



# God Hears Her Podcast

## Episode 98 – With God in the Unknown

### Elisa Morgan & Eryn Eddy with Brianna DeWitt

**Brianna:** I think it's so difficult when you desire something that you know is a...overall a good thing...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...and God has said that it is a good thing. We...we see so much of that, and yet for reasons I still don't understand, He has not said yet that that is a good thing in my life right now. And I just think there's so much wrestling that comes with that.

[Music]

**Intro:** 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. When have you deeply desired something from God? Did you end up getting it? Or are you still waiting for that desire to be met?

**Eryn:** Today we are talking with Brianna DeWitt, a young woman who has learned to trust God in the midst of her singleness, especially when that wasn't something she wanted. Brianna is open and honest about the pain that comes from the unexpected, whether it be a scary diagnosis or a different way of life than what we thought we'd live.

**Elisa:** Brianna DeWitt lives, bakes, and works in Grand Rapids, Michigan. You can find her spending time with her friends or young nieces and nephews, reading a book, or making a new dessert involving peanut butter and chocolate. Heh! We're so excited for this honest conversation with Brianna. So, Eryn, we have a friend at the table with us today, and I know you've met her before.

**Eryn:** I have!

**Elisa:** Uh huh.

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**Eryn:** I met her in 2019 ...

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm.

**Eryn:** ...and we just put those two and two together, cause she's right here in front of me. Right here. Here she is!

[Laughter]

**Elisa:** This is Brianna DeWitt. We're gonna talk with Brianna about her life, about her story, and about what shaped you, and all the things. So tell us your story, you know, wh...how did you grow up and where?

**Eryn:** Where ya from?

**Brianna:** Well, that's always such a big question: Tell me your story. Right?

**Elisa:** Mm.

**Brianna:** I feel like that can go a variety of directions, but...

**Elisa:** It can.

**Brianna:** ...I grew up in the West Michigan area. I went to Christian schools growing up and had a...just a really strong Christian base with my family. And then I at...attended a Christian college in the West Michigan area as well, and then I ended up getting a job in the West Michigan area. And...

**Elisa:** So you're a West Michigan gal?

**Brianna:** Yes, I am...

**Eryn:** Yes!

**Brianna:** ...about as West Michigan as they come. I mean that is a piece of my story in a lot of ways, because, obviously, it's where I'm rooted. But the older I've gotten, that can be a little bit complicated almost at times. I actually have thought a lot about this because there's this idea that you need to sort of  
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be going places and seeking out all these exciting opportunities in different places, and that you should live in different cities. And not that that's bad, of course, but I also think that there's something to be said for, if you are in a space that is good and healthy for you, it's not always a bad thing to stay there either.

**Elisa:** Mmm.

**Brianna:** So that's been something that... I have friends who have moved around a time... I think that's so cool for them, and I have wondered *Is it weird that I haven't done that?*

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...But I think sometimes there is a lot of value in really rooting in where you are and learning to find the beauty that's in that, and seeing...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...the same people every week at church and being in the same church for a long time and, you know, being in the same spaces for a long time. I think there can be a lot of value in that too.

**Elisa:** Is this a lesson that you intentionally set out to learn and to invest yourself in? Or is it a lesson that came from a more unexpected rooting of being in one place?

**Brianna:** Hm. I would say more unexpected. There were – especially right out of college, I was just trying to find a job essentially. And so I applied for jobs in other places, but then nothing came of them, so it was sort of the...the doors opened in the place that I am in. And I have not been someone who is saying *Oh, I need to find all of the other possible doors, wherever they might be and wherever they might be leading me.* And, again, I don't think there's anything wrong with that . . .

**Elisa:** Sure.

**Brianna:** ...but, for me, there were enough things falling into place where it seems like this is where I'm supposed to be. And I really like my family, and they are still in this area. I have nieces and nephews, and my oldest niece was born when I was a freshman in college...

**Elisa:** Wow!



**Brianna:** ...So that was pretty major to me to be able to be a pretty constant presence in her life and the five rest of them that came along. That's been really important to me to be able to ...

**Elisa:** Oh, you are!

**Brianna:** ...dig in in that way.

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm.

