

BONNIE SMITH WHITEHOUSE: SEASONS OF WONDER (TRANSCRIPT)

JANUARY 24, 2023

0:00 Hello everyone and welcome to the Women's Scholars and Professionals podcast.

0:06 My name is Ann Boyd and I'll be your host.

0:13 We at Women's Scholars and professionals are here to support women in their God given callings into the university and beyond.

0:21 So if you're a graduate student or faculty member and administrator or a student in professional school, a scholar in between jobs or simply a person who supports women in the academic world, then this podcast is for you.

0:38 I'm excited to invite you into a conversation with Bonnie Smith, White House English professor and author of Seasons of Wonder, making the ordinary sacred through projects, prayers, reflections, and rituals.

0:55 This handbook walks us through each week of the year with thoughtful guided reflections to help us engage with the presence of God in our everyday world.

1:06 I really enjoyed reading Bonnie's creative ideas and it turned out to be even more energizing to have a conversation with her.

1:14 If you had been there, you would have seen the way Bonnie's whole face lights up as she is talking about this book and the way we can shape our days to deepen our connection with God and our wonder at God's created world. Bonnie and I also spend a few minutes talking about her professional calling into academia and I've included a little bonus at the end of the podcast where she offers wise advice for parents with young children.

1:41 So let me tell you a little bit more about her Bonnie Smith.

1:46 White House PhD is a writer and professor who studies storytelling creativity.

1:52 Contemplation and wonder.

1:54 She is the author of the Nautilus Award winner *Afoot and Lighthearted*, a journal for mindful walking and kickstart creativity.

2:05 So prompted cards to spark inspiration.

2:09 A lifelong Episcopalian, she has spent the last 20 years as the late leader of St. Augustine's Episcopal Church at Vanderbilt University. Bonnie is professor of English and director of the honors program at Belmont University and she lives in Nashville with her family.

2:27 So let's dive right in.

2:29 We're so glad you're here with us.

2:34 I want to talk about your book, *Seasons of Wonder*, but first I'd love to hear about your life as a professor.

2:42 You've been teaching for over 15 years I think.

2:45 And can you just tell us about your, I've been Belmont for 20 years and before that I just was a TA in grad school.

2:56 So yeah, I've been teaching since really for 25 years, wow, as a tenure track professor or tenured professor?

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3:0520 okay, wow, wow.

3:08So tell us a little bit about your path into academia.

3:10How did you, how did you find that that was your calling in life, your work that you were to do and would have been some of the gifts and the struggles along the way.

3:23Such a great question.

3:25And I would say it has been part of my calling in life.

3:30I think I'm still a work in progress and I so I went to college, just absolutely loving writing and literature and found a wonderful sort of home as an english major.

3:47I loved poetry, short stories, I loved creative writing still do and decided to go on into graduate study in literature and creative writing and throughout that experience becoming a grad student, we started teaching and started working in the writing center and really enjoyed and loved that experience of working with writers and thinking about the nuts and bolts of how people grow as writers and how that happens.

4:20So I then went into doctoral study in writing and rhetoric or writing studies as the field is typically called the University of Wisconsin Madison.

4:30So I am a woman who's from the south.

4:34I grew up in Tennessee and did my doctoral work at the University of Wisconsin Madison.

4:39And just really loved learning about what I eventually came to call the role of the common reader or the idea that you know, reading is something libera Torrey for many people, it's a, it's a activity that can liberate us as well as entertain us.

5:02I traced the tradition back through african american women's literacy movements through times through you know what it meant to be an enslaved reader and how reading the bible could become an act of liberation and an act of sort of rebellion even because reading was forbidden of course for enslaved people.

5:25And I traced that up through the incredible movement of Oprah's Book Club and how Oprah has encouraged readers to read for life change and life liberation.

5:41And so I learned a lot about the tradition of african american women's literacy movements in the United States, especially as they were tied to Christianity and trace that up through a book club as my dissertation topic.

