

Welcome to Empowering
Homeschool Conversations,
your authority in
navigating the world of
homeschooling diverse learners.

Featuring Peggy Ployer from
Sped Homeschool,
Annie Yorty from AnnieYorty.com,
Leilani Melendez from Living With Eve,
Stephanie Buckwalter from ELARP Learning,
and Dawn Jackson from Dawn
Jackson Educational
Consulting and Tutoring.

With over seventy-five years
of combined homeschooling expertise,
experiences, and perspectives,
this group is eager to
share their wealth of
wisdom to empower your
homeschooling journey.

So grab your favorite mug, settle in,
and get ready for insightful discussions,
valuable insights, and practical tips.

Give your homeschool the
power boost it needs to
successfully educate the
unique learners in your home.

Hi, everyone,

and welcome to Empowering
Homeschool Conversations.

Today,

we are going to talk about happy
mothering, embracing God's love,
and navigating the chaos of your calling.

And my guests today are

Tricia Goyer and Sherry Seligson.

I'm hoping I pronounced that right.

That's great.

Seligson works.

Okay.

Tricia is an award-winning author,

homeschooling mom of ten,

and passionate advocate for

faith-driven storytelling

with over ninety books across genres,

including historical fiction, memoirs,

and parenting guides.

Tricia's work often explores

themes of courage and

Let's see.

I lost my place.

Family and faith.

She has a unique talent for

bringing historical characters to life,

weaving in timeless, her journey,

truths that resonate with modern readers.

Known for her warm, personal voice,

Tricia shares her life's

journey and lessons through her writing,

speaking, and podcast,

encouraging others to find

strength and hope.

A believer in the power of community,

she also supports foster

care and adoption and finds

joy in nurturing the next

generation of storytellers.

Sherry is a marine biologist

and science author and has

written several science textbooks,
homeschool curricula,
and science apologetics devotional.

Sherry travels throughout
the world to film science in action,
sharing the wonders of God's creation.

An international speaker,
Sherry encourages families
on topics such as marriage,
family relationships,
and apologetics of studying
God's creation.

She lives in Florida with her husband,
David,
who travels with her as an
adventure videographer.

When they're at home,
she enjoys spending time
with her four adult
children and their families,
plus doing anything that
science geeks enjoys.

Enjoy.

Well, welcome, ladies, to the show.

I'm excited to have you here

and to talk about this

really important topic.

So I'm excited for the conversation.

So thanks for taking time

out of your schedules.

Great to be here.

Yeah, yeah, it's great.

I know so many people,

we just struggle with a

calling that is so counter-cultural now.

And I love this topic and I

love that we're going to discuss this.

And you guys bring in so much wisdom.

I know I hate that word being old myself.

But it's true.

And so sit tight, audience.

These ladies have so much

wealth of information and

years of experience to share with you.

And I hope you just absorb

it up because it's a tough

calling to be in as homeschool moms.

We feel like...

We're wasting away our years.

But I want these ladies to

encourage you today that

this is not a waste of time.

This is your calling.

This is your purpose.

And you are doing great things.

And God is calling you to

greater things if you stay

where you're called.

And so so, yeah,

I just thank you for being here.

And I know you ladies have a

new book that is coming out

soon and people can preorder it.

So let's talk a little bit

about that at the beginning

and then we'll wrap up at the end, too.

I know I'm going to be able

to share the link in our show notes, too.

So so how did that book

actually come about?

Well, I'll start with that one,

because we were at a homeschool retreat,

homeschool moms retreat.

And the fun thing was that

we got to hear each other speak.

So usually as a speaker,

you travel and you're in different rooms.

You never get to hear each other,

but this were all in the same room.

And I heard Sherry for the

first time and just the way

she described creation and science.

And that is, that really is what.

solidified my relationship

with God is understanding

that they can connect like

it makes sense that God

created all these things

and I heard her speak I'm

like oh my goodness I love

you like you're amazing I

think let me just say at

the retreat I'm like Sherry
we need to do something
together um because I love
words and the flow of words
and being creative and she
just is like so many facts
and all these things and so
we try to meld that
together and so that's how
like I think I'd
probably ran up to you in line,
like wanting to talk to you.
I'm like,
we need to do something together.

Yeah.

We just kind of took,
we both have these
different areas of passion
and it combined together in this.

And it's just a super fun
book for kids and families
that will just help them see God's wonder,
their wonder of his

creation and encourage them

in their lives too.

So there's, there's more than just a story,

but it's a story that,

with a purpose that brings

everybody along and has

great conversation starters.

So yeah,

it was just a wonderful

opportunity to just start

brainstorming together.

And this book is the first one.

Yeah.

That's so cool.

And yeah,

you just don't know what those

connections are going to lead to.

And that is so neat.

So you're bringing in both

your diverse backgrounds

and gifts and being able to

share those and then share

them with others,

which is such a blessing.

That is so cool.

I can't wait for it to come out.

I'm a science geek myself.

I have a degree in physics.

But our topic today is mothering,

which I mean,

you've cultivated these

gifts through your own motherhood.

And motherhood is often

described as chaotic yet beautiful.

How have you both learned to

rest in this calling and

find peace together?

in the day-to-day chaos,

which we all know exists.

Well, I'll start that one off.

I think that perspective was

always the word that I

would focus on because it

is so easy to get caught up

in the details, the frustration,

the chaos, like you were saying,

and lose perspective of why
God has me where he has me,
what he has for me in this moment.
I would focus on what's the next thing.
What's the next thing God has for me,
even if it's change the diaper,
clean up the spilled milk.
Right.
And then move forward with that.
And the reminder that God
has called me to this and he's with me.
So if he's called me to this
and you know he's called
you to be a parent,
if there are children in your house,
that's obvious, right?
And so then he is going to be there.
And through that beautiful journey,
he's teaching us.
He's working in us.
It is so much more than
raising and training our kids.
It's a lot of it is...

how much I learn,

how character and homeschooling I learn,

all those things.

So I think perspective was

the big deal for me to step back.

What is for today?

What is for this moment?

And then move forward during

those crazy times.

So good.

Yeah.

And I'm right in the middle of it.

I am right in the middle of it.

So we have ten kids.

We've adopted seven of them.

So our biological are all in

their thirties, thirty-five, thirty-two,

and thirty.

