

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

**Hosts:** Elyse Fitzpatrick and Eric Schumacher

**Episode 48 — Guest:** Stefanie Boyles

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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, and 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.

Hi there, and welcome again to the Worthy podcast. My name is Elyse Fitzpatrick, and I am here with my co-host, co-author. I was gonna say code beard grower. But I Oh, I want to say that because that's not a good thing. So my friend who is a beard grower, he's starting to look like ZZ Top or somebody I don't know. Eric Schumacher.

**Eric Schumacher 01:35**

Somebody I don't know. Does that mean, you're gonna claim not to know me soon?

**Elyse Fitzpatrick 01:39**

Yeah. Yeah. I don't think Eric has cut his beard or trimmed his beard since the beginning of the 'Rona. Is that right?

**Eric Schumacher 01:49**

That's right, since lockdown.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick 01:51**

Well, okay. Um,

**Eric Schumacher 01:54**

So whenever this gets over, I'll be I'll be interested in

**Elyse Fitzpatrick 01:58**

Yes. So...

**Eric Schumacher 02:07**

That's my goal is to be able to fold the beard up over my mouth and nose, and then I can just have my own mask. Just get some elastic..

**Elyse Fitzpatrick 02:08**

Sweet! Yeah, that's a great idea, yeah!

**Eric Schumacher 02:11**

I'm saving the environment, one mask at a time.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 02:14

And that's- okay. So today, we're happy to have you with us. And so thanks for being here, wiith us, listening in on the Worthy Podcast. As you know, we're very happy for those of you who join us to rate, review, subscribe and share the podcast with us. We also have a Patreon page. For those of you who'd like to actually ask Eric questions about his beard and how strange it is to live in Iowa. And, so please, please do your best if you love this podcast to help us keep it on. It's free to you. It's not free to us. There we have it. That's the commercial. Today we're going to welcome a friend of ours. Named Stephanie Boyles. Welcome, Stephanie.

**Stefanie Boyles** 03:09

Hey, thanks for having me.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 03:11

Yeah. Let me tell you a little bit about Stephanie. She's the wife of an active duty army chaplain. And she's the mother to three young children, boys or girls.

**Stefanie Boyles** 03:23

Two girls and one boy.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 03:26

Good

**Stefanie Boyles** 03:27

I had to think about that.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 03:29

Yeah, wait, wait a minute, that wasn't in the questions. She has a passion for women's ministry and has a newfound love for creating theologically rich content for children with the heart of encouraging families in their pursuit of God's will. So now you know why she's here. She also enjoys reading good books and home educating her children. And she's a staff writer for the Daily Grace company, and the co host of The Daily Grace podcast. So you can follow her on Instagram at Stefanie and that's Stefanie with an F. B-o-y-l-e-s. Stefanie Boyles and I just went and visited your website, Stefanie, and you have lots of really lovely stuff there.

**Stefanie Boyles** 04:18

The Daily Grace Co.

**Eric Schumacher** 04:20

Yeah the Daily Grace

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 04:20

Yeah, the Daily Grace.

**Stefanie Boyles** 04:22

Yeah, so I'm only a small part of that team. We definitely can't take all the credit. But yeah, it's just full of Biblical resources that are also really accessible. So really [inaudible], are that team.

**Eric Schumacher** 04:38

What's your role there?

**Stefanie Boyles** 04:38

So I am a staff writer, and I do focus more on creating family oriented content. And so I wrote the family Advent devotional - I do that every year. I also kind of manage the blog. We do have a blog that publishes three times a week and kind of curating content for that. And then a lot of podcast stuff, creating outlines with my co-host, Joanna, doing the show notes, which is a labor of love, as you guys probably know. And writing Instagram posts and things like that. But yeah, so that my official title is just staff writer and co host of the podcast.

**Eric Schumacher** 05:23

So we met Stephanie, when we were guests on that podcast. That was fun way back when?

