

Grit 'n' Grace: Good Girls Breaking Bad Rules
Episode #149: How to Live an Immeasurably More Life

Multi Voiceover:

- **I want to do God's will, but I always feel like I'm falling short.**
- **I should be better at managing things – I don't know what I'm doing wrong.**
- **I'm always telling my friends that they need more rest. But for me, rest is a four-letter word.**
- **It's hard for me to set boundaries with others.**
- **Sometimes it feels like every decision I make is wrong.**

Cheri

Do you ever hear these kinds of voices in your own head?

Amy

I sure do! And usually at 2:37 in the morning.

Cheri

Well, this is Cheri Gregory.

Amy

And I'm Amy Carroll.

Cheri

And you're listening to Grit 'n' Grace, good girls breaking bad rules.

THE podcast that equips you to
___ lose who you're NOT
___ love who you ARE

___ and live your ONE life well.

Amy

If this is your first time listening in, this is a podcast for women who love Jesus and long for the abundant life He's promised.

Cheri

But some days, maybe even most days, you feel kinda like a puppet with perfectionism and people pleasing pulling your strings.

Amy

If nothing you do ever seems good enough.

Cheri

If you try too hard to do too much for too many for too long with too little.

Amy

If you exhaust yourself spending time to keep everyone else happy and your own needs go unmet.

Cheri

If you struggle with the C-word, control.

Amy

We get it. And you're in the right place, girlfriend.

Cheri

Grit 'n' Grace brings you weekly encouragement from wise, witty women ...

Amy

Because we have the best guests!

Cheri

We do! Women who come alongside you and equip you to replace the exhaustion of self-made goodness with the rest of God's grace.

Amy

Every week we kick culture's bad rules to the curb so that we can follow Jesus' good plans for us.

Cheri:

So, Amy, I have a surprise for you!

Amy

Oh my gosh. I love a surprise. Do tell!

Cheri

Well, it's a two-part surprise. The part one, which I can share with you this week, is our first review for *Exhale* is up. I have seen it with my own eyes, and I have read it. And, the best part..

Amy

Was it good?

Cheri

It was amazing.

<Laughter>

That's the first question a recovering perfection is going to ask. Did she like it? Did she like it?

It's a really cool review. It just doesn't happen to be public right now. And so, between this week and next week, I'm going to reach out and ask if we can read it on air at the start of next week's episode. But, I had to share with you and our listeners our first review is out and she really, really liked it. There were very specific things that she liked about it that were the kind of thing we wanted a reader to like. So, yay!

Amy

Oh, yay! I guess I should have known. I shouldn't have had to ask, "Was it good?" If it was a bad surprise, we wouldn't be recording it.

<Laughter>

Cheri

Amy, I have a surprise for you!

Amy

Surprise! They hated it.

Cheri

She thought it was worse than the seven skunks under my house. It stunk so bad!

<Laughter>

Amy

Okay, let's not start that rumor. It's not true, people. Not true! And speaking of things that don't stink...

Cheri

So smooth, so smooth!

<Laughter>

Amy

Gosh.

Cheri

Deep breaths. Deep exhale. You know what? Laughing is basically just lots of exhales. Isn't it?

Amy

It is! Okay, can I really use that though?

Cheri

This is our podcast. We can do what we want. Clearly there are no rules, and if there are, we've broken them all at this point.

<Laughter>

Amy

Oh, okay. [sigh] And speaking of things that don't stink, let's talk about Wendy Pope!

<Laughter>

I cannot wait for her to listen to this. I love her so much! Her whole head will be cracking up.

Okay, things that don't stink, including Wendy Pope, is this amazing interview that we had with her.

Today we are talking with Wendy Pope, author of *Yes, No, and Maybe: Living With the God of Immeasurably More*. Wendy is a writer, speaker, Bible study teacher, and a member of the Proverbs 31 Ministries speaker team. She and her family live in North Carolina.

Well, Wendy, we are so glad you are back with us.

