

Grit 'n' Grace — THE PODCAST

Episode #248: How to Live in the Joy of a No-Regrets Life

Cheri Gregory

Okay, Amy, it is time to play the word association game.

Amy Carroll

Well, you know I love a game.

Cheri Gregory

All right, so you're on first. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when I say the word 'regret?'

Amy Carroll

Literally, the perm that my mom gave me when I was in sixth grade.

Cheri Gregory

(Laughs) Alright, I must know more about this. Like, whose idea was it even?

Amy Carroll

Well, whose idea were home perms? Like that, that person should – they should be steeped in regret.

Cheri Gregory

They should. Oh my goodness. Okay. So what happened? What did you end up looking like?

Amy Carroll

Well, I mean, it was not a good look. You know, the poodle look is not good on humans.

Cheri Gregory

Are there any photos?

Amy Carroll

I'm sure there aren't.

Cheri Gregory

Alright, that means I'm going to have to go do some digging.

Amy Carroll

How about you? When I say 'regret,' Cheri, what do you think?

Cheri Gregory

Well, mine is less funny. What comes to my mind is regret is the story of my life.

Amy Carroll

Yeah, I think we can all feel that a little.

Cheri Gregory

Yeah. So it's a good thing that we have Rhonda Stoppe on with us today.

Amy Carroll

We can easily become paralyzed by our regrets, giving up the life God has for us and surrendering His joy.

Cheri Gregory

Although we all have sins, disappointments, and heartaches, it's possible to surrender those points of regret to God in ways that release us.

Amy Carroll

Today, Rhonda Stoppe, the no regrets woman, shares biblical strategies that help us to move forward and freedom and joy.

Cheri Gregory

Well, this is Cheri Gregory –

Amy Carroll

– and I'm Amy Carroll –

Cheri Gregory

– and you're listening to Grit'N'Grace: The Podcast that equips you to lose who you're not love who you are, and live your one life well.

Amy Carroll

Today we're talking with Rhonda Stoppe, also known by the charming name 'the no regrets woman.'

Cheri Gregory

Rhonda is a popular Christian speaker and author of six books including *Real Life Romance: Inspiring Stories to Help You Believe in True Love*, *The Marriage Mentor: Becoming The Couple You Long To Be*, and *Moms Raising Sons to be Men*.

Amy Carroll

Rhonda is a favorite radio and podcast guest appearing frequently on Focus on the Family.

Cheri Gregory

With over 30 years of experience in helping women build a no regrets life, Rhonda helps women to discover significance and purpose for their lives,

Amy Carroll

impact the moral fiber of the next generation by raising children with integrity,

Cheri Gregory

find victory over people-pleasing,

Amy Carroll

parent without regrets,

Cheri Gregory

enjoy the kind of marriage that others dream about,

Amy Carroll

build an incredible legacy,

Cheri Gregory

become more influential than they ever dreamed possible.

Amy Carroll

Join Rhonda's free no regrets women community by signing up for her newsletter at noregetswoman.com.

Cheri Gregory

You can also learn more about Rhonda's books and schedule her to speak at your event at noregretswoman.com.

Amy Carroll

Rhonda, your trademark is the no regrets woman. Oh girl, I'm soaking it in right now. How and why did you make this your brand?

Rhonda Stoppe

Wow, that's such a great question to just start right off the bat.

Amy Carroll

We're diving in.

Rhonda Stoppe

Uh huh. I – my publisher harvest house hired a marketing expert to help me. I have six books out. I hate marketing. I want to write. I want to minister. I want to come alongside and I want to help women live the life they had hoped that they would live, build the marriages, raise the kids, towards no regrets lives. And this marketing expert was reading all my stuff. And we were trying to come up with a brand. And in a lot of the things I'd say 'if you apply these principles to your life, you'll have no regrets.' And 'if you do this, you'll look back one day without regrets.' And he goes "Rhonda, you're the no regrets woman." And I'm like, dang, dang. That's who I am.

