



God Hears Her Podcast

Episode 108 – Spiritual Apathy

Elisa Morgan & Eryn Eddy

Eryn: That's when I start to become a little disengaged, which then I feel a guilt about that. Because the reason I am to this place is because of what He's delivered me out of.

Elisa: Yeah, yeah.

Eryn: And then I'm like cool, thanks. See ya. That's awful.

Voice: 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 free you today on *God Hears Her*.

Eryn: Welcome to *God Hears Her*. I'm Eryn Eddy.

Elisa: And I'm Elisa Morgan. You know, sometimes in our relationship with God, we face times of feeling just kind of blah about our faith or other feelings of apathy about our time with God. How often do you feel that way?

Eryn: What do you do when you feel the spiritual blahs? Well join Elisa and me as we talk about experiencing spiritual apathy and how we can overcome it on this episode of *God Hears Her*.

Elisa: Eryn, do you ever feel just kind of blah? This is awful...in your relationship with God. Why did I say it's awful? Anyway, do you...

Eryn: Why do...why do I say it's awful?

Elisa: Feels so mean and ungrateful. But do you ever feel that way?

Eryn: I do feel that way, especially when you come from a season of feeling extremely connected to the Lord and maybe even seeing Him in a different way. And then, at least for me, I've noticed I've almost gone autopilot before...

Elisa: Yeah.



Eryn: ...in my relationship. And then I feel guilty for experiencing an autopilot. And then I think to myself, like *how can I get that feeling back?* I see it as a feeling. I know the blahs of faith.

Elisa: You just went deep dive, yeah, and I love that.

Eryn: I did. I just did.

Elisa: Let me try and explain what I'm talking about for me. It's like I know better. If I needed to go make a grateful list, I could. But sometimes I don't, you're right, feel like praying, think about God that much, feel a desire or experience a driven-ness to His presence. I'm not sure I want to go to church. I'm not sure I want to read my Bible. I mean this is like true confessions. And anybody who's listening, I'm sorry if I'm hurting you in any way. But I'm trying to keep it real...

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: ...because how can we help ourselves and others if we don't? But there are times when the spiritual blahs take over.

Eryn: Yeah, they do. And I think that we think that that is what faith is, is it's just one big blah. Then we start operating, at least for me, I start operating out of a place of my own strength. And my self-sufficiency comes into place where I start to not engage with the Lord as a relationship in conversation with Him...

Elisa: It's more of a checklist, you mean?

Eryn: ...throughout the day. Yeah, it's like I'll check in with Him later this week. Like it starts to become that. You know what I mean? Like...

Elisa: Yeah.

Eryn: ...I'm just gonna be really honest.

Elisa: Let's talk about, when does this kind of self-sufficiency kind of "I don't need You" or "I don't want to need You", or "I'm just not thinking about You". When does that hit us? When do these moments of I don't need You, I don't want to check in with You...cause those are different experiences both of those. When do the spiritual blahs tend to hit us or you?



Eryn: You know, I would never vocalize I don't need You, Lord. But I think my actions show that I don't...

Elisa: Okay.

Eryn: ...need Him by disengaging.

Elisa: Okay.

Eryn: When do they take over for me? The more I become secure in my circumstances I've noticed. Like I've been in very desperate times of my life where I'm like I literally do not know how this is going to take a turn for the best, come out of something, or heal this heartbreak. I've experienced such beautiful moments with the Lord that has shaped my faith to what it is now. But the more secure that I get in my personal circumstances, now that they're not all over the place; and there's a steadiness and a consistency in my life...

Elisa: Yeah.

Eryn: ...and a sense of security with whether it's job or relationship or friendships or health. That's when I start to become a little disengaged, which then I feel a guilt about that. Because the reason I am in this place is because of what He's delivered me out of.

Elisa: Yeah, yeah.

Eryn: And then I'm like cool, thanks, see ya. That's awful, but that's...

