

Michelle: Welcome to A Word Fitly Spoken, a podcast about Jesus, His Word, and our joy in following Him. I'm Michelle Lesley.

Amy: And I'm Amy Spreeman. In this episode, we are going to take on more of your theological questions for us, in part two of Glad you asked. Michelle I think these are among my favorite episodes, because we get to dig into Scripture to see what God's Word says about life, home, family and relationships - not only with other Christians but with a world that desperately needs a Savior.

Michelle: I love these episodes, too! I feel a little bit like the biblical version of Dear Abby. Praise God we don't have to come up with these answers out of our own knowledge and experience - we can rely on God's Word to give the answers we *know* are right.

Just to remind our listeners about what kinds of questions we take on, here are the questions we answered last time in part one of Glad You Asked:

- How should a christian wife respond when her husband abandons her?
- What is biblical femininity (not womanhood)?
- How can new Christians be equipped to train up their children?
- What to do when church members block you on social media?
- If a church's worship team leads in songs from Bethel or Hillsong, etc., is that grounds for looking for a different church?
- I was recently diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder. Is this just sin?

And, of course, we also take questions about the Bible, how Scripture applies to various situations, current events, our take on the latest happenings in evangelicalism, and so on. Anyway, we weren't able to get to all of your questions last time, so tonight in part 2, we're going to take on some more.

Amy: Alrighty, here is the first question: Anonymous (IG DM) What is your advice to a wife/mom who is spiritually more mature than her husband? And also when he says he is a Christian but is not fulfilling the spiritual leadership role in the family? It can be exhausting a lot of times and encouragement is greatly needed!

Okay here are my thoughts. The first part of your question is what if the wife is more mature than her husband? Oftentimes that happens. One person will have her eyes opened first, and she seems to be walking in step with God or more discerning, than her husband. That happened with us about 20 years ago when we as nominal professing believers were just kind of going along and not really reading God's Word - showing up at church and thinking we were good to go. But then I was invited to join a women's Bible study and being fed the Gospel and solid doctrine from the Word, while my husband was not getting the same meal. That was just for a season, and it didn't last long. My advice to anyone in that situation is to have conversations about what you are learning. Share your excitement with him and ask him if he'd like to read something from the Word that you found - "Honey, check this out! I never noticed it before, what do you think?" But

remember, you and I aren't the Holy Spirit. We can't soften his heart - God does that. As far as him leading you? Ask him. Tell him what you'd love to have him do. Start small with prayers for dinner. See if he'd be willing to read the kids a Bible story at bedtime. Maybe you could even invite some friends from church for dinner and have them initiate conversations about the Bible or about what the guys are doing...and then be patient.

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Michelle, what are your thoughts on this one?

Michelle:

Encourage, affirm, and help him,
ask if there's anything you can do to help him or make things easier for him to lead,
talk to your pastor,
encourage him to participate in men's ministry, Bible studies, discipleship, even just spending time
- with spiritually mature older men,
realize this isn't just about God growing Him, but God sanctifying you as you deal with this.
OK, next, I'm going to take two questions I think I can answer fairly briefly.

First, PanCha (IG) asks: Do you happen to have a teaching on the book of Job? Or maybe recommend one?

I have not written a Bible study on the full book of Job. I've got two or three stand alone lessons here and there on certain chapters, but that's it. And Amy, correct me if I'm wrong, but I checked your Bible studies website, naomi'stable.com, and I didn't see a study on Job. You aren't hiding one in the back stockroom or anywhere, are you?

Amy: ...Ha! No, I'm like the folks at Costco. There is no back storeroom. I've done Bible studies on Job through church, but that is a great idea - we might want to do that one in the future.

Michelle: One study I would definitely *not* recommend is Lisa Harper's study on Job. If you're not familiar with Lisa, she's a false teacher, and if you'll go to my blog, ML.com and put her name in the search bar, you can see why, and you can also read the review I wrote on the first lesson of her Job study. Suffice it to say, it's no bueno.

I'm sure there are some good studies on Job out there, but I would really encourage you to simply pick up your Bible, turn to Job 1:1, and start studying for yourself. Don't depend on somebody else to tell you what it says - study it and find out for yourself.

