



Season 7: Episode 12 | Susie Larson | Is Your Life Being Ruled by Fear?

Joanna LaFleur: Hello and welcome to Scripture Untangled, a podcast by the Canadian Bible Society. My name is Joanna LaFleur. I'm a friend of the Canadian Bible Society and I'm going to be your guide for today's episode.

Today, Lorna Dueck will be interviewing Susie Larson. Susie Larson is a widely appreciated Bible teacher known for her own podcast and radio show, *Susie Larson Live*. Susie is a force in social media where her daily blessings reach over half million people each week.

She's written over 20 books exploring Christianity and life. She's a practical theologian. In addition to her work and ministry, Susie loves to laugh and relax with her husband Kevin, their three sons and families, and including in Susie's own words, delightful grandchildren.

Susie and Kevin enjoy biking the trails and recharging by the lake near their home in Minneapolis, Minnesota. So, here's Lorna Dueck and Susie Larson in conversation.

Lorna Dueck: Well, thank you for joining us on Scripture Untangled, Susie.

Susie Larson: Lorna, it's such an honor to meet you. Glad to spend this time with you today.

Lorna Dueck: Well, you know, you are famous for a first question on podcasts, and I just got to give that one right back at you because as I've been enjoying and listening to your podcast, you often begin each conversation with a question which says, and it's really, I think it's your trademark, Susie. It says, you ask: *"What has God said to you from the Bible this week?"*

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So back at you, Susie. How have you and the Bible been in conversation this week?

Susie Larson: I love God's Word, and there's a story that I keep returning to more so in the last several weeks.

So, I read other places, and then I go back again to this spot because I feel like there's so much more God wants to show me. But it was when Jesus was walking with the disciples, and he said, who do people say that I am? And they said, Elijah, or the prophet, or some other prophet, or, you know, and they were kind of making guesses on what the general population was saying about Jesus. And I just picture him stopping with fire in his eyes going, who do you say that I am? And Peter was the one who said, Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

And Jesus said, you know, *the Lord God has revealed this to you*. You didn't get this from human understanding. It's my paraphrase, right? But, you know, he said, the Lord has revealed this to you.

So, Peter, in that moment, had a divine revelation in an earthbound moment, because they were still walking the dusty roads and the trails of the Middle East, still dealing with opposition and, you know, all kinds of things. But in a moment, he received a deeper revelation, in spite of all that, this is who you actually are. And it was interesting, because in that moment, because Peter had eyes to see and ears to hear who Jesus was, Jesus took that opportunity to tell Peter who he was, you know, you are Peter.

And he went on, if you read the passage, it's absolutely amazing how he unpacks a part of Peter's spiritual identity. And then he goes on to talk about the authority. And he wasn't just talking to Peter, I don't believe, I think he was talking to all of us who have come to Christ, you know, because he's given us the keys of the kingdom.

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And you just read it through, you'll see the provision, the direction that God gives. So, as Peter's getting a revelation of who God is, Jesus gives him a revelation about who he is, which is attached to his calling. And I thought, whenever I have moments with God, or I have aha moments in Scripture, or I see him in his majesty and in his glory, something inside me gets a little more settled, because I'm reminded, I'm in really, really good hands.

Now, just moments later, Jesus tells him he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things, and that he will die, but he will be raised again. And Peter, the same one who just had a divine revelation said, No, may it never be, you know, it's almost like he jumped on the path and blocked him and said, No, over my dead body, you know, he's like, No, this cannot happen. And what did Jesus say? He said, Get behind me, Satan, because you're a dangerous trap to me, you are seeing things from an earthly point of view.

And again, my paraphrase, but if you need to go back and just read it to get context. I pondered that story, I thought, how do you go from a divine revelation to kind of a devilish revelation in a matter of moments, where Peter was operating in his true identity in Christ, and then operating in his false identity? I would say the way that you can go to true identity and false identity in moments is fear. Because what Jesus said to Peter was your fear is a dangerous trap to me, you're not seeing things from heaven's point of view.

And I think about, Lorna, how often my fear can be a dangerous trap, not only to me, but to others, because the message of Christ's love and his provision get lost in translation when you're in fear. But I also feel like it's a picture to show how easy it is for us to move in and out of truth and lie, if we're not careful. And fear is most often, I'd say the biggest bait that the enemy uses to get us out of a mindset that's heaven's perspective over who Jesus is, who we are, who the people in front of us are.

