

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

Hosts: Elyse Fitzpatrick and Eric Schumacher

Episode 15 — Guest: Sarah and Jeff Walton

Date Aired: May 11, 2020

Eric Schumacher 0:06

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 will not always agree on everything. But we do agree that God is glorious. The Bible is true. Women are valuable, and respectful conversation on this topic is essential in our day.

Thanks for joining us on today's episode of The Worthy Podcast and we are excited today to have with us Jeff and Sarah Walton. Jeff and Sarah have been married for 16 years, they have four children under the age of 12, and they live in Chicago. Jeff is a native of Cleveland, Cleveland rocks, right. And Jeff has worked as a trauma consultant for nine years, assisting doctors in implanting medical devices during trauma surgeries. Sarah is a stay at home mom, and a co-author of the book hope when it hurts, which is great, I would highly recommend it and she enjoys writing and speaking about how the gospel speaks to all of life and offers us hope in the midst of suffering. She blogs at setapart.com. And Jeff and Sarah are going to debate today. Which one of them has the more difficult job?

Welcome to the podcast.

Jeff Walton 2:15

Thanks for having us.

Sarah Walton 2:16

Yeah. Thank you.

Eric Schumacher 2:18

Yeah, we're looking forward to it. So I was just reviewing your story that has brought you to your most recent book, which is Together Through the Storms, which just released here in May. And I just want to ask you to start us off by telling our listeners your story. And just even take a few minutes just to give us the background.

Sarah Walton 2:45

Yeah, sure, I will do my best. It's a very complex, layered story. So not wanting to take up the entire podcast on that aspect. Really, I think about three years into our marriage is when things really started getting challenging. We had our first or oldest child that year, and not long after we had him and he's about seven weeks old, we were suddenly thrown into this unknown, he was hospitalized with a really high fever. And it was one day after another that we kept being told worse situations that were likely. So we were really afraid we're going to lose them. We weren't suddenly in the hospital, I think we were there for our third anniversary. And all of a sudden, the questions that we were faced with is do we really trust the Lord with our child that we had just dedicated him to the Lord? Do we really trust his life, if that means he might take him and those are really hard questions to be hit with less than three months into having him or about that. So anyway, we ended up leaving the hospital, we had really no answers to what happened. They knew we had a severe infection, but they never figured out what it was he just slowly got better with the medications they were using. And then as he got a little bit older, we started showing some signs that were at first just seemed very behavioral. Where he was our first we really didn't know anything different. But then it became more and more severe, where there were clearly some neurological issues that were going on. But it was coming out. Very behaviorally, very... with a lot of aggression. A lot of extreme tantrums, couldn't go from one scenario to another without extreme thing happening. And so that is kind of what started to intensify our home life. As you had said, Jeff had been on call. So he was on call 24/7. He was in and out of the house constantly. We couldn't count on him for anything nights, weekends, holidays, anything. And so that was fine. I'd say when we didn't have kids. And then as we had kids and these challenges started, it just became to put it started to put a real weight on our home life and on me because I was in the situation... 24/7. So we ended up having over a period nine years. We had four children while he was on call. And throughout those years, things just got harder and harder with our son, we started seeing doctors. Everyone could tell something was wrong, but they couldn't pinpoint what was causing it. And he would act one place differently than another place. So it was complex. And it was different all the time. And so we were really lonely. We had no idea what we were doing. In many ways we thought is it us? Are we doing something wrong? And it was, it was really difficult because we were so often in our own home with this extreme bottle that was, it's hard to really describe without sharing too much of how really traumatic it was for our whole family in many ways, including our son. And so over those years, we got some answers, but really nothing that solved any issues or really brought much relief, it got more and more difficult as we had other kids because they became involved in the situation. And I was trying to protect them as well. And my health just got worse, it got worse every year and every child that I had, I got sicker. So if you can picture this, Jeff was in and out all the time, I was pretty much feeling sick as a dog, kind of like when you have a flu, and you're really achy, I was like that most of the time. But I had to still be restraining our son, I had to be protecting him and our other kids and myself, whether I felt like I could or couldn't. And then at the same time trying to guard my emotions as Jeff would come in. And I'd let down and you'd say, Oh, I gotta go again. And so that really lends itself to lots of marital issues.