5:57So it's sort of this amalgamation of reading as spiritual reading, as political reading as sort of course, something that we do for Our life's work to gain employment to become financially successful.

6:20But that reading has so many other dimensions to it.

6:23So I am also interested in how that works with writing and how writing and especially writing in the 21st century is Gosh, it's like We are all published writers all the time.

6:37We're all publishing things online all day all the time.

6:42and it's it's a revolutionary to think about how writing has has changed.

6:46So those are some of my scholarly interests.

6:50I began in 2003 on the tenure track at Belmont University and it has been just a delightful and wonderful place to work.

7:02And part of the reason for that I think is that I've been encouraged and allowed to grow and I wasn't, I was hired to do one thing and I still do it to an extent, but I've also been allowed to change.

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7:19I'm not teaching exactly the same classes that I taught when I was first hired.

7:23I'm not publishing exactly the same sorts of things that I began publishing when I was hired and I really appreciate that about my work when I first was hired.

7:34I remember John Payne who was a tenure track or tenured professor and mentor of mine, explaining to me that he was hired to teach Southern literature, but that that he had developed an incredible interest in Japan and that the institution had encouraged that and that gave a lot of freedom as a young tenure track professor.

7:54And I tried to tell my my tenure track colleagues who I'm mentoring or getting to know, you know, I try to try to pass that down to them because I think there's a lot of freedom in that when you're hired in your twenties or your early thirties, there's so much life still to live.

8:10And I think I hope this ethic comes out in my book as well.

8:14You know, I think the world is so full of so many incredible things to learn and that shouldn't halt when you are hired into a tenure track position.

8:23So I thoroughly appreciate the institution that I work for nurturing that in me and in others.

8:31So let's dive into your book.

8:34It is entitled Seasons of Wonder, making the ordinary sacred through projects, prayers, reflections and rituals and The cover copy.

8:46I thought gave a very helpful description and they described it as a 52 week interactive devotional that helps families and friends discover God and fleshed in the world.

8:59So, can you talk a little bit about your hopes for the ways readers will engage with this book?

9:06Absolutely.

9:07I hope it's the kind of book that is used.

9:13I have discovered through learning about the angigram that I'm a two and I'm somebody who's always trying to be helpful.

9:23And so this is probably a story for another day.

9:26But how that filters into my writing and my hopes for my books is that I hope they are like dog eared have underlining and post it notes all through them and that, you know, the family, families and friends and people have their hands on them.

9:43I want them to be off the shelves on the desks or the dinner table and used.

9:48And so that's one thing I hope it's the kind of book that you reach for when you're trying to just sort of catch a breath or incorporate Contemplative Learning and activities into your life or into your classroom or into your friendships or families or with your partner.

10:10So, I hope it's a useful text, A text that helps us think about God as not a big old man on the cloud, but God as something someone with whom we can fall in love with whom we are sharing Earth with.

10:29And you know, that's that's part of part of my big hope for the book.

10:33You know, the legacy of the book will be when something that's useful in a world where you know, we're surrounded by text.

10:41I want this to be the kind of book that people are using and finding that resonates with them and helps them, you know, sort of think deeper about what it means to be Christ centered or a follower of Christ or a follower of the way.

10:59Yeah, I really think it is.

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11:02it seems like the kind of book that one can reach for when you're hoping to step out of the fast lane of, you know, going through your daily routine and getting things done and, but instead taking a moment to breathe and settle in and connect with the real spiritual activity that is happening all around us all the time.

11:32And I wanted to, ask.

11:34So the, you mentioned families and communities and this kind of book is often geared mainly toward families, but in your writing it really seems like it could be used by friends or other small communities as well.

11:48Is that right?

11:49Absolutely.

11:50I, I wanted this to be the book that could certainly be used by families, but also families of choice or roommates or, you know, a group of professors who were meeting for brown bag lunch every week.