And then we have

from the ages of twenty four

down to the ages of fourteen.

And so I'm still

homeschooling three up to

fourteen year olds and a
seventeen year old.

I was doing an algebra test right before.

I'm like, guys, I really got to go.

I need to go do this interview.

And so in my day,

it's everything from working

on a book project to taking

a child to a basketball practice, right?

We were just doing an algebra test.

I was meal prepping this

morning because we have a

basketball game and youth

group and a harvest party and a play.

So every night this week is full.

So it's, I'm still in the middle of it.

And what I realized is, you know,

when it seems like

This day is not going well.

Why is that?

First of all, because I had expectations.

It really is.

There's nothing wrong with the day.

Like there's these things that happen.

It's a day is a day.

But it's my expectations of

I'm going to get five

hundred words written

before my kids wake up.

And that doesn't happen.

And so really looking into

the moment like God is here

in this moment.

It's only my expectations

that got me feeling like

this day isn't going well.

It's a perfectly good day.

Like no one else has a bad

attitude because they

didn't have the

expectations of mom writing

five hundred words.

And so really like the

perspective of things and the peace,

knowing that whatever struggles,

part of it is my kids

seeing how I handle those struggles.

And we all know as

homeschooling parents that.

You know,

there is the education that comes

from the books,

but there's education of

how does mom handle if

someone cut it off the

topic or all these things.

So it's daily taking a deep breath.

Also, my grandma, who is ninety five,

lives with us.

So it's caring for her.

And so now that I have adult kids,

I see that like God's plan

for this has been just him

seeing him working in me

and my kids seeing that.

And then I see that reflected.

My daughter, we just got a pineapple.

She pulled it out.

She starts chopping it up.

And I'm like, wow, that's amazing.

And she goes, mom,

I see you do it all the time.

I'm like, oh yeah, they're watching.

And it was just a reminder to me,

like they watch how I

cut up a pineapple,

but they watch my actions, interactions,

and also how I'm walking

out and serving God.

And I think that's important.

Our kids seem to see us

following God's will for us,

using our talents and our

gifts for his glory,

coming alongside us as we

serve or volunteer.

I volunteered,

I helped start a crisis

pregnancy center years ago.

My older kids were there.

And so as they see us walking out,

that's just as much as

education as any of the

we were just doing algebra

or we were just doing science.

You know, it's all part of it.

Yeah.

Both of you answered that

beautifully in two different ways,

but it's really, you know,

it's that pulling out.

It's not allowing the chaos to overwhelm.

It's allowing God to set the direction,

the pace,

and then realizing your calling in the,

you know, in the middle of that and not

letting that overwhelm how you respond,

how you let the day go.

Just beautiful,

beautiful perspective

because it's so easy to not do that.

And is it a process as well?

We don't automatically do that,

but over time we can become better at it.

And I think that's a great

lesson to be reminded of

those types of things.

So Sherry,

in a world that often values productivity,

how do you balance

scientific work with the slower,

more relational aspects of motherhood?

I know I struggled in this area a lot.

Have you found ways to

invite calm in both realms?

Yeah, again, it's perspective.

I look at what is my main goal.

And I can tell you, just like Trisha said,

there were days where I

felt like this day was a wash.

This day was a failure.

I don't know how many moms

struggle with just feeling

like I'm a failure.

I just, I'm messing up everywhere.

And you know, that's part of, that's,

I'm not saying that failure

is a good thing or

something that we should say, okay,

today's the failing, fail day.

But part of the journey involves that.

And so again, I would step back.

Okay.

I felt like today was a

total wash or a total mess

and I'd have to go and

apologize to my children or

whatever it was,

apologize to the Lord for

not trusting him.

But what was my main goal?

My main goal, raising my children,

building relationships with my children,

modeling a relationship

with the Lord for them so

that they can see

that that to me is more

important than any academics,

any meals that we got.

I used to tell other moms,

cereal for dinner is

cheaper than therapy for mom.

The things that are big
versus the things that just
we can let go.

And in the grand scheme of things,
that's okay.

Your kids aren't going to go
back and remember that mom
kept a perfect house or
made four course dinners.
or even taught, you know,
fabulous lessons that they were, you know,
sitting on the edge of
their seat every single time.

It was more of, you know, we got to enjoy
being with each other.

And, um,
so modeling that relationship again,
what's the most important, what was my,
my prime thing to come away
from maybe this week or this month,
not today, because today is again,
if today was a failed day,

or I felt just totally out
of it this week,
knowing that it's over time,
it's a slow marathon, um,
that takes time and ups and downs and,
and feeling frustrated.

I didn't do a lot of things
extra outside the house
when my kids were really
young because I really felt
like that was my priority.

And so I had to let go of some things.

And this is something we talk about too.

I felt like,

was I putting my career on hold?

Was I putting my career to the side?

No, because God wanted me doing this.

It was a promotion to
motherhood from what I was doing before.

Oh, that's good.

Yes.

And so it really was,

and what's he going to

teach me in this season

that will help me in...

the next assignment,

the next season that he has.

And so as my kids got older,

we could do a little bit

more and I could ask them

to do stuff to participate with me.

Like Tricia was saying,

I would have them come to

conferences with me.

I would give them some of

the stuff I wrote and said,

I would like you to edit

this for me and tell me

where my dangling participles are because

That brings them along and

helps them see what I was doing.

But if it took me away from

my primary objective,

I would have to say no.

And Lord,

you're going to use this for me

for some reason for the future.

And a lot of it was

character building in me.

And skill building.

I write now.

I'm a writer.

And I had horrible writing skills.

And I learned how to write

by teaching my children how

to write as all four of

them went through that,

not knowing that that's

what God was going to do.

So he uses that time,

that time where we feel like we're

on a plan B for our life.

It's not a plan B. It's

God's plan A. And so I just

want to encourage you.

So good.

Yes.

Yes.

So, so true.

So many nuggets of wisdom in there that,
yeah, we have to embrace it.

We can't just say, oh, you know,
this is just getting in my way.

And I know, Tricia, you kind of

You lent to that too in your
previous answer.

It is so easy to fall into that trap,
but yet it is a trap.

It takes you away from your
primary calling and your
calling for your family.

You know, Tricia, with such a large family,
you likely face countless daily demands.

How do you find moments to slow down?

