

Final Edit

[00:00:00] **Shelby:** Welcome to Daily Grace. We believe the Bible is true, trustworthy, and timeless. And we want to help women like you know and love God's Word. The Bible shows us who God is and who He is changes everything. My name is Shelby.

[00:00:28] **Krystal:** And I'm Krystal. And we want to invite you to come join us as we chat about the truth of God's word in our everyday lives.

[00:00:36] **Shelby:** Hey everybody and welcome back to the Daily Grace Podcast. This is Shelby and I am joined as always by my friend and co-host, Krystal. Hi, Krystal.

[00:00:45] **Krystal:** Hey, Shelby.

[00:00:46] **Shelby:** And today we also have a very special guest with us. Her name is Amy DiMarcangelo. Amy is the author of "A Hunger For More." She's also a regular contributor at The Gospel Coalition and a graduate student at Westminster Theological Seminary. She lives in New Jersey with her husband and their three children.

[00:01:04] Amy, thank you for joining us. We're so glad to have you here today.

[00:01:07] **Amy:** Thanks so much for having me. I'm excited to be here.

[00:01:11] **Krystal:** So Amy, your book is called A Hunger for More. And really it's an invitation for those of us that are longing for something, maybe something greater than what we are experiencing currently. It's an invitation for us to find satisfaction in Christ. So why do you think we experience longing?

[00:01:27] Like, where do you think it comes from and then what does it reveal about us?

[00:01:30] **Amy:** Yeah. so I think we can feel longing in a variety of seasons. So sometimes it is in a hard season and we're feeling the pain of life in a broken world, and we're just longing for things to be different. We're longing for a redeemed world. But, what can be confusing is when everything's kind of going well.

[00:01:50] So I've wrestled with this longing a lot throughout my life. I think I've experienced a lot of blessing. I grew up in a loving, stable family. I have a great marriage. I got to receive a quality education. So there were just all these things that I, and I know many other people, experienced that are good. And then we feel confused like, "Well, why do I feel this longing for more? And is it sinful discontentment?"

[00:02:14] So I think a lot of times I'd also assume I must be just sinfully discontent. And I think what the Lord has been teaching me is that our longing for more is always going to be there. And it's a good thing, and it's actually a gift from Him because it's His invitation to know Him more because we were made for more.

[00:02:33] God created this world for flourishing. You know, sin entered and messed everything up. And so now we're gonna naturally have this longing for, a new heaven, new earth, where things are all set right, and just a longing to know God more deeply.

[00:02:49] So even if we are doing well and we feel like we love the Lord, maybe we're even growing in our desire for Him, but we feel this nagging discontentment that I would say is actually a holy discontentment, it's because it's God driving us to seek more and more of Him. So I think that we often will misunderstand it and maybe try to silence it, hush it, numb it, distract it. It's like, "I don't like feeling this uncomfortable feeling of want anymore. So let me try to, settle that down.

[00:03:22] And really, we need to lean into it and see this longing is here for a reason, and that reason is draw me closer to God. So what is this maybe this particular thing I'm craving right now? Am I longing for more love? Am I longing for more strength? Am I longing for, Deeper relationships. And then what do those longings reveal?

[00:03:42] Okay, so how does God fill those longings? So, you know, our longings will take a variety of forms, but instead of viewing them as, "This is just me being sinfully discontent, and I just need to seek contentment." Rather, leaning into it and being like, "Oh, this is here because God wants to fill something. God wants to show me more of Himself in some way. So how can I lean into this longing?"

[00:04:03] **Shelby:** Yeah, I think you're bringing up such a good point, Amy. Even as I, you know, kind of got into your book and read through the introduction, one thing that stuck out to me is I think a lot of us are just content

with the amount of God that we have. Like we're content with what we know of Him. We're content with our rhythms, with meeting with Him and praying and being in the Word.

[00:04:23] Yet, there's so much more. And so what I love about this book, and you titled it, "A Hunger For More," is it's an invitation to, just, that more that we're so longing for and craving.

[00:04:35] So your book covers several different things that we crave. And even as, like, if someone were to read all of these, they'd be like, "Oh my goodness. Yes, I crave all of those things."

[00:04:44] But the very first one that I wanna talk about is craving wonder. Can you kind of break that down for us, and even talk about like some practical ways that we can cultivate the wonder of God?