My husband's been a pastor. He was a youth pastor for 18 years. He's been a senior pastor for almost 21 now and in the many years that I have mentored and ministered to youth, to college career, to women, we get an opportunity to speak truth into their lives, from our own successes, our own failures, from biblical

principles, to help them live a life built without regrets. And I think of Jesus story where He said, “The wise man built his house upon the rock, the foolish on the sand.” We're all tempted to build our house, our little cute shack on the sand by the ocean because it's beautiful, and it's quick, and it's fast. You don't have to get permits for foundation, you just move in, and then the storms will come. And when those storms come, if it's not built on a foundation, you'll have regrets. Your house will come crumbling down. So that is my zeal, my passion.

Women get stuck in regrets. They look back. They wish they could change some things and they get stuck there and they think God can't use them because of regretful things they've done in their past. So my passion is to help women break free from those regrets that hold them back and also to make wise decisions to help them build lives without regrets.

Cheri Gregory

Alright, so this is – this sounds appealing. I'll just go ahead and confirm that – so I'm going to be your naysayer here. Not intentionally. I'm not trying to be difficult, but I mean, my life is just characterized by regret. And then this phrase I learned last year ‘self-recrimination.’ So Amy and I are word nerds. So can we start with a definition of what regret is and isn't? Like how does regret differ from say, guilt or embarrassment or sorrow? Like when you use the word regret, what are you talking about?

Rhonda Stoppe

Twofold. When we're looking back at our lives, and we're keeping a record of our wrongs, of our regrets, of those things that we wish we would have done differently or that we wish we – those words we wish we could take back, those actions that we wish we could clean up and not have follow us around, and give us a view of ourselves of shame. Those regrets, we get stuck there.

I think that a lot of women I talked to – let's talk about abortion, they have had an abortion, and they think if anyone ever knew I have this shame on me, that I did this thing, that if all of these church ladies knew that I had done this thing, they would never – fill in the blank. Trust me, maybe you know, whatever. I'm 60 years old. I think they said 45% of women my age have had an abortion, and the number might be higher in the 70s when it became legal. Girls in my youth group, no one was talking about it. So a lot of women believed it was okay, and they went and then later they had regret and they get stuck there.

But there's also a regret that is things I wish I would have done. I wish I would have gone back to school. I wish I would have been kinder to my first husband, 'cause he probably would have, you know, reciprocated, or I wish I would have done something to build my life in a different path. And those regrets, we can just get so stuck, that we can't see the future that God has for us because whatever is behind us – I love what Paul says, "Forgetting what lies behind, I press on." I shake that – I won't let satan get me stuck there.

What was Paul talking about? The apostle Paul was the one holding the cloaks and cheering them on as they stoned Stephen, the young man proclaiming the gospel who had the face of an angel, and the Bible says Saul was cheering them on, not just watching and not stopping them, he was antagonizing them. I gotta think that there were times that Paul could think about that, regret that he did, that face of an angel, the young man that sang "Father forgive them." And he didn't get stuck there. He let the Holy Spirit wash away remembering that he is his sins are gone as far as east is from the west. And he was able to push on, to press on with his eyes fixed on Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith, and run the race that God has set before him and not believe the lies of the enemy that

says you didn't live perfectly so God can't use you now. In fact, I teach more zealously from my failures than I do from my successes.

Amy Carroll

So true, isn't it? And you gave us some of those big regrets that women have. And I mean, I have some regrets from like the pandemic times, just losing my bacon, you know, at my house, so that my neighbor heard me, that kind of thing. So we've got big regrets and small regrets, and there are lots of things that can hold us back. But what advice do you have for breaking free? How do you think Paul did that?

