



God Hears Her Podcast Transcript

The Beauty of Broken

Season One | Episode Two

- Speaker 1: God Hears Her is brought to you by Our Daily Bread Ministries. Visit GodHearsHer.org or find us on social for more information.
- Elisa Morgan: I loved God, but I didn't really know him. I came to know Him through Young Life when I was a teenager and I gave my life to him. I very quickly thought, "Now I've got the answer. Now I've got Jesus." I kind of determined I'm going to do it different than my mom and dad did. I'm going to raise a perfectly intact second family when I get there. I'm going to do it right.
- Speaker 3: You're listening to God Hears Her a podcast for women where we explore the stunning truth that God Hears you. He sees you and He loves you because you are his. Find out how these realities for you today on God Hears Her.
- Elisa Morgan: Welcome to God Hears Her. I'm Elisa Morgan.
- Eryn Eddy: I'm Eryn Eddy and I want to ask you a question, have you ever pictured the perfect family? Maybe you were a little girl with dolls and a dollhouse, or you started dating your first boyfriend and you thought he was perfect, or maybe you daydreamed about holding your first child and then watching that child grow up into the perfect little adult human. My guest today had dreams too. Her dreams weren't shaped out of a picture perfect childhood, but from a childhood of difficulty and she was determined for things to be different for her marriage and for her kids. She would work hard to create the perfect family, but these dreams, like all dreams didn't quite come true in the way she expected. I'm talking about my friend Elisa Morgan, who actually has written a book called *The Beauty of Broken*. Elisa, tell me, where did you grow up? What was your upbringing like?
- Elisa Morgan: I'm the second born of a three child family, so I have an older sister and a younger brother. My parents were only married nine years. When I was about five they got divorced and I remember my dad pulling me into his home office, he was a corporate exec, and a just pull me up onto his lap and I thought it was awesome. I loved daddy time. He turned me towards him and he said, "I've decided I don't love your mother anymore and we're going to get a divorce." Kids don't understand that. It's not always the parents problems, I know things happen, but I took that as my fault. I thought if I had been a better little girl in some way he would have stayed. I felt like my family fell and broke.



- Elisa Morgan: My mom and brother and sister, we moved across the United States to the California coast, we were on the East coast then. My mom was a single mom in the 60s, not cool and really difficult financially. She had a full time job in San Francisco and then drove back and forth to the suburbs. It was when I was probably entering middle school after we finally moved to Houston that I realized my job was to take care of my mom. Her alarm would go off in the morning and I'd pull my covers back and I would go and get her a breakfast of chocolate chip cookies and Coca-Cola and take it to her and turn off her alarm. Looking back on that, that is so weird, but now I understand it. I understood it as a young adult. She struggled with alcohol and she couldn't get herself up. So, I am a super vigilant, tenacious performer person, achiever person, and I figured out really early I needed to take charge of life in order to be safe.
- Elisa Morgan: I remember vacuuming our gold pile carpet into neat rows and emptying her ashtrays and Ajaxing them and trying to get the cat poop off the knotty pine floors in our home. It was my job, it was my survival to pull out of that.
- Elisa Morgan: When I came to know God, and that's another journey, she always dropped us off at church when we were little and she had a couple hours of free childcare. I loved God, but I didn't really know him. I came to know Him through Young Life when I was a teenager and I gave my life to him. I very quickly thought, "Now I've got the answer. Now I've got Jesus." I kind of determined I'm going to do it different than my mom and dad did. I'm going to raise a perfectly intact second family when I get there. I'm going to do it right.
- Eryn Eddy: Did that happen?
- Elisa Morgan: No. Not exactly, no.
- Eryn Eddy: Tell me about college Elisa and then into dating, to marriage Alisa.
- Elisa Morgan: Yeah, I've shared in other programs that I dated one guy all through high school and college and he was on the road to become a medical doctor. After you are in college and you're dating someone like that, you kind of think, "Well, this is my future. I'm going to be a doctor's wife." Didn't really know what I do. He loved God, I love God. It was glory. It was great, but the last semester of college we broke up.
- Elisa Morgan: We just were really clear that God didn't want us to get married and I actually ended up moving to Denver from Houston and enrolling in Denver Seminary.
- Eryn Eddy: How did moving play a part with your relationship with your mom at that point? Feeling like you were the caretaker, was it-
- Elisa Morgan: I honestly couldn't get away fast enough.



