

# **Grit 'n' Grace — THE PODCAST**

*Episode #247: 5 Ways to Break Out and Experience God's Abundant Place for You*

## **Cheri Gregory**

Many of us feel caged by our circumstances.

## **Amy Carroll**

Maybe it's being enclosed in a hard marriage, a job that you hate, or a painful friendship that's making you feel trapped.

## **Cheri Gregory**

Or perhaps it's just, you know, a global pandemic.

## **Amy Carroll**

Today, Kathi Lipp and Cheri Gregory talk about five ways to move toward an abundant place.

## **Cheri Gregory**

Even when you feel like you can't get away.

## **Amy Carroll**

This is an interview that will breathe fresh new year freedom into your heart.

## **Cheri Gregory**

Well, this is Cheri Gregory –

## **Amy Carroll**

– and I'm Amy Carroll –

## **Cheri Gregory**

– and you're listening to Grit'N'Grace: The Podcast that equips you to lose who you're not, love who you are, and live your one life well.

## **Amy Carroll**

Today we're talking with Kathi Lipp, one of our favorites, author of *An Abundant Place: Daily Retreats for the Woman Who Can't Get Away*. Kathi inspires thousands of women each year to strip down their expectations and live with real purpose. With humor and wisdom, Kathi offers hope paired with practical steps to live with meaning. Kathi is the author of 20 books, the host of Clutter Free Academy Podcast, and an accidental homesteader. Kathi and her husband Roger live at the Red House in El Dorado forest with a highly opinionated lap dog named Moose and five free range chickens named after cheeses

## **Cheri Gregory**

Are you overcommitted, overstressed, or just plain overwhelmed?

## **Amy Carroll**

Kathi and Cheri know the challenge of trying to carve out even a few minutes in the day to get some precious quiet time.

**Cheri Gregory**

*An Abundant Place* gives you an easy to follow framework for spending quality time with God and His word, whether or not you're able to physically get away.

**Amy Carroll**

Each of these thirty mini-retreats take only minutes to read through and complete, but will have a lasting impact on your faith journey, bringing you more peace, more joy, and more abundance.

**Cheri Gregory**

*An Abundant Place* is your invitation to quiet your heart and mind to focus on God and His Word.

**Amy Carroll**

To create a spacious place for yourself, to refresh your soul, to experience greater peace and joy.

**Cheri Gregory**

Each devotion includes spiritual insight, helpful prompts that encourage reflection and growth, and room for you to write down what God is teaching you.

**Amy Carroll**

Let each of these devotional mini-retreats provide a momentary refuge from your busy world and take you to an abundant place with God.

### **Cheri Gregory**

So Amy, you actually wrote in your copy of *An Abundant Place* yesterday morning, didn't you?

### **Amy Carroll**

I started – okay. Full disclosure. When you have authored a book, you get a lot of books in the mail, right? So I got your book and Kathi's book in the mail. And of course, it's different already, because I love you and Kathi so much. But honestly, Christmas happened. I set it on top of my other books, and I kind of moved on and thought I need to do something with that later. Well, yesterday was later and I sat down, and it was my first work day of the new year. And so all of a sudden, anxiety just jumped on me. Like, mugged me.

And your beautiful book was sitting on the top of the pile. And it just called to me. And so I picked it up, and I thought “Well, I'll read just a little bit so I can, you know, write something on social media about it.” And I started it and I couldn't put it down. And so I read all the beginning of it that Kathi wrote and then I read your first devotional and I actually did the assignment in the book. And you know what? I stood up – my anxiety was gone. Like, I was ready. Your first devotion is about finding God as your refuge, and I found refuge there. So beautiful inside and out. I love it.

### **Cheri Gregory**

Oh, well, that makes me so happy to hear.

**Amy Carroll**

Kathi, we're so thrilled to have you back on Grit'N'Grace!

**Kathi Lipp**

Okay, that took me by surprise. I was sipping coffee when you said 'Kathi!' I'm recovered now. Oh my goodness, you guys. Congratulations on six seasons! I'm so excited to be here for it! Congratulations you two.

**Amy Carroll**

Amazing. Almost 300 episodes. We're getting close, right Cheri?