Wendy

I'm so excited to back with y'all professional girls.

<Laughter>

I'm so impressed with what y'all can do.

Amy

That's amazing, Cheri. Hey, we've got to rub that one in.

Cheri

Absolutely.

<Laughter>

Wendy

I feel so ... I don't know what's going on half the time. Technology is amazing, and it is my nemesis.

Cheri

We keep it going with duct tape and chewing gum. I swear.

Wendy

Oh, that's good, yes. Add a paper clip and you're MacGyver.

Cheri

Episode #149: How to Live an Immeasurably More Life

Paper clip. That's what I was missing.

<Laughter>

Wendy

Yes, that's what you were missing.

Amy

Well, Wendy, we loved your first book, *Wait and See*, so much. Tell us what led you to write *Yes, No, Maybe?*

Wendy

Wow. I didn't set out to write this book honestly. It was a message that I developed early on in my speaking. The very first She Speaks that I went to, when we left there, we were challenged to go home and write some messages that we could share, and we could lead retreats and conferences with. Well, I didn't have any idea what I was doing. No idea what I was doing.

I remember going to She Speaks going, okay Lord, I know I'm coming here but I don't know what I'm supposed to say. And how am I supposed to do this whole thing? I don't know all the books of the Bible, in order at this point in my life, unless I sing the little song. You know?

I just remember being immersed in the scriptures at the time. There was a lot of things going on in my life and in my family that weren't very happy. And I had decided at this point, maybe I ought to spend some time with God. Hey, what a novel idea. And possibly even read the Bible. Wow. Especially, since I'm going to be a Bible teacher.

I began spending time with God every single morning. During those quiet times is the time that I began to hear the whispers of messages that He wanted me to teach. Never did I think that I would have to live out the message.

Amy

Oh, yeah. Bummer.

<Laughter>

Wendy

Yes, ouch. Bummer that I would have to live this out. And I remember, when I was getting trained early on and those people that mentored and have taught us, Amy, through Proverbs, you know three points in a poem. I remember, three points in a poem. And throw some

scripture in there if you can. And I really liked the idea of yes to God, no to self, maybe to others. That really sounded great, and so then, God called me to start living that out. And it's taken a long time for me to live that out and for God to give me the opportunity to put it on paper and know that this is part of my life now. This is not just something that I teach and think that this is a great message for somebody else. It's something that I live. Yeah. You have to live it.

Cheri

Yeah. That's when it becomes real. So, you talk about how we are weighed down by the uns of life. So, tell us what you mean by the uns of life, and how do they weigh us down?

Wendy

Anything that keeps us from experiencing the fullness of God is what I would call an un. I remember sitting down and writing this section of the book listing things that were major disappointments in my life and things that I blamed God for. I was mad at God for this or why didn't he do that? And He could have done this, and all of these things. And I thought to myself at the time, this list is really long. So, how can I put this in just some simple points that would encapsulate all the things that I had been dealing with, disappointments and unanswered prayers.

And so, I just ... The Lord just led me to these four points of disappointments and unanswered prayers and unfulfilled dreams and unmet expectations. And it just encapsulates so much of what we feel and what brings us down and keeps us from experiencing the fullness of God, because we can experience Him with the reality of an unfulfilled dream. And we can experience Him to His fullness and with His fullness and in His fullness with an unanswered prayer and with an unmet expectation. And I didn't know that you could do that. You know? I couldn't separate the two.

And through living the disciplines of this book, I realized that He is immeasurably more, even in those places that are uns in my life. And I choose to, at this point, look at them differently. The meaning of immeasurably more is super abundantly, in Ephesians 3:20, and I love to redefine my uns by saying that God is greater than the sum of my failures. Or God is greater than the sum of my past experiences. And God is greater than the sum of the hopes that I had and God is greater than the sum of my accomplishments and my bank accounts. And that He can super abundantly, super abundantly, meet my expectations. Super abundantly fulfill my dreams.

