

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

Hosts: Elyse Fitzpatrick and Eric Schumacher

Episode 50 — Guest: Maggie Combs

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Eric Schumacher 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 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. Welcome to the Worthy podcast. This is Eric Schumacher. And I'm here with my co-host, co-author and co-belligerent, Elyse Fitzpatrick, the author of 23 and one half books. And I am the author of half a book. And together we have written two dozen books. And that makes my mother very proud. I wouldn't have thought of myself as being so prolific at this age. Here I am, and--

Elyse Fitzpatrick 01:43

Just, on the coattails, right?

Eric Schumacher 01:45

Yes, yeah. So we are, we are the dynamic Worthy duo. And we're thankful that you're listening to the podcast today. And we're thankful for all of you who go out and rate the podcast and review it and share it with your friends. And we continue to grow in the people who are listening to this and who are replying to us on a constant basis telling us how encouraged they've been by this and many women saying it's been a lifeline to them. And so if you'd like to help us keep doing these, you can head over to our Patreon page. And you can support us if you'd like to. And that pays for the cost of this podcast. And you get some extras with that like a bonus episode each month, and at certain levels you can have conversations with Elyse or me, whichever one's your favorite.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 02:10

Sometimes both of us!

Eric Schumacher 02:33

And that's the nice thing about this deal is everybody wants to talk to Elyse so I just schedule. But yeah, that's that's a great way-- and if we get enough, who knows there might be an Elise Fitzpatrick bobblehead doll. There continues to be an increasing demand for it. And so despite Elise's-- she, her head is nodding back and forth, just like a bobble head. I think she's modeling for it right now. So usually she's just nodding up and down to do agree with me.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 03:15

Well, that's cause you're the man.

Eric Schumacher 03:17

Actually, usually she's shaking her head back and forth saying, "Don't say that. Don't say that, stop!" Anyway, enough about us. We are excited. Elyse, are you are you a fan of those Avenger movies?

Elyse Fitzpatrick 03:31

Very much

Eric Schumacher 03:32

Very much, yeah. So this is I think is our first superhero to come on the program.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 03:37

Yes.

Eric Schumacher 03:38

So we have Maggie Combs. And Maggie is an author. She is a wife, a mother of three boys. I was the oldest of three sons so you can pray for her. I know what she's going through, and why my mom has gray hair. She enjoys being with their family, herding goats on their family farm, slaughtering cattle? Is that right, did I hear that right?

Maggie Combs 04:08

If you listened to the Front Porch with the Fitzes, I guess I have to own up to that.

Eric Schumacher 04:14

They are obsessed with bovine animals. So anyway, and the safety of cows. That's it. That's what they're actually obsessed with. And she enjoys reading young adult literature and mysteries in her free time. And apparently she has free time, even though she's herding those boys and the goats. One of her joys in life is to disciple women in her local church through her writing, and as the content director for Well-Watered Women, and that's a great ministry that you should check out. Her first book is Unsupermommy. And so that makes her some kind of a superhero I think or unsuper hero, I'm not sure which.

Maggie Combs 05:00

My boys are really good. They're like, "we were supposed to write something about you being a super mom for Mother's Day. But we know that you're not. It's okay." Like, what what happened here? My oldest child has read most of the book, which makes me cringe a little bit. But.

Eric Schumacher 05:17

Yeah, so they're the only ones on the school bulletin board with "my mom is not a supermommy." All the other parents that parent teacher conferences are like, Wow, what's wrong with that kid? So. Well, his mom's not super. So. But that is a book that God drew Maggie closer to himself as she was writing. And hopefully we'll get to hear a little bit more about that. But she's also the author of Motherhood Without All the Rules: Trading Stressful Standards for Gospel Truths. And that's what we're going to talk about today. So Maggie, welcome to the podcast.

Maggie Combs 05:55

Thank you so much for having me.

Eric Schumacher 05:57

Yeah, we always love to have Midwest guests on the podcast who live somewhere that you can enjoy four distinct seasons out of the year, and who don't always talk to everybody about how nice it is in San Diego.

Maggie Combs 06:12

Exactly. You know, my husband is from the south. And he is just like, he hates the winter and all of that. And I'm just like, I love the winter. I think it's great. I'm not one of those northern people who just complained for our seven months of cold the year. I'm like, it's good. This is different. My kids playing the snow better than they do outside in the summer. So I'm happy.

