



This Is Your Life Podcast
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Michael Hyatt

Michele Cushatt: Welcome to *This Is Your Life* with Michael Hyatt, where our goal is to give you the clarity, courage, and commitment you need to do what matters. My name is Michele Cushatt. I'm your cohost, and I'm sitting in the studio today with Michael Hyatt.

Michael Hyatt: Hey, Michele!

Michele: Do you see how energetic and excited I am?

Michael: I see that! Good job! It makes me more energetic to see you energetic.

Michele: Good! That's what I'm here for. Maybe it's because we're talking about a topic I am excited about. It's not exactly a happy topic.

Michael: Yeah, it's not one of my favorite things.

Michele: But it's a way we can reframe a difficult kind of scenario, and that's what we're going to do today, which is what makes me enthusiastic about it.

Michael: Good.

Michele: So today we're talking about waiting, which I can honestly say is probably my least favorite pastime.

Michael: It's one of my least favorites too, and I'm not very good at it.

Michele: Oh, I'm not good at it either. We've talked many times before about how you and I are both achievers, so we tend to not let grass grow underneath our feet.

Michael: Yes.

Michele: So the thought of waiting on anything...

Michael: No!

Michele: It's like fingernails on a chalkboard for me.

Michael: It's not our forte.

Michele: No, it's not.

Michael: I don't know if anybody is good at it though, honestly, but I'm definitely not good at it.

Michele: But waiting is definitely a part of regular life. We wait for phone calls to come in. I personally wait for teenagers to come home.

Michael: Yes. I've been there.

Michele: You wait for doctors to call and publishers to respond to manuscripts. You wait for an approval for a loan or for a new possible raise, promotion, or even job you are waiting to get.

Michael: Yep.

Michele: We wait at the DMV.

Michael: Yes, usually for a long time.

Michele: Usually for a long time. We are in a constant state of waiting even if we don't like it.

Michael: Yeah, before we began this recording we were talking about other times when I've had to wait, and the truth is I'm in the middle of waiting on some things right now.

Michele: Mm-hmm, and in just a few minutes we were able to kind of just throw out the things we're waiting on.

Michael: Yeah.

Michele: For example (I hope you don't mind), you have a proposal you're shopping. You're waiting to see what happens with that. You're in the middle of a launch right now, which is its own kind of waiting, because you're watching metrics and...

Michael: I'm waiting to see what the results are going to be, right?

Michele: Yeah, you're seeing what results are going to come in, which is kind of a nail-biting, waiting time.

Michael: It is. There's always something, so this is something we need to get better at, and I do think we can get better at it if we're conscious and if we're attentive to it.

Michele: True, and sometimes we think of waiting as wasted time.

Michael: Right.

Michele: We try to fill that waiting time with other busyness just because we feel like it's wasted, but it really doesn't have to be if we know the right strategies to utilize during those wait periods.

Michael: That's right.

Michele: Okay, so we're going to talk about all of those different kinds of strategies that can help us maximize our waiting times, but before we do that, why don't you share at least one example of a difficult waiting season in your life?

Michael: This was not that long ago. In fact, it was almost a year ago to the day. I went in for a routine physical which I have every year, and I got the results back from the blood work almost immediately. The nurse from my doctor's office called, and she said, "Mr. Hyatt, we got your blood results back. It all looks great. Your cholesterol is at the right level. All of the other metrics are right." I thought, "Super."

It was kind of what I expected. I felt like I had been in the best shape of my life. I had been working out and doing great. She said, "We're still waiting on the heart scan results, but we'll get back with you on those tomorrow." I said, "Okay." I really didn't think anything else about it. The next day, the phone rang from the same number. I expected the nurse to be on the other end of the line. I picked it up, I identified myself, and it was my doctor.

Michele: Uh-oh. When the doctor calls...

Michael: Yeah. That had never happened to me before, so I didn't really know what to expect, but I didn't figure he was calling me to invite me to play golf, you know?

Michele: Probably not.

Michael: So I was a little bit tentative in my voice, and I just said, "Well, how are you doing?" He said, "Well, I was doing pretty well until I saw your test results."

Michele: Oh no!

Michael: I mean, my heart sank.

Michele: I can just feel that.

