

[Theme Music: upbeat smooth jazz bassline.]

Katie Axelson: Welcome to Have Hope; Will Travel. When we travel, we get to know people who are different than we are. We hear different perspectives, and we better understand others' stories. We learn to stand with people instead of just having opinions on issues. I'm your host Katie Axelson, welcome to Episode {75}. Seventy-five! Wow! That is a milestone episode. It is mind-blowing to me that we have already reached episode {75}. Anytime we hit a milestone episode, I think it's good to pause and reflect, to think about where we've come from and then to think about where we're going. This week we're going to do that with a compilation episode of one of our favorite questions: if you could be any inanimate object, what would you be and why? It's a question we've asked just about every guest since episode fifty. So we're going to hear all the answers put together in one show, here on episode {75}. And I love compilation episodes because I love just getting a little snapshot of what somebody said. But a lot of times when I hear just a little snapshot, I want to hear more. I want to hear the full context of that part of the conversation, I want to know more about the person and why they decided what they decided and what they answered. And that's hard to do in a compilation episode. But let me remind you that every single Have Hope; Will Travel episode, ever since the very beginning, is fully transcribed. And do you know what happens in a transcript? In a transcript, you have to identify voices. And so every single voice that is in this episode is identified by name in the transcript. So if you hear something really awesome and you want to go listen to the rest of the episode, you can figure out which one it is really easily by utilizing the transcript. It is of course at KatieAxelson.com on the episode page where they always are. So here we go: If you could be any inanimate object, what would you be and why?

[Laura Quam begins to answer.]

Laura Quam: I've never thought of this answer before. [Katie laughs.] I think I would probably say a paintbrush.

Katie: Oh!

Laura: I think because I've always loved art, but I also think that there's like a deeper meaning into it rather than just being an artist. But I think I experience Jesus on a whole new level when I paint and it's just like a way for me to like, express just what's on my heart, and just like connect with the Lord more with painting. So, I think yeah - and I think just having an opportunity to like create something with a paintbrush and like using my hands with something and creating like a picture, is always like, something that I love. So. I think that's what I would pick.

Katie: As soon as you said paintbrush, I thought "That's on brand!" [Katie laughs.]

Laura: Yep!

Katie: That's awesome.

[Crunch Rajani begins to answer.]

Crunch Rajani: A pair of my shoes!

Katie: Ohhh!

Crunch: Because yeah, they've been all around the world.

Katie: I love that!

Crunch Rajani: And they're going more places!

Katie: Perfect!

[Crystal Daye begins to answer.]

Crystal Daye: Hmmm. So if I'm supposed to - I'm probably going to say the diary because I love stories and people, women especially write stories in their diary. So I want to be the diary where they feel like they can just be honest and real with me. Because that's who I am, I want people to be real and you know, to share their stories with me. So I'm going to choose a journal/diary.

Katie: I love that and I love how it's in alignment with your ministry and your vision too.

Crystal: Yes!

Katie: And the work that you're already doing.

[Leonard McDonald begins to answer.]

Leonard McDonald: An inanimate object. Oh, okay. So [Leonard laughs.] the first thought was a house. Because it's so many rooms, so many things you can see in a house.

Katie: Sure.

[Hillary Walsh begins to answer.]

Hillary Walsh: I think an airplane. And I could just go anywhere.

Katie: Ohhh, love it. To be able to travel wherever you wanted?

Hillary: Anywhere you wanted. Get up to go into the sky and see above the clouds.

Katie: Love it.

[Mabel Ninan begins to answer.]

Mabel Ninan: [Mabel laughs.] You know, I'd love to be a tree.

Katie: Ohh!

Mabel: But actually it's not inanimate, right? It's live.

Katie: Well I mean it is live. It's not a person.

Mabel: That's living, right, it's fine.

Katie: You can be a tree. [Katie and Mabel laugh.]

Mabel: Yeah I could be a tree. Or a window!

Katie: Oh!

Mabel: A tree because, you know, I have a tree right in front of my desk and I love watching all the birds that come and sit, and how they behave, and all the squirrels that climb up and I love that the tree is so much more than itself. It is so many things to so many other creatures, right? When it moves in the wind, it just looks beautiful. But anyway, but a window is nice too -

Katie: Ohhh!

Mabel: Because yeah, your people can come through you, and you get to see so much. I don't know if that makes sense.

Katie: Sure. It does, it does! Getting to - it's from the idea of getting to see somebody else's window, somebody else's world. A window into their world.

Mabel: Yeah!

[Oly begins to answer.]

Oly: Does it matter the size of the object?

Katie: Not at all!

Oly: I don't know if these still exist, but I'd like to be a lighthouse.

Katie: Ohhhh. They do still exist.

Oly: Oh, okay good. I'd like to be a lighthouse. One main reason is because of their proximity to the sea. And I love the sea. Love, love, love, love, love, love the ocean. So being near it I think would always humble me and bring me a sense of calm. And then they're literally – I guess – light. So those, that's, I think that's the reason why I would think a lighthouse.

