

Grit 'n' Grace — THE PODCAST

Episode #234: How to Live the Unexpected Gift of Being Intentionally Average

Cheri Gregory

So Amy, when you were younger and adults would come and ask “So what do you want to be when you grow up?” what was your secret answer? Not the acceptable answer that you always gave. But the one you didn’t tell them because, you know, you shouldn’t want to be this when you grew up, but you really, really did.

Amy Carroll

My official answer was teacher, and I didn't want to be a teacher. But really deep, deep down, I wanted to be a movie star. And you'll be shocked to know, ha ha, that I was in the drama club.

Cheri Gregory

Of course.

Amy Carroll

But I was I was always townsperson number 39. Never the lead. So movie star was a big reach.

Cheri Gregory

Yes.

Amy Carroll

What was your secret answer?

Cheri Gregory

Oh, my secret answer was, you know, I don't know that I had had it pinned down on anything – but, well, no! It was secret because my poor mother who was such an introvert could not imagine it. But I wanted to be a speaker. Like, I really did.

Amy Carroll

Cool!

Cheri Gregory

But really specifically, why I wanted to be a speaker had nothing to do with serving people or spreading God's word or anything like that. I wanted to be on a stage with a microphone in my hand, with everybody in the room looking at me and listening to me.

Amy Carroll

Next best thing to a movie star.

Cheri Gregory

Exactly!

(Both laugh)

Cheri Gregory

Hey, but mine had the audience that I could see. We did want the big life.

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 processing what we learned from Jennifer Dukes Lee, author of *Growing Slow: Lessons on Un-Hurrying Your Heart From an Accidental Farm Girl*.

Cheri Gregory

Now, today's episode is sponsored by Faithful Counseling. And today what I want to do, Amy, is I'd like to normalize counseling.

Amy Carroll

Yes, counseling isn't always for emergencies.

Cheri Gregory

No, it's not. I was just thinking – okay, I have to pause for our friends who are listening. If you hear children in the background, we're not where we normally are. We're in a hotel room in Denver, we are actually at the same place at the same time!

Amy Carroll

So excited.

Cheri Gregory

Whee! Okay, back to what we were saying. I remember a time when Annemarie was leaving for college in like six months, I think, and I thought to myself, I'm doing fine now. But I had enough self awareness at the time, I'm like, I don't know how I'm going to do when she's getting closer to leaving, and then actually leaving. It was my first child, you know, flying the nest. And so I knew it was gonna be a time of transition. And I knew that I don't do well with change. How do you do with change, Amy?

Amy Carroll

That's such an unfair question. I am change averse. And I actually heard Brené Brown talking about this a couple weeks ago on her podcast, where she talked about hey, when we have a car, we tune it up regularly, we have an oil change. Why should we feel different about our emotions as human beings? Regular counseling appointments are like a tune up for our emotions.

Cheri Gregory

I love that. And to build on the analogy, whenever we know we're going to take a really especially long road trip, we always take the car in and have all the fluid levels topped off. Daniel always checks the tire pressure, we do all that kind of thing. So sometimes counseling can serve as a way of doing a tune up, especially if there's going to be a change.

Amy Carroll

Oh, and to extend the analogy, it keeps you from having a breakdown. So we shouldn't just go to counseling to avoid emergency

Cheri Gregory

I love it. So yeah, a good counselor can be an important part of your team when you're facing a change. And as we move into today's episode, making the move from a fast-paced life for a growing slower rhythm is the kind of change where a good counselor could really help make a big difference.

Amy Carroll

Cheri, tee us up. What are we not?

Cheri Gregory

Alright, we're going to start out with lose who you're not. And here's my statement, and I love this so much, I'm like so excited about it. So I'm going to just say it loud and bold. 'You're not required to make up for lost time.'

Amy Carroll

Ha-le-lujah.