Michael: I thought, "What in the world?" He said, "Yeah, we got your test results back, and we see an irregularity here that, frankly, has me pretty concerned. I need to get you to a cardiologist ASAP. He is probably going to have to run you through some nuclear heart tests where they inject the dye and all of that stuff." But he said, "I think the soonest I can get you in is next week."

Michele: Oh, wow!

Michael: I was like, "Are you kidding me? I'm about to die? How about now? When would now be a good time to do this?"

Michele: Like, "In five minutes or 10? Because we're doing it today."

Michael: It really scared me.

Michele: Of course it did!

Michael: So there was that fear component.

Michele: Yes!

Michael: But then the thought of living with that for another week...

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: I know that some of you people who are listening have medical stories like this and have waited months, maybe, for results.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: But here I was, and I didn't know what to do. I was going off to Colorado, and I was planning to do some hiking, and now all of that was uncertain, and I wondered if my health was in jeopardy. Would I live through the experience? So I said to him, "Well, I'm leaving for Colorado tomorrow, and I'm planning to do some hiking at fairly high altitudes. I mean, it won't be anything crazy, but it will be at 7,000 or 8,000 feet. What should I do?" He kind of thought for a moment. It kind of unnerved me that there wasn't a quick answer.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: He just said, "Well, make sure it's not too strenuous."

Michele: So for the rest of the week, you didn't carry your own luggage. You didn't want to do anything strenuous.

Michael: Well, I know you've experienced this yourself. In fact, I'm going to turn the question on you here in just a minute. I was with great friends. We were eating together. We were having great fellowship. But in the back of my mind were these constant nagging questions.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: "What does this mean for the future? Is my health really at risk? What's going to happen?" I had to live with that tension for that next week.

Michele: Yes.

Michael: Actually, it was longer than a week because the second test results took a few days to come back, so it was probably 10 days before I got the results back.

Michele: Which is a very long time when you're waiting on something so significant.

Michael: Yes.

Michele: Which could be said for those who are... I've raised six kids, and my oldest is 22. I still have a teenager, and I have a 21-year-old as well. You know, when you are raising kids (as you too know), they don't come out perfect. They are in progress. They're becoming their own people.

Michael: Yep.

Michele: So even as a parent, sometimes I watch my children and what I'm seeing in them right now isn't my ideal for them all the time. I'm just waiting for them to develop and become the people I hope they will become, and that's a long waiting process. It's not going to happen over a weekend. They're not going to develop that kind of character or even know themselves for a while.

Michael: It could be years sometimes.

Michele: It could be years and years. It's a lifetime, really, because I'm still in progress too. That kind of waiting space can be very painful, especially when we have high hopes of what we want our children to be or high hopes for our health or whatever it is we're hoping for. That waiting period can be oh-so-long.

Michael: I know the answer to this question is yes, but is there a specific situation when you were waiting recently and struggled with this?

Michele: Yes. There have been more of these situations than I can really count. It has really been kind of an ongoing theme in my life where I've had to learn to embrace the unknown. It's kind of this constant state of waiting. Some of that comes from the fact that I'm a two-time cancer survivor. When you are a cancer survivor, there is usually at least a five-year window when you need to be cancer-free before the doctor pronounces you free and clear. Right now, I have five years stretched out in front of me when I'm doing nothing but waiting to see if it will come back, right?

Michael: Wow. Yeah.

Michele: I mean, really anybody who's a cancer survivor understands this. You are waiting to see if it's going to come back, and that's a very hard place to be. Five years is a long time.

Michael: How often do you think about it?

Michele: Well, I think about it less now than I did after my first diagnosis. After the first diagnosis almost four years ago, I was consumed with it. I mean, my whole life was hijacked by the waiting. That's just the reality. The what-ifs ("What if that happens?" and "What if this happens?") really became the central theme of my life.

Michael: Yeah.

Michele: Honestly, it was not a great use of my time.

Michael: Right.

Michele: It really wasn't a great use of my waiting time, because all I did was feed anxiety, worry, and fear, which is not a great way to live. Now after the second diagnoses, which was in March 2014... It's a little different this time. I still think about it. It probably still crosses my mind every single day, but it's not an obsessive...

