

Speaker 1 ([00:02](#)):

It is time for a pause in your day. Welcome to a podcast where we press the pause button on our busy lives for a few moments, and we focus on God's word With Sharon and Nicole. We pray this is a time of refreshing for you. The Sweet Selah Moments Podcast is a cooperative production of Word Radio and Sweet Selah Ministries.

Nicole ([00:28](#)):

Welcome to the Sweet Selah Moments Podcast. This is episode 116, Joy-Filled Blessings. We've spent the last couple of weeks talking about standing firm and unshaken even in the midst of troubles and persecution. It's been good and challenging. Today we turn a corner and get to read a passage that is filled with joy and blessing. This ought to be fun, Sharon.

Sharon ([00:50](#)):

Yes, it should be. I love these verses we're gonna read today, Nicole. Paul is so exuberant, happy, and relieved to hear that this precious church is standing firm, that he basically can't control the joy that is brimming up inside him and it spills out all over this part of his letter. I just love it. But before we start, I'd like to talk a minute about giving someone a blessing. Nicole, have you ever been formally blessed with someone praying over you for that very purpose?

Nicole ([01:18](#)):

You know, I can't remember. I feel like we were prayed over when we went on a missions trip once when I was a teenager. But also the church we grew up in when I was younger, we always ended the sermon; the pastor read a blessing to the whole congregation.

Sharon ([01:31](#)):

Oh, mine did that too.

Nicole ([01:31](#)):

The Lord bless and keep you and his face shine upon you, it was really beautiful. And then recently my cousin got married up in Northern Maine and at the end of the wedding, when they were married, they had everyone in the congregation all reach forward, reach their hands forward and we all said a blessing together and blessed the newlyweds. That was such a special moment.

Sharon ([01:50](#)):

Yes.

Nicole ([01:50](#)):

I want to always do that at weddings now.

Sharon ([01:52](#)):

Yes. Isn't that beautiful?

Nicole ([01:54](#)):

That was really special. So.

Sharon ([01:55](#)):

Yeah, yeah. I've always wanted to be Jewish on Friday nights for Shabbat because the husband prays a prayer of blessing over his wife.

Nicole ([02:03](#)):

Oh, that's sweet.

Sharon ([02:05](#)):

I know.

Nicole ([02:06](#)):

I wanna be Jewish too.

Sharon ([02:06](#)):

Yeah.

Nicole ([02:08](#)):

Hey Josh.

Sharon ([02:09](#)):

I'm like, to Ray,, can we some light some candles and you're supposed to bless me.

Nicole ([02:13](#)):

Oh, that's so sweet. I didn't know that.

Sharon ([02:15](#)):

Isn't that lovely? It's such a part of the Jewish culture, which, I mean, we have been adopted in. We could do this thing.

Nicole ([02:21](#)):

Okay. We don't have to be Jewish to pray, but, yeah.

Sharon ([02:23](#)):

Well, I learned the most about blessing from my friend Sherry Schumann. She's the, I forget if she's called the president or the C E O or the whatever, but she runs, with God's help, Christian Grandparenting Network.

Nicole ([02:37](#)):

Oh, how nice.

Sharon ([02:38](#)):

And Sherry talks, she has this wonderful talk about blessing your grandchildren formally, really praying blessing over them and what it can mean to them to speak, you know, what you see in them through prayer. Father, thank you for this child that is so kind. Lord, I just love how you've blessed this child with a creativity, you know, or whatever. That kind of thing. And then the literal blessing, Lord Bless you, keep you, that kind of thing. So Ray and I have adopted that. It's easier for us in the sense that if we saw our grandchildren every other day, it might, they might find it a bit tedious if we were like, come here for a blessing. But we see our grandchildren twice a year, so it works out beautifully for us. And we just got back not that long ago from seeing Mary and her five kids and her husband too. He was also there. Sorry, Son-in-law. Love you. So, and they're really on board with us. They're awesome. So everybody sat on one couch and then Ray and I sat on the other and one at a time, I'm gonna cry 'cause I love doing this so much.

Nicole ([03:42](#)):

I know, you've already made me tear up just thinking about it.

Sharon ([03:44](#)):

Love it. It's like my favorite thing, even though it's hard 'cause it's always when we're leaving, but, one at a time, they come and sit between us and we hold their hand or we touch their shoulder and Ray goes first and he thanks God for who they are and how God has wired them. And he prays, you know, for whatever things you know, we want in their lives. And then I add whatever he missed.

