in downtown Indianapolis. And a big part of my faith story is another dietitian, who was a Christian, started telling me about Jesus. So when I look at the big picture now, it's so encouraging to see how God turned my heart to make me passionate about something that I had no idea it even really existed until about my junior year, through a student who

was doing an internship in nutrition helped our track team. And that's how I got interested in it. So I'll let him catch up and then we can jump to us coming to faith.

Derwin Gray 09:11

Yeah, so growing up, we didn't really have a church background. Football became a god that was a football for me was more than a game. Like, I love the game, but I saw it as a vehicle to get me out of where I was. Worked hard, and I think that's one reason that we connected, because both of us are driven. We work hard, we [inaudible], and we're going to get it. So anyway, became Allstate football [inaudible], and I accept the scholarship to Brigham Young which is predominantly you know, all Mormon just about all white. Why would I go to school there? Well, one, great education. Two, it's as far away from Texas as I could get. Three, [inaudible] ESPN all the time. Four, I thought it was a good place to go and play early. And all those things happen, but what I did not factor in was that my freshman year, I would meet this beautiful javelin thrower. And so when I found out, she threw the javelin, I was both terrorized and attracted simultaneously. And so we got engaged in college. We got married in college. And from a spiritual perspective, both of us would have said, hey, we're good people. We're not as bad and in God's grace, he allowed us to accomplish a lot of things to show us that he was enough. And then nothing else could ever satisfy like he could. So get drafted. 1993 I think all of our dreams are going to come true. 1993 with the Colts, first year was miserable. Second year was better. Third year, I was a team captain. Team played good. I played good. But at the end of the year, I recognize that I didn't know how to love her the way she deserved to be loved. I live with a lot of guilt. I live with a lot of shame, I live with a lot insecurity. I couldn't forgive my dad for not being involved in my life. Also, the NFL stands for Not For Long. I knew that one day it would be over. So who would I be outside of that? But in God's grace, there was a teammate. His nickname was the naked preacher. His real name was Steve Grant. Every day after practice, he'd take a shower, dry off, wrap a towel around his waist, and he would ask my teammates, "Do you know Jesus?" And in my mind, I'm like, do you know you're half naked? His real name is Steve Grant, but his nickname was the naked preacher. And over a five-year process, I watched his life, and they matched his words. And as I was going through my existential crisis, of moral foundations cracking, who would I be as a man when I couldn't play. On August 2, 1997 Anderson University at Anderson College. It was my fifth year, we're in training camp, and I leave lunch and I'm walking back to my dorm and it's just like this crater in my soul. And I got back to my dorm and I called her on the phone and said, I want to be more committed to you, and I want to be committed to Jesus and I, I felt when I was born again. Like, I felt God's love, his forgiveness. I felt his presence, and I've never been the same. And so she came to faith about six months before I did. And then I played one more year with the Colts in 97. In 1998 we came to Charlotte, North Carolina, for what I thought, what we thought was to continue my NFL career. I ended up getting injured, so I got put on what's called injured reserve, which meant I was still on the team, but I didn't have to play. So all I did was rehab my knee and read the Bible. And both of us just wanted to know Christ more. And we didn't know what sharing your faith was called evangelism. We didn't know what discipleship was. We just wanted to know him. And for others to know him. And we loved the Bible. We love studying. And I began to develop a theological mind and an apologetic mind. She's very theologically wired. We love discipleship, we love mentoring. But then in about 2005, we were doing this parachurch ministry called One Heart at a Time, that we co-founded. But both of us were frustrated, because we thought to ourselves, when we were not Christians, we would go to the nightclub. And it was very diverse. But when we became Christians, we went to Jesus's club and it was very

segregated. It was like we step back into 1962. And we would begin to ask pastors like, why is the church in America so segregated when communities are so racially integrated. And we just got terrible answers, and after a while, it just seems so incongruent, with what we were reading. Like, the gospel that Paul preached, it was grace that created a new race, and that race was made up of Jews and Gentiles. That would be this one family redeemed and justified because God promised Abraham a family. And that's what the early church was, it was a community of difference, who worship the same Christ and who are on mission with him. And we thought to ourselves, well, we can criticize and we can create and so that's how we co-founded Transformation Church 2010.

Eric Schumacher 14:59

So tell us about your church then. You've co-founded a church. And Elyse, as she introduced, you had a lot of multis in there, multi-ethnic, multi-generational, missional. Tell us what each of those things mean in your vision, and how do you guys implement that?

