



Episode #17

**Real Womanhood:
Expectations vs. Reality
The Wise Woman, part 2**

Black and White
RADICAL GRACE, RAW TRUTH
AND REAL HOPE IN A GRAY WORLD

Listen

**Featuring Liz Curtis Higgs
Award-winning Author &
Speaker**

BW Podcast episode #17
Real Womanhood: Expectations vs. Reality – the Wise Woman, part 2

Denise

Hi! and welcome to the Black and White podcast where we speak radical grace, raw truth and real hope in a gray world. We're back this week with Liz Curtis Higgs. Discussing her book, "It's Good to be Queen" and Real Womanhood, The Wise Woman. Liz, welcome back.

Liz

What a blessing to be with you to chat again. I so appreciate your heart, Denise, and the agreement- I feel- as we share the truth of God's word. It's just a blessing isn't it? Like old friends.

Denise

Yes it is! I am so, so grateful. Well, you know, I think about to-just shifting gears a little bit-the women listening in again today and the expectations that they've had; and I like what you said earlier about how the man looks at the outside. There's this focus on women and we have to look a certain way or do certain things, but where, you know, as I think about your book, where should the significance of a woman come from?

Liz

Well, you know, it's an easy answer of course of that's from who we are in Christ.

Denise

Amen!

Liz

And who we are is based on who he is. Years and years ago and this book is long out of print so I shouldn't even mention it. But I wrote a book in 1996 (laughing). Wooh baby! So, 22 years ago. It was "Who Christ is: From A to Z". Just to help us memorize those attributes of his and who we are in Christ from A to Z. You know the idea was to understand he is anointed, he's our bridegroom, he's our counselor, he's our deliverer, he's our everlasting Father and our faithful friend. It helps us understand who he is and we are adopted, we are beautiful, we're his children, his disciples. You get the idea.

Denise

Yes

Liz

But if your gonna study one or the other -I gotta tell ya - the one you want to study is who he is. Anytime we have boldness, confidence. Any of those wonderful 10 attributes of Sheba. Or all the attributes of the Proverbs 31 woman, the Titus 2 woman. Any woman you want to look at in the bible and say that's my girl. That's who I want to be like. What you want to study, you might want to look at her life and I love to do that, but, I'm always looking through her to the God she loves.

Denise

Yes!

Liz

You know, that's where all those strengths come from. They are not learned behavior, though I do think the longer we walk with God and the more he fills us up. It does become a little bit second nature. But what it really is, is his nature, not ours. But it does begin to feel like us. You know what I'm saying?

Denise

Yes!

Liz

It feels right and it feels good. Yes, this is how I am to be walking. It also helps us notice much more quickly when we stumble. See, we used to call what we did when we were stumbling, oh that's just human nature, that's just how it is. You know we kind of brush it off. When what it really is friends, is sin.

Denise

Yes

Liz

The more I can see the goodness of God. The more I quickly pick out the badness of Liz. The sooner I can submit it to him and say okay Lord your showing me, after all these years of knowing you, a brand new thing, today, that I haven't got right. Here it is Lord, I'm handing it

to you and I'm asking you, show me what to do. Help me. Fill me up with the right stuff. Clean out the bad stuff. It's a daily thing. It is not, you know, meet Jesus and woop, done.

Denise

No.
(laughing)

Liz

Oh, that would be easy, awesome, but you know what, we would learn nothing and we would take credit for it.

Denise

Yes!

Liz

Transformed so immediately in our actions, lifestyle and so forth, and we would take credit for it, we just would.

Denise

Yes we would. You know I just was talking about the I am statements of Christ recently and our identity. Being found in Him and realizing, He gives us His identity. When I think about the significance of who I am. I just think of it is Christ in me alone and one of my daughters yesterday asked me she said "Mom, I know this is gonna sound like a bad question, but why do we glorify God?" ;and I loved the question because I started to think about it and I said man is man centered and it's all about my glory. Look what I can do, look how nice I look. When I'm glorifying God and I exist just for His glory. Others look at me and they don't see me.