Eric Schumacher 06:34

That's good.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 06:35

Wow. We have seasons. I don't know why you said that. Because we have seasons. We have spring--

Eric Schumacher 06:40

Fire?

Elyse Fitzpatrick 06:43

We have spring and fall and fire season. That's what we have.

Maggie Combs 06:48

Fire season came a little early this year, though, maybe?

Elyse Fitzpatrick 06:51

Fire season came a little early, and yeah. It's been particularly gnarly.

Maggie Combs 06:58

We've been getting that like orange glow in the sun in the morning all the way over in Minnesota.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 07:05

You're welcome.

Eric Schumacher 07:06

I was outside the other day, I was driving somewhere. There was not a cloud in the sky and everything was yellow. And I was like, What is this? Well, it's California.

Maggie Combs 07:16

My boys keep running, "Mom, Mom, you gotta see the sunrise!" I'm like, yeah...

Eric Schumacher 07:22

Yeah. Well, Maggie, tell us a little bit about your, your life and how you came to faith in Christ. And what led you to your first book, Unsupermommy?

Maggie Combs 07:34

Sure. Well, I'm currently living on the farm that I grew up on. So I'm hoping that when I, when I die have spent like 99% of my life in this one place.

Eric Schumacher 07:47

Like Hannah Coulter.

Maggie Combs 07:48

Yes, exactly.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 07:50

Hannah Coulter! I know who that is now! I read Wendell Berry.

Maggie Combs 07:53

Good job!

Eric Schumacher 07:56

Now you can move out here, Elyse, and be like Hannah.

Maggie Combs 08:00

So I grew up in a Christian home. And I had two older brothers and parents who just really encouraged me, I was the youngest child, and I was encouraged in my strong personality. And I was really even though I was the only girl I was, I think really well respected and loved and valued. And I grew up without, honestly, a lot of the insecurities that other women deal with. I can only thank God for that and see some of the way my brothers treated me and my father, as part of that piece. And I think I'm just maybe a naturally confident person as well. That's probably a youngest child thing. But I don't remember a time that I didn't know Jesus. And that's, that, you know, when I was younger it was kind of like embarrassing. Like, do I have a testimony? I don't know. But I've learned more about what that means, what our testimony is, it's just how we've walked along with God, not necessarily just our conversion experience, because I hardly remember mine. My parents and I are like, we think it happened after cubbies one night. But really, it just, I don't remember not loving God. And that's something that I pray for for my own children. And obviously, as you grow up and your mind matures, and your brain changes, that looks different and you have these experiences, but I never had like a walking away and then like throwing all of my secular CDs in the fire kind of experience at camp or anything. It was just like, oh, okay, this is what it looks like to do, learn to do Bible study on my own now, and this is what it looks like to grow in prayer and just a slow, long sanctification which doesn't mean I'm perfect by any means. Um, but just that I feel like God is, just I don't remember him not having a hold of me. So.

Eric Schumacher 10:03

That's great.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 10:04

So wonderful. You know, that you were brought up in a house, you were the only girl? Is that right?

Maggie Combs 10:12

Yeah.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 10:12

So you were, you were brought up in a household where you were respected?

Maggie Combs 10:18

Yeah, it's interesting.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 10:19

As a female.

Maggie Combs 10:21

I, we, I was talking to my mom about this the other day, because, um, you know, my, my parents would absolutely consider themselves complementarian which I, you know, I didn't know. I don't know about the label of it anymore what it means but,

Elyse Fitzpatrick 10:40

Us, either.

Maggie Combs 10:43

But they didn't fall into a lot of the traps. I think. My dad, my dad's dad, left his mom with five kids when my dad was very young. And married-- I think was already married to someone else. And just like, never spoke to them again. And so my dad basically has no earthly father experience. And he really, really tried to work at creating, or at being a father in the likeness of God.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 11:18

How wonderful for you.