Elisa: I love how raw we're being, because it is awful. I mean it's awful that our God who loves us so much that He sacrificed His own Son on a cross in a horrible, humiliating, violent death, and then allowed Him to die and be separated for several days and then raised Him. That our God that we would go [pffff] you know, I'm good. Got this.

Eryn: Yeah, right.

Elisa: It is awful. And yet I really believe it's part of our humanity. We run kind of on a roller coaster or a yo-yo or whatever visual you want to use, you know. When we go down into the valleys, I can be so sad at times that I don't have the energy to reach out to God. Or I can be grieving and I think well, He can't possibly understand my bereft-ness, if you will. And I can be up at a high where I'm like, I got this. You



know I've got this. And I'm just...I'm feeling good in my own natural abilities. I'm a three on the enneagram. I can achieve this, ta da! You know...

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: ...so I can go either extreme and be in the awful place of, I got this, God. I'm not sure, you know, You're a priority right now.

Eryn: When I was in this desperation for Him, I feel like I should always be desperate for Him.

Elisa: Yeah.

Eryn: Now I'm in a space of security and steadiness and stability. And then I was unstable and very insecure in many ways. But I still felt like I've got this. But then certain things broke down that I was like, I don't know how you're going to deliver me from all of this, Lord. He gave me a visual. I remember I was at a retreat for worship leaders. And it was a retreat for them to just be restored and refilled and refreshed. And I was there working the event helping with social media management stuff. And as I was there, they did communion. And I closed my eyes, and I just...I felt so broken. It was a moment where I just saw all my broken icky parts. And I felt like a pressing of the Lord and the Holy Spirit just saying "I love you, you can give that to Me. Give this all to Me, all of the choices that you made, all of what you thought you knew. You can give that to Me." And now when I operate out of a space of again, self-sufficiency, thinking I got this; but I'm also kind of like I know I don't. I revert back to that image that He gave me of Him on the cross. Cause in the vision, it was Him on the cross and...and calling my name from a very busy crowd and asking me to come to Him and to see how much He loves me and how much He values me and how much I'm worth this. I try to revert back to that image, not to guilt myself but to experience the grace and the love that He consistently has for me even when I operate out of that state of self-sufficiency. Cause it's so easy to fall into shame I think when you experience I guess you could say like apathy. I think apathy is worse than hate cause it's just, right, you're just numb.

Elisa: You know I think about John who wrote down the Revelation. And it was a revelation from Jesus to seven first-century churches. And one of them is the church at Laodicea. Jesus' words were, you're neither hot nor cold.

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: And so I want to spit you out of my mouth. And I think that's what I go to when I think of the concept of spiritual apathy.



Eryn: Wow, yeah, you're either hot or cold. It's...

Elisa: You're lukewarm is...is the word that, you know, we've kind of coined to describe that. You're [meh].

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: You're...you're blah.

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: You know, we're talking about we can feel that way on a high when we get into this kind of self-sufficiency. We can feel that way or experience the [meh-ness] when we're in a low and maybe we have a huge amount of shame that we're not worthy. But we can also do it just on the daily [meh-ness]. What is it? Where does it come from? Because I look at it myself, and we've used the word "awful" we've used the word "shame." But where...how do I get into this spot? And I do think it's because I start taking for granted. That's maybe another phrase, taking for granted that God loves me.

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: And there's nothing I can do about it, as my pastor says. I can't make it go away. I can't increase it. It's constant. It's Romans, you know, 8 of nothing can separate us from the love of God, not height nor depth nor anything, no not death, not...nothing, trials, tribulations. Nothing can separate us. So I can start leaning into that in a well kind of okay, I got this. It's not a flippant thing. It's just this...it's a context that actually God invites me to live in, in what we might call the victorious Christian life.

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: But I turn it into this taking it for granted thing.

Eryn: Yeah, I do think that there is this level of recognizing I'm just kind of responding to all of my circumstances that I start to forget to look for Him in all of them.

Elisa: You know, Eryn, I don't think it's like a sin, so to speak, to slip into doldrums. But this reality that if I'm not looking for Him 24/7, I will miss something that He's trying to do.



Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: And to live in that doldrum, live in that apathy. Maybe our first steps towards God come from simply recognizing I'm in it. *This morning, you know, God I forgot You.* Oh, and a simple thing like *help me remember You* can be a way that I acknowledge it, and I open my eyes differently. I mean how many times have...have you been leading or simply just living. And you just go on your own way of, you know, I'm...I'm on a walk. Or I'm at the coffee shop, or I'm sitting at my computer trying to write something. Or I'm in conversation with my daughter. And I'm doing what I do. Then if I do a kind of a oh, oh yeah, God's here, boom. My internal spiritual eyes open to something in the conversation, something in nature that I hadn't noticed, something that's going on inside me...

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: ...that I hadn't attended to. And suddenly that very moment, which was a little apathetic, becomes a pow, a wow, a oh, a recognition.

Eryn: An intimacy builder.

Elisa: Oh, that's good.

Eryn: I prayed a couple months ago. It's the first time I think I really, like you said, it's like it's important to recognize it. And I've fallen into that where I was just kind of on autopilot. I just decided in one of my quiet times in the morning just being like *Lord, I've been distant from You. And there isn't anything specific. I'm just getting caught up in life, and I've not made You a priority. And I don't really know even what to share with You.* And part of me got to that space because I had a very long laundry list of things to pray for. It definitely built my intimacy with Him to see Him so involved in that. So then my life is less chaotic, it's interesting to be like huh. There are still many, I mean many, many things that are happening in the world and happening in my friends' lives and happening in my family's lives that I can pray for and be on my knees for. I just recognized I was such on autopilot that I needed to call it out and just say, this is where I'm at. And then I asked Him. I said, can I just see You today? I want to see You today. Give me the eyes and the ears to see and hear You today. I had a day like three days ago where He was there at every turn. And I remember driving out of the grocery store in the parking lot just literally I prayed out loud. I was like, *Lord* (and I was just kind of crying and I was just like). *I'm just so grateful I got to just see You do this and this and this today.* And I just named out things that I knew, like it was just His way of loving me. And I think I just want to do that more where I'm just recognizing the little things that I see Him in and be like *You see me as Your daughter where You want to just show up like that.* And it's...doesn't...it's not even extravagant things.



Elisa: No.

Eryn: It could be something so small that I would share with someone. And they're like really? That's...that's...but to me it's like it meant so much to me. And so I just want to call it out when I see it versus let it go by me.

Elisa: So good. Yeah, I remember many years ago, David and Karen Mains did a 40-day God hunt where you would look for God all day...just for 40 days. It was during the season of Lent. And...and when you saw Him, you'd call Him out. Like I had the exact amount of money in my wallet to pay for my groceries, you know, exact amount. Or when I face-timed with my grandchild, they looked so delighted to see my face. And I can't think of the last time somebody beamed at me that way. And it was like the face of God looking at me with pleasure. Or you know I got to have my very favorite coffee today, because it's finally the season where that coffee is back, you know, in stock or whatever. Those are all such silly things. But you know, if you start...

Eryn: No, but they're things, yeah.

Elisa: They're things. And if you start looking for God, maybe we're praying for something specific, for my husband and his bout with cancer. And he has a good day or he has a good diagnosis. You know, to notice that's not just like yay. That's something God is providing. There are a lot of things we can do like that. You know I think another reason we slip into apathy is we sometimes think well nothing's gonna change.

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: Like we look at the conditions in our world, we think about our climate and what's going on, on the earth with these crazy storms or tornadoes or fires or floods, and we feel so helpless. And sometimes I slip into, well I'm not going to ask for anything from God; because He's going to do what He wants to do. And His ways are not my ways. And so I'm just gonna kind of give into it. But when I give in that way, I think maybe I do miss out on engaging with the intimacy and the power that He has.

Eryn: Yes, I feel like it's very easy when you look around and you see everything that's going on to feel hopeless and to just accept hopelessness. I think that that's a form of hopelessness to me. Why be vulnerable of what I desire when He's eventually gonna just do what He wants?