Derwin Gray 15:20

Yeah. So, in essence, I'll share the first part, and you share the next part. In essence, our vision is the great commandment and Great Commission. Great commandment, love God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength. Love your neighbor as you love yourself. So my neighbor is going to be multi-ethnic, multi-generational, and we are fueled by Jesus's mission to seek and save the lost and make disciples. And so the way we say the great commandment and the Great Commission is this way. We're a multi-ethnic, multi-generational, missions shaped community that loves God completely upward, ourselves correctly inward, and our neighbors compassionately outward. So that way, evangelism, discipleship, worship, justice, are all entailed within the great commandment, the Great Commission. And so the way we do it is we take theology seriously. The theological foundations enable us to be rooted deeply in the soil of God's promise. But then it produces fruit of a multi-ethnic church. And so it starts with theology. Like, we're not a multi-ethnic church, because President Obama was president, because America has racial problems. No, we're a multi-ethnic church because God made a covenant with Abraham. Jesus is the guarantee that this covenant is going to be fulfilled. And so he created a family whose sins are not just forgiven, but a family with different ends of oneness and equality. And unity in this family is to be a tutor to teach the world. This is what our God is like. What do you, what do you think of that, hon? Did I miss anything?

Vicki Gray 17:09

Nope. Great.

Derwin Gray 17:13

You know, so from a practical perspective, right, is once the theological foundations are laid from a practical perspective, your leadership team has to reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity you want to see in the congregation where white pastors struggle is they think, Well, okay, we have some black people in the band, we have the one black guy or Latino guy who goes to the inner city to work with them. And so what you have is a white culture, dominance and the other cultures have to assimilate versus accommodate and even with female leadership, Vicki, co-founder on the executive leadership team. And so our leadership team reflected the ethnic diversity and cultural diversity we wanted to see. It's reflected even in our discipleship. Like so for example, there's a lot of discipleship passages, that

American Western Christianity totally misses the multi-ethnic aspect of it. Every letter that Paul wrote was to Jews and Gentiles. And so, and you talk to them about just the, the animosity between Jews and Gentiles in Paul's day?

Vicki Gray 18:37

Well, in you know, we always say this was the answer to racism, classism, and sexism. Like he was the answer to all of those things. And so we know that and, and, and by the way, love the book, Love, love, love the book. In fact, when you guys sent it to him for to do I think he wrote that endorsement. He was like, do you want to take a peek. And I was like, Yes! I love it so much. And you guys talked about in there, the way women were viewed. And it's not a whole lot different than the way Gentiles were viewed. And they were abhorred, they were the enemy. And so, and there's a lot of history that goes into that, which makes it understandable, which is all the more reason when Jesus came to create this new race called Christian, little Christ, when he came to create this new race it was such a mind-blowing event that you have these local bodies that have Jews and Gentiles in the same body of faith. That was the greatest testimony that world could have ever seen at that point.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 19:52

It's so, it's so interesting to hear you both talk about that and to know how, in your church, you model that. You model the fact that there's a, there's a new race. And it's and it's Christians. And we need to, we need to recognize that and embrace it. And I love the way you've done that, particularly through your leadership. So Vicki, I want to talk to you a minute. Because you are very well aware of the context of, that we're all living in. And you're the executive director of Transformation Church. So what are your responsibilities? And what's that like for you as an Anglo woman? And what's it like? Do you get much pushback? Do you guys collectively get pushback? I mean, how [inaudible]

Derwin Gray 20:55

[inaudible] No, I'm just kidding.

Vicki Gray 21:00

I think in some ways, it's interesting, because I was looking back through the book, and some of the things that I had highlighted. And what struck me so much looking back through it as versus the first time I read it was even God's hand in me not growing up in the church, because I was reading some of the things that you all share in the book about that maybe some women face in the church. And I was like, Oh, thank you, God, that I didn't ever face that because I'd probably be [inaudible] like, I don't have a frame of reference for some of that stuff. And so I see God's hand in that and that I didn't even really have that lens to bring to the table. And what I guess one of the benefits of planting a church is you set the tone, and you set the culture. And what's so critical about that is really him is as the lead and preaching pastor, he sets the tone for, with our staff, with the congregation, when he's preaching, when he's teaching, when he's writing, of how we're going to view women, how, how this is going to work. And the way he treats women, I believe is one of the reasons why we have very strong female leadership at our church, very strong. Incredibly humble, but a powerhouse. And they are learning to find their own way in God's kingdom. What does this look like? And I just have to say one of the things that was so empowering to me, and then I'll get to what it is I do. One thing that was so empowering to me in the book was when you guys talked about in the Old Testament, one of the reasons why there