And I think it's just so important to stay in step with the Spirit so we can see things as they are and not as they seem.

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Lorna Dueck: Well, in typical Susie Larson strength, you just walloped us with a beautiful teaching out of those pages in Matthew. And thank you that that's your week this week.

That's gripping you. You always begin your conversations with that question, asking someone, what has God spoken to you from the Bible this week? Why do you ask that?

Susie Larson: Because we can't rest on our past laurels. You know, I mean, what God has done is wonderful, and it proves we have a history with God.

But what God is doing proves that we have a future with God. And I love some of the past revelations God has given me, but that won't be enough to sustain me. I want a fresh revelation from God all the time.

I want to live in a constant intimacy with Him where, because the Bible does say daily the heavens pour forth speech. And I used to tell my boys when they were growing up, they're young men now, but I used to tell them when you open the Bible, you open God's mouth. You know, I mean, it's living, it's breathing, it's active.

So, I ask that question because I want our listeners to understand that the Word is living and active, that God speaks to His people, and He wants to get us safely home. He wants to transform us into people we never otherwise could be. And I think the more open we are to Scripture, the more teachable we'll be, because sometimes you need correction, sometimes you need conviction, sometimes you need protection.

And we can't make this journey on our own, but we don't have to. We have the Spirit of God with us and the Word of God before us.

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Lorna Dueck: And as you untangle Scripture, Susie, as you have that Word before you, what are the practical tools and ways you do this? Because this is a daily digest for you.

Are you off in a corner? Are you using different paraphrases? What's your pattern?

Susie Larson: That's a great question. Well, I have a little bit of shame about this. So, I would say my husband is like you, where he's read the Bible over and over and over again.

I've read the Bible through multiple times, but the daily yearly plan does not work for me. I wish it did, and I'm embarrassed to tell you. But I'm kind of the person, even as a child, my mom would say when we have seven kids, we'd all have our different Christmas gifts.

I would get one, and I wouldn't care about the rest. I would want to open it, go off and play with it. I'm an introvert.

So, it's like that, and that could carry me for a really long time before I need to open up all the other presents. And I would do these full reading plans, and I feel like there's times it became checking off a box. I got to read this chapter, this chapter, this chapter to stay on task.

And because of just the way that God has wired me to be able to linger over a verse or a passage or a story or to go back and read it, there have been times I've stayed with a passage for two weeks straight where I go just read it and read it and read it, and it gets into me. And I need to have the freedom to do that, but I also want to be so careful not to be zeroing in on just select passages. So, I also do have times where I just purpose to read larger swaths of Scripture.

So, my morning rhythm is, in the morning, when hubby and I get up in our separate spots, you know, he does his Bible reading plan and has a few app devo's that he listens to. I, for me,

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always enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. I always put on a worship playlist, and I sit and put my head back, and I smile, and I just thank him.

I thank him for everything I can think of. I stay in awe that I get to enter those gates at all. You know, we have this hope as an anchor for our souls that's leading us past the outer curtain into the inner sanctuary of the Most High God.

I mean, there are famous people that you might want to meet someday, and you may not ever get the chance. Well, the one who spoke the galaxies into being, when you are in Christ Jesus, you have full access to the inner throne room, and he's glad to see you. I never want to, I never want to take that for granted, so I start my time with the Lord in awe.

I just return to awe every day. And then, you know, right now, like what I'm doing is I'm in a place in 2 Kings, I'm in a place in Acts, and then I'm in a place in the Psalms and the Proverbs. So, I'm kind of jumping around like that, and I'm just kind of working through those books just because it's where God has me.

But if I feel like I need to pause, I pull out my journal, and I, like today, wrote a passage that was jumping out at me, and, you know, a couple different translations. I just wanted to see it in a bigger way. And so, I keep multiple translations around me.

And, yeah, and one of the things, Lorna, that I feel like God has called me to is what I call prophetic encouragement, where you know, again, my mentor would say, you have an upfront ministry, but you have a behind-the-scenes heart. And that's true. I'm not great in crowds.

I love solitude. I always joke that I could be a monk, you know, whenever people hear me say that, my husband's like, what about me? You're married. Hello.