Jeff Walton 6:37

It was five years ago that we were led to a doctor where she got diagnosed with Lyme disease. It's also at that point about within the next year or two, that we had each of our kids tested, because they each have unique symptoms that are just really different points of their struggle, whether it's physical or whether it's mental. And so we saw that they also have Lyme disease, they tested positive for that. And that was something that we weren't aware of was even a remote possibility. But it was something that she passed on through the pregnancies to each one of them and so that along with some of their coinfections, the way that that really impacts them is just, we now have a family that we have a five and that are really impacted by this chronic illness and this disease. I really don't have any of those symptoms. Or if I do dormant, I don't have anything that comes out and presents itself like that. So again, just kind of quickly on our story. That's some of the layers and then that led to needing to make a tough decision. Because after nine years of being on call, and in the medical device field, it was a pivotal point in our marriage where we were in survival mode for so long, just trying to parent and trying to survive, specifically with our oldest and so much of our relationship got just put on the back burner. And just we couldn't address anything, we were too tired to even communicate much after we got the kids in bed. It was just like, let's just get to the couch. We couldn't even speak. We just need to unwind. And just so now Yeah,

Sarah Walton 8:23

We almost worked well on like the battlefield in a sense like that. But that was the dynamic of our relationship, that we are in such an intense situation all the time. That's all we knew how to function as anymore.

Jeff Walton 8:34

Yeah, so then, that was really...the point there was, you know, I realized that and this was God working more and more on my heart, just that the way that I wanted to lead my family. And I felt like I was letting them down to give you kind of a picture. So wherever we had to go to, we would drive two cars, to church to restaurant, to a park..family party, whatever that may be. Because at a moment's notice, I would get called from a hospital or doctor. And so so often, whether it was just stepping foot into church on Sunday, and then a pager went off or in the middle of a service. And so that just wore on me more and more that I am not being the example that I want to be able to center in our kids and and seeing that this was starting to destroy our relationship and our marriage was was really at a low point. So through just a circumstances that we met with some counselors, we met with our some pastors from our church and sought their counsel where they basically said that "I would rather flip burgers than do what you're doing", you know, basically at whatever it costs. "I think you need to leave and make a drastic decision", and that was kind of confirmation we were getting to that point, but then to hear that wisdom and that counsel from them, we knew, okay, this is, I think, where God is leading us. So we took

that step of faith. And we, I changed that out of the medical device industry took a new job. And that also led to a huge paycut and a big sacrifice for us. And so the struggle is, you know, we felt like we were obeying God. And he led us, led me to that next new job. And then it was about 20 months later then that that company had a company wide layoff. And I was a part of that. So it's one of those things that you're wrestling with. God, you opened up this door, we felt like we were trying to obey.

Sarah Walton 10:40

And we took a major sacrifice to do so

Jeff Walton 10:42

...for our family's needs. And now we just got the rug pulled out from underneath from us. What is going on? Like, and that's, that's so much of like, what we're all dealing with right now in the pandemic, no matter what we're facing. And ironically, five months ago, around Thanksgiving time, I had that happen again. So I am in job transition, again, where the company that I was with, it was a startup company, and they ended up laying off 40 out of the 70 of us, and then ended up folding due to that pandemic, just from financial reasons. So we're in that boat again. And I think as we kind of reflect on what we're learning and God, again, just teaching us over and over, to hold loosely, all these things, you know, that's really what I think has led to this book, and just we see this as layer after layer, God is stripping away, chiseling us. So I think that's why we related so much to the story of Job, which is kind of the book. But that kind of just gives, I think, a big picture view of some of our struggles and what we've been going through.