Maggie Combs 11:20

Yeah, he did a really good job, not a perfect job. But you know, obviously, we have a pretty good relationship that we-- we can live next door on his land with him now. So we live right next door to my parents and get to have them as a really active part of our, in our family and with our boys. And I get to see him teaching my boys and everything now. And my mom is a really strong woman. And she comes from a family, there's like, probably 130 of us kind of cousins who all live in the Twin Cities now we still get together. Almost all of them are Christians, and all of the women are strong. And so it's just there's, there was never any question, I think about her capacity to lead and she really flourished with my dad, I think he didn't have preconceived notions, maybe because he didn't have a marriage to watch, of exactly what she needed to look like. But then again, also, my parents were married for 10 years before

they had children. They struggled with infertility and infant loss. And so they probably had more time to work out some of those things than some of us do. So I think we all I think all of us as children benefited from the length of time they had been married before we were born, too.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 12:49

So your most recent book, *Motherhood Without All the Rules: Trading Stressful Standards for Gospel Truth*. That's a Moody publication, I want to recommend it. I also want to recommend the writer of the foreword of the book. I know her, she's-- if she says it's a good book, then it's a good book. So talk to us a little bit about what are some of the rules, the common rules established by our world that interfere in the life of a mom.

Maggie Combs 13:29

So our world has a lot of rules for moms. And I think especially in the time that we're in now, those rules have even been amplified and become stronger because moms are under a lot of pressure right now. Kids home, jobs to manage. And they really, one of the primary ones, I think that we're all experiencing is that everything depends upon us that we are in charge of making sure the family happens and everyone is safe and healthy. And that, that depends upon us. And then also that because all that depends upon us, we really need escapes from motherhood, we just got to get out of there sometimes. And that's all compounded by this rule that we have to be more than just a mom, that there has to be something else giving us happiness and pleasure in our lives as well.

Eric Schumacher 14:28

So you say that the subtitle is "trading stressful standards for gospel truths." So I want to just go through a couple of those stressful standards and have you tell us how the gospel answers those things, but first of all, for our listeners. Could you give us a one to two minute just short summary of the gospel?

Maggie Combs 14:54

Absolutely. So the gospel is-- first starts with some bad news, which I think we all know in our hearts, we are all sinners. And we don't measure up to the standards of God. So there are standards, and we just cannot measure up to them on our own. But the gospel is that Jesus came for sinners, he didn't come for the healthy but for the sick. And so if you see that you are weak and incapable, God has a solution for that. He sent Jesus, his only son, to die on a cross for our sins, taking the punishment for our sins, and then rising again, to bring us to new life with him. And the purpose is not to make us perfect people, but so that we can stand before God and be in relationship with him.

Eric Schumacher 15:52

That is beautiful. And so let's talk about how that message, the gospel speaks to some of these standards. So one of the standards you list is that mom and dad have to be on the same page. So tell us about that standard. And then what does the gospel say to that?

Maggie Combs 16:12

Yeah, so this is a really common one, I remember I was with a group of young moms that I was discipling. And we were talking about the struggling with disagreeing with our husbands on how we

parent, right? And one of them just kind of said really quietly, "But like, do we have to be on the same page?" And I was like, that just kind of made me step back and is like, No, you know, the point isn't always agreement. Because God has given us-- made us-- image bearers, who are meant to work together in unity in our family. And so we have a fellow image bearer who's working with us, our husbands, and we, as women may be tempted to control and think, well, I'm the one who reads all of the parenting books, and he never reads, so probably I know what's best. So we just need to do it my way. And so we are tempted to control but God has given us a really good gift in our husbands, it wasn't a mistake, whoever your parent-- your husband is, it wasn't a mistake that he is the parent of your child. And so we can be together in unity by being on the same page instead-- or, not being on the same page. But by being united in Christ, that means we know that the goal of this time together as parents is to help our children see Christ. I love Paul Tripp calls parents ambassadors for Christ. And so you can be on the same team. If you just think of a football team, I mean, how many different positions and personalities, all those kinds of things, right? And yet, they can work together as one for one common goal. And so that's what we are with our husbands. We're working together as one, as fellow image bearers, both chosen by God to parent these children, to lead them as to be ambassadors of Christ to them.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 18:12

So you're the mom of three sons, and--

Maggie Combs 18:17

It's an adventure!

Elyse Fitzpatrick 18:19

Myself, husband, Phil, he has three other brothers, and there are no sisters. And I know how hard it was for his mom, who always wanted to have a daughter, which is one of the reasons that Jessica is as spoiled as she is.

