

S10 E 08 - Sister Pt 1 Transcript

Heather Khym: Hello friends. This episode of the abiding together podcast is brought to you by Homeschool Connections. Attention homeschool parents, are you having difficulty bringing joy to your homeschooling? Are you looking for help, but don't know where to turn? Is your student not interested in learning? Homeschool Connections is the answer to your homeschooling woes. With dynamic, passionate instructors, faithful to the magisterium, your upper elementary, middle or high school student will find a love of learning that will inspire them to want to continue to learn the rest of their lives. Homeschool Connections offers two types of courses, live interactive courses and recorded independent learning courses. You can take live courses with instructors like Trent Horn and Tim Staples who teach apologetics or take self-paced courses where your student can focus on mastery of Chesterton, apologetics, or speech and debate. The subjects are wide ranging and include all the core courses plus many more that you would expect from an excellent institution committed to helping you with your homeschooling efforts. With over 200 live interactive courses to choose from this school year, and over 450 courses, you have what you need to make sure that your students are educated in the Catholic tradition. Registration for live interactive courses is open between April and September. Subscribing to self pace independent learning courses is available year-round. Prices are around \$200 for a live course or \$34.97 per month for access to all 450 plus recorded courses. So your whole family can continue to homeschool on a budget while receiving an excellent education that will inspire them to want to learn more and more even into adulthood. If you want to learn more, visit their website at homeschoolconnections.com. You can email them at info@homeschoolconnections.com or you can call them at 372-4757. They even have their own podcast, homeschooling saints. We hope you enjoy this episode.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Hi and welcome to season 10 of the Abiding Together Podcast. We are so excited to have you with us this season. Abiding Together is a place where you can find connection, rest and encouragement on your journey with Jesus Christ. My name is Sr Miriam James Heidland, and every week I am joined by two of my dearest friends, Heather Khym and Michelle Benzinger. We talk about our life with Christ. We talk about big things, small things, beautiful things, sorrowful things. We laugh, we cry you'll fit right in. You are most welcome here. So please grab a cup of coffee, settle in and welcome home.

Hello and welcome to this week's episode of the abiding together podcast, which can be seen on YouTube, like we talked about in our last series. So if you are listening to us and you actually want to see us, we'd be welcome to have you there. And so you can check out our YouTube channel, which is abiding together podcast. Is that our YouTube?

Michelle Benzinger: YouTube, abiding together podcast.

Heather Khym: We don't watch our own YouTube channel.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yeah. We also want to tell all of our Patreon subscribers that they get digital content, a bonus digital content with all of our video stuff that we have.

Michelle Benzinger: They get bonus content that goes along with our different series.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yes, so here we are again. And if you didn't listen to our four-part series on daughter, we'd love to invite you to do that. First, we're going to be unveiling the identities of woman, which is daughter, sister, bride, and mother. And so we're going to do the first two this season, and then the next season, we have mother and bride after that, and we've got all kinds of wonderful things for you, but we just concluded our four-part series on daughter. So today we're going to delve into sister. Sister.

Heather Khym: Just in case you don't know, we have discussion questions, and journaling questions that go along with every episode available on our website. So that's abidingtogetherpodcast.com, check it out.

Michelle Benzinger: There's all the deets. There you go.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: And definitely, this will actually air on November 1st, which is All Saint's Day.

Michelle Benzinger: Happy All Saint's Day. All the sisters saints. We have all my sisters and me. Yeah, there we go.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: I think that's what Michelle titled this episode. We're like, what is the title of this episode? We are a family. I got all my sisters. Like you can never unseen. So something that we always do in our podcast is we have a guiding scripture for our podcast episode. And what we're doing different this time is we're actually having the same scripture passage that's going to guide our entire four-part series. So it'll give you an entire month to really allow that word to seep into you and kind of sink more deeply into the word of God and that particular aspect of what the Lord is speaking to each of our hearts. So for this series, we're going to focus on the visitation and the Magnificat of Mary, which comes from Luke chapter one. And it is verses 39 to 56.

Michelle Benzinger: Read to us Sister. Story time with Sister Miriam.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Oh, I will. Here we go. This is so lovely. So from the gospel of Luke, at that time, Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zachariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice, she exclaimed, "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the child, you will bear. But why am I so favored that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb, leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her." And Mary proclaimed, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior. For he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. And from this day, all generations will call me, blessed. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm. He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones, but has lifted up the humble. He has spilled the hungry with good things, but has sent the rich empty away, he has helped to serve in Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever. Just as he promised our ancestors." Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home. Amen. There's so much in that so much.