You might want to invest in a good study Bible - MacArthur, ESV, Reformation - but even then, study the text for yourself *first* and *then* read the study notes to clarify anything you didn't understand. You might also want to check out GTY.org (JMac) and Ligonier.org (RC) to see if they have any sermons or articles on Job. Again, study first, *then* explore their materials to make sure you're on track. It's always fun to pick up on a certain point in the text and then see one of your heroes of the faith make that same point.

The next quickie question I want to address came in via Instagram DM, so we'll keep her anonymous - Could you touch on the book "redeeming love" being made into a movie? It's a book that so many Christian girls are reading and they really shouldn't be because it's so explicit. And now it's being made into a movie.

Not only did we receive this question about Francine Rivers' book and movie *Redeeming Love* in response to our call for Glad You Asked questions, but a lot of my followers have been asking me about this as well. So girls, because I love you, I bit the bullet - because I really don't like romances, secular or Christian - and I checked the book out of the library, and I finished reading it a couple of days ago. I'm going to see the movie this coming weekend. And I will either write a review of the book and movie on my blog, or Amy and I will address it in an upcoming podcast episode.

Now I want to clarify that when the lady who sent in the question said Christian girls really shouldn't read the book because it's explicit - that is *her* opinion and recommendation, not mine. I'm not saying I disagree with her, nor that I agree with her. I'm just saying I've finished the book and I have some thoughts that will probably not please everybody (which is usually the case), but I'm waiting until I've seen the movie to comment on both the book and the movie in the same article or podcast.

The only thing I *will* say at this point is that I would just encourage everyone to look up the words explicit and implicit in the dictionary so that you fully understand the difference between those two words and their meanings.

Amy, anything you'd like to add on either of those questions?

Amy: Redeeming Love - the movie- is in our area for the next week, but local ladies, by the time this podcast airs it will no longer be here. I haven't been to a movie theater in a few years, so perhaps it's time for a date night.

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Next question: Nikki (Michelle's Facebook) How as a disabled stay at home mom can I be more of a servant of God. I have days or weeks at a time that I cannot get out of bed and when I am able that energy goes towards my home and children? I am divorced because of abuse, am I still able to go to heaven?

First - YES, you are still able to go to heaven if you are regenerated by the Lord Jesus. If you are not sure, we have a menu tab called "Good News" on our website at [A Word Fitly Spoken Life](http://AWordFitlySpokenLife.com), and I encourage you to read that page. You do not lose your born-again status because you have been divorced. And I am so sorry to hear that you were abused. We pray that the Lord has brought you through that with His healing mercy and grace, and that He continues to help you in your time of need.

Let's talk about your disability that you mentioned. You can be a servant and do God's will even if you are unable to get out of bed, or if you are wheelchair bound or if you are only awake for a few hours a day. Whatever it is, you can serve and love Him with your heart, soul, mind and body. Be in the Word, and share it with those the Lord has placed in your path through His providence. Caring

for your children - that's your main mission field. After that it's whomever you have in your extended family - your neighbors, friends, everyone needs Christ, and you can minister to them, encourage them, exhort them and love them.

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Michelle, what are your thoughts on this one?

Michelle:

Depending on what "I can't get out of bed" means (Difficulty walking but otherwise OK? Sleeping all the time? In constant, excruciating pain and can't do anything?)...

Be a prayer warrior,

Study and memorize Scripture, have your children come in and teach it to them

Write

Make encouraging phone calls

Divorce isn't the unforgivable sin. If your husband initiated the divorce, it wasn't your sin. Even if you initiated it, it may not have been a sin - I don't know the details. Explain gospel and direct her to gospel page on AWFS.life

Here is the next question. The Addys (IG) What does forgiveness really mean biblically? Is repentance from the offending person required for the offended to forgive?

Great question! Let's look at what Scripture has to say. Just an interesting little tidbit, I mainly use the ESV, and in the ESV, the words forgive, forgiven, forgave, and forgiveness occur 114 times, 53 times in the OT and 61 times in the NT. Not really important, I just thought it was interesting. So let's look at just one of those passages.

The parable of the unforgiving servant in Matt 18 is really helpful here. This is a little long, but as I'm reading, listen for the actions of the people in the story, and you may want to hit pause and go grab your Bible so you can follow along. This is Matt 18:21-35:

Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

23 "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. 24 When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' 27 And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. 28 But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.'