Maggie Combs 18:38

That explains a lot,

Elyse Fitzpatrick 18:40

so many things,

Eric Schumacher 18:41

It's not because she takes after her mom.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 18:44

No. So um, how do you-- what would you have to say to moms who have only sons or moms who have only daughters, and they're, you know, really longing for a different gender?

Maggie Combs 19:01

Yeah, this was a real struggle for me. I think I had kind of, honestly I probably dreamed of having a daughter more than I dreamt of being like married as a child. I had a really good relationship with my

mom. And she was always leading women and Bible studies, and we constantly had young women in our home. I remember when I was in, I think ninth grade, she had college women meeting in our home for a Beth Moore Bible study. And I did it along with them. And I said, afterwards, I said, Mom, I, I think my friends would want to do this, you know, there just wasn't content out there really getting teen girls into the word and she was like, Okay, well, I'll lead that, and so she led that-- she ended up leading that for I think, like 10 or 15 years even after I left high school.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 19:55

Wow

Maggie Combs 19:57

And so, that was the a real gift to me to see a woman just in constant ministry, she is always discipling women, she has women that she first had as seniors in high school in youth group, and she still meets with sometimes. And it's, you know, 15 or 20 years later, and she just really invests in those. And so I learned by example, and I wanted a daughter that I got to pass that along to. It was really important to me. And there were lots of other frivolous reasons I wanted a daughter, like I wanted a friend to go shopping with and I wanted to get manicures and pedicures together and all of those things. But I also like had that really strong desire for a daughter to raise up in this passion for discipling other women. And I thought, well, this is a good desire, like why wouldn't God give it to me? Right? It didn't, it was mystifying to me. And we got pregnant with our third earlier than I planned on and I thought, well, surely now, this is like this baby is gonna be born 13 months after my last one. It's gonna be intense.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 21:06

Wow.

Maggie Combs 21:08

Obviously, God will just give me the daughter I want, then, he wouldn't like ask me to do both, you know, um, and then I found out it was a boy. And I had to name him Judah. Because that's in the story of Rachel and Leah.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 21:25

Uh huh!

Maggie Combs 21:26

And, um, Leah's looking for the approval of her husband, right? And the love of her husband by having two sons. And then she gets to Judah. And she just says, like, now I will praise God.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 21:37

Yeah.

Maggie Combs 21:38

And so I named him Judah, because it was like, This isn't what I planned for. This isn't what I hoped for. But I'm just going to praise God anyways. But that didn't mean it wasn't a real struggle. And it took uh, the first thing I had to do was recognize that it was okay to grieve. It was okay to grieve the loss of a

desire, the loss of a plan. And that that grief could be real. And it was just acceptable for me to be really sad for a while. And then God, really used Psalm 145, to draw me back to him. Where he just taught me that he opens his hands, and satisfies the desires of all things. And then it also says that he's kind in all his works, because I think I really struggled with God's kindness, like I knew that he was good. And I knew that he was sovereign, but like his, I think of kindness is kind of God's goodness towards us, specifically, individually. And I could see like, how could it be kind for him to do this, to not give me this, and then to see that, by withholding this good gift I have given been given the gift of always knowing that I will not be fulfilled by the things of the Earth. I am always to be longing after God, who's the only place I can be fulfilled and happy. And I know that if I had been given a daughter, it probably would have been a lifelong struggle of some idolatry for me. And so I think God in His kindness, chose to instead give me a reminder to just keep on looking to him. And so I would just encourage women who are struggling with motherhood, not looking the way they expected or other losses. I know a lot of a lot of women who have heard the story have reached out and said to me, Well, maybe I just like, I'm actually really sad about my mom isn't the kind of grandma that I wanted her to be. And we don't have the kind of mother daughter relationship I longed for. So there's lots of things we hope for in motherhood that may not come true. And I think that God can actually be too kind to give us everything we want. Because he knows that it'll just blind our eyes to the goodness of relationship that's waiting right in front of us with him. Okay, I want to say something here, Maggie, you are a godly wise woman. And it's such a joy to listen to you, as you have processed through a death of a dream. Death of a sad a sadness as you've processed through the dealings of the Lord in your life. So, you know, I just want to say to you, I'm so proud of you, and how the Lord is using and has used and has worked in your life that you have something of such great value to say to other women. So thank you for sharing your-- for being vulnerable enough to share your sorrow, but then also Honey, to, to say, this is what God has taught me. And that's so beautiful. You're such a woman of value. Thank you, Elyse. That's, um, that means a lot to hear I-- I was saying to my parents the other day that I've admired you for a really, really long time. And I used to admire you, because you were one of the quote unquote, like accepted women.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 25:32

I used to be.