- Eryn Eddy: It was relief.
- Elisa Morgan: It was a huge relief. To finish her story or to take it on through, my mom never really recovered from her disease of alcoholism. She had good years and bad years, but when I was in my, I guess, late twenties I ended up starting into counseling in those years and really needing help and understanding. I hadn't known how to grow up very well. I hadn't had a parent who cared for me. I grew up when I was two or whatever and I became the little parent.
- Elisa Morgan: I needed to do some work on reconstructing my childhood and understanding. I also needed to separate from being responsible for my mother because our roles were upside down. Unfortunately, but in God's timing, my mom died before I was able to finish my work and come back more full circle. She's been dead for 30 years and I long for a time to talk to her and say, "I know you did the best you could" and to be able to be with her in a more healed situation, but this is something else that happens is I've continued to go to counseling over the years and do the grief processing. I remember after her memorial service and I liquidated with my brother and sister her estate, it all happened in 10 days. It's like poof. It hit me so heavy that that chapter was closed, that that relationship was over, that I would never have another conversation.
- Elisa Morgan: I was driving down the road and I remembered this sense of looking up to the dashboard and I had this sense from God, "Now she sees you. Now she loves you." I did feel a closure there that we're both broken, damaged people and we did the best in that relationship. I found healing even though she has passed on, which is an encouragement, I hope, for many listening who have that kind of a circumstance.
- Eryn Eddy: Goodness, that's amazing that you got to experience that almost like, was it audible or was it just an impression that God placed on you that she sees you and loves you?
- Elisa Morgan: It really is a phrase, I could hear in my head "She sees you and she loves you now. She's able to love you now." Because she's whole and I do believe she was with Jesus. She had a relationship with him. God made that clear on her deathbed. She really reached out to Him on her deathbed to know him.
- Eryn Eddy: How old were you when that happened?
- Elisa Morgan: I was 34.
- Eryn Eddy: You were married by that point?
- Elisa Morgan: I was married.



- Eryn Eddy: I'll go backwards though, with your break up to then meeting a guy. Where in that did you start learning more about your identity and how God saw you?
- Elisa Morgan: Seminary was helpful in that they made us go to counseling to. Good idea. If you're going to be in ministry, you better figure stuff out.
- Eryn Eddy: You're a professional therapy goer.
- Elisa Morgan: I am.
- Eryn Eddy: I don't even know if that's a title, but it should be.
- Elisa Morgan: I have a whole endowment in my name.
- Eryn Eddy: Is that your email signature?
- Elisa Morgan: Professional therapy goer. I'm a big believer in it. Life is messy and we don't come out of it without being wounded and damaged and hurting others too. I'm a big believer in it. God's really provided some great grace for me.
- Elisa Morgan: It was an interesting time in seminary back in the day, I think I was one of six women in the master's divinity program.
- Eryn Eddy: Out of how many people?
- Elisa Morgan: Out of about maybe 400 or so. It was not the popular thing to do. Plus, you've got to remember, I went to church. It wasn't like a big Bible church, so I didn't know anything about the Bible. I didn't know what the word hermeneutics or homiletics or blah blah blah. If you don't know whoever's listening, don't worry. I didn't either. I didn't know the books of the Bible in order. I didn't know anything. I came up this little girl from Texas to go to seminary and I was just, you know, everything was new for me. I dated like a lot of the guys because I was one of six girls. They didn't have many to choose from either. Everybody else was married and nobody was a fit. I just didn't want to do that anymore.
- Elisa Morgan: I was starting my second year of seminary, I was making my bed and I just, again, this really weird phrase went through my head and I sensed it was from God, it was "Separate thyself unto me." I was like, "That is bizarre." But in that same moment, I also just had this kind of image flashed through my brain of a horse that had blinders on it, like in old Victorian England. I thought, "I don't know what that means." I lived with a married couple who were very strong believers. He was also in seminary and I talked to them about it. They were kind of mentors to me then and we all just decided, we think God wants me to take a break from dating.