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 05:28

Yeah, it was fun.

**Stefanie Boyles** 05:30

By the way, I have to say I did trip up over the gender thing with my kids. I have a good reason for that. And that is because we are expecting another baby, which we haven't pushed out on social media. And so I had to count. Like, we're gonna have three girls come February and...

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 05:50

Oh, lovely. Congrats!

**Eric Schumacher** 05:53

Congrats!

**Stefanie Boyles** 05:54

I feel like I had to go back and explain myself there.

**Eric Schumacher** 05:59

That's fine. We know that after three kids, you just kept forgetting a lot of stuff.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 06:04

Is that what it is?

**Stefanie Boyles** 06:05

Yeah!

**Eric Schumacher** 06:06

I think that is what I am going to say.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 06:08

She homeschools her kids. And she works. And she's the wife of an army chaplain. So it's okay, if you can't remember how kids you are. Yeah, it's okay. If you can't remember how many kids you have.

**Stefanie Boyles** 06:24

Yeah, thanks. Yeah. So I just want to note that on the Daily Grace Co, they sent - I got a box of stuff! Where's my box of stuff? Wait a minute. What...? Did you not get any?

**Eric Schumacher** 06:39

I am a social media influencer. (laughter) I don't know if you know this, but I'm kind of a big deal!

**Stefanie Boyles** 06:47

Haha, you did give us a shout out.

**Eric Schumacher** 06:53

So anyway, I'm on sabbatical now. And so I was digging through my box of stuff. And this stuff, I was looking for a journal to use on sabbatical. And I came across their abide journal, and it has a rose cover to it. And so I decided I was going to use that for my sabbatical. And so they, the Daily Grace Co saw it and sent me a more masculine one with a gray cover. But I was leaving to go on a spiritual retreat, personal retreat. And so I wanted to start in a journal. So I started with the rose covered one because I'm comfortable.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 07:34

Because he's got that beard.

**Stefanie Boyles** 07:36

Yeah.

**Eric Schumacher** 07:37

Yeah, yeah. So it offsets. And yeah, so I've been using it. I've been loving it. It's been really helpful to me in - I'm not a journaler. And so just doing my scripture reading and writing, and it has challenged me to slow down, think about the word a little bit more and application, and then the prayer request part has been great. So that's my that's my shout out. And Elyse, if..

**Stefanie Boyles** 08:04

Elyse, we sent you a box, no we sent you a box!

**Eric Schumacher** 08:07

Oh, they sent you a box!.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 08:09

Listen, I've moved and so if I'm, if you sent me a box, I think you probably did. But if you sent me a box while I was moving, I have no idea where anything is. I mean, okay, you know, it's the whole moving thing is so ridiculous. So thank you for the box I got!

**Stefanie Boyles** 08:28

It's there somewhere.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 08:30

I'm sure it is. I'm sure it is. So Stephanie, thanks for being with us. We wanted to get a little bit of your personal history and your journey as a military spouse. But I'd also kind of like to hear your faith journey and how, how you came to Christ, and then how you ended up where you are.

**Stefanie Boyles** 08:52

Yeah, so I'll start with my faith journey. I would say I grew up in the church, but I like to kind of put a caveat to that. I say, I grew up in the church, but I didn't grow up in Christ. And what I mean when I say that is, you know, I went to church since I was a little girl, but I was never really disciplined by my parents. They kind of just left it up to the church to disciple me. And unfortunately, most of the churches that we attended were pretty legalistic and not Gospel centered. And so looking back, I would say, it wasn't until after college that I really felt like my spiritual eyes were opened. And I learned that, you know, the Bible wasn't a book about me primarily, it's about God. And I learned about the unified narrative of Scripture and saw Christ woven throughout the Old and New Testaments. And so it's, it's been quite a journey. It's always it's like a long and winding journey. But, you know, looking back, I can confidently say that the Lord's sovereign hand has always been graciously over me. But that's kind of my, my faith journey. I want to say it's pretty typical if you grew up in in America, but right as a, yeah, as a military spouse, say I grew up in America, I was actually born overseas on a military mission.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 10:21

Oh, where were you born?