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I'm like, okay, you can come too. But I can be hours alone and absolutely thrive in that solitude. But in those places of solitude with the Lord, I ask God, who needs encouragement today? And show me, tell me what I should know.

Tell me something I should know. And I mean, I would say anywhere from two to five or six people in the morning, I will send an audio text to say, the Lord put you on my heart today. You can take this or toss it, but this is a sense I'm getting.

And here's a passage for you. I just want, you to know, here's a prayer for you. And I would pray for them.

And that's a part of my morning discipline, because I feel called to it. I just feel called to intercede for others. And to finish our morning routine, we do our own thing.

And then we come together. I'll read a few things that jumped out at me. He'll read a few things that jumped out at him.

And then we come together, and we go after some of the things we're praying for, for our kids and for our culture and things like that.

Lorna Dueck: Wow. You've got a beautiful, very dedicated time. And then you come together with your husband and do business for the Kingdom.

Susie Larson: And I will tell you that came out of, I mean, we came into our marriage with active walks of faith, but our life fell apart with illness and all kinds of things we can talk about if you want.

But I battled Lyme disease, and we absolutely broke over that battle. And I know you have; I think you have government health care. So, whenever I've spoken in Canada about this and

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talked about medical debt, I get a crooked look like what, but we, you know, didn't have that kind of a system.

So, when we were young marrieds, every trip to the hospital, every IV, all of it was racking up. And so as young marrieds, you know, 30 years ago, we had \$27,000 of medical debt, which today would be like \$100,000. And then when I was starting to come out of it, my husband battled cancer.

And I will say, you know, I still have some health challenges, but we've come a long way. But I'll tell you, as he came out of cancer, he was a workaholic and that fueled him in a deeper way. So, he, before that, he was working three jobs trying to get us out of medical debt.

And I'm like, the crisis was starting to settle down and he wasn't slowing down. I'm like, so we were running parallel paths. We were following Jesus.

We were serving. And once he got, you know, out of cancer, once he made it through that battle, he started to serve in a really big way at church. So, he traded kind of his workaholicism in the marketplace for workaholicism in the church.

And it was really impacting our marriage. And I wrote about this, and we've talked very openly about it. And I mean, I want to say this was over 20 years ago and we hit a rock-bottom place where I felt like my wealth, my love had gone cold.

Like, I was begging, you know, we need to connect. So, we were running parallel paths, serving God, but it was killing us because we were running parallel paths. And so, when we came together and there was a point where I was telling on him to God, I'm like, he's not listening.

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And I was just so hurt by that. And I remember the day the Lord whispered to my heart, he is missing it, but you've committed the greater offense. I said, you know what, show me, show me my heart.

And he said, you've let your love grow cold. You made a vow to love him in sickness and in health and rich and poor, and you've shut your heart down. He still loves you.

He's just kind of clueless about how all these commitments, I think for him coming out of cancer, he was like, I want to make my life count. And he was thinking we're strong, we're good. And he just was a hero to everybody but me.

So, in his mind, we're good. But so, he just misplaced his priorities. But for me, I literally, I flat-lined, I just, I felt like I didn't love him anymore.

I wasn't going to leave him. I feared God. I loved our kids.

But when the Lord confronted that, it was true. I just like, I had let my love grow cold. But I thought, Lorna, if I apologize, he'll just keep going.

And my anger was keeping the laundry done. I mean, nobody had dirty underwear in the house. I'm just saying, all the dishes were done, all the laundry was done because I was righteous in my, you know, feeling neglected.

But I feared God and I wanted his blessing in my life. And I remember the night back, this is nowadays, he's a commercial construction project manager. So, he builds sports stadiums and hospitals, you know, big scale jobs.

But back then they used blueprints. Now it's all digital. But you know, I remember him sitting in the corner chair in the living room, looking at this blueprint on his lap.

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And I went in, and I put myself on the floor and that's going to bother some women. But I needed to humble myself. You know, I just, I wanted to. I have a little feisty streak in me, and I didn't want any of that to rise up in this moment because I wanted to honor God.

And I was going to apologize to him because I feared God because I really had no good feelings left because we'd gone so long without a healthy interaction. And so, I said, you know, this hasn't gone well for us in the last few years, but God has shown me that I've committed the greater offense. And I'd said that much while he still had the blueprint up.

But when he heard me say, but God has shown me I've committed the greater offense, he pulled the blueprint down. He said, what? And I said, I've let my love grow cold and I'm confessing this to you. And God really showed me that I made a promise to you.

