



# God Hears Her Podcast

## Episode 115 – Unhurried Transformation

### Elisa Morgan & Eryn Eddy with Gem Fadling

**Gem:** I'm in the Florence cathedral. I'm in one of the chapels. There's this wall-sized painting of the Last Supper. This beautiful sort of face, and it's holding the bread for communion. And I'm just sitting in these pews with a handful of people. And I'm just doing that thing. Okay, it's quiet in here. Everyone's praying. And so I heard in my mind the phrase that I hear every week when we have communion at church which is "This is My body given for you." Right? It was the Last Supper. It was the communion chalice. "This is My Body given for you" and then this phrase was right on its heels. *Gem, stop pushing. Stop trying, and stop angsting.*

**Elisa:** That's a beautiful noun made verb. I like that.

**Gem:** It was perfect. It was like a very soft slap in the face, which I needed.

**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*.

**Elisa:** Welcome to *God Hears Her*. I'm Elisa Morgan.

**Eryn:** And I'm Eryn Eddy. And I'm curious. What does your schedule look like? Are you always running all over the place with a million things to do. Do you feel like you're in a hurry for things? Or maybe you are more relaxed when you have a busy to-do list.

**Elisa:** Today's guest believes there is peace in unhurried living that can quiet our minds and help us feel more rested and relaxed. Gem Fadling is a founding partner of Unhurried Living, Inc., a non-profit that trains people to rest deeper, live fuller, and lead better. She's a certified life coach and a trained spiritual director who coaches women at the intersection of spiritual leadership and soul care.

**Eryn:** Gem has so much to share with us to help us live unhurried lives. Join us as we learn from Gem on this episode of *God Hears Her*.



**Gem:** Our organization is called Unhurried Living. When I say “our” it’s my husband and I. We founded this non-profit together.

**Elisa:** Okay.

**Gem:** So one of the things I like to say about *hurry* is this. You know, busy is one thing. That’s our calendar. We all have a lot to do. I’m not going to deny that. I’m doing a lot of things right now too. But *hurry*, this is Dallas Willard. Hurry is the soul, right? So the question I like to ask is, is it possible to be busy and unhurried? And I’m finding out that it is possible. But like I said, it takes...it takes effort. I have to be intentional about it. Because the culture at large really presses in, in a lot of ways that make it difficult.

**Elisa:** Yeah, I want you to go into that distinction you just made between *busy* and *hurry*. And you said that Dallas Willard said that *hurry* is an aspect of the soul. So where do we feel that? What’s that like to have a hurried soul? How do we know if our soul’s hurrying?

**Gem:** Yeah, well one way I know is I can just feel it in my body, right? Some things like anxiety, a fast-beating heart, a furrowed brow, a racing mind, right, a tight jaw, raised shoulders. I mean, not that this happens to me all the time or anything. But a lot of times I find out that I’m hurried when I start noticing something physically like it’s jarring me awake. But sometimes I can hum a long in that inner pace for quite a while before I really start to feel stress. And it just depends on the season. It depends on how aware I am of what’s going on, whatever the circumstance.

**Elisa:** I don’t know, but maybe one of my soul’s slipping into hurry has to do with worry, which by the way, rhymes with hurry. It’s just...you know I’ll just start worrying about one of my grandchildren going through a big stage, you know, of development. Or I’ll start worrying about what I’m gonna actually say in a given moment when I have to speak. Or I start worrying, and I...I don’t notice, which is such a great word, that I’m worrying until I’m way down the line. And you know I’m not gonna have anything to say. I’m the worst person in the world, or they’re gonna make these choices and end up in jail. Or you know I’m way, you know, wackadoodley, down the line. So to notice what’s going on inside me, that really pulls me back from the edge of the cliff.