And what practices have
helped you embrace a season
of restfulness amid your
calling as a mother?

I don't know if I've ever
had a season of restfulness.

So we just have to,
we have moments of restfulness.

I love my early mornings.

So I get up before anyone else.

That's when I have my time with my Bible.

That's when I have my time

writing my thoughts.

Those usually end up in a

devotion or part of a book

or like just that time with God for sure.

Worship music in the morning

when I'm getting ready in

the morning and worship in the car and,

anytime we're in the car

going someplace there's

worship music on um and

it's just a time like they

just know and now my kids

will say can I pick a song

and they know they go

through my playlist my

worship playlist or they'll

they'll hear something like

a youth camp and they'll

put it on and so I think

with so many people and so
many demands it's not like
I even you know get an
afternoon away there really
isn't that but those
moments with god and sometimes like today
We all went to a family therapy session.
We've adopted kids from trauma.
We're still working through
some of those things.
And it would end up being really, really,
really good.
Yeah, it was so good.
But everyone went in the
house and I sat in the car
for probably like five minutes,
just sitting there.
breathing and it wasn't like
anything was wrong.
I just needed like a minute,
not with be surrounded with people.
Cause I knew as soon as we
went in and we need to

start working on algebra.

And I just sat there and I just prayed.

I thank God for the time in

there for the future,

the day to come for the interview.

Like, it's just like,

it's capturing those little

moments that God is there.

And I think sometimes we

think we have to wait for a

season of restfulness.

My, you know, I was a teen mom.

I had my son when I met and married and,

My husband,

I became a Christian during my pregnancy.

I'm like, oh, I messed up.

God, I need you.

So we've had even from the

moment I got married, had a child.

My grandma's lived with us

for since nineteen ninety nine.

So twenty five years.

We've never had a season

where it's just John and I.

It was so funny.

Last weekend, my kids went to youth camp.

All three of the teenagers in the house,

two of my daughters just

left as a mission missionaries in Poland.

my grandma's still here, but I'm like, oh,

we could have a quiet house.

It's just grandma.

She sleeps a lot.

Oh no.

My oldest son who lives an

hour away came with his two kids.

Like all these people,

that's what we wanted.

Right.

We wanted those

relationships with homeschool moms.

And so I could have been like, oh man,

we wanted, you know,

so we got to spend time

with our grandkids,

just our grandkids and our oldest son.

Like we should,

we never get that because

we have all the people.

So

Again,

it's seeing we're never probably

going to have a restful

moment for a long time

unless we go away on vacation.

But capturing that

throughout the day can

really make a big difference.

Absolutely.

Yes.

So I don't know if you know this about me,

Tricia, but I am the oldest of fourteen.

I have ten adoptive siblings.

Oh, wow.

So my parents did the same as you.

And so, yes,

I had ten siblings out of foster care.

And so I know your life and

all that's involved.

And, yes, there are moments, you know,

I remember, you know,

when we're all together as a family,

there's moments,

but there's not a whole lot of them.

But instead of giving into

the anxiety of what needs to be done,

it's like, can we,

I just like close my eyes and say, God,

you're here.

And how much that changes

the perspective of the

moment that you're in and

allows you that rest when

you don't have long periods

of time for that rest.

But God gives that rest.

in even those small moments

that if you just absolutely

so yeah love that um so uh

for both of you just um in

your experience what are

some ways mothers can

remind themselves to release control
and trust that God is
guiding their family's journey.

Cause you know,
we have twists and turns
and surprises and things
that we never expected for
the way our family would take.

And yet, how do we bring that all back?

Um, just in our own mindset, you know,
that's, it's a hard thing.

Yeah.

I can start with that one.

Um,

So I think one thing is we
never have control.

Even when we think we have control,
there's no control.

And just realizing that like, it's okay.

And it's funny because I'm,

I'm the oldest child, oldest grandchild.

So I like order.

I like the plan.

I like to know things.

And then I always like to clean house.

Then we adopted seven

children in the span of five years.

And trying to keep up with

laundry and kids and therapy sessions.

It was just a lot.

And I remember just like

crying and overwhelmed one day.

And my husband's like, wait,

did you really think we

could adopt seven children

and you'd be able to keep

the house clean and the laundry?

And I'm like, I pause.

I'm like, yeah.

And it was just that reality.

Like, it's never good.

And then in the moment,

I remember being in the

laundry room with literally

a waist high pile of laundry, you know,

because just everything I'm like,

did you even wear these clothes?

I don't even know where all

the clothes came from.

And then feeling like God whispering.

And I love you just as much.

I love you just as much.

If the laundry is piled up,

if the house is a mess,

if there's mud all over the floor,

like I love you just as much.

And that piece where I don't

have to perform,

I don't have to have a perfect house.

And then,

Grandma, after she hurt herself,

we'd have a lot of people

coming in and out.

Therapists coming in and out.

And I'm like, this is my house.

We live here.

And so now it's that release

of it's the people that's important.

It's the relationships that's important.

It's time together.

And so I've almost swayed the other way.

I'm like, if the house is a mess,

come on in.

But it's a good feeling

because I don't feel like I

have to perform or have to

look good for people.

It's just enjoying the

family that we have and

and it's always going to be

work and it's never going to be,

I'm never going to have

control and just kind of

riding the waves of

whatever storm comes and,

and knowing God is there

and that he will still us,

even if there's a storm raging around us.

Yeah,

I'm going to just jump in on that one,

especially the expectations part.

I feel like that we have a

lot of pressures put on us
or we put on ourselves that
are unrealistic.

Again, you adopt seven kids,
you're not going to have
Martha Stewart house.

It's just the math doesn't work, right?

Why do I realize that?

Because we have a lot of servants.

We feel like we need to.

Or someone calls and says, hey,

I'm going to drop off your
pan that you left at church.

And you're like, quick kids,
clean the house.

We don't want them knowing
we live like this.

You know, that last minute,
because we feel like we have to perform.

And I think that that trips
us up and that causes unnecessary anxiety,
unnecessary stress.

And it just makes mom freak out,

which makes the kids freak
out all the time.

No, we have a, as moms,
we have an underappreciated role,
an underrated role that
really is greater than we think.

