



“Teach These Things Freely Unto Your Children”

Show Notes & Transcripts

Podcast General Description:

Follow Him: A *Come, Follow Me* Podcast with Hank Smith & John Bytheway

Do you ever feel that preparing for your weekly *Come, Follow Me* lesson falls short? Join hosts Hank Smith and John Bytheway as they interview experts to make your study for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' *Come, Follow Me* course not only enjoyable but original and educational. If you are looking for resources to make your study fresh, faithful, and fun--no matter your age--then join us every Sunday.

Podcast Episode Descriptions:

Part 1:

Is repentance about healing our relationship with God and ourselves? Dr. Jenet Ericson instructs that God teaches that parenting is a relationship instead of a role. Additionally, we discuss intentionality in family life, the power of ritual, and the strength that comes from brokenness and healing with the Savior.

Part 2:

Dr. Erickson returns and teaches that emotions and sexuality are given as gifts by a loving God. We also discuss Enoch's vulnerability, restoring eternal vision, and displacing shame in our lives through Jesus Christ.

Timecodes:

Part 1

- 00:00 Welcome to Part I
- 01:36 Introduction to Dr. Erickson
- 02:38 Background to Moses 6 and Genesis 5
- 04:12 Moses 6 tells us what to teach our children
- 06:01 Historical changes to meaning of repentance
- 09:44 How we see God is how we parent
- 12:04 Jesus is about change and conversion
- 15:30 Adam loved God and had a strong personal relationship and this is a parenting pattern
- 15:42 Introduction to parenting pyramid (relationship is biggest part and discipline is the smallest)
- 18:57 The Atonement heals retroactively, including with parenting and grandparenting
- 23:32 Fallibility and vulnerability as a parent and modeling repentance
- 27:50 Garments and the Atonement/covering
- 30:19 Intentional family rituals
- 36:03 Calling on the Lord means we care less about worldly approval
- 38:46 Hank shares a personal childhood experience about feeling exposed
- 42:24 Dr. Erickson shares a personal experience about writing testimony from a mother
- 48:55 Eve, Adam, and the familial order of the priesthood
- 55:02 President Nelson teaches we help those struggling by reminding them of their divine parentage and purpose
- 1:03:07 The importance of familial rituals
- 1:14:26 Teaching our relationship with God and the repentance shouldn't include shame is essential
- 1:17:35 End of Part I

Part 2:

- 00:03 Welcome to Part II
- 00:07 Enoch, my son
- 01:44 Repentance is a change of heart
- 03:27 Anger is an emotion can that can lead to a change in action
- 09:09 Enoch's call from the Lord
- 13:19 Anointing of Enoch's eyes
- 23:29 God requires total change and sinning doesn't bring back former sins
- 27:21 First Principles taught to Enoch
- 29:27 We are sent away from parents in order to reconnect with covenants
- 37:46 What "conceived in sin" may mean

- 47:47 Teach the gospel in our home includes vulnerability
- 54:26 How Jesus is our spiritual Father
- 56:28 Dr. Erickson shares a story about the sacrament
- 59:08 Dr. Erickson shares statement by her student Spencer Bergen
- 1:00:43 Hank shares how a friend sees the Atonement in the seasons, etc.
- 1:05:47 Reminders about parenting being a relationship and the Lord doesn't coerce or control
- 1:12:28 Forgiveness for ourselves as parents and repentance has the ability to work backwards and repair relationships
- 1:14:45 Dr. Erickson shares her background in academics as well as the gospel
- 1:21:34 End of Part II

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Biographical Information:



Jenet Erickson, an associate professor in the Department of Church History and Doctrine in BYU Religious Education, teaches The Eternal Family (REL 200) course as well as Introduction to Family Process (SFL 160) for the School of Family Life. Her research has focused on maternal and child well-being in the context of work and family life, as well as the distinct contributions of mothers and fathers in children's development. She is a research fellow of both the Wheatley Institution and the Institute for Family Studies and has been a columnist on family issues for the Deseret News since 2013.

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- Hank Smith: 00:00:01 Welcome to followHIM, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their *Come, Follow Me* study. I'm Hank Smith.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:09 I'm John Bytheway.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:11 We love to learn.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:11 We love to laugh.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:13 We want to learn and laugh with you.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:15 As together, we followHIM.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:17 We follow him. Hello everyone. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I'm your host, and I am here with my patriarch-like co-host, John Bytheway. John, we're talking about the patriarchs today, Adam, and Noah, and Enoch, and I thought, that's John. You would fit right in with those awesome patriarchs.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:42 Oh, thank you, I think.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:44 Think. Yes, no you would. You would. I'm not saying you're old because you're not old.
- John Bytheway: 00:00:52 Oh, no-
- Hank Smith: 00:00:52 I'm just saying that you would-
- John Bytheway: 00:00:53 That didn't come across like that at all.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:55 You're very patriarch-like. Now John, when I looked at the *Come, Follow Me* manual and saw that this lesson was very focused on teaching these things to your children, I was thinking, hey, I know an expert in parenting and teaching children who's with us today.

- John Bytheway: 00:01:16 Yes, and she's back, Jenet Erickson, we're really glad to have her back and she talked about when we had the "Proclamation to the World on the Family," isn't that right, Hank? Was a wonderful, wonderful time. So we're glad to have her back. Jenet is an associate professor in the Department of Church History and Doctrine in BYU Religious Education. She teaches the Eternal Family course as well as Introduction to Family Processes for the School of Family Life. Her research is focused on material and child wellbeing in the context of work and family life, as well as the distinct contributions of mothers and fathers in children's development.
- John Bytheway: 00:01:57 You chose well today, Hank, for these particular chapters. She's a Research Fellow of both the Wheatley Institution and the Institute for Family Studies, and has been a columnist on family issues for the *Deseret News* since 2013. I've seen a lot of those articles and I'm just excited to have her back, because I always feel like Hank, these are really practical things. All of us are trying to figure out how to be the kind of family the Lord wants us to be. So I'm so glad we have Jenet back with us today, because get your notes ready, because we can maybe get some things that can help us be better moms and dads, and children, and aunts and uncles, and grandparents, and patriarchs even.
- Hank Smith: 00:02:38 Hey welcome, Jenet. We're excited to have you here.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:02:40 So good to be here. Thank you, John. Thank you Hank.
- Hank Smith: 00:02:43 It's just a treat to have you, and I feel like if anyone listening hasn't gone and listened to our episode with Jenet, go back. Just hit pause on this episode, go back and listen to the two we did with her on the Proclamation on the Family. Go back and listen to those because this will give us probably a really good setup for what we're going to do today. I'm guessing that a lot of that could help set you up in a good way to maybe understand these episodes better. So Jenet, we're in Genesis and Moses today, Genesis 5, Moses 6.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:03:27 It's so interesting that Genesis 5, I think what it illustrates for us is we needed the Prophet Joseph to receive more, to help us know the true history of that great prophet Enoch in terms of patterns of families. So I'm going to just focus on my intent, let's focus on Moses 6. We can start right at the beginning of Moses 6 with recognizing that Genesis 5 provides historical genealogy for us to follow, but Moses 6 really gives us the story, the history.

- Hank Smith: 00:03:56 I was noticing that as well that you look at Genesis 5 and you're like, "Oh, okay, I get the ancestry, and then I go to Moses 6 and I get an explosion of information." Insight to these that I didn't have before.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:04:12 The title for *Come, Follow Me*, Hank, as you noted already, "Teach These Things Freely Unto Your Children." I think just having that title tells us how significant this chapter is. What is it? The Lord is telling us to teach something to our children, to create a home that is centered around certain things, and what are those things? If you picked one chapter out of all of scripture, this is the chapter that delineates the core truths that parents would care to teach to their children. It starts with verse 1, "And Adam hearkened unto the voice of God, and called upon his sons to repent." And I just had to stop there because that word *repent* is such a challenging word. Yet it's what Adam is told by the Lord to do. What does it mean, "To call upon children to repent?"
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:05:08 I think repentance is so difficult because of all the things Satan would want to distort, it would be sin, and repentance, and atonement, and salvation. All those things bound together, that is what he would care most deeply about distorting. So repentance is so often something we fear, we avoid, right? Our idea is to avoid repentance, do everything you can to avoid needing to repent, and prove your righteousness by not needing to repent, and fear and shame around that word. Then we have President Nelson kind of break open that distortion and help us understand what repentance is, and when we understand it, then we can see why the Lord would say, "Call upon your children to repent." What does that mean? It's interesting. I've loved the Givens, their *All Things New*, Fiona and Terryl Givens book. One of the things that they do is tackle the historical understanding of repentance, especially from the Reformation, and that it is different than what the original Greek truths about repentance were.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:06:12 So for example, we have this feudalistic period where to sin is to offend God, to offend his honor. That's how we've come to understand sin, and then you go to legalism a little later where the idea is God demands a payment for violation of the law. So you have Calvin saying, "Jesus, by his sacrifice, appeased divine anger," and Luther saying, "God hath laid upon our sins, not upon us, but upon his son Christ." Tyndale saying, "We need Christ to save us from the vengeance of the law. His blood, his death appeased the wrath of God." So we developed this idea of repentance that is right, that punishment and meting out a punishment. That it's the penalty paid to obtain pardon. So as a

child, I remember when we lived in Mexico City, seeing people on their hands and knees crawling into the cathedral and trying to understand what was happening, and my dad explaining to us they're paying penance for their sins. It's the way that they feel they will become free of sin and their understanding of Christ, and repentance, and sin and salvation was all locked up in this penance idea.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:07:26 Of course, we know the Greek word for repentance is *metanoia*. President Nelson recently taught us that, and what it means is this, "Change of mind, knowledge, spirit, and heart, even breath." Thomas McConkie will say, "It means coming out of my small mind," and so when Jesus asks us to repent, it is all about growth. A change of mind and heart, and becoming. Not penalty, right? It isn't about paying penance. It's about coming out of growing beyond, learning, developing, even healing. Hank, you've talked about what he teaches us, how he breaks out of these falsehoods that we have. You'll tell your students, but you just think of the woman caught in adultery, and here she's brought before the Savior and the accusers are intent on retributive justice, right?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:08:25 This is their idea, and he's going to punish her for her sins. So you have Adam Miller explaining so well what the problem of human experience is, how we relate to the law, and we see in the Pharisees this distortion in how they relate to the law. Do we use the law to treat the law as a guide and the work of love, or do we use it as a means for judging ourselves, what we do or don't deserve, or judging what other people do or don't deserve? That whole idea is trapped in this false notion of what repentance really means. So you'll see, right? Even as human beings, how we'll say, "Look, they're the people that don't keep the law. They're the losers. They're the people that do keep the law, right? I want to be one of those who does keep the laws, because that makes me a winner." That we spend time evaluating and measuring personal righteousness. That's all a distortion of what repentance means. It's that idea of I've got to keep the black marks, I wipe them off. Right? That's what the whole purpose of repentance is, and I want to be as free of as many black marks as I can. When in fact, God is saying, "Come to me. Come to me and grow." There's this distance to grow, to become holy as they are.
- Hank Smith: 00:09:44 This is difficult because I know that parenting is one of the most intimate parts of our lives, right? Or the way we parent, and so we don't want anybody to come away from this going, "I'm a bad parent or I'm a bad person." Right? But it does seem to me that if you get this wrong, if you get a distorted view, if you pass

on a distorted view to your children, in my experience, you end up with resentment instead of repentance.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:10:15 Yeah. It's interesting Hank. I love how you're saying that. I think, so our parenting begins with our own experience of God, our own relationship with ourselves, and we inherit distortions around repentance. I think that's why this is so beautiful that this chapter starts with teaching us the truth about what repentance means. So that we as parents begin by healing our own relationship with that word, which is healing our relationship with ourselves and healing our relationship with God, because don't you think we as parents, you said it, right? It is the most vulnerable thing in the world to be a parent. It is the place where we are most vulnerable to feeling judged, right? Like a good parent, and this is the product, and a bad parent. You keep the law, here we are again, right? If you're keeping the law, this is what it will look like, and if you're not keeping the law, this is what it will look like.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:11:12 I think this whole truth about repentance turns that totally upside down. It's, "What is my relationship with the beautiful truths of repentance for me personally?" And "How do I live that with my children?" What's so interesting is when we are in that mode of understanding God, and our parenting, and all of that, it's why we can be saddled with pain, and shame, and self-doubt, and unworthiness, and fear, and judgment. The Lord is not that God, and so the Lord, Jesus Christ, turns that distortion on his head. So you see the woman coming to him. They're looking for him to give her tribute, right? This justice, this penalty, right? He says, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more." We see that he is all about change, conversion, and healing.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:12:04 He is not about discipline, right? He's the God who in 3 Nephi says, "Oh, all ye will, ye not now return unto me and repent of your sins and be converted, that I may heal you." His entire ministry is one of healing, and he interchangeably uses healing with forgiveness of sins. They're used interchangeably. They're coming and saying, "We asked you to heal this person, sick of the palsy, and you said forgiveness of sins. That's what you have offered." Teaching us, that is what this is, and how much we as parents need that deep assurance of the Lord's walking beside us in this journey of parenting. Healing us, covering us, because the whole thing is about growth, development, becoming whole. That whole person, right? Perfection is completion. It's why it's so much more than paying a debt.

- John Bytheway: 00:13:03 The Bible Dictionary entry on repentance sounds so different than what you might expect. It calls it, "A fresh view about God, about oneself, and about the world." That sounds so different than what you were talking about, Jenet. Some of those traditional definitions of a scolding tone, or mindset, or punishment. Retribution, you called it. I mean, I feel like sometimes in the new Testament, the apostles, hey, who did sin? This man or his parents that he was born blind? There's got to be a reason that this guy had this affliction. Show us the cause and effect, and that was just a mindset back then. So I'm glad you said President Nelson, say it again, *metanoia*. I remember that talk, *metanoia*.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:13:53 *Metanoia*, yes.
- John Bytheway: 00:13:56 *Metanoia*.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:13:56 He talks about that. It's like he's quoting the Bible Dictionary, "A new view." A fresh view, a new mind, even a new way of breathing. That is what repentance really is.
- John Bytheway: 00:14:06 A new way of breathing.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:14:08 A new way of breathing, right? Taking in.
- John Bytheway: 00:14:10 You even breathe differently when you get it.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:14:12 Yes, yes. So I think when Brad Wilcox, he talks about, "We believe in being not saved by grace alone, but changed by grace." That this is not being saved in our sins, but saved *from* our sins by having been changed by his love and grace, so that that sin is no longer part of us. What a glorious path. So the truth is, we had to leave our Heavenly Parents, and I think this is what this chapter is about. We had to leave the presence of our Heavenly Parents so that we could experience oppositional choices, so we could taste the bitter to learn to prize the sweetness of what is good and pure. That is sin. That bitter bitterness is sin, or weakness, or transgression, and we taste it so that we can know the sweetness that is Christ. So repentance is the process by which we grow. We return into that healing light. We work with Christ and he, in us, changing our mind and our hearts and way of being.
- Hank Smith: 00:15:21 I think I'm hearing you say that Adam was able to teach this so well because of his relationship with God.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:15:28 Yes, yes.