Rhonda Stoppe

You know, for myself, in my own life, the stuff that I regret, the things that I wish I could take back, I can't. But if what we have, "What a man thinks in his heart, so is he." So if I keep thinking on what I did not do or what I wish I could change, I am stuck there. But as I take control of my thoughts, you think about – you wash your mind with the water of the Word. I have so much Scripture memorized, because it's the word of God that's quick and powerful and sharper than a sword. And it cuts to the thoughts and intents of my very own heart.

And oftentimes my pride is what keeps me stuck. I don't want people to think badly of me or I want to appear like I have it in control. I think that the first thought is to take those thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ, to recognize that it's sin, because sin, Satan comes to steal, kill and destroy. And the Bible says he's a liar. He is the father of lies, and he's a liar. And for some of us, we've been hiding something that we're ashamed of for such a long time.

And I think of David and Bathsheba, this godly king who, when he was a young boy wrote the most incredible Psalms worship, he fought a giant with the strength

of the Lord. He didn't even kill Saul when he had a chance because he wouldn't raise his hand to God's anointed. That's an example of an apple of God's eye of the man after God's own heart. But that same man, when he was comfortable, had an affair with a woman that wasn't his wife and then sent her husband to his death to cover his sin and they got married and they hid it. For about a year he pretended to be a godly king. And it wasn't until Nathan the Prophet approached him and said, you're the man. But I love what David says, because he says the stones that you crushed, he talks to God about how convicted he was as he hid his sin. But when he finally repented – which just means agree with God it's sin so that he can wash you whiter than snow – he said then he was free. And then he could teach sinners Your way.

God has so much he wants to do through us. But if we're stuck in regret or fear of being found out, we are not the vessel God wants us to be. To build no regrets lives and to help others build lives without regrets.

Amy Carroll

So good. Those are some good practical steps. Memorizing scripture, so practical. Thank you.

Cheri Gregory

So just listening to it, it sounds like one way we get stuck in these kinds of regrets is failure to repent.

Rhonda Stoppe

Right. And I love that word. Because I feel like in the church, we try to be so proper, you know, we don't say I sinned and I need to repent. We're like oh, I made a mistake, or oh, you know –

Cheri Gregory

– I made an unhealthy choice –

Rhonda Stoppe

Yeah, there you go. Or how about this: a moral failure.

Cheri Gregory

Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

Rhonda Stoppe

I sin, girl, I sin, I am a sinner! And I know that if I'm left to my own thoughts, I always go back to the woman I am without Jesus, if I don't spend time in the Word –

and let me just tell you a story when I was a new wife, and when I was a young mom, I knew I wasn't the wife I meant to be. I knew I wasn't the mom I wanted to be. I was terrible at it. I had unmet expectations. And I would, you know, make my husband suffer because he did not measure up to my expectations. And I knew I came from a long line of divorces, I came from a long line of marriages that fell apart simply because of unmet expectations. And I was walking down that path. And I didn't know how to change. And in fact, I was just messaging someone last night that was telling me some stuff going on in her marriage. And I, you know, tried to give her some information, I gave her a link to a marriage counselor to help her get some help, because it was a deep rooted concern that she can't break free from, but I knew I needed help.

And Titus 2 calls the older women to teach the younger, how to love their husbands, which means be a friend to him and how to love their children. And that's really the books that I write. It's just to come alongside and be a mentor.

But I looked around at the women that were in – the parents of our kids in our youth group, and I looked at their marriages, and I looked at their kids that actually liked them. And I'm like, I want to know what you know. And these women became friends with me. They invited me to a Bible study. I'm like, I don't need to study the Bible. I know all that. I need to know how to be better. And they invited me – it was a preset five hours of homework a week. I'm like, are you crazy? I'm busy! But I went because it was free babysitting, and I got to hang out with grownups for three hours. That's literally why.

But it was the book of Philippians. And that book transformed me. It showed me my own sin. It showed me what God wanted to change in me, and it brought me to repentance. I love Philippians so much. I have, in the last – I'm 60 years old. So I would say in the last five years, God really convicted me that I wasn't still memorizing Scripture. I'm like, I'm old, you know. And I have been memorizing the book of Philippians. And I don't get out of bed every morning until I go through. I've got all of chapter four, chapter one, and most of chapter two memorized. I'm hoping by the time I'm dead, I got it all memorized.