29 So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' 30 He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. 31 When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place.

32 Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 33 And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' 34 And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. 35 So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

So let's zero in on the king's actions in verse 27 there: And out of **pity** for him, the master of that servant **released** him and **forgave him the debt**. What did the king do?

First he had **compassion** for the servant who had gotten himself into something he couldn't get out of. And that's always the case when someone sins against us - she's done something she can't undo. She might be able to apologize, or even make some sort of restitution, but she can't go back in time and not sin against you so that things are like they used to be. It's impossible. So we have compassion on those who are stuck in an impossible situation. We show them mercy.

Next, the king **released** the servant. He "unstuck" him from this impossible situation. I'm not going to hold you captive to this situation of your wrongdoing any more. I'm going to set you free from it and let you go.

Finally the king **forgave the servant's debt**. He surrendered his right to exact payment from the servant, and absorbed the loss himself. He zeroed out the account. He marked the bill "paid in full". He said, "We're good. We're square on this."

Now just to drive the point home, look at how the servant demonstrates the exact opposite - *unforgiveness* - with his fellow servant. Look at verse 28- "he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.'

He didn't *release* the debtor, he *seized* him. He didn't give up his right to *exact* payment from his fellow servant, he tried to *extract* payment - through the guy's neck, I guess - by choking him and demanding payment.

29- So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.'

And look at this point for point antithesis of compassion, release, and forgiveness of debt in verse 30: "**He refused** [He refused to show compassion], **and went and put him in prison** [the definition of captivity, and the opposite of release - because, if you're in prison, how are you going to work to earn money to pay your debt? He keeps him stuck in this impossible situation.] **until he should pay the debt.**" I'm not going to absorb the loss. I'm not going to pay the cost - you're going to pay

it. Even though you're stuck in this impossible situation where there's no way to pay it, and even if there were a way, you'd be *incapable* of paying that much.

Isn't that an amazing illustration of what it means to forgive? We show mercy and compassion. We give up our right to make the person who sinned against us pay, and we set her free from captivity to the impossible situation of us being angry or hurt at her over something she can't change.

And look what's so amazing about this - who's telling this story? Jesus, right? He's the king in this story. The King of kings. And not too long after this, He's going to perfectly practice what He preached. He's going to have compassion on us because we are stuck in the impossible situation of having racked up an enormous sin debt against Him that we have no way of ever paying off, and no ability to pay off that much even if there were a way.

And that compassion is going to lead him to show mercy to us and provide us a way to get unstuck. He's going to go to the cross to release us and forgive our debt. He sets us free from being in captivity to our impossible state of indebtedness to Him. And He doesn't just absorb the cost of our sin, He actually pays it with the currency of His own blood. He can mark the bill "paid in full" because He paid it Himself.

And that's why we forgive others. Because Christ forgave us infinitely more.

Now, in this story, both the first servant and the second servant repented to the person he was indebted to. But what about someone who sins against you and *doesn't* repent? *Can* you still forgive her? *Should* you still forgive her?

Well, let's go back to the text. Can you adopt a posture of mercy and compassion toward her, even if she doesn't think she's done anything wrong, even if she's not aware of your mercy and compassion? Yes, because that mercy and compassion originate and live in *your* heart. It's primarily an internal posture of the heart, whether you can pour it out externally or not. Can you make the decision to set her free from your anger or hurt feelings? Yep. Again, that's an internal decision and attitude of the heart before it ever becomes an external action of responding to someone who repents. Can you surrender your right to make her pay for what she's done? Yes, you can make that decision of the heart that her bill is paid in full and she no longer owes you.

And one more Scripture I'd like to add on that point. Romans 5:6-8 - For **while we were still weak**, at the right time **Christ** died for the **ungodly**. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but **God** shows his love for us in that **while we were still sinners**, Christ died for us.

While you were still actively sinning against Him, before you knew what sin was, before you understood you were a sinner, while you were a hater of God as Romans 1:30 says, Christ died for

you. He showed mercy and compassion to you. He provided a way out of your impossible situation. He paid your debt in full. Romans 2:4 says that *kindness* is what *led* us to repentance.

Now, you don't know whether your kindness in forgiving someone will ever lead that person to repent, but that part isn't your business. That's above your paygrade. Your paygrade is to obey God and forgive. That's where your job stops. It's God's job to handle the results.