- Hank Smith: 00:15:30 Adam knew God really well, they were good friends, and so he was able to teach repentance effectively. So as a parent, if I want to teach repentance effectively, I need to have my own relationship with repentance and with God. Is that-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:15:44 Yes, yes. In fact, the most transformative thing I think in parenting understanding is we have moved from an understanding of parenting as a role, to a relationship. So you have this powerful parenting pyramid, the Arbinger Institute creates this parenting pyramid that I think captures so much. If you'll just picture it, here's this pyramid. At the base of it, the largest section is the relationship I have with myself, with God. My way of being. My "At One Ment" in a sense with myself and with God. The next layer up is relationship with spouse. The next layer up is relationship with the child. Then it's teaching, and the very top is discipline. As parents we tend to spend, where do we spend most of our time?
- Hank Smith: 00:16:40 At the top. Discipline.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:16:41 Discipline, correction, right? I know this from myself. It's so natural to be like, "What are you doing?" Correcting, and here that pyramid is saying the foundation is my understanding of my relationship with God, with myself, that healed relationship. That relationship that then impacts how I relate to my spouse, that then impacts how I relate to this child, and then how I'm teaching them. Then the correction is so small a portion because that foundation is built upon relationships..
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:17:18 It begins with that relationship with myself, and I think when we see Christ as our advocate, and I mean in our parenting, in our personal life, in our personal way. Not an advocate in that he takes the beating for us, but the advocate in our growth who literally that word in Luke, when he was in agony, it's this word that captures the meaning of contest, right? It was this contest against the powers of evil and bondage on our behalf. So he literally works in us today at this moment, overcoming that. Overcoming the shame, overcoming the fear, overcoming the weakness, overcoming the predisposition that would harm us, the predisposition to sin. He heals that beautiful relationship as our advocate, and we bring that relationship into our relationship with our children.
- Hank Smith: 00:18:12 I know that there are people listening right now who are towards the end of their parenting, or even they have only adult children, who are listening and feeling a sense of, "Oh no, I did it all wrong." What would you say to someone? I would say right now, "Don't turn this off. Don't run and hide here. It's okay, it's

okay." Right? That it's okay. Just keep listening. You've said before, we're in this process as well. You weren't supposed to know it all in the beginning. What was I, 20-something when I became a parent? Right? So the Lord I think knew I wasn't going to do it perfectly. So, what would you say to someone who feels a little bit they're here at the end going, "Oh, I taught repentance all wrong, great?"

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:18:57 Oh, so I just think, here I am, right? 11 years into being a mother. I don't know. I can't even count the number of nights that I have awakened and thought, "Why am I like this as a mother? Why do I treat them this way? Why am I in this relationship?" Whether it's my mom, who's way down the road with great grandchildren now, every single one of us depends on that beautiful assurance that Christ is our advocate right now. Wherever that is, and his healing is retroactive. I know that whenever I heal in my relationship with him and with myself, it blesses my children. It doesn't matter when that happens, that healing power is felt, and to absolutely know the process, there's no other way for us to learn this, right? Then to live it and make mistakes. That's what the whole thing is all about. We taste the bitterness of how we relate, and we prize the sweetness of Christ. That was the whole reason we came. We have this idea of perfectionism, somehow. I-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:20:03 ... and we came. We have this idea of perfectionism somehow. I want to do the right thing for my child. I want to make the right decisions. I want to do it right. I want to have it so that they won't have to suffer. And all the questions. Am I expecting too much? Am I expecting too little, too many rules, not enough rules? Did I teach them all wrong about repentance? Did I teach them all wrong about covenants, right? What was I doing? And perfectionism, that whole focus on behaviorism and perfectionism. I love how Jennifer Finlayson-Fife just totally teaches this so powerfully, but it interferes with intimacy, that interferes with our relationships with ourselves and our children. And the moment we can be honest about our fallibility, because that is the absolute truth, instead of hiding behind a false idea that there is some perfect way that we either should have been or should be, then we have blocked intimacy.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:20:56 And it's that intimacy that is the core of parenting. And our children trust us. They can track our fallibility better than anybody. They see our hypocrisy better than anybody, right? Like we are unmasked to them. And the moment we are unafraid, because we know Christ is our advocate, to be fallible to them, honest about that with them, they can trust us. And

we have given them the greatest gift, which is to be confident in their own fallibility with Christ as their advocate. So that is the journey. And the moment we can turn and say, I have failed you because I am a fallible person. And he is my redeemer and he is yours. Then we've entered into a space of that level of intimacy that is the healing part of parenting.

- Hank Smith: 00:21:52 I remember thinking this about my dad before he died. He would be so great with my kids. So fun with them and they just adored him. And I'm like, that's not my dad. That is not the same guy that raised me. And I remember saying that to him, "You're super nice to them and I don't know how nice you were to us." And he said, "Yeah, I probably was too harsh. I probably was too harsh." And he would say, "I'm sorry about that." And that wasn't the point. I was just saying, you just seem like you've really softened up.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:22:24 Yes. Grown, right? Grown in that security of the assurance of Christ's work.
- Hank Smith: 00:22:31 That's why being a grandparent sounds so fun, is you've learned so much now. Now you can be the parent you wanted to be,
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:22:39 It takes so much compassion with ourselves, right? And the thing is compassion with ourselves and compassion with our children is where the power lies. It's that compassion in our own failings, compassion with ourselves about that and compassion with them. I love this statement from William Kautz in the book *Winter's Grace*. He says, "To avoid shame," and I think this happens so much in parenting, "You better believe there's going to be all kinds of anxiety and shame around parenting. We feel responsible for their salvation, that what they do and what they are reflects on us. If I'm righteous, you're going to look and act a certain way. And if I do this right, and I control this outcome. And I think when we totally throw that out, when this is about us developing an intimate relationship together, this parent with child, knowing you, loving you, truly loving you."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:23:31 My anxiety's not infecting that relationship, but out of that relationship and working towards that, then we come to the purpose of parenting that with repentance of the heart, it's this love of repentance, right? It's this gratitude for change. That's what parenting needs so much. Right? And acceptance of that fallibility for you and for me, and a gratitude for that beautiful process of the promise of change. Anyways, he says to avoid shame, one must feign perfection, even though the entire enterprise is a joke. That is the truth about parenting, right?

Authentic intimacy requires a different way of living. The masks come off and the walls fall down whenever honesty is followed by tenderness and mercy. Without such a love, we are all broken beyond repair, parents and children. We tear that mask off. I need Christ. You need Christ. I am fallible. You are fallible. You are loved. I am loved. And his work is to help us grow and become. And that's what Adam starts with right here.

- John Bytheway: 00:24:43 And you have articulated it today, but I feel like modeling repentance for our kids have been some tender moments for me when I can sit. And as we approach family prayer, whatever, and say, "You guys, I lost it today. And I'm sorry that I need help." And those are tender moments when they can see, I haven't got this figured out either. And more than once with my kids, I hope this is true. I've said, "You guys, this isn't you against me or those who make messes against those who clean up the mess. This is all of us against the Adversary."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:25:25 John, I loved how you brought up this against the Adversary. I've been thinking there's some beautiful insights. I think Michael Wilcox talks about this, but just being in the temple. You see Satan. The very first thing he wants to do is to shame us in our mortality, shame us in our weakness, shame us our emotions and our hormones and our traditions and our genetic predispositions, that are part of our mortality. And so he says hide and they make a covering, right? They make a covering Adam and Eve do, and it's pathetic. And the Savior says, "Let me offer you a covering." That's what the whole garment represents, right? Is this covering, and it's not a covering because he's ashamed of our mortality. I think that word covering so beautifully is, "To fill the holes, to make strong again, to heal it, to make it whole."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:26:21 And he's not ashamed of our mortality. He says, bring it to me. I will fill it. I will cover it. I will make it whole. I will purify... And when we can be that way with our children, it's the only honest and true way to live. Right? And it allows them to have confidence in us, trust in us and trust in Christ. If my parents can rely on him, I can rely on him. If we can do that together, unafraid of the adversary's efforts to shame us as a family, then we are on the path to the Lord's healing power.
- John Bytheway: 00:26:56 Well, it's like you said, they're the experts on our... My kids know-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:27:02 Our sins and weaknesses?

- John Bytheway: 00:27:02 I mean, yeah. My kids come to hear me do a fireside. They're listening with completely different ears than every other teenager in the room. They're like, "Yeah, right, dad!" Because they know, and that's always humbling to have my kids hear what I say, "Don't watch me too closely." I think I heard Steven Covey say once. Yeah. "I'm teaching you some true things, but don't watch me too close. I'm still trying to live up to what I believe as well." And I'm still trying. So I like what you said. How did you put it? They're the experts on our foibles.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:27:43 Our fallibility.
- John Bytheway: 00:27:45 They're the experts on it. And so you can't fake it with them.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:27:49 You can't fake it and we're not supposed to. I think that is where the distortion around repentance comes. Right? It's a hiding to one another as other parents. It's hiding from our children. It's hiding, right? And the Lord is saying, "Take the covering off. Let me cover. You do not be ashamed of this." That's what the whole thing is about.
- John Bytheway: 00:28:07 In fact, Jenet, I'm glad you said that because this idea of garments and ... and the covering, one of the things I find fascinating is out of Liberty Jail, "When we undertake to cover our sins," instead of having the Savior cover them, that's the problem where we think we can cover. No, we can't do that. We need the Savior to cover. And then I think it's Alma 34, "Without that, we are exposed." He uses the phrase.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:28:37 Yes, Jacob too says, "We will stand before God in our nakedness." In a sense, that's how we are in front of our children. Right?
- John Bytheway: 00:28:44 Yeah. They know our fallibilities. So I love that you brought that up. "They tried to cover themselves." Eh, no, I've got something so much better. Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:28:54 Better.
- John Bytheway: 00:28:55 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:28:57 Jenet, as you were talking about being open and honest, I read verse 2 and it seems that Adam could have a lot of shame or Adam and Eve about what happened with Cain and Abel, but he seems quiet... "He glorified the name of God; for he said: God appointed me another seed." He's talking about Seth, instead of Abel, whom Cain slew. He's very open and honest about what

happened. It's not like, "Oh, we don't talk about that. We don't talk about that moment in our family."

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:29:26 Oh, so true, Hank. Right there for the entire world.
- Hank Smith: 00:29:29 Right. He's like this happened. This happened in our family.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:29:34 And he's saying agency is real. Cain made choices. Agency is a real thing not to hide from. And it means that there's a possibility of change is what it means. It's a glorious truth. And that all families have real challenges, significant challenges, every family, because that was the whole point of it, to learn and grow. It's interesting that we'll talk about in family life structure and heart. Meaning when I ask my students, "So what are your goals for your future family?" I just read this beautiful paper. And he said, "I want the most important thing for me is to have my children develop faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ." And they were asked how they're going to do that. What do you think students are going to say? Scripture study every day. Family home evening, right? Family prayer. And those are structural pieces and they matter. They're important.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:30:19 They're why we're taught to do them. They're the rituals that enable connection. They're what Bill Doherty, my professor at University of Minnesota, a powerful therapist. He would say that the intentional family and we need intentionality in family life. That's kind of a buzzword, right? To be intentional about where you're going and what you're doing. The intentional family is a ritualizing family. And the gospel of Jesus Christ gives us all these beautiful rituals. That's the word we would use in social science, right? It gives us family scripture study and family prayer and Family Home Evening and going to church together and doing family councils and family vacations and all of these beautiful rituals. Those are structural pieces. But as we all know, it's the heart that has to come through in the structure.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:31:10 You could do the structure and not have the heart and impede the heart. And so there's just that really important focus. I think when we get the core right, this repentance and vulnerability and honesty and the Savior's redeeming power, and he is our advocate and there is no shame in our mortality. When we get that, you are fallible. I am fallible. You are loved. I am loved. Then when we do the structure, then that heart will come through. And that's not to say, we'll talk about that. It's not to say it's going to be any different than Elder Bender says when they're sitting down for family devotional and the kids are like, "Quit breathing my breath." Yes, totally. And the conflict and the contention. It's why Elder Wilford Anderson, when he talks

about learning the music, "We learn the dance steps, but we need to hear the music of the gospel."

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:32:04 And he'll say, that is something we practice over and over again. We're practicing getting the heart there, this Christ centered dependence on the Lord, every single one of us together. So I love that you brought up. They're unafraid to say, "These are the hard things in our family, right?" And so when I'm talking about repentance, that's what I'm talking about. It's like, if we have that core right, we get rid of the fear and shame to one another and to our children, like we see this as a beautiful experience of growth. And it's not to be hidden, right? But I think we struggle in our culture a lot with that. And parents can feel so much shame about just mortality, which is what the adversary would want us to feel.
- John Bytheway: 00:32:52 When I think of how the Book of Mormon starts and that family and how many problems that family had, I thought, "Are people noticing this? Please notice this was not a perfect family." "And let's kill dad." "No, let's kill Nephi." "Oh, I'm sorry. Ishmael died." "Let's kill Nephi." A boy like Nephi comes from the same family as a boy like Laman. I hope we're saying, "Look, everybody has an interesting past. And if your kids all turn out great, great. Can you take all the credit? Probably not. Can you take all the blame? Probably not."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:33:34 Right. Nor can you measure the good that comes from some of those intense struggles, right? That seems so shameful, but that can often put us on a trajectory for growth, that we would never trade what happens because of that. How we come to know the Savior, how we come to really, really know him and experience brokenness and his healing.
- John Bytheway: 00:33:54 What were we taught by this horrible event we went through?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:33:58 Yes.
- John Bytheway: 00:33:58 Would we trade what we were taught now?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:34:01 Yes.
- John Bytheway: 00:34:02 Because it pushed us into the Savior in a way we might not have.
- Hank Smith: 00:34:06 And then social media doesn't help when you're portraying this perfect family.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:34:13 That's a very natural thing to do for all of us to kind of hide, to kind of pretend. Here's President Nelson, "Nothing is more liberating, more ennobeling, or more crucial to our individual progression than is a regular daily focus on repentance." And he's talking about our personal lives and in our family lives, repentance is not an event. It is a process that is the key to happiness and peace of mind. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of repentance. That is not a self flogging punishment kind of orientation, right? He's saying the gospel provides an invitation to keep growing, changing, becoming more pure. It is a gospel of hope, of healing, and of progress. Thus, the gospel is a message of joy. And when we can see repentance like to be taken seriously, repentance is the message of joy.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:35:08 When we can just take that so seriously, then I think we have protected the heart of parenting. This is about change, growth, not hiding. Here's verse 3. And I'm just going to put verse 3 and verse 4 together where it talks about Seth, this son of Adam and Eve. And then it says, "And then began these men to call upon the name of the Lord and the Lord bless them." So we're going to learn in this chapter all about how the Lord teaches repentance to his children, like what that looks like. And the very first thing he says, first of all, is teaching us repentance is good. This is the gospel of joy, but then call upon the name of the Lord.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:35:49 So Elder Christofferson says this divine love... Most recently, "This divine love should give us abundant comfort and confidence as we pray to the Father in the name of Christ. We need not hesitate to call upon God even when we feel unworthy. We can rely on the mercy and merits of Jesus Christ to be heard. As we abide in God's love, we depend less and less on the approval of others to guide us." So when we're talking about shame, that's this need to be approved of by others, like to be affirmed, right? To feel like other people think we're okay. And I'm okay. And here, Elder Christofferson is saying this beautiful instruction about hauling upon the Lord means we can depend less and less on the approval of others to guide us and depend on the absolute assurance of his love, abiding in his love. There's that first key to teaching repentance. We can call upon God right now in our sins with our weaknesses and be heard. And he becomes the source of our approval in a sense.
- John Bytheway: 00:36:57 I think that one of the things that the Adversary would want to do is tell us... I love the way you were just saying that you can call upon God in the midst of your problems. Not well, as soon as I solve this, then maybe I can approach God about it. Or I can't talk to God right now. I messed up so badly, which is

exactly the best time to talk to him. And so, I think about the sequence of, "Come unto Christ and be perfected in him." It's not be perfected, and then you'll be able to come unto Christ.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:37:36 The other day, we had a difficult experience in my own with my children and my husband and something painful that happened. And we have these two children and I could hear in their voices, "This is shameful, right?" This question, "Do we have to be the kind of family that has these kinds of things, right?" And they're young, they have yet to experience how pervasive these and ordinary these challenges are. But it was so beautiful to have my husband say, "We can pray right now for healing from the Lord. And we don't have to be ashamed about this or afraid of it. He beckons us to come right this minute. So I love how these verses start with that. Thank you, John, for that beautiful insight.
- John Bytheway: 00:38:19 There's a little saying I heard when I was probably a teenager that I've always loved, and that is, "Satan trembles when he sees the weakest Saint on her knees or upon his knees." That's exactly what he does not want you to do is get on your knees. But the Lord does want... And you're not going to surprise him. You're not going to say I did this. You did? What? He knows.
- Hank Smith: 00:38:47 When my relationship with the Lord is right, I'm no longer maybe hungering and thirsting after that acceptance from other people. And I remember specifically a childhood memory. I remember once the police were called to our house, I was maybe three or four years old. There was a domestic issue going on. And they sent us, the younger kids out to sit on the curb. I remember the officer said, "You guys go sit out here on the curb and I'm going to go talk to the adults inside." And I remember sitting there and watching all the neighbors come out and they opened their front door to see what's going on over there at the Smith's house. And I remember that feeling of being seen, like totally exposed to our problems, were now very public. And I remember that feeling. I couldn't have been more than three years old, but I remember that shame of this is now open to everyone. And what you're saying, I think in verse 4 is, if you can somehow stop worrying what anybody else-
- Hank Smith: 00:40:03 If you can somehow stop worrying about what anybody else, the neighbors, the ward, what anybody else thinks and go to the Lord in all honesty; when you have that connection with him, these problems become... They're not fun by any means, but they're not shameful.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:40:19 Yeah.

