OG Pastors: Faith Over a Lifetime

Episode 7 – Trish Wilson

"The Impact of One"

TRISH [00:00:00]: …and this little girl runs and leaps and lands in the middle of that spotlight on those stumps. And she dances for three and a half minutes.

STEW [00:00:10]: Wow.

[Music]

STEW [00:00:19]: Hey, welcome back to episode 7 of the O.G. Pastors podcast. I'm Stew, known here as that Texas Pod-vangelist, and you too can be a pod-vangelist. All you have to do is just tell one person about this podcast. Our mission is simple. We sow seeds. God takes it from there. Uh and our slogan is, "Tell one person." So today's guest has spent most of her life uh investing in people, especially young people and women and encouraging them to discover the purpose God has for them. Trish Wilson, of Kerrville, Texas, uh is a wife, mother, grandmother, ordained minister, speaker, author, entrepreneur, and is the executive director of T.W. Light, I may be saying that wrong, ministries. Uh she's served young people throughout her adult life, spent 13 years helping tell the story of the Texas Lions Camp here in Kerrville. Um and today, leads a ministry of 16 women across denominational lines, that has reached more than 5,000 women in just four years. Um but there's a line from Trish that tells you about how she approaches life. "You have one more day, to do one more thing, to change one more life." Trish, that sounds an awful light- a an awful lot like sewing seeds to me. I'm delighted you're here. Welcome to the show.

TRISH [00:01:48]: Thank you so very much, Stew. I appreciate the uh time and the opportunity uh to be able to talk about what God's done in my life and hopefully encourage other people to see Him working in their life as well.

STEW [00:01:58]: Well, a He's working in my life by doing this podcast, I think. So, uh it's it's a really uh it's it's God gave me this concept of talking to people. And what what really was the catalyst was that there were some men that really reached out to me at at our church. And they and and what set me to thinking, like these folks, all of, all of every, all of our guests, have a so much to offer in terms of wisdom and lived experience in faith, that hearing your story would be interesting, right? To a lot of people. And um and you know, I'm not, I'm not a biblical scholar by any stretch of the imagination, but um I am a good, uh I am a good sower of seeds, and that's uh that's what we're up to. So, um, Trish, you know, it's interesting, before the ministry and all of your accomplishments, there was a little

girl growing up in Texas. So, can you take us back there? What was uh little Trish Wilson like?

TRISH [00:03:17]: Well, it's going to it's really funny uh to see and know me now, and me tell the story of little Trish, uh a lot of people are like, "Yeah, right. Sure, she was like that." Um, but I was born into a family of, um, four other sisters, uh my mom, my dad, and my grandmother, my mom's mom lived in the house with us whenever uh I was born, to help kind of take care of the kids, because both of my parents worked at that time. And um so my memaw was kind of a pivotal role model for me. Um, but I will preface this by saying this, I am, um, such a good going-to-church kid that I was going to church while I was still in the womb. Uh, every time the door was open, we were there, and I was even born on a Wednesday, and that night, the mission group girls came and saw me at the hospital. And uh, so I have been, uh I would say, kind of just, um, my my my feeling is is that I've had God's hand on me some from the very beginning. And um my mom said that at one point in time, I was actually uh caught in the nursery behind a little stack of blocks preaching to the other babies. I was standing and preaching to the other babies and pointing at them and, you know, that kind of thing, doing the conviction thing. "You shouldn't have been doing that," kind of thing. Just babbling. I wasn't saying anything coherent, I was just babbling, but they- the nursery workers told my mother I was preaching that morning. And so, uh from that point on, it was kind of one of those things where I always hungered, I always looked towards what God, you know, was saying or doing and loved going to church, loved listening to the word, and my memaw was pivotal in that. I got to see an example of a godly woman. She never said "Amen" in her prayers. Um, she felt as though that, you know, in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, it says, "Pray continually," and she believed that, and so she never said "Amen." She was constantly talking to the Lord. So I saw that lifestyle molded in front of me. But as growing up with a house full of women, I knew that um there was something to learn from everybody. So I watched and I was very quiet as a child in the sense that I was very observant of what was going on around me. And um it's almost as if I was just kind of seeing the areas in which people were hurting or joyful or needing something in that type of thing. And so, in junior high, I felt a call, when we went to youth camp, I felt a call to go into ministry. I didn't know what that meant, you know, specifically, what kind of ministry, but I knew that God was calling me to do more and go more into what He wanted for um the plans that He had for me. And um so I went forward at youth camp and then when we got home, you know, all the all the boys in our youth group were heralded for their call to to ministry. And I was told by the godly men in my life that I couldn't do that because I was a girl, and God did not call girls to ministry. Now, I could help facilitate a man who was a minister, I could be a good wife or a good mother of his children, or I could be a good servant in the church, in the WMU or in a, you know, teaching facility, the uh capacity, you know, for for church purposes, but I could not be a minister. And I trusted them and I said, "Okay," and I I listened to them and I said, "All right, maybe I just misheard.