**Gem:** It’s been very helpful. I’m practicing this again. I mean when you have an organization called Unhurried Living, of course, the standards are so high. Like you must be all calm and zen all the time. But you know how it is, when an author writes a book, we’re writing about something that we need or want to learn. Evidently, when I name an organization, it’s about something that I want to be about and I want to help others with. So yeah, unhurried and worry, for most of my life I really started to wonder if anxiety and worry were my thorn in the flesh. Because I felt that I would never be able to overcome the weight of what  
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I was feeling. But a good dose of mid-life and some therapy and in fact, I did find some...some freedom by the grace of God. And I still struggle, just like you're describing, Elisa. But I find that, because I've been practicing noticing, I can catch myself faster. And hear what I'm saying. I'm not saying I don't worry anymore. I'm not saying I don't get anxious anymore. Cause I live a life just like everybody else. Things happen, but I'm practicing noticing. And I'm practicing caring about what's happening when I look at what's happening, and then, you know, asking God to help me or get whatever help I need, talk to my spiritual director, pull out all the spiritual practices that I know. But it's definitely a process.

**Eryn:** Was there a moment in your life where you experienced, for the work that you do today and you and your husband do together, was there a moment that was a catalyst to pursue unhurried living?

**Gem:** There's more than one answer. There's a lifetime of an answer to that. Because really, unhurried living is a culmination. At this point, we are about 60 years old. So when you've got that last third of life, I mean, this feels like the culmination of everything God has done in us and through us. And now we get to have unhurried living as the place where we pour out. But the call is separate from the organization. You know, the calling that we have and we were in our late 20s. And we had come up through the evangelical church. And both of us at that time, for whatever reason, were just hungry. Like is there more? Is there something we're missing here? And God was very gracious to bring some mentors into our lives. And in a very simple but profound way, they introduced us to John 15. "I am the Vine. You are the branches. Apart from Me, you can do nothing." Right? How many times does it say, remain in Me and I in you...remain, remain, or abide depending on...

**Elisa:** Yeah, that's a powerful word.

**Gem:** Abide, so I was 26 years old, and I got bowled over by the word *abide* and the sentence, "Apart from Me, you can do nothing."

**Elisa:** Did you look up what that word means in some way, shape, or form?

**Gem:** Probably back then, but do you have a definition on hand?

**Elisa:** Well you know, I'm remembering I...I did a thing on it too at some point. And I have this word picture that I picked up. And it...it's the, okay, picture an archer's bow you know that is curved. And then there's a string from the top to the bottom. Okay, that string is taut. That's a really fun word to say, taut. Okay, it's tight, and it holds a lot of pressure on the bow to arch in that shape. And that's where it gets its power to shoot an arrow. But the word *abide* is the word picture is when you take that string off, and you release the arch of the bow to its natural shape. And it's just relaxed. Isn't that powerful?



**Gem:** I love it.

**Eryn:** Yeah, it is.

**Gem:** Oh my goodness, yes. I mean that brings up the idea of the true self as God has made me, right?

**Elisa:** Ooh, that's good, yeah, Gem.

**Gem:** I love that so much. And of course, because it's John 15, so the image I've carried around for more than half my life now is that of the vineyard, the vine and the branches and...and I've been to vineyards. And I've really just looked at them and studied and...and that place where you've got the vine, which is the part that goes, you know, in the root system and then the branch comes off of that. But then there's leaves, and then of course, all the grapes. But the part sometimes I don't know that we focus on concertedly is where the branch meets the vine. I think a lot of times what can happen in our lives is that we think we're supposed to be making the fruit happen, right?

**Elisa:** Well that's a pop right there. That's pop for sure.

**Gem:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** All about the grapes, yeah.

**Gem:** It's all about the grapes. And so, and I gotta make that happen. So this is...and then now we're busy, right?

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Gem:** So but the thing...I think there's a simplicity in the image, because my invitation in that passage is, remain in Me. You will bear much fruit. And He says, "Fruit that will last." He will bear the fruit that will last. And I have found this to be true anecdotally in my life, in my own fumbly way, it has been important to me to abide. And so there's a...just a paradigm I carry with me all the time through all the things of, what is God doing right now? What is the story God is writing of my life? How can I make sense of this in light of Him? And that has carried me through everything. And so it's that little place where the vine and the branch meet.

**Elisa:** That's so good.



**Eryn:** So how do you practice the discipline of not worrying about the fruit that's being produced on the branches, but you are focused on the attachment?

**Gem:** Yeah, that's really central to what we're talking about in *Unhurried Living*. It really is central. Cause we work with Christian leaders. And Christian leaders, of course, I mean you're working for God, right? So there's a lot of reasons to stay busy and pushing and all of that stuff. But really the queen of the disciplines, it's been called, is solitude and silence. And the same man that introduced me to John 15 taught me EPC, extended personal communion.