Nicole ([04:06](#)):

That's so sweet.

Sharon ([04:07](#)):

And then I end with 'the Lord bless you and keep you'. And then the next one comes and sits.

Nicole ([04:13](#)):

Oh my goodness, Sharon.

Sharon ([04:13](#)):

And it's their special time. It just, you know, I mean, Jacob blessed all his sons. Right? Although his blessings were unique.

Nicole ([04:20](#)):

Some of them of them weren't very nice.

Sharon ([04:22](#)):

They were more like, some of them were more like prophecies.

Nicole ([04:25](#)):

Right.

Sharon ([04:25](#)):

Thankfully, God has given me no negatives.

Nicole ([04:27](#)):

Oh good.

Sharon ([04:28](#)):

This is good.

Nicole ([04:29](#)):

You will be a troubled person who pursues his brother and---

Sharon ([04:33](#)):

I know. Yeah. I was like, wow. Those are not the blessings Sherry taught me.

Nicole ([04:37](#)):

No. That's funny.

Sharon ([04:37](#)):

So, but I love the biblical thought of we're their elders.

Nicole ([04:44](#)):

Yeah.

Sharon ([04:45](#)):

And more than anything, 'cause I don't know how many years I have, I wanna bless them. I wanna bless them. I wanna bless them. So I love blessings.

Nicole ([04:54](#)):

That's so beautiful.

Sharon ([04:55](#)):

Yes. So this is supposed to be the joy-filled one, and now we're both crying.

Nicole ([04:58](#)):

I know. Like, can you bless my children? Like, am I allowed to do that? That's so beautiful.

Sharon ([05:03](#)):

Of course you can do that. Yeah. You can make it a Sunday night tradition.

Nicole ([05:07](#)):

Oh my goodness. That is so sweet.

Sharon ([05:08](#)):

You could just choose to add that as a rhythm to your lives.

Nicole ([05:11](#)):

Yeah. Well it's so easy in this world to see the negative and especially, you know, as a mother and as a grandmother, you're always looking to guide them and help them and correct them.

Sharon ([05:19](#)):

Right.

Nicole (05:20):

But you often see the things to fix in them.

Sharon (05:22):

Yes. Yes.

Nicole (05:23):

And not always---. So that's such a beautiful way to stop and see the good that's in them, that God is already growing in them.

Sharon (05:29):

Yes. Yes. And to pray that that's what continues.

Nicole (05:32):

Yeah. Oh, I just love this.

Sharon (05:34):

Well, okay. Well, perhaps we should read the scripture.

Nicole (05:38):

See if Paul brings us to tears today too.

Sharon (05:41):

Let's dive in and hear Paul's joy firsthand. Why don't you begin.

Nicole (05:45):

Alright. So today we're gonna be reading 1 Thessalonians 3:6-13. "But now Timothy has just returned bringing us good news about your faith and love. He reports that you always remember our visit with joy, and that you want to see us as much as we want to see you."

Sharon (06:03):

"So we have been greatly encouraged in the midst of our troubles and suffering, dear brothers and sisters, because you have remained strong in your faith."

Nicole (06:10):

"It gives us new life to know that you are standing firm in the Lord."

Sharon (06:14):

"How we thank God for you, because of you we have great joy as we enter God's presence."

Nicole (06:20):

"Night and day we pray earnestly for you asking God to let us see you again, to fill the gaps in your faith."

Sharon (06:26):

"May God, our Father and our Lord Jesus, bring us to you very soon."

Nicole (06:29):

"And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow, just as our love for you overflows."

Sharon (06:37):

"May He, as a result, make your heart strong, blameless and holy as you stand before God, our Father, when our Lord Jesus comes again with all his holy people. Amen." Those last two verses are a blessing.

Nicole (06:53):

Oh!

Sharon (06:54):

Something you could pray over your children. So now its---

Nicole (06:56):

I love that. Now I can go home and like find all the blessings in the Bible and start writing 'em down.

Sharon ([07:00](#)):

Oh, yeah. Yeah. It's so fun.

Nicole ([07:02](#)):

That is fun.

Sharon ([07:02](#)):

I start looking for them now. You know, more than I used to. Thank you Sherry Schumann, if you're listening to this podcast.

Nicole ([07:07](#)):

I know. That's so cool.

Sharon ([07:08](#)):

So yeah. So now's time to examine each verse one at a time. And you get to start with verse six.