Michael: It's not defining your life.

Michele: It's not defining my life anymore. It obviously comes to mind because it is very much a character in my life, but I try to keep it as a minor character rather than the major character in my life.

Michael: Yeah. Well, good. As we talk through this, I think it would be good for both of us to give input on this. I know I've never stopped you in the past, but seriously. You've had a lot of experience with this as well.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: This is such an important issue, and I think that sometimes we just need perspective to make it through.

Michele: Mm-hmm, and we both talked about health things here, but there are people who are listening today... Right now my heart is really speaking you who are in waiting seasons. It may have nothing to do with health. It could be that you have been unemployed for a year and you're just desperately needing a job.

Michael: Yeah.

Michele: It could be that you have a relationship that needs to be reconciled, but you are waiting for the other person to finally be ready to reconnect with you.

Michael: To move.

Michele: It could be that you have a dream for a career or you want to be a writer or whatever it may be, and you have been trying, trying, and trying for years, and you're not seeing any progress, so you're

very much in a waiting place too. As we talk through these different strategies to embrace waiting time, I just want to reach out to all of you who are in your own very unique waiting places. Even though our stories may be very different, we're very much in the trenches together on this.

Michael: Yes, absolutely. We're right there with you.

Michele: We're talking about *strategies for making the most of our wait times*. Let's start with the very first one.

Michael: Well, I think the first one is to *embrace it*. This is counterintuitive because my initial response is to resist it. It's like, "Oh no!" I want to push that out of my life.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: But to lean into it... I have this core belief (I know you do too) that nothing happens by chance. That's not to say that God sends everything into our lives, but I do believe that at a fundamental level, everything is purposeful, and things don't happen *to* us; they happen *for* us. It may not be the thing I would choose, but ultimately, what's important in my value system is the development of my character, and sometimes that happens best through suffering and through waiting.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: I wish it were different.

Michele: Oh goodness. I wish it were different too, but if I look at the defining moments in my life, the things that have transformed me the most, that have developed me as a person the very most... Honestly, every time it's suffering. It's pain. Isn't that ridiculous?

Michael: Well, I had a friend ask me at a different waiting time when I was going through something else, "Well, what's the gift in that?"

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: I was like, "Are you kidding me? A gift? This is like a horrible thing. I want this thing to go away." But as I began to think about that and reframe it as a gift, the truth is it was an enormous gift. In most of the ways gifts show up, they don't look like gifts initially.

Michele: No, they don't at all. It's really up to us to assign meaning to it. It makes me think of Viktor Frankl's book *Man's Search for Meaning*. I kept thinking of that even as you were talking.

Michael: That's one of my all-time favorites.

Michele: I love that book because although he endured a very horrific circumstance as a prisoner at a concentration camp during Nazi occupation, he was able to (both as a participant in that suffering and as a scientist looking at it) see that those who really were able to survive that were those who were able to assign some kind of purpose or meaning to it in spite of the unwanted nature of it.

Michael: How do you kind of overcome the issue in a Christian context or a spiritual context? Did God send it or did he not send it? Has that ever been a struggle for you? We'll probably get mail on this no matter how we respond.

Michele: That's fine. Well, even if we do get mail, I think the point here is it's worth a dialogue. I don't know that you and I have the answers, but I think it's worth at least having a conversation about. If people want to send mail, then welcome to the dialogue, because none of us really have a very clear answer on this. Some of this is just hard. But yeah, there have been times when I've wondered that. As you know, at the time of recording this, my father died from cancer just last week.

Michael: Yeah.

Michele: His funeral was just last Thursday, and I'm not going to talk about this a lot, but when you look at the fact that I had a second cancer diagnosis in March and then my father died suddenly from cancer six months later, it doesn't look exactly fair, so you can look at that and say, "What, is the universe conspiring against me? Is God punishing me?" or whatever. But if I step far enough back, look at the world as a whole, and start to take in the suffering that's everywhere, I realize suffering is not unique to me.

Michael: Right.

Michele: There are people in this world who are suffering every single day. I'm not the only person who has lost her father to cancer or something else. I'm not the only person who has been a two-time cancer survivor. All of a sudden, now I become a part of a community of suffering, a world of suffering, and I'm not alone in that.