**Elisa:** Oh wow, okay.

**Gem:** Which is just their name, you know. It's not a magical term. It's just what they chose to call it, extended personal communion. But it really was solitude and silence. Can you go away for an hour? Can you go away for two, four, or six hours? And can you just be? And so that's another practice I've been practicing now for more than half my life. And I bring that one up first, but I know it's intimidating. Six hours? What are you talking about? I know it's intimidating, but I'm...I'm sharing it because I really believe it's been key to me keeping my focus. The vine and the branch connecting is that solitude. And again, it's not just go sit in a chair somewhere for six hours and try not to think about something. For me, it was often, often in nature.

**Eryn:** That's what I was gonna ask you. So tell me, how do you plan for six hours?

**Elisa:** Or how about is that where you start at six hours?

**Gem:** Oh no, I start at...no, no, no, no, no.

**Eryn:** Did you work your way to six hours?

**Gem:** I told...yes, yes.

**Eryn:** ...by six minutes?

**Gem:** Well, the assignment that they gave us, cause we would go to their workshops. And we were, you know, we...we really, really put ourselves under their tutelage, both my husband and I. And their first assignment was an hour, which felt like forever. Cause it was, you know, you're talking to people who were just used to the regular sort of quiet time, whatever that was at the time. And now we're being asked  
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to do this very odd thing. You know, just go and be. So I would go to a park that was near our home, and I would take my beach chair and just set it down under a tree. So sometimes I would sit. Sometimes I would stroll. But whatever it was. And then over the course of years, of course, I would just get myself to wherever, the ocean. Or if I was at a retreat center facilitating something, I would go out among wherever that was. For me, nature is just really conducive to this kind of prayer. If you decide to start with an hour, it's gonna take most of the time. I remember 55 minutes of it was just my brain fluttering around and me trying to figure out what to do with myself. I'm not gonna lie. That's what it feels like, because our brains are busy. Our hearts are fluttering. We have a lot on our mind. But I do remember the grace of God would meet me pretty much at the end of every time with just something, some gift, some thought, some shift of perspective. And it was very personal to me at the time. Whatever I was going through at the time at work or in my relationships or in my family, I would...He would just give me some...some insight. And it kept me trying. Cause I...I sensed something different. Cause think about it. If you picture a jar and like a little Mason jar, and it's full of water. But in the bottom you have maybe half an inch of sand. If it's just sitting there like that, of course, you've got all this beautiful clarity in this water. But most of us, our lives aren't like that. But if you shook the jar and now there's this swirling dirt inside, of course that's what it feels like a lot of times up here—so many people, so many thoughts. But if I were to set the jar down, in a couple of days, it would be back to that clarity. That's the sensation I would get when I set aside time like that. I gave my body and my mind and my soul and everything a chance to just whoo. And then you start small. But over the course of time, it builds on itself. And it allows you, just like any other spiritual practice, you gain sort of a spiritual muscle in that area. And then you're able to add more time or add more whatever you want to add.

**Eryn:** That's so beautiful. I love the picture that you gave of the Mason jar and the...the sand and how it gets muddied and then it settles. I do a prayer retreat every year with a spiritual formation mentor of mine. And the first probably hour or so, it is what you just explained. My mind is going crazy. I mean it's [lalala] and I have these different thoughts and these voices. And I think about like oh my to-do list, and did I do this, and did I do this or I forgot to email. All of a sudden, everything that I have forgotten, everything that people are depending me for comes to the forefront of my mind. And it takes a minute for me to pay attention to what voice to listen to. And I want to ask you, like what are some ways, you know, somebody listening may be like I don't have time to do a, you know, a prayer retreat or to do so many hours. But I do want to begin. How do they decipher between the voices, that swirl in their head once they decide to start to take the next step of maybe doing an hour?

