

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 today I am joined by my friend and co-host, Krystal, as always. Hey, Krystal.

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

[00:00:47] **Shelby:** And we're really thrilled to introduce you to our guests today. We have two guests in the studio with us. We have Kelly Ramsey and Jen Hessey of Waiting in Hope, infertility support ministries. And we know that infertility is a topic that touches a lot of people in a lot of ways.

[00:01:03] And so we're really grateful for them being here today to share their stories and also the gospel hope that they, just know can be found even when you're walking through infertility. So, Kelly, Jenn, super glad to have you ladies here today. I would love if we could kick this episode off by each of you just sharing a little bit about yourselves and also the ministry of Waiting in Hope. So, Kelly, do you wanna get us started there?

[00:01:29] **Kelley:** Yeah. Thank you so much for having us. I'm Kelly Ramsey and I am the founder and visionary of Waiting in Hope. And it started from our own journey of infertility. So my husband and I have always been a very open book. We were like the first ones to get married out of anyone we knew from college. And so we were always that couple.

[00:01:47] And then when infertility hit, it was like hidden. And so pretty quickly in, we realized we can't do this alone. And so we asked our church at the time, in Houston, Texas, what can we do? There's gotta be more of us. And sure enough, I said, "I'm willing to help and do whatever."

[00:02:03] And then I got to co-lead that what would become Waiting in Hope, infertility, like, support group.

[00:02:09] And so from there it was just like, that's what we do. So I have two boys, a 10 year old and a seven year old. And my husband and I have been married for, let's see, 17 years this summer. We're, I'm still questioning that. It seems too long.

[00:02:25] Jenn, what about you?

[00:02:26] **Jenn:** I am the content director at Waiting in Hope. Um, I joined Kelley, we had to figure this out. It was in 2018, I think. Um, And we found each other through an online like a Facebook support group. And we messaged each other and we saw that our hearts were aligned and, wanting to share hope with women who are hurting and struggling through infertility.

[00:02:56] So, the rest is history and we just kept working together and eventually it led to a book. But I have a similar background with, obviously, going through infertility for many years. My husband and I struggled.

[00:03:08] I've had many years of leading infertility and infant loss support groups and, have seen God just really transform women in their waiting. And I, I mean, no one chooses this journey.

[00:03:21] But I wouldn't trade it for anything for how I've been a part of the stories that God has authored in these women's lives, and just completely changing them from hopeless to hopeful. And so I'm so grateful and love the way that God connects us through unlikely circumstances, un-asked-for circumstances.

[00:03:45] So, yeah, that's, oh, and I have, yes, I have a husband. We've been married almost 20 years and we have three boys, 12, 10, and two. So busy, busy days.

[00:03:58] **Krystal:** Well, I'm excited for our listeners to get to know a little bit more about you, to hear about your ministry a little bit more, and in the book that y'all co-authored, and so we'll talk a little bit more about that.

[00:04:08] But first, what we do at the top of every episode is we share a favorite thing that we are using and loving lately, and it spans a wide range. We have talked about a lot of things on the podcast. Sometimes we'll link it in the show notes if it's a product, but sometimes it's a person or something that's more of an experience. And so, Jenn, you said yours was maybe a little bit silly. So I kind of wanna ask you first what your favorite thing is this week?

[00:04:32] **Jenn:** So I've been wearing lipstick for probably the first time in my life. And it's been through all this book, promotion activities and interviews and things like that. I'm not that much of a girly girl. Maybe it's because I'm a boy mom. I don't know.

[00:04:44] **Kelley:** But, I've just been having fun wearing lipstick, trying different shades, and having, it's like a simple joy and fun thing to do. Well, what a southern girl would tell you is, every old lady would tell you, you are put together if you only have lipstick on. That's, I'm from the South. That's what they say.

[00:05:04] **Jenn:** I guess I'm becoming more southern because I don't live, I'm in Oregon and so maybe Kelly's rubbing off on me.

[00:05:11] **Kelley:** Probably.