- Hank Smith: 00:40:19 It's just being human.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:40:22 And Hank, to give a child that is such a gift, right? To know you do not need to be afraid of these mortal life experiences with Christ as your advocate, always and forever. And they don't have to hide, right? They can develop confidence in the reality of fallible, mortal experience. We can accept it together. We don't want to, right? As a three-year-old, I think it's so natural to resist, right, the realities of the fallibility and mortality, and to feel ashamed about it, but what a gift to give them.
- John Bytheway: 00:40:58 And Jenet, just one more plug for the word you're using. My favorite nickname of the Savior is Advocate. He's not on the side of the law. He's on our side and our Advocate for what we're going through. If we get that mindset, it changes everything that our advocate is by our side. Our Advocate. So, keep using that word.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:41:28 John, I'm so glad we stopped with that word, because the Greek word, and I just learned this from a wonderful woman...
- John Bytheway: 00:41:36 *Parakletos* or something?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:41:38 Yes, yes. And it means consoler, as well as advocates. So you get this, and then if we think about it, and we'll talk about this a little bit later, but the Holy Ghost is the Comforter, right? The consoler, and he is also the teacher of truth. So here, Hank, in this moment as a child, you're being exposed to the truth and comforted at the same time, right? That's what an advocate does. It's not to hide from the truth, but this consoler with us, advocating for our growth and testifying of the truth, is just so powerful. That word, advocate. So thank you for stopping us there.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:17 Okay. Here's Verse 5. "And the book of remembrance was kept," and we're going to read this book of remembrance repeatedly. We're going to read the word repentance eight times. We're going to read book of remembrance four or five times. "And in which was recorded in the language of Adam, for it was given unto as many as called upon God to write by the spirit of inspiration."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:41 I had a really powerful experience as a Young Single Adult. I wasn't young enough. I yearned for children and I had a very sacred experience listening to President Eyring tell a story. I was in graduate school, yearning to be married and have children. I'm listening to his talk in my car. And he tells a story about how

he taught, when he was President of Ricks College, he taught religion and he taught the Doctrine and Covenants. And he would tell the students that one of the requirements was to write.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:43:10 And he describes this girl in the class who kind of said, "Why do I need to work on these..." He could hear her questioning. "Why is it so important that I refine my writing skills?" And she said something like, "The only thing I'm going to write are letters to my children," probably. She didn't see herself as an academic or something like that.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:43:28 And so, "Why do I need this?" And he said, I was kind of, "I don't know how to answer this exactly." And this young man stood up in the back of the room and he said... He said, "This young man had said very little during the class. I'm not sure he'd ever spoken before. He was older than the other students and shy. He asked if he could speak. He told in a quiet voice of having been a soldier in Vietnam. One day, in what he thought would be a lull, he had left his rifle and walked across his compound to mail call to pick up the mail. Just as he got a letter in his hand, he heard a bugle blowing and shouts and mortar and rifle fire coming ahead of the swarming enemy. He fought his way back to his rifle, using his hands as weapons. With the men who survived, he drove the enemy out. The wounded were evacuated. Then, he sat down among the living and some of the dead and opened his letter. It was from his mother."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:44:28 "She wrote that she had had a spiritual experience that assured her he would live to come home if he were righteous. "In my class," the boy said, quietly, this phrase that I cherish, "That letter was scripture to me." I kept it."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:44:48 Now, when the Lord is asking us to write and telling us, here's this example of this mother, writing revelation given to her that is scripture for her children. When I think of the most precious things I have for my parents, it's moments... Just a month ago, a mom had a spiritual experience in a very difficult situation, and had an answer to prayer come to her. She sent an email to us the next morning. I will ever keep that. It was an answer to her prayers that came from the Lord. Nothing is more scripture than that.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:45:24 And here, the Lord is teaching us this beautiful pattern. Parents, write your stories of repentance, right? Write your stories of repentance, of the Lord hearing your cry and answering your prayers and helping you and giving you strength, and began there with Adam and Eve writing scripture.

- Hank Smith: 00:45:46 When I was younger, I wrote more because I struggled more, right? If you read my journals, you'd think I was just constantly struggling because...
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:45:55 Same with me.
- Hank Smith: 00:45:57 That's when I would write, is when I was struggling, but I've never thought about sharing that writing with my children. But maybe it's time to go, go back, look at that writing and say, "Here's something that maybe will bless my teenagers." And that'd be very vulnerable, though. I'll be honest. That would be a very vulnerable move.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:46:18 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 00:46:19 They're like, "Dad, what was going on?" "You don't want to know."
- John Bytheway: 00:46:23 Yeah. President Eyring changed my life about writing in a journal because I'd figured journals... "Oh, I went on this trip." "Oh, I won this prize."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:46:38 Your daily activities or whatever.
- John Bytheway: 00:46:40 "And here's the price of gasoline." And President Eyring, I don't remember the exact phrase, but it was kind of, "Document the hand of God in your life. That's why you're writing a journal, and that's what would bless your children." And just what you're saying, Jenet, repentance, spiritual experiences, scripture, impressions. Document the hand of God in your life.
- John Bytheway: 00:47:05 You've heard me talk about this before, but my dad on a yellow pad, I think, wrote what is now about 90 pages. My sister-in-law typed it up, an autobiography. His World War II experience, his conversion. A treasure, absolutely priceless. Treasure because he wrote it down, and the parts that are treasure are documenting that God was watching over my life and helped me and my family through the depression, through World War II, everything.
- John Bytheway: 00:47:40 So, I love that they're being told. I mean, I just underlined in Verse 6, "Taught to read and write." And I'm thinking about 1 Nephi 1:1, "Therefore I was taught in the learning of my father." Others in the book of Mormons start out, "Yeah, my father and my parents taught me to write and how important that is."

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:48:03 Write by their scriptures, their written testimonies, right? That's how they were taught to read and write. It's interesting too, right, that it says, "Having a language which was pure and undefiled." And I think as we were talking about in the beginning, it was so illustrative to me to study that history of how we stand the word repentance and the defiling of its meaning, right? And that these words that we pass around that we use, right, and assume, right, where we can pass distortion right along with them. We need that pure and undefiled truth. And I think that when the Lord teaches us through our hearts, by the power of the Holy Ghost, it is pure and undefiled. What we learn is pure and undefiled truth. And when we write that, then it is language that is pure and undefiled.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:48:52 On to Verse 7. "Now this same Priesthood," and okay, so we've learned this pattern of starting with repentance, calling upon the name of the Lord, that this is scripture and that this book of remembrance that is the hand of God in our lives. And then we get this reminder. "Now this same Priesthood, which was in the beginning, shall be in the end of the world also."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:49:14 And you had Barb Gardner on here talking about the truth about priesthood. And here we're brought again to this familial, patriarchal order of the priesthood, which we all enter into as we receive the ordinances of the temple. Before we're even married, we're initiated in that Initiatory Ordinance into this familial order of the priesthood, culminating in parents being sealed and altered together and doubted both of them with priesthood power. He's saying, "This is this familial order of the priesthood, by which this book of remembrance, the stories of repentance, the truth about Christ, is kept."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:49:57 I loved the clarification of Elder Renlund about what priesthood is. For me, it was so powerful. Do you remember him talking about the rocket and the payload? And you have the rocket, its whole purpose is to deliver the payload. And so, he described the rocket as priesthood, the payload being the atonement of Jesus Christ. And so here, the purpose of the priesthood is to launch, here's his words, "To launch and deliver the opportunity to benefit from Christ's Atoning power."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:50:32 If you think of being endowed with priesthood power as parents, it's so touching to me to think what I'm endowed with is the power to launch the blessings of the Atonement of Jesus Christ to my children's lives. I can't make them receive that. That's the beautiful gift of agency, but I can create a space where I experience the truth of it in my life, his covenant atoning power in my life, and come to see it, its fruits in my life.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:51:06 And so, here that, being endowed with priesthood power, being endowed with the opportunity to launch, right, to carry that power into the lives of our families, to facilitate the delivery of the Atonement into our children's lives. And if we understand repentance, if we try to, if we're unafraid, if we seek that vulnerability, if we seek to be exposed in honesty and receive his power, that's what we're doing. We're accessing priesthood power to help them experience the Atonement in their lives.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:51:38 I love Elder Renlund's clarification. "Anytime we are using the priesthood, it is with that purpose in mind; deliver the Atoning power of Jesus Christ into the lives of other people."
- Hank Smith: 00:51:51 John, I remember you telling me that your mom would often tell you guys not to judge your dad, right? Because he would maybe not be the most... I don't even know how you'd describe him. Maybe not use the best words. He used "navy words," sometimes.
- John Bytheway: 00:52:09 Yeah. I'm going to face my dad again, so I got to be careful. They were mild, but he joined the Church at age 24 and my mom was great. Because she would say, "Look, you be careful. You don't know where he came from." And it was kind of, these are my words now. " He had a different starting line, and you don't know where he came from. You be careful. Now, you can't use that word."
- Hank Smith: 00:52:38 Yeah. "You don't get to use that word."
- John Bytheway: 00:52:40 Yeah. But I think, Jenet, that's another instance of all of us being in this together. And my mom is saying, "Look, dad's in this together with us and he's working on it too. And be careful, because he's trying so hard." And we saw that. To this day, I'll find an old book of my dad's and find a note inside to encourage himself to try harder and to be better. And it was never, "I've arrived." It was, "We're all in this together." Sorry. So, yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:53:21 So beautiful.
- John Bytheway: 00:53:22 Thanks Hank, for bringing that up.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:53:25 So beautiful.
- Hank Smith: 00:53:26 Oh, it just seems like that was your mom, trying to show you the access to the Atonement that everybody in this family has.

- John Bytheway: 00:53:33 Yeah. And you know, Mom's Miss Pioneer Stock, probably walked personally with a handcart but never mentioned it. I mean that's my mom. And she's saying, "Look, he came from a different place, so be careful. He's trying so hard." And he was, and it made me love both of them in moments like that, and love the Savior, to say, "He's working with all of us."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:53:58 Yes, he's working out our salvation, all of us. And isn't it interesting as parents, you'll think, "I'm going to work out their salvation." And about four years in, all of a sudden, you're like, "Wait a minute, they're working out my salvation. This was all about me learning, right? This brought that's what's going on here." So beautiful.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:54:17 Well, Verse 8 is the other core truth. So, we've had this repentance theme, this recording. Recording repentance in our lives for our children. And then you get to Verse 8, and the Lord is going to do that most magnificent thing of establishing his relationship with us, of saying, telling us who we are, who we are, our identity, our purpose. So here's Verse 8, right.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:54:44 "A genealogy was kept of the children of God." These are not just children of this parent and this parent. These are the children of God and the book of generations tying us back. That's why genealogy is so beautiful. It takes us right back to God the Father, God the Mother as our Parents. Then in Verse 9, "In the image of his own body, male and female," which tells us Heavenly Parents, "Created he them and blessed them, and called their name Adam." Here they are, this direct lineage of God.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:55:21 Do you remember when President Nelson, there's another General Authority, who spoke about being in a training session with then Elder Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve. And the question was asked, "How do we help these individuals struggling with pornography?" It was recognized that this is a ubiquitous challenge. "What do we do?" And his profound answer, it was simple. It came right away. "Teach them their identity and their purpose."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:55:50 If you think about what is powerful, who you are, telling this person, and because this is who you are, there's that beautiful statement of President Packer, "You are a child of God. He is the Father of your spirit. Spiritually, you are of noble birth, the offspring of the King of Heaven. Fix that truth in your mind and hold to it. However many generations in your mortal ancestry, no matter what race or people you represent, the pedigree of your spirit can be written on a single line. You are a child of

God." And here the Restoration, when Joseph sees them, "Joseph, my son." It just turns all the blackness of the Apostasy upside down, right? That whole idea that this is a God with no feeling, with no body parts or passions. He can't be affected by our human suffering. You were created out of nothing, and there's such a distance between you and God that it's unsurpassable, right? You can't know him. And here, your nature is so totally corrupted all you can hope for is a rescue.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:56:59 This is what Christians believed. And then to be told, "You are my child." Literally. This distance is not only surpassable, it's the whole intent of the whole plan, is for you to come and become as I am. And how is that, just knowing parental love, right? How do we feel when children disobey? It's not anger, it's an anger for the hurt that they suffer because of it. It's not an anger because of retribution of this dishonoring of us. Sometimes we have to work out of some of those feelings, right? But this divine love that is grounded in parenthood, in literal parenthood. "You are me, you are the other of me." And hear the Lord just establishing right at the beginning. "I want you to know who you are as we talk about repentance and this plan of salvation."
- Hank Smith: 00:57:54 So Jenet, what I'm hearing verses 8 and 9, is if I have a child who's struggling with something, don't shame them for that problem. Ennable them by teaching them who they are and their purpose.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:58:09 Yes, yes.
- Hank Smith: 00:58:10 Lift them out instead of... The natural thing might be to say, "That's evil stuff. You're involved in something terrible."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:58:19 Yes, Hank, because when they are, we feel shame. Isn't that the whole irony, right? We're so caught up in how they are a reflection of us. So, working on the issue of pornography, if a parent learns that their child's struggling with pornography, the shame that comes with that, right? So, the shame for the child, and the shame for what kind of a parent has a child who's struggling with this, right?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:58:45 And all the shame around shaming, our mortality and shaming our mortal experience. And instead of what you're saying, which is, "If I cannot infect this dynamic with my own insecurity as a parent," right? "If this isn't about me and what's reflecting on me, but it's about you and my love for you and my desire to help you grow, and my care not because you're not because in your choice not to serve a mission, it's about me or your

struggle with this, it's about me. But it's because of what it means for you. How can I help you?"

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:59:18 Then we're in a place of power to really see and help them, right? Because it's not infecting it. In Jennifer Finlayson-Fife words, "I infect my relationship all the time with my own insecurities about how their behaviors or their choices reflect on me." And that has so much to do with, right, my own relationship with God. That's why it comes back to that foundational part of the pyramid: me, at peace with my relationship with God and his advocacy for me.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:59:48 And then I relate to my children from that place. And I'm going to go back again and again to healing that, as I'm relating to them in their journey with the bitterness of sin and weakness, so that I can truly be a help and a guide to them.
- Hank Smith: 01:00:03 That's a lot of weight...
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:00:03 ... so that I can truly be a help and a guide to them.
- Hank Smith: 01:00:03 That's a lot of weight to put on a child, if they not only have to live their life, they're trying to live yours now as well, because you're putting... you're reflecting me to the rest of the world. So, there's a lot of pressure.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:00:15 I think every single parent is experiencing, you are a reflection of me. And so working on overcoming that so that we can really truly see them and help them sort out the path of truth for their life, that's the foundation, them sorting out. Not choosing it because of pleasing me, not choosing it out of defiance against me. Right? Like, I'm going to set my own path. But choosing out of truth to the best that is in them.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:00:45 I think there's quite a bit of family data that would say, there's power in an identity. Right? Like, I belong to this family and I live up to that. So you'll hear parents, "Remember who you are when you leave the house. Remember you're this."
- Hank Smith: 01:00:56 Right.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:00:57 Right?
- Hank Smith: 01:00:57 Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:00:57 And I think at some point, every single one of us knows that identity is not enough. Right? It is an identity bound in God. I, a

child of God, as the mother, you, a child of God as the child. And that identity is the only absolutely secure and true identity. Right? And so, that's what the Lord does that right here. It's so beautiful.