**Eryn:** Aww!

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

**Eryn:** Aw! Oh!

**Elisa:** An...and you're single right now?

**Brianna:** Yeah. So that...yeah, that's kind of another...another piece of my story too. So I love that question you asked of: Was it something that you intentionally sought out, or was it something that kind of happened unexpectedly? So growing up, I sort of always thought *I'll probably go to college, and I'll probably meet someone in college or soon after.*

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm.

**Eryn:** Yeah, which a lot of people feel that pressure to do.

**Brianna:** Right! And...

**Eryn:** That's a normal, yeah...

**Brianna:** Yeah, and...

**Eryn:** ...Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...and it wasn't... for me, it wasn't even so much of a...a pressure, even though I think that can be huge. It was more of an *No, I would actually like that to happen!*



**Eryn:** Yeah, yeah...

[laughter]

**Elisa:** Right away!

**Brianna:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** That would be in my plan. Right...

**Brianna:** Yeah...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...well, and...and even just the examples that I have around me. My parents just celebrated their 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, and my grandparents have been really strong examples for me. Both of my siblings got married pretty young. So I have kind of all of these strong examples of what a...a healthy marriage can look like...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...and the really good things that that can add to someone's life.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** So it was something that I desired for myself. And then I graduated from college, and there was no one in my life. And so I was like *Well, that quickly didn't happen!* And it's just sort of been continuing. It just hasn't happened. So I would not have thought that I would be sitting here and be 32 and single. So that has been a huge wrestling point between me and God.

**Eryn:** Mmm.

**Brianna:** I would say probably one of the biggest ones of my life, really, and I think it's so difficult when you desire something that you know is a...overall a good thing...

**Eryn:** Yeah.



**Brianna:** ...and God has said that it is a good thing. We...we see so much of that, and yet for reasons I still don't understand, He has not said yet that that is a good thing in my life right now. And I just think there's so much wrestling that comes with that.

**Elisa:** Mmm.

**Brianna:** Like, for me, it's singleness; but other people experience that in...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...in a variety of different ways...

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** Other things.

**Brianna:** Yeah, so we have had a lot of conversations about that. [Laughing]

**Eryn:** I want to know what those conversations look like.

**Elisa:** What they sound like? Yeah.

**Eryn:** Yes, what they sound like...

**Elisa:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Eryn:** ...how do they feel?

**Brianna:** I mean for... I would say it definitely goes in kind of phases or seasons. I...I don't always feel the same way about it. I...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** That's honest.



**Brianna:** I...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...well I...I have tried to still make good things out of my life. Like I mentioned, I have nieces and nephews. I...I love being involved in their lives. I really like my family. I like getting to see them. I've been really involved in my church and try to keep that a really active part of my life. So I've tried really hard to not just sit around ...

**Elisa:** Mmm.

**Brianna:** ...and be sad about being single. And, at the same time, there are times when I am sad about being single, and it is partly because it is something that I desire, and it is missing in my life. And also there are some things that are...that have just been really hard for me about being single, whether it's... I have my own condo, and sometimes there are projects that I can't really reasonably complete by myself. And so needing to ask for help in those things and...and not having sort of that consistent partner present...

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm.

**Brianna:** ...in my life. That is just one of the things that I have asked questions of God about.

**Elisa:** You know that's a good example. Like you're trying to hang a picture...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...and it's high up on the wall. And you can handle getting a ladder and climbing up there, Brianna, I'm sure you can. You're very fit. But you get up there, and you can't tell if it's straight. [Laughs]

**Brianna:** Mm-hmm.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...Or you can't lift it up to where you are...

**Brianna:** Yeah.



**Elisa:** ...and you just need another set of hands. Right?

**Brianna:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** And that...those examples can go on and on and on...

**Brianna:** Yeah. I put together some IKEA furniture recently, and...

**Eryn:** Go, girl, go!

**Elisa:** Yeah!

**Brianna:** Well, I...I wrestled the TV stand together by myself...

[Laughter]

**Eryn:** You wrestled it?

**Brianna:** ...but...

**Eryn:** Way to go!

**Brianna:** ...it would have been easier...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...with another person there.

**Elisa:** Right.

**Brianna:** ...There were a couple of points where I was like *Am I going to break this before I even get it together?*

**Elisa:** Oh ...eh...yeah, and not just cause you're mad!

**Brianna:** Right, exactly! Exactly!





**Eryn:** Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

**Brianna:** That was a piece of it, but it wasn't the whole piece. [Laughter] But then...

**Elisa:** Gotcha!

**Brianna:** ...but then I ordered bookshelves, and that's a whole different level. So I did...I did call in some assistance...