I start to see it as just a part of life, so rather than God being this negative character who's being punitive, all of a sudden he is the redemptive part of this very difficult life at times, right? There is hope. There is a God who loves us and has something different in mind for us eventually, eternally.

Michael: Yes.

Michele: So that's kind of the silver lining in what can sometimes be a very difficult and hard life.

Michael: Does it ever cause you to ask, "Is there a meaning to this?" or, "What could be the intent in this?" or are you content (this is kind of where I am) to believe that some things are just shrouded in mystery, that we may never know the purpose of them on this side of heaven but that the fact that we don't understand them doesn't mean there's not a purpose?

Michele: True. I'd answer your question, "Yes and yes." I think there are times when I like to find the meaning in it. In other words, I like to take these circumstances and... Nothing has to be wasted. There is something that can be gained from all of this. I mean, just the fact that having gone through a diagnosis twice makes me more compassionate toward others is a positive outcome for a negative situation.

Michael: That's huge!

Michele: That's good.

Michael: Yeah.

Michele: So I can find meaning, but there's also a lot of mystery, and I have to let that go. This is where my control freak nature has to just kind of resign herself to the fact that I'm not going to know all of the details, so I can either choose to feel out of control or to be kind of content with the fact that there's some story that's being written that's greater than me and there is still good that's happening even though there are some things I would rather not be.

Michael: That's awesome. Very well put. Yeah, I think that the older I get, the more content I too am with mystery.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: I don't have to have the answers to everything.

Michele: No. In fact, it's a lot of weight to have the answers to everything.

Michael: Oh, it really is.

Michele: Sometimes it's very freeing to know there is someone who has the answers and I can trust him to take care of it.

Michael: Yeah, that's good. So the first strategy is to embrace it.

Michele: To embrace it. Now moving on, the second strategy for maximizing our waiting seasons... What is it?

Michael: I think it's to *ask the right questions*. You know, our brains are always serving up questions. If we're not careful, we start asking the wrong questions, the disempowering questions, things like, "Why can't they hurry up?" or, "Why is this taking so long?" or, "Why did this happen to me?" That's not very empowering, because the truth is that if you ask that kind of question, your mind will serve up answers to that, and you'll begin to reinforce the conclusion that's sort of assumed in the question.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: "The world isn't fair, and I deserve this," or whatever. You just start reinforcing that. The better questions to ask are things like, "What can I learn while I'm waiting?" or, "How will this kind of waiting make me stronger?" or, "What's the gift in this?" The truth is that when I had that situation with my heart scan, Gail and I had some very profound, very meaningful discussion, because when things go wrong, suddenly (you and I talked about this in the context of your father's death) things come into perspective in a way they don't when everything is going well.

Michele: Mm-hmm. Oh, so true.

Michael: We tend to get forgetful. We tend to miss the big picture. We're caught up in the rat race. Things that are trivial seem significant, and that's not really how life should be, but these moments when we're suffering or even when we're waiting give us opportunities to stop and say, "Now wait. What's really important in this context?"

Michele: Mm-hmm, and that changes perspective. That's such a powerful way to twist and reframe something that could be devastating into something that has, even as you grieve or even as you're sad, a layer of possibility or hope.

Michael: Yes.

Michele: That's what we really need. We need to know there's hope there.

Michael: Well, usually we get through this stuff.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: Because you and I believe the end of this life is not the end of life, we believe it may not all be resolved in this life, but it's going to be resolved eventually. So I don't worry about it.

Michele: Yeah, and it does free us up to kind of let it go a little bit.

Michael: Yeah.

Michele: All right, so moving on to the next strategy for maximizing our wait times. What is that?

Michael: Well, this is a really practical one. *Redeem the time*. I don't like to wait. I don't like to wait at the dentist, I don't like to wait at the doctor, and I don't like to wait at the DMV when I'm getting a new license, so I take something with me that I can do. Now fortunately, we have these wonderful laptop computers that are light and that we can take anywhere.