Nicole ([07:13](#)):

Alright. So if you didn't catch last week's podcast, the week before, Paul has been trying to get back to this church in Thessalonica and see how they're doing. And Satan has prevented him from going. And they've been so concerned with checking on them that finally Paul sends Timothy to find out how they're doing. So then, now "Timothy has just returned, bringing us good news about your faith and love. He reports that you always remember our visit with joy and that you want to see us as much as we want to see you." I think this must have been such a blessing for Paul, who's been worried, he's been anxious. Like he can't get to them. They're probably wondering what's happening. He sends Timothy and that they are remembering his visit with as much joy as he's remembering them.

Sharon ([07:57](#)):

Yes. That was so sweet.

Nicole ([07:59](#)):

That's great. Because sometimes you wonder like, is it all lopsided? Like, did they have as good of a time as I had? You know?

Sharon ([08:05](#)):

Exactly so.

Nicole ([08:06](#)):

But to find out that this church really did seem to love Paul as much as he loved them.

Sharon ([08:11](#)):

Yes. Isn't that sweet? Yeah. And also Paul's pretty happy probably that Timothy's back safely too.

Nicole ([08:16](#)):

Yes.

Sharon ([08:17](#)):

You know?

Nicole ([08:17](#)):

Yeah.

Sharon ([08:17](#)):

He comes back with good news. Guess what? They haven't forgotten you They want you to come too.

Nicole ([08:22](#)):

Yes. And also that they're still growing in their faith.

Sharon ([08:25](#)):

Yes.

Nicole ([08:25](#)):

Obviously that's probably even more exciting than the fact that they did love Paul. But I just think this must have been such a moment for Paul to hear.

Sharon ([08:32](#)):

What a relief.

Nicole ([08:32](#)):

Timothy's home. Everything's going great.

Sharon ([08:35](#)):

Yes.

Nicole ([08:35](#)):

Great start to our verses,

Sharon ([08:36](#)):

Beautiful. Beautiful. So verse seven. "So we have been greatly encouraged in the midst of our troubles and suffering, dear brothers and sisters, because you have remained strong in your faith." Yes. So he's all happy, but his troubles and suffering are still going on. He's made that clear, whatever they are. He's still sick is my theory. But whatever. But hey, he's not even thinking about being suffering. He's too happy. His relief is almost palpable. They're okay. He's so selfless. He could be just, you know, if I'm feeling pain, it's really hard for me to be like, focused on how other people are doing.

Nicole ([09:16](#)):

Oh, sure. Yeah.

Sharon ([09:17](#)):

It's like, I hurt.

Nicole ([09:17](#)):

Like you take care of you. I'm dealing with this, this feels huge right now.

Sharon ([09:21](#)):

I am hurting. Right. And I can get to a point of very unhealthy self-pity and self focus. Paul is not doing this. Paul, in the midst of trouble and suffering is thinking about other people, praying about other people, being happy about other people. The best thing we can do when we're in the midst of suffering is not dwell on our own pitiful selves all the time. Right?

Nicole ([09:46](#)):

Yes. Oh yeah. Wallow in our pity parties.

Sharon ([09:47](#)):

Oh man,

Nicole ([09:48](#)):

We're so good at pity parties. I throw the best ones.

Sharon ([09:51](#)):

Yes. We feel it's indulgent, kind of like eating ice cream.

Nicole ([09:55](#)):

I know, it's awful.

Sharon ([09:56](#)):

But it comes back and bites you worse than ice cream ever does because then your world gets so bitter and small.

Nicole ([10:03](#)):

Yeah. It's so small.

Sharon ([10:03](#)):

Anyways. Go Paul.

Nicole ([10:05](#)):

So, and then he continues in verse eight, "It gives us new life to know that you are standing firm in the Lord." So this, like you just said, this report that they're doing well, it's revitalizing Paul no matter what he's going through, sickness or troubles. This is kind of sparking a new joy in his heart. And because his focus is on the right things, he's not having a pity party.

Sharon ([10:28](#)):

Right. Right.

Nicole ([10:28](#)):

So when we're in troubles, if we're looking for that good to see the growth in others, we're gonna get that spark of new life too.

Sharon ([10:35](#)):

Yes. Yes.

Nicole ([10:35](#)):

You know? So I think that's kind of neat.

Sharon ([10:37](#)):

It's beautiful and it's so selfless. It's not like, Hey, you're doing all right. I'm suffering. Why should I be happy for you? I mean, he's just thrilled. He's thrilled.