His super abundance provision and answer and response to all of my uns is better than anything I could have ever dreamed or imagined. But we have to wait on God to bring us to that place and be able to accept that this is a little bit different than what I thought it was going to be, God, but this is so much better.

Cheri

Well, you also say that every soul saved has a Damascus road experience that's just waiting to be told. Can you unpack this a little bit for our listeners?

Wendy

Constantly in the Bible, we are seeing where God is the pursuer. He planted that tree for Zacchaeus a long time before Zacchaeus was born, because Zacchaeus was going to one day climb that tree to see the Lord. So, God and the Holy Spirit are constantly pursuing us. They are constantly wanting to have interaction with us every single day, every single moment. They want to be part of our makeup and in every decision that we make.

And He is pursuing us, and He wants to meet us wherever we are. On the Damascus Road is where Paul met him. But somebody else might meet him at an abortion clinic. Somebody else might have a Damascus road experience right in church. Can you imagine?

<Laughter>

Or at a conference, at a retreat, maybe even in the grocery store when you're talking to somebody that you just feel led to witness to. So, that Damascus road is a place to me ... I'm just defining it as someplace very unusual and very unexpected and God is going to pursue everybody. It's up to us and up to the individual whether or not we're going to respond to the pursuit.

Cheri

Now, I did find a statement in your book that I disagree with. You said talking about sin isn't fun but it's freeing. And the truth is, I'm very comfortable talking about sin. I could talk about Amy's sin all day long.

Amy

Hey!

<Laughter>

Wendy

Amy, sin?

Cheri

But in all seriousness, we perfectionists are allergic to talking about our own sins.

Wendy

Yes.

Cheri

So, why should we talk about it and how does that free us?

Wendy

Scripture does say and supports that sin separates us from God. And when we are separated from God, we do not have communication with him. And when we're at a loss of communication with God, our creator, we're lost. How do we find our way when we are not communicating with the one who is the way? So, the sin that we hold onto and that we don't want to identify keeps us from that intimacy with Christ.

And the second part of your question was how does it free us? Anything that has a hold of us that is not part of what God wants for us is going to weigh us down. And when we're weighed down, we're not going to feel free. We're not going to sleep well. We're not going to feel well physically. David even references in Psalms 32 the physical effect of sin and how it weighs you down and the how it saps you like the sun's heat. So, there's a physical effect that sin will take on in our lives and will manifest itself if we do not deal with it. So, we have to get it out. And it's not because God doesn't know about it. It's because it's affecting us physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually. And I'll tell you; sin will also affect our pocketbooks. It will affect our decisions, our relationships, everything.

For me, one of my strongholds in my life has been shopping. And there were some problems in our marriage, and so, I thought, every problem in my marriage could be solved by going to the store and buying something and making myself feel better and that affected my pocketbook. I didn't deal with the sin. I did not deal with the problem in an appropriate way by speaking to my husband. I just went out and spent money. It manifests itself in countless ways.

Jesus died so that we would be free. And when we don't live in freedom, we are, in my opinion ... this is just me ... when I don't live in freedom, let me just put it that way ... when I'm not living in freedom, I am leaving his gift of freedom and salvation at the foot of Calvary. I'm not experiencing it every single day. I'm just, okay, my salvation was enough, and I'm just going to go through life until you come and get me. That's not what we're supposed to do. We're not supposed to leave our gift of salvation at the foot of the cross. He rose. He's free, and He expects us to live that way.

Amy

Wendy, you say that we can start living life operating on autopilot. What does that look like and what are the long-term effects of living on autopilot?

Wendy

Oh my goodness. I lived on autopilot, for a long time, but there are also still seasons where I find myself living in autopilot. Autopilot means going with the flow of life without experiencing Christ in an intimate way. It is living our life just one second at a time, one minute at a time, as best we can. I call it also white knuckling. Just barely hanging on. And I'm sure there's maybe one or two people listening to the podcast, and they could identify with that. They're just barely holding on. And that's not how we're supposed to live. And I believe we go into autopilot, kind of tying back to what we just said, we can go into autopilot really easily when we haven't dealt with our sin.