Cheri Gregory

Now Jennifer said I wish – and then this is almost a quote from her, she said I didn't need someone to tell me how to go big or go home anymore. I needed permission to go slow and even just to be unspectacular and boring. And I'm going to have to admit that even though I'm an enneagram 2w3, which means I love to serve, and I love check marks, I really don't resonate that much with this whole idea of needing to be spectacular. I know there's a lot of people for whom that feels like a high pressure. But for me as a highly sensitive person who didn't even know that being an HSP was a thing until my mid-40s, being spectacular has never really been an option for me. I have just always felt like I was in survival mode, just like hanging on for dear life trying not to be so overwhelmed. So for me the things she was talking about, like adrenaline and cortisol, that was my life. So for me, though, my hurried heart, which is a phrase I do love, I do resonate with the whole idea of a hurried heart; it's always been around two things: so money, and we're a teaching family. So there's been so little income and so much outgo.

Amy Carroll

Yes.

Cheri Gregory

There's an old joke, you know, money talks. And we've always said, yeah, our says goodbye.

Amy Carroll

I can relate.

Cheri Gregory

So money and relationships, you know, and actually, they really go together. Because I feel like there's just always been so many mistakes, so many poor choices, which lead for me, or at least have in the past led to regret and a lot of self recrimination, and beating myself up. And then so much time spent trying to fix the past. And here comes the c word, control the future.

Amy Carroll

Yes, I might have just confessed to you that I didn't sleep and I sobbed a lot of the night because of a financial mistake I made. So audience members, you are not alone. We are not alone.

Cheri Gregory

It's just, it's so fraught, you know, it feels so high stakes. And I don't mean to say it isn't high stakes. Okay, it is. But this is where I do love how Jennifer pointed out that the land teaches us lessons, whether it's a productive year or an unproductive year. And so I was again, I was thinking of that in terms of income, it teaches us things about ourselves. And this is where I wish I had learned how to trust God to provide and learned how to adapt to what we had in any given season of either productivity or unproductivity. My go to was always to frantically try to make more money. And you know, let me pause for a moment. It's not like I ran a counterfeiting ring or anything. But I mean, I was just like there must be more money. There's actually an old D. H. Lawrence story about a boy, it's called *The Rocking Horse Winter*, now that I'm thinking about it, and the walls in his house would whisper *we need more money, we need more money*. I mean, that was like the soundtrack in my head.

But here's the thing: I especially in my 20s and 30, when I had small children, I was not good at coming up with ways to make more money. Most of the things I tried cost us more time and energy and often money and I couldn't afford any of that as a highly sensitive person. So here we are now, 2020 and 2021. feel like they cost us so much. There was so many missed opportunities. Of course, there was a lot of loss of life and money. And so now we hit we're here with the temptation, at least I feel it, to catch up and make up for lost time. But again, how does one catch up? Like, do you set a trap for up? Like, I don't know. There's no such thing as catching up. I've tried my whole life, you can't do it. And then also, how do you make up? Like, it's just – these are these phrases we use, at least I push myself to do it. And it's not a thing, like they don't really exist.

So now here's another place where I admit, I kind of diverged from Jennifer, but I just want to speak for any of our friends who are listening who might have had a similar experience. She described the lockdown as a grow slow time for some people. And so I just want to mention that for some people. For some of us, it wasn't. For our family, it was survival mode 24/7. And I'm not saying that to ask for sympathy, I know people for whom it was way worse. But with the thing I'm seeing this summer, this is kind of the first real break we've had since the beginning of the pandemic. And Daniel and I are both having a hard time coming out of that panic mode, survival mode, it became so normal for us to be up at 5 am, at work by 7, and then you know, crashing into bed at 10 o'clock, six days a week that actually we feel lazy now doing anything else. Daniel has been wondering why he's sleeping so much. And I'm like, maybe it's called exhaustion.

Amy Carroll

Yeah. And layered on top of that, all the emotional weight.

Cheri Gregory

Yes.

Amy Carroll

So it's not just the time working. It's the emotional weight. And that's what has just really hit me so much harder than I thought.