Maybe I just don't understand what that calling is." And my spirit stirred within me for years and years and years. And finally my parents left the church that we were in and we went to another church and when I walked into that church and I walked into Sunday School for the very first time, I met a woman who was a youth minister. And I said, "You, you can't be a minister." And she said, "Who said that?" And she started showing me in the Bible where God calls all of us to be ministers. Whether it's a secular vocation or a, you know, religious vocation, it is still our calling that we are supposed to minister to one another, sow seeds, as you say. And so I just I did not realize then that my conception was you had to be in a pulpit to minister. That's not the case. And so it's being who God created you to be in every walk of life, in everything that He calls you to, every place He sends you, you are to minister in that area. And so that gave me a whole new lease on the calling on my life. And so I felt, um, very much like I was supposed to be doing something more for the Lord, and for Him to just show me what that was. And so He called me to to minister in, um, youth ministry, and I was very, very fortunate to be in churches and with ministers that not only, uh, encouraged me and built me up, but also pushed me to be more scholarly in the Word, and even one of them said, "Have you ever thought about going to seminary?" And so I went to Southwestern Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, and I sat down on orientation day in this great big huge hall and the gentleman got up in the front and he says, "You all been called to your forms of ministry, and we are here to encourage and build you up in that, and we are excited that you are here, and now we're going to call the different schools away and you need to go with your deans of those schools," and he says, "And the theology school is going to stay right here in this in this building." And so I had met all these people and especially these guys and they're all like, "Trish, we're so glad you're here. It's going to be great, you know, you're fun, and you're, you're you're kind of silly," and that kind of thing, "It's going to be great to have your spirit around here." And I just was so excited about being at seminary, and they started calling, they called the music school away and one of the guys turns around and goes, "Are you not in the music school?" I said, "No, I'm not in the music school," and he goes, "Oh, okay." Then they called the mission school away and he goes, "You're not in the mission school?" I said, "No." And then they called the youth ministry away, and I didn't get up, because I felt called to be in the theology school. I wanted to know the word so well that when I taught young people, they were feasting on the meat. They weren't just there at church to have a good time, they were there to learn and grow in their faith. And so for me, theology was where I needed to be, and biblical languages was where I needed to be. And so I sat there and when all the other schools were called away, these guys that were around me turned and they said, "You're not in the theology school, are you?" I said, "Yeah, I am." And they all got up and moved away from me.

STEW [00:09:54]: That's interesting.

TRISH [00:09:56]: Yeah, that really showed me what I was up against, because, you know, we are we are always consistently tested in our faithfulness to what God