Sarah Walton 11:53

Yeah, and on the one other thing that I often forget to tell, even though it's a major part is, throughout this time, I had five ankle surgeries, because I had had a severe ankle injury in high school, and I have always been an athlete, I've loved being active. So the part of loss for me has been losing that. And I'm to the point now where I have no other options. So I'm fully lost my ability to walk. And so I can't go for walks with our family, I'm in a wheelchair, if we have to go somewhere far. And that has been a sense of another wrestling of Lord, You created me to love these things. You've created me to have stress reducing by going for a run or getting out and exercising, but you've taken it from me. So I think that's really what we, I think have walked through the main picture is like Jeff said, a sense of the word stripping away layer after layer of good things. Not things were bad thing. And it's not like he was removing them to discipline us for something we were doing wrong in that. But for whatever reason, he has chosen to strip away anything we could hold on to. And it's been extremely difficult. And it's still we grieve these things still every day, even though we've seen his faithfulness. But that's really our hope is

to show people even though we're still here, he has been so faithful. And he has given us so much in its place.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 13:17

So where you guys both raised in a Christian home?

Jeff Walton 13:21

Yeah, yeah. We both were.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 13:25

So you had ...you had this wonderful sort of foundation already. But then you walk into Job's life. You know, what, um, what are some of the questions that you're asking? In the middle of that? I mean, you, I know that when I go through things like that, I mean, I always think, Lord, we prayed about this. And, and we got counsel. And we tried not to, you know, we try to examine our own hearts, and make sure we weren't doing things that, you know, we're playing like, this is what God wants us to do. But you know, it's just what we want to do. And yet here, I am totally stripped, you know? So, so what do you say to yourself? What, what would you say to somebody who was saying that? These kinds of things.

Jeff Walton 14:27

I think the important thing in that and this is something that I didn't do? Well, I would say at the beginning, you know, so much of that, and just my personality is when adversity comes or when just something hard comes that I just try and just try and push my way through it and persevere. And a lot of that is just kind of how some of my upbringing and just playing sports growing up and just kind of from that aspect of not wanting to show my emotion out on the field and trying to in that way, and so some of that has been in the earlier parts of our marriage. And I think that has been something I've really tried to grow and learn and what does that look like when we frame it up in the perspective of how can we take this pain and confusion and all these questions to God directly? And what's okay to do? Because when you read through Scripture, and you look at Job, and the Psalms and Lamentations, it's really shocking to actually study the words and picture that you just said that to God? So that's something that it almost seems like a disconnect for me when I first started reading that and kind of studying that more of, I don't think I could ever say that to God. But yet he knows our hearts, right. And he wants to know exactly what we're wrestling with. And so I think that's something that, again, that I have grown a lot in. And right now, as we go through the seasons of, again, stripping away, I am much quicker to get to that point of, of asking the why and how long? God, what? what is going on right now? And taking those to

him, because I know that first he can, he can bear that on his shoulders and knowing that, that process of lamenting leads me if I am in His Word, and in Scripture, constantly praying to Him, that that is going to lead my heart back to trust. So it's that lamenting is like my way of fighting for hope and continuing to come back. And it's really the only way that you can take your fumbling words, and have that be that channel that can lead you back to character of God, and his faithfulness and cause us to look back and again, reflect on that you have been faithful in the past. And I choose right now, I can't see anything more. But I choose to trust you because I know that you are good, and you're faithful. But it's the same thing that you're wrestling because the next day, it's the "God this does not seem fair" kind of doubting, that there's nothing that makes sense as to why you haven't answered this. So that's kind of the ongoing wrestling. It's a process. And it's it's a daily Battle of fighting for hope. And, and just rehearsing the gospel and his faithfulness to you.