Or I even just use my iPad, with which I can continue to read, but I always have something I can do. Now the worst situation for me (this was one place where I was caught recently) was when I had to go to the eye doctor, and I had my eyes dilated. Then I had to wait to see the doctor, so there I was. I

couldn't read, because I couldn't see, and I was stuck. Unfortunately, if I'd had my earphones, I could have listened to an audiobook, but I didn't.

But I think it's good to try to be proactive and think about what we can be doing. To me, part of the threat in waiting is that it can derail us and take on a much more significant role than it should, so instead of being about what we should be about (which is helping people, serving people, or whatever), we get derailed and caught up in our own drama. If we can be prepared a little bit more, we'll be able to serve, learn, or whatever.

Michele: This is so applicable in so many different situations. I know some who have this dream of writing a book, so they just desperately want to publish a book, and they're just waiting, waiting, and waiting for their big break. Well, there's so much that can be done in this in-between time, this waiting time, that can actually help contribute to their success. Rather than just waiting, waiting, and waiting for somebody to respond, discover them, and publish them, there are things they can do right now that are enjoyable and kind of feed their talents and grow their abilities.

Michael: Absolutely.

Michele: It doesn't have to be wasted.

Michael: No, it doesn't. I mean, you can be busy in that context with building your platform, honing your writing skills, or any number of things that will actually serve you once the book comes out. But if you're waiting and not doing any of that, then you're going to be disadvantaged when it finally happens (if it does happen).

Michele: It really goes back to what we talked about at the beginning when I shared my story about the diagnosis. Waiting can hijack your life, and if waiting is hijacking your life, then waiting has too much power.

Michael: Yes. Absolutely. When I went off on this trip to Colorado with my friends as I was waiting for the further heart scan results, I just said, "I am not going to let that hijack this weekend."

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: "I'm going to get busy loving my friends, entering into these meaningful conversations [which we only do once a year], enjoying my wife, enjoying the travel time, enjoying the scenery, and all of that. I'm going to redeem the time. I refuse to let this hijack my life." I mean, it felt like for all I knew, that was my last week. I didn't know if there was going to be anything beyond that.

Michele: Uh-huh.

Michael: It kind of comes back to a truth that really, all we have is today.

Michele: Oh, it's so true. It sounds like a morbid concept to think about, but it's just a reality.

Michael: It is.

Michele: It really actually sets us up to have the best day ever today if we have that kind of mindset.

Michael: It does. Yeah, if we don't squander it but really embrace it... Even waiting is a privilege. With the kinds of things we wait on, usually we have a lot of help. We're living in a different time when there's just something to learn there. There's something to redeem, some way to grow.

Michele: Mm-hmm. I get asked this all the time. Those who haven't experienced cancer ask how I kind of deal with that reality every single day, how I kind of deal with it and face it every single day. I just have to tell them, "You know, we all live knowing that the truth is it could end today for any of us."

Michael: Yeah. Absolutely.

Michele: "It just can. The difference between you and me is that the veil has been lifted."

Michael: Yep.

Michele: I mean, it's a truth for all of us, but I just don't have that veil of ignorance anymore, and it's actually a huge benefit.

Michael: It is.

Michele: It completely changes how I live every single day.

Michael: Well, you probably know this, but in the history of our faith tradition, Christianity, monastics (people who dedicated themselves to God and lived a separated life) would often be encouraged to contemplate death. It wasn't because they were morbid, but it was because they realized it was the foundation for life to realize, "What I have is a gift. The sand is running out of the hourglass. I can't presume on the future. I need to embrace today and live it to its fullest."

Michele: Again, this can translate to those of you who are in waiting seasons as parents, those of you who are in waiting seasons in your careers, and those of you who are in waiting seasons in whatever. You still have today. You still woke up today.

Michael: Yeah!

Michele: Even if you woke up and you were unemployed, which is a very difficult situation to be in, today still holds possibilities.

Michael: Right.

Michele: You can still change and make today an amazing day, even though you're still in that waiting zone.

Michael: There's stuff you can do.

Michele: Yeah, there's still life.

Michael: Yep.

Michele: All right, so the next strategy... Let's recap. So far, the first strategy for maximizing our wait times is first to embrace it, just to lean in. Second, it's to ask the right questions rather than "Why me?" or "Why is this taking so long?" or whatever. It's to ask, "What can I learn while I'm here?" Third, it's to redeem the time. The time doesn't have to be wasted. You can actually redeem the time. Then, fourth... What's the fourth strategy?