**Stefanie Boyles** 10:22

In Seoul, Korea.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 10:24

Oh, okay.

**Stefanie Boyles** 10:25

Yeah. So I was born in a military hospital there and went to the Department of Defense school till fourth grade. But I say that because military life was very normal to me. You know, I laugh because I grew up thinking cops were just called MPs, which are Military Police. And I went to the commissary instead of the grocery store, so a lot of that lingo was just part of my growing up. And that's helpful being a military spouse now, I think. I didn't know I would marry into a military or become a military spouse. But yeah, that's part of my story. And like you said, my husband is a chaplain. He's endorsed by the North American Mission Board, which just basically means he's a Southern Baptist chaplain. And unlike other jobs in the army, this is really unique to chaplains. They're required to have a master's degree, be

ordained, and oftentimes need two years of pastoral experience prior to being picked up for active duty chaplaincy. And so I feel like our journey together as husband and wife on this military road started before he even got picked up for active duty, because that's kind of always been the end goal for us as a family. And that's where he felt called to serve. And so he did get picked up in 2014. And since then, we've been at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, Fort Benning, Georgia. And we're now in Fort Lewis, Washington. And so yeah, since 2014, life has kind of been crazy for our family. We went through two back to back nine month deployments at Fort Campbell. I'm actually think we counted it up. Of our 39 months, so a little over three years at Fort Campbell, he was gone for 23 months.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 12:20

Wow...

**Stefanie Boyles** 12:21

And so it's, it was an intense season. And then we went to Fort Benning, and he served there at the Ranger School, which is an intense army school, and he was gone for five months going through that training by himself or going through that training himself.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 12:39

Oh, man, he went through the Ranger training.

**Stefanie Boyles** 12:42

Yes, he did. And so he is a Ranger, Airborne Ranger chaplain, which is pretty unique. I think there's like less than 20 in the army.

**Eric Schumacher** 12:53

So he can share the gospel with someone well jumping out of an airplane.

**Stefanie Boyles** 12:56

Yeah, he can.

**Eric Schumacher** 12:57

Wow

**Stefanie Boyles** 12:58

Yeah. And yeah, that's pretty cool. I'm proud of him for doing all that. But it was it was intense getting to that point for all of us, I think. And now we're at Fort Lewis, where he is currently deployed, but he has the privilege to serve as the chaplain of the 275 Ranger battalion. So he's really happy to be serving that group of elite soldiers. And you know, I'm just along for the ride to be honest. Yeah...

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 13:28

So when you say he's deployed, forgive me, because I'm not a military person. Does that mean that he's not living at home? He's elsewhere? I mean, I know when you're deployed in the Navy, you go somewhere, but I don't know how that works for a chaplain.

**Stefanie Boyles** 13:43

Yeah. So he is, I mean right now, typically, the army for normal battalions. I mean, he is in a special Battalion, because he's part of Rangers. They do go to Afghanistan and Iraq. And so that's where he is. They're not traveling as much, but because of COVID, and all of that. But, you know, as a chaplain, he does have the blessing of being able to go where his guys are, and kind of be in the trenches with them. So that's where he is.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 14:12

Did you ever. I mean, when you guys when you met your husband, was he on the- was he on the chaplaincy trajectory? You knew where you were going with that?

**Stefanie Boyles** 14:25

Yes. So he was actually in the chaplain, basic. I don't even know what it's called now. Basic Officer Leadership Course for chaplains. When we started talking, but our families actually knew each other in Korea, growing up. Like my dad, not my dad, his dad did ministry with my grandfather. Our older brothers were on the same t ball team and, you know, we kind of our family overlaps.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 14:52

Really?