Sarah Walton 17:18

Yeah, yeah. And I think it, what it ultimately does is it comes down to what do I actually believe is true about God? Is this have I created, in a sense, my own God that I'm comfortable with? Because we come into these situations... And we realize, Oh, wait, I always have said God's good. But I don't this I don't agree with it's not the God that I would...This is not how I would imagine a father would treat his child. And so really, that's what Job is, it's all of looking at... Job was a righteous man. God was not punishing him and we have that ability to see that. But he didn't, so we put ourselves in his shoes and that's often where we are. We're seeing, "Lord, I'm trying to follow you and now I'm confused. Are you angry at me? Did I do something wrong? Am I not learning something fast enough?" You know, we start to go through all these questions, right. And so often it comes back to sometimes it's just we can't understand what he's doing in the moment. And so what it breaks it down to is, can I trust the Lord that He is good that he is faithful that he is sovereign, even when I can't make sense of it at all? It strips are facedown and what a beautiful thing we see in Job? Job was a righteous man. But if you think from the beginning to the end, God took what Job maybe would have said, "I believe God's good". But by the end of Job, Job knew God was good, because he had seen his goodness. He could have testified to it before out of knowledge. But now he could testify out of having seen it. And that's true about all of it, he had been able to say I believe God's sovereign, well, he had to really wrestle through do I actually believe God is sovereign? But by the end of it, he had a totally different view of the sovereignty of God that would make others look and completely change their view of what suffering is. And so I think that's what I would help encourage someone who's going through something that just doesn't make sense, is that God is so much greater than we are. And on one hand, he grieves with us and He wants us to cry out to Him. On the other hand, our circumstances will only grow smaller as he grows bigger.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 19:26

So I'm wondering, you know, one of the one of the main problems that Job had, of course was his counselors. God bless. Bless their hearts. Yeah. So have you had people around you who have either

helped or hurt and, and, and what can people do? That would be helpful to people who are in a situation like you, but I'd like to know your experience. You know, how has it been in your church? How has it been with, you know, spiritual authorities in your life? And then? Yeah, and then how can people be friends to people who are going through things like you?

Sarah Walton 20:15

Yeah, you know, that is something that has been, it has been deeply painful at points. There have been times where I think especially because of the situation that we're in, many people don't see the gravity of what we go through, because most of it happens in our home. So we have faced lots of, let's just say, you can tell they don't quite believe what we're saying. Or they create their own picture of it. And they put their own shoes in it. "Oh, my child's really strong-willed too".

Elyse Fitzpatrick 20:47

Yeah, they don't understand.

Sarah Walton 20:48

...That's a completely different thing than a strong-will. But what that immediately does, it makes your situation less, it makes it like they would they would know what to do, because they've dealt with it too, right. And so sometimes it's just purely ignorant comments, or it's people that that they mean, well, but they just they haven't learned or they don't understand how things come across. But then there have been situations that have been legitimately painful, that we've had to one figure out, what do I do with that hurt? Because it does hurt. And that's hard on a relationship. Yeah, so it's trying to figure out what to do with the pain when that that happens in a relationship, because the closer you are to a person, the more painful that is. And you can't always just sever the relationship if you're not in agreement, or whatever. So we've had to one we've had to continually I think, practice the sense of forgiveness towards people that understanding of where they're at, and extending the grace, knowing that I want to believe the best in them that the Lord has not given them the ability to see. And to know how their words affect, sometimes we can, I think it's okay to say that to them, you have that ability, and we have been able to at times, but like, for example, we've gone to doctors before, and I remember, I think this might even be in the book, we had been to doctor after doctor after doctor and we were so utterly depleted. And I remember sitting the doctor's office, and the guy very confidently looked at me and said, you know, he's a great kid, I think you just need to give him more to do. And I'm like, Are you kidding me? Do you think we would be in this place? If I didn't know how to give my child something to do? You know, there's but I wasn't necessarily hurt by him, relationally. Right. But that's different kinds, I can move on from that quicker. But it has been, I think, lonely knowing that so many people can't enter into our situation. And what that tempts us to do is to isolate. Because we think if they can't understand