Elisa Morgan: I did. I didn't go out with anybody. It was late into that semester, I was running into class and I had an exam and I plopped down in the only open seat in that classroom, I think it was Old Testament class, which is why I'm so terrible at Old Testament, I plopped down and this, guy sitting next to me starts talking to me and I'm so annoyed because I've got a test and he keeps interrupting me. I just kept answering him in one word, questions, never looking at him and finally I turned my head and looked at him and I went "La la la la." It was like God had taken the reigns on my head and turned my head with my blinders on every side until all I could see was the face of Evan Morgan.

Eryn Eddy: And then?

Elisa Morgan: Then we were engaged about two and a half months later and married about nine months later.

Eryn Eddy: Oh my goodness.

Elisa Morgan: He's been just the right person for me. It hasn't been all "La la la." We've had bumps, we've had messy moments, but it's been great. He is a stability to my unpredictability. We both get the drive and the passion for ministry. We're just good together.

Eryn Eddy: You're on the same page and the same team. So how long have y'all been married?

Elisa Morgan: 40 years.

Eryn Eddy: 40 years. That's amazing.

Elisa Morgan: It's a long time.

Eryn Eddy: When is the anniversary? I'm just curious.

Elisa Morgan: June 15th. Any kinds of gift cards can be sent to Our Daily Bread Ministries.

Eryn Eddy: So then at that point, you had said earlier you're going to make a perfect family. You're going to make a perfect family and be on that road. So tell me, heaven's Gates opened up, you heard bells, and you saw him. Now the perfect family is made.

Elisa Morgan: Well, we got married, but-

Eryn Eddy: You got married and then?



- Elisa Morgan: Let me back up. Our very first, it wasn't even a date, we always say, "Well, it wasn't really a date." I was going into the library, I was hungry and my little tummy was having little butterflies. I thought, "I'm going to see if Evan Morgan is in there." I went into the library and there he was. I went, "Okay, that's a sign." So I said, "Do you want to go to Burger King and get a Whopper?" He said yes. So, we drove to Burger King and ordered a Whopper and we're sitting there over Whoppers and he tells me that he's a cancer survivor and he won't be able to have children. This is our first true conversation and I've got a burger hanging out on my mouth and Evan is telling me that if he has children, they'll need to be adopted. My heart went out to him. It was real quick that I realized it wasn't just Evan who would need to have children through adoption, that I might need to have children through adoption if I married him.
- Eryn Eddy: When we come back, we will find out what God did in your life and if he provided kids for you through adoption or led you in a different direction. That's coming up right here on God Hears Her.
- Elisa Morgan: Hey guys, if you're enjoying this show today, please take a moment to write a quick review and rate us on iTunes and on whatever podcast platform you listen. Reviews and ratings help us reach more people. So, if you could take a moment to write a quick review and rate us, that would be super helpful in helping us to reach more women with a message that God hears her.
- Elisa Morgan: Welcome back to God. Here's her, I'm Elisa Morgan.
- Eryn Eddy: I'm Eryn Eddy and in just a moment we will hear the rest of Elisa's story, a story of beauty and brokenness, which she wrote a book about. We will have a link in the show notes. It's a story on how God can not only heal us, but use our brokenness as a witness of how He can heal others. So if you're listening today and thinking to yourself, "I am far from perfect and my life is not working out the way I expected" or maybe you're thinking "It is so much harder than I thought it would be." Keep listening. This conversation is for you.
- Elisa Morgan: Before we jump back into our conversation, we want to let you know that if you miss anything in today's show, check out today's talking points included in the show notes. The show notes also include a link to a free resource, it's an article that fits well with today's topic. It's titled Scar Stories where I write about how Jesus' brokenness, His scars point us to the love of God just like our scars can too. Again, the link to this article is in the show notes, which can be found in the podcast description or visit GodHearsHer.org for all of this and more. That's GodHearsHer.org.
- Eryn Eddy: Okay, Elisa, let's jump back into your story as you begin to describe waiting to adopt your first baby. This has God Hears Her.