And just one final thing about this. Forgiving someone who's unrepentant doesn't require you to put yourself into situations with that person that allow him or her to keep on unrepentantly sinning against you. For example: If you're in an abusive marriage, you can forgive your unrepentant husband while living somewhere safe. Scripture does not require you to move back in with him and give him the opportunity to keep sinning against you.

If your niece comes over to visit and steals your favorite earrings, and she has not repented and changed her ways, you should forgive her, but you don't have to have her over until or unless she repents. Maybe you meet in a coffee shop to visit instead. Forgiveness doesn't require the other person to repent but *reconciliation* does. Forgiveness is a one man job. Reconciliation is a two way street. You can't be reconciled to someone who refuses to be reconciled to you.

Amy, what say you on this one?

Amy: I feel like I've just done an entire devotional with Michelle Lesley! Great answers from God's Word. I like the idea of taking captive every thought, because if you truly forgive someone then you don't continue to allow past behaviors or memories bubble up and make you miserable or angry and bitter.

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Next question: Anonymous (IG DM) If you've recently moved and started at a church, joined with the ladies for their weekly bible study only to sit and watch a video sermon with no follow up questions ,comments or discussion about what you just watched. And then you ask what we will be "studying" next to which the pastor's wife answers probably another you tube video, what do you say? I've asked if we could work through a book in the Bible, but was told that they tried it and a lady got offended and left the church.

Um, first, we don't know why this person left the church - it could have been for a reason other than what you might assume - which was that she was offended by the Word of God. Now it sounds like this women's Bible study possibly might not be grounded in Scripture if they are allowing YouTube videos to do the heavy lifting - so maybe this person left because she was offended by false teaching - who knows? The point is, if you are not being taught the Word of God in your Bible study class, and if no questions are allowed, how is anyone learning?

I'm not sure whose videos you are watching - perhaps it is a good teaching. But I've long said that if you are doing a topical study outside of the Bible, stop calling it a Bible study. So, anonymous, you might want to study the Bible for yourself or with a small group of like minded women either from your church or from your community, or even join a weekly study offered by another church.

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Michelle, any additional thoughts?

Michelle: This is why I would not advise someone to join a church without thoroughly checking it out first. Ideally, you visit for a while, at least a couple of months, you get involved, and you find these things out *before* you join. Now, the lady who sent in the question said she had "started at a church." I don't know if that means she just joined or she has recently been visiting that church. So, hon, if you haven't joined yet and this is a dealbreaker for you, and there's an equally or more doctrinally sound church near you where this is not an issue, then go check out and join that church instead.

Another thing - she didn't say whether or not these sermon videos were doctrinally sound. If they are, then maybe you just don't like the style of the class and the way it's being led, and maybe you just don't go to those classes. If you've already joined, I don't think this is something you change churches over. Keep going to worship service and Sunday School and find another way to fellowship with the ladies - like having them over for dinner or going out for coffee or something.

What's our last question, Amy?

Amy:

Finally, I want to address this question: Anonymous (IG DM) I'm looking forward to this episode. I wanted to ask regarding the teachings of Douglas Wilson. I've seen different things about him, both good and bad. What are your thoughts? Is his teaching of patriarchy biblical?

My answer is, A - I'm going to link up some of our teachings Michelle and I have done on Patriarchy, biblical roles of women, and the seepage of feminism into the church. It is a poison. And B, I haven't studied the teachings of Doug Wilson. He is not one who is on my radar at the moment, but I have seen solid, biblically sound people who have greatly enjoyed things that he has taught, and I am aware of some of the concerns that others have voiced about The Patriarchy.

In fact if you've seen things posted on social media, may I just encourage you to hold off on making a judgment call based on a meme which contains a grainy photo of the pastor with a cut-and-paste quote that he allegedly has said. I have a warning to share about that. You see for the past couple of years there has been a group of very vocal women - women I've known personally who have been influenced by feminist leftist ideologies, who have been posting and sharing these alleged quotes from Wilson and his family members and friends - without proper attribution by the way - just pasting in their own text boxes without including links to the actual teaching - that's just lazy yellow journalism - and what is worse is that this group is attacking anyone who doesn't agree with them.