why do we share it all? Or why do we even go to church? Or why do we pursue relationship if a big part of us is going to feel like nobody can really enter into that massive part of our lives? And I would like to say that that's gone away, but it hasn't, we still carry that burden. But I think what we've had to what that's done is it's made us get to the point of do I believe that the Lord sees those dark, deep places that no one else will be able to enter into? And can I rest that if he allows us to be in this isolated, difficult place for the rest of our lives, that he's enough that he is enough to comfort us in that place, and to strengthen us in that place. And in his grace, he's given us a couple people who can enter into the really dark places, and we have to be content with that we have to know, I can't accept, I can't expect people to enter into these places. Otherwise, I won't have relationships, because it's almost not fair to ask. Right? So there's a lot of different layers to that. But I think we've really learned what we approach other people now who are really hurting, to realize that people most need for us is to just grieve with them. Yeah, to let them know I am here with you. I don't have to completely understand your situation. I don't need to tell you how I relate to your situation. I just need to be able to give you my presence. And how can I pray for you and asking them? Are you today rather than these big open ended questions that are overwhelming. So also just even thinking about we've gone through Job and realized how like you said his friends miserable comforters. But what we found fascinating is Job's friends never once actually prayed directly to the Lord. They poured all their questions out to Job or their accusations about God. They never actually directly went to the Lord and so I think that's been convicting. Before I speak to someone in their pain, am I asking the Lord for the wisdom in that moment, rather than quickly thinking they need my wisdom? How Lord can you give me wisdom and discernment in this moment to give this person what you know they need most not what I think they need most. And I think that's been a helpful thing to remember.

Jeff Walton 25:03

I think even within the marriage context, so if... if your spouse is grieving, and if you think of Job and his wife, and you know that she just ... Are you going to still be a man of integrity or curse God and die. And if you think about just again, whether it's a close friend, or even if your spouse has gone through something, and they are starting to, you know, voice, again, just their confusion and their... their pain, and just speaking out, if you truly know that their theology is correct, and that they are, you know, a believer then I think we can take the advice of Job, I think it's in chapter six, where he just talks about the "words of the wind". And so there's this season that as we're just breathing, we may not speak words that make sense. And they are not true, they're not accurate of what we deeply believe, but it's just our grieving and our lamenting process. So if we cannot reprove those words, and just again, listen, and sit into those moments, and just be that friend, and that comforter, and not just spew, you know, all these verses, or what we think God is trying to work in them, and that's a fine line to know when to speak and when not to. And so that's when things I think we can take the advice from the story of Job of obscene that we need to prayerfully enter into all of these situations. There's a time where we just need to listen and there's a time that we got to be careful not to reprove their words, and, and actually, you know, put more pain into their situation. And so it's such a delicate situation that, you know, a lot of people if they're trying to comfort you or counsel you, but if they haven't gone through much suffering

in their life, they may not be able to be that counselor with the wisdom that you need them. So prayerfully seeking wise counseling, hopefully through your church, your local church, or through an actual counselor that can get some extra help from, is what we found to be very helpful. Yeah, yeah.

Eric Schumacher 27:35

So thinking about just even your marriage relationship. I mean, the two of you have all the people in the world share this experience, and you're more or less in the same situation. Did you process it the same? you respond the same? How'd that go? And how did you deal with each other?

Jeff Walton 27:42

So no, we process it very differently. I think from the way that I handle it, it is a little bit whatever referred to earlier, just with how I mentioned just about the lamenting, and the grieving aspect is, I'm probably more of internalizing and processing now up here in my head, and not really communicating to Sarah, well, and so I can try and just be stoic and try and be the strong man that I just want to be...and show to her that I can be okay through this. But still kind of delicate, or gently walking alongside with her. And so I think that's created a lot of problems, where she then will look at me and probably build up frustration...And think, "Is anything getting through?". "Like, what do you have going on?", "Are you not fazed by what's going on for last months?", "And where have you been?". And so I think, when we've faced that, and, you know, she's been gracious to ask me that question. So it's not just me and my silence, just thinking, "we're going through this and we're gonna, hopefully meet it at some some path and then pick right back up", but that you need to have that communication. And just have those questions of, you know, how, how are you processing this, like, what is going on right now? You know, what, what is a struggle or fear of yours right now? And if we can have that, so that, again, first and foremost, we're taking this to Christ, but then also, with our helper next to us? Can we come alongside and say, I know that we grieve differently. And there's times where we have to give each other space... And there's times where we just need to embrace, giving each other a hug. But how can we also in the appropriate time, talk through that so that we can encourage and kind of spur one another on but we do grieve very differently? And I think that's important just to acknowledge that it's okay. That's the way God created us. And so let's understand and continue to grow in that so that we can not let this be a sticking point in our marriage that's going to build bitterness, and just kind of that....