For example, it's Sunday. Let's get up and go to church. Let's grab our Bibles. Let's go to church. We've gone to church. Let's go out and get our chicken after church. We go out and get our chicken or our Mexican, whatever you're... I'm in the South so we eat a lot of chicken here.

Come home and start back in the daily routine, just start back into the life the next week without experiencing every single day. And it's dangerous because we miss personal interactions with Him in our every day life. And I look back sometimes, honestly girls, it brings me to tears when I think about the opportunities that I have missed to experience Him at the bank or at the grocery store or pumping gas or wherever I do life because I was just on autopilot. I'm just going to do the things I've got to do. I'm not going to look around. I'm not going to talk to people. I'm not going to interact with people. I'm just going to go on about my business.

So, we have to have that constant interaction with the Holy Spirit all day long, not just on Sundays. Not just in our quiet times at home but have our experience with Him and let Him deal with us. If He asks us to go up to somebody, and say hey, "Can I help you put your groceries in your cart? I see you're struggling. Or I would love to take your cart from you after I help you with your groceries." I've done that before and people have said, "No, I'm good." I'm like, "Oh, okay. I hope you have a good day." I didn't lose anything and I didn't gain anything but the Holy Spirit prompted me to go talk to this person. Those are the interactions that I'm talking about where we can experience Him, and we can make an impact on somebody's life, but we miss those when we're on autopilot.

Cheri

Mmm.

Amy

Wow. I love that you point out it's not just neutral to live in autopilot it's dangerous. That's fantastic.

Wendy

Yes. Yes.

Amy

So another thing that you said in the book that just really caught my heart, is, you said, being caught between the charms of our culture and the wooing of the spirit can be toilsome. Tell us how that's looked in your life, Wendy.

Wendy

I spent a lot of my life trying to be accepted by everyone instead of pleasing the one that really mattered, and it was very dangerous for me, because I got caught up in what the culture said was important. What the culture said I should do. How the culture says my marriage should look. How the culture says my children should behave. How the culture says my home should look. How I should be, what I should be participating in. Let me just very gently say this, I don't necessarily mean the secular culture because ...

Amy

Oh, girl!

Wendy

... we're dangerously close to that in the church.

Amy

Preach.

Wendy

To where we are creating a church culture that is not attainable, and it's killing relationships, and it's killing the church. You have to serve ... and I'm a server, I get it. Your kids have to be involved in this program. Your kids need to do this. I mean it's, yeah. We can get to that place where we are trying to fit into the culture whether it's the secular culture or the church culture and we forget who we really need to be pleasing. It's toilsome on a person to live in two cultures. I mean it's very weighty. The demands are very high.

And in the secular culture and our desire to be liked and be loved ... Who doesn't like to be liked and loved? Everybody does. Everybody does. But we are loved. We are liked. By our Heavenly Father who has a really great plan for us. And so, we've got to seek intimacy with Him so that we know what He wants from us. We can trust Him in our obedience to Him, and we

can live the life that He created us to live. And that life, His words to us, is not toilsome. It is not heavy. It is not weighted. It is a rhythm of grace and freedom. And that's what he died to give us.

Amy

Beautifully said, I love that you encourage us to choose the wooing of the Spirit. Gorgeous.

Wendy

For sure.

Amy

Wendy, can you unpack this quote for us, "Love is revealed in how we schedule our time." I have a feeling I'm not going to like your answer.

<Laughter>

Wendy

I remember, and I think I shared this story in *Wait and See*, where I told my family that God had called me to write a book, and I was going to write a book. And I was going to be stepping away from some of my responsibilities, and I was going to really need their help. And I would have to go in my room ... and y'all, I took them to lunch and had this lecture. I mean, really this is sickening to me to actually even confess this out on the airwaves. But I said, because I knew what all the other authors had told me how they had lived their life when they were writing a book, and I remember telling my kids when they would knock on the door, "Mom, such and such." And I would say, "I'm writing. I'm writing. I'm working. I'm writing." Seriously, this is how I behaved to my family.