- Hank Smith: 01:01:21 We say, "Remember who you are." And, "Don't let that get you down." Right? That's what we say.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:01:26 Hank, I love it. I love it.
- John Bytheway: 01:01:29 My wife tells a story about one of her friends, I guess, growing up, because they always heard their parents say to the other siblings, "Remember who you are.", when they left. But they didn't know the meaning. They didn't know what their parents meant by that.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:01:42 What does that mean?
- John Bytheway: 01:01:43 So one time when my wife's friend's siblings were leaving, the other younger kids yelled, "Don't forget your name." Because that's what they thought it meant.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:01:53 What mom and dad mean is, don't forget your name.
- John Bytheway: 01:01:55 Don't forget your name.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:01:55 I love it.
- John Bytheway: 01:01:55 Because kids are always going out there forgetting their names. So...
- Hank Smith: 01:01:58 They're nervous about it.
- John Bytheway: 01:01:59 Remember who you are. Don't forget your name.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:02:03 Now, we're going to get in these next verses. In verse 10, 11, 12, 13, we're getting this beautiful genealogy. And then we get at the end of 13, another phrase we're going to get repeatedly. So it's not unlike this book of remembrance. It's not unlike this identity grounded in God. Here's this next one, "Taught his son Enos in the ways of God." What that means to be taught.
- Hank Smith: 01:02:29 That's going to come up a couple more times, right?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:02:30 Yes. It's going to happen repeatedly. What does it mean to be taught in the ways of God? And I think that gets back to that whole idea of structure and heart. And it is really powerful, the

research on family life and the power of what we would call, routines and rituals. So routines are the things you do to keep the family functioning well. You eat dinner and you brush your teeth and kids get their homework done. And you wake up, and for some families, that's making your bed and keeping a house of order. Those kinds of things are important. Those structural pieces.

- Hank Smith: 01:03:02 If my kids-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:02 But then-
- Hank Smith: 01:03:02 ... are listening, can we repeat that list one more time?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:05 Remember all these things. Do your homework, make your bed.
- Hank Smith: 01:03:09 Do your homework, make your bed.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:10 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 01:03:11 Yes.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:12 Pick up your clothes.
- Hank Smith: 01:03:12 Brush your teeth. Yeah, okay.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:14 Brush your teeth.
- Hank Smith: 01:03:15 Yeah. You heard it from an expert, guys. This is important.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:18 And those routines are very important. But then the other side is what we call, rituals. And rituals are very fascinating. Rituals are those things that are... So I'll say to students, "How do you say goodbye when you tell your parents goodbye on the phone?" And many of them have phrases that they repeat. Right? They say. "Are there any birthday traditions that are just your family's?" And the goofy things that families do. Right? Or movie quote patterns or dancing around doing dishes together or... All the things, these rituals, that establish identity that are so important in a healthy, emotional climate.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:55 So you need these, what we call, rituals of connection. And I think what we talk about is family prayer, that's a ritual of connection. It can be routine, right? We know the difference. Or it can serve that purpose of being a ritual of connection. Family prayer and family devotional and Family Home Evening. And they...

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:04:13 Even sitting down and having dinner. Dinner is one of those that comes up just ubiquitously in research as having a powerful benefit to children. I could go on for four hours about the research on family dinner. There's something powerful about sitting together. You're kind of in a place of commonality because everyone has to eat. And so, there's a reduction of hierarchy that way. There are different kinds of conversations. Even linguistically it's very powerful, because you'll have narrative talk where children are telling a story about what happened. And dad and mom are bringing in news or talking about professional and they're bringing in a different kind of vocabulary.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:04:51 You have that... In the CASA research of the Center for Addiction and Substance Abuse, there is one predictor that comes up every single year, when they collect that data, as the thing that predicts less likelihood of substance abuse for adolescents. And it's the number of family meals in a week. So, it's the number of times they have eaten dinner in that week as a family.
- John Bytheway: 01:05:13 You're sitting down together, even if it is you're breaking open the bags of Wendy's. Who got the single, who got the... But you're sitting down together. I'm fascinated by that.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:05:24 The family sacrament is what one researcher will call it. And so it's a sitting down, looking at one another, hearing one another, talking to one another. And we all know it's not always a fun occasion, right? I think my mom with five little children, peas all over the place, people throwing things, right? You spilled 95 times at that meal. But there is so much power in the consistency of that ritual.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:05:49 And it has ritual elements. Where you sit. Many of my students have a ritual where they share their high, their low, their rain cloud, their sun. Right? The meal, who they served or what they learned or... And these are all ritual elements that if they don't happen... It's like when you try to put that young child to bed and you don't tell them the story that night and they cannot go to bed because that ritual has been so core to their emotional wellbeing. You can't mix it up. If you don't... If you leave out the birthday tradition This one year, that child feels like, "I'm alienated. I don't belong." These rituals are very powerful.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:06:27 And so when we talk about this whole idea of, in the ways of God, rituals that orient us to God are so important in family life. And again, can the structure get in the way of the heart? Yes. It's why that focus on what is the heart, but God and Christ and

this centerpiece of our lives. They redeem us. That retaining that even as you're like, "Get in here for family prayer and sit down and please be quiet. And quit interrupting and..." Right? And we're practicing. We're practicing over and over again, that process.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:07:03 But I love that family research that helps us understand what it means to be growing up in the ways of God and the power that rituals can have. And that even when they fail... Right? Even if it feels like there was 15 years of failure of this family devotional ritual or this Family Home Evening. Right? We tried. We were consistent. We wanted them to know we cared about them hearing about God and that we were together in that.
- John Bytheway: 01:07:27 Somebody described a Family Home Evening as, an argument that ends and begins with a prayer or something.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:07:34 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 01:07:35 I don't know when it was, there was sometime along in my parenting, I think it was my wife who taught me, "Look, we're not just after getting the room clean. We're not just after getting a prayer set. We're not just after eating a meal. We're after building relationships." So make sure that your goals, when you go into these rituals, would you say, you got to have the right goal in mind? Goal is not to just get the room clean, the goal is to build the relationship and get the room clean. You could get the room clean and destroy the relationship. I've-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:08:08 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 01:08:08 ... done it.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:08:09 I'm an expert at those kinds of things, actually, Hank.
- Hank Smith: 01:08:11 Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:08:12 And I know all this data and it is... That's why I think it takes compassion for ourselves in this journey. Because you... And that the purpose of life really is to taste the bitter, to prize the sweet. So, Hank, you and I, who are trying to get that room cleaned... And I have this experience where I'm over and over again, " Pick that up." Right? And ruining the relationship in the process. But I'm learning from that experience of bitterness, "You know what? I'm going to change that."
- Hank Smith: 01:08:36 Yeah. I don't want to do that anymore.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:08:37 I want to do that differently.
- Hank Smith: 01:08:38 No.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:08:39 And I might do it 400 times wrong. Right? But God is good, and gives us this mortal experience to learn through bitterness, to prize the sweet. And sometimes the bitterness can cloud our view of God's love for us. But all around us, we see, here is hope again. We're going again. We're going to work on this being about the relationship, this about intimacy and connection, and knowing you and loving you in a better way.
- Hank Smith: 01:09:09 So, let the milk spill.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:09:11 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 01:09:11 Right? And-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:09:11 That's why my mom took on the motto, "Have a laugh." That was our family motto. When the milk spilled it was like, "Have a laugh. Just say it right out before we get upset." Right? We're just going to have a laugh.
- Hank Smith: 01:09:21 There it goes. Look at that.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:09:22 Here it comes. Yep. Here we go, again. Here's 14 and 15. And we see this shift and hear the Lord. Right? He's going to teach us about what had happened. Here, he told these children, "Thou art my children, the direct descendants of Heavenly Parents." And then it says, "And the children of men were numerous. And in those days, Satan had great dominion ... and raged in their hearts ... and every man's hand was against his own brother ... and seeking for power."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:09:54 Here, they lost their identity. They had rejected that identity of being from God. And they're seeking for power, not God's power, not priesthood power. He'd promised that, priesthood power, his power. But seeking another way and how deeply painful. It's why in Moses 7, we'll him weeping. "Why is he weeping? And it's not your sins against me. He's weeping for their sins against one another." And how deeply painful that is, to hate their own flesh.
- Hank Smith: 01:10:31 In verse 15, Jenet, this idea of, here's the ideal and here's the poison. Right? The poison comes in. It's anger, right? Dominion... He raged in their hearts and came wars and bloodshed.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:10:50 Yes. Ah.
- Hank Smith: 01:10:51 Man's hands up against his own brother.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:10:52 And this seeking of power.
- Hank Smith: 01:10:53 Right. And power.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:10:54 Mankind... Yeah. I... Yeah, that's so beautiful, to think about this ideal and then this... what happens in real mortal life. Right? And as you said, John, within one's own family, in Lehi's case. Right? There was this raging. And the Lord never gives up. He doesn't say, "Well, goodness." Right? Like that's... "What can I do with these people who've been rejected. And now they're fallen. And the pain that it causes me, so I just pull out." No way. He keeps coming back. Repent, turn. And if it's not in this generation, in Lehi's case, he's bringing them back generations later. Right. Bringing them back, fulfilling that covenant relationship. Never quitting in seeking his children to follow in his path.
- Hank Smith: 01:11:40 It's hard enough to be a parent. And then adding an adversary who is deliberately trying to poison your family. Oh. Right?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:11:48 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 01:11:48 I think the Lord gets it. This is tough.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:11:50 Yes. I love that. And there was no other way, right? We have to experience that bitterness, to know the sweet. To choose as they give and say, "To choose Christ with eyes wide open." I love that. When we experience bitterness in family life, when we experience bitterness in our own lives, and we all do, it's part of the plan so we can choose Christ with our eyes wide open. We know the pain and we will choose differently.
- Hank Smith: 01:12:20 Hmm. I've noticed, maybe I'm being a little too vulnerable here, but I've noticed when my relationships with my older children get tense, it's usually an idea of power. Right?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:12:38 So much. Yes.
- Hank Smith: 01:12:39 And honor. And-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:12:41 Yes,
- Hank Smith: 01:12:42 ... you're insulting my ego. Right?

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:12:45 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 01:12:45 My pride.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:12:47 Ah.
- Hank Smith: 01:12:47 And I'm going to set you in your place. Right? "You can't talk to me that way. I'm your parent, I'm your..." That feels like verse 15, Satan rage is in the hearts of people they're seeking for power over their own family.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:13:03 I will never forget the first time our daughter said, "No" to me really strongly. And she kind of said, "No", just a wonderful gift to me because she has an independent personality, not a pleaser. And that's been very helpful for my growth. But I will never forget that first time when I was like, "I can't believe you just said that." Right? And that feeling has happened over and over again. And it is. If I'm honest with myself, I'm not thinking about what she's communicating about her own feelings. I'm thinking about what that means for me. Right? My own ego or my own insecurity being right. Kind of infecting my understanding of her. And I can't be.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:13:46 And that's why that beautiful healing has to happen over and over again with parents, because that is absolutely natural to feel that way. And if we're coming back to the base, that pyramid, am I being truthful about what's really happening here? And that this is really about me instead of about what she's trying to communicate about her needs and herself and her growth. And just how we... It's just a growing process, to not get in the way of that experience of parenting. Right? Our own selves.
- Hank Smith: 01:14:13 Do you guys remember getting hit by your own [children] for the first time, when they're maybe two or three? And they're mad at you and you're holding them and they just sock you upside the head. And you're like-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:14:22 You're like-
- Hank Smith: 01:14:23 ... "You!"
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:14:26 Yes. Yes. And I can get those feelings. Right? As a mother who's giving a lot, and trying to serve a lot, you can get into that, you owe me something. And I think it is a power dynamic there.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:14:40 Okay, here's 21 again. "And Jared taught Enoch in all the ways of God." There's that phrase coming up again? What does that mean to teach the ways of God? And it is that path of repentance. Then 22 and 23, I love this. And John, you actually brought this up a little bit before, but here's, here's that "Genealogy of the sons of Adam who was the son of God." It just wants over and over again, "This is who you are. You are a child directly of God." That is so core. And then that next verse, "And they were preachers of righteousness, and spake and prophesied, and called upon all men everywhere." And what are we going to hear? Again, that calling upon to repent.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:15:29 And it's the opposite of that shame world. It's, come and grow with Christ. Come and be honest about yourself. Come and speak the truth. Remove the shame. Come and be changed. And then it says, "And faith was taught unto the children of men." You can never teach repentance, without the very first truth booth being faith.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:15:55 I loved hearing Kerry Muhlestein. You had him on that very first podcast of this year. And that absolute assurance, "I can do my work. This is my work and my glory. I can do my work. I can do that work in your life, I can do that work in your children's lives." And you both just shared so powerfully, that reliance on God. And so whenever we teach repentance, the foundation is faith in his belief in us. Faith in our belief in him and what he can do in us.
- John Bytheway: 01:16:38 Please join us for Part II of this podcast.



- John Bytheway: 00:00:03 Welcome to Part II of this week's podcast.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:00:07 And then we get to move right onto Enoch. So we've laid this foundation. This is who you are, and here comes Enoch and he's journeying, right? And it says the spirit of God descended and said, Enoch, and what is it going to be there in 27? Enoch, my son. The very first thing, Moses-
- John Bytheway: 00:00:28 My son. Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:00:29 My son. Yes. Joseph, my son. Identity at the very core of this. The thing is we cannot change that identity, nothing we can do can take us. Nothing our children can do can take them from being ours. And having that beautiful relationship, right? Established at the very core. Nothing you can do will take you from being mine, and my love for you. So then he says, repent. And then look at these phrases at the very end of 27, their hearts have waxed hard, their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes cannot see afar off. And then coming back to President Nelson, teaching us what metanoia means, and that it's this change. And he said, it's a change of mind, a change of hearing, a change of seeing, a change of heart. And the Lord is saying, I mean, you're thinking of these people and you're like, how pathetic. They can't hear, they can't see, their hearts are hard, right? And that's me, that's all of us, right?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:01:44 And the Lord's saying, here is the answer, it is repentance, it is *metanoia*, that's what Christ promises us. I will change your heart, I will enable you to see all things anew. John, as you read from the Bible Dictionary, right? "And a fresh view of God, a fresh view of one's self. Now, when I got to these verses, I read the word angry. And I don't know if you feel this way, but I'm sensitive about the word angry, and I'm sensitive about reading that God is angry. And I kind of want to be like, I'm afraid of anger, right? I'm a little bit afraid of anger.
- John Bytheway: 00:02:22 I'm glad you're about this, because I get this in New Testament class. When Jesus cleansed the temple, was he angry?