[00:04:54] **Amy:** Sure. Yeah. I think this craving for wonder starts, as early, you know, you see it in kids, they crave wonder when they see superheroes. That's what I've got sons who are really into superheroes, superpowers, those things that they can't understand and that are just so amazing, and then we continue to crave that.

[00:05:12] I think it's what drives our desire to travel. I love traveling, exploring new cities, seeing mountains, seeing just all those things that are reminders of like, I am so small and this world is so big. And then when we even realize our big world is so small when we look at the universe. And that's there because we were created in the image of this infinitely glorious God, who, declares His glory in the heavens and, among the earth.

[00:05:42] And so that craving that we have, is meant to point us to I think just the overwhelming beauty and majesty of God, who is more, He's this unsearchable wealth of glory. And so often we underestimate how great and glorious God is.

[00:06:04] So, you know, a lot of times our lack of wonder and amazement at God is because we are just not, really looking at Him and we're distracted with smaller things. And so even though that craving for wonder's there, because that's uncomfortable, we hush it and we get, you know, we get in our screens, we get in our little lives without really looking around and seeing, okay, like, God created this world in this majestic, glorious way.

[00:06:33] And He did that because He's showing us, like, everything in creation, God is showing us something of Himself.

[00:06:40] So I think that that craving for wonder is so good and the way that we sort of like fan that into flame is by spending time in creation, spending time in nature, or exploring even created things, like, if you're into art, going to a museum, because you know, God created people with this amazing capacity to create beautiful things.

[00:07:01] So even likemanmade, wonderful things point back to God. I think we're all amazed by different types of things, so we just kind of lean into like what captures our attention, and then how does that, we ask ourselves like, "How does this reflect a truth about God and who God is?"

[00:07:19] **Krystal:** As you were talking, what I was thinking of is like the times where I am the most anxious, it's because I am viewing my world in such a small view. And so when I feel anxious, I get outside. I mean, I know there are studies that have been done and like looking at the ocean and how it can calm you.

[00:07:37] It reminds us of just the vastness of His creation, but also just His character and who He is. And so I think you're right in that we often neglect thinking about just the, the vastness of who God is and just His majesty.

[00:07:51] And so, as we're thinking about that, and you talk about this a little bit in your book. You know, you talk about the different persons of the triune God, because like that's something that we often neglect, right? Is that like God is triune because we get confused. We're like, "The who is doing what?"

[00:08:04] And so sometimes we just don't really think much about Him being triune. So you talk about different ways that God can love us as God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Spirit. So can you just walk through that a little bit with us? What are some of the unique ways that God loves us as a triune God?

[00:08:19] **Amy:** yeah, and I think this is so important because based on our backgrounds, our personalities, we're gonna probably all tend to be, and because of just how mysterious and incomprehensible the Trinity is, like, when we were like, "I believe one God, three persons." That's so hard to, like, wrap our minds around.

[00:08:35] And we know that we're so limited in how we understand that. So, we are gonna tend to focus on, like, one aspect of God or one, like, God the Son or God the Father. And maybe, if we have baggage, like, thank, I had a great dad. So, when I think of God as Father, I associate that with good things, with trustworthiness, with someone who's protective of me, with someone who wants my good.

[00:08:59] But if you're someone who has had a father who was not around or was abusive or just neglectful, or not affectionate, those things, viewing God as Father is gonna be very difficult for you because you have a skewed version of what fatherhood was supposed to be. So we need to first kind of realize what are maybe things that might block us from seeing God the way we should be seeing Him.

[00:09:25] And understanding that knowing the unique ways that the persons of the Trinity love us, just gives us a fuller or picture of who God is and does help us love Him more. And if we cut out one part because it, it's hard for us to think about, or it's hard for us to relate to, then we're not gonna be able to receive the love of God the way that He intends for us to, the way that He wants to love us and meet us. And He loves us that way anyway, but we won't be able to, like, appreciate it.

[00:09:56] As our Father, when we think of what is a good earthly father? A good earthly father provides for you, protects you, cares for you, carries your burdens, is wise and leads you.

[00:10:10] And so we wanna be able to view God our Father in that way. that intimacy of that relationship, that a father, he's not just, you know, God is our King, God is our Lord, but He's also our Father. And so there is an intimacy to that relationship, and a just a deep commitment to that relationship that we wanna lean into.

[00:10:31] And that can be very, so on, on the one hand, if you're someone like me and have had a good father, we wanna lean into that and realize even how much our good fathers were just limited pictures of how good God is. And it's, like, "Oh, I have a great relationship with my dad. That's just a picture of how much closer my relationship with God the father is."