**Stefanie Boyles** 14:52

Yeah, but we didn't reconnect until adulthood. And so when we did reconnect, he was already on that trajectory and it just felt natural, I guess for me to, to, you know, be okay with that - it wasn't so foreign.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 15:07

Yeah.

**Eric Schumacher** 15:08

Wow, that is so that that is fascinating that, you know, that's just an aspect of life that we as civilians, if that's the right term, don't don't get to see or experience. And I'm just sure there's a lot of sacrifices, you know, we often think about the sacrifices made by soldiers. And it's easy to overlook, I think, what their families experience and the sacrifices they make, you know, having your husband be away is, is a big sacrifice. And you know, those kids need to be cared for, and your home needs to be managed. And, and if you know that, that is an important part of serving our country, as well. And so thank you for doing this.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 15:59

Yeah. Thank you.

**Stefanie Boyles** 16:00

Yeah, I always say it's, it's a family calling, you know, even in the ministry in the army, it is a family endeavor. It's not just their job, it does impact our kids even you know, so.

**Eric Schumacher** 16:15

Yeah, yeah. So just starting from a general perspective, what is life like for a woman on an army base?

**Stefanie Boyles** 16:23

Yeah, you know, I was thinking about this. And I feel like, it's almost impossible to answer because there really isn't a stereotypical army wife. It's been a while since I've watched the show, *Army Wives*, I don't know if that's where, you know, stereotypes are pushed out. But from my personal experience, I have just met the most diverse group of women on military institutions, or installations. And you know, there are stay at home moms. But there are also spouses who are physicians, who are nurses, who have PhDs even and have other like, thriving careers. And, you know, another thing I noticed, even just more recently is that there are more and more women in uniform. And I was thinking about how, you know, there's just this national push for advancing women's equality. And that's definitely seen in the army as well, there have been clear, intentional efforts in integrating women into Combat Arms positions, like infantry and armor. And I mentioned how my husband was the chaplain of the Ranger School, prior to this position, and Ranger School is actually a really rigorous combat course. It's kind of described as the most physically and mentally demanding program in the army. But we're seeing more and more female soldiers attempting the course. But I mean, this is really recent, I think the first two women to graduate Ranger School was just in 2015. So that's pretty recent, that, you know, I'm just finding that you know, even in military families, we really can't assume any more that the man is the soldier, because there are more just role reversals, and they're just also more dual military family. So there's all sorts of women in the army.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 18:20

So talk a little bit, Stefanie, about what marriage and mothering is like on an army base.

**Stefanie Boyles** 18:27

Yeah, and again, I think this varies from person to person and family to family. You know, but I wouldn't think that anyone would say it's easy. But honestly, I think marriage and motherhood are sanctifying in general. So there's that, bu...

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 18:45

Amen to that.

**Stefanie Boyles** 18:46

Yeah. But as a military spouse, you know, I would just have to say that there is a lot of doing marriage while physically apart. And that's just part of the job. That's part of our reality. And, you know, that presents a whole host of unique challenges, I think. You know, not only does physical separation kind of present this need to fight to stay pure and faithful. But I think physical separation can also deeply impact spiritual and emotional connection between spouses. You know, I was thinking there's just this challenge to be of one mind and heart and marriage anyway. And that's kind of heightened when you're just frequently physically apart, and individually kind of growing and changing. And then coming together again, and going through the process of reintegrating which takes time to reestablish rhythms. And so there's just that aspect. And then as for mothering, there's just a lot of solo parenting. That's what I like to call like, it's, I don't think it's the same as single parenting. I mean, we have the blessing of knowing that there's a paycheck coming and so I say solo parenting. And there's, there's a lot of that.



