



God Hears Her Podcast

Episode 116 – Learning Your True Identity with Jamie Winship

Elisa Morgan & Eryn Eddy with Jamie Winship

[Music]

Jamie: The wrong view of ourselves is things we've come to believe about ourselves usually sourced or based in trauma, or traumatic situations, that inform our being through our lifetime, right? So, something happens to me, it goes bad, I draw the conclusion that I'm a failure, I'm not worth loving, I'm unseen, I look wrong, all those things from a... a situation that's negative and we pull, or someone will say, something about us out of it, and we take it on as an identity with no real way of ever questioning it.

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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. How would you describe yourself? Are there personality traits you love? What things are you working on? Do you have any lies that you've believed about who you are?

Eryn: Today's conversation might be one that will inspire some note taking. Jamie Winship is joining us today to talk about our identity. He wants us to understand the core of who we are while overcoming lies we may believe about ourselves.

Elisa: Jamie and his wife, Donna, are co-founders of Identity Exchange, and its corporate arm, Identity Method. There they provide training and consulting in the transformative power of living fearlessly in your true identity.

Eryn: Let's learn more from Jamie Winship on this episode of *God Hears Her*.



Jamie: So, I grew up in Washington, D.C., and my mother is a very smart woman, well educated, and she is a very strict independent Baptist. And so, no music, you know, no movies, that kind of thing. And then my dad was pretty much the opposite. He wasn't a believer. Very different, very much. So... Just... We just grew up in these very different worlds... going back and forth between, they were together, they were... happily married... just very different in how they viewed themselves and the world that we're in. So, just grew up in that, one of five kids. But there was a lot of conflict in our house and in our neighborhood. A lot of racial tension in the neighborhood I grew up in in Washington, D.C. I just had this sense early on that there must be something that can get rid of this kind of conflict. It... I mean, like a little kid, you're a little kid and you're already very aware of the color of your skin, who likes you, who doesn't like you. Not... not anyone that actually knows you, they... the decisions are all based on the team you're on, the color you are, that kind of thing. And so, about eighth grade I actually broke the rules and snuck into a movie. I was curious why God wasn't allowed in the movie theater. And so... And when I went to the movie, the movie was about the life of a police officer, it was a true story, it was an Academy Award winning movie. I had no idea what it was about, I just wanted to see. It made me cry, the movie made me cry. I was fourteen and I knew that something was speaking to me about who I was. And I couldn't figure out who, because I knew it wasn't God, cause God can't speak in this context. He can't speak...

Elisa: That's what you were raised to believe...

Jamie: That's right. Yeah. It actually, I'm sitting there in the identity of sinner in this dark, separated place from God, and yet the most moving thing is happening inside my heart that I've ever experienced. And I actually went forward at the end of the movie it was so moving to me...

Elisa: Oh my.

Jamie: ... because an independent Baptist, God doesn't listen unless you go forward, right? So, I went forward at the end of the movie, crying, I stood up there and I committed my life to be a police officer...

Elisa: Precious. Wow.

Jamie: ... That was the identity I... I believe that a police officer is a person that can bring order and peace to a community. And it was a true story, and it was a great story, and so... I... I've... I'm sixty-two now, I've never, never walked away from what happened in that movie theater. It was the most profound, spiritual experience. But it wasn't until I was seventeen that I discovered it was God speaking to me in that movie theater.



Eryn: Wow.

Jamie: Because my theology didn't permit it. And so, I was in a wrestling tournament, you know, trying to stay in shape, cause all I wanted to do was get through university and get into the police academy. And that drive kept me out of drugs, it kept me out of alcohol, it... It was interesting, cause what I saw myself to be is what kept me faithful, not trying to not sin and none of that, just, I knew who I was, and I didn't want to violate it. I wanted to become that. Then the wrestling accident made it so, like, I potentially couldn't pass a police physical, cause it was a severe injury...

Elisa: Oh, okay.

Jamie: And I meet this nurse, and these two particular women really impacted my life. One was this nurse. I wake up in recovery the next morning and I ask the doctor, you know, *can I pass a police physical?* And he said, *I... I'm not sure, but you're not going to play sports again.* And I was so bitter, and then...