And one day, I came out of one of my working sessions, right? And my little girl ... she was little at the time ... she loved grilled cheese sandwiches. When she was little, she called them gorilla cheeses, a gorilla cheese sandwich.

<Laughter>

So, that's what we call them around here. She'll even to this day, at 21, come home from college and say, "Will you make me a gorilla cheese?" I'm like, "Yes." She hollered down, because she had heard the door open, and she hollered down and she said, "Mom, will you make me a gorilla cheese?" In that moment, it was one of those wooings of the Spirit, I wept because I could not remember the last time I had made her a gorilla cheese.

Love is spelled in time. And I talk about in the book that we are to consider opportunities to serve in the realm of our schedules, because God will not call us to complicate our lives. What He calls us to will complement our lives, not complicate our lives. And so, I put that manuscript down, because I realized in that moment that I had not communicated love to my family. I had dictated what I was ... and what picture had I given them of God? So, love is really revealed in how we schedule our time, and those of us who have children at home, those were our first ministry opportunities. Those of us that are married, that's our first ministry opportunity, actually, before our children and even after we have our children.

Now, what I'm finding later in life, is what I thought, my children were grown, my daughter is in college and my son just graduated high school, and he has started his career and needs me. They need me a lot less. Now, I'm in a season where I'm taking care of my parents. And so, love is spelled differently now with my family that is kind of up under my home, under my roof. So, there are seasons of this but yes, it's spelled T-I-M-E.

Cheri

So, Amy is not the only one who is feeling convicted here. We have lots to discuss here. I love the complement, not complicate, and the whole idea of, am I communicating to my family or dictating to my family? Whew, yeah.

You talk about calling ourselves by the right names. What do you mean by the right names and why is this so important?

Wendy

Going back to that question we talked about earlier about freedom and living free and those burdens being lifted off of us and living free, part of that is knowing who we are in Christ. And many people that I know and that I've ministered to, and I'm sure that you girls have as well, have come from places of complete and utter brokenness and devastation. And they've actually heard someone call them a loser or a failure or you're ugly. Why did I ever even marry you or I wish ... I have had somebody tell me that their parents said that they wish they had never been born. Or they wanted a girl, and they got a boy.

And so, what happens with us is that we grow up, and we form our opinions of ourselves early on in life based on what others have told us about ourselves. And it's hard, it's very hard, to silence those when they have basically they have rooted themselves into our DNA. It's difficult to tell ourselves anything otherwise. And I mean I know it's difficult because I have to tell myself the same thing. Just recently, in the release of this book, the enemy has had some fun with me, playing back these old scripts of, "See, you are a failure. See, you can't write. See, nobody is going to buy this book. See, I told you." These things, because I was shaped this way when I was young, they rooted themselves. And I have uprooted them with truth. I know what truth is. I am a holy and dearly-child loved by the King, the most high King. I am forgiven. I am

fearfully and wonderfully made. I know what these truths are. But he still goes back to the places of familiarity and those places where e's had success and victory in our lives.

And so, just in the recent release of this book, have had to go back to this principle and tell myself out loud, "You are loved. You are whole. You are forgiven. You are redeemed. God has given you a gift." And this is what I encourage people to do is to tell themselves this **out loud**, to speak truth over themselves. Don't just think it because the enemy is not omniscient. He can't hear your thoughts.

So, the only way that he is going to know that you know the truth is to tell him that you know the truth. Deity and darkness cannot reign together. So, you are speaking deity. You are speaking truth. You are speaking life. You are speaking kingdom into the darkness of his lies. As crazy and as corny as that sounds sometimes, I am talking to myself out loud so that I can get the enemy away from me. And I have to go back to these truths, like I said, as much as I know them and as much as I teach them, I was like gosh, I'm still having to live this, Lord. Have I not learned this lesson yet?