But when I'm stuck, that drives out those thoughts of regret, and it it drives out those who I am without Christ motivations, and it is powerful. It is a sword. And if we don't take hold on to that sword, I think of Nehemiah, when he told them the joy of the Lord is your strength. They were fighting off the enemy with one hand, with a sword, and a trowel in the other as they built their wall. And that's what we do when we build our families. We build with one hand and we fight the enemy with the sword of the word with the other hand, that's where there's power. And that's where you will build a life without regrets.

Cheri Gregory

All right, well, speaking of building families, in your new audio book, *Moms Raising Sons to be Men*, you tell a story of a time where you felt actual despair. Could you share that story with us and our listening friends?

Rhonda Stoppe

Yes. When we had moved to Austin, Texas, and we planted a church there. We had a youth group in our house every Wednesday night. We had 200 teenagers. If you feed them, they will come. And these kids were coming to Christ. And my son had a seizure that lasted 28 minutes long, and it was terrible. And they did brain scans on him. In fact, he was asleep. I went over and I kissed his little temple while he was asleep and the the techs circled it and wrote 'mom's kiss.' She said they know you kiss them when they're sleeping. So I always went in and kissed my junior highers when they were asleep. Just so they knew I still love them.

But when Brandon had a severe seizure one night, I went up in my room and I wept and I said, I quit. I'm done. We're serving you and you can't heal my son. I'm out of here. But if we hide God's Word in his in our hearts, we won't sin against Him. And as I was weeping before the Lord ready to walk away. I heard – and not audibly, but as strongly as I can tell you, in my heart and everything, give thanks for this as the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. And I said, no, there's not one good thing I can think of that can come out of my son's seizures. But I'll say thank you with my lips if you change my heart.

Long story, it's in *Moms Raising Sons to be Men*. I actually wrote an article for Encourage magazine about this. And I told the Lord, You changed my heart. And I will speak thanks with my mouth. Slowly, we saw that Brandon was becoming a musician. He was six years old when this all started, with band practice in our house every Wednesday night after youth group because we met in a school and

every musician that he sat behind, he learned to play. He grew up. I wanted – I was coach in high school cheerleading at the time. Let me tell you, that's a cult in and of itself. But my goal was to see my son run down the field. I wanted to hear the crowd glory in my son's accomplishments.

But God got this mom out of the way, I would have raised an arrogant little athlete. God wanted to raise up my son to bring the crowd to glory in His son's accomplishments through worship. Brandon's a worship pastor now, he just took a job closer to home at Modesto, Big Valley Grace Church. So he's close to home. He's been down in Southern California. So we're super happy. He's close by.

But 10 years later, my daughter gave birth to a daughter that had something called Goldenhar syndrome. And it's a cleft mouth, cleft palate, cleft lip. She's had five surgeries so far. And I walked in after Meredith had kind of processed it all. And I said, How are you doing? And she said, Mom, this is Ivy's trial. And God has invited us to prepare Ivy for her trial. Now, timeout, what if I had walked away when Brandon was having seizures? I would have regretted it. And most likely, I'd have come back because the Holy Spirit's meaning wouldn't have left me alone till I repented. But at what cost? My daughter Meredith was in – I think she was in junior high or high school at the time watching how we walked through this heartbreak. God was preparing Meredith for a decade later to mother a child that would have special needs. No regrets, ladies, no regrets.

Amy Carroll

Wow. Sometimes parents or a spouse say negative things that make us feel stuck. So why is it important to break free from the negative scripts we have in our heads? And how can we do that?

Rhonda Stoppe

I think that's a very common, very common – whether it's a parent that said you'll never amount to anything, or whether you just didn't feel your worth, because you weren't cherished by a spouse or by parents, maybe your dad was there but not involved. Maybe he left. We can get stuck there. And we long to find our worth and our value in who loves us. We want to be loved. Well, we ache to be loved.