Elisa: Yeah.



Eryn: And I don't want to be hopeful and then my hopes are crushed.

Elisa: Yeah.

Eryn: So then we live in this state of really hopelessness, but we think we're being realistic.

Elisa: Or very yielded.

Eryn: Yeah, or very yielded, yeah.

Elisa: Well I just won't want anything.

Eryn: Yes.

Elisa: Yeah. I just won't want anything, because that means that I'm not trusting God. So I'm just gonna trust Him, and I won't want anything except...except I do.

Eryn: That's so true. And you know to just firsthand to have hoped for so much, and some stuff happens, and some stuff doesn't happen and does happen. And but when it happens, it builds that reservoir of my, I don't know, well of hope you know where it's like He wants to experience me being vulnerable with Him about what I hope for.

Elisa: Oh, that's so good. Yes.

Eryn: Cause He really wants to know that I trust Him with this like childlike oh maybe He'll do this, you know. And...and maybe He won't. But even if He doesn't do the things that I hope for, the journey and the intimacy of me expressing and being vulnerable and trusting prepares me either way for the response of whatever it is I'm hoping for.

Elisa: When we come back, Eryn and I will share how to overcome the spiritual blahs with some things you can do and some practical new ways to read your Bible. That's coming up after this quick break.

[music]

Eryn: Hey, y'all. *God Hears Her* recently celebrated its hundredth episode. If you haven't checked out the episode, you can find it on our website or anywhere you listen to your podcast. As part of the celebration, godhearsher.org



we also want to offer you a special limited edition *God Hears Her* tote filled with things that you'll love including the three devotional books, *God Hears Her*, *God Sees Her*, and *God Loves Her* with pens and stickers and a notebook and other great goodies too. You'll want to get your hands on this ASAP. Check it out on our *God Hears Her* website. That's godhearsher.org/shop. Again, that's godhearsher.org/shop. Now back to the show.

Elisa: I'm just blown away by how much of Him there is...

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: ...in the blah-ness. If we recognize the blah-ness and invite Him into the blah-ness, there is a place to risk. And I think that's what we're talking about around the edge of this, to risk in the blah-ness.

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: What does that look like for you?

Eryn: Well, I think we take big risks when we express what we truly desire. Because we could be met with, that's a dumb desire. Or...

Elisa: Yeah, I have been. I have had that.

Eryn: ...like that's selfish. Or you're not gonna get that. Or not yet, you know. And...and sometimes "not yet" doesn't mean no forever. Not yet could be that you're just not prepared yet. I think we can wince at that. I don't want to hear "not yet" or "no" so I'm just not gonna express at all what it is that I deeply desire. But I just know that in a season that I've been in with the rebuild of my life after divorce, there have been a lot of no's from Him. But those have built an intimacy, because I've learned in the journey of before I got the no's how much He loves me.

Elisa: Let's go to this other part of apathy. We've done a deep dive into the holding back our desires. But let's go into the place of when you don't even really realize you're on autopilot. And then you realize it, and so you're gonna recognize it. And you're gonna, you know, lean into it and risk and etcetera. But what else can we do practically? One thing that comes to my mind is to do something different than what I normally do. So I'm not musical. I'm kind of tone deaf.

Eryn: Okay.



Elisa: If I sing, everything's like in one note, you know kind of a thing.

Eryn: Kind of a thing.

Elisa: But if I'm feeling apathetic, and I risk musically, that can pull me into a different spiritual place. Like I put on a worship album...

Eryn: Oh yes.

Elisa: ...and I let it sing over me, and then I join into it. That would be something different for me. And it...I can find myself awakening to God. What comes to your mind?

Eryn: Well, I resonate with that. Because I used to be a singer.

Elisa: Yeah, you're good.