**Eryn:** Oh.

**Elisa:** Good job!

**Brianna:** ...with the bookshelves.

**Elisa:** Good job, good job! So...so when you wrestle with feeling sad about it, you know, what are the emotions that hit you and roll over you and tackle you down?

**Brianna:** I think comparison can really get me into a bad spot...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...when it seems like other people have gotten the things that I...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...that I'd hoped for in life. And...and, again, I think that is so true of people in all sorts of different...

**Elisa:** Sure.

**Brianna:** ...situations...

**Eryn:** Yes.



**Brianna:** ...And, for me, it happens to be in the area of singleness, and I've always wanted to have kids, and that has not happened in my life. And so those are kind of the two major spaces...

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm.

**Brianna:** ...for me. But, yeah, the comparison thing doesn't help me at all.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...And yet it's...it's really hard to *not* do that.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** How do you help yourself move through it? Like you're on social media, or you're getting the very next invitation to be a bridesmaid, you know, the 27 dresses thing...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...Or the baby shower, or the, you know, your sister, or... I mean there's a million of them. How do you help yourself through that?

**Brianna:** Yeah. I try to not immediately shut down whatever that reaction is, because that sadness is valid.

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** It doesn't mean that I have to live in that sadness forever. I can't let that...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...take over me. That's not helpful or healthy, and I...I don't think that's what God wants for my life, for me to just sit in that all the time. But I also don't want to ignore it.

**Eryn:** Mm-hmm. Yeah.



**Brianna:** So there's a piece of sitting in it, and then also trying to look for the celebration with people who ... they're really excited to be in whatever place that they're in. And I want to genuinely be happy and excited for them because that is a huge thing that's happening...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...in their life. So...

**Elisa:** And you probably are excited...

**Brianna:** Right, yes!

**Elisa:** ...for them...

[Speaking simultaneously]

**Eryn:** Yes.

**Brianna:** There's always...

**Elisa:** ...It's not like you don't love them...

**Brianna:** ...a picece of me that's...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...excited.

**Eryn:** Yes.

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** Right.

**Eryn:** But that's still so hard to do...

**Brianna:** Yeah.



**Eryn:** ...you know? I mean it really is. I mean I remember, after my divorce, it was really hard for me to be happy for other people that I saw something going on in their life that seemed so joyful. And I was so sad.

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

**Eryn:** ...You know for me to choose joy for them. It's a selfless act, but it's hard...

**Brianna:** It...it's a...

**Eryn:** ...It's hard to do.

**Brianna:** ...really tough tension to...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...to try to hold. And I would say I rarely get that balance correct...

[Laughter]

**Brianna:** ...I don't know that ...

**Elisa:** Where it feels good. Right.

**Brianna:** ...I don't know that humans are great at finding that perfect spot of balance...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...there, but I...I do tryyy...

**Elisa:** Yeah. You work at it.

**Brianna:** I do sort of \_\_\_\_\_

**Elisa:** Okay, I'm going to dig in, so forgive me if this is too personal. But do you ever want to just take it in your own hands? Do you want to say, *I'm just gonna go have a baby?* Or do you want to say, *I'm just*



*gonna go online and find a guy?* Or okay, first, do you ever feel those feelings? And what do you do with them?

**Brianna:** Yeah, I think we often want to take situations into our own control...

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm.

**Brianna:** ...but with all of the...the wrestling that I've done, with the singleness in particular, I kind of keep coming back to: Is it better to take something into my control and just go find a guy and try to marry him? Or do I truly believe that the life that God has for me – whatever it ends up looking like – is still better because life with God is, I think, ultimately better than what we might try to do on our own.

**Eryn:** Mm-hmm.

**Brianna:** And, again, that's a really difficult thing to keep coming back to...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...and I also just have thought a lot about: What is the point of marriage? Why do people bother getting married? And...

**Elisa:** That's good.

**Brianna:** ...the...

**Elisa:** Fair question.

**Brianna:** Right? And the...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...the thing I come back to there is: *Well, I can love and serve and glorify God on my own, but I could also love and serve and glorify God being married.* I...