Nicole ([10:45](#)):

When I was thinking like, new life that you were standing firm in the Lord, I think we'd mentioned in an earlier podcast that sometimes we feel like we have to do it all. We have to plant the seed and water and harvest. And this is kind of cool because he's gotta be encouraged, 'cause he's probably like, he planted the seed and he left and he didn't know if the droughts came and killed the seeds. And now he's seeing these little green shoots push through.

Sharon ([11:07](#)):

Yes.

Nicole ([11:07](#)):

Without him being there to tend it. God is growing them. And he gets to see it though. Like how cool.

Sharon ([11:13](#)):

Beautiful. Beautiful. Yeah. Okay. Verse nine, "how we thank God for you! (Exclamation point) Because of you we have great joy as we enter God's presence." Paul's prayer life is so robust. He doesn't just go and ask for things. He's entering God's presence with joy. He's just being happy with God.

Nicole ([11:37](#)):

I know.

Sharon ([11:38](#)):

Right? I mean, sometimes I do that and it's really fun. God, I'm just so happy.

Nicole ([11:42](#)):

Right. This is happening and this is happening.

Sharon ([11:45](#)):

Yeah. It's just so nice. And I love that he remembers to thank God.

Nicole ([11:48](#)):

Yeah.

Sharon ([11:49](#)):

You know, because Timothy comes back and Paul could just go, phew. Well now let's pray for the Corinthians. Right?

Nicole ([11:56](#)):

Right, well, I got this other letter to write. So

Sharon ([11:57](#)):

Yeah, exactly. Moving on. Check it off. But no, he takes the time to thank. And I love in our ministry and in my personal prayer life, that Thursdays are Thankful Thursdays. Yeah. I pray as you know, long prayer lists six days a week with different focuses each day, but Thursdays are Thankful Thursdays and I put aside all the prayer lists and I just thank God and I just list all the things. It's so fun. And I brought it into the ministry and social media. Thursday is Thankful Thursday. And I love it when people participate because we sometimes we have to work at being thankful. And we're supposed to be. So I think it's a good exercise, every week I need to come up with something new for social media for which to be thankful. And it's a good thing. It really is.

Nicole ([12:48](#)):

That is good.

Sharon ([12:49](#)):

My grandmother in England when she was in the nursing home and she could no longer see, 'cause of cataracts, she could barely hear, she could not walk. She just kept saying, I'm so very, very thankful. God has been so good to me. My family's marvelous. This is a woman who was a hundred and almost one.

Nicole ([13:12](#)):

Wow!

Sharon ([13:12](#)):

Who needed help with everything at this point. And every single nurse that entered the room, Oh, thank you, dear. I'm so sorry to be a bother.

Nicole ([13:22](#)):

Sweet lady.

Sharon ([13:23](#)):

No complaints.

Nicole ([13:24](#)):

Yeah. Just all thankfulness.

Sharon ([13:25](#)):

Just gratitude. Honestly, Nicole, she had trained herself over the years. This is a woman that lived through World War II, went to bomb shelters every night with her children. All kinds of sad things happened to her. Many, many, many.

Nicole ([13:39](#)):

I was gonna say, we've lost the art of thankfulness. We are not a thankful people.

Sharon ([13:43](#)):

No. We do not practice it. (Nicole: No) And I'll tell you, I learned from my mother who learned from her mother. You look for what to be grateful for. (Yes) And that's how you get your little joyful heart. (Right) So, anyways.

Nicole ([13:56](#)):

And we forget to thank God. We forget. I forget to thank God for good things.

Sharon ([13:59](#)):

Yes. We forget to go back. And Paul's like dancing with God over this.

Nicole ([14:02](#)):

I know. That's so good.

Sharon ([14:04](#)):

'Cause Oh, who kept their faith strong? Might have been God. So he goes to the right person and has great joy as he enters God's presence in Thanksgiving.

Nicole ([14:13](#)):

Oh, that's so good. Well, verse 10 talks a little bit more about his prayer life. "So night and day, we pray earnestly for you asking God to let us see you again to fill the gaps in your faith." So first I see here again, he is so faithful in praying he didn't go talk to them about Jesus. All right guys, good luck. Pray for them once. Oh God, help that church. He's praying earnestly. And again, this is not his only group of people he's been ministering to. So that's really cool that he's been faithful in prayer and then again, asking God to let us see you again, to fill the gaps in your faith. He's continuing the work. He's being faithful in the work God has given him. Not just Oh good. They're, they're saved. Okay.