[00:05:12] **Krystal:** Oh, that is awesome. Okay, so, Kelly, what's your favorite thing this week?

[00:05:17] **Kelley:** I have a plethora of things right here, wondering what I was gonna choose. Because I cannot choose favorites ever. I'm like, I have six favorites. Okay. These are actually a Woodlands mom, I haven't met her yet, but they're called Poppy, and they are probiotic soda. I feel like a commercial right now. And this one is raspberry rose, but the, there's a strawberry lemon, I think? These are amazing. You can get 'em at Target. Different grocery stores. They're for gut health, but they're a fun like sparkling-type water, which I don't really like many of those. but I love this one.

[00:05:52] **Shelby:** I have not seen that. That is so fun. I have tried some other sparkling probiotic waters and I wasn't the biggest fan. But I will take your word for it and I will give this one a try because I like the idea of drinking something fun that also, is mindful, health-mindful, and so love that.

[00:06:11] **Kelley:** Yeah. Oh man. Okay. Those are fun.

[00:06:14] **Krystal:** So if anyone has questions on those products, they can grab those and try 'em out. So, like I said, we're gonna talk a little bit more about, your ministry and the book. So y'all wrote a book. When did it release?

[00:06:27] **Kelley:** so April 11th.

[00:06:28] **Krystal:** Oh my goodness. you really are in the thick of it in terms of just promoting it and all that. So yeah. We're gonna link it also in the show notes. It's called "Waiting In Hope: 31 Reflections For Walking With God Through Infertility."

[00:06:39] And one of the reasons I'm excited for y'all to share a little bit more about your story and about this book is I think even as you shared your own, just, as you were introducing yourself and saying there wasn't anything in our church that really helped support us in this. I think a lot of women listening are saying, "Yes, I am in that place, or I've been in that place."

[00:06:56] I also have friends that were in a similar place as you where they needed that. And so they actually helped pioneer a ministry or counseling program to help those that were walking through this.

[00:07:06] And so, this book is the same title as your ministry. And one thing you do talk about in this book is how infertility itself touches a lot of areas in your life and really every area. So can you maybe explain a little bit more about that?

[00:07:19] **Kelley:**

[00:07:20] **Jenn:** I have an analogy that I kind of use with this because I think that our identity as women is very closely tied to motherhood. And I'm not saying it's rooted there. Like, our identity is in Christ and who He's made us to be. We're His daughters And ambassadors and all of that.

[00:07:41] God created our bodies in such a way that this is something beautiful, that He made, a beautiful process. And so we have that like biological drive and that's good. And we also have this desire to nurture and to raise children and care for them.

[00:08:03] And so, I think that's one reason why infertility touches so many things, because it goes to the, just core of who we are. Like, it's just very close to our hearts and the way God made us to be. And so my analogy is like you're on a train because in the book we call infertility a journey and walking with God through that. But if you're in a train, like you're headed to this destination of motherhood. And it's like you wanna go there, but then infertility like, it throws you way off track.

[00:08:37] And so then every train, like segment of the train, like Kelly said, your marriage, your health, your finances, like everything goes off the tracks.

And so, I mean, there's a lot of unpacking to do with that in terms of, are we finding our actual identity in this good thing, but not ultimate thing?

[00:09:00] And so there's a lot of processing, where are you putting your heart investment in? but also at the same time, not feeling ashamed of, no, this is a good thing and it's a thing to grieve when it is not working out the way that like, God created. So, yeah, so that's how it just is all encompassing.

[00:09:21] **Krystal:** You know, this is already just such a tender topic and I can appreciate the vulnerability with which both of you are talking. Whether someone listening has walked through infertility themselves or not, it's likely that we all know somebody who is. And so I'm wondering if you can just talk through, maybe be a voice of just, help to those who aren't walking infertility, but know someone who is. What do you wish that people understood about infertility that maybe is often misunderstood about this journey?