Well, the problem is, no one can love us like that. God created us for that ache and that longing to find our worth in who loves us, but He wants to be the one to love us like that. And He proved his love for us by sending His Son. If you don't know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, find me at noregretswoman.com. Message me and I would gladly share with you the hope of the gospel. Because in Christ, we find our worth and our value. And then we don't have to look to others, really, as an idol to give us the worth that they can't ever give. There are real hurts, there is real pain, there is real stuff that our parents have done to us. I was molested as a little girl when I was six years old. I know how that affected me. It's not, I'm not discounting that those things aren't affected. That's where we go find a Titus 2 woman, we go find a counselor. If you go to my website on my homepage, you can click on Focus on the Family. It'll take you to free counselors and start there.

Cheri Gregory

So Rhonda, you've got a free resource that our friends who are listening can get also on your website. And this has to do with money, which is often associated with regrets. So tell us more about that.

Rhonda Stoppe

My husband Steven and I wrote a book called *The Marriage Mentor: Becoming The Couple You Long To Be* and it was too long. So they took out the chapter on

money, which to me, most marriage troubles are about money. But it's the myth of more money equals less stress. If you sign up for my newsletter, you will get that for free. And it also has videos, all of those chapters from that book, Steven, I have videos on my YouTube channel that you can watch for free. And we'll talk about the money myth. But yeah, and if you sign up for my newsletter, I'm trying to get another book – publishers now look more at your numbers for your newsletter than they do for your social media. I won't badger you, I'll send you like one a month of what's going on and you can be part of my no regrets community and you'll get that free resource.

Amy Carroll

Well, it sounds valuable because I think statistically, it's the biggest fight in marriages is over money, right? So yes, something valuable for free.

So our friends who listen to Grit'N'Grace always have the best questions and they gave us some for you.

The first one is 'So what do you do when you think of things that you wish you had done differently or that you hadn't done at all? How do you stop ruminating over it?'

Rhonda Stoppe

I have to talk about it out loud and I need people in my life that are not going to go "Oh, you – that was okay. You didn't mean to do that." or "You tried." or – you know what I'm saying? Because I really think that God says we should confess our sins to one another. I'm not talking about going to confession. But I am talking about having trusted individuals in our lives that love Jesus more than they love us and love God's word, and are grounded in sound doctrine that are going to give us truth when we need to hear it.

For me, that's my husband, I will tell him, my sister – I just got emotional. My sister just passed away a month ago from an overdose. And she had been addicted to prescription medication for more than 20 years. And we had reached out, we had done family interventions, we had done a lot of things. And in 2019, I was going to go to Texas to speak at something and I was going to try to see her, I shattered my wrist, I couldn't go. 2020, I was going to speak at the same event, 2020, I couldn't go. And then 2021, I was going to go to the national radio broadcasters in Houston. And then I was going to try to see my sister and I got COVID and I couldn't go. And then she died.

And I was so regretting that I didn't get one more opportunity to look in her face, to tell her I love her, to ask her to try one more time. And I kind of beat myself up with that. And my brother, who has also been through his own alcoholism, and he now leads to celebrate recovery group and he's amazing. And my husband both let me talk about my regret and then reminded me if God wanted me to be there, I would have been there and that God purposely stopped me. And the last conversation I had with her was a good one, was directing her to Christ, examine yourself to see if you're of the faith, it was a good conversation. But Steve spoke truth into my life and said if God wanted you to talk to her one more time, He would have opened that door; He – in fact He slammed it shut right on your wrist. But I think inviting people in our lives that aren't going to just excuse us, but are going to call us – like you said, Cheri, to repentance when we need to repent, help us take thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ. And give us scripture and truth to pull us out of where we might be ruminating.

Amy Carroll

Really good. And thank you for being so vulnerable and sharing that story. We're so sorry about your sister.