Elisa: Wow. Gosh.

Jamie: ... then I was mad at God. You know, I needed someone to blame, and so I was blaming God. And this amazing woman comes in and sits next to my bed, she's a physical therapist, and she... all I know about her is she is a single mom from West Virginia that worked her way through night school...

Elisa: Wow.

Jamie: ... That's all I remember about her... biography. But I'll never for get her, because she said to me, the first thing she said to me was, she touched my arm and she said, *listen, let me tell you something. I'll help you with your body, get well, but the thing that's going to kill you in life is your anger.* And she said, *so I want to work with you on that.* And I... I had never had anyone say anything like that. And I was so rude to her that she really couldn't proceed. She got up and she walked to the door, and she looked back at me, and she smiled at me, and she said, *welp, I'll see you tomorrow...*

Eryn: I love it.

Jamie: ... And she came back the next day as if nothing had occurred...

Elisa: Oh, wow.



Jamie: ... and I... I did it again to her, I did it to her for five days.

Eryn: Wow.

Jamie: She would work with me, but I would insult her, I wouldn't let her talk. But here's what I knew after day three. This human being is the most remarkable person I have ever seen, and their love is more powerful than my hostility. At seventeen, I was seventeen. There's lots of healthcare professionals working in this hospital in that vocation. She is something more than that. She is healing me.

Elisa: Wow.

Jamie: So, the other healthcare people weren't healing me, they were just doing their jobs. And they were fine. She was determined to bring healing to me. So, I've never found this woman ever again. I've looked for her, I've used my badge to get into the hospital records, I cannot locate her. Cause as far as she knows, she had zero impact on me.

Eryn: Wow.

Jamie: But, when I was discharged from the hospital, I was at home one day, and I wanted to know the God that gave her this capacity. I knew the God that could tell you not to go to movies and all that stuff, I didn't care for that one. And that's who she kept talking about, was Christ and God, and... and healing me inside, and I said to God, *I want to be a police officer like she is a nurse*. That's the only way I knew how to say it.

Elisa: Oh.

Jamie: She's more than a nurse, she's... but in the vocation of nurse, she's doing something I don't think you could do without God. She became my model of a human, and then I... later I met a English teacher, as soon as I saw this model of human, I could spot 'em anywhere, but they were few and far between. And I had a English teacher in my senior year, and soon as she started talking, I'm like, *she's one of them. She is not just an English teacher. Her vocation does not come close to identifying who she is*. She could get the entire football team after school in her room reading the Bible as literature when no one could get a Bible study going in that school.

Eryn: Wow.



Elisa: Gosh.

Jamie: Because she was... she... it was coming from something deep inside her. She wasn't trying to get a Bible study going, she wasn't trying to do that. She was in literature that she was naming us. And I... And she... I told her about the movie, and she said, *the movie was naming you*, and then she said, *and then God is the One who names*. And I'm like, *that was God in the movie theater*. Oh my. *That's who we're...* that kind of power and call in the darkest place I knew. Right?

Eryn: Wow.

Jamie: He met me there, and He met me with such power I took the invitation that He offered. Even though I didn't really know who He was and all of that. And so, I just knew, if I'm going to be a police officer, I need to understand what these two women know. And that's really how I came to faith was from those two.

Elisa: And your focus, I mean, you have done many things in your career, always holding onto that root being, calling, you know. But bring us forward into your work in Identity Exchange now. I mean, you've been doing it a long time, and it all comes back from the same root, right?

Jamie: Absolutely. Yeah. And so, I worked through the police department and then... and then overseas for... into militant organizations for twenty-seven years, and it... I mean, basically, I would say to the, you know, the militant folks that we worked with who were filled with hate and fear, and I would say to them the same thing that lady said to me at seventeen. Like, *hey, we can come in here and help you with some of the circumstances you're in, but here's what's going to ruin you: your wrong view of who you are...*

Eryn: Yeah.