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:02:31 Yes. And John, I'd love to hear how you teach that. As we've been working on the issue of sexuality and our stake, my wonderful Stake Presidency, he's been so clear in saying passions are given to us gifts, sexual desire is a God endowed gift. And then the Lord says, passions are to be set within the bounds I have set, right? And so I think we tend to say about sexuality or anger, right? Stop it, control it, get rid of it, don't do it, don't look. And that's all we say, right? Instead of emotions are given, and this is just all over in the parenting research. The importance of identifying and talking with children about feelings. Maybe in the last 10 years, the strongest research suggests the importance of identifying and talking about emotions, including the emotion of anger.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:03:27 And I love that we get to read that God was angry. That all emotions, passions are given to us as gifts to teach us. Anger can lead us to see the truth about moral violations, to see them clearly when there has been a violation of something moral, right? When there is a wrong done to us or done to others, anger is a natural emotion that can lead the mind to action. What it asks of us is what are your motive motivations for that anger? What are the motivations of God in this anger here? What is it about him? Is it about him, Hank? Because you and I described, right? That child says no, and my feeling can be anger incensed at you, right? Disrespect for me.
- Hank Smith: 00:04:17 You've insulted me. Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:04:18 You've insulted me, right? And then it's all about me, and that emotion of anger is outside the bounds that God has said because it is not in that purity of changing something that is wrong for the good of others.
- Hank Smith: 00:04:33 Of the person for the good.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:04:34 Yes. And so here's the Lord, I do think anger has played a very important role throughout history for positive social change. When there's abuse going on, it's a natural feeling. I think when there's a violation of covenants of chastity, for example, right? A spouse who's been betrayed, those feelings of anger are very natural. And they can have a rightful place, I think God is teaching us. They can help us see a moral violation, something that has been wrong. And what's important is that purity of heart, right? About where within those bounds, where that emotion is coming from.
- Hank Smith: 00:05:11 His fierce anger is coming from his fierce love.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:05:15 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 00:05:15 Right? For his children.
- John Bytheway: 00:05:18 Jenet, what you said reminds me of keeping things within bounds. When Alma talks to his son, Shiloh, he says, I just love the word, "Bridle all your passions." It wasn't, "Destroy your passions." It wasn't, "Deny your passions." It wasn't, "It's wrong to have passions". It was, "Bridle all your passions, that you may be filled with love," which is so interesting and so different. And so when you were saying that, I thought, "Yeah, maybe the passions, they're in control and maybe anger." Can there be anger, where I'm angry but I'm in control? I'm not, "You are out of control," we will use that phrase, right?
- John Bytheway: 00:06:07 And boy, I'm just throwing it out there because it's always an interesting discussion and sometimes a disputed discussion about, does God get angry? What does that mean? What does it look like? Is it the same kind of anger we have? I mean, I'm curious what you both think about that, the cleansing of the temple and that kind of anger. And maybe that's not for this podcast, but I'm just... I like what you said, because that gives me a framework to say it was anger, look at the motive. For Jesus, this is my father's house. It wasn't about him personally, and it was controlled.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:06:47 Yes, in those bounds, and that it has an important place, right? In stopping some pretty significant moral wrongs that were going on at that time, right? And an abuse of lower class individuals, a way of exploiting it, right? And the Lord does not look lightly on that kind of thing. And I think sometimes we can, right? Someone who's in an abusive situation can feel afraid of really calling out what's happened because if emotions like anger and feeling like this are absolutely wrong and I need to stand up to this as opposed to turn the other cheek, right? We can misuse teachings of the savior to cause people to stay in places of abuse. And the Lord is clearly saying, there is a place for saying this is wrong and this cannot go on, right? And he's feeling that way now as he's looking at his children, harming one another, and hurting one another.
- Hank Smith: 00:07:46 As I read ahead here, why is he angry, "Yet they repent not."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:07:51 Yes.

- Hank Smith: 00:07:51 Right. That goes back to verse one, "Adam was called to teach people to repent," and now the Lord is upset that there is no repenting happening.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:08:02 Yes. And they're hurting one another, right? Their own flesh, using power against one another. Okay, here is verse 28. And I think Hank, as you were just talking about the Lord's feelings of pain and anger, right? Here, it says, "I created them and they have gone astray, and have denied me, and sought their own counsels in the dark." And so it's, right, that theme throughout the old Testament of the unfaithful wife, right? You'll hear in Hosea, right? And the Lord saying, "Do not deny me, do not turn away from me. Do not betray me," right? I love how in the prodigal son's story, it says, right? He came to himself, the truth about his identity, of who he is, which is why when you see a child's struggle, and as they're growing and developing, all you're wanting for them is to come to themselves, to their best selves, your best self, which is what God wants for us.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:09:09 We are with Enoch, and he hears this call from the Lord. Verse 31, "And when Enoch could hear these words, he bow himself to the earth before the Lord and speak before the Lord saying, "Why is it that I have found favor in thy sight, and I'm but a lad, and all the people hate me for I am slow of speech, wherefore, meaning why, am I thy servant?" Here is his vulnerability, totally unafraid to show his mortality and his fallibility, and this is who I am. Are you sure, right? This is me. And I just think that vulnerability therein lies power. Weakness is honesty about who we are, right? He's being honest about who we are. And when we are honest about who we are, and our fallibility, and our weakness, and our need for God, he can be honest with us about who we can become.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:10:02 But when we hide, we cannot hear him say what we can become. I love how Ann Voskamp, that great Christian writer, she'll say, "Weaknesses do not bar us from mercy. They incline God to us the more." And children feel the same way. I think when we are honest about ourselves, they feel trust in us, they can develop trust. Mom and dad aren't going to lie about their fallibility, they're going to be honest about it, and I can trust them, and I can trust myself in this process of growing.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:10:33 Okay. 32, 33, 34. "Enoch go forth, open thy mouth and it shall be filled, and I will give the utterance." So here he said, I can't even talk, I'm slow of speech. And the Lord says, why are you afraid? I will open your mouth. "I will give you utterance, for all flesh is in my hands." And I think about how we fear, right? Whatever we're called to do, even as parents, I think maybe

especially the fear there in that significant role. And the Lord saying, I will give the utterance, it shall be filled. And then verse 33, "Choose ye this day." And whose words do you hear when he says that?

- John Bytheway: 00:11:15 Joshua.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:11:17 Yes. I love that. John, I'm like Joshua knew Enoch's words. It's as if he knew him, right? "Choose you this day to serve the Lord God," and then here's that identity again, who made you who you are, who you are. "Behold, my Spirit is upon you, wherefore all thy words will I justify." Ann Voskamp will write, "The Lord ends with that walk with me. Here's Ann Voskamp, she's not a member of our Church, but a great Christian, but she'll say, "Be vulnerable enough to let the brokenhearted love come and let it fill your emptiness. You never have to overcome your brokenness to claim God's love. His love has already overcome your brokenness and claimed you. Grace doesn't ever negate transformation, it always initiates it." She quotes this, she's on an airplane and sitting by a rabbi, and he said, we always talk about a strong belief in God, and then he says, who sits with the knowing that God's belief in you is even stronger than yours in him.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:12:29 Every morning that the sun rises and you get to rise, that is God saying he believes in you, and he believes in the story he's writing through you. God's mercies are new every morning, not as an obligation to you, but as an affirmation of you. Reading that brought me so much peace after many days. I'm not the kind of mother I want to be, I'm not relating to them in the way I desire to. I'm not who I want to be, and to have that son come up every morning, I believe in you, and in the story that I can write in the openness about your vulnerability, in the of your brokenness, I believe in you.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:13:19 And then what happens is we get this beautiful temple reference in verse 35, "And the Lord spake unto Enoch, and said unto him: Anoint thy eyes and wash them and thou shall see." We were just talking, our daughter is going to be 12, going into the temple. This next year, she'll be 12 and so she gets to start doing baptisms. And thinking about the temple, obviously she will not be receiving her initiatory ordinances yet, but I talked to her about how all throughout the temple it's about seeing the beautiful promise there that we are anointed to see, to discern, to know truth from error and it's the Holy Ghost that's given to us as the great guide, as the Great Comforter as the great teacher of truth in that process. And I am sure this is a reference to temple ordinances for Enoch, not unlike what happens to

every prophet. With Jacob, right? At Bethel. And Moses and Abraham receiving temple ordinances, being anointed, to be able to see anew. And then verse 36, what is he called? A seer.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:14:36 And here he is a seer. That is how our prophets are. Now, aren't you amazed in 37 and 38. I love that Scott Sorenson, that great religious education teacher, right? He'll say, "Here was Enoch, he's slow of speech. And then what we see, what happens to him is he was so powerful in speaking the words of God that no one could contend with him. They couldn't help but believe." And then his second one, "All the people hate me." And then what the promise, the Lord gives him? "I will walk with you, I will be with you." And then that last one, "All men were offended because of him." And then we see he built Zion, the city of oneness and pure unity. So you see how the Lord, here's the walls of Jericho, right?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:15:28 They're afraid of the great walls as they're coming in. We can't go into Israel, it's filled with these giants and huge walls. And what does the Lord say? Come in, he tears the walls down. They didn't have to worry about taking the walls down, he tears them down. And here he's telling Enoch, you say you're slow of speech, that all the people hate you and that they are offended, and this is what I will do with you. I was really touched and to read a recent *Ensign* article at *Liahona* about, Spencer is his name, grappling with same sex attraction. And he describes just the pain of going to church sometimes. And he leaves after sacrament meeting and just said, "Lord, I just can't go there. No one gets me. No one understands me. I feel so different." And as he's walking, he hears the Lord say to him, "I get you, Spencer."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:16:21 And you don't need anything else, I get you, I understand you. You hear that assurance over and over again when right here's Enoch, I can't do all these things, I hear the Lord saying, but it's me, I'll walk with you, I will write the story of your life. I will make you so powerful, I will put words into your mouth, I will open your mouth. Isn't the old Testament, just the stories are just all about incredible redemption, right? This story of redemption over and over again, what God will do, what he can can do. Okay. 39, 40, 41, 42, 43. We hear that phrase again. "My father taught me in all the ways of God," and then 43, "That he is my God." Here's Enoch, he's telling them their identity. The very first thing, "He is my God and your God, and ye are my brethren."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:17:16 These are the ones he was speaking to, right? Who have been hurting their own flesh and the will power, and doing things

that were harmful to each other. And he's saying he is my God and your God, and ye are my brethren. Then you hear President Nelson teach them and their identity and their purpose, that's how we answer the questions.

- Hank Smith: 00:17:38 I loved in verse 38, they said, "There's a wild man, we got to go see this guy. You gotta come see this prophet. He's saying crazy stuff."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:17:49 He's saying crazy stuff. My husband is a convert to the Church, he joined at age 21 and grew up without any faith growing up. In fact, he would say his only exposure to Christ was Evangelicals on TV, and it was distasteful to him. And so that was all he knew, and then he's walking on the campus of University of Texas, and then Gideons, that wonderful organization, hands him a new Testament that just has Psalms Proverbs in the Gospels. And he will never forget reading the Savior's words. He didn't know him to be the Son of God then, but what a teacher here, right? This woman brought and he says, right, no man condemn me, right? And Mike will say, as the missionaries find him, and they're telling him about angels and appearance of divinity, he's sitting there in that Institute building at the University of Texas at Austin. And he's like, "They're crazy."
- Hank Smith: 00:18:51 "A wild man has come to witness."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:18:52 Yeah, a wild man. And yet he would say, "I could not deny their witness." Meaning they spoke with such assurance and the Holy Ghost bearing witness, he couldn't speak against it. Even though in his mind, it's like that's completely crazy, right? And then going to Church and experiencing the fruits of the gospel, he couldn't stop going after that first time of going, and this wildness became the most beautiful thing to us. I want that fruit, so is it possible to have that kind of joy? Is it possible to have that kind of life? And so Hollywood would see us as wild people, what?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:19:33 And yet it's like the that the mommy bloggers, right? That *New York Times* piece that comes out at these women, not members of the Church, right? Who are just professionals who they're kind of drawn to these Mormon Mommy, these mommy bloggers, why this life, the husbands and children and this caring relationship and this meaning. And it seemed so impossible and so foreign. It seemed like a wildness, and yet it was so beautiful, right? Can this be real? And the Lord's saying, absolutely, this can be reality for you with me.

- Hank Smith: 00:20:10 Yeah. It does say that. After he speaks to them, what is it? Verse 47. Enoch spoke forth the words of God, the people trembled, could not stand in his presence, something happened when he spoke.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:20:25 And here's the guy who said, "I'm slow of speech."
- Hank Smith: 00:20:28 Right.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:20:28 Are you kidding me? Now, we get to go next to verse 49. And I think this is important to talk through. "Satan had come among the children of men." This is Enoch teaching the plan of salvation. He's saying, "Adam fell, and by his fall came death, and behold Satan had come among the children of men and tempted them to worship him," right? He's always just pulling us away from who we are. And then men have become carnal, sensual, and devilish and are shut out from the presence of God. And I think we have to carefully look at that verse for a long time, right?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:21:00 Christians would say, "We are so carnal, sensual, devilish that this is unsurpassable ... We cannot know the holiness of God. And this gap between us is so great, it's impossible to come to know Him or be like Him." And that's not what this verse is saying. I think this verse is saying, what we learned about in Section 93, that as soon as we choose to go against the light, right, then light is taken ... We deny the light. And so we effectively, we have agency, but when we choose to not use it in ways that lead to truth and light, according to the truth, we give away our ability to exercise it.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:21:46 And part of the trap of transgression and sin. This is so true for all of us, it's certainly true for me, is that we begin seeing the world ... When we sin, we begin seeing the world in ways that justify our transgressions and our sins. We find ways to justify why we did what we did. We find ways to blame others, or our circumstances, or our genetic tendencies, and so on. And what happens is that we lose sight of the extent of our responsibility for our transgressions. And when we lose sight of that responsibility of our agency, we lose sight of the need for repentance, and we lose sight of the need for the Savior. And so it's so interesting, right? This don't feel shame about your reality, and also be honest about it. Be honest about it because I can't help or heal you, but that's what the Lord does, is he restores sight to us, and breaks us free from the corruption of our justifying hearts.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:22:47 You see Adam and Eve do it. "She brought it to me and I partook." And, "Satan came and tempted me and I partook." And this displacement of responsibility is so natural to us. I think that's what it's talking about when we become carnal, sensual, and devilish. We want to cover, John as you said, "We want to cover our sins," quoting Section 121. And the Lord doesn't shame us and say, "See, you're hiding. You're right." He says, "Come. Be honest about what you yourself know. I am your Advocate. I am a Consoler and I speak the truth. Come be honest about it. And I will heal you a new heart I will give you. I will break you free of the bondage of the lies about both the sin and the justification of your sin."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:23:39 So it's a real thing, that need for full-on change, right? And does he teach us that change is possible? Just think of water to wine, and leper to clean, and blindness to sight. And Alma changed, and the sons of Mosiah. And just the whole story of Christ is not only ... His gospel is a gospel of change. And it's founded on that honesty about one's self in that process and his ability to give us a new heart, new eyes, new mind, new breath, that is like him breaking us free from the bondage of that.
- Hank Smith: 00:24:23 The answer is repentance. That's Verse 50, 52-53.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:24:30 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 00:24:31 It's 57. The answer for carnal, sensual, and devilish is, "So God told us all to repent." And it's everyone. All men. All men, all women.
- John Bytheway: 00:24:44 I appreciate that earlier you quoted President Nelson talking about repentance as a process. I think that that was something I had to learn, and maybe even unlearn some things I had thought before. Because of the idea, oh, if you repent and sin again, all the former sins return. I felt like it was this one time thing, and if I didn't do it right, it all comes back and it's all over. And we tried to have a discussion about that verse last year, talking about the doctrine of covenants. But over and over again, we are seeing and hearing from living prophets. Repentance is an ongoing process, a daily ... what did President Nelson say? A daily thing. And that if you might think I repented, but I guess I didn't do it right, because I sinned again and all is lost. And that's what I worry about. No, no, no, no. Just keep getting back on course.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:25:55 You remember getting baptized and that feeling of, I'm never going to sin again. I'm clean.