Heather Khym: So much.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yeah, which is what we're going to talk about during these four episodes. So maybe Michelle, we could start with you. What are some things that stir in your heart as we hear the word of God, I'll save mine for later, but what are some things that stir for you? And then when we talk about the identity of sister as we're building upon the identity of daughter.

Michelle Benzinger: So I think for me, the visitation is probably one of my favorite scripture passages just to even go into, to really look at and go into. And just the power of sisterhood. I think now for me, more than ever, I see in just different forums and different things. There's a real division going on, in women and just different. There's a real division going on everywhere. Everything seems to be more polarized and divided and all of that. But I think especially with the women that we can also model really well, what true sisterhood comes about. And I think we forget that, like that quote from Mother Theresa, we have enough peace, we forget that we belong to one another, that we are actually family. The body of Christ is family. We are sisters, we are brothers. We are family. That is who we are in our truest identity. And so I think using the prototype of Mary and Elizabeth as what that looks like and lived out and all of that, and one of the first things I love about it is when this comes right after the annunciation. So the angel Gabriel has just come to Mary, announced that she will be the mother of the Savior, all of this kind of stuff. And

what does she do? She goes and makes haste and goes to her cousin Elizabeth and tells her, this is what the Holy Spirit just said to me. It always makes me think okay, who can I share with what the Holy Spirit is doing in my life right now? When the holy spirit overshadows me, who can I share with what the Holy Spirit is doing to my life. Now some saints say in their interpretations, that Joseph was actually with her, some people say that he wasn't. Who's to know we weren't there. So, but.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Use your imagination.

Michelle Benzinger: Use your imagination.

Heather Khym: You're older than us, so you may remember.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Oh, no, she didn't.

Michelle Benzinger: Oh yes she did.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: She's 29, we just celebrated her 29th birthday not too long ago.

Michelle Benzinger: You're losing your memory, not me. but I loved, even when she came. So Mary just hightailed it over to see Elizabeth, but just even, I won't go to the whole scripture, but when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. But I love when she says, in a loud voice, she exclaimed, "Blessed, are you among women and blessed is your child, but bless the child that is in your womb." And then she says, "Who should it be that the mother of my Lord should come and visit me." I love when the first greetings that Elizabeth gives to Mary is that she just exudes blessings on her. She exudes blessings on her. And then she calls out Mary's truest identity. The Holy Spirit had already announced to Mary what she was doing, but Elizabeth confirmed and affirmed that this is what the Holy Spirit is doing and called her out in her truest identity. This is the mother of my Lord, but come and visit me. So it's asking those questions. Do we create an environment where we have women in our lives that affirm and confirm what the Holy Spirit is doing in our lives? Do we have women that we can run to and say, hey, guess what the Holy Spirit's doing in my life? And the women bless us with that. Heather, what are your thoughts?

Heather Khym: There's so much here. I mean, don't you wish you could be there sometimes in scripture? Sometimes I like to imagine being there. What that would be like in that place. Almost always hot and dusty, but beyond that, what would it be like to be there, to see the joy in their faces? And how did John leap in her womb like that? This was a real story. So I'm like, even the baby knew. When you