And I've obviously broken that promise in my heart. I'm not going anywhere, but my heart was shut down towards you. And I'm going to just start loving you, whether you get me or not, I'm going to be kind and serve and apply love and not withhold my heart anymore.

And then I started to weep, and he slid down onto the floor and said, is this what my choices have been doing to you? It was like the scales came off of his eyes. And he started to look at like, when I started to look at my heart, he started to look at his heart. You know, Arthur Willis once wrote, *God is not merely concerned with what we do, but with why we do it.*

A right act may be robbed of all of its value in the sight of God, if done with the wrong motive. And he was doing a lot of right acts, but he realized he was trying to pay back, pay back God. And just, he wanted his life to count, but he just assumed we were okay. And we just weren't.

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And so, we had some rebuilding to do in our marriage. And in that time, we're like, what are the big rocks? What are the non-negotiables? And we both had said, well, we both have active prayer lives, but we need to come together, and we need to pray together, non-negotiable.

We're making time in the morning, even if it means we're late for work, we're doing this. And the Lord blessed the work of our hands. And that prayer place became, I can't even explain it to you, but the place where supernatural dreams grew out of it, just, vision for Africa.

The things that God has had us do in the years since then, we are literally managing five times more now than we were then when we were on parallel paths. And we're doing it with margin and a good bedtime. And to me, it's like this picture of the difference between the abiding life that bears much fruit and the striving life that is just not sustainable.

And we've never retreated from that place. I mean, my book, *Your Sacred Yes*, kind of that book was born out of this bumpy place where we learned the secret of abiding with each other and abiding with God and having non-negotiables. So, all that to say, I didn't mean to get into that much of this story, but that's why our morning time, we're not bending.

We're just not. Because we've seen too much. God has knit our hearts together. I mean, I always say dreams are conceived in intimacy and they're achieved through intimacy, both with God and with, if you have a spouse you can pray with or a close friend, when you both say, I'm on Jesus' heels, I'm walking intimately with him.

And I'm going to join with you as we seek God together. That's the stuff of miracles. And we're both just in awe, respecting our limits, but then calling on God with no limits, that's when you start to see things happen.

The Bible Course: I want to take a minute out of this conversation to tell you about The Bible Course, because whether you're a seasoned Bible reader or you're just starting on the journey,

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The Bible Course offers a superb overview of the world's best-selling book. This eight-session course will help you grow in your understanding of the Bible.

Using a unique storyline, The Bible Course shows you how key events, books, and characters all fit together. It's great for in-person groups or digital gatherings. It really could be used anywhere. You can watch the first session for free and review the accompanying course guide.

Go to biblecourse.ca to learn more. That's biblecourse dot c a. Now back to the conversation.

Lorna Dueck: You know, that is not a story you have shared in your latest book.

Susie Larson: No, I haven't shared that in a long while. Yeah.

Lorna Dueck: Thank you. I think someone needed to hear that, obviously. And it catches me by surprise, that still, that moment of humility is still such a foundation as you choose which activities you're going to do.

So, I do want to ask, why did you write *Waking Up to the Goodness of God*, the new book?

Susie Larson: Yeah, I love this book. I hope it's okay for an author to say that. I mean, really only because it came, it was just the Lord pouring through.

So, for those who follow me at all, know any of my backstory, the Lyme disease that I contracted, it was during our third pregnancy. I was very, very sick for the first handful of years of our marriage. And then about 20 years or so, I just managed life with a chronic illness, but I had a fitness background.

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I went back to teaching aerobics. I'm a fighter, I was just like, I have stuff to do. I was not going to be known by illness.

Lorna Dueck: And Susie, how did Lyme begin for you? Because I know you live in Minnesota, which is a Lyme hotbed. And it was a very misunderstood disease then, still is, but especially then. So how did you contract it?

Susie Larson: Yes. I was on bedrest. So, our second pregnancy, I was on bedrest, a high-risk pregnancy for three months. Our third pregnancy, I was put to bed for six months.

So, they had to sew the cervix shut, put me to bed for six months. And I had a one and a three-year-old. And so, every trip to the hospital was costing us money.

And just because I was going into premature labor, having lots of contractions and the cervix was softening. So, they're trying to keep the baby in. And I was three months into bedrest, so six months along, and I was feeling pretty depressed.