**Elisa:** Yeah.



**Brianna:** ...I, like I, with my family, I've seen so many wonderful examples of that, and...and outside of my family as well. So it would be, I would say, wrong of me to get married just because I really want to if it is not ultimately going to let me love and serve and glorify God – not just as well as I could as a single person, but even better than I could as a single person because there was something about that person that made me better able to do that and him better able to do that...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...and us, as a couple, better able to do that than we could on our own.

**Eryn:** Yeah. So how do you juggle that tension with... Somebody gave me a quote one time. They said, "The Lord can't steer a ship with an anchor."

**Brianna:** Mm.

**Elisa:** Or drive a stalled car. Or, yeah, there's some good examples like that.

**Brianna:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** So should you be moving kind of thing?

**Eryn:** How do you balance that "I'm going to not take it into my own hands, but I'm also going to move my feet in a direction while still involving the Lord?" That's a tension that I've not learned how to dance at all. I feel like I...I come at the crossroads with different parts of that dance at different parts of my life. But I'm curious what would you say?

**Brianna:** Well, I have seen some sort...sort of joking memes about how "You're probably not going to find a person if you just only stay at home and hope that the pizza delivery person is your person." And...

[Laughter]

**Brianna:** ...not that there's anything wrong with dating a...

**Elisa:** And he might be!

**Brianna:** Right!



**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** Right. Dating a...

**Eryn:** And then also, who knows?

**Brianna:** ...pizza delivery person! Yeah!

**Eryn:** Maybe might take that.

**Brianna:** So I...I think there is a little bit of a tension in trying to not...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...fully take things into your own hands, and yet there...

**Eryn:** Pull the anchor up?

**Brianna:** ...are lots...but, yeah, there...there are lots of situations in our lives where if you are sick, you can and should be praying about it. And...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...also, hopefully, you are seeking some sort of medical attention to address that. And I think that God would be fine with that. So I think trying to meet new people, in whatever ways that looks like ... because that could end up being someone that I...

**Elisa:** Sure.

**Brianna:** ...might end up with...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...I think that is a totally fine...

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm.



**Brianna:** ...thing to be doing, and I think there are healthier spaces to do that in than others, perhaps. But I do think there is still an action component to it. That's not necessarily saying I'm the one who's fully in control of this...

**Eryn:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Brianna:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** You have some very intentional thinking that you've done. You know and...

**Brianna:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...I can... I can hear it, you know, as we asked the question about: Is this something that came out of \_\_\_\_\_ [regional?] intentionality or developed intentionality?

**Brianna:** Right.

**Elisa:** ...You know, from the unexpected. And I so appreciate your honesty. And I appreciate the passion that you're exhibiting. And I also appreciate that it's not always like that, so there!

**Eryn:** Yes.

**Elisa:** You've ... describing your original family as one where your parents were married for a long time, your grandparents were married for a long time, your sibling, you know, is...is in an established marriage. How did they respond?

**Brianna:** What I really appreciate about my family is that I think because of the journey that I have been on with my own singleness, they have come along for some of that. There are some types of things that they maybe used to say, language like "when you get married," or "when you have kids." And we have shifted to more, "if you get married" or "if you have kids." And...and I think that's...that's helpful language for anyone to be using. And even in the conversations I have with my nieces and nephews, they'll sometimes make comments like, "Oh, Aunt B, what about when you get married?" And I always want to be like, "Well, yeah, we certainly hope so!"

**Elisa:** Right, right.





**Brianna:** ...But trying to use more of that “if” type language. So it...yeah, it has been interesting to see kind of the journey that I think some of my family members have been on as I’ve been on my own journey. And also, I guess I don’t know for sure. My parents have said things kind of along these lines, is that it is hard to see someone that you love so much not getting the thing that they deeply want when it’s something, you know, a good, godly desire...

**Eryn:** Mm-hmm.

**Elisa:** Right.

**Brianna:** So I don’t know fully what it has been like for them, but I think there’s probably been some tension for them too, just seeing a kid struggling in...in whatever space that might be. But for me this happens to be in...in this space. And one aspect of my story that is a more recent thing. So in the fall of 2019 I was diagnosed with endometriosis, which is a condition where cells that are supposed to behave like cells that lo...live in your uterus, they grow in other spaces in your body. And I was diagnosed with it because I was having a lot of pain, and the way that it happened I ended up being diagnosed. And then not very long after I ended up in the hospital for a few days with really intense pain from that, and then in April of 2020... So when our whole state of Michigan...