Jamie: *You don't understand who you are. Because you don't understand who you are, you view everything incorrectly in your life.* As those young men and women, most of them were Muslim in those years, as they came to hear the One that named them, it cut through Islam, Christianity, apologetics and polemics, all of that. Sliced right through it into, *hear that voice? Do you hear that voice? That voice...* And they would say things like, *wow, I've heard that voice before. When? When I was young.* Right. And then we started hearing this voice, and this voice was louder, and this voice was *we got to fight and you need to be afraid and you need to be...* you know, all that. And so, we just started, like, really perfecting the process of getting a person to start listening to God, really is all we did.



Eryn: I love your story. It's interesting. When I hear your story, I'm just thinking about all of the voices that we hear in our younger years. And then when we hear God's voice over our life, and how quickly the enemy swoops in to distort that voice that's so divine. And he'll surround us with different people that will reinforce those things, and over time it's hard to strip away...

Jamie: That's right.

Eryn: ... those voices that have spoken over us. And I think what's so beautiful, and I wrote down... Like, I love that you questioned her capacity that came from a divine place. I just think that's so encouraging to me, to use that filter of just being able to see others around me that have a divine capacity...

Jamie: Right.

Eryn: ... that can reflect back who God is, so I... when I start to hear these voices that are lies that I can point back to something divine and see Him in it. I wonder what it was in you, you know, you hear Scriptures, like, "Give me the eyes to see and ears to hear," but sometimes you don't pray that prayer and still He gives you the eyes to see and the ears to hear. So, how does that work?

Jamie: Yeah. I think all of us hear it. I'm... in fact, pretty much through all the years, once... once a person really understands identity and they've embraced Christ at a deep level, we'll ask them, *let's ask God to remind us of times in our life when He was speaking to us and we didn't know who it was.* And it's amazing what people will say. It's like Samuel hearing the voice in the night, and he goes to Eli and says, *Who... what do you want?* It's like, Eli's like, *I'm not the one calling you.* Like, that happens to humans all the time and they don't know where to go with it.

Elisa: Right.

Jamie: It's like when I was a rookie police officer and my FTO, my training officer said, you know, *your radio is your lifeline. You gotta hear your number called when it gets called.* Well, I worked in a big police department, and that radio is just non-stop noise and chatter. And all I'm listening for is the numbers five-ten. And... and I couldn't hear it if my life depended on it. And my training officer's going, *there, they just called you right then.* And if you would have put me on a lie detector, I would have said they did not, and I would be telling the truth.

Elisa: Oh my gosh.



Jamie: But even though I'm telling the truth, I'm wrong.

Eryn: Right.

Jamie: That's what people don't understand. And he said, *you have to train your ear to hear these numbers*. I would sit in absolute silence with my ear on the radio and I would go, *there it was!* And he would go, *great*. He goes, *now we gotta learn how to drive and hear it, you gotta learn how to be in a high-speed pursuit and hear it*, and that's exactly what this still small voice, that's what the Lord's teaching us is, *You need to hear My voice in the midst of the biggest trauma in your life, cause I will be talking in that, but you're going to learn to hear it in the quiet*.

Elisa: Jamie, take us into how you define identity, your true identity.

Jamie: Yeah.

Elisa: You know, you're talking about hearing the voice and stuff, we may have jumped ahead a little bit...

Jamie: That's okay.

Elisa: ... which is fine. How do we understand our identity and how do we discover slash hear it?

Jamie: Okay, so it... it... it might help if I say what the false identity, or the imposter identity you said earlier, it's called a lot of things, the wrong view of ourselves. But, the wrong view of ourselves is things we've come to believe about ourselves usually sourced or based in trauma...

Elisa: Yeah.

Jamie: ... or traumatic situations, that inform our being through our lifetime, right? So, something happens to me, it goes bad, I draw the conclusion that I'm a failure, I'm not worth loving, I'm unseen, I look wrong, all those things from a... a situation that's negative and we pull, or someone will say, something about us out of it, and we take it on as an identity with no real way of ever questioning it. Right?

Elisa: Cause it's subconscious usually, you don't even know it.



Jamie: Yeah. And...

Elisa: Okay.

Jamie: ... when we're working in public schools, elementary kids can already tell you their false identity. They know it really well. Because it's so clear in their mind. And they can tell you why it's true. And the thing is, it's not true. But anyway, and so, true identity...

Eryn: That's so profound.