is asking us to do. And you know, probably very well that when God calls you to something bigger, Satan knows that and he starts to fight you on that and he tries to distract you and tries to manipulate and he tries to throw those stumbling blocks in front of you. And so right then and right there, I had to pray to the Lord, "I am not here for me. I'm not here for them. I'm here for You." And every day is going to be a mission field day for me. So, Lord, guard my heart, renew my mind, and calm my spirit, and give me what You want to have for me to have in this time that I'm going to be here. And it was a four-year study for me because I didn't go to a Bible college, I went to the University of Texas in Austin for two years, and then I went to the University of Texas in Arlington and I have a business marketing degree. And so I kept on thinking, you know, "How's that going to work for the Lord? You do not know how much I have to market Jesus all the time." And so I was like, "Wow, this really works," you know. Um, but throughout that seminary experience, I was encouraged and built up by my professors, um, and I was ridiculed and heckled by my fellow students. And the thing that really upsets me, some of those guys went on to lead churches, where they are going to diminish the role of women in ministry, and I just keep on going back to, "How can you look at the disciples and the different women that were following Jesus and taking care of their needs and ministering to the people that were around them and say that women don't have a place in ministry?" Because Jesus did it. And so it's like, I'm not called to preach, I'm not called to stand up in a pulpit and lead a church. I believe that there is an actual order of things for people to be in charge when they're called to be in charge. I am a teacher, and I love that teaching position, and I will teach anybody who will allow me to teach, and even if they don't, I'm still going to teach. And so if you want to sit and listen and learn, great, and if you don't, I understand. But it's not- it's not me. But anyway, when I graduated from seminary, I was one of two women that graduated from the theology school, and every single professor stood for both of us and applauded us walking across the stage, and that meant the more to me than anything, because they saw, "There is a change coming in the church, and women will be held in high regard." And it's not that we have something extra special to offer, but we do have something to offer. And God created us special in a way that men can't minister. So, I'm excited about what God has done, and I'm excited about what He's doing.

STEW [00:12:44]: Yeah, that's that's super interesting. I I did not I did not appreciate the cultural barriers to women entering uh theology school. I I'm really surprised at that. I mean, especially given that, you know, we're here to serve Jesus, and it's it's not like, you know, there's not, you know, there's not a lot of like, you're not you're not supposed to be here, you know. Everyone everyone's welcome. So when, so you'd mentioned this you'd mentioned this prayer that you pray the first day of of of school. Is that when Jesus became personal to you? Um, how, when did you begin to understand and you've covered some of this, but when did you understand that God had a special purpose for you?

TRISH [00:13:43]: Well, I I think for me, you know, it goes back to that small child being, you know, saved at 7, uh being baptized and learning and and following Him. Uh through school, um, you know, under secondary school and that type of thing, I was the minister that everybody would come to and with their problems. And, um, it wasn't that I had, you know, a little shingle like Lucy in the Peanuts that says the doctor's in, it's just that people knew I had something different. In junior high, this is the one of the funny things, in junior high I had a t-shirt that says, "Nanu, nanu," because Mork and Mindy were so huge at that point in time. It said, "Nanu, nanu, Jesus loves you." I was very bold about my faith, and my friends knew that. I wasn't invited to parties in high school, but I was the one that they called whenever they needed a ride home because they weren't able to drive home. Um, and in college, I wasn't the party girl, I was the study girl, and I was the person that people would come to, and it was almost like they were drawn to the peace that I had because there was turmoil going on all over the place. But for me, I knew that Jesus was in charge. And so Jesus has always been, um, really my best friend, and it was almost as if I've always kind of had Him to talk to right beside me all the time. And so He's always been very real to me. But going into ministry and really coming against the spiritual world, I have seen His hand working in my life, and I've seen Him do the miraculous that I cannot explain any other way. And so when people talk to me about who Jesus is to me, I always tell them, He is my mountain mover. He is the one that I go to for solace. He is my peace, and the peace that He gives me brings me joy, even in the times that are dark. And so that day in seminary, I knew the calling on my life. I just didn't know the next steps ahead. Sure. So I just had to take it day by day, and I think that's what we really need to do with Jesus is just take it day by day, because that's all we're promised, and that's all He wants us to do, so I concentrate one day at a time.

STEW [00:15:51]: Yeah, I love that. I it's interesting, uh, you know, I kind of have that feeling um with regard to being able, you know, speaking with Jesus throughout the day, and I wondered if that was me being crazy or if that was real. Um, I'm new at this relatively speaking, um, in spite of my, uh my, uh youthful appearance. Uh and and I I I find it interesting that you that you experienced the same thing and have for a long time. Um, because I think, you know, it's difficult, you know, you don't know what's going on inside somebody else's head, and you don't know how they think about things, and it does give me some comfort to know that that it's that way for you as well. Yeah. Um, you've worked with young people most of your adult life, including serving as a youth minister. Uh our pastor at Bible study this morning mentioned something he was asked as a youth minister that I was like, "Whoa, I didn't, I didn't know that was going to be, I didn't know that was a question." So, uh yeah, I was like, "Whoa." Uh so there's some, there's something special about having access to people, young people I taught uh for a while, it, it was, it was very, very rewarding. Yeah. One of the young people taught

you about faith, and and what have you learned about planting seeds that that may not sprout for years?