Maggie Combs 25:35

Right. So now, I admire you, because you aren't concerned about being accepted. You're concerned about doing the work that God has put before you and yeah, that really means a lot. It can be-- people can be really judgmental about things that we're sad about, what things that bring us pain like that. Especially, like, you know, there's women who struggle with infertility and stuff.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 26:05

Yes.

Maggie Combs 26:06

So, I've, so we, we tend to like stuff that pain down and not talk about it, and then be afraid to share how God has spoken to us in it and all of that, and actually, Psalm 145, the whole point is that you're telling of God's faithfulness. And so that really encouraged me to learn to share that story. And to not

compare our pains with one another think-- as, you know, women, there's such, there's such a temptation towards comparison. Or, and that I would like, when my kid falls down on their bike, I don't come up to them and say, like, they're crying, you know, I don't come up to my son and say, like, "Well, you think that's pain? I gave birth to you. And you were 10 pounds, you know, um, we say, Ah, I know what pain feels like, I know what suffering is. And so I just want to come along side you and weep with you and be sad together and then find the goodness of the gospel in our pain. You know, that reminds me Sorry, Eric, I know you're going to you're going to ask an important question. But it-- this this really reminds me of the way that when, sometimes when women talk about their sadnesses, it reminds me of the story of Elkanah and Hannah, and how she's grieving over the fact that she has no children. And he says-- I love this sentence, because it's so completely tone deaf-- He says, "Am I not better to you than 10 sons?" And it's like, uh, no, actually, you're a good guy, but not so much. But it's like, sometimes that's how we-- that's how we talk to people who are suffering. And the thing that, you know, you're suffering with, that this child that was unexpected, and came in some ways too soon, or made it more difficult. And that wasn't, wasn't a girl. So you don't have anybody to go do foofy things and shop with whatever. And then people can say, Well, so what you've got three kids, what do you want? I mean, they're all healthy, get over it. And and it's that same sort of idea with Elkanah. That's so completely tone deaf, to-- what, what people go through and what I go through may or may not be something that would even speak to you or bother you. Yeah, it's interesting. People are always like, Don't-- Don't let your sons hear that. And my sons have no question that I want them, that I love them, that I love being their mother, like-- like they can't understand that there's, you know, realness and nuance to life and all of that but it's like they will never grow up and listen to this and go like, Wow, did mom not want me? Did she not love me? Because they know, they know from my life with them. And you know, the story of Hannah, I actually mentioned in motherhood without all the rules because-- there's that thing where it's like she gets she gets the baby she's been longing for right? And then she gives me back to God and I was like, That's not fair. Like, you know, really struggling with that. But she understood. She, she got it, like, she got that this, that God was better even than this child that she longed for for so long. And that he was her good gift. Because like, like, when we moved out to the farm, I kind of tried to tell myself like, okay, now this was the other thing you really longed for, and you got it. So just like, that should outweigh the thing you didn't get and just be happy, you know? Um, and we kind of have this, like, You deserved that. She deserves this. Or, like, I had a cousin who was single for a really, really long time. And then she got married. And then she was-- struggled with infertility. And everyone who knew her was like, Are you kidding me? God? Like, she deserves now to have this be easy, right? Um, but we're putting our stock in the things of this world when our inheritance is Christ Himself. And all of the promises are already Yes in God and so when you feel like God is just saying no to you over and over and over, he has never stopped saying yes to you.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 31:26

Yeah.

Eric Schumacher 31:26

Yeah. That's good. That's one of the things, I really appreciate--

Elyse Fitzpatrick 31:29

Preach it!

Eric Schumacher 31:32

Amen. So that's one of the things I really appreciate about both of you is, is looking beyond this world to who we are, and what we have in Christ. And, you know, you've applied that so well to dreams we have that don't come about. Another stressful standard that you mentioned in your book is that image is everything. And so talk to us about how women are stressed by an image, particularly mothers are stressed by an image they feel like they need to conform to, and how does the gospel speak to that?