Cheri Gregory

Yeah, well, and for us as teachers at a boarding school, you know, our our thing was to keep the school open to take care of our students to help them pass. And there were just so many policy changes and things that we needed to stay on top of and we're so grateful – I don't in any way, shape or form want to make it sound like I'm complaining. But now that the pressure is off a little tiny bit, yes, the emotional weight of that responsibility is hitting hard. And so for me, I'm not teaching next year, it'll be the first year in a zillion years that I'm not teaching –

Amy Carroll

I'm so proud!

Cheri Gregory

It was a hard decision, but it was a good one. And I'm actually finding myself looking forward to doing more nothing and again, there's an oxymoron if there was one. How do you do nothing? But we just recently got home from a road trip and I took a ton of stuff to do and I did none of it. Like, it was just really nice to kind of look out the windows and watch the road go by and listen to John Denver on the radio, and I'm looking forward to to growing slower even though I don't know how to do it and I'm not so good at it. But here's the thing I am reminding myself, so I'll say it again to everybody who's listening: 'You're not required to make up for lost time.' We get to move on, but we don't have to make up for lost time.

How about you? What's your you're not statement?

Amy Carroll

Well, let's pause on yours for a little c'est la for a moment, because I have this feeling, I have this need to truly exhale at this moment, because I do think we all have that mindset that oh, now we need to go back to doing what we were doing. And I think we need to hold on to some of the gifts from last year and some of the slow that was forced upon some of us – not your household, but some of us.

Cheri Gregory

I agree.

Amy Carroll

So my not is 'You're not on a shortcut to amazing.'

Cheri Gregory

Oh, man, oh, man. Oh, man. So

Amy Carroll

Jennifer made the point that deep roots will sustain us during a storm or drought. This idea of deep roots is so so important. I've been in the church for a long, long time. I always say I started attending church nine months before I was born in '53. So a long, long time. And I have watched this pattern in churches happen over and over and over again, where someone who has some natural talent, usually somebody who's like on a fastpass to amazing right, that they are elevated into positions that they were never ready for. And when it happens – I can see it happening now, and I know what the end result's going to be. And it's going to be disaster for that person.

It feels amazing at the time, to feel like you're on the shortcut, on this fastpass – for example, I watched a worship leader at our church. He was a brand-new Christian. This was in another town long, long time ago. Brand new Christian. He was absolutely an incredible vocalist, and actually kind of famous, but a brand new Christian. So what do they do? They elevated him right to worship pastor. Well, he had the vocal talent for sure. But he did not have the spiritual maturity to handle that. And I have no idea what he's doing now. I pray that he was able to take a step back and flourish. But in that time period, he crashed and burned. It was totally tragic.

And so here's what I want to say to everybody. There are no shortcuts. I think Kathi Lipp said that there just are no shortcuts. And you know, Cheri, you and I as authors sometimes experience this, that younger writers or newer writers will approach us as if we are the shortcut.

Cheri Gregory

Yep.

Amy Carroll

And that's problematic on a lot of levels. But here's what we just need to remember, no matter what it is that God's put on your heart to do – was that man probably called to be a worship pastor? I think he was at some point – you know, you that are listening, you have a calling on your life, God has something for you. But don't try to keep looking for shortcuts. There are no

shortcuts. And even if you found one, it would be terrible for you. And so it's just really, I feel you. I can hear it. I feel so passionately about this, because I've just seen so many Christians devastated by this idea that they could be elevated to something that they weren't ready for. And churches actually do it all the time.

Cheri Gregory

Absolutely. You know, you're reminding me of number of years ago, I got a direct message on Facebook from somebody and she was, you know, she was a hopeful first time author. I don't remember what favor she wanted from me, but she let me know, she had already been trying to get her book published for three years, three years, Amy, and I rolled my eyes because at that point, I've been speaking and writing for 27 years. I'm not saying that's the ideal.

Amy Carroll

Let's just sing a little hymn about being average.

Cheri Gregory

Yes. But you know, I, I agree with you because I look back at my my own journey. And, you know, oh, praise God that I didn't quote succeed any earlier than I did. I knew exactly the growth that I needed and why I needed to take the scenic route.