Rhonda Stoppe

Yeah, it's hard. She's – we're 14 months apart. Best of friends. We dated brothers in high school. I married one brother, she didn't. Best friends. And it – her life just took a different turn. It's been heart wrenching.

Cheri Gregory

I'm thinking of our – I'm sure we have listeners who have similar, in some ways, scenarios. So thank you for sharing that, that can have so much regret attached to it, oh for what was or wasn't done.

So the next question is from a listener known as me. I sneak my questions in sometimes. One of the things I've noticed is that my regrets are often triggered by returning to locations from my past. So like about a month ago, my husband and I drove by my old elementary school, which is a very rare occurrence. And I just got hit by this flood of memories from when I was a sixth grader. Like, that was the year I accidentally left a gate open, my dog escaped the yard, and got hit by a car. That was the year that in class the girls passed a note that said 'We don't like Cheri today.' It was also the year that I was really mean to a particular girl in the class and still wish I could find her and and apologize to her. So short of avoiding every place on earth that might trigger regrets, which is impractical because the older we get that would kind of like decrease our mobility, like how can we prevent or at least manage being blindsided by these regrets that show up kind of out of the blue? That are maybe either location dependent, or maybe they they show up at Christmas or Easter, maybe it is times of year, where they just kind of come out of the blue?

Rhonda Stoppe

Right. And so many times during the holidays, we meet with family and we have to, you know, share a turkey with someone who's verbally abused us or emotionally abused us or sexually abused us. Those are all triggers. And those are things that honestly it's coming back to regularly, when those triggers occur, running to Jesus, speaking out loud. I am a firm believer that if we just pray in our mind, you're not praying powerfully. And the Bible says "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous one accomplishes much."

When I started talking out loud, using my hands, talking to God, speak in my heart. That's when my intimacy with Him grew. You know, David, why was he the apple of God's eye? Why was he a man after God's own heart? He would be like, God, this sucks. This is horrible. This isn't fair. And this is happening and that's happening and why are you letting it happen? But he always came back after he vented to God, but where else where I go. And then I went into the house of the Lord that I believe is where we take our triggers.

And I'll be vulnerable again. This man that molested me was a church family friend when I was six years old, and I remember just praying oh God, send my daddy, send my daddy, send my daddy, and my daddy came. And I remember – so I can either focus on what happened to me, or that my daddy came before more happened. And honestly, when Steve and I got married, and I was like, hey, I gotta tell you something, it was my little secret. You know, I gotta tell you something, I've never talked about it. But this is what happened to me. And it's weird, because as I've talked – I'm talking about it right now, or there's times when youth or you know, I kept it my secret till I spoke at a youth camp. And I'm like, here's the secret to breaking free of that person that has harmed you, is you forgive them.

And that's how I broke free from this man that molested me is I had to come to the point of saying to the Lord, I don't care if you judge him, or if you save him, he's not my business. And I'm going to break free. Because as we stay tethered to the one who harmed us, it's just like love and hatred. The same thing knits you to a person. So that freedom from – breaking free is the key, and again, having people to talk to you. But there's times like when I'll talk about it, my husband and I'll begin to have sex, and he'll touch me in a way, and it'll remind me of how I was touched as a child. And I have to choose not to think about that. And when we were younger, when we first were married, I said if I move your hand, don't be offended. It's just because I got to wrap my head around not thinking about that thing.

So yeah, it's there. They're there. They're real. But God is bigger than those triggers if we bring them to Him. And if we do the battle in our minds, because it's won and lost in our mind, and greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world.

Amy Carroll

So I know someone who – this is a listener question. 'I know someone who loudly proclaims to live with no regrets, but it seems to be their way of excusing or escaping the consequences of their choices.' So what do you say to someone who uses the phrase, no regrets in this way?