come into the presence of God or something big that the Holy Spirit is doing, that it should stir your spirit, that something within you should pay attention, you know? And so that's the first thing I'm like, Lord, help me to pay attention to where you're moving, to where your movements are, to where the Holy Spirit is and how you're moving in the lives of the people that you've entrusted to me so that I can recognize it and call it out like that. But I love this part where she says, blessed is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her. I just feel she's like, way to go girl. You believe that, you believe what God said to you. Don't you think Mary would have told Elizabeth? I had this crazy experience, this angel, and she's like, I don't know, did that actually happen? I mean, who knows that she was like, you don't notice that you're pregnant for a while. Really physically your body doesn't change right away. There's a lot of trusting that had to occur there. And so I just love this exchange and I love the exchange of not just family, but friends. Know that you can tell there's a delight in one another here. I think for me, I've had some really wonderful experiences with girlfriends and some not so great. And I think that's probably true for most of us, some people might be thinking, well, I don't have a sister or whatever, but you have friends that are women and maybe your experiences have been great or not great. And I think that it's time to look at that, it's time to look at what does it mean to be a sister? How can I be a good sister to my friends and to my family, but also what do I need out of a sister? Or maybe what do I need to be healed from sister wounds that might be there.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: That's true. All of us desire to be a gift to one another and to love like that and to be able to call out somebody's beauty and call out their identity and to be able to do that as women. There's something in that that is really a blessing. I remember listening to a podcast over the summer and the counselor on the podcast was saying that he finds, it's kind of simplistic, but in his office, when women came with depression, he said many times it was number one, they felt they were not loved. And number two, they felt they were not useful to the ones they love. And it's just interesting of that part of the gift of calling out your beauty and calling out your identity and understanding that it doesn't diminish mine or it doesn't infringe. And I think that's something that you see really beautifully about Elizabeth and Mary is that they can reveal and reflect the goodness of the Holy Spirit and what God is doing in each one of them without fearing it's going to detract, which is why this is a second layer of the identity because we, as daughters, that's a received identity. Sister is received identity as well, biological sisters and sisters in humanity. And I think many times what happens is when we find those places in our hearts that feel threatened, or we feel afraid, or we feel jealous or envious or those things in which our hearts telling us something. But it's just a deeper kind of reflection of where there's places in our heart that I don't feel rooted and grounded as a daughter. So there's not a seat at the table for all the sisters in my life. I'm afraid that it's going to be like musical chairs where there's going to be a chair pulled out and I have to fight for a chair. And what you see is the beauty of

Mary and Elizabeth is just fully revealing because like the both of you, I love you both so much. And you're both so different and I see such beauty in each one of you. And it's so lovely. It's just the exact way that each of you are made. It's so beautiful. There's things I admire in each of you. And that reality of like, oh my gosh, I get to learn from you. I get to be in life with you. I get to hear how you hear the Holy Spirit. And there's something so incredibly beautiful about that. And then all of us, like we said, have our places in our hearts where relations with women have been very wounding and they've been very in a sense dangerous, or very hurtful. And so it's like we said in our series on daughter, that it's much easier to self protect, but these are the places we have to push into so that we can become the women God is calling us to be.

Michelle Benzinger: Amen. Amen. And I love what she said. I think there's something with Elizabeth, where she says, blessed is that the mother of my Lord will come and visit me and blessed is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill her promises. Because later on in this series, we will compare it to Sarah and Hagar where Sarah took the promise that the Lord had given her and try to manipulate it. Where Mary took the promise that the Lord gave her and allowed it to unfold in his timing and did not manipulate it. She received it freely and gave it back freely, but I love that Elizabeth, there's not this comparison. There's this celebration. There is this light, like we said before. And one another, I always say when I'm teaching this, Elizabeth didn't say, oh my gosh, what a bummer. I get to be the mother of John the Baptist. And she gets to be the mother of the Savior. Like I totally am losing in this story.

Heather Khym: She one up-ed me.

Michelle Benzinger: She one up-ed me. again. Yeah. She's younger. She is, yeah. She didn't have to wait this long. And now all the other things. And so no, look what happened, but the both of them needed each other's yes. For the whole story to unfold that each of them had a part in salvation history and they needed each other's story. They need it. I love even in the episode of the chosen, just the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus. And he said, remember when we were kids, they told us that this is the foretelling of the, and was spoken over and over us, the stories of us. And I loved that. I just loved just even there as cousins, their kinship because they saw the closeness of their mothers. And the whole kinship of that. How do we celebrate it? Both of them tell just in scripture about the humility. Do we humbly receive the promises that the Lord received from us? Are we grasping or do we receive humbly and freely the promises that the Lord gives us? And I was thinking about this this time when I was just putting it into the document that we go by, who do I share my Magnificats with? Mary did this beautiful Magnificat, he's performed mighty deeds with me. He has scattered the proud. Who do I proclaim my Magnificats with because what the Lord has done with me?

We were asking the questions, who do I go to the Holy Spirit, and do I proclaim a Magnificat when the Holy Spirit has done great things with me and how do other women receive that also? I think we have done a good job of bringing into our lives, women that celebrate the Holy Spirit, what he's been doing with us. But I think that's been a learned skill for a lot of us. It has not come naturally for, well, some of us it has, more naturally than others, but I think that it has to be very intentional to live this way. With a celebration mindset of other women. Heather, what would you say?