Don't you know He goes, "We've been down this road again, my love. I love you and why do you want to live unloved? Why do you want to live unredeemed? Why do you want to live bound up when I freed you?" So, it's important. It's so important to know who we are and to tell the enemy that we know who we are.

Amy

So, practical and powerful, Wendy.

Wendy

It's just ... and as crazy as it sounds, you have to talk out loud. And I do. I talk out loud too. And I tell them to get out of here. And sometimes I say the ugly word and I tell him to go back to, and I say it out loud. I didn't say it so you don't have to bleep it out. I get so angry at him and when he messes with my family and my children, that's a lesson for another day, but I yell out at him. I yell at him to get away.

Cheri

I love it. I love it. I love the physicalizing of it. That is wonderful.

Wendy

And there's some freedom in that right there. Talk about freedom. There's freedom in that, because we have the power to bring down strongholds. Scripture tells us that. We have that within us. We don't harness that power. We just cuddle back up and go back to those names

and go back to those scripts that play in our head from a long time ago and that's not how we're supposed to live. And that's not why He died. He didn't die for us to live that way.

Amy

Wendy, what closing words of encouragement would you like to leave with our listeners today?

Wendy

The immeasurably more life is the life that is greater than you could ever ask or imagine. It's super abundantly, more than anything that you could dream. How is that found? The super abundant, the immeasurably more life, is found at the intersection of God's word and our obedience to it.

You can't find it apart from God's word or apart from our obedience to it. It's not possible. We're constantly going to be caught up in the culture. We're constantly going to be caught up in, as your broadcast talks about, people pleasing. We're going to constantly be weighed down by the uns in our lives. But when we intersect our life with God's word, and we obey it, that's where you're going to find immeasurably more than you could ever ask or imagine. And it's not a greater bank account, it's not a bigger house, it's not a newer model car, it's not manicures, pedicures, new hairdos, that's not what the immeasurably more life is. That's not what Paul was talking about because he wrote most of his letters from prison. From prison.

And a lot of your listeners, I would venture to say, are in a prison of their own. Maybe not a physical prison, but they are in a prison of their own. Maybe a troubled marriage, a wayward child, they're stuck financially. They're bound to a job that they can't stand but they can't leave it. A troubled family. They're in a prison of their own. But what God wants is to show us, His children, that He can be immeasurably more even in a prison cell, even in a cancer ward, even with a bank account that has \$2.59 in it, and I don't know how I'm going to pay my gas bill. You can find Him when you look at His word and you read it and you take it in and you obey it. That's where you're going to find Him.

Cheri

We hope you've enjoyed Episode 149 of Grit 'n' Grace: Good Girls Breaking Bad Rules.

[gritngracegirls.com/episode149]

Amy

Make sure to stop over at the website for all the good stuff there including our digging deeper download, a printable resource that helps you to apply what you've learned in this episode. There's also show notes, where you'll find a link to Wendy's powerful book, *Yes, No, and*

Maybe. And our transcript is also there for those of you who love to read better than you like to listen.

Cheri

If you're a loyal listener, we would love for you to leave us a review on iTunes. You'll find full directions, including a demo video, at gritngracegirls.com/review.

Amy

And, a BIG thanks to those of you who have left us a review, as you can tell from our earlier conversation, we read and treasure every single one.

Cheri

That we do.

<Laughter>

And, Amy's on the floor again.

<Laughter>

Amy

Join us next week, when we'll be processing what we learned from our interview with Wendy.

Cheri

For today, grow your grit; embrace God's grace, and when you run across a bad rule, you know what to do, go right on ahead and...

Amy & Cheri

Break it!

Outtakes

Cheri

All right. I'm convicted.

<Laughter>

Amy

I was going to make a snarky comment but it will get edited out anyway.

Cheri

Go ahead, Amy. You're perfect free to say whatever you want.

Wendy

Because Amy doesn't sin. So wait, Amy does sin, right?

<Laughter>

Amy

So, I was like maybe Cheri will get set free now.