**Cheri Gregory**

Yes, we are.

**Kathi Lipp**

Look at all the good you're putting into the world. This makes me so happy I can't even stand it.

**Amy Carroll**

Well, you too! I mean, today is launch day for your newest book baby, *An Abundant Place: Daily Retreats for the Woman Who Can't Get Away*. Can you unpack that subtitle for us?

**Kathi Lipp**

I would love to unpack that subtitle. We have all spent two years of not being able to get away. And when we do get away, it's awkward. Can we just say that? It's just super awkward still. And so this is a book for those of us who realize that not everybody has the luxury of getting away. Not everybody has the health, the resources, the time, the place to go – and how can we encounter God not on a beach in California? Not in the mountains? Not, you know, on an island off of North Carolina? But how can we meet God every single day exactly where we're at, not as an act of being deprived, saying, "Well, okay, I'm stuck here." But how can we make where we are at our favorite place to meet with God?

So, you know, we talk about little things like having your favorite blanket and having your favorite drink. And they're almost rituals at this point. But these are the cues that get me set to say, "Now is my time to spend with my favorite guy." And we're going to sit and we're going to talk and we're going to do the thing. And Jesus and I are going to spend some time together. So that's the subtitle about, you know, daily retreats for the woman who can't get away, or just maybe chooses not to right now in this point of her life.

### **Cheri Gregory**

I love it. So I love how you segued straight into what I want to talk about next. In the first pages of the devo, you invite the woman who's reading to prepare an actual space for her retreat and gather her supplies. And first of all, I'd love for you to unpack this idea of ritual. I know you are a habit person.

And then what are your must have supplies when you cozy up for some quiet time? You mentioned a blanket and something hot to drink. What else do you need?

### **Kathi Lipp**

Yeah, so and it has to be a certain kind of blanket like, okay, I become very precious in my old age. But you know, those fleece lined blankets, we call them dog catchers, because wherever one of those is, our dog Moose is on top of it. So like Moose is required for this. And so I put one of those dog catchers on, I get my cup of coffee, I have certain pens I like; currently one of my favorites are the Zebra Z grip. I'm really enjoying those right now. I'm very fickle about pens.

But here's the other thing, I've had to learn that even if all I have is me and Jesus, like even if I don't have my Bible some days, I can still do this, I really can. But I enjoy having that pen, I enjoy having a journal, whether it's the journal that came with the devo, or just a spiral notebook, because I'm a processor, when it comes to, you know, when I'm trying to understand a verse. Also, up here, having slippers is very, very important. And I've added one thing for the winter, because this has been released in the winter. I got – it's the cheapest jacket in the entire world. It's from Costco, and it looks like a shearling jacket. I don't even know if that's what it's called. But it's basically one of those fleece lined blankets, but as a jacket. And seriously when I wear it, Moose crawls into the back of it and one arm. And so that's how I wrote. The other thing I love when the opportunity arises is a good smelling candle. Right now I have a Christmas tree candle that is making me all sorts of happy.

**Amy Carroll**

Oh, those are all good things. And they bring abundance into the space with you and Jesus.

**Kathi Lipp**

And the only, like, I am such, like – I don't know, maybe, you know, I'm reincarnated as a child of the depression. I don't know where this comes from. But all those things, like some of those things feel super wasteful, especially like using a piece of notebook paper. Like I don't know where that comes from. Or burning a candle. But you know, I'm trying to get past that and say, you know what, these are things that I can do on a daily basis. That don't cost a lot. But like you said, Amy, they feel abundant. They really do.

**Amy Carroll**

Small things with big impact for sure.

**Kathi Lipp**

Exactly.

**Amy Carroll**

Alright, so, Kathi, you share the acronym SPACE as a tool for meditating on scripture. I always love a new scripture study tool. So can you talk me and our friends through how they might use it?

**Kathi Lipp**



Yeah, so this can either be written or done – I'm very much an auditory processor. Like, I want to talk things through. And so one of the things I ask people to do, Cheri and I ask people to do when you're confronting scripture in this devotional is to speak the verse aloud three times. It really allows you to process the verse and internalize it. Now for some people, it might be better to write it, but for me, speaking it, I just love – first of all, I love language. And I love what God has done with language in Scripture. And so speaking it, to me, is – it's a ritual, it's an act. We were talking about ritual before. And so this is part of the ritual, because I feel like ritual gets our heart to a place more quickly than we could without it oftentimes.