Sharon ([14:53](#)):

They're launched.

Nicole ([14:53](#)):

Off we go. Exactly. He's like, okay, are they growing in their faith? Let's fill the gap so they become strong---

Sharon ([14:58](#)):

I love that thought.

Nicole ([14:59](#)):

Well-rounded Christians. Very good.

Sharon ([15:01](#)):

Beautiful.

Nicole ([15:01](#)):

So that's a good verse for us to carry with us as we evangelize.

Sharon ([15:05](#)):

Yes, it is.

Nicole ([15:05](#)):

Praying earnestly and continuing the faith.

Sharon ([15:08](#)):

Yep. And going back to where he talked about Satan preventing him, prayer is warfare in a lot of ways. So when you are earnestly praying, we're praying that hearts stay open. We're praying protection, we're praying all kinds of things.

Nicole ([15:22](#)):

Right. It's so important.

Sharon ([15:23](#)):

Part of prayer is warfare. It is. So that's really cool. Okay. So now he's hoping, verse 11, "May God our Father and our Lord Jesus bring us to you very soon." He's still trying to get to them.

Nicole ([15:38](#)):

He is. Oh Paul.

Sharon ([15:38](#)):

Bless him. He hasn't quit. He sends Timothy to let them know, I'm really trying here. Right?

Nicole ([15:45](#)):

Right, right.

Sharon ([15:45](#)):

But it's not like, okay, Timothy's gone, now I'm done. I'm still trying to get to you. May God let me come. So he's still asking God. And you know, Jesus says that, he talks about the persistent widow that keeps knocking. You know, we can keep asking.

Nicole ([16:01](#)):

He'll let us.

Sharon ([16:02](#)):

He's our Father. He's our Abba. And so Paul's knocking at that door again. Can I please go see these people? I loved it.

Nicole ([16:10](#)):

That is sweet. And then (verse) 12 is, "And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow just as our love for you overflows." There's just so much love and overflows of love.

Sharon ([16:22](#)):

I know. I like the rhyme that the New Living Translation people put in.

Nicole ([16:26](#)):

I know.

Sharon ([16:26](#)):

May all people grow and overflow.

Nicole ([16:30](#)):

It's just so nice because you had said he probably only knew them for about three months or so. And there's so much genuine affection for these people (Sharon: Yes, yes) in Christ. And we can't do that on our own. There's no way you can love and be this concerned with people you've met three months ago. There's just no way. God has put into us like this deeper capacity for love because of him. (Yes) It's only through him. (Yes) So if we feel like we're having trouble loving people, or Oh, I can't let any more people into my life, that's because we're not getting love from God.

Sharon ([16:59](#)):

Exactly so.

Nicole ([16:59](#)):

And he can fill us.

Sharon ([17:00](#)):

We need to go have a Selah Day.

Nicole ([17:02](#)):

That's a good warning sign that maybe your love tank is empty.

Sharon ([17:05](#)):

Yes. Yes. Gotta go fill up. I love that.

Nicole ([17:07](#)):

Go fill it. Yeah.

Sharon ([17:08](#)):

Yeah. And that really is a beautiful blessing to pray for your children. May the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow just as our love, your Daddy's and mine overflow.

Nicole ([17:19](#)):

Oh, your gonna make me cry again.

Sharon ([17:21](#)):

Isn't that the most beautiful thing?

Nicole ([17:23](#)):

I love all these blessings.

Sharon ([17:24](#)):

These blessings are so fun. And until you are aware of them, you forget to look for them.

Nicole ([17:29](#)):

You do. It's that training and thankfulness. We're not a thankful people.

Sharon ([17:33](#)):

Yeah. So verse 13 is continuing this blessing. So Paul is, I'm picturing him, laying his hands on them figuratively as he says this, "May he (God) as a result, make your heart strong, blameless and holy as you stand before God, our Father, when our Lord Jesus comes again with all his holy people. Amen." So this blessing, a blessing is a kind of a prayer because we're not saying, dear God, we're saying, may God. But that Amen is kind of like, I'm blessing. I'm asking God to do this for you. So it's kind of interesting.

Nicole ([18:10](#)):

Right. Like a feel of like, okay, God, now you do it. Takeover.

Sharon ([18:14](#)):

Yeah. I thought what was interesting about this though was that someday we stand before God.