John Bytheway:	00:25:59	Yeah, I'm done. Yeah.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:25:59	I'm never going to ... Right? And then within five minutes ...
John Bytheway:	00:26:03	Yeah.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:26:04	... I've done something that I know isn't quite right. And misunderstanding what baptism is, not the gate to perfection. Either you've messed up and now you're off. Right? But that is the pathway of repentance. It opens us up to that pathway of <i>metanoia</i> , right. Of continual renewal, of being changed, of being taught, of seeing the world different again. And the Adversary, he is always shaming us. That's what it's all ... The Great Accuser, his whole thing is to say, "See, you've sinned. See you've done it wrong. See this is who you are."
John Bytheway:	00:26:41	Those nicknames are juxtaposed—Advocate and Accuser. I've always thought, "How interesting, one accuses, one advocates for us."
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:26:49	Yes. So true, John. And the Advocate is not covering us from it, right? It's not hiding. It's not saying, "Oh, it wasn't so bad! It's not the Savior saying, "Oh, it's not a big deal." He never says that. He says, "Come, don't be afraid of it. I have the power to heal. I have redeemed it already. I will teach you. I will enable you to see this differently so that you become a new being who doesn't want that sin anymore." Article of Faith, #4 right there, right?
John Bytheway:	00:27:21	Yes.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:27:21	Our kids, I'll say, "Okay, here we are again, it's Article of Faith number 4." We start with Adam. And then here we are with Enoch, and then we're with Moses. And then we're with Abraham. And we're taught every single time. We're taught the same absolutely beautiful doctrine of Christ every time. And here it is, repent. "First believe and repent. Be baptized in the name of mine Only Begotten, who is full of grace and truth. And then ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. And whatsoever ye ask shall be given you." That's that path, that beautiful covenant path of repentance.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:27:58	And so President Nelson said ... you remember last [General] Conference when he opens and he says, "I want you to listen for three ..." I invite you. He doesn't ever use the word want. He says, "I invite you to listen for three things during this conference, pure truth, the pure doctrine of Christ, and pure

revelation." And in that verse, 51-52 we're given the pure doctrine of Christ. And then President Nelson says, "The pure doctrine of Christ is powerful. It changes the life of everyone who understands it and seeks to implement it in his or her life." So that covenant path, right, is that believe, repent, renew that covenant, receive the healing love of the Lord in your life, his healing blood through baptism, be given the gift of the Holy Ghost over and over again.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:28:46 It's interesting, as we talked about, Hank, at the beginning, this idea of children and relationship. Parenting from relationship, instead of role. The list of things I do, instead of a list of things I do to this child, it's a relationship with them. But it's interesting that mothering, we know from the very beginning, an infant cannot grow outside of relationship. That brain develops, that soul and body develops from within a relationship. And it's this mother responding to infant, infant responding to mother, and it's this incredible process. And we can watch the brain develop. Now technology enables us to do that. But it confirms that we cannot grow outside of relationship.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:29:27 And so we're sent away from our heavenly parents. And what do they teach us about in being sent away? Covenants. What are covenants? They establish a relationship. They affirm and confirm our connection that the Redeemer made himself at ... We talk about being at one with Him, but He made Himself at one with us in a relationship, that from which we can grow and we have to have it. We have to have that relationship just like a child does, cannot grow outside relationship. We have to have it to affirm, confirm to us that we belong and are part of. And you are safe to be honest. You are safe to be vulnerable. You are safe to be open about your sins and weaknesses. You are safe to not hide from me. And in the moment you do, I am here. I am ever with you and I will enable you to grow. And so they send us covenants. And what's the promise that comes with the covenant of baptism? The gift of the Holy Ghost.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:30:39 We renew it every single week. And it's the assurance of his presence, the divine presence with us. Who is He, the Holy Ghost? He is the Comforter. He is the Consoler. He is the Teacher of all Truth. So he'll be teaching us. He'll help us see ourselves honestly. He'll help us see others honestly and truthfully. Like your mom was helping you see your dad, John. I love that. Right? There's the Holy Ghost helping us see things honestly and truthfully, and consoling us in that process. And we grow, and we grow, and we grow. And it's that beautiful process of the doctrine of Christ. How he says here, President Nelson, "It changes the life of everyone who understands it."

- John Bytheway: 00:31:22 And I think that it can be easy because we can make a quick list of faith, repentance, baptism, to make it sound like a checkbox list. But all of those are an ongoing process. Growing faith in Christ. Can I say that baptism is an event. I can point to when I was baptized. But the process of being born again is ongoing, right? And the process of following the Holy Ghost in my life is ongoing, and the Lord has arranged it so that every Sunday I am going to come back to the sacrament table and continue the process.
- John Bytheway: 00:32:02 So it's helpful for me to see the first principles and ordinances all of them as a process, even though it sounds like you might say baptism is an event. Well, it is, but Elder Christofferson talked about the ongoing process of being born again. It's kind of like, maybe this is a bad comparison, I can have a temple wedding, but do I have a celestial marriage? A temple wedding is an event. A celestial marriage is our ongoing process of making it celestial, having the Holy Spirit of Promise touch us, and anyway. So I'm glad we're bringing this up, but I want to think of the first principles as, all of them as an ongoing process.
- Hank Smith: 00:32:50 Enoch uses some interesting pedagogy here, because he tells them the first principles and ordinances. And then he says, "Adam had a question for the Lord." And it's almost as if he's answering the question his audience might have, which is, why? Why do I have to do these things? Why do we baptize? So he says in Verse 53, "Our father Adam spake unto the Lord and said: Why should men repent and be baptized?" Almost as if his audience is like, "Hmm, I had that same question. I'm glad Adam had that question." Then he said, "Okay, well let me tell you what the Lord's answer was to, 'Why do we have to do these things?'" And he gives him what he calls in verse 62, the plan of salvation. Right? "Unto all men."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:33:40 And the Lord's saying you are conceived in sin. Meaning you have to have a predisposition for sin, right? Hormonally, and physiologically, and all of those things, so that you can taste the bitter to know to prize the good. And all these emotions that we have that make our lives hard in a sense, right? Do we have to have these sexual inclinations? They're really hard. And they start when I'm this young, and I'm not going to get married for ... What in the world is that all about? Right? Or all the things, like my anxious personality, my super conscientious, anxious person. I tend to be like, "Why do I have to have this predisposition towards that temperament?" You know? And yet it's the way we can experience the truth and prize the good. And that we need to be born again.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:34:28 So it's so interesting that Elder Christofferson ... Do you remember him telling the story about that mission president? It's very powerful. He describes this mission president who says, "I fell into a dream in which I was given a vivid panoramic view of my life." This is a good man, right? Like he's a valiant person. "I was shown my sins, poor choices. The times I had treated people with impatience, plus the omissions of good things I should have said or done. A comprehensive review of my life was shown to me in just a few minutes. I awoke, startled, and instantly dropped to my knees beside the bed and began to pray, to plead for forgiveness, pouring out the feelings of my heart like I had never done before."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:35:13 Then he says, "Prior to the dream, I didn't know that I had such great need to repent. My faults and weaknesses suddenly became so plainly clear to me that the gap between the person I was, and the holiness, and goodness of God seemed like millions of miles." And then he says, he felt so grateful for a Redeemer who would offer that to him. He said, "While I'm on my knees, despite my feeling so unworthy, I felt God's love and mercy that was so palpable." And that's the two parts we have to hold together that are hard to hold together. But it's Adam's question. Really? Like we need to repent, right? And the Lord's saying, "Yes, the quest is to become like we are. And that is holiness. You wouldn't want anything less, "Nothing less can be in my presence." As Elder Christofferson recently described, he said, "Any corruption," and quoting Hugh Nibley, "Any corruption would corrupt eternity." It would spoil it. It can't be there. And so we have to be changed completely. And we hold together that need for absolute change and the promise that it is possible with him, and his absolute love and mercy. That's what covenant means. "I will never leave you. I will never leave you. I am here beside you."
- Hank Smith: 00:36:38 It seems to me, in 53 Adam asked the question, "Why do we need to repent and be baptized?" And the Lord starts in the beginning. He says, "Listen, I wanted you to be born the way you were born. I wanted you to become mortal. I wanted you in this situation so you can grow up and taste the bitter, and prize the good. I want you to be an agent to yourself." Verse 56. "I want you to have the freedom to choose." So all of this is, everything that's happened so far is really good, but I don't want you to stay that way. I don't want you to stay carnal, and sensual, and devilish. I want you to experience it, but not stay that way. So here comes verse 57. "So now repent. So you can learn all the lessons from mortality, be cleansed from the problems of mortality and come back to me educated." Right?

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:37:33 Yes. Yes. That's right. This is an educational experience, right? It's helping us taste bitter to know to prize the good. Learning, growing, with that covenant relationship assuring it.
- John Bytheway: 00:37:46 Can we look at a phrase that I want to make sure we clarify for our listeners? In Verse 55 it says, "In as much as thy children are conceived in sin ..." Now it's not sinful to conceive children.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:38:00 Right. And this has been interpreted that way, right?
- John Bytheway: 00:38:03 Right. It can be. Or that, "Oh, I guess sexual behavior then is sinful." No. What do we think that means when ... I've always tried to explain. Maybe it means coming into a fallen world.
- Hank Smith: 00:38:20 That's what I would say too.
- John Bytheway: 00:38:21 Is that what you would say?
- Hank Smith: 00:38:22 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 00:38:22 Okay.
- Hank Smith: 00:38:23 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 00:38:23 You're conceived-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:38:23 It seems like-
- Hank Smith: 00:38:23 And as much as children are born into a fallen world.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:38:28 With predispositions or vulnerabilities, right, that would incline us to doing things, to tasting the bitter.
- John Bytheway: 00:38:38 Yeah. I remember Robert Millet once in a class saying, "Raise your hand if you are responsible for the Fall of Adam." And nobody raised their hand. And then he said, "Raise your hand if you have been affected by the Fall of Adam." And everybody raised their hand. And so I'm thinking, "All right, maybe that's what this means. We grow up, sin conceived in our hearts. We are fallen also." Gerald Lund talks about the Fall of man, and the fall of me. Each of us has our own fall. And then a phrase that you've repeated Jenet about 10 times today, which is one of my favorites, "They taste the bitter that they may know to prize the good." This is just another Lehi saying, "There needs to be opposition in all things,' and here's why. 'You would not know to prize the good if you had not tasted the bitter."

Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:39:30	Yes. Yes. And so it's not a Fall, right? It wasn't a mistake.
John Bytheway:	00:39:34	Yeah.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:39:35	Right? That's what you're saying. This isn't a mistake. This is the plan.
John Bytheway:	00:39:38	Right.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:39:38	To prize the good, tasting the bitter. Don't you love how he emphasizes again? The fact is we're susceptible to sin. That's probably not the right word. It's not predisposed. But we're susceptible to it. Hormones, and physiological, and all that stuff, and genetics. We're susceptible to it. And that's being conceived into that susceptibility, if you will. But then there he says agency. Because what we can do, right, is we can say, "But I had to do it. I had to do that thing." Right? And it wouldn't make sense, if in fact the possibility of change is that magnificent. It would not make any sense if we didn't have complete agency. Right? If we didn't have the ability to choose otherwise.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:40:30	And so I love how this ... Richard Williams, who talks about this so powerfully, but he'll say, "We are in the process of being human. We are continually acting, accepting, rejecting, taking up the world, or a thought, or feeling. Accepting, or giving ourselves over to an idea or an interpretation, a mistake, a priority." We're always acting on what we're picking up, what we're holding onto, what we're letting go of. Right? We're always in the process of acting. And the Lord is teaching us how to become pure so we can use that agency purely in pure ways. It's so powerful because it tells me why.
Dr. Jenet Erickson:	00:41:13	Here's Ty Mansfield struggling with same-sex attraction, and grappling with those issues, that reality in his life. And the narrative that the world gives him is, "This is what you must do to find happiness, Ty. This is the path." The world offers all of us a narrative. You've got a predisposition towards addiction, or you've got this, and this is the narrative of your life given that. Or in this case, you have this reality of identifying as gay. And this is the narrative of your life. He's singing in General Conference, fasted all day. Comes there at the end of his fast. He says the prayer. The prayer is said, and there is this flood of love all around as he's grappling with, "What does this mean for my life? I love the Gospel. How do I live the Gospel? What does this mean?"

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:00 This flood of love and a vision of love. You read that story over and over again with individuals who, and all of us were given a narrative. The Lord says, "You are agents, and you may have inclinations or whatever to whatever things that can be a mix of both good and bad," right? My conscientious nature can be great, and it can be a pain in the neck in some ways, right? But the Lord is saying, "I can write the narrative. I will write the narrative of your life, if," as he told Ty, "Stay with me. Stay with me, Ty."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:42:40 So he will teach us to use our agency in ways that bring blessings. We are never trapped. We have agency, and so we can choose how we will relate to the realities of our lives. We have constraints, no question. We have limited choices. No question. We are never fully without agency to act in how we relate to those situations. So I'm so grateful for the miracle of agency. It allows us to have a story that is re-written every day that is a new narrative offered by Chris.
- Hank Smith: 00:43:13 Yeah. I think it's crucial then that we come back to what you said in 54, 55, "You are not a mistake. You are not a mistake. This was all done for a purpose. Now you're an agent. That's what I wanted. I wanted you to have your agency, and please use your agency to repent. Please. Teach your children to repent." Yeah. Interestingly, he says, "Teach these things freely unto your children." It almost seems like vulnerable or openly, just-
- John Bytheway: 00:43:50 Openly, yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:43:51 Exposed, yeah. Teach it. Teach it to your children.
- John Bytheway: 00:43:53 Make sure they know.
- Hank Smith: 00:43:55 Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:43:55 Because shame is so big and real, right? I think in addressing the issue of sexuality, the fear of a child to come to their parents and talk about their struggles that way. I think because the adversary, his whole work is the accuser and to shame us, and to cause us to fear. You see that the woman brought to the Savior. She comes into that Pharisee's home, and she washes his feet. You see Simon look at her, and he says, the Pharisee says, it says when he saw it, it's like he's even calling her an it. Then he says, "Do you not know who and what manner of woman this is? For she is a sinner."

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:44:38 There is the Great Accuser, and I think our children, ourselves, right, I have this problem, I have this weakness, I've done this thing, and what we hear in our minds, "You are a sinner," right? You are this. You are defined by this. The Savior says, he turns to the woman and says to Simon, it's so beautiful, "Seest thou this woman. You have called her a sinner." Seest thou this woman. She is whole before him, right? She is defined. Her identity is whole, defined already. She is a daughter of divine beings. Then he says to Simon, "Guess what? Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. She was honest about her need, where you have been hiding your need."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:45:31 So beautiful when you heard on this podcast Steven Harper saying how he loves the phrase, "Relentless repentance." Relentless repentance, right? It's that I love repentance. Then he said something. I wrote it down when I listened to him on this podcast. He said, "Repentance is signaling to the Lord what we want him to do for us." That's what she is doing here. She is coming and signaling, "I know you can. This is what I want you to do for me." In that moment, right? Her sins are forgiven. Whatever that means, forgiveness, it's her growth. She's growing in Christ. She is coming into holiness. She is coming into greater purity. How the Adversary would say, "You are a sinner," and the Savior, "Seest thou this woman?"
- Hank Smith: 00:46:24 Yeah, love that part of that story, because everyone sees her. He's saying, "No, you see her, but you don't see her."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:46:33 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 00:46:33 "You don't see what I see."
- John Bytheway: 00:46:35 Well, I loved what you said, Jenet, when he saw it, is that what we're supposed to put on the other side and Jesus saying, "This woman," that's amazing. We're all sinners. How-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:46:51 Yes.
- John Bytheway: 00:46:52 Yeah. It's kind of like when John says things like, "And the disciple that Jesus loved," I put in my margin, "Well, that doesn't really narrow it down very much."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:47:04 Yeah. Yes, yeah. Isn't that the truth? Yes.
- John Bytheway: 00:47:10 We're all sinners, and he loves us all too. Anyway,

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:47:12 He loves us all perfectly. Oh, that's so beautiful. So there we get to that, Hank. Just having that whole mindset, then it says, "Therefore, I give you a commandment, to teach these things freely unto your children." It's that, that story of repentance, the need we have for him, that being honest. The fact that we want to hide our sins, we want to cover them from the time we're babies, right? He's saying, "Don't be ashamed. Come. Bring them to me. I am here to heal them and make you whole." It takes a lot of practice to do that.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:47:47 It's why that structure and heart, Elder Anderson, he says, "If you're not hearing the music of the gospel in your home," and he says, "if the basses in the family choir are too loud and are overbearing, if the strings section in your family orchestra is a little too shrill or a little bit sharp, if those impetuous piccolos are out of tune, be patient. If you're not hearing the music of the gospel, the good news, that path of repentance, that covenant relationship in your home, please remember these two words: keep practicing. With God's help, the day will come when the music of the gospel will fill your home with unspeakable joy." For Lehi, that music of the gospel is still coming about in his home, right? That music of the gospel in the plan for the redemption of all of his posterity, that music of the gospel is still being brought about in fullness in his home. We may not see it all in this life, but we will see it.
- Hank Smith: 00:48:47 Yeah, that word freely is fascinating to me, because he could have said, "Teach these things unto your children. Teach these things freely unto your children," just means so much to be open, maybe with them. Be honest. Be vulnerable. Let them know that you have not lived a perfect life, and that you've needed to repent. It's okay to let your children know that, and that's hard for me.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:49:12 It's hard for me, Hank. I think it's hard for all of us. Our natural inclination is not, right? As a parent, you're supposed to have all the answers. You're supposed to be the authority. You're supposed to be these vulnerable children that you have the responsibility to save.
- Hank Smith: 00:49:25 I remember my dad talking about the first time he ever smoked a cigar, right? I was like, "Dad, you smoked a cigar?" He's like, "Oh yeah, I found my dad's cigars, and I went and smoked cigars, and got so sick." He said, "I thought I'd never do that again, right?" It was just a small little lesson, but it was good to hear. It was good to hear that my dad had been a dumb kid.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:49:49 Had been a human, right? Had been a mortal.