12:04, sunday school class, all sorts of different kinds of groups who could come together great well and I really, you know, it's funny, I read the whole thing, which you're not really supposed to sit down and read the whole thing on that's true, that's true.

12:21But it was it was so much fun and really right from the beginning, I was immediately grabbed by your introduction and the words you used to describe God and our spiritual experiences and you talk about the way God is a surprise and you focus on curiosity and wonder and our human embodiment and your words.

12:45I found to be really refreshing, especially coming from someone with your background as a professor of english and you know, just in the world of academia.

12:54So I'd love to hear about the way someone who lives life in the university world can approach God in this playful way.

13:05Right?

13:05Sure.

13:06Well, I I've been learning about and studying metaphors since I was in fifth grade as perhaps other readers and listeners will be familiar with the idea of metaphor.

13:23and there are so many ways that metaphors construct our realities.

13:28George Lakoff has written a lot about this and I'm really interested in the metaphors or the methods of comparison that we have used throughout time to think about God.

13:43the patriarchal ones are the ones that really have seemed to stick for lots of reasons.

13:49you know Father Lord etcetera.

13:53And we have to acknowledge though that there are so many different metaphors found in the bible found in sacred texts that also help us think about God.

14:04God is described as a mother hen, a potter god is described as a lamb as a dine as a woman in labor.

14:17God is described as of course you know, a midwife high tower, a fortress.

14:27There are all these different metaphors.

14:29And I'm interested in playing with those a little bit and that's how I moved to the place in the introduction that you're referring to when I remember this song that I learned at my Episcopal summer camp when I was a kid and later a counselor and you know, it's sort of just sort of glossed over when I

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was a kid and when I was a teenager and a college student, but it came back to me and the metaphor is God is a surprise in the song and the song, I don't know if your listeners know it.

15:04 That was written by reverend Harry Pritchett who is a was an Episcopal priest and a bishop.

15:09 God is a surprise.

15:11 It's baffling to the wise.

15:15 so much of the way christians are talked about in media and in our world, I think I think the brand is in trouble, I'll be honest with, you know, I think the brand is in trouble and Lamont said it's mortifying to be a christian except for the jesus part and that sort of resonates me.

15:34 I mean sometimes it seems like all that we're hearing is, you know, christians want to exclude trans kids or christians want to reinforce patriarchal cultural, patriarchal culture or whatever.

15:47 And I mean, this idea of christians being certain about everything is very, very much in the culture and it's not wrong.

15:55 I mean, I think there are a lot of, a lot of christians who want to say this is what you must believe.

16:00 These are the words you must say.

16:01 And and that is alienating to a lot of people I've been teaching For a long time and I've watched a lot of people walk away as young, you know, 20somethings from the Christian tradition because everything feels to certain and they don't feel certain and so they feel like they don't belong.

16:24 And so I wanted to write a book a long way around to this, but I wanted to write a book that was more of an invitation unless of a thou shalt believe this or of an invitation to the idea that our expectations could be upended by conceiving of God as a surprise not this Lord King who was going to tell us everything that we must know and believe forever and ever.

16:55 But what if we think about things in a more vulnerable way borrowing from some language?

17:02 I think that burn A brown has really helped us understanding our culture, especially in academic culture.

17:08 That a posture of vulnerability, posture of openness can crack things open in our relationships in our work laws.

17:17 And so a posture of vulnerability and open heartedness, tenderness, gentleness, curiosity, these are the things that really feel more genuine to me, as I reflect on what a faithful life looks like.

17:34 And so I wanted to kind of make a syllabus of 52 weeks for families, friends, etc.

17:42 To play with those metaphors, translate them into concrete actions, concrete things you can do with your hands and with the people that you love to get at more of an off field faith.

17:57 All e filled faith as opposed to a faith that is so certain.

18:06 Yeah, your book is, you know, I don't really ever since any should in your book, you know, that you should do something a certain way.

18:14 It's there's you said invitation and it really is an invitation to explore, the joy of being connected with with God.

18:25 Question?