Nicole ([18:19](#)):

Oh, yeah.

Sharon ([18:22](#)):

So "Make your heart strong, blameless and holy as you stand before God, our Father, when Jesus comes again." Yikes. I mean, we're saved by Jesus' blood. And when, God says, why should I let you into my heaven? We point to Jesus because he took the punishment I deserve. Right. It's not 'cause we've been any great shakes. But at the same time, the parables you read in the Bible where Jesus says, I gave this person one talent and gave this person five talents. I gave this person ten, and you know, the five and ten people did great. So in heaven you will be in charge of five cities and ten cities. I don't understand them. And I'm not trying to unpack a parable right now in the middle of Thessalonians, but the point is, what we do here matters there.

Nicole ([19:06](#)):

Yes.

Sharon ([19:06](#)):

Somehow. So when I stand before God my salvation is secure, but how I've lived matters. And so he wants them to have strong, blameless and holy hearts. And the other thing I love about this is he's not saying, May God remove all the troubles from your life and give you chocolate.

Nicole ([19:26](#)):

Right.

Sharon ([19:27](#)):

He's saying, may God make your heart what it needs to be. And this is what we primarily need to pray for the ones we love, that their character is strong.

Nicole ([19:37](#)):

Yes. No matter how God chooses to do that.

Sharon ([19:39](#)):

Right. Because that character goes with them into heaven. And I don't know what being in charge of five cities and ten cities means at all. It's just strange to me. But it's gonna follow me. What I do here, how I build my character here, is going to be useful to God. Not only here, but in heaven. So anyways,

Nicole ([19:58](#)):

We need to be mindful of that.

Sharon ([19:59](#)):

Yeah. So, all right, well then.

Nicole ([20:02](#)):

Three question time.

Sharon ([20:03](#)):

Three question time. And I'll let you go first with the favorite verse.

Nicole ([20:07](#)):

My favorite verse. So I picked 12.

Sharon ([20:11](#)):

Of course you did.

Nicole ([20:12](#)):

Because you did, didn't you? I was like, I wonder if she's gonna pick that one. I should pick a different one.

Sharon ([20:16](#)):

No, no. Do 12. Do 12.

Nicole ([20:18](#)):

It's all the love. "And may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow just as our love for you overflows." Ah, that's just such a beautiful verse.

Sharon ([20:28](#)):

It is.

Nicole ([20:28](#)):

And I am sometimes a grumpy person and people are overwhelming and not fun to love. And I don't overflow with love for my child, anyone, that I'm in contact with. So this was just really beautiful that God, God loves me with that overflowing love.

Sharon ([20:42](#)):

Yes, he does.

Nicole ([20:43](#)):

Even when I'm having a grumpy day.

Sharon ([20:45](#)):

He does.

Nicole ([20:45](#)):

So should I not go and bestow that overflowing love on the people that are irritating me in the moment?

I just, I love his love for me. It's beautiful. And then that, charge to love others with that same love.

Sharon ([20:57](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. I like the grow part too, because we can grow in love. And we need to grow because I also have the days where I'm like, I'm a people person, but there's been too many of you.

Nicole ([21:09](#)):

There's been too many people today. Yeah. It can get overwhelming for sure.

Sharon ([21:14](#)):

Yeah. I can remember one time when I was flying somewhere for Moms in Prayer a very wonderful friend of mine said to me, I am praying that on the plane you have divine encounters, and you know, the ability to bring people to Christ. And I felt so guilty because I was like, oh, I really wanted to sleep,

Nicole ([21:33](#)):

But I was praying for a nap.

Sharon ([21:35](#)):

Yes. So yes, we're sometimes grumpy and sometimes, but that's why we actually need that alone time with God. The filling up your love bucket. And so Selah Days are for me, essential. Just a day to be still with him and just be loved.

Nicole ([21:52](#)):

Let him whisper. Oh honey, you need to love that person a little bit more.

Sharon ([21:55](#)):

Yes. Yes.

Nicole ([21:55](#)):

Instead of somebody telling you, 'cause it makes you a little bit more grumpy.

Sharon ([21:57](#)):

Exactly. Exactly. Oh, that's all it does. You're right.

Nicole ([22:00](#)):

Yep.

