



GRACE BIBLE WOMEN'S NEWSLETTER

Stories, Testimonies and Conversations.....

WHO IS GOD, AND IN LIGHT OF THAT WHO AM I?

Tinna Hood

There are two questions we need to ask ourselves and others as we share one another burdens: Gal. 6:2, "Who is God?" and in light of that, "Who am I?" These questions provoke a myriad of thoughts such as what in the world does that even mean! If that was your first thought don't worry it was mine too! For example when health issues, betrayal of a spouse or friend, the death of your dreams, aging, fear of what others may think of you, depression, disabilities revealed in your children, etc. we may ask ourselves, "who am I when these things happen?" Who is God in light of these circumstance? I learned to whisper the words God says about himself over and over to myself. Often times I have had to shout his words out loud to my self to silence my fears and the lies I would tell myself. In Isaiah 55:8-9 God says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts and my ways are not your ways". When life wrecks your heart, whisper HIS words or SCREAM THEM OUT LOUD if need be. Keep telling yourself WHO GOD SAYS HE IS. I am still who God says I am! My circumstances may have changed but our GOD HAS NOT!
God says: "I AM trustworthy," Ps 9:10
God says: "I WILL never leave you," Heb. 13:5
God says: "I AM your strength" Ps. 28:7
God says: "I AM Your God" Isaiah 40:9-31.
God says: YOU ARE accepted, Romans 15:7.
God says: YOU ARE his child, Gal. 4:7



AMY CRELIA

In 2016 I was diagnosed with a rare autoimmune disease called Primary Biliary Cholangitis. After years of relenting fatigue and illness, it was a relief to finally have a diagnosis. My doctor started me on medication to slow the progression of this incurable disease. Unfortunately for me, it didn't work. By the end of 2018, I was told I would need a life-saving liver transplant. At that time I was still

AUCTION

Chili and Dessert cook off

**Sunday OCT. 6,
for lunch**

**immediately after
church**

- **Its time for our annual Family Auction and chili, Cook off.**
- If you would like to Donate an item or service contact Krista Wade 214-674-0885
- Or, Enter the Chili or Dessert Cook off contact Tinna Hood at 903-815-4055
- Or, be a judge for the dessert Cook off Contact Jennifer Wright at 214-926-0925
- Proceeds go to Bible studies, missions, women's retreat.

healthy enough to receive a partial liver through the gift of a live liver donation.

This is where God gave me a gift only He knew I desperately needed. No, it wasn't a liver. It was the gift of love. In John 13:34 we are told to 'love one another, just as I have loved you.' God showed me love in a MIGHTY way through my family, friends, church and even strangers. I had person after person offer to donate a part of their liver in order to save my life. God knew my struggle with feeling worthy of love and He healed a piece of my heart through all of these selfless people.

After many tests, Mayo Clinic made their decision. My sister was chosen as my live liver donor. The only stipulation they had was she had to go to counseling to talk about our childhood trauma. I'm ashamed to admit that rather than trust God with my sisters' emotional health, I became angry. In my anger, I decided that I knew best and I didn't

want her to go to counseling. My fear for my sister was so great that I shut down. I was just so tired. I obviously still have cracks in my broken heart from past hurts and betrayals. God had healed a piece of my heart with the love I was shown from everyone offering to be my donor but I was still struggling. I decided I was done. I didn't want to take medicine anymore, I didn't want any more doctor appointments. I was broken. The next evening, Jeff and I were sitting in a carwash when I got a phone call. It was Mayo Clinic calling to let me know they had a liver for me. By 9:00 pm we were on a jet flying to Jacksonville, Florida and by the following evening I had a second chance at life. It hit me hard that a family who is dealing with the death of a loved one put their grief aside in order to help save others' lives. I will never be able to explain my feelings about what this family did for me and for countless others. I pray often for their peace and for their hearts. I thank God daily for saving my life through their selfless gift.

What truly humbles me about this part of my story is that even (or should I say especially) at my lowest point, Jesus was always by my side. God never left me, He never forsook me even in my rebellion. My temper tantrum did not push God away.

I often have people ask me if I was scared. The answer is yes and no. Yes, I was scared of the physical pain but I knew it was only temporary. I can handle that. I would so often think of the suffering that Jesus went

through for me and for you and it helped put my pain into perspective. No, I wasn't scared of death. I'm not ready to die but I'm not SCARED to die. The moment I gave my life to Jesus Christ my place in heaven was secured. That can never be taken from me. This is the ultimate peace of heart and mind. Paul says in Romans 8:18 'For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.' This verse comforts me.

After 2 more life-saving operations due to complications and a month spent in the hospital almost dying from a fungal infection, I am still here! I don't know what Gods plan is for my life but it seems He isn't finished with yet.

Be Encouraged,

Amy

HERE ARE FEW THOUGHTS FROM MY PERSPECTIVE AS A PATIENT.....

In the past I struggled knowing when or how to help a friend who was struggling. I would get all in my own head about what I think they would want or don't want, would I be interfering in their life, would my help even wanted or needed, etc. Now that I have been the person struggling, I'd like to share a few things that I found helpful or not so helpful. I hope this information from my personal experience will be encouraging.