Rhonda Stoppe

Right? There's a commercial where the guy is getting a tattoo, and it says no regard.. And I feel like that's what she's talking about, regard. Because what people will do is it gives them a license to be harsh. It gives them a license to just walk all over people and say what they want to say and do what they want to do and say I'm confident that I did the right thing, and I have no regrets. God calls us

to love. God calls us, you know, 1 Corinthians 13 says “Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, believes all things means believes the best about others,” the Bible says “As far as it depends on you, dwell at peace with all men,” we have to have – and this is only going to work if you're a believer, if you're not, if you're just listening, and you're gonna pull yourself up by your bootstraps, and try harder, good luck to you. I can't do it. I would not – I would have destroyed my marriage, I would have destroyed my children.

I come from a long line of women who hate their mom. My daughters want to be with me. My sons want to spend time with me. I know that's because of Christ in me, the hope of glory. But when we just say what we want to say, and we say I have no regrets, because I was telling the truth. That's not what Jesus was like. Jesus spoke truth, but he also wept over Israel and He said, "How I've longed to draw you to myself, but you would not let me." Brokenness before God, looking in the mirror and knowing if it wasn't for Jesus, I would be – every woman in my family is addicted to something or has been, there's nothing in me that would not have gone the same way that every woman in my family has gone except for Christ in me. So brokenness over our own sin and not harsh, not speaking harshly, but asking the Spirit to guide our tongue and to speak words that are going to encourage and uplift challenge when we need to, but always done in love.

Cheri Gregory

It sounds like this person's no regrets is really no responsibility.

Alright, so the last question from our listeners – this is all a direct quote, she said, “A dear friend used to tell me regrets are a waste of time. That was good advice for me as one who's prone to self flagellation. But I've also learned from regrets. I

put them in my mental what to never do again file. So what's the line between wasting time on regrets and learning from them?"

Rhonda Stoppe

Great question. And here's the truth, the letter to my younger self that I can write to say, hey, don't do this and do that and try this and go back and change that does nothing. It does me no good. But if I can write the letter to my younger self, and give it to the next generation, oh, it's so valuable. And that's the books that I write. In my book, *If My Husband Would Change, I'd Be Happy and Other Myths Wives Believe* it's all about – I know those were my thoughts, and I couldn't change him. And I realized my happiness did not lie in changing my husband. That changes nothing. We've been married 40 years this October. But if I can take a book that I've written, or I can go to somebody and talk to them and say, hey, don't make the same mistake I made.

I had postpartum after my third child. We lived in the middle of nowhere on a generator with no power on a sofa bed. There was only one bedroom in the house. It was my husband's Little House on the Prairie, let's be debt free. I loved him, So I followed him, but I cried a lot of tears. Had a baby and wept, because I was postpartum. And then I was left with really severe PMS PMD after that. I could hide that secret and say, oh no, no, I had it all together. Or I can say I was a wreck. And let me tell you the help that I got.

And let me tell you in the church, we hide those things. We hide depression, we hide postpartum, we hide PMS, because we think, you know, no one will think we're spiritual. But if we're bold enough to say, man, do I regret looking at my husband's face and saying you always and you never, I can help someone else.

One of the stories I tell in *The Marriage Mentor*, when I was going through really severe PMS, and Steve's known me since I was 14 years old. And he's like, "Baby, I don't know who you are anymore." I'm like, "I don't know who I am." And he says, "I don't understand what's happening to you." And I said, "Imagine this, every full moon, you're going to turn into a werewolf, whether you like it or not, it's coming. And when you're aware, you're going to kill whoever is next to you, you will eat your young, you can't stop yourself, that is PMS. When the full moon comes, the only hope I have is that you will lock me in a cage and keep everyone away from me until it's passed." And I literally saw a light bulb on the top of Steve. He's like, I get it. And I you know, word pictures are a powerful way to help someone understand what you're feeling and what you're going through. But that triggered Steve helping me keeping the kids away from me just so I could be quiet and be still and and let me just tell you, it was a difficult season. But if I can share that with someone who's younger than me, and I can say there's helping, there's hope, that makes my regret valuable.