And so at the end of the day,
I remember my husband at one point,
I was just so stressed and I have severe,
horrible pregnancies and I
was pregnant with my last child and

At the time,

I didn't know she was my last.

But anyway, I was just,

and I got three little ones

that are running all over the place.

And the house was a disaster.

He said, you know what?

You did great today because
the kids survived.

Whether they were still in

pajamas and there was a mess...

Not that we have to set the bar low,

but we have to set our
expectations realistically
and encourage others that way too.

If you're in the grocery
store and you see a young
mama who's got a child
who's just crying uncontrollably,
just a simple word of
you're doing a great job.

Just keep it up.

That just is encouragement
that will lift up her heart.

And to be able to be...
more transparent with others
and be a safe place for
others to be transparent for us.

We need that encouragement.

We need to show what's
behind on the other side of
the camera if we're doing
something on Facebook.

We need to show the non-Pinterest picture,
the one that didn't make it

because it shows the dog who just
threw up his breakfast or whatever it is.

Those things, life, and that's part of it.

And it is messy.

And our expectations to have

everything under control,

like Trisha said, are wrong.

Those are the enemy's

thoughts that get into our heads.

So we need to be a place of

encouragement for each other,

a place of transparency.

And the goal needs to be

what the bigger picture is,

to love the Lord,

to model that for our kids

and to build relationships

with both him and with them,

with our family.

And everything else is just

on top of that.

And it will come.

It's not all academics.

It's not all even learning
how to do all the chores
perfectly or your kids who
spend the day not getting
along and you feel like
you're wearing that referee
shirt all day long.

It's much more.

And so we have to have that
mutual encouragement of one another.

And that's why I'm happy
that you're doing this, Peggy,
because you're there for moms to,
you know,
just refresh themselves by
hearing encouragement.

And we need to do that to let others know,
hey, I don't have it all together either,
but I know who does.

The Lord does.

And I'm relying on him.

Yeah.

Absolutely.

Yes.

And the more that we are

transparent with each other,

I remember sharing a story

years ago of my anger issues, you know,

when I was first starting

homeschooling and one mom

looked at me and she's like, seriously?

I mean,

because you can put on a good front,

but you know,

if you will really open up

and share where you struggle,

people will like go, oh man, I do too.

And then you,

you have a common bond right there.

Then you can support one another and

and realize that you

know this isn't the end of

the world that someone else

is struggling um you have

community and we need we

need that community and I

loved what you said to
sherry and I know both you
brought up um just how your
kids are watching but when
we go into those panic
moments where we want to
hide everything we build systems and
and ideologies into our kids
about how we should portray
ourselves to others.

And I don't think we think
about that too much when
we're in the reactionary moment.

But we need to think about that,
is that this is probably a
modeling that they're going
to take into their own
adulthood with their own issues.

Are we teaching them how to
hide things or how to share things?

And that's huge because
if they don't share,
then they're going to shut down.

Something bad is going to happen, you know,
in their life.

And they're going to feel
like it's not a safe place
in my home to talk about
these things because we got
to put on a good front.

So I love,
love that you guys addressed that.

Sherry,
you often marvel at God's creation
through science.

And how has this
appreciation for creation
helped you to cultivate a
sense of wonder and rest
for your family life,
even on hectic days?

You know,
one of my favorite verses in the Bible,
and it's actually the,
I would say it's a physics verse.

So you'll enjoy.

Colossians.

It's a quantum physics verse.

Colossians one,

he is before all things and in him,

all things hold together.

And,

and I love that because what it is

saying is God didn't just

create everything.

He is the one that's upholding it.

He is, he is, it's in his hand.

He's active.

He is holding, you know, R.C.

Sproul said there is no maverick molecule.

There is no one little thing that is,

that goes without God's,

God's control, God's awareness.

And so the wonder that we

see in creation helps

encourage me that God is

big enough for any difficulties.

He spoke all of that into being.

Boom, and it happened.

I mean, that's the big bang.

So the more that we learn

about what's in our world, the more...

magnificent his power is the

more that we see that's out

there because oh and he did

this and oh and he did that

and oh there's galaxies

after galaxies after

galaxies out there that we

weren't even aware of or

microscopically there's you know the

The periodic table of the elements,

something that all moms are like, oh,

we got to teach that.

And kids are like, no, I don't understand.

Well,

there's a periodic table of subatomic

particles now because even

smaller and based on the

order and organization of

the way that these subatomic,

smaller than an atom, subatomic,

smaller than an atom.

But there's so many little

particles that behave in

predictable ways.

that there's order and

organization that showcases a creator.

And so that even magnifies even more.

And if God is that powerful,

who am I to say that he

can't give me wisdom to

focus on this situation here and,

and to give this situation over to him,

that he knows what,

if I've got two children

who are struggling to get along and,

He knows what they need.

I can open his word and say, Lord,

show us your word that

gives us instruction that

will help them to, I don't know.

I don't have it.

And that just,

that encourages me in so

many ways because it's a tangible,
visible evidence of our
maker and our creator that
is really present.

If he removes his hand from me,
I'm falling apart.

So I want to visit.

Yes.

Yeah.

I, yeah, I,

I expected you to answer about
nature and stuff, but I love that.

It's so true is, is yes.

And there's,

there's nothing that escapes
and there's nothing that could be.

Um, and we,

we so easily think that we can
control everything that we, you know,
we have so much,

I was actually praying
about this this morning.

I'm like, God, I don't, I have nothing.

Um,

And I feel like, yeah,

I have nothing some days.

And yet you've got it all.

Why am I stressing over anything?

I shouldn't be.

You've got a perfect plan

and timing and everything in all things.

And when we can take that step back,

and I know you talked about

this very early on, Sherry,

it's that step back, that perspective,

and just allowing God to

Be magnified before anything else,

because that's when

everything else falls into perspective.

So, so good.

Tricia, in your writing,

you focus on courage and resilience.

How do you find ways to

encourage your own heart

with these traits in the

middle of motherhood's ups and downs?

Yeah, you know,
when I research for like a
historical novel,
I just find these amazing
people and they never, true stories,
all my novels are based on
true stories that I kind of
weave into fiction.

They never expected that
these hard things would
happen in their lives,
whether it was World War II
or surviving the Titanic or
I've written some biblical stories.

You know, Hadassah never imagined she'd be
Queen, Queen Esther.