was such an emphasis on women having children was that each woman's hope was that she was going to bring the Messiah into the world. And now that the Messiah has come, women can now have other Kingdom callings. Man I was running around my office like, yes! And what I mean, we have two children. Love my role as wife and mother, I love it. It's a priority for sure. It's a priority. I've always known there was more for me out there to be a [inaudible] some type of something bigger than me. And before I was a Christian, I don't think I knew what it was, which is one of the reasons I was striving so much. So I just want to say how encouraging that is to just the regular woman to go, I can have a role in God's kingdom. And yes, being a wife and a mom can be an is part of that. But it's not the only thing that I can bring to the table. So, so what Transformation Church, I being co-founders, I've actually played many, many, many different roles at Transformation Church, I founded our whole communications area. And so I set the tone with that, which is really important because words matter. And that helps you establish your DNA.

Derwin Gray 24:15

Let me add. So way back in the early years, even though we're 10 years old, our communications are struggling. And she doesn't have a communications background. But what she does have is the gift of faith and the gift of leadership. So, I tasked her with I need you to take this communication by well, I don't know what that is like, but you will figure that out. And so that's what attracted me to her right, because she was valedictorian in high school, valedictorian in college. What she didn't say, is in 1994, she was a Young Dietician of the Year for the whole State of Indiana. So her mom, her grandma, like she has the gift of leadership. So I knew that she would take it. And my only job was the resource and to encourage and where we're situated in life the Holy Spirit uses to help us understand the text and to apply the text. As a minority, there are advantages that I actually have interpreting the text instead of majority culture person. Now, truth is truth, its objective, but how we are situated in a life helps us to see that and so the idea that women's gifts have been squandered, oppressed, depressed, is a heresy. It is a heresy [inaudible]. And so I'm very sensitive to that. But I knew she would better take that role, and transform it and hand it off to what it is now.

Vicki Gray 26:10

And so I, my current role is Directional Strategy Executive. And a lot of that has to do with getting me out of the day to day operations. I've been entrenched in day to day operations for 10 years, and we brought a consultant in because we really had a couple of lives that needed lifted. And one of the things that needed to be done was getting me out of the day to day because my mind works very strategically in seeing how the inner [inaudible]. By getting me out of the day to day, so I can really see above the fray a little bit, be a little more directional be a resource for our team, but not having to be in the minutiae as much. And I think one of the things that I have realized, and even again, looking back through the book, I know proper theology is, it is critical to have a proper theology of women in the church of you know, Jews and Gentiles, etc. One of the things that I have started to see are going around being at different churches, because you asked if I got pushback at our church, no, not at all. I don't get that at all. There have been other churches, I've gone to, for, say, a conference. And it was almost all males, almost all white males. And I've raised my hand to talk just like I do here. And everyone would get uncomfortable.

Derwin Gray 27:42

I wasn't there.

Vicki Gray 27:42

He wasn't there. People would get uncomfortable, and I'd be like, I don't know what their problem is, you know, and so I just didn't have like, and I'd come home and I'd be like, "What is this about?" And so because he's been around, he's been in seminary, he understands kind of [inaudible], traditions are, he would walk through that with me. Um, and so the little bit of pushback there, where I'm at now, it's more of, the point I was trying to make is, sorry, his humility. The leader has to be secure in their identity in Christ to be able to celebrate, whether it's a woman in a position of leadership, a non-white, or if you're, you know, whatever, if you're black, a white person, etc. It really is also going to be rooted in your identity in Christ. Because if you are not comfortable in your own identity in Christ, you're going to feel threatened. Therefore, any false theologies are going to get like embedded in there.