Amy Carroll

Well, because I was the girl that wanted to be the movie star or the pop star, like, I did want to be spectacular, but I just now at my age have such an appreciation for average. I'm so thankful to be average. I wrote about this on my blog, just recently over at amycarroll.org. And it was that spiritual depth and character take time.

Cheri Gregory

Yeah.

Amy Carroll

And I was talking about it in terms of knowing God's word and being a woman who reliably dispenses God's word when people come to us for advice. So I was thinking about that again this morning. That spiritual depth and character take time. It takes intention. We have to set time aside to spend with God mostly daily, so that we can know God's word and know Him and live His truth. We have to have perseverance, studying the Bible, knowing God takes time, He reveals Himself to us just over and over again over periods of time. And we have to be in it for the long haul, and then tenacity because inevitably, when we know God, and we're getting to know him better, and when we're spending time in the word, and we're letting it work on us, it will be painful because it works on us first before we try to share it with anybody else.

Cheri Gregory

Oh, okay. That last one really, really hit home. It'd be so nice if we could just change the world first, Amy, wouldn't that be nice?

Amy Carroll

Ugh, so nice.

Cheri Gregory

The dream of every control freak.

Amy Carroll

Exactly.

(Both laugh)

Amy Carroll

Okay, that was painful. Let's move on to something good. Love who you are.

Cheri Gregory

Alright, so the two lose who you're not: 'You're not required to make up for lost time.' and 'You're not on a shortcut to amazing.'

Alright, dun dun dun, love who you are. So here's mine. 'You are designed for sustainable growth.' Sustainable growth. I loved when Jennifer talked about that. And actually, what I want to talk about here relates really closely to what you were just talking about just it especially in terms of the intentionality she said, when the seed is planted down, there's already happening downward growth of roots before we even see anything coming up for every inch up there inches down. And you know, one of the things that occurred to me is that, you know, we've heard this: "First you shall know them by their fruits." At least I grew up with that. And I think I've misinterpreted that. I think I've interpreted that to mean, you will know how good a Christian they are by how much fruit they produce. I don't think that verse is about quantity. I'm not gonna – I didn't study it or do a deep end. But I'm like, oh, I've assumed that if one wasn't in the process of bearing fruits, that that was bad. And again, I don't think that's what the verse is about. I don't think it's about a dormant season. I think it is about what kind of fruit is produced when producing fruit is there, is the right season. So I really, really need to spend some time thinking about that. But the note I wrote down when Jennifer was talking was roots go down before plants go up. Roots go down before plants go up. And I recently did a teaching on a topic that everybody loves, right? Accountability. Okay, study,

Amy Carroll

(Laughs) Did anybody sign up for that one?

Cheri Gregory

Actually, no. I should have called it something totally different.

Amy Carroll

I was just joking, but I'm not really surprised.

Cheri Gregory

Nobody showed up. Title it 'Accountability for Highly Sensitive Persons' and you will have two people, they're the people who really, really care. However, people watching the replay said it was very, very good. So. And I have you here as a captive audience, you know, hopefully our friends listening aren't turning the dial off. But okay, so here, it really, really, really not only is fascinating, but I found it really, really encouraging.

So first of all, I found an article that pointed out that accountability is related to the key notion behind accounting, which means to give an account of. And I want you to as I say, the next three lines, I want you to think about what parable this reminds you of. What resources were entrusted to you, what you did with them, and what outcomes you produced. the talents?

Amy Carroll

The talents.

Cheri Gregory

Yes!

Amy Carroll

The parable of the talents.

Cheri Gregory

Parable of the talents, right. Okay. And so I was like, geeking out over that. And then of course, I went to the dictionary, and I looked up the synonyms for the definition of the word account. And one of the alternate words is narrative. And like, oh, that's right. So that's like the story I'm telling myself, you know, if I give you an account of our trip to Southern California, I tell you the story.