But I will also share that on a lot of military installations they do offer programs to, to help military families, right. While I was at Fort Campbell, I remember there being a program where they offered free childcare, I think it was like 16 hours a week, per kid. And then it was really cheap, hourly after that. And so that's not available at every installation. But I do want to highlight that, you know, we do have services that help us. And I used it, and it was great, I got to go to the gym during those two deployments. So that's a blessing. But I will also say that, you know, there definitely is kind of this instant sense of commonality in military communities. I have loved living on post during deployments, because there is just the sense that, you know, my neighbors and I are in this together. In a really, really small way, it's a small, small glimpse of how the gospel kind of unites us as believers. Right. And so, you know, even though it's hard, there are blessings. You know, personally, for me, it really has been a gift in the sense that I have had ample opportunities to lean on others, I've really learned the value of community out of just sheer need.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 21:28

Yeah.

**Stefanie Boyles** 21:30

And that kind of goes against my personality, where I kind of want to do things by myself, but just having that need to depend on others, has really deepened my understanding of how God created us as believers to live and flourish in community and how he made us to be members of one body where every member really does need the other member.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 21:53

Yeah.

**Eric Schumacher** 21:53

Hmm...

**Stefanie Boyles** 21:53

And so, you know, I think military spouses, you know, kind of can rally around that idea of it takes a village better. But for me, it really has been military spouses that are believers, who have allowed me to taste and see the goodness of the Lord, because they were His hands and feet, to me and my kids during deployments. And, you know, I was thinking about it. One other thing, a blessing of physical separation is that I have grown so much spiritually during those many months apart, you know, usually, it's during deployments when I can study the Bible more deeply, because my evenings are more open. And I also have more margin to develop deeper friendships. And I really do think it's such a great opportunity for fruitful discipleship, because, you know, if another spouse is deployed, like, you know, they're in a place of need, and you know, they have the extra time. And so it has just really been a sweet time of growth for me. And so I just wanted to present both sides, like, yeah, there are ugly moments, ugly cry moments is what I like to say. And you know, there is a need to extend grace and be flexible when you know, they're coming and going. But, you know, more than anything, I will say that I have found that the Lord is faithful through it all. And he always redeems our times apart. And at least for us, what we have noticed is that, you know, strong marriages tend to get stronger during deployments it's contrary or I don't know, backwards, upside down?

**Eric Schumacher** 23:41

Yeah. So in my time of pastoring, I've had a number of military couples, and, deployment through like National Guard and that sort of thing. And so it's been eye opening to see how challenging that can be on someone's faith or on their marriage. And, and like you've said, I've seen some thrive, and I've seen some end in divorce. And it can be a - I've just seen it be a very hard thing, even on spouses. What are some, some ways that you and your spouse, you and your husband stay connected during a deployment?

**Stefanie Boyles** 24:27

Yeah, you know, I think there are a lot of different ways. You know, nowadays with technology, a lot of spouses can talk to each other every day. For us, that's not really the case. I think just because we go into deployments with certain expectations. For me, I, I don't have this expectation for him to call every night and engage with the kids on this deeper level every night or even tell me everything that's going on. Because I know he's giving 110% over there and I do want him to focus on his soldiers and his ministry there.

**Eric Schumacher** 25:05

Yeah.

**Stefanie Boyles** 25:05

And so I think that has been really helpful for us to go into deployments with. I don't know if I would say, lower expectations, but more appropriate expectations. And so just having that mutual respect, I think, and valuing each other's jobs, because he does. I think my husband does a great job of valuing me as his spouse and valuing my role in his ministry by staying behind and raising our kids and trusting me to do that. And so that's a way I think, there are so many creative things you can do, you can pray together, still on the phone, you can email prayers to one another, you can go through a Bible reading plan together to kind of sort of stay on the same page. I've heard of people reading books together. We don't normally do that, because I am so involved in ministry here with a lot of books to read. And he's also preaching frequently there and leading Bible studies with his guys there. And so that's kind of unique to us as a chaplain family. But you know, there's just so many ways. I think of my mother in law, who was a Navy spouse for 20 years. And they didn't have that. I mean, she relied on I think, like telegrams or something. But they didn't get to talk every day. And so, you know, that is the blessing of technology today - is that a lot of spouses can, you know, connect and stay connected in that way. And so, for us, we've just kind of, you know, really valued our, our work even and, and seen it as a means to glorify God and in an intense way, together while apart.