And there's some backstory trauma in my backstory as a child at the hands of some teenage boys. So, when I became a Christian, I was doing what my husband was doing as a young Christian. I was serving on five committees because I was excited to be a Christian.

But I also, as I say often, I knew I was saved, but I didn't know I was loved. And I just want to tell you, I think there's a lot of Christians, seasoned Christians who walk through life. They know they're saved, but they don't know they're loved.

And if you don't know you're loved, you will misuse your time, treasure, and talents to prove things that Jesus has already proven. And that's what I was doing because I just didn't know. I mean, I just was trying to dig myself out of a hole because I'm so insecure, but I love Jesus too.

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So, there was passion and all of that in it. So, to lose all of that and go to bed rest and then have to call in so many friend favors for six months and to see friends get tired on my behalf, it was confronting every insecurity I had because I couldn't pay people back. I felt like a debt to society.

So, three months into that bedrest, six months along, my doctors could tell I was pretty down, and I hadn't contracted in a few days. And they said, well, let's just get you up and see how you do. Test the waters.

Why don't you plan a lunch outing? Just be careful. I met my old college roommates in a little town that's got, you know, river and trees. It was a fall day, and we went for a lunch and just a gentle walk.

And by nighttime, it was too much. I was contracting back to bed. Two weeks from that outing, I was lying on my left side, which you do when you're in high-risk pregnancies, just lie on the left side, drink a lot of water.

And a friend had come and said, hey, can I get you your water bottle? And I pointed and said, it's over there. And as I pointed, pins and needles shot out my arm. And then as she was talking, this pulsating numbness started in the base of my skull, pulsed around to my whole face was buzzing and pulsating with numbness.

And I'm like, I'm kind of distracted. She's like, what's the matter? And I said, well, things are going numb on me all of a sudden. And she was a friend who was just getting very sick and tired of me.

So, she literally said, oh, really? Now this? I mean, like you're a piece of work. I mean, she just was so frustrated with our crisis. And she admitted later that she should have departed much earlier than she stayed long past her grace place.

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But she actually said to me, do you know it's personalities like you that most often get MS? That's what she said. While I'm sitting here with three months left, our finances are a mess because of this medical debt. And we knew of a woman in our church who was our age, who was also athletic, kind of like I was, and had MS. And she was spiraling down so fast.

It was horrific to watch just her tremors. And it was so horrific. So, for her to say that, and then she left. Lorna, the fear was palpable. It was just palpable for me. And I still had three months to go.

And it's a long story short. Um, the numbing was up and down. Uh, when I, we delivered our son, he ended up in the hospital with a double pneumonia and things are going numb and the room is spinning.

My memory is going, my joints hurt. Everything is kind of wacko in my body, but I kept thinking, well, we're going broke and I'm exhausted and sleep deprived. And I'm sure that's what this all is.

And there was a point where Jordan was in the hospital as a four-week-old. I was so exhausted, and I felt like God had lost my address because my friends had money. They had health.

We had neither. And even I had people say to me, a loving God wouldn't let this many bad things happen to one family unless you're hiding sin. So, if you just come clean, you know, maybe this will all go away.

And I'm like, can you see anything in my life that I'm not seeing? I mean, nobody wanted out of this more than me. I was at a loss and I'm sitting at his little hospital bed, and my hubby went to call family. And all of a sudden, this joy just poured over me and this peace.

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And it was a dead of winter, and I can't stand winter. So that was divine. And I'm sitting by this little hospital bed and feeling just overwhelmed with joy and peace.

And I wrote in my journal, I don't know what this is, but I'll take it. Like it was just a gift of joy and peace. Well, he was in for a week.

We get him home and my health plummets. And in that year, they ruled out MS. They ruled out a brain tumor. And it was a year later through a miracle, we found out we had Lyme disease.

I had Lyme disease. And when the home healthcare nurse came to my home and they put a shunt in my arm and filled my fridge with IV bags, little Jordan runs into the living room. He's a year old.

And he runs in with a little diaper on. He's just speedy Gonzales. And the nurse is like, what's he doing alive? I'm like, what do you mean? And she said, well, I've taken care of two other patients like you who are pretty sure they were bit around the middle of the pregnancy, like you, because the symptoms manifested just a couple of weeks later from their outing or however they figured that out.