**Gem:** Yeah, what am I gonna do with all these voices with all these thoughts? And for the purposes of this very brief conversation we're having, I mean at least to mention this. Our brain is an organ inside of our head, right? And some have said that there's a separate mind. You know I have the...have the mind of Christ. Or be transformed by the renewing of your mind. You know so I think there's a place inside of *godhearsher.org*



us that is a little more objective and can take one step back. We can call that the mind. Let's call it the mind. The brain is just this thing. Now the brain has just a life of its own, right? Everyone's talking about neuroscience right now, so we know at least this much. Our brain is very busy. It likes to make habits. It has a negativity bias, and it likes to create problems and solve them. And it likes to do that in a very efficient way. So even if you are armed with that much knowledge, see back then I didn't know. Here's the sentence. You are not your thoughts. Your brain is having thoughts. It's okay. You can take one step back and look at what's going on and make a decision about it. Now that has taken me an actual lifetime...

**Elisa:** Wow.

**Gem:** ...to really grasp and to practice.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Gem:** I'm not...I'm not kidding. The first half of my life, I just didn't know. I thought it was all me. It's my voice. It's my thoughts. It's me, right?

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** Yeah, and it must be true.

**Gem:** And it must be true, cause there it is.

**Eryn:** For me, I've...I've seen how these voices in my head can even bring an evidence to...

**Elisa:** Of course.

**Eryn:** ...confirm it.

**Elisa:** [inaudible] accuses.

**Eryn:** ...even if it's not true.

**Elisa:** Yeah, yeah.

**Gem:** Exactly. Well that's just our own self-confirming bias. We all have that. We all have that. We're looking for ways to confirm what we already believe. And again, it's the brain's way. The brain wants to  
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make it easy, so it's trying to get all this stuff streamlined. And then that's why we get into those grooves where we feel stuck. But it's okay to wake up. It's okay to believe you're not stuck. It's okay to believe that that's not you. So you are not your thoughts. Here's another sentence. You are more than your thoughts, right? In Christ. And there's this beautiful quote by Victor Frankl that I just love. He was a Holocaust survivor. And he said, "Between stimulus and response, there is a space. And in that space lies our power to choose. And in our choice, lies our growth and our freedom." And so what I like to say when I work with women is, you have agency here. You can make a choice. You don't have to be stuck or trapped. I'm not saying this is easy. But at least begin to believe that you have a choice. And Victor Frankl, he was actually talking about the trauma he had survived. Between stimulus and response, there's a space. And so in my book, I talk about this very simple practice. It's called "notice, discern, and respond." I call it NDR. And I like to suggest that in the space that Frankl is talking about where you get to choose, you could do "notice, discern, and respond" and come out on the other side with something that you would rather be doing.

**Elisa:** So good. And you started some of this illustration you're in or this practice that you're...you're talking about. You started talking about Romans 12 and about being transformed by the renewal of our minds.

**Gem:** Exactly.

**Elisa:** I do think if we back up and look at what Paul is advocating there, he is saying you are not your thoughts. You can have the mind of Christ. And if you notice what you're thinking, that's just paying attention. And then if you discern, you're going, *God what do You think about what I'm thinking?* Okay, and then you respond. Well, I'm always going to be this way or oh wait. Change is possible.

**Gem:** Exactly. Yes, and I...and I always like to encourage us, while that this is not Pollyanna thinking, I'm saying there's a 1, 2, 3 thing. I'm talking about...because I'm a spiritual director at heart. So I believe in transformation. We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. So I believe in this transformational life that we're invited to. And I just like to find ways to try to engage that. Because when it says, "Be transformed" that's passive, right, for me? So what's my job then? I get to cooperate. So then my question to myself is, *how will I cooperate with this transforming process that I'm in?* And that can be answered many ways, right?

**Elisa:** Can you give an example of, if it's not too difficult, something that you worked through personally about this?





**Gem:** I use this very often, daily, sort of unconsciously now. Because what I do is when I notice a way of thinking that's not helping me, I like to call thoughts helpful and unhelpful.

**Elisa:** Okay.

**Gem:** Because it keeps us from judging them. Cause when you're not...when your noticing, it's good not to berate yourself or shame yourself. That's so easy to do. When I say "notice" I mean simply see it. Well let's use today as an example, for an example. Oh my goodness, I'm talking to Elisa Morgan today. I used to lead MOPS, and oh my goodness. What if I look stupid? And you know...

**Elisa:** [inaudible]

**Gem:** ...do you know what I'm saying? I'm just talking about today, regular lady thoughts that are going in your mind...