**Eric Schumacher** 27:00

I'm wondering too, about on the marriage front, particularly in terms of like managing a household. And so you mentioned earlier, you know, non traditional ways, I guess you might call it of how women are being included in the military now as combat soldiers and that sort of thing. I'm also thinking like, in terms of household, your husband's on deployment for, let's say, he's gone for 24 months, or something like that. I think you mentioned earlier, he was gone for almost two years. And that probably puts you in a place to make a lot of decisions about how to manage your home that maybe even you

know, evangelical Christians, conservative Christians might not think of as being a woman's role. Could you talk about that a little bit?

**Stefanie Boyles** 27:48

Yeah. I think home management is part of our role. And it's a blessing, it's, it's a high calling part of being a wife and a mom, in my opinion, of just cultivating this, this atmosphere in our home. And, and thankfully, I think my husband has just entrusted a lot of that daily decision making to me. I mean, I do consult him as much as I can on, I don't know, big purchases or extracurriculars for our kids or things like that. But for the most part, and I don't know if I would say this is true of all military families, but there is just this kind of passing of batons that you kind of have to do out of necessity, because you can't consult them for every decision. And, and that could be a blessing in a way to. Because, you know, as a believer, I'm forced, in a good way to not idolize my husband, not look to him to answer all of my questions, but to really rely on prayer and, and the community that God has given me and relying on His word and the Biblical principles that we find there to kind of guide me in my decision making. And I think my husband knows that, that you know, that I am the Word and part of a church or community of believers and, and really just trusting those things to do what they're meant to do in my, in my life apart from it. And so, yeah, that's kind of how our family has, you know, kind of taken that.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 29:31

So, Stephanie, um, thank you. Thanks again for your service. Talk to us a little bit about your ethnicity and, and how your ethnicity has helped or hindered or how you've had problems or not you talk to us about.

**Stefanie Boyles** 29:50

So it's kind of unique. I am half Korean and half Caucasian, and my husband is also half Korean, and half Caucasian. So I never thought that that would ever happen. But it did. And so I always say this is the only time a half and a half equals a half, because my kids are also half Korean!. That's, that's really unique. I haven't really met any other family that can say that. But, um, growing up, I would say that there was some difficulty because there was just culture clashes even within our home. And my mom, actually, she has lived in the states for a really long time we came, I think, in 96. But she still doesn't speak English fluently. And I think there's just a lot of nationalism in Korean cultures. And so that has been a balance for me. But also part of my story. I think my husband and I are really sensitive to other cultures and other ethnicities, because we, you know, have experienced firsthand just the difficulties that just come with diversity, there's definitely beauty there. But that doesn't mean it's always easy. And so, yeah, I mean, that that is part of our story. We really embrace different cultures. I mean, you know, firsthand, there's just so much to learn, even though you can disagree with someone or not understand someone, there's just so much to learn about other people learn about God and, and who he is by our differences. And so that's a big part of our lives, actually. And, yeah, the army is pretty diverse, too. I would say. It's not

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 31:43

Right.. Yeah.

**Stefanie Boyles** 31:45

You know, we have been in places where it's predominantly white, or there's more segregation of races, but within the army, it's a really diverse place. You will sit, you will find, people of all different backgrounds and, you know, transcending race to financial backgrounds, family backgrounds, there's all sorts of people in the army. I think that's kind of a beauty of the army. But yeah, I don't know if that answers your question. But...

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 32:17

Yeah, it totally does. I mean, I would think that you're coming from, you know, a background with blended ethnicities. And I would think that in the army, you're going to have a lot of diversity. And so that wouldn't be that big of an issue. But I'm wondering, do you attend church on base?