Sharon ([22:00](#)):

You're right. So, okay. All right. So that's our favorite verse, verse 12. Obviously significant. We both chose it. So, okay. So I'll go first on this one. What did we learn from God from this passage? Well, first of all, I just said it, God can make our love grow. Which is good because we do not possess the amount of love that he has. So please make it grow, good prayer to pray, make it grow. And praying sometimes can just be joy in his presence. You know, Paul just was happy. And I wanna be happy in God's presence, not always coming with a list.

Nicole ([22:35](#)):

Yes.

Sharon ([22:35](#)):

You know, and that's what a Selah Day does for me too, because I'll walk by the ocean, or even if I'm sitting on my deck looking at trees grow.

Nicole ([22:42](#)):

Right. And little birds twittering.

Sharon ([22:44](#)):

And my little birds, just finding joy in his presence and knowing that prayer is so multifaceted. Prayer is abiding with Christ. It's bringing your sorrows, it's confessing your sin, it's being thankful. And sometimes it's just being happy with him. So I like that.

Nicole ([23:01](#)):

That's so nice. I like that.

Sharon ([23:02](#)):

How about you? What did you learn about God from this passage?

Nicole ([23:05](#)):

I have been struck by what can happen during troubles and suffering. That we can be encouraged and we can remain strong and we can grow and have overflowing love.

Sharon ([23:15](#)):

Yes.

Nicole ([23:15](#)):

And troubles are not fun. And I don't want troubles. I want God to have all that happen to me when things are going well. And I think I can be a good little Christian girl and avoid these troubles if I pray enough or do this enough. And it's like, oh, that's been a hard lesson to learn.

Sharon ([23:30](#)):

It is hard.

Nicole ([23:30](#)):

That you can do everything right, and we can't do everything right because we're sinners. Even when we try to do the right thing I'm doing it for my own benefit to avoid trouble.

Sharon ([23:37](#)):

Exactly.

Nicole ([23:38](#)):

So I'm not a good Christian girl. So it's just this, God's just like, Be still and in the trouble I am with you. And even through this trouble, you're going to grow.

Sharon ([23:47](#)):

Yes. Yes.

Nicole ([23:47](#)):

And you're going to have love. So that was just like, God is with us through all of it.

Sharon ([23:51](#)):

He is. He is. And and he leads us by the hand.

Nicole ([23:55](#)):

Yes.

Sharon ([23:55](#)):

I mean, he's our shepherd.

Nicole ([23:57](#)):

See you at the other end of this trouble, no, he's walking through the trouble with us. And I'm just so struck by his love for us.

Sharon ([24:04](#)):

I know. Me too. Because you know, sometimes somebody that's going through a really, really hard time, you get overwhelmed by their sadness.

Nicole ([24:12](#)):

Yes.

Sharon ([24:12](#)):

Right? And you're like, I kind of need a break from feeling sad with you. God never needs a break.

Nicole ([24:18](#)):

Oh, thank goodness.

Sharon ([24:18](#)):

From feeling sad with us.

Nicole ([24:19](#)):

I know. And he's with all of us. That he feels all the things of all of our troubles.

Sharon ([24:23](#)):

No matter how big I think God is, he's bigger. He is, just that thought. How big can he be? He's huge to do that.

Nicole ([24:30](#)):

To walk through our sadness.

Sharon ([24:31](#)):

Yeah. So, nice. Oh, okay. Nicole, what did you learn about living wisely in troubled times?

Nicole ([24:38](#)):

I put that there's still joy in crisis and in trouble. And then to look beyond ourselves at others and to see the good and the growth in them.

Sharon ([24:47](#)):

Yes.

Nicole ([24:47](#)):

So just to kind of get us out of our funk, I know I love a good funk. But to get out of that. Look around at 'what's God doing in my friend's life? What's God doing in my children? What's my husband's heart?

Sharon ([24:56](#)):

Yes.

Nicole ([24:57](#)):

Seeing kind of through God's eyes at the big picture of how we're trying to get our hearts to be holy and blameless before him. That it makes the sickness or whatever trial I'm going through a little bit less sharp.

Sharon ([25:08](#)):

Right, right. Yeah. I've really pondered that part too. Or did you have more? I'm sorry.

Nicole ([25:12](#)):

No, just that because in heaven, like if you look at it in the light of heaven someday, these trials won't seem so big. But the refinement of what he's trying to do to make us more Christ-like is the big picture. So when we look beyond our suffering to see those little growths, that's the big picture. We get a little glimpse of heaven.

Sharon ([25:27](#)):

Yeah, exactly.