Liz

Right.

Denise

They can know Him.

Liz

Right.

Denise

And that is the highest calling. I just love to start kinda thinking about the Queen of Sheba and how her quest for wisdom wasn't just so she would be a smarty.

Liz

Oh! Oh no!

Denise

You know. It was this she saw someone who knew God.

Liz

Yes! You know in her country, in the land of Sheba 3000 years ago, they had about a hundred deities that they had to build temples to and appease and you know burn sacrifices for and so forth. So, you can imagine a woman who is dealing with about a hundred little gods. Hearing about this man known all over the ancient near East for his relationship with one God. That's what just really drew her to him. I think she might have said to anybody who asked while she was riding on that Camel, what are you after? I'm after wisdom. But it was really the Lord drawing her to him It's such a picture of how He speaks to us and reaches to us when we're in search of something that might be for our own benefit. She wanted to go back and as you say, be a smarty pants (laughing). She found so much more. I can think that's something we could aspire to. I have been asking myself where would I travel two months in discomfort. You know in 2 months you could go around many times over in the way we travel these days. sometimes it's like I would be willing to travel 2 miles to hear a great speaker of God or am I too lazy for that or think I'm I have enough information or you know that kind of thing. That's what makes her such a stand out to me. Her willingness to take risks, to be bold, to be uncomfortable, to be humble. Not to humble herself, but to be humbled. Like and by Solomon. there's a lot going on there. I'm still learning from her. I think the beauty of studying scripture is we've never got it. We've never got it all figured out we can never see, I've heard that story I never need to hear it again. If that were true we would not need to hear the Christmas story every Christmas and The Easter Story but we do. fresh and say this year Lord I'm a different person than the last time I looked at this scripture. What can you teach me today?

Denise

Yea. You know we're a forgetful people and I especially am. I do the same bible reading plan every year and it doesn't matter how many times I've read different scriptures, there's always something new. I was really struck from just what you are saying to. I mean, the Queen of Sheba was hungering really after God. And she saw the treasure of wisdom and of relationship. But when I look at over 30 years of walk with the Lord. There's been dry seasons, there's been seasons where I say okay I'm going to do my Bible reading plan, my devotions, check mark, check mark. But it wasn't really hungering. I really wasn't until I was a hard place that I thirsted and hungered after God. And then went to a different level of just, I've got to have my time with Him. Not, I have to have my time with Him, you know?

Liz

Yes, I do know. I would also venture to say that's the reason we sometimes go through the hard places in the dry places. Uhm, cause we certainly see that in the bible. When a famine pops up in the Bible, it is purposeful. God is saying to his people I'm going to make you literally hungry and thirsty, so that you'll see that you've fallen away from me, that you have lost your hunger and thirst for me. He does it over and over and over and over and over in the Bible and He dies it over and over in our own lives. It's hard to be grateful for hard times. Honestly, it's the gift we don't want. But I have found, and I'm walking through a cancer journey right now. I have found that in that hard journey, God is so faithful.

Denise

Yes.

Liz

He is more present, more real, more loving, more grace giving, more supportive. stronger, deeper, wider than I ever knew him to be; and guess what? He has not changed. He was always all those things.

Denise

Yes.

Liz

But being in the valley with Him, has opened my eyes to who he really is. And I know you'll appreciate this Denise, but I finally understand that everything I've been teaching for the last 35 years is true.

Denise

(yells Amen!!!)(excited laughing)

Liz

We teach these biblical truths, we know they are the truth. They're in the word so we can teach them with authority. But, there's a difference between knowing and experiencing.

Denise

Mm huh.