Heather Khym: Yeah. And I think even for Jesus to be the center of the relationship, even here, you see an acknowledgement of the Savior was clearly what was acknowledged and lifted up in this conversation that they're having. Yeah, exactly. And, and I think for many people, it's difficult to know how to bring God into relationships, especially if He hasn't been a part of friendships before. I've had so many women ask me, how do I make that transition to share with my friend something about God, or it feels awkward or whatever it might be. I think it just opens up a whole new realm when you're able to have that kind of trust, but to bring all the parts of yourself and your relationship with God to another friend and to share those things together. It's incredibly powerful and incredibly beautiful. And I think that those are the times that as you journey together with God in the mix of things, and that's how we really started hanging out. We met at Franciscan University on the campus, but we started praying together. Even though we were doing different things with different friends and different people and whatever, all of that stuff, we were connecting.

Michelle Benzinger: When she quit smoking, but go ahead.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: That's another series, people.

Heather Khym: That's the series on the heathen living. Just kidding. So, yeah. So we just started praying together and listening to the Lord together. And we were learning together. Although we had come with a lot of experiences before we were learning to listen and grow in a different way and champion each other in different things where we felt like the Holy Spirit was moving. For example, when you were talking with your not husband yet Chris on the phone and there was something happening. And I remember you were like well, I don't know, I mean, I probably should go down and see, but I'm probably not going to go. And I was like, Michelle, something is happening here. Did you hear what this guy said to you? Something is happening. You need to go and see him right now. And I think I bought your plane tickets.

Michelle Benzinger: You did buy my plane tickets.

Heather Khym: And so, I mean, it was like so clear to me and you had some, not hesitations about him, but it was happening very fast.

Michelle Benzinger: I was too close to it.

Heather Khym: Yeah, exactly. And I was like, this is obvious to me. And I think we've all done that for each other at different times, to be able to say, hey, you may have lost sight of something or you may not be able to see something, but I see it for you. I hope this for you. I can have the hope for you or I can hold onto the promise for you, or I'm going to speak this, declare this into your life or whatever. When we're in a position where we aren't competing with each other, we're able to just speak and receive. And it becomes a very mutual gift. I think many times we pour out into friendships and don't feel like we get anything back or we're a taker and we're not a giver. So to just find some balance in our relationships and it doesn't mean you necessarily need to find new friends, maybe some, but maybe you need to have some conversations about it. Okay.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Yeah, I remember reading a book many years ago. I've referenced it before called friendship in the Lord by Father Paul Henninbush, who's a Dominican priest. And there was one chapter of the book where he talked about how every person in somebody's life is a needed aspect in their life. And so often we say, for example, get jealous or, because that person took that person's place in my life. Or when we look at other people and we're like, well, how come that person's in that person's life? And I feel like they're overshadowing. And he said, every single person is in somebody's life. They need that particular aspect of that friendship or that particular gift of the heart. And that helps us understand. All of us women here today, like we talked about, we're all women here in the studio, which is really amazing. Every single one of us bears a particular facet of the femininity and the beauty that God has and that every woman's plate is placed in somebody else's life is a particular gift to bear. And I think understanding that helps us enlarge our hearts and understanding when we do feel the pings of jealousy at times are being left out. We've been talking about going to the place, okay, what's happening. What's happening? What good am I seeing? What's the good thing that I really want. And to be honoring the good thing of, oh, I really want to feel connected. I want to feel like I belong. And that's some of the core realities of sisterhood, which we'll talk about is supporting, it's belonging. It's challenging, it's sharing. It's learning how to be a girl among girls. Of celebrating, of learning where do I fit in, in my own way, in my own facet. And then receiving the other women in my life, in their particular stories and where they are as well. And that each is a good gift. Each woman has an irreplaceable piece to play in the puzzle of divine salvation. The divine economy of salvation. And that's really a totally different way of it. Sometimes it takes a bit of a learning curve to be like, okay, now this person is not a threat. They have their own gift and what's happening in my heart. So then we can

come from a place of blessing, it's not just something that's nice that we're saying, it's a real reality. It's a real reality.