Nicole ([25:29](#)):

I'm done.

Sharon ([25:29](#)):

I love it. I love it. That's good. I was like, oh, I don't wanna cut her off. So, yeah, I think that the not self-focused thing is so important too. And that really struck me that he was concerned about them even while he was suffering. And I'm reminded of the first five, well, four years 'cause I got pregnant in my fourth year, but for four years I had no children and I desperately wanted children. And, I went to baby showers.

Nicole ([25:53](#)):

Yeah. Oh.

Sharon ([25:53](#)):

Yeah, that's hard.

Nicole ([25:54](#)):

That's so tough.

Sharon ([25:55](#)):

So, trying to not be self-focused at a baby shower when I wanted the baby they were having and making myself with God's help, be happy.

Nicole ([26:06](#)):

Yes.

Sharon ([26:07](#)):

Be happy for this friend who's so excited to have her fifth child, you know.

Nicole ([26:11](#)):

I know.

Sharon ([26:12](#)):

Or whatever.

Nicole ([26:13](#)):

It's hard. Yeah.

Sharon ([26:13](#)):

That's a different kind of suffering. But it is a suffering to lay aside my own hurts and my own pity in myself that I don't have that. And I was able to do it except for one shower. One shower I had to leave 'cause I started to cry. And then it would've been about me at the shower. Right? And that's not fair to the person that was having the baby.

Nicole ([26:38](#)):

I know.

Sharon ([26:38](#)):

It was supposed to be a happy time.

Nicole ([26:39](#)):

Right. And God knows us and he knows our hearts. And you were strong for so many baby showers. Maybe that one, he just,

Sharon ([26:45](#)):

Oh, he was very nice to me about it. He was.

Nicole ([26:48](#)):

Our culture is not, I'm finding my generation, we're not very good at that. We're very easily offended now. Well, you shouldn't do that 'cause that hurts me because of my past whatever---? And I think it's so important that similarly twins, twin things can be difficult for me. Losing Claire's twin.

Sharon ([27:04](#)):

Oh my goodness. Of course they can.

Nicole ([27:06](#)):

And I've made myself go to twin birthday parties or twin baby showers or acknowledge it and rejoice for them. But like I said, one out of ten times, it's too hard. And that's okay 'cause God still sees that. But if I'm trying to see the joy and the good in things and not just like, well, I could be a real miserable person about it, but God has given me the ability to look beyond, most times.

Sharon ([27:27](#)):

I love that. Most times. And it is okay to cry.

Nicole ([27:30](#)):

It is okay to cry.

Sharon ([27:31](#)):

I wrote a blog about that in August.

Nicole ([27:33](#)):

Yes!

Sharon ([27:33](#)):

It's okay to cry.

Nicole ([27:35](#)):

Thank goodness 'cause there's lots of stuff to cry about sometimes.

Sharon ([27:38](#)):

Yes. And then the other little lesson was to go to God persistently asking and not giving up because Paul, for the last three podcasts, has wanted to go see them and he's still praying about it.

Nicole ([27:49](#)):

I know. Go Paul.

Sharon ([27:49](#)):

He hasn't stopped yet. Yeah.

Nicole ([27:51](#)):

Persistent.

Sharon ([27:53](#)):

So, okay, well, I'm gonna pray and I'm gonna pray a blessing over our listeners.

Nicole ([28:00](#)):

I love it.

Sharon ([28:01](#)):

So here we go. All right. Oh, Father, how I thank you for everyone that listens to our podcast, to those that enjoy Nicole's and I sometimes strange thoughts and your word being presented. And Lord, today I just lift my hand in blessing over everyone from the different countries that listen all across the world and say this, may the Lord make your love for one another and for all people grow and overflow, just as our love for you overflows. May God as a result, make your heart strong, blameless and holy as you stand before God, our Father, when our Lord Jesus comes again with all his holy people. Amen.

Nicole ([28:52](#)):

Amen. Thank you for joining us for this joyful talk about blessings. We hope you have been blessed as Sharon prayed over you. Write us anytime at SweetSelah.org/podcast and you can donate at SweetSelah.org/donations. We could use the help and we'd love to add you to our podcast partner list. Would you prayerfully consider giving to help us get these podcasts out? Thank you. And please do come back next week for episode 117, God Pleasing Advice. Next week, we are going to get a lot of great advice on how to practically please God with how we live. I can't wait. See you then.

Speaker 1 ([29:33](#)):

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