[00:09:57] **Jenn:** I think it's really important that they, that people, because it's one in eight, but we're starting to find research and so we're gonna look into it. We think it might be one in six, which I've been saying for a while that it was higher or a higher percentage. But so everyone, out of six people, potentially seven, eight people have walked through this, and four, one in four are miscarriage.

[00:10:18] **Kelley:** So for sure, people who've miscarried and have never talked about it. And the thing is that, like she said, people don't realize that it affects you to your core. And that yes, you feel isolated and alone, but you also don't know how to express that. Like you don't know how to be yourself. And I think it's really key for people to understand that you're going through grief, whether you realize it yourself or not.

[00:10:43] If I'm the person going through infertility, my friends, it took me a long time for me to realize I was going through grief, before I even lost any babies. And, once we realize that the people we love are going through grief, like cancer, like a death, then it's really much easier to step beside them and love. Because we know a little bit better what to do with someone who's walking through a grief of a loss of a loved one, or grief of walking into cancer and not knowing what's ahead.

[00:11:13] Well, that's a very similar feeling to this because it's your whole future that you're looking at and what you desire, and it's not the way that you thought it would be. And so that's grief.

[00:11:24] **Krystal:** So for, the experiences that y'all have had walking through this, and then as you're coming alongside of other women, what do you feel like? Is an encouragement to you in that struggle? But then also for those that those other women that were in your group as they were having babies that maybe didn't even see the perspective of your own experience, as you're sharing what's encouraging to you, maybe even say for someone who is walking alongside of someone, like how can they be an encouragement rather than, maybe just giving platitudes? Or maybe just giving as simple, "Well, God's in control," or, things like that are functionally and biblically true, but sometimes can be harmful in the moment, if that makes sense.

[00:12:05] If y'all could just speak to general encouragement and then how women can encourage others that are walking through that.

[00:12:09] **Kelley:** First of all, thank you, Krystal. You knocked out of the park because that is exactly how it feels. They are biblically true statements. We know God is good. We know He's gonna, has our best in mind and our good. But it doesn't feel good right now. And so that's really hard for those who are struggling in their faith and walking through the journey of infertility.

[00:12:29] And we pray that many would come back to faith or would come to faith for the first time because of their infertility, because it brings you to a very desperate, needy place for God. And your deepest questions become, whether you're a believer or not, become, "Why God? Why would you allow this?" We're like, David, "How long, oh Lord, how long will you leave me in this pit?"

[00:12:50] There's no other feeling that becomes higher than that when you get down to it. And so, thank you for what you said, because the platitudes are well meaning. However, Jenn and I would probably say the same thing of, step into that pain with them. Like, if they were with in cancer or mourning, grief of a loved one. Like, step into that.

[00:13:13] Ask them how they're really doing and listen. "How are you really doing right now in this waiting? How is your marriage? How are you feeling spiritually? How can I fight for you and pray with you?"

[00:13:24] Those are the things when people really cared and really listened. Because the junk of grief is not fun, and most people don't wanna step in. But when the Christian community can step in, that's when the watching world sees Christ.

[00:13:38] **Jenn:** Yeah, exactly. Being quick to listen rather than quick to speak, which I think a lot of us have that urge to fill in the gaps. you want to comfort and so we wanna say something and yet sometimes it's better just to, I mean, you can ask like, "How are you doing?" and then listen.

[00:14:02] And really that's the weeping with those who, and I, from my experience, I had a lot of women both who were in like in the thick of waiting, but then also those who had babies, like who, who were already become mothers. And, they were very sensitive, toward me and my grief, and they recognized it as such.

[00:14:28] And so they just asked me like, "How are you doing?" Or they would say, "I'm praying for you," and that's it, Not adding a lot more words on top of that. And then they were like physically present. I had a friend who came with me to a fertility treatment and

[00:14:47] **Krystal:** I mean that was just like, just her presence there was such a gift and it showed me that she cared.

[00:14:55] **Jenn:** I, I'm hearing like kind of two sides of this story here. I'm hearing like your deep pain and struggle. I'm also hearing glimpses of how God was with you, how He comforted you through His Word and through His people. So I'm wondering if we can just kind of dig a little deeper on that for a moment.