Heather Khym: Yeah. I think an important part of friendships, moving to some next levels is really listening to one another stories and be willing to share your story. I know so much about how to love you both, because I know your story, not that I'm perfect at loving you, but I think I can anticipate certain things that you might need or how you might be feeling in a situation. So even quietly interceding in certain moments, because I just, oh, this might not be easy for this one because of this or this, and you guys may not know that whatever, but vice versa, I feel like you do similar things for me. And in sharing your story with one another, you realize that I don't know. I wish I could say a percentage, but many of the interactions that may not be pleasing that happen, usually are happening for a reason that isn't about you. So even in my marriage, I would take things so personally sometimes then I realized after a while I was like, wow, most of this really has nothing to do with me. It's something else going on in the heart of Jake. So when I let my defensive guard down and I can love him there. That hearing and understanding each other's stories and knowing, oh, there's parts of your heart that are tender here. Or, you might need this here. Then I'm able to love better and be loved better when I share that myself. So to cultivate safe places, safe spaces, and you may have known someone for 20 years, but never heard their story. And I think it's important that we start breaking through those barriers and making time to do that. Can you just share your story from the beat? What are kind of some of the main themes of your story or positive or negative messages that you heard at different stages of your life that have made you who you are. I think that's a huge gift that we can give one another, that kind of vulnerability.

Michelle Benzinger: And I think knowing our stories and identifying what are the promises the Lord is speaking to you. Right now in this season, what do you think it is? What are the things that you are hoping for? What are the things that you desire? What are the things that need to be named in you like the aches? Sometimes we say as women we'll, I don't want to say it out loud because what if it doesn't happen? Or it's not wishing, it's not a magic wish that you throw a coin into a fountain and it comes true. It's like okay, I feel like this is a desire of my heart. I need to voice this and really surrender it to the Lord. Can you do that with me? I really need this in my life right now. This is a really ache for my life right now. This is something that the Lord is stirring in my heart right now. Almost to help you process that. What is this, what is the longing? What is the ache? Because I think oftentimes, especially in women, we numb the ache and the longing. We numb it or we dismiss it. Oh no, I just can't or like we said before, we just pushed through. It's vulnerable. This is a longing in my heart. This is a deep ache in me. I feel like this has been placed on my heart from the Lord, will you hold fast with me to this promise? This is

what I desire. How the Lord maybe needs to refine it, redeem it, but here it is and bring that to other sisters. Speaking of sisters, Sister, what do you think?

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Well, there's this circular gift that we have as women to each other. We've talked before about how women help prepare women for a wedding and a women also help women get ready for childbirth. Women come together and they get the water and they get the towels and they serve a woman. And there's a spiritual midwifery that happens in our own souls. When we come together and we hold sacred what God is birthing in you and what he's birthing in you and protecting that and helping to defend it like a new life inside and fighting for it, fighting for each other. And there's something really powerful. And we got together, there's eight of us that get together in Michigan and we've done that for three years now. It's just so lovely. We're also different. So just hearing the hearts of each woman where she's at and then really just prayed for each other and just prayed prophetically over each other. And there was something so beautiful about women coming together in a safe place and in each where we're at in our own stories and just being received and loved and being blessed. The power of blessing, we've talked about that. The power of blessing of our words, of our intentions, of our presence is really life-giving. And gosh, I think there was an article that came out sometime ago and I think it was about guys, but it was about the people in society right now who have a lack of really one true friend. There's so many people that don't even have one real friend to have conversations like this. And so we need sisters. I mean, biological, we need sisters on the journey and we talk about the complementarity of men and women, which is important and we'll talk about that later. But right now we're talking about women with women. And that reality of, I need you guys, my life would not be that, I don't have a biological sister. And so even more so, I need you guys in my life. I need your beauty, I need your wisdom. I need your truth. And it's so important to me. I don't know where I would be with my life without you.

Heather Khym: Yeah, and you need safe people who love you enough to tell you the hard things sometimes. We need to open the door for one another when there's a trust built. To be able to say, is there something that you see that I can't see? Would you love me enough to tell me the hard thing that might make me cry, but is necessary that I'm here to grow. Those types of things are an incredible gift, painful sometimes, but an incredible gift that can be underestimated.

Michelle Benzinger: Oh, I agree. And I think even going back, like Sister referenced, there's a group of us, eight of us that meet. And we did it for three summers, but two summers ago, not this past summer, the summer before we had to make it very intentional, we had to say, okay are we going to commit to this, meeting once a year? Really? We all have different relationships within this group. And it was so funny. We had to go around and say, are we committed to this to go?