**Elisa:** Sure, sure.

**Gem:** ...as you're putting on your makeup. Oh, I hope I do okay. If you could...but that could...but you can e...

**Elisa:** I have those too, Gem. Exact same ones.

**Gem:** Right.

**Elisa:** [inaudible]

**Gem:** I'm not, yes. So I'm just saying, you know, we could bring up all of our most sinful thoughts. But let's get very practical. This happens today. I have a thought that's not helping me. That means I'm thinking from my ego, and I'd rather not do that. I'd rather come from my true self. And it's making me feel afraid or anxious. I don't want to feel that either.

**Elisa:** Sure.

**Gem:** So what if I just see myself thinking oh no, I'm gonna be intimidated. And I'm not gonna know what I'm doing. Or I could step back, notice. Okay, now let's discern. Okay hold on a second. I've done tons of podcasts. I've been on both side of the mike. I just wrote a book. Evidently, I know what I'm talking about at least I some way. Do you know what I mean? Like so I just start saying things out loud. And even if I



have to make myself laugh like that, say some things out loud that are true. Elisa Morgan's not gonna treat me...no, she's not gonna treat me terrible. This is gonna be delightful. So I start telling myself versions of the truth. But you have to stop and see it first and not judge it. And then discern. Well that's probably not gonna happen, right? And then the response can kind of a lot of times just flows naturally. My response is, oh I feel better. I'm gonna keep putting on my mascara now.

[interlude]

**Elisa:** When we come back, Gem will share a time in her life when she felt highly anxious, a time some of us may relate to. She'll also explain how we can react when we feel like God isn't with us in our moments of overwhelm.

**Eryn:** But first, we want to remind you to check out our website at [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org). We have so many great podcast episodes and blogposts covering a range of topics that can help us in the beautiful and messy moments of life. Make sure to check out our website for tons of great resources.

**Elisa:** Now let's get back to our conversation with Gem.

**Gem:** I have a story about a really anxiety-producing moment that I had, that I think will speak into this very, very well. Unhurried Living I think is...we're in our seventh year now. And we basically left another non-profit where we both had two different positions, and we decided it was just time. It was time to start our own thing. So when you're starting something from "nothing" I mean literally we had, you know, we had to get the license and the 501(c)(3). And then I guess I need a website. And oh, should we podcast? Like literally we started. You know I need an email list. And so about once a year for the first four years, I got myself to a place of really severe anxiety that felt debilitating, not to the point of not being able to function, but it was enough that my body was talking to me. My brain wouldn't shut off. And it took me months. I would build up to this anxiety. And then I would go, okay, Lord. No, no, no, no, I see what I'm doing. I would catch myself months later. And then we would do some work together, again spiritual director, my own spiritual practices, some just self-talk about what's going on. And I would calm down. You know this was all a process. And then I would take off again. And I did that four times in a row, first four years. Now the fourth time it happened, I got myself in such a bunch or a pinch, whatever.

**Elisa:** Tizzy.

**Gem:** I thought I could...a tizzy.

**Elisa:** There you go, yeah.

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**Gem:** I know. It's interesting how your ambition gets turned on, and your perfectionism gets turned on because you're...

**Eryn:** To a whole other level.

**Gem:** ...to a whole nother level.

**Eryn:** You didn't know you had, right.

**Gem:** That's...all of that was happening. Because here I am again. I'm in this beautiful empty nest season. I've got all this energy, all this life wisdom. I'm gonna build. I'm gonna share. And along with that was just this kind of driven-ness. The fourth time it happened, I was beyond my ability to cope. So I called my former therapist. And I said, "Something's wrong. I've been going a month here, and I can't." My head's buzzing and my everything.

**Eryn:** And explain to me. Was it like tremors? Was it flutter in your heart? Was it loss of appetite?

**Gem:** Fast heartbeat, a brain that would not shut off. I didn't have all the qualifications for a bonafide panic attack, cause that's more a severe sort of boom that happens to somebody. He ended up calling it a quasi-panic attack. In the book I called it an anxiety attack. Because an anxiety attack is something that sort of builds up slowly over time. And it...it's this more fluid thing. It was severe anxiety that I could not figure out with prayer or anything how to. So I called my therapist. He said, oh, we can resolve this in one to three sessions.