I mean, all these things,
these people never expected it.

And so really understanding
and seeing that in our lives,
we might think we know the plan,
but hard things come and
you can either turn to God

and rise above and become
someone who's going to help others,
serve others.

Those are the stories that get written,
right?

The ones that are out there
hiding Jewish children and
making a difference.

Or we can kind of go with the crowd.

There's many Christians in
Nazi Germany that did nothing,
or there's those that hit
the children and smuggled
them out and made a way for humanity.

And so I think in our lives,

well, it goes back to,

I love Henry Blackaby,

see what God is doing and join him.

And it really is,

what is God asking us to do?

So for a season,

cause I had been a teen mom,

I helped start a crisis

pregnancy center and then

cared for my grandma.

She's been with us again since, and then,

okay.

In your word,

you say to care for the

orphans and the widows.

Well, we got the widow taking care of,

she's in the other room orphans.

Like, and I really,

believes that the things in

God's word that he tells us

to do are things,

if he stirs it in our heart,

not everyone should go

adopt ten children or seven

children or whatever.

Like, Sherry, get busy.

Come on, girl.

Or whatever.

But there's going to be

something specific to what he calls.

And he's going to bring people around us,

the messages around us.

And if we hear something

here and hear something

there and read in God's

word and there's a story in our heart,

then that's where we can either say,

I'm going to believe in

faith and take those steps

of courage forward.

Or I'm just going to like, oh,

I'm just I'm going to church.

I'm being a good person.

We can do that.

Like it's our salvation is

not based on our works.

But I think we experience

God so much when we take

those steps of faith.

And so.

sometimes courage is just

like checking like, well,

what does it take to

require to adopt from foster care?

Or, you know,
just those little tiny steps
that pretty soon you're on
a different path than you
ever thought of.

And so courage isn't always
like standing up and doing
a speech in front of a thousand people.

It's walking across your
lawn to your neighbor or
whatever God is calling you to do.

I think that is courage.

And really looking at that,
that all the people that we
see in history books are,
that we read about.

We love the missionary stories.

These were all ordinary
people who just like said, okay, God,
I'm here for you.

And so, and when we do that, I mean,
we have one daughter who
moved to Europe when she

was twenty years old.

moved over there as a missionary.

She's been there ever since.

She's married now.

We have two other daughters

that just moved there,

twenty and twenty-one,

the two that we adopted from foster care,

and they're over there

serving with a wonderful ministry,

teaching in a Christian

preschool for a year.

And

reading those missionary stories with them,

talking, showing courage, you know,

people of faith,

like they were just like

you and just getting that.

And then all of a sudden

they're like doing it.

And it's amazing that when

we can let our kids know

that whatever God calls you to do,

he will provide for you,

have the faith to step forward.

It's amazing where people take them.

Absolutely.

Yes.

And I love that.

It's it is those little

steps of instead of saying, no,

this isn't this isn't my job, my calling.

We often think callings are like jobs or,

you know, like titles, but they aren't.

It's it's that obedient walk

step by step that create it

puts you into the place

that God created you to be,

which is unlike anybody else.

And and it gets played out each day.

And it's not just one thing.

I could say I'm called to be a writer.

So I'm just going to sit at

home all day and write books.

But what would I write about?

Like so much of the things

that I've experienced and
walked with God in,
those become themes for my
books because he's acting
and moving and working in me.

So he's using that mixed
with this and this.

This journey is so completely different.

So I think we can kind of
get stuck in like,

this is what I'm called to do.

And he's like, actually,

I want you to step out of

that and go over here

because it's going to help

you with what I've called you to do.

Yeah.

The Holy Spirit is prompting me.

So so the the life you

figured you would have at

this point in your life,

was it what you thought God

would have for you or was it better?

Oh, me?

Yeah, I was planning to, like, I pictured,
like, I wanted to be a school teacher,
like, teach third grade, have three kids,
you know,
go on vacation to Disneyland once a year.

I mean, I don't even know.

I have my vision of, like, right here.

Like, so...

And God's like, let me show you this.

And you're going to write
these books and meet these
people and adopt these kids.

And the experiences are far
beyond anything.

Yeah,

I would say I would echo that the
same thing.

Yeah.

And really,
it was the means to by doing
the things that I thought, you know,
I didn't think this is the

direction I was going to go.

You know,

God called me to leave my job at

Disney World as a marine

biologist and be home with my children.

And then

He called us to homeschool.

And I'm like,

as if we weren't weird enough, right?

Let's just do that.

And so we did.

And again,

then if you get pegged as a

science person in the homeschool arena,

everybody's like,

they throw their children at you.

Please teach my kids science.

And so I started doing

little co-ops in our house

and we did different things,

co-op and stuff.

And then I, I mean,

the God would open up the next assignment,

the next thing.

And I'm like, well,

I have no clue where I'm going from here,

but okay.

Just like you were saying with Blackaby,

Tricia, God's working here.

This opens up, we pray about it.

My husband like, okay, this,

this sounds like a reasonable thing.

So then we move next, the next thing.

And, and it was, it's just, it's,

Most of the technology that

we have today wasn't even

available when I had my

dream of what I was going to do.

I was like, you know,

that internet was just a

baby at the time.

So who knows what God has for each of you,

each of those listening for us,

even five years from now,

it could be something

completely different,

but he's using what

experiences we have today.

What challenges we walk through today,

what things we rely on him

for today to build in us,

whatever skills for the

next assignment that he has for us.

So true.

Yeah, I look back and go,

how miserable I would be

had I gotten my wish to

stay as an engineer and

send my kids to private school.

And I would not be

experiencing what I'm experiencing today.

I never,

never saw myself hosting a podcast.

That was a child's idea.

And and now, you know,

I this is only my part time job,

but part other part time I

run another business.

I'm actually an aerialist

and I teach kids how to
perform and do aerial
acrobatics and I perform myself.
So that was not in the cards
at all as far as what I saw
and in doing it to worship
music and just spreading God's
love and light throughout our community.
Um, yeah, it, God will surprise you.
And I love that you both
brought up Henry Blackaby
because that was,
it was his book
experiencing God that
brought me to faith.
And, um, it's such an amazing,
amazing resource.
Um, so yeah, just where's God working?
What, what is he doing?
Can I be, you know, can I,
kind of see, you know,
take the time to step back
and see where he's at work

versus where I want to be.