- Hank Smith: 00:49:51 Had been a human, yeah.
- John Bytheway: 00:49:52 And Hank, I can throw in that my dad didn't have a Word of Wisdom. He tried it in the Navy and just said, "Eh, I didn't like it." He tasted the bitter—Light of Christ, whatever. "Eh, I didn't like it. Maybe some people do and have to give it up, but it's just everybody comes from a different spot." But that phrase, "Tasting the bitter that they may know the price of the good," is so fascinating to me, because it almost sounds like they're supposed to taste the bitter. You kind of don't want to go there, but you think, no, I guess we really are supposed to actually say, "I don't want to do that again. I did it, but I don't want to do that again."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:50:40 Yes, which is why, as we've said before, right, that Elder Christofferson saying, "Ours is not a religion of rationalization or a religion of perfectionism. It's this religion of tasting the bitter to prize the good. It's a religion of redemption, redemption through Christ." I thought a long time, was there any other way? This path of dependence on another's holiness to make my holiness, was there another way? Could I have made my own holiness somehow? Just to think no, because it's a plan of love. Redemption by love, and that holiness is the path of love.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:51:24 Here this inexpressible love of a Redeemer, this is that. The plan of salvation is a plan of love where there is a Redeemer whose holiness and purity redeems us. Then we become beings of love, the whole purpose not being to become pure as much as to become beings of love who can be in the kinds of relationships that define heaven, because heaven is not so much a... Right? It's a way of being in a relationship.
- John Bytheway: 00:51:53 I was listening to this chapter last night, just because in our day and age, I can tell my phone to read me a chapter, and it'll do it, right? But the phrase at the end of verse 59 I thought was cool. "Enjoy the words of eternal life in this world, and eternal life in the world to come." It's like we get the words of eternal life in this world, but hang on, because we're going to have the real thing in the world to come.
- Hank Smith: 00:52:21 You're going to experience it. Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:52:23 Yes. This process is going to keep going on and on, right? This process of becoming purified, born again. It is interesting that if you think about the idea of being born again that is repeated over and over again in these verses, right? As you noticed in 59, and then again we have that talked about... I've thought about

birth, right? You have Nicodemus saying, "Does this mean I need to come back into my mother's womb and come..."-

- Hank Smith: 00:52:50 And be born? Yeah.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:52:51 And be born? Yeah. I think just realizing, wow, when a mother is creating life, there's that placenta that's the source of blood for that life, and the water in which that infant is growing. So we see water and blood, and it's all about creating life, not just the process of coming out, right? Do you remember Elder Christofferson, remember in [General] Conference when you were sitting there and he's talking about the sacrament. He says, "I have spoken of receiving the Savior's grace to take away our sins and the stain of sin in us, but eating his flesh and drinking his blood, that intimate, bringing it into our bodies in the sacrament is to internalize the qualities and character of Christ, putting off the natural man and becoming Saints."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:53:43 As we partake of the sacramental bread and water each week, we would do well to consider how fully and completely we must and have the opportunity to incorporate his character and the patterns of his sinless life into our being. So when we take the sacrament, it's not so much I've done this, and I've done this wrong thing, and a time of shame, but a time to say he has offered me his blood and his body into me that I can become like he is. I can become that pure and holy. It's that beautiful affirmation, and we're honest about it. We're honest about our needs, and he says, "I am here with you fully."
- Hank Smith: 00:54:26 Paul calls Christ the Father of our salvation at times. I think that might be here where you said, "He compares himself to a mother. You were born into this world by water, blood, and spirit. I want you to be born again by water, blood, and Spirit. This time, it's not the blood of your mother, physical birth, but it's going to be the blood of your father." So when I see Christ being referred to as the Father in scripture, I often think of this verse, because, "I'm providing the blood in your spiritual rebirth, just like your mother did for your physical birth." It was you, Jenet, who talked to us about the Savior often identifying himself in the feminine, right? "How oft I would have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings." In this regard being, "I am going to give birth, spiritual rebirth to you."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:55:22 Oh, that is so... Thank you. I love that pattern, Hank, a father and mother participating in the salvation, right? In this process of exaltation. But that's how intimately we need the Lord. We need him as much as the placenta's blood feeding, being the nourishment of life, and that water in which we grow, that's

- how much... When the Holy Ghost is given to us, that's what we're promised. That divine presence with us always, that closely.
- Hank Smith: 00:55:52 Baptism becomes the day you became his, right? Just like your birth when my wife held those little babies in her arms, this is the day you became mine. It seems like our baptism is the day we become his, born to him. The baptismal fount represents a womb, right? Immersed. Here comes this-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:56:19 So beautiful.
- Hank Smith: 00:56:20 ... brand new child. We don't slap you and say, "It's a girl." Right? But we-
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:56:25 Oh, yes.
- Hank Smith: 00:56:26 It's the idea of you're born.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:56:28 I've started this pattern from a few years ago when a cousin, my mom's aunt passed away. She had been raising, she was a widow for years, and was raising her daughter, who had had a severe illness when she was 18 months old and her brain did not grow beyond that date. So she was handicapped in that sense. So Ilene, she's 68 now, I think. So when her mother died, she'd been sleeping in her mother's room, and so close to her mother. The children, her siblings, were worried that when mom dies, what will Ilene do? How will this be for her?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:57:03 So they were sitting in sacrament meeting. She didn't cry. Ilene didn't cry through the funeral. She didn't cry at all at the burial. She didn't cry during that process, and so they just didn't know what was going on inside of her. As they're taking the sacrament that next Sunday where she had always sat by her mom and taking the sacrament, all of a sudden tears start coming down her face. Her sisters look over and say, "Ilene, are you okay?" I think feeling like, oh, all of a sudden it's hitting her, mom is gone. She just said the words, "Jesus loves me. Jesus loves me."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:57:40 I've thought I want, sitting beside my children as they take the sacrament, more than anything to know this beautiful ordinance is telling you Jesus loves me. He gave his blood and his body for me. He assures me of his desire to work out my repentance, my growth, my becoming. So I love that.

- Hank Smith: 00:58:04 That's beautiful, Jenet. In verse 60, it almost seems like the Lord is saying, "Leave it to me and the Holy Ghost," right? "You repent. If you do the repentance and baptism part, then the Holy Ghost and I, we can justify you and sanctify you. That's our role. You don't have to worry too much about sanctifying yourself or justifying yourself. You do the repenting. The Holy Ghost will do the justifying, and I'll do the sanctifying."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:58:30 I love that, Hank. Yes. Okay. 63 is that beautiful verse that says, "All things are created and made to bear record of me, but all things temporal and spiritual, in the heavens above and which are on the earth, and things which are in the earth and under the earth, all things bear record of me." My father-in-law is not religious, but he loves nature and grew up... My husband grew up doing lots of things in nature with his dad. Mike will tell our kids, "Granddad feels close to God in nature."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:59:08 We have words of scripture. I just had this wonderful student, Spencer Bergen, write a paper about this. We have scripture where we learn of God, right? We say you'll learn of God from the scriptures, but the Lord is telling us you learn of me where else?
- Hank Smith: 00:59:22 Everywhere.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 00:59:24 Everywhere. "In Creation," Spencer wrote, "We yearn for something that can approximate the grandeur of God, and in nature, we find it. You stand there in beautiful places, the bottom of the Denali in Alaska, and all you can say is that it is grandeur." It almost reaches God, right? It almost... Alma teaches us that, right? All things denote there is a God, upon even the earth and all things. So Spencer writes, "Order, grandeur, form. These are witnesses of deity that come from nature." Aren't those beautiful words? "Order, grandeur, form."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:00:10 Next week, when we talk about, or the next couple weeks we talk about Creation, why does he spend so much time in the temple teaching us about Creation? I am creating you. Spiritual creating and line upon line, and holiness upon holiness, and truth upon truth, and light upon light. In the end, it is good. It is complete. It is whole. So I just think all around us when we see creation, it is the story of our lives he's bearing witness of. I am in the process of creating you.
- Hank Smith: 01:00:43 My friend, Todd Parker, gave a devotional at BYU. He kept a list of just the creations around him that he feels like testify of Christ. He said, "Consider the seasons themselves as teaching about the Fall."

- John Bytheway: 01:01:03 We even call it Fall.
- Hank Smith: 01:01:04 Fall.
- John Bytheway: 01:01:06 And spring.
- Hank Smith: 01:01:07 Winter. Right? Spring, this Resurrection and summer, right? He said, "The sun itself comes from the east. Christ will come from the east. The sun gives light and life to all things. Its heat can consume all things." He says those who live in Arizona understand that. "It does both. The light of Christ gives life to all things. People whose lives are full of light will be saved by the light, as by fire." He says, "The universe," he said, "Consider hibernation. Every creature, every squirrel, insect, snake, or bear that hibernates and lies dormant during the winter appears dead. Each one that comes alive again in the spring testifies of Christ and his Resurrection. Every tree, every plant, every leaf."
- Hank Smith: 01:01:55 He even says, "When you go to bed at night, why do you go to bed at night? Because you're tired? No. You symbolically die every night. Why do you get up in the morning and go to school, or why do you get up in the morning? To go to school? No. You symbolically resurrect every morning." I remember asking him once, he told me, I think it was him who said, "Look at the 12 full moons of the year," right? We have 12 full moons every year testifying that the sun is still there, even though you can't see it, right? And we have 12 Apostles who testify that they can still see the son, even though we can't, right? "All things are made to bear record of me." It's fun to look around the world around us, isn't it? And to see symbols of Christ?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:02:41 Hank, that is... What a powerful list. As you were saying it, I was thinking that adds a whole new meaning to, "Teach these things freely unto your children."
- Hank Smith: 01:02:51 My wife consistently says to our kids, "There's a spiritual lesson in that." Everything. Everything that happens, right? Everything that happens. "I think there's a lesson in that."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:02:58 Which they have to make fun of sometimes, right?
- Hank Smith: 01:02:59 Oh, all the time.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:00 If they're like my kids.
- Hank Smith: 01:03:01 "Let me guess, there's a spiritual lesson in this."

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:00 They're like my kids.
- John Bytheway: 01:03:04 "Let me guess, there's a spiritual lesson in this."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:06 Yes. "Let me guess."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:06 64, 65 and 66 are Adam being taught these truths. And then what does he do? He cried unto the Lord, was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, carried down into the water, laid under the water and brought forth out of the water, and then was born of the Spirit."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:24 And I just think it's so beautiful that, in this chapter, we're not left with just the truths. We end with one who experienced it, did it, and how the voice of heaven says, "Thou art baptized with fire."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:39 I'll never forget Elder Holland, at this last General Conference, when he talked about the first great commandment to love the Lord with all our hearts. And then he says, "The first great truth is that he loves us with all his heart, with all his mind, with all his strength."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:03:58 And then he said this: " Of course, we are speaking here of the first great commandment given to the human family, to love God wholeheartedly without reservation or compromise, with all our heart, might, mind and strength. The love of God is the first great commandment in the universe, but the first great truth is that God loves us exactly that way: wholeheartedly, without reservation or compromise, with all of his heart, might, mind and strength."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:04:26 And then this is the important part that's so beautiful. This is important for what we just read: "When those majestic forces from his heart and ours meet without restraint, there is a veritable explosion of spiritual moral power."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:04:45 Then, as Teilhard de Chardin wrote, "For the second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:04:55 I was thinking about my need for change that all the students that I ... Whether they're grappling with who knows what; depression or struggles with family or dating, or whatever it is; and that need for power, that need for fire. And how he promises us here, "Your love for the Lord meets his love for you. And there is an explosion of spiritual, moral power."