1. "Let me know what I can do to help."

I have an extremely hard time accepting help. For example, if someone says, "Let me know if I can bring you dinner." (Even though I know the person offering is completely sincere) I will NEVER call to ask. That being said, I had a few people who would call to say, "I'm bringing you dinner. Which night is best?" Now that is an offer I can accept! The burden of me having to call and ask for help was taken off my shoulders. I'm not sure what that says about me but I have a feeling many people who need help won't ask. Offering to help is a blessing in any form that it comes in. To make that help easier to accept, be decisive and specific to take the burden off the recipient.

2. "How are you doing?"

People are truly caring and bring with them good intentions. So many times I had people asking me how I am. It seems like such an easy question to answer. To someone ill, it's difficult to know how to respond. Do I say I'm ok or do I say I feel like I've been hit by a truck? There was always a war in my mind about how to answer that question while still being honest. I was ok but I absolutely felt like I had been hit by a truck (and dragged on a rock road). I found it easier to answer a question that is more specific. For example, "How is your energy level today?" "How

was your last doctor's appointment?" It's great to ask how someone is feeling! If you have a personal connection with the person try to be a little specific to make it easier for them to answer.

3. Not invited

As my illness progressed I slowly started disappearing. At least that's what it felt like to me. People became aware that I was sick and extremely fatigued most days. I had to cancel plans constantly. I became lonely. It's hard to watch life pass you by as you lay on the couch or in bed because you aren't able to participate. One huge piece of advice I can give is to **ALWAYS** include the person you know will probably cancel. I still wanted to be included. I didn't want to be forgotten. This might sound self involved but feeling forgotten hurts. If you have a friend suffering don't forget to invite them to join. It matters.

4. Looks can be deceiving

I was sick for years but I didn't look sick for most of my illness. I don't think most people could tell until I started turning yellow. So many people around us are struggling from illness, heartbreak, financial strains, relationship problems etc. Give people the benefit of the doubt. "Do to others as you would have them do to you" Luke 6:31 Show others grace and see beyond canceled plans, sour moods and distant behaviors etc.

5. Acknowledge

The last time I was in the hospital, I was there for a month. As I became able, Jeff would push me around in the wheelchair so I could get out of the hospital room. I was so surprised by how many people would greet Jeff, completely ignore me or glance at me and quickly look away. I would often be talked over as well. Don't be scared to have a conversation with someone who is obviously sick. They are probably craving to be treated normally.

6. Caretakers

Remember the caregivers. The amount of stress is heartbreaking. Care for the caretaker.

7. Share Life

One last piece of advice I can give is to know it's ok to tell us your problems as well! Share your life with me like I want to share mine with you. We are to carry EACH OTHERS burdens.

I hope some will find my experience helpful in caring for others.

In Christ,

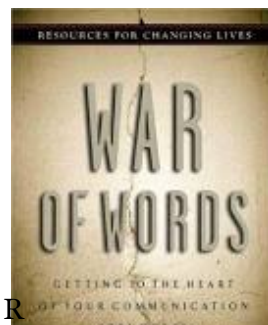
Amy Crelia

Bio: My name is Amy Crelia. I've lived in Gunter for 10 years. I'm married to Jeff and we have 4 grown children (when did that happen??) we joined GBF pretty quickly after we moved here. I've been part of the GBF Women's Ministry and I'm hoping to become active with the ministry again after this first year of transplant is behind me. I have a passion for the Navajo women we minister to and I'm counting the days until I'm healthy enough to go back!

If you would like to receive the "Grace Bible Women's" News letter Please send your request to

gbfwomensministry@gmail.com

You can also follow us on Facebook



Getting to the Heart of Your Communication Struggles

by [Paul David Tripp](#) "War of Words"

FALL BIBLE STUDIES BEGIN.....

THE TRUTH PRINCIPLE by Leslie Vernik.

Tues. Sept. 4 at 9:30 am at 704, North 8th Street

Contact Tinna Hood-903-815-4055

STEPS...by Michael Snetzer

Tuesday nights at 6:30 at 704, North 8th street

contact Tinna Hood 903-815-4055

WHAT LOVE IS by Kelly Minter

Begins Sept. 4 at 9:30 am, 699 Wallace Rd.

Contact Nancy Nevil, 469-401-3614

ESTHER by Beth Moore

Begins Sept. 3 at 6:30 pm, call Keelie for directions

Contact Phyllis James-214-514-1106

NONE LIKE HIM” by Jen Wilkin

begins Monday Night Sept. 9 at 6:30 pm,

Contact Keelie Ferguson- 903-821-3371 or Krista Wade- 214674-0885

“DEVOTED TO GOD” by Sinclair Ferguson

Begins Aug. 29 at 9:30 am, 618 Cypress Point Dr.

Contact Shelby Garner- 903-821-6891 Or Casey Pettett 903-818-2548

HEBREWS 10:24
And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