**Elisa:** Oh boy!

**Brianna:** ...was completely shut down, I ended up having surgery for that. So that has been another kind of major thing to wrestle with. And going through that as a single person, without sort of one specific person...

**Elisa:** Yes.

**Brianna:** ...not that my family and friends haven’t been...

**Elisa:** Right.

**Brianna:** ...supportive, from the other side of things, I imagine it is maybe a little bit different to have just one like your \_\_\_\_\_ [core?] person who’s there to be really supportive through that. And my...my mom was able to help me out when I had the surgery and stayed with me for a few days and helping me and everything like that.

**Eryn:** So sweet.



**Brianna:** And at the same time, I still spent a decent amount of time alone and just because of the time when it happened. And even that was hard because that wasn't what I thought that experience was going to look like, even though I knew the experience was not going to be fun.

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** But I had already had some plans in my head, *Well, oh, some friends can come and we can...we can watch movies...*

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** *...and, you know, just hang out!* And...

**Elisa:** And then that didn't happen...

**Brianna:** Right and it...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...And th...even that experience ended up looking so different than I thought that it was going to. And so that whole journey has been kind of another layer on...on top of the singleness journey. And it's wrestling with it on my own, that's a piece of it, and also just \_\_\_\_\_ complicated. And it can have unknown effects into my future that I...that I won't know about while I'm sitting here today. And those sorts of future questions loom really big, and they tell me that the wrestling isn't going to stop any time soon.

**Elisa:** That's right.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** Yeah, Brianna, thank you for sharing that. And, you know, Covid, I think, was in so many ways the hardest for children and for singles, because you really get stuck alone. ...eh... My brother has been single most of his life, and it was very hard for him. The endometriosis – if I can – I had that as well. And my husband and I were unable to have children biologically because of some other issues. But I'm just going to be straight up. I could not believe that I had to deal with that on top of not being able to have



children. And so I'm just sitting here in empathy with you. You would love to have children. You would love to be married. And endometriosis is a very complicated...

**Brianna:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...disease that can affect our future ability to have children. But beyond that, it's incredibly painful...

**Eryn:** Yeah, exactly.

**Elisa:** ...and it's such a flippin' hassle!

**Brianna:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...So I really...I really am sorry, and I...I guess I'm wondering, you know, how have you coped with the...eh...you said a layer on top of...

**Eryn:** Mm-hmm!

**Elisa:** ...and that's exactly it. How do you cope with that emotion of maybe anger, frustration?

**Brianna:** Yeah, well, first of all, thank you for saying that. And I...I always appreciate meeting someone else who has some first-hand experience. Well, and it's part of the reason why I'm even talking about this, honestly...

**Elisa:** Mm-hmm. Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...because when I was diagnosed, I felt so alone. I had heard of maybe one or two people...

**Elisa:** Yeah. People don't talk about it.

**Brianna:** No, it...it...

**Eryn:** They don't talk about it. It's so...

**Brianna:** ...it's such an awkward thing to even talk about it...

**Eryn:** Yeah.



**Brianna:** ...even as I was describing what it is, I'm like, *Oh, well I probably just turned people off,* because it's a really uncomfortable thing to talk about. And I think that's probably why people don't, but even from when I was kind of first diagnosed, I had this feeling that at some point ... I wasn't ready right then, but at some point I needed to start talking about it more...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...so that, hopefully, fewer people would be in my shoes...

**Eryn:** And feel less alone.

**Brianna:** Yes, exactly...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...saying, *Oh, I've never even heard of this thing. How do I even pronounce this word that they told me I have? I don't know of anyone.* And so that's part of the reason why I'm even talking about it. And it's not because I'm ss...super comfortable talking about it, because...

**Elisa:** Right.

**Brianna:** ...it's super awkward to talk about...

**Elisa:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...but I think it's really important to do that.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** So first of all, I just wanted to say that. But it has been really difficult because the singleness piece has been such a big thing that I've asked God questions about.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** And then to have something that feels like it is just adding to those same types of questions, but in a slightly different way...



**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...And if I could think about all of the different sorts of things that can go wrong with the body. And, obviously, there are many, many of them...