Derwin Gray 28:46

I can add, Paul says in Philippians 2:3, do nothing out of selfish ambition, but with humility, consider others better than yourself. That's speaking to Jews and Gentiles because of those rivalries. But I think in context of male and female and then he goes into the ancient hymn in Philippians 2:6-11, where we see what actual humility looks like, love looks like, I want to help you become the best version of yourself or the redemptive purpose of God, which is the glory of God. But what Vicki does well, and this is an example, so she loves to do puzzles, not me. I'm like baby, if that makes you happy. Let's get as many puzzles as you want. But I think that's a great picture of her leadership is what she's been able to do over the last 10 years, is she can see the puzzle and right where the parts need to go. In the first 10 years she was so immersed in the ministry, that she was fixing things. Now she can use her gifted mind to help people. And she's probably the best one on one discipler that I've seen, like the way she disciplines women and in large context the way she disciplines men. And I'm, I'm currently writing a book on prayer. And the third, the fourth chapter is about her. Because I've read great books on prayer. But I've watched her pray. I've watched how she's taught our staff to pray. I've watched her pray through cancer, who our miscarriage, through difficulty in parenting. I've watched her pray through planting a church and we're going, man, this thing happened. So what are we going to do? We're going to pray and then before you know it, we're getting, you know, hundred thousand dollar checks or people are donating all types of things. And so I believe that there are a lot of women who have that gifting, who need their brothers in Christ, to come alongside them and encourage, you know, like, like for you Elyse, like you write on the sonship of Christ as good as anyone. I mean, your union life in Christ theology is epic, it is so needed.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 31:25

Thank you, Derwin. Thank you. And, and, and it shouldn't be so. But I'm gonna say this anyway. It means a lot that you're a man, that's you're saying that. Okay. Because, because to be a woman who loves theology, I love it. I Christ has always been good to me. I have wonderful men, including Phil, whom you know, and my sons and I have wonderful guys around me who are always sticking up for me, Eric, and encouraging me. But it's not an easy thing. Just among the women. And we need, and this is one of the things that I think I'm so thankful for Eric for and then we're going to talk about your book, because we want to do that. But I want to say, you know, Eric, and again, I have a whole family

of people who do this, but Eric has been there to say to the guys, stop doing this. And the guys need to say it. Yes, guys need to say it. And you know, you can throw a javelin girl, but I mean,

Derwin Gray 32:49

[inaudible] I was like, in college, I was like, that's easy. And I almost stabbed myself in the back of my skull.

Eric Schumacher 33:00

That's why all those pastors were uncomfortable. They're like, she's got a spear.

Derwin Gray 33:10

Elyse, if I could just add this to what you're saying, and I feel your heart and I know you've been serving the church and writing and doing your thing for so long. What I would say to, and one of the blessings of not growing up in a denomination is I've got friends across the spectrum. And I understand you're kind of in a reformed Baptist world Presbyterian world. I just say that there's a much bigger world where, where, where you're not an oddity, where you will be appreciated. And personally, I think that a lot of majority culture expressions of evangelicalism are like the Emperor with no clothes on, and they're being exposed. And so I want you to know, there's a whole other world that saying, Come on sister!

Elyse Fitzpatrick 34:08

Thank you, Derwin. Thank you guys. That's so kind. Thank you. I want to talk a minute about your book, and we are almost out of time. So let's do that, because I want our listeners to know, to know you as a writer Derwin. And so you've written a new book, how many books now?

Derwin Gray 34:29

Oh, gosh, this is number what, baby? Five.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 34:33

Good for you. Good for you. So Derwin's new book is entitled "The Good Life: What Jesus Teaches About Finding True Happiness". So what do you have to say to the church about Jesus and happiness because sometimes ages ago when I wrote Idols of the Heart, I talked about happiness and idols of the heart. And I got so much pushback because people said Christians aren't supposed to talk about happiness. Oh, I just teed it up for you brother. Have at it.

Derwin Gray 35:05

Yes. So, so let me give you the backdrop. So back in 2014, so this is six years ago, I'm discipling, I'm trying to reach people who don't know Christ, I'm mentoring, and I'm talking to Christians, regardless of age, ethnicity, male [inaudible], and no one was happy. And so I thought, what does Jesus have to say about happiness, and hiding in plain sight in the greatest sermon ever preached by the greatest preacher who ever preached, Jesus opens up the Sermon on the Mount with the Beatitudes in the Beatitudes, he describes seven characteristics of a blessed person. Well, the word blessed is the Greek word makarios. And it literally means happy. Happy are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And so he described seven characteristics of what a happy person looks like, and here's