Liz

Knowing is important but experiencing is the real deal. Back to Sheba, that was it. the knowledge the wisdom was more than knowing she realized. It was experiencing God. And so, it is true for all of us and so when the hard day's come, oh my friends, I just want to say to you hang in there grab onto the hem of His garment and say I know you are with me Lord and I know you will never leave me nor forsake me. Whatever is ahead it is for my good and your glory. That's what's gotten me through the cancer thing for the last 10 months and however much longer that's going to go. My good His glory and you know if you can hang onto that it's so simple but, wow! It has gotten me through.

Denise

You just answered really the next question I had which was in that chasm of knowing and applying is really crying out. You know so, anyone listening today, if you feel like well, that's other people can do that, I just can't. God sees you and He's the one that enables you. But you just need to ask, you need to cry out. He's so good to answer us. Liz, in closing, what would you say burdens your heart most about women today?

Liz

Well, (sigh) It's interesting, I uh asked a woman who is a friend of mine who is a counselor. Just this week I said what's the greatest need that women have when they walk in the door seeking counseling? First up, was childhood. Second was marital abuse, spousal abuse. One from the past, one from the present, though often the present is tied to the past in that issue. And it broke my heart because I feel like oh dear sisters we've come so far and we have so

many places to turn now than we might have had 30 or 40 or 50 years ago. But the truth is, there's a whole lot of shame involved in both. I know shame is a subject you are writing about. I love the title of your book Shame Off You. Exactly! Because here's the thing about shame. We often feel that we deserve to be ashamed. That we should carry our shame like a cloak on our shoulders. God intends that shame and guilt be laid at the cross. Jesus paid for, not just our sins, but all the shame and the guilt that goes with it, so that we can live in freedom. Freedom is the very opposite of abuse. Abuse is being held captive to someone else's sin. And somehow convincing ourselves that we deserve it. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Not a woman listening to this podcast who deserves to be treated as anything less than a wonderful woman of God. But we often beat ourselves up emotionally, and therefore feel other people have the right to beat us up in other ways. In the scripture would never support that kind of treatment but the shame is the sticking point. So, to my friends here's what I want to say, shame never comes from God. Shame only comes from the enemy. Guilt! Guilt is sometimes deserved for when we do something wrong yes! We feel guilty. We are convicted of our sin. And we go right to the one who died for all those sins and he washes us clean over and over it's amazing to me. His ability to forgive us. When we are contrite, when we come to him and convicted by the Holy Spirit. But condemnation is the enemy's work. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. So, we should never live feeling ashamed. We should never live being condemned. But it is the enemy of our soul's great delight to tell us over and over again you're not worthy, you're not good, there's nothing good about you, you deserve any negativity you get, you deserve any punishment you get, and on and on and on it goes. We hear that voice so condemningly day after day. That we come to believe it. In fact, sometimes we even think that's God telling me I'm bad. Nope, it's not the loving voice of God. He convicts but He never condemns.

Denise

Amen!

Liz

Yea so. If you wanna say, what burdens my heart most fir women. Is that shame that they continue to carry around as if they lust as if there is no recourse for that and Jesus said cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Denise

Wow! You know, you don't know this, likely you don't know this. But the book that the Lord put in my heart to write came from a place of abuse and from my former husband harming my children. And being at a place of feeling so much shame and thinking this isn't the testimony I wanted. You know I wanted to be a homeschool mom. I waited for marriage and I wanna do everything right. And you realize we do and I, I talk about condemnation in my book as well and but there's shame throughout our lives and Christ took all of our shame. And that's an amazing thing to think about. So, Liz thank you so much for being with us today and just sharing your heart to help us, all these women listening. We appreciate your willingness to share what God has given you, us as well.

Liz

My delight. Thank you.

Denise

The raw truth for today, is that as women our significance comes from Christ Alone. The radical grace is that our God enables us to live out Godly lives that bring him glory. And the real hope is that our story is not over and we can cry out to God in our time of need He knows the end friends. You've been listening to the Black and White podcast. Where we filter life through the bible and live life in the freedom of truth.