Maggie Combs 32:12

Yeah, I think, you know, obviously, we live in an age of social media, that's no surprise to anyone. And even if it's like, a good desire, we see a lot of, we see a lot of women to compare ourselves to, and that comparison can do-- can motivate us to change. But it also can be unrealistic, because what we're seeing on the screen isn't a whole picture of their lives. And you know, what, it doesn't need to be. Like, I don't need to share every piece of my life with the world on social media. But there's this-- so, I was reading, I was doing some research on this and there when mommy blogging first kind of hit the scene, before social media went crazy, it was like-- there was a real, like, show the authentic like, show the imperfect. So there was really an encouragement to that. And women were being really real and raw and open about what motherhood is. And then Instagram came along. And it's all about looking beautiful, you know? That's why I'm not that good at it. But that's why I had to be-- I'm like, I love my job at Well-Watered Women because I can create the content and someone else who's gifted in creating beautiful things can create a beautiful thing to go along with it.

Eric Schumacher 33:40

Here's a picture of a slaughtered cow.

Maggie Combs 33:45

Yeah! So then what happened is we got all these mom-- "momfluencers," they're called, and they are singing in their words, like, you don't have to be perfect, just be-- be one kind of mom, all of these things, but then they're showing the perfect picture with it. And there's this incongruence until there's a pressure that's greater even than before because it's like, well, she's saying that this is imperfect, but it still looks perfect. And so like, gosh, even her imperfectness looks so much better than I could ever manage on my best day. And we just are tempted to long for that instant transformation, even if it's like say a godly woman who we're following on Instagram, and she's got all this truth and we long to be more like her that is a great longing, but we don't-- we want it to be instant. We want to like slap a filter on our lives and have it look beautiful and that is not how sanctification works. Sanctification is a slow process. It's full of lots of ups and downs and lots of, you know, being in Romans Seven. Jared Wilson talks in his book, *The Imperfect Disciple* is so great, talking about being stuck in Romans Seven, where it's, I don't do the things I want to do. And I'm always doing the things I don't want to do, and how to move into Romans Eight, where we are a new creation in Christ. And so it really distracts. This focus on image really distracts from the true work of growing in holiness, which has to be done only in intimate relationship with you and God, and with, you know, fellowship with people in your real life community who can come alongside you and say, first of all, say, like, Hey, I'm not sure if you're seeing this blind spot, but also be the person to say, I don't know that you see how much God has sanctified you in this place. And so I really encourage women to make a practice of doing that with each other, when you see

a friend who's growing, to take the time to text her, pull her aside and say, like, I really see you growing in patience with your children, and I know that is the work of Christ in you. And that takes the focus off of us trying to be perfect, or create these perfect little mom kingdoms that we like to have that are really all about serving ourselves. And it puts the focus back on glorifying God through growing in relationship with him.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 36:31

That's so good, Maggie. And you know, when you when you talk about that, and pointing out the graces that you see in other people, then that also flows over to your relationship with your kids, and how you handle their disobedience, how you handle their growth and sanctification. Do you want to speak to that a little bit?

Maggie Combs 36:57

Yeah, what-- you know, one of the best tools I found in, I'm going to call it discipline. And by that I don't mean punishment, but growing my children up in the path of the Lord, is to recognize when they're doing really well, to say,

Elyse Fitzpatrick 37:15

Right.

Maggie Combs 37:16

Hey, I know this has been a struggle with you. And I know we even talked about it last week, and then I saw you make the choice to let your brother go first, today, even though you really like to be the first one to run up the staircase, I might have one of those. And to let him know that I see his sanctification when it's happening, and then say, that is the work of God in you. So that we aren't raising little legalists, who are just trying to live up to our standards or and then fall in constantly. That's the trap of legalism, is we're always falling into somebody's standards. And very often it is not God's-- or it is God's by our own power, which only lasts so long. But we're raising people who understand both their weakness before God and their strength in Christ.

Eric Schumacher 38:16

Maggie, one more question. You mentioned to us, there's something that you really appreciated out of the Worthy book. And, if our listeners don't know, that's the that's the book that Elyse and I co-wrote together. And they should have it. And in fact, Maggie has two copies of it. And--

Maggie Combs 38:37

I do.