Actually, I was the one that was wavering. We were all going around saying, no, I really commit and will be intentional to be a safe person, to pray for these people. And I'm thinking, and it wasn't that I didn't love, first of all I was thinking, all right. If Sister's no, my sister will say yes.

Heather Khym: She says, no, it's easier for me to say no. You just know what's required.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: It wasn't just words. It was a very serious,

Michelle Benzinger: And that's what I was thinking. I adore these women and I wanted to, but my big thing was, do I have the bandwidth to give, do I have the bandwidth? And I realized, but there was also some things even in that process that I had to look at some of the ways that I had given before. I wasn't giving healthily to other people. I was allowing a lot of people to take from me. And then where this was a very reciprocal relationship. These are all very reciprocal relationships. And it was a really beautiful thing for me to do that. But I also know that there has to be intention and there has to be commitment. And there has to be time and trust, which I don't think we do a lot now. It takes a lot for all of us to travel to Michigan every year for a couple of days.

Heather Khym: And it takes attention. Undivided attention, to put everything else aside, just say, I'm here with you to listen to you. I think too, uniquely about that group, which I think needs to be cultivated more in relationships is that we don't relate to each other because of what we do, but who we are. There's amazing people in that room and there's amazing people that we know outside of that circle, but that's not what's held up as important. It's the gift of the person and who they are. We don't even really talk about that stuff, which is so great. And I think that often, what we're trying to bond with people, we want to, this is what I'm doing or this is what makes me important. Or can you see that I'm valuable because I've accomplished this and I've done this. And I have this many kids or I'm this kind of thing. And I work and I do this. Whatever it might be, but to really allow people to see who we are without all that other stuff. That at the core of who I am, this is who I am. It's not about what I do.

Michelle Benzinger: And I think I'm realizing more and more the intentionality of relationships and the time and the presence, and that has to be a priority and actual in-person relationships. And that has to be more of a priority locally. And then a lot of people live far, but making time for that. And making that as intentional. And also knowing your bandwidth. You can not be every person's nearest and dearest. But I

think one of the big things is, even with social media, I think social media is a great thing, but it does not take the place of real people talking to real people, where you are, where you live locally and then deeper relationships. It could be great, but it doesn't replace what the Holy Spirit is doing right where you are and the stories that it wants to unfold within you.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: And all these things that we're talking about today, they take time. And that's okay. Like everything else in life, many times we want a quick fix and it's hard. I can imagine just, both of you have sisters. When you think about your relationship as teenagers with your sister and your relationship now, and where you've grown as women and where your sisters have grown as women and kind of the beauty and the sorrow, both of those things. But you just think of, it takes time. Our friendship has taken time and the friendships we invest in outside of this friendship, they take time and that's okay, and that's okay. New things come to birth in all those places. And I think just kind of sitting with what we've talked about today is that reality of what is it for you just to be a sister, even that word? What does it feel like to be a sister? How do we experience being a sister? And I think for us, it can conjure up many different things, whether biologically or in humanity, but what does it like, does it feel peaceful? Does it feel contented as apart? Maybe that feels afraid. That feels like, ooh, I don't know if I want to go there or women can't be trusted. All the things we've made. Just think maybe this week, just sitting with that, as we sit with the scripture and just sitting before the Lord and just asking the Lord, okay, Lord help unpack my heart. How do I really experience being a sister? What does that like for me to be a sister, to be somebody as support alongside somebody else, or to be in a relationship with somebody else, that's a mutual thing. I think noticing that in ourselves because we can, as we'll go through the identities, I think we're going to find certain identities we're much more comfortable with than others. And so for some people it's going to be mother yeah, I got that, but daughter not so much, or sister's like, oh not that one, but I could do bride really well. So I think noticing those parts of our own hearts as well, what's stirring in your heart as we talk about these things and just to kind of sit with that this week before the Lord and just say, okay, Lord, what's happening in my heart and kind of where do you speak in me to this week?