18:25 I think it, I'm gonna get it wrong, but there's an expression in the Episcopal tradition that informs so much of the way that I think, and it's going to be very ironic if I get it wrong, but I'm gonna do my best here.

18:42 All May.

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18:45Some should.

18:48None must.

18:51I think that really sums up a lot of the posture.

18:54I'm trying to take in the book.

18:56All May, some should none must that comes through.

19:03So you reference the liturgical calendar throughout the book as part of this 52 week journey.

19:11Can you tell me a little bit more about how the liturgical calendar impacts your own spiritual practices and maybe just offer a brief explanation for those listeners who might not be very familiar with the liturgical calendar.

19:25Absolutely.

19:26So the liturgical calendar is a way of organizing time in the christian tradition and the liturgical calendar begins with advent, And then of course you move into the season of Christmas, the 12 days of Christmas.

19:44Epiphany is a time to, you know, consider light and you know, it's, it's marking the visit from the Magi and marking the light and then you move into the season of lent.

20:04although there's a little slice of ordinary time that the roman Catholics have in between there, but move into lent.

20:11Lent is a time of course to soberly think deeply about the transformation that is to come through the mystery of easter tide.

20:25And then we have Pentecost, the season of Pentecost going out into the world and the role of the holy spirit and how God's presence is moving through the world now.

20:37And then there's this long season of ordinary time where the green season.

20:41And so christians have used these liturgical seasons to kind of organize time and orient us to where we are in the story.

20:51and I find the christian liturgical seasons to be very grounding for me.

20:57And of course they play onto the calendar year, the seasons of the earth, the cycles of the earth and in the book.

21:08I've worked really hard in the book to organize the chapters around the months of the year along with, interview along with fusing in the liturgical seasons and specific ways we can mark the seasons and, you know, all these different moods and prayers and practices that are associated with the seasons, both the liturgical calendar and the calendar of the year, calendar of the Earth.

21:37And I think the liturgical calendar really invites us to consider one of the key things of the book, which is that time is sacred.

21:47Time reflects the life of the church, the teachings, the death, the resurrection of jesus, as well as these patterns that we find in our natural world, patterns of planting, harvesting, coming back to life being reanimated and lingering in this, this greenness, this long season of greenness.

22:12Well, we are, although we're recording this in advent, we are planning to release this podcast in mid january and I wonder if you might like to walk us through one of the chapters for january or february so that our listeners can get a taste of what kinds of things you suggest.

22:30The thoughts and prayers and actions and suggestions.

22:34Absolutely.

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22:35I would be delighted to.

22:37So the week three is devoted to an action and it might be an action that might surprise people.

22:47It's the action of wrestling.

22:49And I think this verb, I don't know what this verb conjures up for you, but it might conjure up a vision of your kids rolling around the floor, that's immediately what I get for my two little boys rolling around on the floor halfway fighting, you know, halfway laughing.

23:09I also think about genesis, I think about Jacob wrestling with God and receiving a blessing when morning comes after a long night, a struggle.

23:21So in this chapter I walk through that word wrestling and how to wonder is a kind of wrestling.

23:31It's good when we come to the table with the people that we love and we resolve that we're going to wrestle together, we're going to bring our doubts to the table, we're going to bring our questions and our complex feelings and we're not going to hold back because we're afraid that it might offend someone or it might be outside the lines of belief or that we need to appear to be certain and not wrestle.

24:01And so then I write about someone who modeled this so beautifully throughout her life and her presence and her teaching and that is Rachel held Evans who I believe your audience will be quite familiar with Rachel held Evans wrote so eloquently about her own spiritual journey and she often wrestled openly and often wrestled publicly with herself and with others by asking big questions wise questions, genuine questions about the systems and the structures that represent faith and I think her witness in this world was so powerful and just terribly too short, we mourn her loss, but she pointed out so wisely that God asks us to love with all of our hearts, all of our minds, all of our bodies and doesn't God doesn't demand that we suspend our critical thinking the moment that power structures or systems are challenged.