So speaking that verse aloud three times. Ponder, sit quietly, and let the words flow over you while you think them through. And it's really interesting. Oftentimes, my heart will just be caught on one word, like, there will be one word. I've never processed the word abundance so much as I have, especially over the past couple of weeks. And scarcity. And like, what are the feelings that come up from me with those words? And that's been really interesting as I've been doing this acronym, to ponder one word. And not just about its meaning, but how does that word make me feel? Like, what is my emotional reaction to that? And it's been interesting to pay attention to it, I've never really done that before.

And then act. Consider what God wants you to do with this word, look for application. So there's a part that we play in this.

And then the next one is commit. And this is asking, “What has God committed to me?” So oftentimes, you know, we go through scripture and like, okay, I've come home with a list of to dos. God wants me to do this, that, but so much of scripture is God's promises to us.

And can I go off for a second – I'm part of a team that creates sermons, or an organization I'm involved with. And so often, where we go in the sermon is where we're lacking in our lives and what we need to be doing better. And this year, I've just been so much more focused on how God has said I adore you, I love you, you are created in My image, you are not an accident, you are not a mistake. And this is how I show you I love you.

And can I just tell you right now, in my life, I need more of that. And it doesn't mean that I don't need to change my behavior. It means that I change my behaviors, because I am intrinsically loved and adored by God, and I will do anything to mirror that love back. I'm not doing it out of fear. I'm not doing it because what are other people going to say? What are other people going to think? It's not about that. It's not about fear from God, either. It's saying, I fully embrace how loved I am by God. And I'm learning to live, like the loved and adored daughter, that He intended me to be.

And then the next one is express, which I think I just showed, to be free to express to God, exactly how I feel. Like, whether it is questioning His promises, because He's a big enough God, and He can take that, but questioning who He is in my life, or just expressing my adoration and love, like all of those are equal. And all of those are valid.

## **Amy Carroll**

Beautiful.

## **Cheri Gregory**

I love that. And of course, you know, I keep coming back to that commit, because as a recovering perfectionist, I was so sure that was going to be okay, what am I going to commit to do. And so when you highlighted that's about what God has committed every week – I do Lectio Divina with a group. And what I've started discovering, as I go through, it seems regardless what passage we choose, I end up making a T chart. And I can put all the verbs of what I'm supposed to do on a very short list. And they're all things like receive and praise and give things, and the verbs that God is going to do is a very long list, and they're all the big actions. And week in and week out, I see that. And so it's really been highlighting this idea of focusing on what God has committed. And then our response comes naturally. It's not a forced, it's not, like you said, another list of things to do, to add upon the other list of things to do. And, you know, of course, this whole devotional started out as devotions for the overwhelmed woman, then we came up with a better, you came up with a far better title. But the last thing that overwhelmed women need is more lists of things to do. To shore up their weaknesses, and being able to respond naturally, for all that God is doing for us is a huge, huge paradigm shift.

## **Kathi Lipp**

You know, I have spent so much of my life – if somebody says they – like, when Roger and I were dating and falling in love, he would say something nice, and I'd

freak out. Like I'd practically break up with him every time. You know, he said, I think I'm falling in love with you. And I'm like, no, shut up. You're not. Stop it. And like many of the women I know, I have a hard time receiving or believing love. And so, Cheri, what you just said, that God's list of commitments to us so far outweighs anything that we could get. But that ours are things like receive. And that's just beautiful. And it's amazing. And it was not what we were taught, all of us girls who grew up in the church of the 80s. At least that's not what I was taught.

**Amy Carroll**

True that.

**Cheri Gregory**

Absolutely.

Well, Kathi, you've written something like 20 books, and this is your first devotional. So have you always seen yourself as a devo writer?