It's vile, sinful behavior that Michelle and I have tried to address with this group, but unfortunately they've targeted us in their hate campaign for exhorting them to act humbly. And I know that just me saying this will probably result in more gossip and backbiting, but you will know them by their fruits. But back to the social media posts you may have seen about Wilson. Don't take these photo image quotes - these memes - as truth. Instead, find out what the teacher actually said -

listen to his sermon in context, or read his book in context, or go to whatever article he actually wrote. That's doing your homework and being a Berean who studies the Scriptures to see if the real authenticated quote lines up with Scripture.

Speaking of that slanderous group, last week the leader of the Pack, accidentally shared a screen shot from a group called Examining Doug Wilson - a facebook and twitter account that she has denied she leads - but oops, in that screenshot she forgot to hide her name as the account administrator. Why does that matter? Because lies matter, and it turns out that this leader of the Pack has been deceiving her followers. And not only that but she has damaged her credibility as a bastion of truth telling. So I am going on record to encourage you to mark and avoid accounts like this and do your own homework instead.

Thoughts, Michelle?

Michelle:

Very articulate writer. I've read two of his novels - E and RSR, but not much of his other writings other than a few blog articles, and a few videos of him being interviewed, fans of his quoting him on social media, etc. I've not seen anything of a serious theological nature directly from him that I disagreed with much if at all. I've been listening to his wife Nancy's podcast for 3-4 months now, and I haven't heard her say anything unbiblical.

Concerned about his use of vulgar / profane words, but this has been taken wildly out of context. A lot of the memes Amy mentioned that I've seen are from his novel Ride Sally Ride.

So I read RSR Because I wanted to see for myself what all the accusations were about. It is not "soft core porn" and although there were a few small parts I found objectionable (though most people probably wouldn't - I have a pretty low tolerance for vulgarity), it wasn't anywhere near as luridly horrifying as the "I hate Doug Wilson crowd" would have everyone believe. Overall I thought it was a decent contemporary Christian novel.

The parts I objected to were not essential to the story line and could easily be deleted or changed without impacting the story. And that was my main objection to those parts. It would have been just as easy to leave them out or use other words, which, as a pastor (and frankly, as a Christian), he should have done. I would say the same thing about his novel Evanjellyfish, which I also read.

I've seen the memes of quotes from the book. I find the quotes objectionable. But they're not representative of the book as a whole. Just like, if you've ever read Ezekiel 23, that's not representative of the Bible as a whole. If the only part of the Bible you had ever read was Ezekiel 23, you would think God was disgusting and perverse because you're reading it out of context. Just like these meme makers are taking parts out of context.

For example, one of the memes with the most shock value contains a vulgar word for the female anatomy. I'm going to read that quote to you - don't worry, I'm not going to say the word - and then explain a little of the context. "Stephanie lost her temper completely and totally, and shouted at

him. Lionel, I already have a []. What made you think I was in need of another one?" Now, in case you don't even understand what Stephanie means, the expletive she uses can also mean a weak man, a wimp, so she's calling him that vulgar word.

Now I'm not going to make any excuses for Doug Wilson's use of that word in his book. He's a gifted writer. He could have found another way to write that line without the use of that word. But here's what I want to explain: 1) This is an isolated incident in the book. I could be wrong, but as far as I can recall that's the only time that word was used in the book. 2) This is someone who lost her temper, not someone whose language was constantly peppered with profanity. 3) Stephanie, the character who said this line, was either lost or a brand new Christian (I can't remember which) when she said this. 4) Almost immediately after she said it she expressed remorse and regret, and apologized.

So, I'm not endorsing Doug Wilson, but I'm not warning against him either. What I'm trying to demonstrate to you is that people with an agenda aren't usually the most reliable sources for objective information. If you want to know whether Doug Wilson or any other teacher is biblical or not, don't take somebody else's word for it, find out for yourself. It's a skill every Christian needs anyway. Compare his teaching and behavior to Scripture and see what you find.

And that's going to wrap it up for this episode of A Word Fitly Spoken. We love connecting with you and hearing your thoughts. Don't forget to check out all the resources and links in our show notes and visit our website, [s for this episode on our website, AWFS.Life](http://www.AWFS.Life).

And until next time, be in the Word, love your neighbor, share the Gospel and walk worthy.