Jamie: ... it's the... it's the truest thing about you. It's the essence of the I within you grounded and secure in love to be worked out in community over a lifetime. And true identity is received in community from God. Right? So, false identity is received usually in community from the liar. So, both...

Elisa: Amen.

Jamie: ... both are being received. All identity is not something I just come up with, that's radical individualism, all identity is really learned from an external source, right?

Elisa: Okay.

Jamie: And then you agree with what the source is saying about you or to you. And then being informed, stewing, and then you start to live it out and it becomes more true.

Eryn: Why is it that we're so trusting to an external source that wants to speak something so hurtful over us?

Jamie: Well, humans... you know, there's a lot of great research on this, but, humans are not born with an inner voice. They develop their inner voice by listening to external voices. I mean, you can watch kids do this, and they'll talk to themselves, but what they're saying is things they've heard. That's how they start talking. They can't just generate language. They're repeating things they heard and they're forming an internal voice that develops in them. So, if they hear their parents arguing about money all the time, they will develop an internal voice that is anxious about money. And then they'll gain an identity from it. So, I'm... I'm fearful and we're poor. They'll start developing these identities. So, the reason it's from an external source is because that's the way God made us to be. He made us to be receivers of His voice, and His truth, not to just come up with our own stuff. So, in the garden you see Eve has the capacity to



listen to different external voices, and she's developing a view of herself, and God, and her world, from listening to these different voices. So, simply, the false voice is easier to believe because it doesn't require any faith to believe what the false says.

Elisa: We just think it's true. Yeah.

Jamie: The false is just, like, *you're ugly*. And then, how hard is that to believe? I mean, you just look in the mirror and go, *well, you know, you're stupid*, or, *you're not as smart as they are*, or, *your idea is dumb, no one really wants to hear it*. It's just so, it's like, *I know, yeah, I know, I know*. And we agree with it, and it becomes a part of how we view ourselves. Not *the idea's dumb*, that's nothing wrong with it, *I'm dumb*. That's the danger, *oh, no, I'm dumb*. Right. And so, the voice of truth, the voice of God, always takes faith to believe. Always. Because it's more than you would say about yourself.

Elisa: That's so great.

Jamie: It's greater than you would think about yourself, like, *hey, you know what? You're pretty amazing*. And you're like, *no I... No I'm not*.

Elisa: And this goes back to the PT woman, and you recognizing her capacity that was something beyond the liar, if you will, the source of it had to be something divine...

Jamie: Yes.

Elisa: ... and, yeah. And so, this identity... and I... I like the way you say receive it in community, and you're either going to receive it from the liar or from God...

Jamie: That's right.

Elisa: ... What is the identity that God gives us in community?

Jamie: Yeah. The identity that God gives us in community is the identity that He knit together in our mother's womb. This is really important, because if I say, *well, my identity is I'm a Christian*, or, *I'm a child of God*, it... that's true, but that's... God didn't knit a Christian together in my mother's womb. He knit this one unique masterpiece, and we need to know who we are, right? And so, if I say, *I'm a child of God*, that's like, yeah, generally speaking, that's like me if I bring each of my sons in, we have three sons, and I just name 'em *Jamie's Son, Jamie's Son, and Jamie's Son*. Like, it's true, but it's not uniquely who they



are, and that's that beautiful verse, *Raise a child up in the way they are bent already, in the way they're already formed, raise him up along with that, and in the end they'll never depart from it, cause it's what's always been there.*

Eryn: I love what you said, not to do, but be. And we live in a world that tells us that we have to perform in order to be loved.

Jamie: Right.

Eryn: How do you get out of that thought pattern, of just being content with yourself and still holding a balance of allowing yourself to be developed but knowing to not perform and do?