So I put all of this kind of together and I realized, okay, so accountability for me, breaks down into four things. It's the story I'm telling myself about first of all, acknowledgement of what God has entrusted to me. And then I was thinking to myself, okay, so who's doing what here? And I

realize, well, that's God, He's outpouring, okay. God is outpouring into my life, then it's also the story I'm telling myself about my response. It's my response to God's invitation to join him at work and participate with him. So that one is okay, well, that one's on me. So that's obedience. Okay. And then there's also gratitude and praise for what God has done and is doing well. That's outcome and you – we've all heard the phrase that our job is obedience. God's job is the outcome. It's a great cliché. It's also really, really true. Yeah. So again, that's God. And then the last thing is serving others as a result of the first three things and that's overflow. Okay, and again, that's God.

And so I realized, okay, the outpouring into my life is God, the outcome is God, the overflow is God. So like really the only part I do in all of this is the obedience part. And I realized that just another way of looking at accountability is increasing my intentionality and testing. That's the very word that you use, instead of worrying about, you know, somebody snooping into my life, am I checking all the boxes, am I making huge lists or to do lists or anything like that, it's just increasing my intentionality.

And so right now, I'm a part of an accountability group that's really, really working well. And it's with just a few others who are in ministry. And what I'm finding is that we share at the beginning of the week, we share our goals. And then at the end of the week, we kind of report back to each other. And what we're all finding that it's doing is it's keeping us focused, like instead of running off and doing little rabbit trails, or starting brand new things, or, you know, to use the plant analogy, and the sprouting suckers that grow in all sorts of directions, and take up all the resources of the plants, we're staying super duper pruned and focused, we're being really intentional about how we use our time and energy, and we're being very present in the moment rather than all over the place. And, in fact, each of us now, we have had opportunities come up, that would have been fun, or exciting or spectacular, you know, that really seemed like more spotlight or more glory, or whatever. And we've each one by one, we've said no to them, because it wasn't part of the plan. It wasn't part of the season, we recognize that we were in and it feels a little more ordinary, a little more average to use your words.

And yet, over time, we've been doing this for several months, we're starting to see the fruits of it, because we're putting those roots down, we're starting to see real growth, in those areas that we've said we were going to, and it's sustainable growth. And a lot of what I know all of us are doing is some real foundational work, like we're taking really good care of the soil, and really focusing on that. So I know it might seem like a little bit of a stretch for accountability to be connected in here. But that's I mean, that's just kind of where I'm at right now.

And as opposed to I'm going to do this and this and this, you know me, I can get really scattered, I don't have the discipline that you have had, as long as I've known you and way backward in terms of margin, you've always modeled for me protecting margin. And I feel like

this whole idea of you are designed for sustainable growth is really had me going wait, I've got to be realistic, I've got to really pay attention to this plan that I've laid out and said, this is what I'm going to do. You know, I'm going to make the plan, I'm going to work the plan. And I'm going to give myself more margin so that this is sustainable over the long haul.

Amy Carroll

Well, and I love that your group, you and your group have chosen sustainable growth because I think this happens one of two ways: a slow growth, sustainable growth happens either because we choose it, or it happens because God strips us of something. It's kind of like we can do this the easy way, which is the choice, or we can do this the hard way, which it's much more painful to have God strip things away than to choose the slow sustainable growth. I love it.

Cheri Gregory

You know, that's a that's a really good point. And you're making me realize that I've been part of other groups where it was competitive, and I started adding things because I wanted to keep up with them. And this group is much healthier. Every time somebody – in fact, we've added that to our checking in with each other. What did you say no to? What did you almost take on and realize wouldn't fit at this time in your life? And so we are cheering and just as loudly for the 'no's.' And for the deferments. Like this week, all of us had something that we were going to get done and it just truly was more sustainable to put it off for several months, it was actually strategic to put it off for several months. And we cheered for each other just as much for that decision to wait and put it off as we would have for a major, you know, rah rah success. So, great point.

Amy Carroll

It's fantastic. Well, and that's why I said earlier that I was so proud of you for not teaching this year because – and for all the teachers who might be listening, listen, Cheri and I honor you. We've both been teachers. We love teachers. It's a great profession. So it's not because I don't think you should teach anymore, you are I know a fantastic teacher. But you've worn a lot of hats for a long long time and I see you narrowing, narrowing, narrowing, and it's a beautiful thing.