TRISH [00:17:30]: Well, the the neat thing about youth is they have no filter a lot of the times, and so they just really speak their minds and it is profound most of the time, what they say and what how they say it. And when I was working at the Texas Lions Camp, one quick story, there was a young girl there that was an amputee on both legs, um, right around the knees, uh just a little bit below the knees. And her stumps, uh on her knees were were long enough they almost look like um flippers I guess is the best way to put it. Anyway, uh her prosthetics fit just great and she walked around to the point where I didn't know what her disability was. And so I asked her mom and she said she was a double amputee and her, um, prosthetics fit just like socks, so it looked like she had these really tall knee socks on. And so you couldn't really tell and she moved so freely, but she had been an amputee as a baby so she, she had had prosthetics her whole life so she knew how to work them. Anyway, uh they have a talent show at the end of the week and it was my first week working there and I was trying to get some marketing tools together and so I was taking pictures and video of kids and so I went to the talent show to watch um the talent and I got there just before she was going to do her talent. Now, all week she had been singing and whistling all over campus, so I thought she was going to get out there and sing, and I saw her in the wings and I'm standing there with my video camera and my camera and getting ready to, you know, take pictures of kids doing stuff, and I see her and I- I'm like going, "Oh, she's nervous," and she's just going back and forth, just back and forth, she's so nervous. And then all of a sudden, the kid that was on stage leaves, and she sits down, and she takes off her prosthetic limbs, and the stage goes dark, and then there's a huge spotlight in the middle of the stage, and Cindy Lauper's "Girls Just Want to Have Fun" comes on, and this little girl runs and leaps and lands in the middle of that spotlight on those stumps, and she dances for three and a half minutes. Wow. It was amazing, absolutely amazing. I was stunned and she is just having the best time and she's counting "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8," in her, you know, little lips are moving and she's just smiling and having a great time, and she gets done and there's kids all over the place screaming and yelling and, you know, circling their wheelchairs and just having the best time, and she shimmies off stage, grabs her prosthetic legs, and runs down to the the little ramp right there where I'm standing at the base of it, and I sit and I look at her and I said, "Can I ask you a question?" And she looks up at me and these great big huge eyes and she says, "You want to know why I took off my legs?" And I said, "I would think that dancing with feet would be easier." And she said, "You know, sometimes you have to take away what the world gives you in order to be what you were created to be. I'm a dancer, and I just needed a stage to prove it." It was the first time she'd ever done that in public. Wow. And so for me, that's always stuck with me, and I followed her for a while, and she teaches dance to other children now as an adult. Wow. And to me, that just goes to show you, that it doesn't matter what you're

born with, it doesn't matter what you come up against, it doesn't matter what happens to you, your perspective has to be one where it's not a "Why me, God?", it's a "What do You want to teach me, God? What do You want me to use this for, God?" And that is probably one of the most profound lessons I've learned from a young person, and she was only like 9 at the time, and I'm like sitting there going, "You are profoundly wise for a 9-year-old." And by the way, never took a picture, never took video, I was stunned the whole time, my stuff just, this- it just slid inside my body, but that profound statement has never left me.

[Portion of conversation not captured by auto-transcript]

STEW [00:31:15]: That's super touching and I- and- and- and a- an- an amazing, amazing success. Congratulations, that's that's quite that's quite an accomplishment to get a thousand people anywhere ever is uh is in you know, it it- it- it- it shows the the need and demand.

TRISH [00:31:20]: Yes.

STEW [00:31:21]: Um that that you've obviously identified and you think like an entrepreneur, which is you know, I appreciate that.