And we never know what God

will want to do with our kids.

So I remember with like

starting this crisis pregnancy center,

we'd be there and they'd be

helping me fold stuff and

babysitting for teen moms.

Like it's just like other

homeschool kids are going

on field trips and doing all this stuff.

And you guys are here like

folding baby clothes and

going to fundraising.

But

my daughter's heart for people that

maybe other people would

turn their nose up at or

not give a second glance at.

Um, now she's in Europe,

just ministering to people

and talking to people and

we'll have conversations with anyone.

It's, it's amazing.

And it was one of those
moments when I felt like,
what am I doing?

And it was like, God's in my heart.

Like I'm doing this for you for some,
like a little bit,
but I'm doing this for her.

And she was like a twelve
year old girl sitting on her computer,
right?

Working on her math assignment.

It was like that moment.

just gave me this little
glimpse like maybe all this
that I'm having you do is
so that she can see because

I have something planned
for her and now I have to
see these adult kids I was
able to write a novel with
my son who's thirty now
like all these things that

you're just trying to like
let's finish this math
homework please or whatever
it is our vision is so
little this and then he
said I have so much for you
and whoever you're going to
impact and for them and
whoever they're going to impact.

And now to see my
grandchildren following God,
it's just this ripple effect,
but we just have to be obedient.

And it might be crazy,
the things that we feel
he's stirring in our heart,
but it's for a purpose.

Yeah.

And just really quick off the top of that,
the experience that each
child has in their
homeschool experience or years,
it's going to be very

different from one to the next, you know,

and we feel we shouldn't

have to feel like we've got

to do the exact same thing

for each child because

They're all different.

God's got different plans for each one.

And trusting that what they

get exposed to and what

classes are available when

and what things are all

part of his plan for them.

And so when you've got a

teacher who's great in

their co-op who's teaching, I don't know,

language arts and she retires,

don't freak out because the

next one might be perfect

for the next child.

And I saw that with my kids,

just things that were

opportunities that opened

up for some and not the others.

God knows what he has for them.

And just ask him to show you
that and to open your eyes
to what would be the wisest
choices for each of your
children because his plans
for them are specific as well.

Right.

And all of us having adult children,
we know how different their
paths become as they leave our house.

So, yes, that is so, so true.

Are there any scriptures or
words of wisdom that have
been an anchor for you in
finding just your purpose, your calm,
just in the shifting
seasons of motherhood as
well as homeschooling?

I love Luke nineteen.

It talks about Zacchaeus.

And this also comes from experiencing God,
by the way.

But I just remember it's

somewhere in that that

Henry Blackaby talks about

ask like because Jesus had

the crowds pressing in.

And then he saw Zacchaeus and he says,

Zacchaeus, I'm going to your house today.

And when I was working with teen moms,

it's like all their needs

are overwhelming.

It's like, Lord,

show me who's the Zacchaeus.

Who is like, I'm going to your house.

And then now with ten kids,

like every one of them has a need.

Like there's something going on.

They need someone to talk to.

They need a prayer.

But like show me the one who

I need to go on errands with me,

have a special day,

sit down with a conversation or whatever.

Call up this child I haven't

heard from in a couple of days.

God knows the one and he

will put us on our heart.

So when all the knees are pressing to say,

like,

and I'll say that he was showing me this,

like he is the one that I'm

going to your house and,

and you just have that

target on who it is.

And God will do that.

He will show you.

That's really good.

Yeah, I think for mine, I'm thinking,

and you talked about rest and calm.

And I think of the verse in

Matthew where come all you

who are weary and burdened.

Weary and burdened.

And I'll give you rest.

And for me, the weary and the burdened,

that's what...

caught my attention in that

verse more than anything
because overwhelm, busyness,
we all feel weary or
burdened about many different things.
And some of them are not even real things.
They're not actual things
I'm stressed out about or
freaking out about or anxious about.
Something that I'm
perceiving that's not even
actually true or a fear of
something that's not going to happen.
And if we know that God identifies
you are weary you are
burdened I have rest for
you it's not a new thing we
can calm and quiet our
souls not because our
circumstances are peaceful
um or our to-do lists
aren't checked off you know
it but but we we in that in
that burden in that in that

weariness god is a
trustworthy faithful provider
He invites us to come to him,
to rest in his arms.

So he knows we're overwhelmed.

He knows we get weary.

I mean, weariness is,

I think they go together,

burdened and weary.

We become weary because of our burdens.

And

you know we may have an

assignment in our life or a

certain season where

there's a job loss or

there's an illness or one

of our children is ill and

that can get exhausting and

tiring you know we feel

like we need to do

something for the others

who have to walk through it

with us and there's there's

all kinds of struggles

family members who who need

us grandma who moves in

like you have trisha

And we become weary and

think of it as a burden.

But God's like,

weariness and being

burdened are a part of

walking in this life.

And yet, I am here to give you rest.

So come to me.

He's inviting us.

He's like, I'm here.

My lap is here.

I'm going to give you the

rest that you need.

And it may be two minutes

while you are in the

bathroom away from the children.

And even then,

the notes come under the door.

Right.

Exactly.

But that is the moment of Lord,

just a moment in your day.

You are here for my rest.

I am resting in you.

I don't see how it can be restful,

but I am resting in you.

Can I crawl into your lap

this minute and just give me that rest?

And he is there.

He is there for us.

And we need to be reminded

of that regularly.

Yeah.

When I was having an especially hard day,

my friend Amber, who I'm like,

I need a prayer.

And she said, well, you know,

overwhelm is a choice.

And I'm like, what?

What are you talking about?

But we can choose to be... I know.

Thank you.

And every day when I start to feel that,
there's so much.

Because we can either...

go over all the things that

we're not getting done that

we need to be done all the

tasks or we can like well

in this moment I'm doing

this thing all that'll be

waiting there and I could

just lean into god and so

every time I start feeling

that overwhelm is a choice

I do not have to be

overwhelmed I can remember

that I can only do what I

can do and god is here and

it's absolutely

Yeah, that's great wisdom.

I was just having that

conversation with myself yesterday.

Like, well,

that to-do list did not get done,

but maybe God has plans for tomorrow.

So that's just the way it goes.

So Sherry, in your global travels,

you've likely seen both

peace and intensity in nature.