**Stefanie Boyles** 32:39

So this is, I don't know if I would say, a hot point about military family life. I would say like finding a church family is particularly difficult. So let me just share our story. The past six years, we have attended chapel on post, which I have to say is not equivalent to a local church. There isn't that structure and accountability of elders. There's a lot of difficulty in that, you know, the head pastor or the head chaplain is randomly assigned installation to installation. It's whoever happens to be there, you know, rank plays into it. And so doctrinally there could be a lot of differences, even though we're all Protestant, or, or whatever it may be. It's just not the same as a local church. And the reason we have been a part of chapels the past six years is because my husband was invited to be a part of the preaching team. And so typically, chaplains, this is unique to chaplains are required to serve at a chapel once a month. And so, you know, we had to ask ourselves, like, hey, are we going to get plugged into a local church and know that you're going to be serving a different congregation regularly? Or are we going to serve at this chapel as a family? And because he was preaching and because I got involved in the women's ministry, they're leading Bible studies or serving as the president of Protestant Women of the Chapel, which is a women's ministry that comes under Chapel. That's kind of the direction that we went. And, you know, we together as a family have just decided to really, sometimes be the odd ones out, you know, doing - he is an expository preacher. He, we're about, you know, Christ centered preaching and teaching and so it's been fruitful though because, you know, there are so many people who go to Chapel who go because it is less threatening, I think, then a local church. They - a lot of people can slip in and out, it's an hour. It's not really liturgical, it's it's laid back. And so we've kind of just used it as an opportunity to go and encourage people to pursue sound doctrine and get serious about their faith. And so that's the direction that we went. But we also have the tension of realizing that, you know, every believer should come under the authority of a local church. And, you know, we should be members of a local body. And those parachurch ministries are fantastic, and have been instrumental even in our spiritual growth. But we also know the value of the local church. And so here at Fort Lewis, we are pursuing a local church and membership at a local church. Because it is a different season for us to get the accountability from elders, to, we both serve in our own ways he's preaches and does his chaplaincy thing. And then me serving with Daily Grace or discipling, one on one with women. Like I often need someone to teach me and disciple me. And so yeah, it's it's unique, I would say every installation, you kind of have to go to the Lord and prayer and ask for discernment and wisdom and in terms of like, where he wants you to serve. And for us, in this current season, we are going to be plugging into a local church. And because he's a part of a ranger Battalion, he doesn't have to serve in

a chapel. And so that's another kind of blessing of being a part of special ops. But yeah, it's, it's, it's hard. It really is hard.

**Eric Schumacher** 36:54

So I'm really encouraged by your family's love for the local church and your family's, you know, emphasis on studying the Word well, and that sort of thing. I have another question that I didn't send you ahead of time. So if you're not prepared to answer it, that's, that's totally okay. But I'm wondering about, are there mental health issues with military spouses? You know, when we, when I read about mental health, particularly with PTSD, I'm familiar that most with, you know, those who've been involved in combat. But what what sort of mental health impact does life in the military have on spouse?

**Stefanie Boyles** 37:39

I would say, that's a huge topic. I think mental health is something that we should be talking a lot more about, even not just my spouse's, but even our kids. And, you know, I think I even mentioned that, or even thought about that in terms of like how the church can help. And I think the church can be a safeguard and should be a safeguard, because, man, yeah, PTSD and TBI, which is traumatic brain injury, like that's a very real thing that even soldiers today are experiencing, and it could be so subtle, and could even impact chaplain's families, I will say, or people of faith. And so I think that is something that we definitely should be mindful of. And I mean, that could be a whole range of things of like loneliness, anxiety, depression, but also even be as far as like, actual personality disorders or abuse, domestic abuse, alcohol abuse, all sorts of abuse. That is so prevalent, I think, in the army, more so than I think that most people are aware of more so than even I'm aware of, I think. But yeah, that's definitely a need, I think that this community has in terms of working through that and having others come alongside us working through that.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 39:09

Well, thank you so much for, for your life, for the way that you're seeking to serve the body of Christ and, and for the way that you have laid down your life along with your husband, for this country. And for the people in the service. Thank you so much for that. Thank you for standing the way that you do for for the Gospel. And for what's right. It's, it's a blessing to know that there are strong women like you, who are doing what you're doing. So as we're drawing to a close here, can you talk to us a little bit just about how are folks who are going to listen to this? How can how can they pray for you. And for military spouses.