And those, both of those babies went blind and died after they were born. She's like, why is he alive? He's a year old. How did he make it? She said, was he ever sick? And I said, actually, yeah, four weeks old.

He was in the hospital with double pneumonia. She said, well, what did they use in the IV? And I remembered, and I told her, she said, that saved his life. So, while I was having that moment of peace, not knowing what was wrong with my body, the Lord allowed this illness to save Jordan's life.

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And I remember my knees buckling underneath me, Lorna, because I remember begging God, don't let him go in the hospital. I mean, I've got all these symptoms and now I've got a sick baby. My friends are sick of me.

Don't let him go in the hospital. And he did. But I always say what he allows, he redeems.

And I'm in awe of that. So, jumping ahead. So, 20 years, I managed a chronic illness where about four times a year, the numbing would start to surge, and the inflammation would surge, and I would get blindsided and then I wouldn't be able to get out of bed for a few days.

And then I'd feel really, really crummy for a few weeks. And then I would bounce back up again and I'd be mostly okay, never felt great, but I could teach my classes and mother my kids and, and I just never felt great, but I could do it. And then I'd get blindsided again.

That cycle went on for 20 years. And then nine years ago, I had a massive relapse. And apparently people with chronic Lyme can't process mold.

And I'd been unknowingly exposed to black mold, which attacked my brain. At that time, I was writing a book, and I couldn't remember how to spell basic words. I'm on the air every day on the radio, my tongue was going numb.

And because my brain stopped working, I was getting words mixed up in my speech. And it was, it's too much to tell, but I will say the surges of symptoms were so terrifying. And so at a new level, I would pace the floor, my heart would beat out of my chest, and I would have stroke-like symptoms. And by morning, I would be like, God, you have to either kill me or heal me because I can't, I don't have the bandwidth to keep on like this.

And in that place, a friend lovingly, gently confronted me. And she had so much compassion in her heart, but she said, Suzy, it seems like you've lost your joy and you're just bracing for impact.

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Like you're just waiting for the next shoe to drop. And if there would have been a hint of condemnation or judgment in her, I don't know that I could have heard it because oftentimes in the early years when people had their perfect life, those are the ones that would talk to me while I'm army crawling through my valley. But she had no judgment.

She just had concern, and I felt it. And I initially thought maybe this posture is just from an unpredictable disease, but her compassion quickened in me, Lorna. So, I brought it home and said, Lord, is there more than I'm not seeing about my own heart? And he showed me that I was disappointed in him.

I was, I was hurt. I would never have admitted that. And it's not the same as someone who flippantly says, I'm mad at God. I'm not it's not like that. I fear God. I'm more mature than that.

But deep in my soul, I was so hurt that he allowed another relapse at this age and stage of my life. And as God just walked me to the reality of what I was feeling, I just wept, and I repented. And I just said, how do I get out of this? This is scary.

I hate this disease, but I want a right relationship with you. And so, I just started to apply myself to the things he showed me. I wasn't doing that to write a book.

I was just trying to get my heart back. And one of the things the Lord spoke to my heart, he said, I want you to look at every good gift in your life with a gift tag on it to Susie from God. I want you to see how meticulous I am and how personal I am.

You know, and somebody once said, you know, if you woke up tomorrow with only the gifts you thank God for today, what would you have? And I realized I was so terrified by the symptoms. I had stopped being thankful for the mercies and the miracles all around me. But the more that I started to fixate on the good things that God has done and is doing, Kevin even said, my husband, he's like, you look different.

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You're carrying yourself different. Your eyes look different. It was like something in my physiology started to heal.

And I will just tell you the reason for this book is I applied myself to it. And I saw it work and shared it with friends and people I was ministering to. What we're hearing is people are feeling their physiological life change because it's not good for our soul to be waiting for the next shoe to drop.

And I feel like if the enemy has accomplished anything in this last four years, he wants us in a posture of bracing for impact, but you can't at once receive all God wants to give you and live with elbows locked. You can't do it. And so somehow some way, and it's not an overnight thing.

It's a daily train. As you and I were talking before the show of applying our hearts and our minds to the goodness of God. And this book really is to build a case for the goodness of God so that your heart can rest secure in him.