Katie: Yeah, and it's the protector too, right? It's showing people, "This is dangerous, be careful." And being that warning too.

Oly: Exactly.

Katie: I grew up near a lighthouse and so you can see the light over the trees at night when it's going off. It is peaceful and calming and beautiful, and also recognizing like, I'm on the land side. On the other side, like it's warning you of danger. So just the two contrasts of the land side versus the seaside is - I could talk about that all day.

Oly: Ahh, woah! I'd love to hear more about that.

Katie: Yeah, absolutely

[Katina Horton begins to answer.]

Katina Horton: You know what? The only one thing I can think of, 'cause I guess my mind is not there, I've been so into - this information, just be thinking about a chair. You know? Yes! And you think, when you think about a chair, a chair is used to - you know, when you have a chair, it can serve for a lot of different purposes. And just sitting down on the chair, it takes trust. And you might think, "No, you just sit down and it's fine." You can sit on a chair and you can actually [Katina laughs.] hit the floor!

Katie: Yeah.

Katina: Because you don't know if that chair is going to hold you up. You know? And then when you think about the chair, you are also thinking about the different people that have sat in that chair, that have found comfort in that chair, that they feel like they can just be at ease sitting in that chair, you know, after like a long day's work. And to just be able to sit back. Even me thinking about sitting back here and just relaxing, especially if it's a rocking chair you know? And like, the different uses for that chair that has gone down through generations, whether it's rocking your grandchild, reading to your children, you know what I'm saying? Rocking yourself to sleep, or being on a porch and rocking you know, during a hot summer day, or that type of

thing. So it's just, you know, being able to be that chair and being a part of the history of generations and generations.

Katie: I love that. And even if the chair you're sitting in hasn't existed for generations, the company that made the chair probably has.

Katina: They probably have.

Katie: What other iterations of chairs have they made in years past?

Katina: Yes and they've got their stamp of approval somewhere on that chair, saying, "I made it." You know what I'm saying?

Katie: Yep, and the way technology has advanced in the chair itself yeah.

Katina: There you go! Yes. And it makes me think about the stamp of approval that God has already given us, with His son's death on the cross, you see what I'm saying?

Katie: That's good, that's so good. Yeah.

Katina: So yeah, and we can find comfort in Him, like the chair. [Katina laughs.]

Katie: What a great answer! [Katie laughs.]

Katina: Oh wow.

[Andrea Fortenberry begins to answer.]

Andrea Fortenberry: Ohh! I would say a pen, a felt-tip pen!

Katie: Ohh, why?

Andrea: I - I'm a writer, I love it and when I'm writing, you know much of my writing I do is on the computer but I do love a good journal with like, thick white paper and a felt-tip pen. I love office supply stores, like the office supply aisle at Target, and I have all kinds of different pens and my favorite ones are the felt-tip pens.

Katie: That's awesome. I love office supplies too, that's my guilty pleasure. [Andrea laughs.]

[Paul Forchoine begins to answer.]

Paul Forchoine: I would, you know I love the beach so I think I would want to be a seashell. And I would, you know where the sun is beating down and then I get relief from the water tickling me back and forth, so I think I'd be a seashell.

Katie: That sounds beautiful and peaceful.

Paul: Yeah, yeah that would be cool.

Katie: That'd be awesome.

[Anastasia Vladychynska begins to answer.]

Anastasia Vladychynska: Oh... An object right?

Katie: Yeah.

Anastasia: Okay yeah, right now I feel like I would want to be a box.

Katie: Hmmm. Okay!

Anastasia: And with a box, and you know, don't use me until, don't look at me. Don't use me until everything is over [Anastasia laughs.] you know?

Katie: Yeah.

Anastasia: Inside, I feel like that. I just want to fall asleep and wake up when everything is over, but you can't.

Katie: No, I get that. I'm feeling the same thing in different situations. So.

[Lisa Waldman begins to answer.]

Lisa Waldman: I'm going to say I would be a car because then I could travel all kinds of places and explore things.

Katie: I love that, I love the traveling answers, because there's so many fun ways to travel and so much of the world to explore is so I love the car answer.

[Ezelis Sanderson begins to answer.]

Ezelis Sanderson: [Ezelis laughs.] Oh my goodness... oh, a camera!

Katie: Oh.

Ezelis: A camera so I can just freeze those memories into place.

Katie: Love it! To be able to capture all of it.

Ezelis: Yes capture it, breathe it in, and just let it soak in.

Katie: That's awesome.

[Dennis Axelson begins to answer.]

Dennis Axelson: Inanimate? I want to be a golden retriever! Everybody loves me.

Katie: No! [Dennis laughs.]

Dennis: An inanimate object? An object? I don't want to be an object.

Katie: You have to be an object.

Dennis: I don't want to be an object. I probably would be a microphone then everybody would talk at me.

Katie: I was going to say, "This my friends is where we get to a battle of stubbornness. Who's going to give first: Dad or Katie?" [Katie laughs.] You're going to be a microphone so everybody listens?