what's beautiful. The happiness that Jesus is inviting us into, is not about good things happening to us. It's about God actually making us good for the world. And so therefore, happiness is no longer predicated upon situations it's no longer predicated upon circumstances. Happiness is now rooted and grounded in the gracious work of Christ in us to make like himself. So happiness isn't running around, always smiling, happiness is redemptive purpose. And if you look at Matthew 5:13-16, when Jesus says, you are the salt and the light, the people that Jesus uses to change the world are makarios people or happy people. And here's the [inaudible]. Jesus is beautiful. The beauty is this: the happier you are in Jesus, the holier you will become, and the holier you are, it's because you're happy in Jesus. And so what's happened is, many Christians are looking for happiness outside of the scope of the redemptive work of Christ. And so this book is a book about Jesus, and it's a book about how Jesus produces a happiness that leads to a holiness. Therefore, we become the people we were created to be. Happiness is about becoming the person [inaudible].

Elyse Fitzpatrick 37:35

Amen to that, and I know that it says, I believe in Hebrews that Jesus was anointed with the oil of gladness above all the people around him. Jesus, Jesus was a happy human being. Yes, because he was completely at one with his father and his father's purposes.

Derwin Gray 38:01

Hebrews 12:2, for the joy of the cross. His happiness was the oneness with his daddy, and his redemptive purpose that, think about this. Jesus saw the day that Eric would come to know him, the day that Vicki would come. The day that Dewy from the hood, who's a compulsive stutterer, who scored a 16 on his ACT, who shouldn't be writing books or leading a church, came to know him. Jesus [inaudible] boy, because he's a living portrait of the Beatitudes, and he invites us into this picture, if I could share this story. So my son, our son, Jeremiah, was one of the top high school football players in the nation. This is in 2018. He had multiple scholarship offers. He chose to go to Wake Forest, but before that, he's playing in a state championship game. First quarter one of his teammates gets blocked, falls on the lower part of his leg. His leg is broken in eight places. ligaments are torn in his ankle. And when he's laying out on the field, I can tell that he's hurt. And a parent's worst nightmare's when a coach comes to the stand and says, Hey, your son's hurt. I've been in that position. I knew what the deal was. So I run down to the field of medical staff that's around him. He's laying there, he's got a tear coming down his eye, and I do what I've done for him since he was small, put my hand on his chest, put my hand my other hand on his head. And I said, Son, I love you so much. I am so proud of you. You literally gave your body for your team [inaudible]. So you could kind of see the confidence come back in his face. And we carry him off to the sideline, his ankle's about four times the size that it normally is. He's in pain. He's got it propped up with ice. The crowd is all around us, but it's silent. And it's like, it's just me and him. And he looks at me and he's smiling. And he goes, dad, God is so good. I said, What? Because on the inside, my heart's going crazy. He said, God is so good. And I said, "Why do you say God is so good?" And he said, Well, I could have got hurt in the first game. He goes, Well, I could have got hurt really bad in my mind. Oh, God, dude, and he's seen your ankle. And he and he goes into doxology, about the goodness of God. And he's encouraging my heart. And I'm like, that's the good life. The circumstance wasn't good. His dream of playing in the state championship game was gone. He couldn't be out there with his teammates. He was writhing in pain. But he says, God is good.

The goodness of God, and the happiness of God is the presence of God consuming us and perpetually remaking us. That's what the good life is.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 41:12

So thank you, Derwin. Thank you, Vicki, for being with us. Again, the book we want you to run out and get today is entitled, "The Good Life: What Jesus Teaches About Finding True Happiness". We've got a foreword by our pal, Beth Moore, so that's good for you as well. And this is a B&H publication. So thank you, brother and sister for being with us today. We're so grateful for your lives, for what you're doing for the kingdom for the way you're living that out. We thank you for that. And we would love for those of you who are listeners to the Worthy podcast, we ask this every week, would you please get on wherever it is that you get your podcasts, and rate and review and subscribe and go be irritating to the people around you. You know, if you're walking through the park, and you see somebody and they don't look like they're listening to something really interesting, just stop them and talk about the Worthy podcast. Or you could talk to them about Jesus, one of the two. And then if you if you really love what we're doing here, we need your help. So if you'd like to support us on Patreon, we'd love to have you do that. And Eric and I will have a conversation with you once a month with all the Patreon supporters and you get to listen to extra content. And so, you know, give up a cup of coffee and help us put the podcast on. But in the meantime, Derwin, Vicki, Eric, thanks for all being here, and we'll see you again.

Vicki Gray 42:48

Thank you.