Cheri Gregory

Alright, so what's your love who you are statement?

Amy Carroll

'You are on the right track.' And so I mean this in terms of the pace of your growth. So I am from a family of farmers even though I grew up in the south, and I have the southern accent to prove it, my entire family actually lives in the Midwest. So Denver, Colorado area and then lots

and lots of folks in Kansas. I had my city grandparents and my country grandparents since that I used to love to go out to grandpa and grandma's farm. And I loved it, loved it, loved it out there and out there in western Kansas. You know, Cheri, have you ever been there?

Cheri Gregory

No, no.

Amy Carroll

Okay. It's It's amazingly beautiful and a very different kind of way. You can see for miles across the prairie and the only sign of the small towns out there is there will be a grain silo and a church steeple. And that's how you know where a town is. But otherwise, mostly what you see is acres and acres and acres of wheat fields. Now, I have never seen my grandfather or his brother or any of the cousins that are farming that land, I have never seen them stand out in the middle of the field and scream at the seeds – like *Grow! Grow! Grow! Grow!*

(Cheri laughs)

That would be absolutely ridiculous, no matter how much they screamed, or led cheers, or any of that, those seeds were gonna grow at their own pace. But guess who stands out in the middle of my life's field and screams at the seeds?

(Both laugh)

Amy Carroll

Me!

Cheri Gregory

How's that working for you, Amy Carroll?

Amy Carroll

It doesn't make the seeds grow any faster. And that's why it's like we've got to get to this place of acceptance that we are on the right track. And you know, Cheri, when we wrote *Exhale* I became so enamored with Mark 4, the whole chapter of Mark 4, because it was this series of parables of seeds. So the first one is the famous parable of the sower, where God is the sower, he scattering seeds and all these different kinds of soils. And there are different kinds of results. And then the last one is the parable of the mustard seed. But tucked in between is a parable we don't really hear very much. And it's the parable of the growing seeds. So I wanted to read it real quick.

This is Mark 4:26-29. “And he also said this is what the kingdom of God is like: a man scatters seed on the ground, night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up the seed sprouts and grows. Though he does not know how – ” see nobody's screaming at seeds all by itself – “the soil produces grain. First the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. And as soon as the grain is ripe, he puts a sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

And in *Exhale* what I said about these parables in the first one, God sows, and in the second one, the parable of the growing seed, we sow, and then in the last one, which is the mustard seed parable, the kingdom grows. And this is the order that it always happens in God sows, we sow, and then the kingdom grows. And it's so interesting, because when I think about this parable tucked in between of the growing seed, and we are the sower, but still, we don't know how it grows, it just does it on its own. It's kind of this miraculous way that God has made things happen in our world, and only a full grown flower for our fruit produces seeds.

And so maturity is the goal for this sustainable growth, this slow growth, this acceptance of growth, as it happens, not as we try to make it happen. And we we want to mature to the place where we are seed centers, we talk about that in *Exhale*, where we are fully mature, that we're just bursting with seeds and that we let the Holy Spirit blow those out into our world.

Cheri Gregory

I love that.

Alright, so for love who you are, ‘You are designed for sustainable growth,’ and ‘You are on the right track.’

Okay, so moving on to live your one life well, I have a few questions to ask. And these all come from my my little accountability rant. And since we're not so fond of the word accountability, my intentionality discussion here, because that intentionality is going to lead to greater sustainability. So four questions the first one has to do without pouring and that is what has God entrusted to me. The second one has to do with obedience. Where is God inviting me to join him at work? The third one is outcome. What has God done and what is he still doing? And then the fourth one, overflow, how is God leading me to serve others as a result of the outpouring, the obedience, and the outcome?

Amy Carroll

And it's so cool how this is all dovetailed – and we prep separately, but it's all dovetailed so well together because that is the picture of a seed sender. And so my action to take today is just grow slow with the vision of being a seed sender. Cheri, can I read a little excerpt from *Exhale*?