- Elisa Morgan: We waited almost five years for our first child. Both babies, first one at three weeks old and then two years later, two and a half years later, our son at 13 days old. I really thought I could make up for any wound that they had ever experienced.
- Eryn Eddy: Because they were so young.
- Elisa Morgan: They were so young and I wasn't going to be so much better and our marriage was going to be so whole and we weren't going to be all messed up like my poor little parents were. God warned me before we got our daughter and before she was placed in her arms, I was wallpapering our bedroom or something for the baby and I had this again sense, and this is how God nudges me, "Elisa, before a baby's ever placed in your arms, he or she is going to experience the greatest wound of their life."
- Elisa Morgan: I heard it. I journaled it. I thought I understood it, but I didn't truly. I was a bit humbled and a little bit scared, but still pretty confident that I could raise a perfect family, just me. Just trying hard.
- Eryn Eddy: Did Evan feel that way too?
- Elisa Morgan: Yeah. Evan came from a really great Christian family, really strong believers, and really hadn't had many bumps in their family and they were great people, lovely people.
- Eryn Eddy: So you adopted two little ones?
- Elisa Morgan: Mm-hmm (affirmative) one after the other. I had been working as the Dean of Women at a Bible college before they came. It was an amazing time of finding out how do I help kids in college come to understand God and other things. I taught psychology, I taught counseling, I taught women in ministry. It was a very specific Bible college where women were not allowed to teach men.
- Elisa Morgan: I thought it was ironic that they would invite me to share in chapel and I was like, "How is that better than using the word, but okay, here's my idea." I shared my idea, but it was interesting. It was a long time ago and we all learned a lot and it was great to have that opportunity to serve in that capacity. I resigned in order to wait for children.
- Elisa Morgan: During those days actually had a radio program that Haddon Robinson had asked me to do for Denver seminary. For actually a long time, about six years, I was the voice of Denver Seminary in a radio program called Considerations. Haddon Robinson mentored me in communication and speech during that time. Then we got our babies and I stayed home for three to five years and then came a phone call one day.



- Eryn Eddy: Yeah. Tell me what was that phone call?
- Elisa Morgan: That was from one of the board members at an organization called MOPs International, Mothers of Preschoolers. They were a grassroots led organization that started in 1973. This was 1989 and they were looking to formalize the ministry, which was now international by hiring a first president. They were looking for people who might be a fit and invited me to apply.
- Eryn Eddy: How did they get your name? How did they get your phone number?
- Elisa Morgan: One of them knew me from something, it was Denver based then the office, and somebody knew me from something.
- Eryn Eddy: Were you praying for doors to open or did it just cam up?
- Elisa Morgan: It came out of the blue. I was actually praying because the seminary, Denver Seminary, had decided to stop the radio program. I was praying, I was getting ready to call another radio ministry to see if they wanted to pick it up, and the phone rang. It was this board member from MOPs. Because of that I went "Pfft, what?" Because I had never been pregnant. I didn't come from a good mother. I didn't really know how to be a mom. Hello, do you know that God gives babies to people, every time, who've never been parents before. I don't know what he's thinking and I just said "Because you're calling here, I will pray about this."
- Eryn Eddy: Did you feel qualified?
- Elisa Morgan: No. I never led that kind of thing. I didn't know anything right about nonprofits. I was a speaker and a writer and a radio host, but I doubled up my therapy sessions, the Elisa professional therapy goer. The Lord really nudged me forward a bit at a time. He used scripture, He used my therapist as in the grocery store one day and He just nudged me to look around at all the other moms. I sensed Him saying, "Elisa, you don't have to be perfect. Just minister from a place of vulnerability. Just being honest about what it's like to be a young mother." It's like He said this phrase, "Put your deficits into my hands and I'll make them your offering." He did and I served there for 20 years as the president of MOPs. It grew from 300 groups to 4,000 groups. I was blown away. It almost ate me alive, but it's still going on. I'm so grateful for God's grace in it.
- Eryn Eddy: Wow. How have you balanced being a busy mom and healing and also being present for your kids?
- Elisa Morgan: It's been a lot of years now, so I'm looking back at it, I'm on a different island of life now, looking back at it. It can be in perspective. You can't always see that when you're in the midst of it and I understand that.



Elisa Morgan: Evan and I had a great little routine going in our early years when I said yes and we said it together to this position of leadership. Evan was the VP of Business at Denver seminary. He was Haddon Robinson's right arm and he had a very demanding job. I had been at home focused, working home. We did kind of a tag team where I would leave the house at about six in the morning, sometimes five in the morning and go to work and then I would be done by two-ish. He would be responsible to get the kids sorted to school in the morning and I'd be responsible for them after school in the afternoon.