[00:15:13] **Shelby:** And I just wanna know, what was your walk with God like while you were in your seasons of infertility? and, maybe in what ways was your relationship with God difficult and in what ways was it strengthened through what you've walked through? And Jen, if you wanna start us off, that'd be

[00:15:30] **Jenn:** Yeah, that's, a big question. Yeah. But yeah, I, you know what? I think that God has a sense of humor with, Leading me to write a book about waiting because I am not fantastic at, waiting. and especially not in this experience. I was just like, as soon as my husband and I were starting to try to get pregnant, I was like, "Okay, let's go. Get this ball rolling."

[00:15:58] I have been a Christian a long time. And this was probably one of the biggest, faith crises up to this point in my life because like I knew who God was and is, and that He's good and loving and kind, and He's my heavenly father and that He sent Christ, he saved me, all of these things. And then I was experiencing this.

[00:16:22] I know you gave me this desire, Lord, and I know You are able to fulfill it and You're not."

[00:16:28] **Kelley:** that was the huge, it was, real disappointment with God, and struggling with that. Like I felt like He was being cruel. Like, "Why else would you give someone this desire and then say, 'no and no?'"

[00:16:41] **Jenn:** And so it was a real time of feeling somewhat forsaken by the Lord. And, um, but I, He was so good and, and let me talk to Him. Like He, I always felt that I could pray. I always felt that I could go to Him with that, even the feelings of like, "Why?" and, "You're being mean, Lord." And I could talk to Him through that.

[00:17:09] And so I'm so thankful. And then for the Psalms, like going, running to the Psalms for that encouragement and seeing David do that, over and over again. And finding like through the Psalms, like always with the laments, it brings it back to the character of God. And so, that was the, the other side was, through time and it was not an overnight, like "aha!" moment or something of, like, "Now I get it."

[00:17:38] But it was through time that God led me to see more and more of who like His character, who He is, and that, and like to see His compassion toward me. And His patience with me as I was doubting Him and feeling so disappointed and confused and fearful. but He kept reminding me of His steadfast love.

[00:18:00] That was the other side of it, of getting to see, over time, it was like peeling back the layers of false ideas of who He is to show me He truly loves me, and to accept that. And gosh, I'm so thankful for that part of the journey because it just brought me closer to Him.

[00:18:21] **Shelby:** Yeah.

[00:18:22] **Krystal:** That was good, Jen. I think for my, yeah, it was the first real struggle I had in my faith. it was the first real like roadblock where I felt, "Well, what do I do now? What happened?"

[00:18:36] **Kelley:** When reality does not meet my expectations and I can't change it, and I can't make it any different, but God can.

[00:18:43] And it really, like, I said earlier, made me desperate for the Lord. I had always clung to, "Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be

filled." And so like I knew these scriptures, but they had never become super real and deep to me, if that makes sense. And because this became my tears, it became my breath of life, like the Word of God is really what sustained me.

[00:19:11] And, I really found in that the value of waiting. It had purpose and it had meaning. And the Lord was walking me through. And He was walking me through, holding my hand, showing me how, how He protects the birds and how He sustains them and His Word would sustain me. And just, they're kept being visuals from, with the Word and also in life that He would give me examples of.

[00:19:37] And it was just this rich intimacy that I felt like grew in that season of waiting, that I feel was really hard for it to happen otherwise. When life is good and you're not desperate for God, you're not like needy, it is much harder to dig in and to really go to those places that David went, those places that Hannah went, those places that Job went, where you are questioning all things and it's becoming real to you.

[00:20:04] And one of my big questions, I share the story within the book and different things, is the Lord kept bringing back to me, of whispering, "Do you trust me? Do you trust me, Kelly?"

[00:20:15] And not trust Him that He would do it. And not trust Him that I had enough faith and belief in Him, but a trust of, "Do you think and believe that I have your best in mind? Do you trust me with whatever it looks like?"