[00:10:49] Or we can find deep healing in that if it's, "Yeah, I was left by my earthly father, but my heavenly Father will never abandon me. I was hurt by my earthly father, but my heavenly Father always works for my good."

[00:11:03] And so there's a lot of healing in knowing the love of God as our Father.

[00:11:07] And then as far as God the Son, I think I tended to always think of Jesus. And we should think of Jesus this way as our Savior: how much He loves us as our Savior, that He came to earth, humbled Himself to become a man, to bear the penalty for all of our sins, And to save us from our sins.

[00:11:26] But one aspect of Jesus, I think I never really appreciated was Him calling Himself "the friend of sinners." How that uniquely comes alongside of us. So, we have, you know, God as Father, which is like above. God as Lord, it's above us. God as our King is above us. But when Jesus says He's a friend of sinners, that just shows His heart to come alongside of us.

[00:11:48] And I think when we just think through what do we read in the gospels where we see kind of His friendship displayed with Mary and Martha and with His, disciples, men and women, like how do we see just the warmth of Jesus and the coming alongside. And, again, when we think of earthly friends, like, okay, well what makes someone a good friend? They're trustworthy. I can share my burdens with them and they will carry burdens with me. They're going to be a good counselor. And even just like the feeling of being known. You know, I think we make good friends, like, our closest friends are people who we just feel like, "You know me and you get me."

[00:12:28] And just remembering, like, Jesus knows you and He gets you, wants friendship with you, you know, Jesus says that "I have called you friends." So we shouldn't underestimate sort of the depth of what that means, too. That Someone so high and lifted up, someone's so above us, so separate from us, chooses to identify and come alongside of us. and just what that says of the humility of Christ.

[00:12:51] And then finally knowing God as, the Holy Spirit and how He's our helper. Like, God didn't save us and then leave us to figure this out on our own. God saved us. Jesus said, "I will not leave you as orphan." Like, we are left with a Helper who is with us at all times, who intercedes for us when we don't know how to pray. That's such a comfort to me when I'm in a place of struggle and having trouble forming words, and I don't even know what I need. I just know I need something. Like, I just know that I feel desperate and I need God.

[00:13:28] And just knowing that the Holy Spirit is interceding on my behalf, and He is praying for me with "groanings too deep for words", like, that is such a comfort, to me. And just knowing the Holy Spirit is here as our Helper to help

us to overcome sin, to help us follow God, knowing, like, "I don't have to follow God in my own strength. God equips me with His own strength to follow Him."

[00:13:51] The Holy Spirit empowers us to obey. So, even that is just such a limited version of the many faceted ways in which God loves us. But I think when we think in our minds through just sort of God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, it'll help us just access different aspects of His love for us.

[00:14:09] **Krystal:** I think this has already been helpful because, you know, like I said in the beginning, I think we just get content with knowing what we know. We just have almost these ruts in our mind of like, "Every time I think of God, I think along these same lines." Yet God is so vast like we've talked about and there is more.

[00:14:27] **Shelby:** And so I hope that even what you've just shared is beginning to like spark some things in the people listening and, like, "I've never thought about that before. I wonder what else I'm missing or I don't know yet about God's character." So this is already super amazing and helpful.

[00:14:40] I wanna ask like a question because I think this plays into kind of this hunger for God is maybe realizing how much we need Him. And you already referenced in the beginning talking about seasons where everything just seems good. And I don't know about you guys, but for me, when I have those seasons where everything just seems to be going along fine, like that's when I tend to forget that I need God. I forget like the depth of my sin.

[00:15:08] And so I'm just wondering if we can explore that for a little bit and how being aware of our need for God plays into hungering and craving more of Him.

[00:15:17] **Amy:** Yeah, I think that when life is going well, that can be one of the biggest detriments to seeking God. because like you said, we have this, false idea that like we're kind of okay, like without Him. We don't feel our dependence in the same way as when we're going through trials or, experiencing loss or just struggling. You know, there's something that in our desperation that drives us closer to God.

[00:15:43] But when we don't feel that need, then, you know, we can turn to just lesser things and be content with lesser things. You know, the whole, like CS Lewis, "We content ourselves with mud pies" when we could be enjoying, you know, the ocean.