Jamie: This is what Jesus is talking about in abiding, right? Abiding, so... people say, *teach me how to abide*. Abide is a decision. You don't have to teach me to go be with Jesus, just be with Him. In the abiding you learn all the other stuff. Right? So, just be with Jesus. So, that's where if I say I'm going to spend the whole day with a person, I'm going to... and will listen, I'm going to learn a lot of stuff. But if I stay at home going, *boy, I gotta learn how to go be with that person, I wish I could learn how to go be with that...* it's like, just go be with them. And so, Jesus says in the abiding, then the truth of who you are just starts to flow from the One who created you. And the doing is a byproduct of the being. So, for me, my identity in the kingdom of God is an untier of knots. That's how God refers to me in the deepest part of who I am. So, when I was officer of the year, the reason I... and I made detective, and got recruited by the government, all that was because I knew who I was. And because I knew who I was, nobody could compete with me in my identity, right? And so, I didn't compete with other officers, I just became an expert untier of knots. Just like... And so, each person, once they know their identity, it's like, go get it with everything that you have. But it's not doing, it's you're becoming that thing.

Elisa: I'm hearing you say, and this is really important, and we've talked about separating being and doing, you know, that's a... a phrase we've used a lot, but I am not... my identity is not being a mother, my identity is not being a grandmother, my identity is not being a speaker or a Bible teacher...

Jamie: Right.

Elisa: ... or a counselor, or a mentor. My identity is who God made me to be...

Jamie: Yes.



Elisa: ... Elisa, or come up with some other words. And so, for all who are listening, you may do all of those things as an expression...

Jamie: Right. Yes.

Elisa: ... of your identity, but you're no less who you are if you don't do those things.

Jamie: Beautifully said. Your identity is your gift to the world. Jesus's gift to the world was He is the Son. Nobody can give the gift to the world that you can give when you give your identity to the world, and so, I tell, especially men, but me... and, me... it doesn't matter, men and women, but... if someone says to me, *tell us how to be a good father*, I say to 'em, *give your identity to your kids*. You want to be a good husband? Give the gift of your identity to your spouse. Don't try and be a good husband. Like, no one even knows what that is.

Elisa: Now, I want you to go into that further. How do we discover our unique identities? I mean, I'm not Jamie, the untier of knots.

Jamie: Right.

Elisa: Give us some s... steps if you will, for how...

Jamie: Yeah.

Elisa: ... we hear God giving it to us.

Jamie: So, of course, this is prayer, this is what prayer and communion and contemplation are all about, this is why this is so important, is that we spend time not talking, listening. The way into the kingdom of God is only through receiving. That's the only way in, is by receiving. Christ didn't come to be served; He came to serve. He wants to serve us. And if we refuse His service, He says to Peter, *if you're not going to let me wash your feet, you don't have anything to do with me at all*. So, receiving is letting...

Elisa: Yeah.

Jamie: ... it's very beautiful, it's letting the Lord serve you. Like Jesus says to the Samaritan woman, *if you drink from Me, let Me serve you, if you drink from me, I'm not like other men who demand you to serve them. I am different. I want to serve you. If you drink from me, from you will flow the rivers of living*



water. So, identity is simply going to the Lord and say... And it's important to start with confession and just say, *Lord, this is the truth of what I believe about myself.* Always start with emptying confession. *Right today, Lord, I believe that I'm just... I'm just a failure. I'm a disappointment, I'm an imposter...* Just start by just... "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is..." Just let it... lay it out there before the Lord. He wants to take that from you. And then as you empty out, then say, *Lord, what do You say about me? What do You call me?* And just write down what He says and learn to hear it. It's hard to hear, it's hard to receive. Everyone in the Bible when God starts telling them who they really all... all argue with God. They're just like, *not me, You don't know me, You don't understand me, You don't know how old I am.*

Eryn: That's so true.

Jamie: And so, why do we think for us we're just going to get it? We're not. God's going to say, *You're My beautiful daughter, and I have never been disappointed in you, not one day.* We're all going to go, *I don't believe that. Cause I'm a dis... I'm disappointed in myself.* And He's like, *because you are wrong. That's why. And that wrongness is sin. It separates you from Me.* People that don't understand identity, of course, are going to end up in moral degradation. Where else... What else are you going to do in the false? But in the true, the true identity doesn't have time to go get involved in alcohol, and drugs, and pornography. It's too consumed with being who God made you to be.

Elisa: Okay, well, I gotta dig in there...

Jamie: Yeah.

Elisa: ... Because honestly, if we are dealing with alcohol, and drugs, and etcetera, does that mean I'm bad and I'm not listening to God, because if I listen to God I would never do anything bad? So go in there and talk to me right there. Cause I know you just tr... Sorry, you just tripped up somebody just like me who goes [crying sound]. Okay.