Michael: The fourth one is to *encourage someone else*.

Michele: Powerful. I have to say this is probably one of the most powerful strategies I've discovered.

Michael: How has that worked for you in your situation with your health this last year and with your dad? How have you had the opportunity to encourage others?

Michele: Well, I can tell you a very specific situation. March was when I got my second diagnosis. I had a major surgery that put me on a path of a 6-12 week recovery. It was a pretty long recovery. In the middle of that, on May 6 (I'll never forget it), my dad found out his cancer had returned and it was serious. It was very serious. He called me. Again, I was five or six weeks out of my own crisis of surgery and everything, so here he and I were on the phone. We were a family of four. It was just my brother, my mom, my dad, and me. So now 50 percent of my family was dealing with cancer.

Michael: Wow.

Michele: Some people would look at that and say, "What a nasty string of bad luck! That's horrible! How awful is that?" I just remember that dad and I spent an hour on the phone that day talking with each other, and rather than whining, complaining, crying, and commiserating, we actually just spent an hour talking about how blessed we were.

"Look at us! Look at the kind of family we have. Look at the children we've been so fortunate to raise. Look at the careers we've had, the spouses we've been married to. Even if we don't live another day after today, May 6, dad, look at how blessed we are." Just our having that conversation (yeah, there were some tears too) made us able to have some grieving together, but we also helped each other have the courage to reframe it into something positive rather than negative.

Michael: Wow.

Michele: The power of having somebody else who was in the same circumstance doing it with me was... I'll just never forget it. It was truly a life-changing conversation.

Michael: Well, this is one of the things I love about the word *encourage*. To *encourage* means to give somebody courage, right?

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: That word comes from the same Latin root that has to do with our hearts.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: So it's to strengthen someone else's heart who's going through this. You know, when you confront somebody else who's going through suffering and you've been through suffering yourself, there's that empathy.

Michele: Uh-huh.

Michael: I remember traveling to Ethiopia and seeing abject poverty. It just completely reframed any suffering I would go through. I realized, "I'm not living in *that* situation." There's always somebody you can help.

Michele: Totally.

Michael: There's always somebody you can encourage, somebody you can offer assistance to. I think that too is a key to waiting. There's a reason that you've been given this empathy or are in this place.

Michele: Mm-hmm. It's such a valuable resource, I guess you could say. *Resource* doesn't even sound like the right word. When you connect with somebody in their own waiting season while you're in yours and you're willing to step outside of kind of your own... Well, let's just be honest. Pain and suffering can make us very self-consumed, right?

Because we're licking our own wounds and taking care of ourselves. We're in those waiting seasons. All we can see are our own scenarios. But when we're willing to step out and encourage somebody else, it almost becomes a sacred appointment, a sacred kind of moment, that kind of situation that doesn't just happen randomly, because it takes great courage to step into that place.

Michael: Well, like in your situation, you have such authority as a cancer survivor. When you're talking to somebody else who's going through cancer, it's not the way it would be if I were doing it. I've never had cancer. When I'm talking to somebody, I can be sympathetic, but I'm not sure I can be empathetic, because I've never been there. What I usually say in those situations is, "I can't imagine," as opposed to just even, "That must be difficult." I mean, I can't imagine, because I've never been there.

Michele: Uh-huh.

Michael: You, on the other hand, can imagine. You know what that's like.

Michele: True. True. Again, for our listeners who are unemployed... I've never been laid off from a job, so I don't fully understand that, but I think of the person right now who has been unemployed for the last year and what a unique gift they have to offer to somebody else in that same position.

Michael: Mm-hmm.

Michele: They can speak into that and offer encouragement that is so powerful.

Michael: Well, there's actually a Bible verse on this, and I believe it's in 2 Corinthians. It's the idea that if we suffer, we don't just suffer for ourselves but we're suffering on behalf of somebody else in the sense that what we're learning can be used to be an encouragement to somebody else.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: I think that if we see that, it can add more purpose to what we're going through.

Michele: Yes.

Michael: It can be directed so it's not just something that begins and ends with us but we're able to offer comfort to other people who need it.