[00:20:31] And so I compare infertility as very much a refining fire. And my prayer became, I want to be like, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego." I wanted to be like them. I wanted to come out of the fire of infertility and not smell like smoke and to also say, "My God can do it. But even if He doesn't, He's still a good and loving God." And so it really just became a prayer of, "Do I trust Him? Do I really believe Him and trust Him?"

[00:20:59] **Krystal:** Yeah. But I think women can relate to that because even if it's not infertility, the season of waiting can look different, right? There's gonna be women listening to this that maybe they have a friend that's walking through infertility, but they're waiting is something so different. And yet, It's incredible that we have the Word of God to model for us a language of what it looks like to wrestle with God in the waiting and to have the permission to say the things that David says and the Psalms say and Hannah say. And yet we often don't feel like we can do that.

[00:21:28] It gives us that language to grieve well and to grieve with hope. and so I would love to hear what you think. What does it look like for women that are in a season of waiting, that are struggling with infertility? How can they wait with hope?

[00:21:43] **Jenn:** I think it's really having some kind of support because I think we don't go through these times alone. No Christian should go through hardship alone. That is not God's picture of this in the Bible. Jesus was so. know, he had his disciples and he told them to go make disciples and to spread the Word.

[00:22:04] **Kelley:** And we need community. And so I think the longer you're in this, in isolation, the more the enemy's going to use this. He's gonna pick apart at every doubt you have. He's gonna tell you that you're broken. He's gonna tell you that this is, you've done this to yourself. All the wrong feelings are gonna happen, and the shame's gonna set in, and it's gonna be hard to see the light of hope.

[00:22:29] And so what I would say is, number one, find a community. If that means starting with a book that just gets you towards understanding yourself, but finding community, whether it's online or it's support group, or it's, in your church, you need to find a few who know what you're going through. Who can stand with you and, sometimes hold your arms up.

[00:22:48] At some point in your waiting, this is specifically for someone's going through infertility. At some point you're gonna get to this question of what am I hoping? What is my hope?

[00:22:58] **Jenn:** That's some heart work that God will do. Like He's committed to completing the work He started in us. But at some point you're gonna get to that conflict of what am I putting my hope in?

[00:23:11] And as much as a baby and a child is a good gift, a miracle, like how God creates any child, and amazing. So that's all really wonderful. And at the same time, a baby cannot be our hope.

[00:23:27] And so it's good and it's great and wonderful. It's not ultimate. It's not ultimate because like you think of a, a child cannot, like, you think of their little hands, they can't hold you in their hands? Like, who is holding you? It's the Lord.

[00:23:43] And so even as hard as that is, like it is very, like just, ugh, digging out a lot of stuff in, in what you are, finding true, like, satisfaction in. But God

can do that in your heart and transform you to find your real, true hope in Christ and see that this is what we are really, like, this is beyond infertility, too. What are we all waiting for?

[00:24:10] As Kelly said, What are we all truly longing for? Well, our greatest satisfaction is in knowing Christ and being loved by Him. And so, that is like, as you think, like nothing is happening. This is what we get. We get Him through waiting. And so, that's the hope to hold onto you. That the hope that we have and the hope that is coming of eternity and future with Him.

[00:24:35] And that's why it's Waiting In Hope and not waiting for hope. Hope is Christ. And so we are in a season of waiting, but we can wait in hope of Jesus.

[00:24:46] **Shelby:** Yeah.

[00:24:46] **Krystal:** That's good.

[00:24:47] **Shelby:** Jen, at the beginning of this interview, you said something that really stuck out to me. You said that, many women see their identity as being rooted in either being a mother or desiring to be a mother or just somewhere along this motherhood journey. I'm just wondering if we can follow up with that, like as y'all have walked through your journey, and I'm guessing that you found that, "Hey, actually that's not my identity." I'm wondering if we can just talk through like, what is our identity as women, if it's not found in

[00:25:17] motherhood?