Jamie: I went through a year of rehab for alcohol. Lots of law enforcement people wrestle with that kind of stuff. So, identity was very important there because the question wasn't *how do you stop drinking*, that's not the question. The question is *what do you need the alcohol for?* And it's to cover fear. It's because of fear. What are you afraid of? I'm afraid that I'm a disappointment to the world. I have to figure out how to cope with that. So, either I'm going to become an overachiever, the most zealous Christian you've ever seen in your life, which is just as much a lie, or I'm going to go drink my life away so I don't have to think about it. So, you're either going to self-protect or you're going to self-promote in that false thing. And so, for me, that was my meeting with Jesus on that was, stop drinking long enough to tell the



truth. Stop drinking long enough to tell the truth. Stop looking at pornography long enough to tell the truth. Why are you there? Because I'm so terrified of rejection that I've got to go in a fake world and find it. What's the identity you believe about yourself? I am unworthy. I am not lovable. Those are identity statements that those people learned young in life. And so, instead of attacking how they're trying to cope with it and doing books and lect... it's like, come back to, like, what do you believe about yourself that this is your coping mechanism? And I'm...

Eryn: Yeah.

Jamie: ... When people say to me, you know, like, *I'm addicted to pornography*, I always say to them, *that's not an identity. That is not an identity. We are not talking about that. I want to know how do you have that much time to be involved in that? You must not know who you really are.* Right? This is what Jesus is actually doing with people, and this is what God is doing with people.

Elisa: You know, Jamie, we often ask people, and I'm going to ask you this, there are women listening who do not feel like God hears them. Don't feel like God sees them. Don't feel like God knows them. And I'm guessing that you would say, *those messages are from the liar, they are not the truth.* But would you speak over those about what is true?

Jamie: I would, because this is all of us. I think especially, maybe, for women in whatever culture they're in, or you're in, because of, just, the way society treats and thinks about and objectifies, but... when you're... saying that, I think of Hagar, you know, who's kicked out of her family, thrown out in the desert, and she's weeping, and it says God found her. That's what it says, God found her. And He said to her, "Where have you come from and where are you going?" And He calls her Hagar, and that's the first time in Scripture since Eve that God talks to a woman, is Hagar. He doesn't call her the slave, though all the passages call her the slave or the bondservant, He calls her Hagar. God says, "Hagar... where have you come from?" It's a question of identity. Where are you from? What's your origin? And where do you think you're going, because you seem to think that you're going into despair, and He finds her. And so, for anyone out there that feels like God doesn't hear me, or He's not with me, is to get alone with God, and say that to God. Just get alone and say, *God, I do not believe You're with me. In fact, I believe You're not with me. I believe that You don't hear me. And this is what I believe, this is my confession to You. Will You speak to me about these issues?* And just sit in the silence and listen. And write down what comes through your... your mind. Here's our definition of hearing from God. [Music] The free flow of thoughts that go through your mind when you fix your eyes on Jesus and ask Him a question and learn to hear His voice. Because He speaks uniquely to each of us, and... pictures, symbols, impressions, words, Scripture verses. Learn the way He speaks to you so that in the storm you will not miss it. In all the other voices



you're like, *no wait a second, I know that voice, the One who knows me best is the One who loves me the most*, right? This is discipleship. This is the discipline of learning to hear the voice of the One who made you and who loves you and holds your future in His hands. Learn it, practice it. And then, go out into the world at higher and higher levels of... of lies. And you will be stunned at what the Lord will invite you to, once, even when the storm is raging, you can still hear Him saying, *you're okay, it's okay. We're going to be okay. I'm with you.*

[Music]

Elisa: We can train ourselves to listen to God's voice and learn the identity that God has given us.

Eryn: What a powerful reminder from Jamie. 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 Jamie's website, Identity Exchange, where you can learn more about him and the work that he does. You can find that 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.

[Music]

Eryn: Today's episode was engineered by Anne Stevens and produced by Jade Gustman and Mary Jo Clark. We also want to thank Curtis and Jim for all their help and support. Thanks everyone.

[Music]

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