Eric Schumacher 38:38

Yeah

Elyse Fitzpatrick 38:39

She's doubly blessed.

Eric Schumacher 38:40

And she's still unsupermommy. So. But you hear how well she knows the gospel. So. Anyway, you go ahead and bring up what you wanted to talk about.

Maggie Combs 38:52

Yeah, I first of all, there's like, there's like 50 things. We could have a podcast. Like I was totally jealous of Beth Moore getting to come on here and interview you guys. But.

Eric Schumacher 39:03

Maybe we can do that later?

Maggie Combs 39:04

Yeah, absolutely. Um, one of the things that meant a lot to me is this question that I often get from moms is, Okay, well, what do I do if my, if I want my children to be doing this? Growing in the Lord, I want them to be memorizing Bible verses. I want us to be having devotions together. What do I do if my husband won't lead the devotions? And it was just so meaningful to me, when I read your book, you spoke about how women and men are in mutual service together as husbands and wives and that we can both according to our giftings be speaking the gospel into our children's lives and that it's not-- that a woman does not have to wait on her husband, feeling either the prompting of The Holy Spirit or her nagging, to--

Elyse Fitzpatrick 40:02

Right. Right.

Maggie Combs 40:03

--start doing family devotions, um, that and-- I think of even my own circumstance where I am especially gifted at teaching the Word and so for me to stand back and not get the chance to do that with my children would be-- not-- would be wasting my talents, would be burying them in the sand versus using them for His glory in my own family. And so, yeah, we want to be working with our husbands for the spiritual edification of our children. But if your husband is not interested, don't wait. Move forward with whatever you're feeling called to do. God is calling you to implement a new way of your children growing in the Lord. Don't be afraid to move forward on that.

Eric Schumacher 40:34

Yeah.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 40:59

Right. We've got a great example of that in the New Testament in the lives of Lois and Eunice and Timothy, and Lois and Eunice brought Timothy up in the scriptures. And Timothy's dad wasn't a believer. So, women, you can do this.

Maggie Combs 41:16

Absolutely.

Eric Schumacher 41:17

And I think, you know, that's one of the things that can be freeing to realize about both being a mom or a dad or a husband or a wife is that the New Testament doesn't give us a lot of rules or directions for what that means. I think, one time I was teaching a Sunday school class and it was supposed to be on parenting. And I realized that I think there might be only two direct verses in the New Testament--

Elyse Fitzpatrick 41:47

Right

Eric Schumacher 41:47

--speaking about parenting. And you know, fathers bring your children up in the fear and admonition of the Lord. But there's not a practical, This is exactly how it looks. And so we bring in all these implications, and then make concrete applications that turn into commands written in stone, that the Father has to lead all the family devotions and, or things like that, and the New Testament just doesn't give us those sorts of rules. And so I think there's a lot of freedom for us in Christ to figure out what it looks like in our family to bring our children up in the faith.

Maggie Combs 42:30

Absolutely. And I think there's, like we, I mentioned before, that tendency for women to compare, because they want to make sure, with the people around them that they're kind of like looking at them, how are they doing it to get things right. And I just remember, even like, when I first got married, it was like, Oh, submission looks different in my marriage, a lot different than it does in some of my friends', and that it doesn't-- we're not all carbon copies of each other, because we're all created differently. And it can function in healthy ways, but look very different from your friend's marriage or-- the way you're parenting together can look completely different than your friends' does and still be healthy and God glorifying and honoring.

Eric Schumacher 43:17

Yeah. So you've been listening to the Worthy podcast with our guest Maggie Combs, the author of *Motherhood Without All The Rules: Trading Stressful Standards for Gospel Truths*, and we hope that you will go out and get that book, whether you're a mom or a dad, I think dads can profit from reading this book too. Just exchange the titles and Gospel truths are Gospel truths. So you'll be helped by Maggie, even though you're not a super mommy, we think you're a woman of whom the world is not worthy. And we thank you for being on our podcast and blessing and ministering to our guests.

Maggie Combs 43:56

Thank you so much for having me.

Elyse Fitzpatrick 43:59

Thanks, Maggie.