Heather Khym: Yeah, and where are the places that I need to be healed so that I can open myself up to sisters. Maybe there's been a betrayal in your past that you can't reconcile with the person. Maybe you've tried, I've heard this story so many times, or maybe it's somebody in your family, but Lord, how do I entrust that into your hands? And let it go into your hands, for you alone to heal. But to help me to stay open to new relationships with new sisters, I think to pray for it. If you don't have it, to pray that God would send you sisters, I've prayed for different friends at different times that I really needed someone who I could connect with on a spiritual level. And God has always provided for me. So just not be afraid to ask.

Michelle Benzinger: Yeah, pray and ask. And also, where do you need to repent? Where have you heard sisters? Where have you not been? Yes, we all have. I know this past year, I had to go back and repent to two different people. They were younger sisters of mine, but say, hey, I didn't show up the way I needed to show up and really take my part in the relationship. And it was just beautiful. I mean, I adore both of them, but I love what happens because when we have repentance and we have repair, then the bond actually attachment gets stronger and the trust gets deeper. And then actually, it's beautiful. And we grow in the heart, we grow in the wrestle, we grow in the struggle. My life would not be the same without these two women also. So I mean, I couldn't imagine our life without them. But I had to own my part of it. I had to take responsibility for my part of it. And it could be easy, well they did this or they, no. I'm only responsible for me. The Lord will, and so yeah. So where do we own? We have to own it.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: It will be beautiful to see where this series unfolds.

Michelle Benzinger: I'm wondering if he should unfolding you singing sisters for us.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: That was my one thing.

Michelle Benzinger: Oh, sorry. Please forgive me for interrupting your one thing.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Well, speaking of your sisters, would you like to talk about your one thing for the week? Was it tiny hands because I love tiny hands?

Michelle Benzinger: No, it's not tiny hands. My one thing is actually fall. And so yes, well my front porch and fall because it's decorated really beautiful, I know. My front porch and fall is one of my favorite things. Actually, I just want to switch out all my rugs. And so it's really an excuse for more rugs and throw pillows, but don't tell my husband that. But yes, fall.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Theoretically in the south, it's playful. It's wonderful in our hearts and minds, friends. Fall is happening in the south. Heather. Where you live is where fall really happens.

Michelle Benzinger: Ours is just pretend with Hobby Lobby. Go ahead.

Heather Khym: Yeah, okay. So I have a recipe for these really good chicken carnitas.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: In the Crock-Pot?

Heather Khym: Yeah, I did in the instant pot. Yeah, and it was really good. Well, you can do chicken or pork, but I was surprised the ingredients were like really? There's a lot of lime in there and different things.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Can you make that for us later?

Michelle Benzinger: Can we have Mexican for dinner tonight?

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Focus, focus people.

Heather Khym: But then you put it in the oven. So it gets kind of crispy. This is the key. I'll skip that part.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: This is like a cooking show right here.

Heather Khym: Anything that gets crispy, it's not greasy or oily. When you put it under the broiler anyway, so good. I'll send the recipe. It'll be in our show notes.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: All right. Well my one thing. No, I love musicals. We did have a conversation about this this summer with our friends about, we learned shocking news that some of our friends hate musicals. Almost broke our friendship. We did repair. It's tenuous, but we can respect that. I, on the other hand, love musicals. I love the theater and I love the musical White Christmas. I have seen it on stage and just seen it so many times and Bing Crosby.

Heather Khym: You've seen it on stage?

Sister Miriam James Heidland: I have, it came to Seattle a couple of times. So we would get the discount and they make it snow on stage. And it was just so much fun. Yeah. It's fun, isn't it? If you haven't seen it, I'll put the YouTube clip on, but there's a great little dinner show theater where the two sisters are singing the song, Sisters and I did sing it for y'all in Michigan this summer. That will not be repeated today, but we were listening to it here in the studio earlier.

Heather Khym: Next season, Abiding Together Karaoke.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Well that's a good idea. We should totally do that.

Michelle Benzinger: Living the dream, living the dream.

Heather Khym: We should let our listeners do that.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: We should. A sing along with abiding together.

Michelle Benzinger: Oh gosh, please stop. Please stop. Yeah, let's go.

Sister Miriam James Heidland: Oh anyway, dear friends. Thank you so much for joining us. We just, once again, want to invite you to sit with the scripture this week and just to allow that, what is your experience of being a sister and just allow what happens to happen and knowing that the Lord will lead us in guidance. So we're looking forward to this four-part series and we will see you next week. So until then, we'll be abiding together. God bless you, have a wonderful week.

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