**Kathi Lipp**

No, no, because I would have to be far more Jesus-y than the current person or the former person or the future person I am. But what took that mantle off of me of like, oh, Kathi, come on, do you think you can write devotionals? I'm so glad this started out as devotions for the overwhelmed woman, because I could get behind that. I searched the scriptures. I know where those verses – like, I know what God has to say to the overwhelmed woman. And then it totally got flipped on its head, which I'm really glad it did, because I love this concept so much

more. But I needed to go in through something that I knew women were searching for, and longing for, you know, understanding what does God have to say to me, this imperfect person who is overwhelmed, and the world says, “Don't be overwhelmed!” And you're like, great, show me how. And God says, “I can show you how. But first, you have to understand how much I love you.” Like yeah, no. We are such a weird, complex creatures, aren't we? We are all bizarre. So I'm really glad I did it. I thought devotional writing would be much easier than it was. Let me just say I am not bucking to do one again very soon, but I see myself doing one again in future. How about you, Cheri?

### **Amy Carroll**

You didn't love devotions at the beginning, either, as I remember.

### **Cheri Gregory**

Well, I – what cracks me up is Kathi, you've told me you thought that people who wrote devotions wore long flowy country dresses, and you know, everything in their life was Instagrammable. And –

### **Amy Carroll**

Wait, y'all know me, right? I mean, that's – devotions, that's how I cut my teeth on writing.

### **Cheri Gregory**

I've also been in your house, Amy, you have a gorgeous Instagrammable house.

### **Kathi Lipp**

Okay, I just have to tell you one of my favorite things I've heard recently, and then I will let you get back to your very awesome answer, that there is a song about how a woman standing in the middle of a cornfield with her arms spread out, oh wait, that's a scarecrow.

**(All laugh)**

**Amy Carroll**

Too many devotion book covers.

**Cheri Gregory**

You know, what was interesting for me – in the process of writing this, and I mentioned this during one of our previous little bit minisodes, is I did struggle to write it. And so I really relied more heavily on our manuscript development team than probably ever before. And one of them when she gave pushback, she said, “Cheri, what I'm reading is an inspirational essay, not a devotional.” And that was so helpful to understand what I had written versus what was expected. And so I don't know, if all – it remains to be seen, like, if I'm naturally better at writing an inspirational essay, I'll just – that's kind of what – my blog posts have always been the devo format, where they're, I mean, the reader has a certain expectation of being led through a certain kind of experience.

Like you, Kathi, I'm glad I did it. I learned a lot in the process. And again, I mean, you know, for me, by the time I was done, I was usually in tears of gratitude. And, you know, having really more thoroughly internalized the message I thought I was trying to give. I think I got it, you know, 10 times more than I had

originally, before I started doing the writing; but, Amy, I don't know how you do it. Honestly, I don't know how you do it. And I know you've got a whole guide you've written on teaching people how to write devotionals and I still don't know how you do it.

### **Amy Carroll**

Well, okay, I'll tell you how I do it. And this is why I know that you guys are good at this, because devotions are story driven. And I'm a Southern girl. I love a story. Like, I live for a great story. Kathi, you have a few chickens stories. In fact, I think you have multiple chicken stories in this book. What is up with you and the chickens? I love your Instagram feed. And share one of the chicken stories please.

### **Kathi Lipp**

Okay, I had no idea. I had no idea that I would be a chicken lady. I just thought you know, especially with a pandemic and things like that, it was not a bad idea to get a good source of protein for an emergency or something like that. Well, little did I know these lazy hens have totally stopped laying. Like, can I tell you my great shame? The last time I went to Costco I bought eggs.

### **Amy Carroll**

Those hens are so coddled at your house. I have seen their abode. It is quite lavish.

### **Kathi Lipp**

They are living the life, they really are.

So if you don't know my chickens, they are all named after cheeses. So we have Pepper Jack, we have Brie, we have Cheddar. So Brie and Chichi is what we call them. And then we have Rocky and Bullwinkle, because we have Raclette cheese and then bull mozzarella. And Rocky and Bullwinkle are our newest additions. So I'll just tell you my favorite story recently. So when you get new chickens, there really is a pecking order. Every cliché you've heard about a chicken has a story behind it. And they really do have to figure out their pecking order. And Rocky, our newest little girl, is at the bottom of the pecking order. And the other girls let her know that often. Like, they all peck at each other. Yeah, it's just terrible. Well, my husband – who by the way, did not want to get chickens – every morning, goes out to the chicken yard, and says, “Rocky, you are beautiful, you are strong, I love you more than all the other chickens.” Like he is out there, giving Rocky a pep talk every single morning because he is worried about Rocky’s self esteem. And we just all need a Roger Lipp in our lives to tell us what beautiful, we're capable, we're strong. And we're his favorite. You know, I know that's what God does to us. But it's really funny to hear it toward the chicken, I have to say.