How have the experiences of

experiencing God's world

and just his natural

wonders helped you approach

life just in general,

as well as motherhood with

more calm and confidence?

You know, I would say regarding that,

it's the ebb and flow that

caught my attention when you said that.

The cyclic nature of the

world is carefully balanced.

We've got food webs.

We've got weather cycles.

We have planetary orbits.

All of those things are

natural and necessary for us.

God did those for us.

We even need like the planet Jupiter.

We need the planet Jupiter

to keep the earth in orbit.

If not, if Jupiter was disappeared,

we would probably die.

So those things are...

Never need to be saying that, did you?

But it is, it's there for us.

It takes the hit for like

things that come from

outside our solar system

and we get pulled into its gravity.

But I can rest then in the omniscient God,

who's again, upholding it all.

He can get me through a day

with toddler meltdowns, with flat tires,

with,

with whatever we've got to do to this,

you know, driving here,

homeschool moms are never home, right?

We're driving all over the place often.

And so God can get me through those days,

the ebb and the flow that there's,

there's going to be days

where you're like, wow, today was,

today was a day.

It was a,

it was a crazy day.

Other days where you're like,

we all survived.

That's one of those days

where you get those, you know, wow,

we finally caught it.

I had two children who were

sitting down and they were

playing together and enjoying.

And then you're like, Oh yeah,

what is happening here?

And so we have those ebbs and flows,

but knowing that,

That is part of the rhythm

of our days and the rhythm of our life.

And God has made things that

way that it doesn't take him by surprise.

And it is part of the nature

of the world that he's placed us in.

So we're going to have days
of wins and we're going to
have days of frustrations
and we're going to have
hard days and we're going
to have slightly easier days.

Sometimes I feel like it's
just the hard days.

I know that too.

There are seasons of that.

But understanding that God is there,
he's omnipotent, all powerful,
he's omniscient, all knowing,
and he upholds all of those things.

And so he's the one we can
rely on to get through
those crazy days and the good days too.

Yeah.

Yeah.

I think that thought is sometimes it's, oh,
what did I do to make this day better?

You know,

and then we could put it all on

ourselves like, oh,

there was there was like

some secret that I've now

got to figure out.

But but that is so true what you just said,

that it is those ebbs and flows.

And a lot of times it has

nothing to do with us.

Most of the time it does.

And we just have to take the goods,

you know,

the days and the bad days and

just thank God for being

there with us in all of that.

And there are days that we can praise,

those bad days are days we

can praise the Lord through.

I mean, it's rather than a,

today was a failure day.

Today was a day of learning.

Today was a day of

And it just changes my

perspective rather than I

just messed up this whole week.

I'm a waste.

I'm not a good homeschool mom.

I'm not a good mom.

I'm not.

I mean,

those are just those don't benefit

us at all.

So understanding that this

is a time of learning.

This is a time of progress.

The Lord is working in our family.

What's he going to do?

Lord, what are you doing in this?

And I just trust that you're

going to do something.

So, so true.

Yeah.

So Tricia in storytelling,

it's a way of slowing down

and reflecting really,

because you kind of reiterate, you know,

what has happened or what is going on and,

and often point out things that, you know,
we would just observe,
but not maybe vocalize.

Do you find that sharing
stories or creating
memories together has
helped you and your
children find more peace in
everyday life?

Oh, absolutely.

I think because like one of
the books we wrote, and I say we,
because my kids participate,
it was the grumble for a year.

We made a goal to not grumble for a year.

knowing we were going to
fail but also knowing what
we need to do so we were in
reading through like
deuteronomy and exodus and
all the grumbling like and
learning prayer and
learning learning gratitude

like all these things um
but because we have to stop
and like think through okay
this happened but we did
this and look how god
showed up it just makes you
like see everything life
and like cherry was just
saying when we see those
problems what is god doing
and really the problem
is is the way that takes us
to where we need to be like
if we were if we had all
the money we needed if we
had no problems like we
wouldn't need god but the
problem so because I write
that like you write all the
problems then you have to
like see how god is working
and then you see like oh
god showed up because of

this problem we discovered
this because of this
problem I grew in this
character trait or fruit of
the spirit and so like just
recently our daughter's car
broke down she um was the
driver for her she was
nineteen and for the driver
for her twenty-one year old
sister who does not want to
drive no interest so she
was driving two people to
work two people all the
time and her car broke down
and we had no money to replace it
And so she was so distraught.
She was crying and it was
completely like a,
it was completely destroyed.
So we just trashed the car.
And I said, Florentina,
I really feel like God is

wanting you to slow down

and we just need to pray together.

Like, what is your purpose in this?

Like he has a purpose in this time.

What is it?

And it wasn't the day later

that we found about this

opportunity to teach in Poland.

And she's, she got so excited.

She was like, mom, maybe that's it.

Maybe if I was still have

the car running around everywhere,

I wouldn't have even like

pause to consider this

might be something.

And because I had just said

that like the day before,

and then they turn those applications,

there's a loving people

that applied only two spots open.

I like little, let's walk in faith.

Let's go get the passports.

Like we just walked in faith.

Like this was God's plan.

Um,

but it's because we had seen over and
over again, whenever there's a problem,

When we turn to God,

there's a better solution

than we thought.

And they're in Poland.

And my twenty one year old who's
was such a difficult high schooler.

We adopted her when she was thirteen.

She's like, Mom, I just saw the other day,

she's like, I would have never thought,

if someone would have told

me when I was in high school,

that when I was twenty-one,

I'd be living in Europe,

teaching in a preschool,

that God would have provided,

that I'd be telling others about him,

like, I wouldn't have believed it.

I'm like,

I definitely wouldn't have believed it.

Like, it was just too much.

Like,

can you just wake up and do something?

Like, that's all, we were just trying to,

like,

Get a little bit of homeschool work done.

Keep your head down through the day.

But the more we see the story,

like the greater story,

like the whole Bible's the story.

The problem is we were

separated by God and he had

to make the way through Jesus.

Like story after story after

story after story.

So anytime we can see like,

what's your story being written here?

There's a problem.

It's for a purpose.

What are you trying to teach us, show us,

grow us in?

And the more you do that, like, okay,

you don't have a car now.

We cannot buy you another car.