[00:15:58] And, so I think in those times, just praying for the Holy Spirit to show us our need is important that like we know and can recognize, "Okay, I'm living sort of in this self-sufficient way and maybe right now I feel okay, but I know that's not gonna pan out because I know, even if I don't feel it right now, I know that I am utterly dependent on God."

[00:16:23] And also remembering just so to, like, "Okay, I'm gonna still be in Scripture. I'm gonna still be in the Word and in prayer and in community. because even though right now I feel okay, I don't know what's around the corner."

[00:16:36] A lot of how we handle trials later on can turn back to like, well, did we sow, like when we were in a season of plenty, how were we sowing? And were we sowing to the Spirit or were we sowing to the flesh?

[00:16:49] So, I think that those are sort of just steps of faith that even when our feelings aren't there, we're just doing it anyway because we know, like, "I know this is true about me and so I'm gonna live this out even though, like right now I feel fine and I feel self-sufficient", and confessing that, obviously, too, that we should be confessing and repenting of, you know, "Oh God, I went through my day, like acting as if You weren't even there. because I was just going through the motions of my own life."

[00:17:16] And just confessing that to the Lord, confessing how easily our hearts kind of drift and forget our need for Him.

[00:17:22] **Krystal:** I think that's so important for us to remember. Because I feel like the times I can look back on my own life, where I thought everything was good and then realized that it wasn't. When I thought it was good is because I wasn't in God's Word. I wasn't being reminded of my sin and my dependence on God.

[00:17:42] I was like, "I think I'm doing okay." And then, being with other people, my measuring stick became them. It was like, "Well, I'm doing better than them, or I'm not struggling in this way." But then when we go to God's Word and realize, oh, our standard of holiness is so much greater than we realized, and yet Christ has paid the penalty for our sin.

[00:18:00] Like that helps us to grow in humility and it helps us to grow in dependence on God. But that comes with being in His Word, right? That comes with being with Him.

[00:18:09] And so I think it's a good reminder for us that, you know, things can be good. We still need God. Things can be bad. We still need God. And so just having that perspective of our dependence on Christ, no matter what's going on, I think is so helpful.

[00:18:23] Now let me, I wanna go back because you know, Shelby mentioned in the opening, like you're a graduate student right now.

[00:18:29] How far are you into your degree?

[00:18:31] **Amy:** I will hopefully be graduating in May. so I'm, right now I'm planning for that. There's a chance and, Having to like back something up and, but I'm hoping to graduate in May.

[00:18:43] **Krystal:** Tell us a little bit about what you're studying. And then if someone is listening and maybe they're thinking, "I've been considering seminary, but I don't know if it's the right thing. Is that something that's gonna benefit me? Especially if I'm not working in a church or whatever."

[00:18:55] Like we have a lot of listeners that are stay-at-home moms or maybe work in, you know, a secular setting, so they're like, is seminary right for me? What would you say? So tell us a little bit about what you're studying and then in encouragement.

[00:19:06] **Amy:** So I am, getting my Master's in Theological Studies. so it's a much shorter program than like an MDiv. It doesn't require the languages, which is good because I'm terrible with languages.

[00:19:16] So I pursued this degree because I knew that I felt a calling to write and I thought if I'm gonna be writing, books on Christian living, theology, I need to just grow as a student of Scripture myself. So it really came in just wanting to be equipped to be a better writer and teacher in that sense.

[00:19:36] It really has been growing my hunger for the Lord. One thing I love so much about Westminster is just seeing the professor's, like, personal love for God. That was one thing I was praying, like, "I don't wanna just grow in head knowledge, I wanna grow, like, I want this to make me love Jesus more or else it's not worth it.

[00:19:52] And I feel like it really has done that. So, but I felt, so, for any stay-at-home moms or whatever, just women like wondering about this, I definitely felt weird about it at first. because I knew, like I, on a complementarian. So at

first I think I just like always associated seminary with, like, you go to seminary to become a pastor. And since I'm not called to become a pastor, why would I go to seminary?

[00:20:18] So when the idea first started, I think just when God planted the idea in my head because it was something I had never thought of before. I didn't even like talk to people for a while because I just felt like, "How's this gonna be received? This feels weird."

[00:20:32] Then I talked to my best friend first, and she was, like, so gungho, like, "Yes, do it!" And then I talked to my dad, who's actually like, also the senior pastor of our church. And he was like, "Yes, do it!"