Dennis: Oh I'd be a microphone so everybody's talking at me.

Katie: Yeah. I did make the mistake of putting a microphone in front of you. That was bad choice.

Dennis: Mr. Microphone and I are friends!

Katie: Yeah, I know. Am I getting that microphone back?

Dennis: No!

[Lena Cebula begins to answer.]

Lena Cebula: That's so funny, first thought I have is like a cactus. But it's very interesting, now I'm thinking like, why is the cactus? So I will actually brainstorm that, because it's the first thought I have.

Katie: Yeah.

Lena: So the cactus, okay: that one I'm imagining somewhere like in Mexico okay? So this gigantic flower grows in like, under the sun with no water really, and really dusty ground and still green okay? Still has liquid inside, that actually can make vodka from it and can make people buzzed and funny - I don't know why I think that but it's actually giving liquid as well to life. You know? And another thing that the cactus is prickly, but guess what? Like with all of this, it looks still very interesting because it's different like, dimension, and dry and green and alive and dead, and then I think the most amazing thing and if you guys never know this, Google this: the cactus flower. The cactus actually blooms and it blooms in this miraculous, amazing, mind-blowing flowers. But it's rare, but it's happening. So that's where I am. That would be cool to be a cactus and fun and a survivor and beautiful and persevering and overcoming, and yeah. Longevity too in a very difficult situation, so there you go I'm the cactus! [Lena laughs.]

Katie: There you go, that's great! And living in Mexico in January doesn't sound too bad, does it?

Lena: Oh yeah, we have so much snow it's not even funny.

Katie: Yeah, we do too. It's not pleasant.

[Sydney James begins to answer.]

Sydney James: I would be a candle so I can light the way for others.

Katie: Oh I like that one!

Sydney: Yeah.

Katie: It's fun. Shine your light so that other people can see as well.

Sydney: Absolutely!

[Tanya Hackney begins to answer.]

Tanya Hackney: I would be a ukulele.

Katie: Oh I wasn't expecting that! Tell me more!

Tanya: I love the ukulele. I love it so much. I learned to play about five years ago. It's a small, pretty innocent instrument that you can take with you everywhere you go. It is just, it brings joy everywhere it goes. And so I guess I would want to be the instrument that would bring joy. That's what appeals to me.

Katie: I love that. Don't we all want to be instruments who bring joy?

Tanya: You know, I don't think that we all do!

Katie: [Katie laughs and Tanya laughs.] No!

Tanya: I have seen some like - some of the opposite. But I would love to be an instrument of joy.

Katie: Okay, fair.

Tanya: What did you think I was going to say?

Katie: I thought it was going to be something nautical related honestly. Which is fine. That's the fun part of the question, you can go anywhere with it.

Tanya: There you go, it is a fun question. And I knew right away!

Katie: Yeah you did, you were real fast with that!

[Angela Alexander begins to answer.]

Angela Alexander: I probably - hey, how about this? Let me be a teddy bear. [Angela laughs.]

Katie: Oh! I love it.

Angela: Yeah, because teddy bears are loved. People just love to hug and nurture and just really, a lot of care goes into that. People always hug teddy bears, and I love that.

Katie: Yeah, oh I love that. It's so precious, so tender.

[Tori Hope Petersen begins to answer.]

Tori Hope Petersen: Oh my gosh! Wow. Probably a table.

Katie: Ohh!

Tori: Because I want to be a place where people gather, a place where people can eat, a place where people can play games, and just be together. A place where people cry and laugh. And again, just be together, where they break bread together. Yeah, a table.

Katie: Yeah.

Tori: With lots of chairs!

Katie: With lots of chairs.

Tori: A big table! A big table.

Katie: There you go. I feel like it's such a visual representation of who you are as a person too, wanting to be that gathering place, wanting to be that safe space for people to be able to gather, and then there always being room for one more right? Always one more chair, always space for one more to gather, always the ability for one more to be in the community.

Tori: Exactly. Do you ask that question after every podcast? Because now I have to go back and listen to people's answers!

Katie: Just about, yeah.

Tori: That's so interesting! What would you say?

Katie: Ohh, good question, no one's asked me back before! I would say like, a thumbtack in some really fun place. Because you just get to witness the things that no one else gets to witness.

Tori: Ohhh. That's so interesting.

Katie: Yeah. Which is, I think, also very indicative of why I host the show that I host, because it is like getting to be a thumbtack in someone's life just for fifteen minutes or an hour or whatever it is, to get to hear their story and their perspective. I get the little inside view.

Tori: That's so cool.

[Katie's outro begins.]

Katie: Thanks for listening, my friend. I am so curious right now: if you could be any inanimate object, what would you be and why? Let me know over on Instagram, that's at @KatieAxelson. I would love to hear your answer. We will see you again in two weeks. Until then, know that you were loved, know that you matter, know that I see you, know that your story has value. We'll see you soon. Bye.

[Transitional music: upbeat electric guitar riff.]