[00:25:17] **Jenn:** That's so, so good. And I, and I have to say that again, It's a process. So we tend to see it's like a, a Disney movie or, or, or something where it's like, " Oh, once you get the baby or once you get married, like, then it's all happy, like happily ever after. And, you know, God's still gonna show you things in motherhood just as He did through the waiting.

[00:25:41] And one of those things is honestly how motherhood isn't like, um, you, you can get a lot of joy from that, obviously, but our identity cannot be in what we do, anything of what we do. And, And God made us like We are God's workmanship created for the good works that He made for us, right? But that's not us.

[00:26:06] Most fundamentally, we are God's children. And His beloved children that He adopted. I love all the adoption language in Scripture. Like He,

we were not like biologically birthed. He chose us. He brought us into His family because He loves us so much and He sent Christ to die, to remake us into, uh, like

[00:26:31] We're made in the image of God. And then He's remaking us to look more and more like Christ. And so, yeah, I think that it's like before motherhood, think of your daughterhood is, is one way to, to really get at the core of that. And then to think of, all the Scripture that talks about, who we are in Christ and being made new to, and being made into a new creation,

[00:26:55] to have the Spirit-led desires, to want what He wants. To submit to hi, like, everything that Christ did in His life, as far as like, um, the, the qualities and, and, attributes, the things that He did and the way He loved people and His patience, His compassion, um, his, um, even justice, you know, at times.

[00:27:20] And so, um, yeah, that's all of part of who we are and who God is changing us to become more like.

[00:27:28] **Krystal:** I appreciate so much of what y'all have shared. And so, uh, We have one last question, though. It's a question we ask every guest that comes to the podcast. um, At the Daily Grace Co., we say "the gospel changes everything". And so we would love to hear, Kelley and Jenn, what has the gospel changed for you?

[00:27:45] **Kelley:** I love that you guys do that because we completely believe in that, too. Because the gospel changes our waiting. The gospel ultimately makes us wait differently. We wait in hope. We wait with hope. He's our guide and our comfort and our joy and our source, even when it doesn't make sense. And so that is the gospel.

[00:28:06] Yeah, I honestly don't know how I would've gotten through infertility and waiting or anything else in life that's been hard without the gospel hope that we have. That Christ has paid it, the price, for our sins. And that, we have that resurrection, that, that death and shame and our struggles don't have the final word.

[00:28:29] **Jenn:** The gospel changes our waiting. It's not wasted. Nothing is wasted with the Lord.

[00:28:34] Thank you so much, ladies. This entire interview has just been wonderful. I love seeing the way I can just tell how thoughtfully you're approaching this conversation with compassion, with vulnerability. But also just

saying, "We have to point our eyes towards Christ." He is our hope and this is what will get us through when we're walking through infertility.

[00:28:58] **Shelby:** And so, thank you, Kelley and Jenn. Just been a joy to chat with you here for the last little bit.

[00:29:04] **Kelley:** Thank

[00:29:05] **Jenn:** We love the Daily Grace Co, and we're so thankful to get connected with people. Thank God for technology.

[00:29:14] **Shelby:** Yes, Krystal and I always say that one of the coolest parts of our job is just, weekly almost, getting to chat with people who have just all these different experiences and wisdom that they've gleaned from Scripture and we just get to sit and learn. And it is an incredible gift to do it, and y'all are no exception to that.

[00:29:35] But, also just wanna thank our listeners who are listening today. We'll be sure and link Waiting in Hope Ministries and also the Waiting In Hope book that Kelley and Jenn wrote in the show notes. We hope that you'll check both of those out, share those possibly with someone who may find encouragement and hope from them.

[00:29:52] And while you're in the show notes, don't forget to subscribe to our weekly newsletter so that you can receive resources related to the podcast straight to your inbox. There will be a link there for you to click on. Until next time, you can join us over on Instagram at Daily Grace Podcast. We'll see you next week.

[00:30:09] **Krystal:** Bye.

[00:30:10] **Shelby:**