[00:20:43] And so that, so as I started talking to different people who know me and to, know how I serve in the church, but then would also have similar convictions made as me in like women's roles in the church and got affirmation, like that was really helpful. Like, "Oh, okay, yeah. Like I can do this even if it's not because I feel a call to like become a pastor." And then that helped narrow down sort of where I was looking for, a place to go to seminary.

[00:21:14] So, I got a lot of affirmation, and then went into it and what's been so encouraging is I would say half of all of my classes have been with other women and I've just loved that.

[00:21:25] And people from all different, some are going into ministry full-time, counselors, different types of ministry roles, or they're just like lay leaders in their church and they're like, yeah, I lead a small group and I just wanna be more equipped to lead a small group. Or like, this is for my personal growth.

[00:21:42] I think it's so important, probably especially in complementarian spaces, that like we have more and more women showing, like, the importance of taking theology seriously. And obviously you don't have to go to seminary to take theology seriously. I would say some of the wisest people I know have never gone to seminary. But I think it is important that women are on in these spaces and that we are coming from these different backgrounds.

[00:22:09] That this is for the equipping and strengthening of the church. And we all serve the church in different ways. So some of us lead ministries, but some of us have small, little discipleship groups or book clubs that we do. And this is gonna equip us for that type of discipleship. You know, it doesn't have to look a certain way. And I have like just learned so much and it's really been a great experience.

[00:22:31] **Shelby:** I am so glad you shared that. We're always telling the women who listen that, "Hey, like, theology is for you. It's not just for professors and pastors. Like, it is for you."

[00:22:41] And so that's so encouraging. You know, we have one more question for you, Amy. and this is a question we ask every guest who comes on the podcast. And it's at The Daily Grace Co., we always say that "the gospel changes everything." And we would love to know, Amy, what has the gospel changed for you?

[00:22:56] **Amy:** That is a good question. I love that you a end each one with that and. I would say two things stand out to me.

[00:23:06] One, the gospel just changes how we view God. It's changed how I view God. Knowing that Christ loved us so much that He came and died for us and took my sin, just knowing the security that I can have in that kind of love. When He took our sin, He took it all. Like knowing the security that I can have in, even if I really mess up, that does not change God's love for me. It's just hugely comforting.

[00:23:37] And for someone like me who grew up in the church, and was pretty, like, good kid, didn't go through seasons of rebellion. I think that when people like me mess up, we can feel even more this temptation towards condemnation because it's like, "Well, I knew better and I still did this." And we can have these expectations, these high expectations that are more that are set in our own righteousness and our own trust in our own righteousness. Like, "I should be able to have not done that.

[00:24:05] Or, we don't understand really the depth of our depravity. But when we look to the gospel and know, like, Jesus knew all of this. Like, when I'm surprised by my sin, it's because I just like don't have a very accurate view of who I am. Like I don't realize the darkness that is within me. But Jesus already knew that and He's not surprised by any of this.

[00:24:28] So even the sin that surprises me, and then I'm like, "How could I do that? I knew better." Jesus isn't surprised, and this hasn't altered His love for me. So that is just hugely comforting. And then the other aspect of the gospel is just I think that Jesus didn't come to just save, but that He is bringing renewal and redemption to the whole world, just gives a lot of comfort and hope when we look at the broken world that we live in.

[00:24:55] And I'm someone who can be prone to discouragement and despair and, just knowing that, like, yeah, this is gonna end, though. Like, Jesus won. Jesus on the cross, like, that showed His decisive victory. And so even though it's not, fully realized yet that His r his kingdom is not fully realized. Like, He did win.

[00:25:16] And so I can have faith that someday everything wrong will be set right. And, that is just a beautiful thing to meditate on when we encounter just the grief and trials of life in this world, knowing, "Yep, but it's, it's gonna have a good ending.

[00:25:35] **Shelby:** That's a great place to end this conversation. Amy, thank you so much for everything that you have shared today, on hungering and craving God, but then also just that beautiful gospel reminder at the end. It's been a joy to have you here today.

[00:25:49] **Amy:** Thanks for having me.

[00:25:52] **Shelby:**

[00:25:52] **Krystal:** And thank you all for joining us today. Don't forget to subscribe to our weekly newsletter to receive free resources related to the podcast, including how to connect with Alex. And that'll come straight to your inbox. So you could click on the link, get the show notes to you, subscribe to that.

[00:26:04] Until next time, come join us as we continue this conversation over on Instagram @DailyGracePodcast. We'll see you next time.