Elisa Morgan: It worked really well. There were times when I would travel on the weekends and the pastor would always go, "Oh, Elisa's speaking this weekend?" Because our daughter would have her bow like sideways in her hair or something. I was like, "I got the bow in." It was kind of a neat mutual, beautiful dance that we did. It wasn't always tidy and easy, but we made it work.

Eryn Eddy: Then we decide to do no more MOPs.

Elisa Morgan: No, actually a couple of things happened before we decided not to do anymore MOPs.

Eryn Eddy: Okay, so tell me about that happened?

Elisa Morgan: About 15 years, we're scooting along just like we described with this tag team and Evan had since transitioned himself into Our Daily Bread University, Our Daily Bread senior leadership, so he was traveling to grand Rapids for his responsibilities at the ministry and I was still leading MOPS and we were very, very invested. Our kids were both swimmers and real involved in high school things.

Elisa Morgan: Well, here's what happened. I had a dream one night and in my dream I was walking through a home that was under construction. Scaffolding, kind of, just the two by fours. Jesus was my tour guide, He had a little hardhat on. He stops at these two adjacent rooms in my dream and He goes, "Elisa, this room is for your daughter and this room next to it is for her baby." I wake up and I'm like, "What?" I mean that is a freaky dream to have. A couple of nights later, the dream repeated itself. I'm not kidding. Home under construction. Jesus in a hard hat. "This room is for your daughter. This room is for her baby."

Elisa Morgan: Okay, I'm president of MOPs international. About a week later I'm sitting in a meeting around a table and we're discussing the creation of a spin-off called Teen MOPs. I sensed God in the Holy Spirit leaning down in my ear and saying, "Elisa, you're going to know more about this topic than anybody in this room." I am like, "What?" I went home and I thought I'd better ask my then 16 year old daughter, who had just returned from a short term mission trip in Kenya serving HIV/AIDS orphans, my state ranked swimming daughter, my beautiful five foot



seven daughter, "Is there any reason you could be pregnant?" My daughter, who was so involved in her youth group and she nods. I who've never been pregnant before, get to go to the grocery store and get an at home pregnancy test and bring it home and wait outside the bathroom while my daughter pees on a stick to find out she's pregnant.

Elisa Morgan: My precious son, a couple of years younger, began to struggle as well and veer his little life off of the main road into some ditches of struggle, substance abuse and some legal things. I felt like my second family fell and broke.

Elisa Morgan: While this is all happening, I'm president of MOPs International and it was reeling for Evan too. We just were stunned. We just were blown away. Now, what did we do as a result of it? We rallied.

Eryn Eddy: You had done such a beautiful dance in the beginning, working and then this happened. A few things happen-

Elisa Morgan: To be honest, in that rallying, I kind of pushed him out. I kind of thought, "Well, I'm the one from all the mess. He hasn't, he's still innocent. He hasn't seen all this." I think I was trying to protect him some. I just became admiral of everything and kind of took over. I took all the doctor's appointments with her and he watched golf because that's where I pushed him. It was a very humbling process. It ended up she had an emergency C-section when the baby was 27 weeks in utero. She had made the decision to relinquish him to a couple and that adoption did not work out because he was born differently than they expected. We waited. We parented him in a NICU for five months while we waited for God to bring forth another couple, which He did in great faithfulness. Our precious firstborn grandson is now nearly 20 years old. It was an open adoption and it's been a painful but beautiful reality. It was a lot.

Eryn Eddy: How did you see God and all of that? Even after like when you... You're like "Don't ask that question here."

Elisa Morgan: It's just a lot of journaling. A lot of cleaning.

Eryn Eddy: How did you not go from the opposite of being angry, like not being angry at God because your family from what you came from to what you thought it would be and then it ends up, it's like "This is not the picture that I thought. God, why wouldn't you give me a picture I thought?"

Elisa Morgan: A couple of things there and that are really important. One is we all have wounds and they're not always directly attributed to direct circumstances. My children came to me with wounds. I'm sure I have wounded them as well. I received wounds from my parents and I wounded myself in them as well. Life is not this neat formulaic box that once you know Jesus, it all gets tied up with a bow.



Elisa Morgan: That's one thing really strong. Another thing is that I remember begging God, "If I quit, would Satan leave my kids alone?" God was pretty clear, "No, this is their journey and you're on yours." I would put myself, my body over the potholes that I knew I didn't want them to go down and they'd pick up my body and throw it aside and dive down. That's just human nature to figure it out.