25:15And so I I didn't ever really know her.

25:19We had some private messages on twitter and I wish that I had known her.

25:23We actually grew up not very far away from each other, I was from Men County and she was from Ray County Tennessee and we like our football teams played each other and so, you know, I hope that maybe there was some moment when we were in the same space at the same time, but I, I just feel very connected to her.

25:41I've assigned her books, in my classes and you know, I really followed, I followed her on twitter very closely, so I appreciated her candor and she just really embodies this idea of wrestling to me and I think the legacy that she left us in bodies wrestling so well.

26:00So in this week, you know, I talk about, I reflect on Rachel's legacy and I reflect on the idea of how to truths can be held at the same time.

26:13I can hold joy in one hand and grief in the other hand, paradox is part of life and I think that wrestling certainly, you know, helps us think about how paradox is a reality in life.

26:30So after kind of reflecting on this, the nature of wrestling, I invite everyone to wonder about one thing that you're really struggling to understand, one ideal.

26:44You're grappling with one thing you wish, you could believe, but you're not quite there.

26:50And the theme of january is transcending dualities.

26:55And so I want you to wrestle and think about how that one thing that you're struggling with is it connected to dualistic thinking, either or kinds of thinking.

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27:08And, what if you dwell in unknowing orbit as opposed to trying to figure it out.

27:16And so wondering together with your, with yourself or with the people that you're gathering with about, dualistic thinking and about how something that you're wrestling with might be connected to dualistic thinking.

27:30That's the wonder moment for the week.

27:33And then the specific activity or the thing I'm asking you to try is very simple.

27:40Something you can do with your family or something you can do with your little group if you're meeting for lunch around the conference room, table in the department or whatever.

27:50and that's just to find some sort of object that embodies that thing you're wrestling with or embodies.

28:00something that hold two truths or two feelings at once.

28:04So it could be a picture of someone you love, my own dear dear grandmother just died a few weeks ago.

28:11And so when I look at her picture, I feel delight and joy and gratitude.

28:18And I also feel deep lost at the same time.

28:21I feel all those things at once.

28:23I'm wrestling with grief in that way.

28:27so find something tangible like my grandmother's picture and show it to your group and say this embodies wrestling for me and just kind of talk about that.

28:39And then I have a prayer and I have some I think very illuminating words from the tower teaching that can help us think about paradox.

28:51So I'm happy to read that if you'd like me to as a Yeah.

28:55So I wrote the prayer and then the prayer is for me and then the concluding words are from the tao te ching may this family or this group, May these friends forever be a safe harbor where we can bring our anger, our hard questions, our doubts, our contradictions and our silences.

29:23May we forever be a sanctuary where we know that faith and doubt are not opposites.

29:30May this family be made up of loving, critical thinkers who embrace the shades of gray when it might be easier to just see things in black and white May we wrestle openly together with all the respect and kindness we can muster.

29:49Sometimes the path is hard and rocky.

29:53So help us Oh, divine spirit to walk in the way of love as honestly and openly as we can.

30:05We reflect on paradox.

30:07Water wears away rock Spirit overcomes force the weak will undo the mighty May we learn to see things backwards inside out and upside down.

30:30That's beautiful.

30:33I love the way you as you have designed this devotional.

30:40You have these really accessible ways to connect with your community and to do something physical to take the rich ideas that you're offering out of just staying inside our own heads, our own hearts but expressing them and connecting with one another.

31:00and one of the things that I noticed that I really liked you have your devotional feature, a recipe or a project often as part of the practice and I am just naturally drawn to this kind of thing.

31:13But I can also imagine that seeing a time consuming craft described in the chapters might feel kind of oppressive to listeners who feel very busy.

31:23So what would you say to them about those elements?

31:29Well it's not required.

31:30Certainly we don't have to do it.

31:33you know all may some, you know what is it?

31:37All may some must none.

31:42some should should.