**Elisa:** You bet.

**Brianna:** ...I think I described it to a friend around the time of my diagnosis is it just feels like a particular attack of the type of diagnosis that it was. And it's a question that I keep coming back to. I don't have a good answer for it. And I...I want to be able to sit here and say *Oh, yeah, you know, God has shown up for me in these huge ways throughout it.* And...and...and I have seen God, I would say, especially through the people who have cared for me in...in a variety of ways, whether it's people like my mom and dad turning up for me physically when I had surgery, or other people just being really supportive through cards and support like that. So I have seen God show up for me in that way, and yet there's a piece of me that wishes that God would do a really big thing. And you hear those types of stories sometimes from people, whether they're going through an intense medical situation or in really intense grief of another sort. And they will say that they had never felt like God was closer. And that, so far, has not been my experience...

**Eryn:** What's been your experience?

**Brianna:** I would say it has been more of being able to look back and see the way that being single this long, this was not my plan. And then I can see that God is still carrying me through it. It's not always been fun or particularly easy, and yet I still fully believe that He was with me and continues to be with me. And it is recognizing the gift of the people that I have in my life...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...maybe it's not the exact shape that I still hope for, but I do have a lot of wonderful people in my life. And it sounds almost bad to say those small things. I'm sorry, family and friends, if you're listening to this and feeling like *Oh, I'm a small thing in her life.* [Laughter] ... And tha...that's not...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...what I mean by that...



**Elisa:** No.

**Eryn:** No.

**Brianna:** ...at all. It's...it's not sort of this...this massive presence that you sometimes hear people talk about.

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** It has been kind of in the smaller things.

**Elisa:** Yes.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...Yeah, you're really having to dig around and scratch through to discover little buds of...of...of hope...

**Brianna:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...That's how it feels.

**Eryn:** Has there been a moment in your life where you have just not cried and asked the Lord, *Why aren't You not giving me the things that I desire?*

**Brianna:** Oh, only all the time, Eryn.

**Eryn:** Right. Okay.

[Laughter]

**Elisa:** That's good.

**Eryn:** And in those moments, have you experienced any comfort from Him? Or have you been met with still feeling a sting of loneliness?



**Brianna:** Mm. One of the stories from the Bible that I have kept coming back to and is a way that I think God has given me some comfort in my more difficult times is the story of Joseph, which might sound a little bit odd. But one of the things that I find so comforting about that is when you look at the chunk of the book of Genesis that covers Joseph's story, it is a large chunk...

**Elisa:** It really is.

**Brianna:** ...because when we start with Joseph, we don't have his exact age, but presumably he is fairly young. And we follow him through until he is an old man, and then he passes away. And there are pieces of his story... I mean his...his brothers threw him in a well...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...and literally sold him...

**Elisa:** Yep.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...And then he ended up sitting in prison for a sort of unidentified amount of time, but we know it was quite a while. And I don't know for sure what Joseph was thinking when he was in prison, but I suspect it may be some of the same sorts of questions that I have asked God of, *why are You doing this to me? How can this be happening?* And eventually Joseph saw some of the redemption from that moment. And I think that we don't always see the redemption in our lifetimes. And I da...I don't know if I will. I don't know that I will be able to say when I am, hopefully, many years later from now, *Oh yeah, God used endometriosis in my life in this huge way!* Maybe I will be able to say that. And...and I think in ways, when things are really difficult, it does force us back to God. At least hopefully it does that.

**Eryn:** Mm-hmm.

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** So I think that He has used it in some ways because of that...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...But the story of Joseph just shows sometimes it takes a long time...



**Elisa:** Mmm.

**Brianna:** ...to be able to see what God is doing.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** And there's something comforting about that. And being able to read a story like that and be able to hear other people's stories of the ways that maybe God's redemption took a long time to show up. But it did happen, and I think there's a lot of comfort in that and being able to return to those types of stories...

**Eryn:** Mmm.

**Elisa:** And probably the best-known Scripture for Joseph's story is right at the end of his story. Do...do you remember it is about, you know, *my brothers meant it for...*

**Brianna:** Yeah. "My brothers meant it for evil, but God meant it for good." Yeah.

**Elisa:** It creates an arc over all of our lives for the hard, hard things.

**Brianna:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** Would you say it's hard to be vulnerable to the things that you hope for? And fear that if you express what you truly hope for you won't get them, and you'll be met with that disappointment?