Amy Carroll

I love that redemptive point of view of passing it to the next generation.

So Rhonda, what closing words do you have for our friends who are listening to motivate them to live their lives with no regrets?

Rhonda Stoppe

Press in – you know, just to say I'm a Christian, and I do good things, I've lived the Christian life both ways. I've followed the rules, I've done, you know what's right, don't smoke, chew, or go with the boys that do. There wasn't a zeal or passion for Christ. I was I was arrogant, I was judgmental. I would measure my good deeds against your good deeds. That is not the Christian walk that God has for us.

When I realized that I – first of all had nothing in me that was righteous, nothing. And when I surrendered all that I am to Christ, when I said I don't care what you do to me, I'm all in. I will seek You, I will serve You, I will follow You, I will know You through the pages of Scripture. Jesus said the priority of life is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. That's your whole being. But we go I'm gonna love God with all my strength, with what I can do. And God's like, slow down, skippy. Love Me. Fall in love with Me with your heart, with your soul. That's who you are.

With your mind, wash with the word. Find my character in the pages of Scripture I showed you. My name is Jehovah. He'll fight your battles for you. All of those names that God reveals in the pages of Scripture is His way of saying, "This is who I really am. And you can trust Me and you can fall in love with Me." When we do that – the second commandment Jesus gave was to love your neighbor as yourself. I can't love my neighbor properly, I will love them selfishly every time until my love for God is what it's supposed to be. Then Jesus said, "My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." His love spills out on us, onto our spouse, onto our children onto those around us, onto those that have wounded us, that we have regretfully been treated by them. His love loves them unconditionally. And Psalm 1:19 says "Great peace have they that love thy law and nothing shall offend them." When I'm loving God through His word, I can walk above offense doesn't mean people won't offend me, but I can break free of that I can I can not be stuck in that regretful offense.

Amy Carroll

I can break free and not be stuck in regretful offense. That's a powerful statement for today's culture.

Cheri Gregory

No kidding. I think – isn't regret, or trying to get other people to be stuck in regret, like what it's all about these days?

Amy Carroll

It seems like it. And regretful offense. That's a combination.

Cheri Gregory

Yes, absolutely. So, so helpful.

Well, friends, we sure hope you've enjoyed listening to Episode 248 of Grit'N'Grace: The Podcast as much as we've enjoyed making it for you.

Amy Carroll

Check out our web page at gritnegracethepodcast.com/episode248. There you'll find this week's transcript and a link to Rhonda's website, noregretswoman.com where you can sign up for her newsletter.

Cheri Gregory

So Amy, when was the last time we read a review on air?

Amy Carroll

I don't know, like 1879 or something.

Cheri Gregory

Okay, okay. Okay. Well, friends, reviews make a huge difference. Yes, to our hearts, for sure. But also to these things known as search engines, and algorithms, which is word I try never to use because I have to look up the spelling of algorithms every single time.

Amy Carroll

And also, do we know what it really means? We do not. In other words, your reviews can help new listeners find grit and grace.

Cheri Gregory

Here's a new review I saw just yesterday, and it was titled 'Refreshing.' "Every episode God speaks to me about an area where I can let go of me and better serve Him. I love you guys."

Amy Carroll

Aww, we love you too!

Cheri Gregory

Yeah, so friends if you'd be willing to leave a review, you'll find a short, super simple how-to video at gritnegracethepodcast.com/review.

Amy Carroll

Be sure to join us next week when we'll be processing –

Cheri Gregory

– oh, will we ever be processing –

Amy Carroll

– what we've learned from Rhonda Stoppe, the no regrets woman.

Cheri Gregory

For today, grow your grit –

Amy Carroll

– embrace God's grace –

Cheri Gregory

and as God reveals the next step to live your one life well,

Amy Carroll

we'll be cheering you on! So –

Both

take it!