31:44That's right.

31:46You don't have to make the confrey, savor, the candles or the linton easy linton soup.

31:53Although we do all have to eat something.

31:55We do.

31:56These are generally really easy, especially during lent.

32:00So, but I think I love to make stuff.

32:07I thought about like maybe that should be my, my little biography on instagram Bonnie smith White House.

32:13I like to make stuff.

32:15You can't say like three words to three or four words to describe yourself.

32:19I love to do things with my hands and I feel like it connects me to creation all of the crafts and the recipes are really not expensive, not fancy.

32:32but things that I think connect us to earth and connect us to one another.

32:38And so, I would invite you to just maybe give give something a try, you know, making a rosary may sound like not something that you've ever imagined that you would do, but there is something very primal about touching a bead.

32:53People, human beings have been doing stuff with beads for a long time and you know, I think it's worth experimenting with how that might feel to you to have your, have your hands engaged in touching a beautiful bead, that feels really good while you're saying your prayers.

33:13so you know, maybe give it, give it a try or just not do that part or maybe come back to it in a few years if you're looking at this book and you've got babies and all you want to do in your free time is go to sleep or watch the great british baking show, then do that and then maybe when the babies are, you know, 789, you might try to make cookies for the birds, and honor ST Francis.

33:41but certainly if if that's not something that you feel called to in this moment in your life then skip it, that sounds wise.

33:49Yeah.

33:50And that, I mean that is really kind of the next question I wanted to ask.

33:57I was just thinking about women in academic and professional context who are mostly these are our listeners and how they can use this book.

34:07and I think, I mean I do hear you saying that it really can be an invitation to richness rather than another thing to do.

34:18I wanted to ask to have you ever used any of these ideas in your own classroom?

34:23Absolutely, in different ways, but absolutely.

34:28So one of the things that I've talked about, I'm teaching a senior, I just finished teaching of course with my seniors in the honors program at Belmont and I've talked to them about how so much of life is being alienated from mystery.

34:43And I invite them, I invited them to pull up the images from the James webb telescope.

34:51Have you been if you've been following this unbelievable images from the carina nebula?

35:00And I asked them pull them, pull those images up on your phone and I want you to just stare at them while I'm talking to you, just look at them because what you're looking at is a stellar nursery or you know this, this Sort of birthplace of stars, stars are born and they grow older and they die.

35:23They're just like you and just like me and look at those images and allow yourself to gasp and wonder and think about how something that formed 13.5 billion years ago is this is the light that you're beholding as you look at your little smartphone and it's just, it's a shift in perspective to me.

35:46And it's this way of summoning the past and the present and the future altogether.

35:53And so then I would read them a few lines from walt Whitman.

35:57It's a great poem about the tension between academic life and being part of a mystical kind of experience on earth.

36:11So that the poem is called when I heard the learned astronomer.

36:16And so I'm having my students, you know, at two o'clock in the afternoon in Nashville Tennessee look at their phones and just listen to me read the short one when I heard the learned astronomer when the proofs, the figures were arranged in columns before me.

36:33When I was shown the charts and diagrams to add divide and measure them.

36:41When I sitting heard the astronomer where he lectured with much applause in the lecture room,
How soon?

36:50Unaccountable!

36:51I became tired and sick till rising and gliding out.

36:57I wandered off by myself in the mystical moist night air and from time to time looked up in perfect silence at the stars.

37:13What a wonderful I think.

37:14What a wonderful thing to do on epiphany.

37:17And hopefully, you know, your listeners will be listening to this around, you know, somewhere around epiphany, but what you mark the day with a moment of wonder and go out, and look at the sky or even just pull up the carina nebula on your phone and imagine the light in the sky and how those magi were gazing at the same stars and you know, feel that mystical sense of communion, we are just alienated from that so much in life.

37:48And you know, we're stuck in modes of learning, like the ones that that Whitman describes in the poem that just feel sort of flat.