**Elisa:** Goodness. Everybody's gonna want his number now. So...

**Eryn:** I know.

**Gem:** Unfortunately, he's retired.

**Elisa:** Snap, I wanted to text him. Okay. Go ahead.

**Gem:** I know, yeah.

**Eryn:** Me too.



**Gem:** Well essentially, I...I won't give you the whole thing. But the...but the quick version of...of it is, when you feel this happening, you find a chair and you sit in the same chair every time. And you essentially just say out loud, I'm not running; and I'm not fighting. Because what had happened to me was I turned on the faucet of my adrenaline. And it was just...and whatever happens in your autonomic nervous system, something got just heightened. And I was unable to regulate myself. Once you tell yourself that you're not gonna push against this, and you're not gonna run from it or fight it; then you just sit in the chair until the adrenaline flows through. And that usually doesn't take more than about 10 or 15 minutes. And then you get up. And you do that as often as you need to. And he was right. I did it a handful of times. And my body and/or my brain both learned how to regulate. And ever since then, I haven't gotten to that heightened sense again.

**Elisa:** That's awesome. Who can't do that? I mean, we can do this, right, Eryn?

**Gem:** I'm not, yeah. You just sit...sit at any...sit at...let it be the same chair. So your body, everything knows this is the spot where I go. And I'm...and I'm gonna say that I'm not gonna...I'm not gonna run, and I'm not gonna fight. I'm just...

**Elisa:** There's an element of surrender in that.

**Gem:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** And...

**Gem:** Yes.

**Elisa:** ...I don't know what actually to do with that. Because there are bad things that happen that we don't want to surrender to.

**Gem:** Right.

**Elisa:** And that's different. Like I'm not gonna surrender to abuse, or I'm not gonna...

**Gem:** Of course.

**Elisa:** ...surrender to addiction. Or I'm not gonna surrender, you know, to...but or these crazy thoughts I have. But I am gonna surrender to try to control everything. And I am gonna surrender to worst case scenario thinking, that kind of stuff.



**Gem:** Of course, yes, an appropriate, healthy open-handedness. Cause I was, you know, white-knuckling. About two or three months after that, my husband and I had planned our 34<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, and we were going to Italy and Spain. And we were so thankful we didn't wait till our 35<sup>th</sup>, cause our 35th was 2020.

**Elisa:** Yeah, everything was canceled, yeah.

**Gem:** And we would not have done it. So here we are in Italy. And I...not only was I on a romantic vacation with my husband, but I was on a pilgrimage. Because I had just come off of this thing where I wound myself up beyond my own manageability. So I said, *Lord, I need a new way. I need a new way to live and work evidently, because I'm getting my pants in a bunch; and it's not working anymore.*

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** [inaudible]

**Gem:** So I went...it was a heartfelt prayer, and I meant it. Who knew how God was going to answer me. But He was so gracious to just kind of speak with me in prayer in a couple of cathedrals, one in Florence and one in Assisi. And I got a couple of really great guidance. It's in the opening chapter of the book. I'm in the Florence cathedral. I'm in one of the chapels. There's this wall-sized painting of the Last Supper, this beautiful sort of vase. And it's holding the bread for communion. And I'm just sitting in these pews with a handful of people. And I'm just doing that thing. Okay, it's quiet in here. Everyone's praying. And so I heard in my mind the phrase that I hear every week when we have communion at church which is "This is My body given for you." Right? It was the Last Supper. It was the communion chalice. "This is My body given for you" and then this phrase was right on its heels. *Gem, stop pushing. Stop trying and stop angsting.*

**Elisa:** That's a beautiful noun made verb. I like that.

**Gem:** It was perfect. It was like a very soft slap in the face, which I needed. Like this is My body given for you. It's okay. Stop pushing. Stop trying. Stop angsting. And so a few days later, I'm in the cathedral in Assisi and wandering around, of course in a prayerful mode. I went. I told you it was a pilgrimage. Plus, when you're in a place like that, everyone's walking in a solemn way because it's very...it's like that, you know. You're in a centuries-old what...you know. And I'm walking through, and I hear this. Again, I think it's from the Spirit. *You know you already have what you need. You might have lost it or forgotten about it, but you have it.* So of course, what verse is that? That's 2 Peter 1:3, right? "His divine power has given us [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org)



everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.” You already have what you need. So now I’m...I’m like I’m starting to string things together in my journal. This is My body given for you. Stop pushing. Stop trying. Stop angsting. You already have what you need. So I took that, and I’ve been living off of those invitations or guidances now for three years. And it’s making a huge difference in my life, so much so that it became a part of the heartbeat of the book. Because then I’m trying to say, okay, if you put that together with thought work, our thoughts very often lead to anxiety and worry and fretting. Can we learn to step back? Can you have the posture that I have what I need in Christ. I could discern what is going on here and maybe make a different choice. So that’s been sort of the ways I’ve been working with my thoughts.

**Eryn:** I think about just that story how you...you sat there and the Lord spoke. You said it was a gentle slap, right. I love it. He does that sometimes, and we just...we need it. But I think about the words that you were sharing. When you sit in a chair, I’m not running. I’m not fighting and how practical that is to just experience that. To the woman that feels like she’s sitting in a chair, and she’s telling herself I’m not running. I’m not fighting. And she’s just longing to hear from God, and she feels like she’s not with just silence, what would you share with her when she doesn’t know like what to do next? Like she feels like she has to do something in order to hear Him. What would you say?

**Gem:** Well first, I just want to say that’s a really rough place to be. I want to say I’m sorry if you’re in that situation. I also want to say, the word *hope* comes to mind. When we’re in a place where God feels silent or distant, I really believe that it’s okay to just allow that space to be what it is. And I actually believe that there might be something going on inside of me that I may not see right now or be able to manage in anyway. And so you kind of have to get comfortable with that.

**Elisa:** When we’re in that spot, and like you were saying, Eryn, we feel like well I’m doing it. Where are You?

**Gem:** Yes.

**Elisa:** Sometimes we are feeling or hearing some painful things that we haven’t had access to or haven’t been able to hear because we’ve been so busy hurrying. And that’s really scary. It’s just really scary to let those feelings come up to the surface, those thoughts sit in your mind. And...and I think that’s where you have to go into that next step that you talked about of discernment. You know, what does God say about those...those thoughts, those feelings, those realities? So sometimes we’re looking for something from Him, if you will, and it’s really coming...He’s trying to reveal something that we have in us.



**Gem:** Yes, and that silence actually makes the space for that to come up. And so some people call that a darker shade of grace.

**Elisa:** Oh, that's nice.

**Gem:** Isn't that an interesting phrase? A darker shade of grace is when we don't perceive God to be there, but we know He is. We don't perceive Him right now, and that's okay. And I guess, as a spiritual director, I would say any place you are in the journey is a valid place. But like, obviously like what Elisa said earlier, if it's trauma or abuse, we don't stay there. We don't just surrender to that. I'm talking about our regular day-to-day lives. Every place can be valid. But can you...can you notice what's going on? Can you make the space? And can you think it's okay, even just for now, that yes, I'm here in this chair. I hear nothing. I feel nothing. But even just the tiniest, tiniest shift, maybe one notch deeper, one step down a stairstep. *But Lord, I know You're there.* And even if you have to say it by sheer faith, cause there's nothing in you that can feel it at all. I get that. But again, we're being transformed, right? He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. I love that verse, because it's process. And sometimes we're measuring ourselves by that moment. But that moment is a part of the bigger story. And at some point, we will be able to look back on that moment; and it will make sense. But inside the moment, it's so hard to stay aware that it's okay. And my heart just goes out. I've been that woman multiple times. I know you guys have been too. We all have our stories. As a woman of this age, I try to say with as much grace as possible, hang in there.

**Eryn:** Hang in there. Sometimes it feels like we have too much to do in our daily lives. It's great to hear Gem's advice to just hang in there no matter what we may be facing.

**Elisa:** We can trust God with any emotion, even when we don't feel Him near.

**Eryn:** Well before we go, we want to remind you that the show notes are available in the podcast description. There you can find a link to Gem's book *Hold That Thought*. You can find a link for that and more when you visit our website at [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org). That's [godhearsher.org](http://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 Gabrielle Boward and produced by Jade Gustman and Mary Jo Clark. We also want to thank the amazing Our Daily Bread phone team for all their help and support. Thanks, everyone.



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