**Brianna:** Mm. I think I have always been fairly open with my desires in being single, and I don't entirely know why that is. I mean maybe there's a teeny piece of me being like, *Eh, maybe someone will read my blogpost, and they'll...*

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ... *be like "Oh, I have a friend!"* ... [Laughter]... And, you know, maybe there's a...maybe there's a piece of that living in there.

**Elisa:** Sure. Well, that's just smart!





**Brianna:** ...I mean...

**Eryn:** That's just smart. Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...you know...

**Eryn:** It's being creative with other ways...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** Right, you know, taking some action or putting things out there. But, especially, with talking about my story of endometriosis, partly because it's so much more recent and...

**Elisa:** Mmm.

**Brianna:** ...it...eh... I mean I am still single, so that is ongoing as well, but that feels more intensely ongoing, in a different way. And so I wasn't really ready to talk about it very much at first. And it wasn't even until I ended up in the hospital for it, and all of a sudden, I had disappeared from life for three days. And I kind of had to start telling people about it, like, *Oh, well, I'm not going to be at work...*

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...*Here's why.* And that was difficult, but I didn't really have a choice in that moment cause I had to tell people I wasn't going to be there. But thinking of me feeling really alone when I first found about it, I think, has sort of helped me to try to become a little more willing to talk about it...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...because I just think there's a lot of power in sharing stories...

**Elisa:** I agree...

**Brianna:** ...whether they're...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...stor...they're stories...



**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...of the really tough stuff, or stories of the ways that you are seeing God show up in your life, or of the ways that He showed up in your life...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...ten years ago...

**Elisa:** Sure.

**Brianna:** ...I just think there's...there can be so much comfort in sharing those stories. So it has been difficult...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...but I...I think believe strongly enough in it that I have been willing to push through some of that uncomfortability...

**Eryn:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...of...of saying the hard things.

**Eryn:** Like Elisa said, you're so intentional with your thought process and the choices that you make. It's just really admirable...

**Brianna:** Well, thank you, but I...I will say that was definitely not something that I started out with. [Laughter]... I think...I think part of my intentionality has been forced because I had to come up with answers of...

**Elisa:** Sure.

**Brianna:** ...Why has this not happened for me?

**Eryn:** Answering other people's questions that they have over your life.



**Brianna:** Yeah, yeah...

**Eryn:** That's hard.

**Brianna:** ...With that and also answering my own questions...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...about my own life. So it was definitely something that I was forced into over time, not something...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...that I would've said ten years ago...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Brianna:** ...had we been

**Elisa:** You know...

**Brianna:** ...having this conversation.

**Elisa:** ...to that point, I wonder if we could ask you to talk to your 20-year-old self...

**Brianna:** Mm.

**Eryn:** Mm.

**Elisa:** ...just for a few minutes. I mean we all wish we kinda had that opportunity.

**Eryn:** Mm-hmm.

**Elisa:** But could you talk to your 20-year-old self — and there's probably some 20-year-olds and 30-year-olds and 80-year-olds, you know, listening right now — about this. What advice would you give yourself to make your way through the next decade?



**Brianna:** Be open to the ways that life is going to look different than you thought it would, whether that's actual situations in life that happen to you, or in the ways that God shows up. And I have a different perspective now than I did when I was 20 on the ways that God works, in the ways that God moves, and even how big God is. [music starts here and seems louder than the speaker] When I was 20, I think I thought God was smaller than He is or certainly than I think He is now, cause I grew up in Christian spaces, but that was sort of one perspective that I had seen. And I have been able to see and experience more of that in this time. And there's just something so valuable about being open to that and being open to being surprised by life and by God.

[music]

**Eryn:** I just love that Brianna was willing to share her story with us. If you have similar struggles as her, we hope that this conversation helps you to know that you are not alone. We're so thankful that Brianna took a step forward to open up a conversation about having endometriosis and the impact that it's had on her life.

**Elisa:** 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 and a link to the *God Hears Her* blog where you can find posts written by Brianna. There's also connections for Eryn and me on social. You can find these links when you visit our website at [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org). That's [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org).

**Eryn:** Thank you for joining us, and don't forget: God hears you, He sees you, and He loves you because you are His.

[music]

**Elisa:** Today's episode was engineered by Anne Stevens and produced by Daniel Ryan Day and Jade Gustafson. We also want to recognize Londa and Ryan for all of their help and support. Thanks everyone.

[ODB theme music]

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