Eryn Eddy: It's a beautiful analogy though.

Elisa Morgan: So, there's that. I think another reality is we're not done. God's not done with me now. He wasn't done with me 35 years ago when I received my daughter. He's not done with me. If we were done, we would be dead. He continues to shape us, but the biggest lesson for me in the breakage, the true breakage, that the breakage that caused beauty is I discovered in this process while my daughter's pregnant, that I was proud and God showed me, "Sweet pea, you're just proud. You're just as sinful as anybody else."

Elisa Morgan: He actually used the story of Luke:7 of the woman anointing Jesus' feet where He was at the home of Simon the Pharisee, and she's anointed Jesus' feet and she's washing His feet with her hair and Simon is all incensed "Do you know what kind of woman this is?" And He looks at Simon and He says, "The one who has been forgiven the most is the one who is able to love the most." And I thought, "Oh my gosh, I am in such denial of my sin that I can never be forgiven and I'm never going to be able to be loved." I had to embrace my sin of pride in order to be forgiven in order to access the love that I really needed.

Elisa Morgan: God's just shown me in the years since, there's been a lot of years now, that brokenness is nothing to be ashamed of. It's nothing to hide. We all come into church all dressed up and looking great and faking it and singing our hymns and going out and get in the car and screaming at each other again. God's people are broken people and we need to say so. We need to reveal that breakage in such a way that we show how God heals us, because honestly He can use us far more after we've been broken and put our breakage into His hands than before.

Elisa Morgan: Those things that we think disqualify us from ministry, from being of use in this kingdom on this planet, when we put them in Jesus hands can actually further qualify us and we become more useful. That's what I've seen Him do.

Eryn Eddy: Where are your kids today?

Elisa Morgan: They're marvelous human beings. They really are. My daughter and her husband have been married a really long time now. We have two grandsons, beautiful, beautiful children. One is in his teens, the other one's just a little toddler so it's kind of fun. My son is married as well. He's been married for a good while to, to a beautiful woman. They're making their way. I like to say, if you put a toothpick



into our family and pulled it out, like you test muffins from the oven, you'd see it's a little gooey in the middle.

Eryn Eddy: I like that with my brownies though.

Elisa Morgan: Isn't it great. We'll maybe put it back in a little bit longer, but you know, it's a relief to know God never made us to be a perfect family. He made us to be His family. He made us to be a beautiful demonstration of His love, of His grace in our messiness and our brokenness, everyone of us broken. There's a great freedom in understanding that, embracing that. Evan and me, while we still kind of helicopter parent from time to time, we get too involved and forget where grandparents not parents to our grandchildren and bless their hearts, they another set of parents if we don't watch ourselves. But we keep on, Evan continues to serve at Our Daily Bread University, I continue to serve with Our Daily Bread and I'm President Emerita, which means old woman, for MOPs, which I love. But we're just still growing and going and learning and being used despite our cracks.

Eryn Eddy: I'm serious when I say I just love that analogy of the brownies because I love gooey brownies and we're all gooey inside, aren't we?

Elisa Morgan: Some a little more than others, but yeah we are and God isn't finished with us yet. That's a good thing because our undoneness continues to point us to our need for Him and like we just talked about are undoneness when it's shared, it actually can point others to Him as well.

Eryn Eddy: Thank you for letting us pry into your life a little bit today, Elisa. I learned a lot about you. I know our listeners did too. For those listening, don't forget if you miss anything, the show notes are available and can be found in the podcast description. There you will find the talking points of today's episode and some helpful links. We have a link to an article written by Elisa about the scars that Christ bore and how Jesus' scars point us to a God who loves us and heals us. Also, Elisa's book *The Beauty of Broken* and of course if you want more information about what's coming up on season, one of *God Hears Her*. That information is available on our website GodHearsHer.org. That's GodHearsHer.org.

Elisa Morgan: Thanks so much for joining us today and don't forget God sees you. He hears you. He loves you because you are his.

Elisa Morgan: Hey guys, before we go, I just want to say a quick thank you to some of the people who helped make this podcast happen Anne, Brian, Curtis, Nicole, you guys rock. Thank you so much.