- Hank Smith: 01:05:24 I kept thinking grateful, 24-year-old Joseph Smith gave us this. 24.
- John Bytheway: 01:05:30 Right. Right.
- Hank Smith: 01:05:33 And this is just one chapter of so many.
- John Bytheway: 01:05:36 Genesis 5 is, what, 32 verses? This one is 68. And we get so much here.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:05:44 Rich, beautiful truth to bless our lives.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:05:47 So I think we have to talk about just a little bit, why parenting, why it's not so easy? Just teach these things freely to your children and they'll experience what Adam did. Jennifer Finlayson-Fife says this so powerfully: "Parenting is noble work because so often you are reaching through the dark, trying to figure out what it means to love this unique child, with their challenges, strengths, and desires, and how we need a big dose of self-compassion and compassion."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:06:20 We need, in that beautiful process of trying to teach these things freely to this child, as we talked about, infecting that relationship, in a sense, with our trying to have them be the evidence of our goodness, and when they choose a path that is painful to us, that rejects that goodness, we can experience it as them needing to reinforce us; instead of their journey tasting the bitterness, get curious about their journey rather than fearful of their journey.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:06:50 And I appreciate that.
- Hank Smith: 01:06:53 I've noticed, as a parent, that when I try to force my children, I end up usually pushing them to the exact place I don't want them to go."
- Hank Smith: 01:07:08 When he says, "Teach these things freely unto your children," there might be a sense of, "Teach, but don't force these things upon your children."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:07:18 Yes. Yes.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:07:19 Isn't it Elder Bedner who says, quoting that verse, "You can bring it unto the heart, but not into the heart?" And that is, Hank, you already said, "Leave this work to me." He is their child, and this process of salvation has to be worked out with them as an individual.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:07:45 We seek the Holy Ghost as the teacher, we bring it unto their heart, in a sense. And when we don't have the Holy Ghost with us, which is going to happen all the time, we have compassion with that process. And we return again, trusting his working out their salvation with them, not our responsibility for their salvation. Right?
- Hank Smith: 01:08:08 So sometimes my lack of faith in him makes me want to take his spot. Right? "I'm going to force these things." And I then foster rebellion and resentment in my children because I didn't trust that the Lord would do his work with them.
- Hank Smith: 01:08:27 Does that happen to either of you?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:08:29 You know what? I think they look at us and they're like, "I'm going to see, do you love me, or do you love yourself in me? Do you love what you think is so true that you want this to be about your journey instead of my own?"
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:08:43 And so, if they're smart, and we hope they are, they're going to differentiate themselves from us and be like, "Now I'm choosing a different way, because I got to know, is this about me or is this about you?"
- Hank Smith: 01:08:51 Yeah. And when a child is resentful, in my experience, when they grow up, they fight against the one thing that you, the parent, seemingly love most, which ends up being God and the Church, right?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:09:13 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 01:09:14 So, "I'm going to use this power that I now have. Because you are forcing me, I'm going to use my power to fight back against you."
- Hank Smith: 01:09:21 It's a trap. And it's based on fear, really, right? Fear that, "They're going to make bad decisions, so I better force them to make good decisions."
- Hank Smith: 01:09:29 But God never does that to me. He's never forced me to make a good decision. In fact, when you're forced to make a good decision, it's not even a good decision because you didn't choose it.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:09:41 Yes, that's right. That's right. If it's not chosen of your own heart, it's not going to bring the blessings. Yeah.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:09:47 Hank, don't you think ... ?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:09:48 So if we come back to the beginning of this, I feel like what the Lord is teaching me is that I parent with faith in the Redeemer. That is unending. And that's something I renew every day. I renew his faith in me and my faith in him for me. And I renew that faith in what he is going to bring about in the lives of my children. And when I am in that place, I am not in the place of fear and coercion and control.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:10:18 Now do I have to keep coming back to that? Yes. But he's saying, "This beautiful teaching about repentance is starting with you. Your faith in me for you and your faith in me for them. And your faith in them. Your faith in their being able to work out this journey because of who they are."
- Hank Smith: 01:10:39 Often, when a parent comes to me with a concern about a wayward child, I almost always ask first, "What kind of person are they? Are they a good neighbor? Are they a good ... ?" "Well, yes, they're a very good person." I'm like, "Well then, it sounds like God has their heart. The Church might not have their membership record, but God has their heart."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:10:58 Yes. Yes.
- Hank Smith: 01:11:00 They're good people.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:11:02 We can think the most important thing is doing those behaviors. And you're talking about this heart, right? What a good person this is.
- Hank Smith: 01:11:10 This is a good citizen. This is a very good child. "Well, is he a good neighbor?" "Yeah." "Well then, I think you can trust the Lord on this, right?"
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:11:18 Yes.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:11:19 I think parenting, if we infused it with more compassion for ourselves and for them, it would just help us.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:11:27 And I think God is ... When we learn about repentance, here's the God, our Redeemer, saying, "My bowels are filled with compassion for you." And I just know I need forgiveness from him for the things I didn't know, that I didn't know to do better, that I didn't know yet, I didn't understand.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:11:48 I love how Jennifer Finlayson-Fife say's that, "We have to forgive life for its profound imperfection, for me as a parent for that child."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:11:56 And that is strangely where our spirituality is. Isn't that amazing? It's in that compassion, in that forgiveness, in having compassion towards ourselves in our flawed state, forgiveness and compassion for them, forgiveness for ourselves. And that is where spirituality is.
- Hank Smith: 01:12:15 You also mentioned forgiveness.
- Hank Smith: 01:12:17 Jenet, just before we let you go, there's something to be said for, when you become an adult, forgiving your parents for being imperfect.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:12:28 Yes.
- Hank Smith: 01:12:28 Because it's so easy to look back and go, "Wow, they were terrible. And I have a lot of problems because of this or such and such that my parents did."
- Hank Smith: 01:12:38 And perhaps we don't look upon our parents when we get to this stage of being a parent ourselves with as much compassion as we should.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:12:48 Hank, I love that you said that. I actually was going to write about this, because David Brooks at the *New York Times* just wrote about this epidemic of adult children cutting off their parents, saying, "You failed me."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:13:01 And he's talking about parents who tried. These weren't addicts, abusive addicts who abandoned children. These are people who tried, who were trying. And I do think we have this epidemic of blame toward parents.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:13:16 And it's Satan, right? Because it's trying to tell people they have no agency; because of how you related to that, you're locked into this.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:13:25 And I think it's not the path of repentance for that child either, of healing. Because when we're blaming another, we have given another power over our own journey with Christ. And he's saying, "Come. This is all a journey for all of us working together."

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:13:45 So I love that. Forgiveness and compassion for parents is the way to healing as a person yourself. It's a more honest place.
- John Bytheway: 01:13:56 Yeah. I think you've got to get to a point, all of us, where, "Okay, maybe mom and dad weren't perfect, but here I am right now. I'm now accountable for my own life. I have agency. I want my kids to get to that point to say, 'Okay, my mom and dad weren't perfect.'"
- John Bytheway: 01:14:12 But I keep thinking of that talk that Elder Robbins gave about, "Take 100% responsibility, and ... "
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:14:18 Yes. Yes.
- John Bytheway: 01:14:20 The idea of, "Yeah, your parents weren't perfect. So? But now you are an adult."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:14:26 Yeah. And they weren't supposed to be perfect. I think that's the funny thing. Somewhere we got this idea, "They should love me perfectly and do things perfectly for me." They're just growing, they're growing themselves.
- John Bytheway: 01:14:41 Like you just said, life is a journey.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:14:41 It's this amazing messy journey. Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 01:14:43 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 01:14:45 Janet, Dr. Erickson, this has been fantastic. Absolutely fantastic. And I can see myself going to my children to apologize and tell them that I'm going to need their compassion and grace.
- Hank Smith: 01:14:59 I think our listeners would be interested in these two backgrounds of yours; this secular education in marriage and family life combined with your knowledge of the gospel.
- Hank Smith: 01:15:16 What's happened for you personally in your own marriage and mothering your own family?
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:15:22 Oh, Hank. Thanks for asking that.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:15:24 I can tell you I woke up many nights after becoming a mother, and I'd been a professor before that, I taught about parenting and family life, and I would wake up and I'd say, "What was I teaching them? What was I telling them?"

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:15:37 Because I think I came into motherhood with this idea, the list of things I was going to do, and these little people who were going to just go right along with what I wanted and my working out their salvation. I knew all the right things.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:15:52 And it has been such an incredibly growth inducing and precious experience to have them and my efforts to parent them work out my salvation, and to learn the truth about, here's my list of things, and yet this is all about the opportunity to know and love individuals at a most personal, deep, intimate level.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:16:16 And my list, my perfectionism, my behaviorism can come in and block my experience of them and our experience of Christ together. This is not me having them experience Christ my way. It is us experiencing the redemption of Christ together.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:16:38 My efforts to have them feel and experience the gifts of the Holy Ghost through my own repentant heart, my own heart that loves the fact that he has redeemed me and he is working with me and he will help me with them, and they're experiencing that vulnerability and openness from me, just learning that instead of my list of things that I'm going to do and make happen in their lives has been such a journey of growth.
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:17:04 And I'm still at the beginning, and so thankful for a Savior, whoever teaches me, "Jenet, this about experiencing the beauty of these people in your life and you together experiencing my love and my redeeming power. And everything else is just nothing. Anything that blocks that is not what you desire, is not what you want."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:17:29 Now, does that mean that it's a friction-free life or that I'm not having to say, "No, you have to do this. This is important to do," and there's consequences and all of that? No, but it's coming at it from a heart of faith instead of a heart of fear. It's coming at it from a place of, "We are working on this together and there's no way he's going to let us down. There's no way that we will not be within his hands the whole way."
- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:17:53 So my professional stuff coming into conflict with reality has taught me about the Redeemer and his beautiful plan for parents, that's not a perfectionism plan, but a beautiful plan of redemption and joy in loving and experiencing, with all the rockiness to it, these precious people that we have the opportunity to be close to.

- Dr. Jenet Erickson: 01:18:19 So I'm so thankful for the Redeemer. That's what it's taught me. I need him. We need him.
- Hank Smith: 01:18:26 This has been a fantastic day, John. Good things.
- John Bytheway: 01:18:32 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 01:18:33 Good things. It was good for us to be here.
- John Bytheway: 01:18:35 Good for us to be here. I felt like you, Hank. I want to go tell my kids I love them and, "Sorry."
- Hank Smith: 01:18:41 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 01:18:41 "Sorry." We all need Jesus, including dad.
- Hank Smith: 01:18:46 Yeah. Including dad. Mostly dad probably.
- Hank Smith: 01:18:48 Well, thank you Dr. Jenet Erickson for joining us. Thank you to everyone who listened and stayed with us today or watched on YouTube. Thank you. We're grateful for your support. We couldn't do this without listeners. I guess we could, but no one would hear it. So we're grateful that you're here.
- Hank Smith: 01:19:11 We want to thank our executive producers, Steve and Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen.
- Hank Smith: 01:19:18 And we hope that all of you will join us on our next episode of followHIM.
- Hank Smith: 01:19:26 Hey, we want to remind everybody that you can find us on social media. Come find us on Facebook and Instagram. We would love it if you would subscribe to, rate and review the podcast, share it with your friends. That would be awesome.
- Hank Smith: 01:19:38 Go to followhim.co, followhim.co, for any show notes, transcripts, any references you want. If you're feeling up to it, you can read the transcript in French, Portuguese, and Spanish. So all of that is available to you absolutely free. Go to followhim.co to find all of that.



- Hank Smith: 00:00 Hello, everyone. Welcome to followHIM Favorites. My name is Hank Smith. I'm here with the wonderful John. By the way, we are the co-host of a podcast called followHIM. This year, our followHIM Favorites is taking on a specific question given to us from youth of YSA, someone younger, who just has a question about the Gospel, and we're going to answer that specific question.
- Hank Smith: 00:22 And the question we received this week, John, is this idea of, if I repent of something, and then do it again, can I repent of the same sin, basically, over and over? Is that allowed? What does God think about that? I've received that question before from students, or young people, who feel, "Man, I'm no good at repenting, because here I am repenting, but I'm repenting for the same thing." What would you say to them?
- John Bytheway: 00:47 Oh, man, that's a good question. I think I had it as a kid. But one of my favorite synonyms for "repent" is "to turn". One of the things that I find fascinating, Stephen Covey talked about it once, is that an airplane is off course about 90% of the time. You fly across the Pacific Ocean, New York to London or something, you are off course 90% of the time, but the airplane just keeps turning, turning back. The autopilot just keeps-
- Hank Smith: 01:12 And it crosses the correct ... Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 01:13 ... It just keeps turning back on course, finally lands on the numbers, pulls up to the gate, and you walk out the jet-way, exactly where you're supposed to be, which you is incredible. You can be off course 90% of the time and get where you're going? Yeah, because you keep on turning. And that's why I like that synonym of "repent" is to turn.
- Hank Smith: 01:33 I like that. And that's a daily-
- John Bytheway: 01:34 Yeah. It's a process. Just like a journey, like a flight is a journey, yeah.

- Hank Smith: 01:39 There's a scripture in the Doctrine and Covenants that confuses people sometimes, John. It's Section 82, verse seven, where the Lord says, "But unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return, saith the Lord your God." And we've taken that to mean, oh, well, if you repent of a sin and then do it again, that's like you never repented, and now you're guilty of all those sins, which, that's not really what the Lord says in that verse. We were kind of implying some things.
- Hank Smith: 02:08 It reminds me of a great parable Jesus told, where He said, "Listen, if a man casts an evil spirit out of his house," He says. Really, he meant his life. "If a man casts an evil spirit or a sin out of his life, but then he doesn't do anything else, he doesn't fill his house, that evil spirit or that sin is going to come back, and he's going to find a vacant house."
- Hank Smith: 02:32 He hasn't filled his life with anything, and so he's going to invite this sin back, and six of his evil spirit friends. So, He said, "And now, that that man is worse off than he was when he started." I think that's what the Lord is referring to here in Section 82 is the idea of, if you sin and you repent get, rid of that sin, and you don't do anything else, you don't fill that spot, that void in your life, then something else is going to come and that sin's going to come back and return back to your life.
- Hank Smith: 03:05 So, I would say, to anyone who's worried about this, keep repenting of that same sin, keep casting that spirit out, but also put good things into your life, start inserting more scripture study, more temple attendance, more prayer, all these basics, insert them into your life so those former sins can't return. That's how I read that verse, anyway. And I found it to be a little more empowering than discouraging for students.
- John Bytheway: 03:36 Yeah. Do you know what's also encouraging to me, Hank, is that Jesus would tell, when the disciples are, "Hey, how many times do I have to forgive my brother? Seven times? Is that enough?" And He is, "Well, actually ..." And hyperbole is what, seven times 70 or whatever.
- Hank Smith: 03:52 Yeah. 490.
- John Bytheway: 03:55 So, keep a tally, take a little notebook with you. No, that's not what he meant. He just meant, always. And I think if the Lord's going to ask that of us, He's equally forgiving, and-
- Hank Smith: 04:06 Absolutely.

- John Bytheway: 04:07 ... He knows that we're going to need to keep course correcting a lot. So, that gives me a lot of hope, and hopefully it's helpful.
- Hank Smith: 04:14 In fact, John, you pretty much quoted the book of Mormon there, Mosiah 26:30, the Lord says, "Yay, as often as my people repent, will I forgive them their trespasses against me." So, how many times can you repent? It seems that when the Lord says, "As often as my people repent," meaning, He knows we're going to need to repent often. He's saying, "Oh, this isn't a one time thing. This is a daily thing. As often as my people repent will I forgive them." We have a very merciful Lord.
- John Bytheway: 04:48 Yeah. And it's got to be real, it's sincere, really, it's repentance. And I think you'll make progress when you keep repenting, and those sins will become less enticing to you.
- Hank Smith: 05:01 That's an important point is to say that, just because you returned to a sin doesn't mean that first repentance wasn't sincere. It was. It was sincere. And you just keep trying. Wasn't it Brad, our friend, Brad, Brother Wilcox, who said, "Listen, worthiness is not flawlessness."
- John Bytheway: 05:19 That was the title of his talk. And it's called "being a disciple discipline", discipline, disciple, same word. That you keep getting back on track. Now, you don't plan this in. No, that's not what we're after, you're trying, you're sincerely trying. And that's also what Brad said, you're not trying to hide it, you're seeing your Bishop, you are trying to make those course corrections.
- Hank Smith: 05:42 John, what you just said reminded me of something that Elder Renland said in the April 2015 General Conference, he said, "Even if we've been a conscious, deliberate sinner, or have repeatedly faced failure and disappointment, the moment we decide to try again, the atonement of Christ can help us." This is the idea of the Lord understands even the deliberate sinner. "Oh, I made a mistake." It's the idea of, I actually willfully went after this sin. Now, I don't. I'm sad I did that. I want to turn it around. The moment we decide to try that, the atonement of Christ steps in, we tapped into that power.
- John Bytheway: 06:26 Yeah. That's why I like that it's "turn". Just keep getting back on course, and you'll get to your destination with the help of the Savior.
- Hank Smith: 06:34 Yep.

- John Bytheway: 06:34 But you've got to keep getting back on course.
- Hank Smith: 06:37 The idea is I just won't stop trying. I can't say I'm never going to commit a sin again, but I can commit that I won't stop trying to become like Him-
- John Bytheway: 06:46 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 06:46 ... And do what He wants me to do. And I'm honest in that, I won't stop trying.
- John Bytheway: 06:49 And over time, Joseph Smith says, we lose desire for sin, but he said, "It's a station to which no one ever arrived in a moment." So, it's a-
- Hank Smith: 07:01 That's true.
- John Bytheway: 07:01 ... Life-long process. Just keep trying, and hopefully and prayerfully, that sin will become less appealing to you, and less and less, and you'll taste the bitter and know the price, the good, as we learned in Moses: 6.
- Hank Smith: 07:13 It doesn't happen in a moment.
- John Bytheway: 07:15 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 07:15 It doesn't happen in a moment. And that's okay. The Lord understands you. He gets you. He knows why you do what you do. He's not disgusted by you. He's not, "What were you thinking?" He gets you. He understands your childhood, your personality, your DNA, your genetics, He understands all of it. So, go to Him, the one who understands you. Well, John, let's take on another question next week-
- John Bytheway: 07:40 Sounds great.
- Hank Smith: 07:40 ... We hope all of you will join us for followHIM Favorites.