Lorna Dueck: Um, I want to hold it up again because I am stunned at how effective it is to retrain your brain 40 days, always diving into. Let's take for example, John 10 verse 10 - *I have come that they may have life and have it to the full*. So, you're challenging me retrain, even in chronic illness, retrain to think life to the full.

How do you? Is it just positivity, woo do stuff or is it?

Susie Larson: I'm so glad you asked that because this isn't self-help or positive thoughts. You know, um, I cringe whenever I hear believers say I'm sending my positive thoughts because that's so new agey. Right. But when you think about it, to talk about John 10 I want to talk about Jeremiah 17. And I'm going to start with the verse seven.

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I believe it is, *“Blessed are those who trust in the Lord who've made the Lord, their hope and their confidence. They are like trees planted by streams of living water. Their roots go down into the water. They don't fear the drought or the heat. They're not bothered by long months of heat. Their leaves stay green and they're always bearing fruit.”*

That's again, my paraphrase, but that's verse seven. If you go to the verse before that, it says, *“Cursed are those who put their hope in man and man-made solutions. They are like a stunted shrub in the desert.”*

And the original translation in this particular verse reads most accurately in the New King James. It says, cause you don't see it in the newer translations. It says *“they don't see goodness when it comes.”*

And I want you to think about that. If you're putting your heart and your hope in a political leader or a friend and expectation of friend, a spouse or a boss, and you've locked in or even your own capacity to save yourself and protect yourself, you stunt your own spiritual growth. And when you're so focused on man-made solutions, you don't see goodness when it comes.

But Jesus, it says in his Word, you know, *see, I'm doing a new thing. It springs up. Do you perceive it?* Which means you might miss it.

So yes, the enemy is a thief. And my friend, Maria, I'm pretty sure I wrote this in this book, but she said, *there's a pattern of theft in every one of our lives.* And I believe this is true.

There's a pattern of theft in every one of our lives. And it starts when we're children, where the enemy's conditioning us to believe his lies. So, he can drive in, rob you blind and exit before you even know you've been stolen from.

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So, the thing that is so important is, everybody has trauma. Everybody has loss, but you won't feel safe with God if you don't build a case for the goodness of God. And if you have all these parts of your story swirling around that are unresolved, you're going to have hurts against God, even if you don't admit it.

And you will accuse him of things that he's not guilty of.

Lorna Dueck: Okay. That's very interesting because you've got to build a case for the goodness of God in this crazy world, whether it's your own personal health or the world coming apart as it is.

Build a case for the goodness of God. So, it's this balance that I sensed in your new book. Of you're saying by doing this discipline daily, which some people might misinterpret as just positive thinking disciplines, you're saying, no, you're pouring Scripture.

You're untangling Scripture, as we like to say here. You're taking those elements of God's promises and presence and saying, it's with me, even though physically I may feel differently.

Susie Larson: Yes.

And you know, on my show, I have one of my doctors on every month, Dr. Troy, and he explains it so well. I've read this when I was trying to get my brain back. I've read it in several places that our brain operates on two motivational fuels only, either fear or love, which is amazing.

Science has discovered this with Scripture, and has said, there's no fear in love. So, you either are in fear. That's a motivational fuel that is driving everything that you do, or you're in love.

You can't be in both at the same time. You're only in one or the other. But Dr. Troy says when you're in fear, literally your cells close up on top of each other.

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So even when I was at my lowest point and they took some blood work, I was dehydrated and somewhat malnourished. I'm like, how is that possible? I eat healthy. I drink 70 ounces of water a day.

And he says, because you're totally locked up in fear. Your cells are covered up and you're not receiving the benefits of your disciplines even because fear is so hard on the system. So, this is more than positive thoughts as because when you're in love, your cells literally open up because you're wired by love for love, by the love of God, for the love of God.

And when you immerse yourself in, and again, it's not just even amassing my blessings and counting them and saying, look how blessed I am. It's tethering that blessing to a Father who's been very attentive to your life. And that's the thing is that these blessings, the things, not only that God has provided, but the things he's prevented, all the stuff that hasn't happened to you, tether that to a God who loves you.

And so, when you're retraining your heart and mind, when you're in love, literally, if you could see the synapses in your brain, you are so much healthier when you're in love.

Lorna Dueck: You actually want us to read our faith declarations out loud.

Susie Larson: Yes.

Lorna Dueck: Verbally, there's something to sitting on the couch saying, *You are El Shaddai*.