Sarah Walton 29:47

...just giving them repentance to get in there... And, you know, I'd say something that I think is so important that I wanted to be really clear in the book because this question, there was a point in our marriage where Jeff could not grieve with me in the same way because he had not been with me in certain very difficult situations. And so while we had been together in many ways, he had the freedom

to come and go, I was not able to. And so over the years, as that went on, it started to build a sense of abandonment, almost because there were certain times that...that I would be in a really, really difficult kind of scary situation. And he would walk out the door. And I, I felt left on my own to carry something that I felt like was supposed to be carried by the two of us together. And I mean, extreme situations, not just like, I'm tired, and I don't feel like cooking dinner, right. And so that would build over time. And when the Lord moved just out of that season, and he got a new job. That's actually when all of those feelings started to surface, I started having all sorts of things come up in me that I did not know where it was coming from. Again, I think because we had been in survival. I didn't have the energy to let myself feel those things. But when we had gotten out of it, and had a little bit of reprieve from that standpoint, I started feeling anger, I started feeling lonely, I started feeling like, "how in the world can we move forward, if he has no idea, so much of what I have just endured?". And I could tell him, I could say things, but there were aspects of it where I felt so hurt, but I, no matter how I explained it, it was like we were just totally missing each other. And so for it was a period where I kept trying to rephrase things, I kept trying to let him know in a different way and try to express it differently. What that did is it just built more anger, because he wasn't grasping what I felt like he needed to grasp. And then one day, it was just so clear, the Lord convicted me. And it was like he was saying, "Sarah, stop trying to change stuff, and come directly to me." And that was a huge turning point in our marriage. Not only because I did that, but unknowingly, Jeff was doing the exact same thing. And I started just bringing all that emotion to the Lord and praying, honestly, word, you saw those moments that I feel like no one else will ever know what I was feeling in those moments you saw, and you were there with me. And I have to believe that you will give me what I need that even though I feel like I want Jeff to see these things. And I long for him to understand how I'm feeling in this.. Help me to trust that even if he doesn't, that you will be enough for me, and that you will be with me and you will be able to heal me. And if you will open his eyes, open his eyes to what you see. And know that he needs to be able to see. And it wasn't immediate. But I kept really coming to the Lord with that. Jeff was actually doing the same in many ways. He was feeling his inability to understand. And so he was praying more and in the word more. And all of a sudden, our conversations became fruitful. It was like, the Lord just took us with two totally different views and started to mesh them. And it was an absolute miraculous thing to watch. It was still hard. I don't want to sugarcoat it. We had really hard, hard conversations. But all of a sudden, we were getting certain things and we were feeling a compassion for one another. And yeah, and he was starting to see things that I had longed for him to see for years. But it just had not happened. And I... I just watched the Lord open his eyes to things that... things that it wasn't just even the beauty of seeing his eyes open it was that I knew the Lord saw me and the Lord cared enough and knew what he saw fit for our marriage to grow and to heal. And that's something I think we have just continued to want to share with people is the marriage relationship is a gift. It will never be perfect, though. And it is not our ultimate goal to have a perfect marriage. Ultimately, Christ wants us to seek Him first and foremost, no matter what. And the beautiful thing is, that means even if our spouse isn't a believer, or if they're just not in the same place as us, that does not mean we can't still be pursuing the Lord and trusting him with that marital relationship.