37:59And I want to find ways to jar myself out of that and jar my my kids and my students and you know, my readers out of that alienation from time to time as women says, Well, you've created a wonderful handbook for that and I'm grateful that it's in the world now.

38:23Thank you.

38:24So as we, as we wrap up, why don't you tell us how listeners can follow you and your work and what's on the horizon for you?

38:34Sure, Well, you can follow me on instagram, you can follow me on my website, which is Bonnie smith white house dot com.

38:44And I am beginning to build a little infrequent newsletter.

38:48So feel free to subscribe there.

38:50, I'm also in the future.

38:53I'm hoping to work on some of the work that I mentioned in the beginning with regard to images of God and how our images of God are always provisional, they're always inadequate.

39:08you know, I want to ask myself and ask others what is this image of God that I'm bringing to my imagination and how can I learn from other images that we've that maybe time and space and textual sort of work can help us understand sometimes.

39:30I think it's good that images can be set aside, so that we can find new ones that can help us imagine God in in new ways.

39:41I am really interested in learning more about the divine feminine.

39:45Some of your readers may be familiar with the recent scholarship of Elizabeth Schragger, she did some great textual work on the role of mary Magdalene and how translation specifically john, the translation of john has probably downplayed the role of mary Magdalene.

40:04So, I'm interested in diving into some of that scholarship.

40:09I'm also very deeply committed to and interested in interfaith learning and dialogue, especially with regard to buddhism and Judaism.

40:20So, those are some areas that I expect to be diving into a bit more in the coming years.

40:29We're releasing this episode in mid january and in my mind it's the perfect time to pick up a copy of Bonnie's book and treat it as a guide for inspired connections with God in 2023 personally, I'm looking forward to using it during lent, it's a season that often feels difficult for me and I think Bonnie's invitational writing style will be just what I need for lent this year.

40:56And as I mentioned before, if you listen to the end of the credits, you'll hear a little bonus from our interview in which Bonnie offers sound advice for parents with young Children.

41:08The Women's scholars and professionals podcast is hosted by me and Boyd and his production of intervarsity, christian fellowship.

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41:49Please consider rating and reviewing our podcast and sharing it with others and as we close, listen in on this excerpt from my interview with Bonnie I wanted to ask specifically to about your family life.

42:09I know that you have several Children.

42:12How did you manage, especially those days when you know newborns and toddlers?

42:19How did how did that?

42:21I know that that is a question that comes up a lot for women in our audience.

42:27how to, how to manage all of the time intensive stress of raising young Children while also pursuing a tenure track dumb very, very hard.

42:41I have two sons.

42:44it feels like several, but it's too, it's just too and it was actually tenured when I had them.

42:51So that may be a little bit different from your audience for many people in your audience.

42:58and I don't know, you know, I don't know how much of a difference it makes, but you know, I will say it it's very difficult to find the child care aspect to figure out how to balance having babies in particular and nursing.

43:16when you're teaching and you're trying to buy students and you're going to committee meetings and you know, going into your office and putting a piece of paper over the window in the door so you can pump.

43:26I did all that stuff for years.

43:28And it was hard and I don't, I mean I wouldn't offer a recipe for how it could be done except to say that.

43:38I think we have to say out loud that it's hard.

43:42I think we have to get on those committees, those faculty senate committees that have to do with work life balance.

43:49I think we have to argue and get our male colleagues to argue for spaces on campus to pump a nurse.

43:57I think we have to just say these hard things out loud and find very specific strategic ways to work them into policy.

44:07And, I hope that resonates with your, with your listeners.

44:11But get on those committees, get your male colleagues to get on those committees and encourage them to advocate for policies that support mothers and fathers and all all parents of all kinds as we are trying to juggle and you know, do this incredibly important vitally.

44:32You know, vital work of parenting.

44:35we're going to be better professors were gonna be better colleagues.

44:38We're going to be better writers if we are supported in our roles as parents, don't be afraid to get on the committees and and make noise.