Susie Larson: Yes. God is good. His promises are true. He will always make a way for me.

That's one that he gave me in the worst parts. God is good. His promises are true.

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He will always make a way for me. Scripture does say faith comes from hearing. And I just, you know, I don't think the enemy can read our minds.

Pretty sure he can't, but he can sure hear our declarations. And I just know for me, Lorna, I physically feel different, when God's Word is on my tongue, when I'm saying it out loud so that my ears hear it. And there's times when the symptoms surge, even now, I'll march around this basement and go, I am a child of God.

By his stripes, I'm healed. One day, one way or another, I'm getting a new body. I don't know how, I don't know when, but I'm getting that new body and I'm not giving into despair. I just know that I physically feel better, and I do better when there's faith in my heart.

Lorna Dueck: And you're very serious as a former gym trainer yourself. You are retraining your brain with the words of Scripture, with praise music, with prayer, with, it's spoken, right? That is key for you to untangle Scripture is it's got to come out of your mouth.

Susie Larson: I believe it so, so strongly. And I will just say, if you, my Dr. Troy said, if you could see your MRI of your brain and how bad it was and your cognitive function, in spite of the inflammation in your brain, he goes, I can only attribute it to all the things that you just mentioned. He says, you're just, your confession of God's promise and faithfulness over your life, your determined reading of Scripture, and all the other ways that I fight for life...

And so I'm just saying, you know, when you think of John 10, 10, and I'm not the first person to say this, but I've heard others say it as well, that your abundant life is not going to come up on your doorstep in a nice tidy bowl where you just can, you can leave it at the door. I'll get to it when I feel like it. We've got to contend for the promises of God because we have a thief who wants to steal from us.

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And I wonder how often, you know, passivity passes for meekness. And there are two different things. You know, there's times where we shrug our shoulders at the promises of God and that there's nothing noble about that because Scripture says make every effort to live up to the promises of God.

And I would say to someone listening today, you've been maybe living with a low level or maybe a high level of misery and there are promises God has made to you and you know it, but what have you done with them? Maybe the Lord wants you to take a new grip with your tired hands.

Lorna Dueck: Read those Bible verses out loud. March them out of your mouth.

Susie Larson: Yes. Pray them, say them, sing them, you know, text them to somebody else.

Lorna Dueck: But that's going to drive your family nuts sometime.

I wanted to ask how you planted the Scripture in your three sons. We're almost out of time, but this affects the whole family for you, doesn't it? Speaking the words of Scripture.

Susie Larson: Indeed, it does.

You know, give thanks in all times and all ways. One of the things I remember because we just had no money, remember praying, God, thank you that we have choices about what to eat. And to this day, when our youngest son, who's mid 30s now, gets to pray, he'll often say, thank you that we have choices about what to eat.

It's amazing the things they pick up when it's real for you. You know, when you sincerely are thanking God, that there's some power in that when instead of just sort of rehearsing things because you ought to or because it's a good Christian thing to do when it's coming from your

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gut and you really mean it. I'm a child of God and no weapon formed against me is going to prosper.

There's power in that. There is.

Lorna Dueck: Susie, I just want to encourage our listeners to sign up for your podcast.

You're doing a beautiful job with Faith Radio. Thank you for that. And 22 books, but this newest one, *Waking Up to the Goodness of God*, short daily devotionals, which gets you moving to get Scripture released from your mouth.

Speak it, speak it, walk it, dwell in it. Take our role as daughters of the King. Take our role.

Beautiful. Sons and daughters of the King. Susie, is there anything you've got to say before you leave? Because I am out of time, but I just want to say thank you so much.

Susie Larson: Such an honor to be with you. And I just, I get such a strong sense that your listeners need to remember how much God loves them. You know, one of my regular guests, Dr. Rob Reamer says, we have got to learn to live as deeply loved children of God.

So you to dare you ask yourself each day, what would a deeply loved child of God do today? How would a deeply loved child of God think today? Because when you live loved, I feel like you more aptly understand and believe what the Scriptures say, not only about who God is, but about who you are.

Lorna Dueck: Amen. Tune in to Susie Larson's podcast.

This is a beautiful new book, *Waking Up to the Goodness of God*. The Canadian Bible Society is thankful for you and thankful for your time with us today. Thank you, Susie.

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Susie Larson: Honored. Thank you.