Eryn: And they always say, once you're a singer, you're always a singer. So that's really sweet that they say that. But you still lose some of your craft. But for some reason, I will not pay attention to how I sound when I worship. Because it's not about how I sound. It's about me letting these words wash over me and connecting with them. So whether I hit a pitch or not or I hit a, you know, a note that sounds really beautiful or I decide to improvise and do something different; or sometimes I just recognize I just let it flow. And sometimes it sounds awful. And...and then sometimes it sounds great.

Elisa: Yeah.

Eryn: But the point in what you're saying is that...

Elisa: I love that.

Eryn: ...it's just all about just connecting and just letting the words be what they are supposed to be in your life right now in that moment.

Elisa: And a real way to do that is just to put your earphones in, and turn it up really loud. And...

Eryn: And do noise cancellation so you can't really hear yourself.



Elisa: Yeah, and...and...but anybody around can. But just get private and go for it. Okay, what...what else? What else can we do?

Eryn: I love that you said disrupt a routine. I love to go on nature walks. And where I lived, they were easily-accessible, and now they are not. So when I do go on them, I experience just the Lord in another way. I think disrupting my routine is being very intentional about being in nature and being around it. I think sometimes it can look like maybe even changing up the routine of when you have quiet time. Maybe it's buying a new journal and...and a new pen, you know.

Elisa: Yeah.

Eryn: And start...

Elisa: A new Bible.

Eryn: ...you know.

Elisa: Yeah, different version, yeah.

Eryn: Leave the journal that's half-filled and go get a new one and just restart with a...

Elisa: That's good.

Eryn: ...maybe you just need a refresher, you know, just a reset. It's a new journal, nature walk, sing without knowing the tones of your voice and not caring about it.

Elisa: That's awesome. And...and a new Bible. I think a new version can help us.

Eryn: A new Bible.

Elisa: ...you know.

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: Get the Amplified, or get the YouVersion, or get the whatever that, you know, will help you...the Message...help you hear God differently.



Eryn: I do want to ask you, Elisa, what do you do when you have a disinterest or this apathy where you're just like, I don't want to pick up my Bible. What am I going to read? You know, you feel so disconnected to your Bible. What do you do?

Elisa: A lot of things come to my mind. Just the discipline of opening it and starting in a book. You know, maybe it's the Psalms. Maybe it's a gospel. Maybe it's a letter from Paul. But doing the work of four to five verses and then one tool I like to use is to read the Bible with an ear to the author who wrote it. So that means, the author with a little "a". So that's Paul. That's Moses. That's David. That's John.

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: Okay, what was going on in their life? Who were they writing to? Why were they writing? Why did God pick them? Just thinking about...that's a person, okay. And then reading the Bible with an eye to the Author with a capital "A". The Holy Spirit can speak through God's Word. God's Word, the Bible, is not the fourth person of the Trinity. But the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity. And Jesus calls Himself the Living Word of God. So when we open up Scripture, we can really open up our spiritual ears and remind ourselves God's talking to me. What can I get out of this today? So I think that's one thing that...that I really go back to when I get bored. Another thing is I just go, *Lord, I need to see You. I need to engage with You.* So this goes back to our music thing, is I sing this little song. "I love You, Lord, and I lift my voice to worship You. O my soul rejoice. Take joy, my King, in what You hear. May it be a sweet, sweet sound in Your ear." And just singing that humbles and connects me. And I do it much slower and with great presence. And somehow God inhabits it and pulls me up next to His heart.

Eryn: Oh, I love that, Elisa. Well before we close out today's episode of *God Hears Her*, we want to remind you that the show notes are available in the podcast description. There you can find a link for a free *Reclaim Today* article about how to see God. There are also links to connect with Elisa and me on social. Find all of this and more when you visit our website at godhearsher.org. That's godhearsher.org.

Elisa: Thanks for joining us. And don't forget. God hears you. He sees you. And He loves you because you are His.

Eryn: Today's episode was engineered by Anne Stevens and produced by Mary Jo Clark, Daniel Ryan Day, and Jade Gustman. We also want to recognize Chriscynethia and Jody for all their help and support. Thanks, everyone.

Elisa: *God Hears Her* is a production of Our Daily Bread Ministries.