Let's pray about why this is happening.

And God will show up.

He is so faithful in that.

And so all of our lives are a story.

Like I just happened to like

pick it out and put it on paper,

but all of our lives are a story.

Yeah.

So, so good.

Yes.

And it's those interruptions.

We have a choice.

We have a choice to get

upset or a choice to seek what,

what is in this.

I love that.

Love, love, love that.

And yes,

that has to become our natural

response because it's not

our natural response.

Our natural response is to grumble,

like you said.

Yeah.

Well,

this has been such a good conversation.

Before we wrap up,

could you tell us a bit

about your new book,

Wonders of the Ocean Realm?

What inspired it and what do

you hope that readers will gain from it?

And also where our listeners

can find out more about

your work and connect with,

I know because you both

have a lot of resources

outside just this new book coming out.

So I'd love for you both to share on that.

Sure, you go.

Wonders of the Ocean Realm.

Okay, it's for upper middle school.

I don't remember the exact ages,

but we're saying upper middle school,

younger, or no, sorry,

upper elementary and middle
school age kids.

And it's a story of five
unique ocean animals.

You follow them along
through their lives and all of the
exciting things that happen to them,
some dangers in the oceans.

And then you're learning also,
as you're reading about this,
some of the unique features
that they have been given
in their design to be able
to survive the environments
where they are.

And we follow unique animals,
not ones that are just
traditionally told like
most kids' stories.

We pick some really fun, unique,
fascinating creatures that
you get to learn about and
from all over the world,

from all over the globe.

So there's academic stuff happening,

but it's kind of snuck in there.

But then there's also... That's right,

that's right.

Because we want it to be fun.

And so you're following them

along in this nature...

like a narrated nature story,

but then there's lessons,

both spiritual lessons as

well as academic lessons,

and then seeing God's

fingerprints through creation.

And Tricia has pulled out

some beautiful analogies to students,

what is God saying to them?

And you can take that part if you want,

Tricia, go ahead.

Yeah,

I think it was the funnest book to

write because I had my

research right there.

Like, Sherry, what about this?

And what about this?

But how can we describe this?

And she's like, oh,

this fin would be described

more like this than this.

I'm like, perfect.

It was like this instant resource.

But as a mom,

when we adopted the seven

kids and I was

homeschooling seven at one time,

I just read aloud a lot.

Like we're just reading

because I cover all of them.

like all of them from five

to sixteen at the time.

And so,

but so then you would read all

these novels and,

but then you get to the

science and it was fact, fact, fact, fact,

fact, fact.

And I see their minds are
just like wandering.

And Sherry is the one that came up,

I would love us, like,

can we do science stories

where we're telling a story,

but they're learning about

The life cycle, the migration and how this,

like the rainbow mantis

shrimp that has like a punch,

like you share,

you get to share all the details,

but it's like these amazing

creatures that only God

could have come up with this,

but it's in the story form.

So a parent can read it out

loud to like around a table

or a kid can just read it

and they're enjoying the story,

but they're learning as they go along.

Yeah, fun fact.

This peacock mana shrimp is

able to punch with a speed
that's faster than light.
It actually creates light.
It's so fast from underwater.
It's the fastest moving
thing in the world.
And it can see better than
any other creature.
The colors that we don't
even imagine are perceptible.
It has so many more abilities.
cones in its eyes that it's
able to see things that
just so it's an astounding
creature it's like the
superhero of superheroes
fastest strongest uh
supervision superpower and
and it's just a fascinating
creature and yet god made
this unique animal
absolutely a purpose and he
serves a purpose where he

lives and what he does and
just the coolest animal so
yeah that's one um mimic
octopus more than an
octopus does so much more
than an octopus could do
So they're just fun
creatures that hopefully
the stories pull you in and
you want to follow them along.

So there's five of them in the book.

And just again, just a fun, rich, sweet,
engaging story,
a series of stories that we
hope all families will enjoy.

Yeah.

And that book again is

Wonders of the Ocean Realm.

And I will share the link.

It's, it's, you can pre-purchase it now.

When is it actually coming out?

Do you guys know?

First week or second week of January.

Yeah.

January seventh, I think.

Yeah.

So it's available for
pre-order now from pretty
much any outlet that's out
there that sells books.

Yeah.

And that's from Tyndale.

And so, yeah, we'll share that,
that link in the show notes
and I'm sure when did.

And the illustrations are so beautiful.

Yeah.

Oh, I saw that.

We fell in love with the
illustrator and what he was able to do.

It's great because he's
creating all these things
that were in our mind.

We're actually able to see it.

It's awesome.

That's so, so cool.

Awesome.

Well,

I can't wait to see it and to have
our audience enjoy it.

I know a lot of parents...

especially with kids who struggle.

Those fact science books,

they can really be

difficult for them to digest,

but I'm excited for this

resource to be available for them.

So thank you for doing that.

So thanks all for joining

this conversation.

I know we had just a couple comments.

One asking if we could be in Spanish.

I don't know about that one.

We'll have to consider how

that would happen.

But I know that we do have

the transcripts downloadable.

And you may be able to

actually get the captions

depending on how you set
them on YouTube or Facebook in Spanish.

So that may be an option for you.

But I know I'm just glad we
got the captions and the
transcript now and the podcast.

So the podcast for this
episode will come out next week.

But these live versions on Facebook,
YouTube, and Instagram will be there.

So definitely you can
rewatch if you caught us at
the end and want to listen
to this whole conversation.

But next week, our topic is going to be...
nurturing creativity,

how parents can empower
unique learners at home.

And we're going to kind of talk about that,
like stirring that
creativity within your child.

And so you'll definitely
want to be to join us for that.

But in the meantime,
check out our website at
spedhomeschool.com.

And we just want to continue
encouraging you and your
journey to home educate
your learner who learns
outside the box and maybe a
simple way or maybe a drastic way,
but we're there for you.

And we have lots of
resources on our website.

Thanks, Sherry.

Thanks, Tricia.

I've appreciated our conversation.

You were a wealth of
information and wisdom,
as I had anticipated.

And thank you.

And I'm excited about your new book.

And thank you for all that
you do to support families
and just walk the walk.

Thank you for having me.

Yes, absolutely.

Take care, everybody.

God bless.

And we'll see you next time

on Empowering Homeschool Conversations.

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