**Stefanie Boyles** 40:09

Thank you. I think it's helpful just to be mindful of, you know, the hardships that are a part of our lives. You know, I always say deployments are not pauses in our lives, they're just part of our lives. And so, we will have seasons where our husbands are gone for weeks or months on end. And so personally, I've just found it to be a tremendous blessing when just church friends offer practical help, yes, are just inviting our kids, our kids over for dinner during family time, which is like weekends or weekday, evenings or holidays. And so I would just encourage others, you know, if you see somebody, anyone, it doesn't even have to be a military spouse, but just be more inclined to open our hearts in our homes to others. And in terms of like, just even for me, you know, realizing that we were created to be limited beings. I think, you know, alters spouses do get this picture of being strong, independent woman, but

you know, remembering that by God's design, we are dependent creatures, and we need help. Our friends need friend or kids needs friends, we need friends. We're not meant to do this alone. And so invite us, invite us out to do things. Invite us to engage in ministry, rather than waiting for our husbands to come home. That's a big thing for me, I love when churches, you know, invite me to serve in a certain capacity, even if my husband's not there. And so I really appreciate that. And then I will also say, just be willing to ask hard questions. I think it is hard for us to move and have this transient lifestyle and find local churches, because we're doing that in the midst of unpacking, which is a lot as you know, Elyse! Unpacking and, you know, navigating our kids emotions, to the new places. Finding new schools, and new house, new doctors, and all of these things all while trying to find a local church. And, you know, no matter how intentional and forward we are, it takes time to find a local church, it takes time to develop relationships. And so I just love when people, you know, in a church are willing to go deep, fast, you know, to ask the hard questions, to not be afraid to get to know us and to open their hearts towards us. And also recognizing that, yeah, we do need safeguards, because it is an emotionally taxing, mentally taxing kind of lifestyle. We do have legitimate stressors. And so, you know, if, if you could be a mentor to just a military wife and husband, and that's just a beautiful way to, you know, be in the hands and feet of Christ to - even if it's a strong Bible believing couple, like, we need that accountability, we need to be reminded of the Gospel. Day in and day out. And so that's, that's my prayer, because I'm in the thick of it. Now we're new to Washington, my husband deployed, right when we got here. And so, for me, even I'm in the process of looking for a local church. And, and working through the tension of waiting for my husband to come back to, you know, together, find a local church, you know, because he is the spiritual head of our home. And so just praying us through this process of getting settled, and the most important way though, getting plugged into a local church. I think that's, that's something that every spouse every person should do. But that's just my where I'm at now. So if you guys could pray for me about that. That would be great.

**Elyse Fitzpatrick** 44:14

Well, your husband be home when you give birth?

**Stefanie Boyles** 44:18

Yes, yeah. He will be home. So Rangers do deploy, like - they are four month deployments versus typical 912 month deployments. So he will be home. Yeah

**Eric Schumacher** 44:30

Great. Well, thank you, Stefanie, for joining us on the podcast. It's been a pleasure and we're thankful for your service to our country and, and for your service to your family and, and the Gospel, the cause of the Gospel. We love what you're doing over on the Daily Grace podcast. We hope our listeners will check that out. And, and we hope our listeners will be praying for you as well.

**Stefanie Boyles** 45:00

I appreciate it. Thanks so much for having me.

**Eric Schumacher** 45:04

Thanks for listening and join us next week for another episode of worthy