### **Amy Carroll**

I just love it. So do chickens in love stop laying? Maybe they're all in love with project. This is the problem maybe. They're lovesick.

### **Kathi Lipp**

They're cold is what's going on. We have about, we have about five hours of sunlight here because of all the trees. And so if you want to you can do artificial



lights. But we've just decided Costco will take care of them for the winter. But Roger also gives motivational talks about how we bought you so that we would have something for breakfast every morning. So you can either be involved in our breakfast or committed. So you decided, is it eggs, or is it chicken sausage?

**(All laugh)**

He would never, never do it.

**Amy Carroll**

They know that. They've got his number.

**Cheri Gregory**

Oh, my word.

Alright, Kathi, I want you to imagine an overwhelmed woman who picks up and opens a copy of *An Abundant Place*. Maybe she bought it for herself, or maybe somebody gifted it to her. What are your hopes for this woman?

**Kathi Lipp**

Oh, my hope is that you go get your favorite beverage, whether it's iced tea, or hot tea, or let's just say, you know, a latte. I mean, I really think this book deserves a latte, but you do you. And that you find just a moment, I would say if you can't read an entire devotional, have a devotional, just read the entrance, you know the introduction to it, just be really gentle with yourself. Because if you are overwhelmed, finishing is not the goal, starting is. And know that there are

no gold stars in this, that I just want you to curl up and I want you to have just a moment with God. And if you want to start with one minute, start with one. And know that that's enough, God will meet you where you're at.

**Amy Carroll**

Really good.

So Kathi, what closing words of encouragement and motivation do you have for our friends who want to find an abundant place with God in the New Year?

**Kathi Lipp**

I think, to understand our abundance is to be really, really grateful. I just heard from a friend last night, who was just going through one of the worst circumstances imaginable. A health situation with her husband that is just – it's unimaginable. And all she kept talking about was how grateful she was to God, she had the resources to start taking care of this, and that she had support, and you know, all these things. And I'm thinking to have such extreme gratitude in such hard circumstances – this is why she is who she is and why she believes God so fully for her abundant. And so you know, with Cheri, wrote the book *An Abundant Place*; and I'm learning to – every time I stray from that abundant place, learning how to get back there. So it's not that we're grateful or we're not grateful, it's – we're learning how to get back to that grateful place each and every day.

**Cheri Gregory**

Oh, I love that so much.

**Amy Carroll**

Learning how to get back to that grateful place. We really, as we move into this new year, we might not be moving back, we might be re-finding.

**Cheri Gregory**

Yes, exactly.

**Amy Carroll**

That's what said the other day, she said "I hope 2020 isn't a trilogy."

**(All laugh)**

**Cheri Gregory**

I saw somebody posted hoping that 2022 was going to be like a Toyota Corolla boring, completely reliable, and fun for the whole family. Like, I am so on board with that.

Well, friends, we sure hope that you've enjoyed listening to Episode 247 of Grit'N'Grace: The Podcast as much as we've enjoyed making it for you.

**Amy Carroll**

Check out our webpage at [gritnegracethepodcast.com/episode247](http://gritnegracethepodcast.com/episode247).

**Cheri Gregory**

There you'll find this week's transcript, a link to order Kathi and Cheri's book *An Abundant Place: Daily Retreats for the Woman Who Can't Get Away*, and a link to the book's website, which has some great extra reading sources.

**Amy Carroll**

Be sure to join us next week, when we'll be talking with Rhonda Stoppe, the no regrets woman.

**Cheri Gregory**

For today, grow your grit,

**Amy Carroll**

embrace God's grace,

**Cheri Gregory**

and as God reveals the next step to live your one life well,

**Amy Carroll**

we'll be cheering you on! So –

**Both**

– take it!