Michele: Mm-hmm. Oh, so powerful. Okay, this last strategy... Again, we've said to embrace it, ask the right questions, redeem the time, and encourage somebody else. What is the final strategy for maximizing your waiting seasons?

Michael: Well, this one is specific to me because of my worldview, but it's to *trust God*. I think the temptation when I'm in the midst of this kind of thing is to doubt God, to think that somehow, God's intention toward me is not good, that somehow I'm outside of his favor or I've done something wrong. Often, it has nothing to do with that. I mean, maybe I'm suffering a health problem because of the way I've been living...because of my diet or my exercise or whatever.

Michele: Yeah, that happens sometimes. Yes.

Michael: That does happen. But sometimes there's not even a reason, and it's important just to trust God that it's going to work out, that his purposes toward me are good, that his heart toward me is good, that he loves me and his timing is perfect.

Michele: Yes. You know, being in a place of trust is a much more enjoyable place to be than a place of anxiety, worry, panic, etc. Those are just not fun emotions.

Michael: No.

Michele: So to trust, to be in a place of kind of just letting go and trusting that there is something that's operating on a bigger scale than me and it will work out is just a much more peaceful place to be.

Michael: Well, one of the Bible verses I often turn to in these moments when I'm waiting and when things aren't going like I wish they were going is this verse: Romans 8:28. God works all things together for good.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: God is at work. To paraphrase Romans 8:28, "God works all things together for good to those who love him and those who are called according to his purpose." So it's not like things are out of control, like God took a vacation and the universe has run amuck, or God doesn't have the power. I know atheists like to make the argument that when bad things happen, either God isn't all-loving or he isn't all-powerful.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: Well, maybe it's just a mystery.

Michele: Yeah.

Michael: Maybe we just can't see behind the veil, and there's a purpose that's bigger than something we can explain, and I'm okay with that.

Michele: I'm okay with that too. Now sometimes the whole concept of trusting God seems like a huge demand, and it can seem like just an enormous step. In some ways, I hear it and think it almost sounds passive, but the truth is that trusting is actually like a muscle you have to build, right? You almost have to exercise it. When it comes to kind of us as leaders and influences that are in our lives, trust is something we have to develop anyway.

Michael: Yeah.

Michele: The waiting seasons just give us more practice to be able to do that.

Michael: They give us a lot more practice, but they kind of cut to the core of what we believe...what we believe about the world, what we believe about purpose and what our place is in the world.

Michele: Mm-hmm.

Michael: But all of those are those kind of ultimate questions that you get to ask in the middle of this kind of stuff.

Michele: True. For those of you who are waiting, I know this is a difficult topic because none of us really like being in these seasons, and whether it's a small waiting season or an extended waiting season... They all can be challenging. But I really hope the conversation you and I have had today, Michael, about these waiting seasons has helped all of us kind of reframe them and see them more as opportunities... I'm not trying to sound Pollyanna-ish, right?

Michael: Right, right.

Michele: But they are opportunities to hopefully see the upside of a very difficult situation. We see that waiting can actually be some precious and valuable time in our lives if we understand the strategies to be able to turn it around.

Michael: Yeah, absolutely. I totally agree with that.

Michele: Well, if you've enjoyed today's conversation, you can get all of the show notes and a complete transcript of the entire episode at michaelhyatt.com. If you'd prefer to watch the video rather than listen to the audio, you can also find that at Michael's website. Again, the address is michaelhyatt.com. Do you have any final thoughts?

Michael: Yeah. I think that if you're in a series of waiting, I'd love to hear from you. I'd love to be able to encourage you, and I know it would be an encouragement to other people who are listening if you would go to the comments section for this particular podcast at the website and just talk about the season of waiting you're in and maybe what you're learning in the midst of it.

Michele: Which will actually be an example of one of those strategies we just talked about.

Michael: It will be.

Michele: I have a feeling that not just you and I will be responding to those who are in waiting seasons but that the entire community is going to kind of pitch in and support one another.

Michael: I think so.

Michele: That's what we're here for.

Michael: Yep.

Michele: Well, thank you again for being with us today.

Until next time, remember: Your life is a gift. Do what matters.