Eric Schumacher 34:12

That's good. I really appreciate you guys. Having the willingness to share your story with the world because there's a lot of people I think, will find themselves in similar situations and think they're all alone. So thank you for doing that. You've been listening to the Worthy Podcast with our guests, Jeff and Sarah Walton. And they're talking about their recent... recently released book, *Together Through the Storms: A Biblical Encouragement for Your Marriage When Life Hurts*, and these are the kind of conversations that we hope are helping you and blessing you as listeners. If that's the case, we hope that you've already subscribed to the Worthy Podcast and that you will head out and leave us a review and a rating share this with your friends. And if you'd like to join our team in helping make these podcasts possible, we do have a Patreon page. And we would appreciate your monthly support. You can find things like bonus podcast episodes. And other stuff that we throw up there from time to time, even opportunities to

Elyse Fitzpatrick 35:23

Eric suggested like a Elyse Fitzpatrick bobblehead doll. And that's such a bad idea. No, no, no, it's about No.

Eric Schumacher 35:34

Listeners reply.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 35:35

Yes, listeners reply. If we get all right. If we get 25 people to reply to that, then I will acquiesce? No, no, no. They have to. They have to go on and rate and review the podcast and say that they want a bobblehead doll. Okay.

Eric Schumacher 36:05

I definitely have 25

Elyse Fitzpatrick 36:07

No, no, no, no.

Eric Schumacher 36:12

All right. Um, so since we're laughing now, the last question I was gonna ask you guys about your about being parents, particularly Sarah, being a mom through all of this. I think I think you want to approach that question with how do you? How do you add fun? In your home? In the midst of all of this?

Sarah Walton 36:39

Yes. You know what that is? I'm so glad you asked that. Because there have been seasons where a home has left that and it's been heavy. But I think one thing that a gift The Lord has given us is despite all that Jeff and I have gone through, he's given us both this sense of humor, that we have had to learn to laugh at things that most people would probably find disturbing. But he's had to either, it's really been a gift because in some of the most intense situations and seasons, we've actually been able to really support each other in laughing about things that are just like, Are you kidding me? Can you believe this is happening right now? But also, even with the kids, I think we've really tried to keep a sense of even as so much as hard. How do we help the kids and us continue to keep our eyes on? How are we seeing God's faithfulness, trying to turn what's really hard in our life, and encourage them to think in that way. Let's be looking for ways we see God providing for us in ways and we've had seasons like when he's been out of a job, that it's actually been fun and fascinating to watch, how's God going to provide in a way that we're just completely unaware of right now. And we've had Christmas gifts dropped to the front door anonymously. We have had some of we've had certain money show up in a bank account. We don't know where it came from, we have had things happen that have just been astounding, that we get to enjoy. Just even with the kids sharing these things like look at what God has done, that we never would have experienced had we not been in a place of need. And then also just trying to lighten it by not letting our suffering become our identity. And helping them see that we have gone through a lot of hard things. But this is not all of who we are. God has given us gifts and talents and things we enjoy. How can we keep those things in there, even though they may have to look a little different with the challenges we're facing?

Jeff Walton 38:38

I think there's two different things like if we want to try to have fun and be light hearted with our kids. But secondly, if that's not always the case, let our kids see that Sarah and I are going to be silly with each other and light hearted so that they at least get that picture that yes, we are going through really hard days. But man, Mom and Dad can still have those times of joy and just lightheartedness. And I think that's hopefully, you know, teaching and just kind of showing them too... just that God can bring, you know, some, some of those joys that are, you know, hard to see. But if we can really pull out some of the simple things in life and just laugh at them or just enjoy them so that our kids don't always just see a heavy, somber face walking around the house. And so I think that's salary. Just really try and be intentional about overtime.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 39:36

Yeah.

Eric Schumacher 39:37

That's good. Well, thank you guys, for being on the podcast.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 39:40

Thank you.

Sarah Walton 39:41

Thank you.

Eric Schumacher 39:42

Yeah, we're gonna ask you one more question. And this is something new that we're adding to our podcasts. So for our listeners, for asking one final question of each guest, and then that's going to be compiled for a bonus episode of our podcast. That is for our Patreon supporters.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 39:59

Thanks so much for joining us friends. We're really glad that you were here. Remember what we're trying to do here is have respectful conversation about the worth of women. We hope you'll join us again next week.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>