Cheri Gregory

At this point, I would love for you to.

Amy Carroll

Okay, this is page 174. "Working on ourselves is a process needed to move into God's big story he calls us to know and animate our callings, not simply for self fulfillment, but to build his kingdom. His kingdom isn't limited to the walls of churches, it's in workplaces and homes, neighborhoods and cities, hospital rooms and domestic violence shelters. God's kingdom is being built wherever his seed sending people are. And this is the part where my throat clenches, with emotion in my eyes filled with tears of longing, this is the moment when I want you and me to be consumed with the life created for us. I want us to be swallowed up with the desire to be a seed sender, the good news being a seed sender, both powerfully glorifies God and deeply fulfills us, I picture us as a field of women, all you listening, standing on my shoulder to shoulder with flowers, filling our hands, the flowers are in full bloom bursting with seeds. And suddenly the wind begins to blow. It's gentle at first, but just as God always does, the wind of the Spirit grows in power. And as the wind strengthens, we lift our hands is one offering our flowers to its force, and the seeds begin to blow. And we lift our faces to watch, we don't know where the seeds are going exactly. We're just the seed senders, we're not the seed grower, but we know Him. So we trust and wait with expectation, dreaming of a field on the horizon until the fruit appears and then raising our arms with joy, we rejoice together."

Cheri Gregory

I love that picture. So, so much.

Amy Carroll

I just thought it went so well with what Jennifer was teaching us about growing slow. And then what you told us about intentional growth, and that we just appreciate where God has us and how He is bringing us into full maturity. And then even as I read that, I thought about the women who are listening to us today, just doing this podcast live with us. And I saw us together, doing this together, letting the Holy Spirit send those seeds into the world.

Cheri Gregory

So what's the scripture that Jennifer shared with us?

Amy Carroll

Ecclesiastes 3:1 – "There's a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens." What's the grit for that, Cheri?

Cheri Gregory

Oh, my goodness, like the grit for me is to surrender to those rhythms to those seasons, instead of pushing, white knuckling, forcing, controlling, making things happen. For some of us, it takes grit to – I'm going to use a cliché, but I'm going to go ahead and use it to let go and let God.

Amy Carroll

So good. And for me, the grace is just appreciating the stage I'm in. I was thinking about this season, Cheri, that we didn't really orchestrate this big theme this season at all, but a thing came together anyway. God is so good. And that's this idea of having stages of growth and appreciating the stage that we're in and I thought about some of the other interviews or we talked about this with Kristi Gaultier and Shelley Rushing Tomlinson so many of these tied together in talking about seasons of growth.

Cheri Gregory

You know, sometimes a good counselor can be a big help when it comes to changing our habits, our beliefs and our mindsets.

Amy Carroll

Absolutely.

Cheri Gregory

And Faithful Counseling offers four ways to get licensed counseling: video sessions, phone calls, live chat, and messaging.

Amy Carroll

Faithful Counseling is available worldwide. You can access Faithful Counseling from every country and there are counselors who speak a variety of languages. Every counselor on Faithful Counseling is licensed by their respective state board in the United States and has over 3000 hours of experience. And faithful counseling costs only \$260 per month, which gets you unlimited messaging with your counselor and for 30 minutes sessions. Financial aid is available for those who qualify.

Cheri Gregory

Well, friends, we sure hope that you've enjoyed listening to episode number 234 of Grit'N'Grace: The Podcast as much as we've enjoyed making it for you.

Amy Carroll

And we want to say a big thank you to Faithful Counseling for sponsoring this episode of Grit'N'Grace.

Cheri Gregory

Check out our web page at gritngracethepodcast.com/episode234. There you'll find this week's transcript and a link where you can learn more about Faithful Counseling.

Amy Carroll

Aaand – that's a wrap for season four! Can you believe it?

Cheri Gregory

I cannot believe it.

We're going to take a few weeks off to get all gussied up for season five.

Amy Carroll

There's good stuff coming, y'all!

Cheri Gregory

There is.

So 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!