TRISH [00:31:28]: So, well it's I was going to say it's it's across denominational lines too, so it's everybody coming together and there was when you get a thousand women in a room, you might have a problem at some point in time. There was no problems, I mean, women were loving on each other, they were praying for each other, they were talking with one another, and it was incredibly wonderful to watch. But we do probably 10 to 12 conferences a year, the Ignite conferences are our last conference of our conference year, we start conferences in September and go to go to May. And um, we take the summer off so our team can rest and be with their families and that type of thing, and I'm, I'm trying to write material and that type of stuff, but we designate conferences to what the need is of the churches as well. And so when I talk with a church that wants a conference, we talk about where their church is, and what they're, what that study needs to look like, and we don't repeat studies, because every church is different, every community is different. And in doing that, we are seeing God use those materials how He wants to use them and it just broadens us as teachers, um, and it helps us to to do more and more and more for women. Um, our next conference, our big, our big conference in May next year, our Ignite conference next year, is Ignite Peace, and we're talking about the peace that passes all understanding. And I think that's something that our world needs, and um, it's, it's an incredible, exciting time, but in the meantime, we've got conferences on the for the Spirit, we've got, you know, conferences on unity in the church, and and so we're excited about what God's doing this fall and spring, and where He's going to take us.

STEW [00:41:11]: It's interesting, uh, that purpose runs through virtually everything that you do. Uh and you and you and you've covered it here very well. Um there are people sitting uh around listening to this podcast or watching it,

wondering what is my purpose. Um, how would you help someone begin to answer that question? That's a big question.

TRISH [00:41:38]: That's a that's a big question. I can give you I can give you two scriptures that possibly would help with that. And in saying that, um, I need people to just follow this, this, chain of thought. A lot of people ask, "Trish, how do I know what God's will is for my life?" and I said, "It's really simple. The God, God's will for your life is the exact same will that He has for my life." And they go, "What? What?" I'm like, "No, seriously." I said, "So if you look at 1 Thessalonians 5, 16 through 18, it says, 'Be joyful always, pray continually, and give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.'" And we as Christians are supposed to be joyful always. That doesn't mean we're supposed to be happy, we're supposed to be joyful. We're supposed to pray continually, we're supposed to seek Him first in all circumstances, no matter what it is, and we're supposed to give thanks in all of our circumstances because, in that circumstance, it's teaching us something or bringing us closer to Him. And so, if that's God's will for us to do that, then we are going to be smack-dab in the middle of His hand.

STEW [00:43:20]: I love that, that's a- that's a really great answer.

TRISH [00:43:24]: Um, so and then you go back to, you go back to Jeremiah 29:11, that says, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you, not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future, purpose." So if you're in smack-dab in the middle of His hand, He can give you the plans that He has for you. And those plans can change. Notice He says "plans," not "plan." So if you say, "I'm supposed to be a teacher," and you retire, then you don't have a plan anymore? No, He still has a plan for you, it's a different plan. Different plans that evolves. Yes, so your purpose is to stay right here, and to let Him guide you and give you the plans He has for you. Plans to prosper, not to harm, and to give you hope and a future. And so if you do that, then you are able to not only know your purpose, but you're also having a passion about it, you're having an excitement about it, because God knows you better than you know you. So He's going to put you right where you need to be so that you can grow in Him and in the process, sow seeds and help others grow.

STEW [00:43:54]: I love that. That's true. I love that. That's great. I mean, it's inspirational for me, too. I feel good about that. That's why I'm smiling over here. Uh, so, yeah, so, your book, as if you don't have enough to do, uh, you decided you wrote a book, um, which is, uh, which is called "One." And your motto is, and we covered it earlier, is you have one more day to do one more thing to change one more life, even if it's your own. Where did "One" come from?

TRISH [00:44:23]: Well, um, it's the whole impact of one. It's the whole impact of one person making a difference, and you have to go back to the original one. Uh, God created heaven and earth with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit being a part of the process. And when you think about the one person in history who has changed all of history, you have to say Jesus Christ. So if you keep, yeah, and you keep Him

first and foremost in your life, then your life is going to make a difference, too. And so I always go back to, "It's not about me, it's about Him. It's not about what I want, it's about what He's done." And it's not about who I want to talk to, it's about who needs to hear the truth. And so I want to always be available to what God wants and the stirring of the spirit in my life has led me to walk up to people in grocery stores or the post office or whatever and ask if I can help, or can I pray for you, or whatever, and it's always at the right time, it's always when they are in their deepest need, and it's usually when they say, "God, I need a sign from you." And it's not because I'm great and wonderful, it's because I'm sitting in the palm of His hand, and I'm listening for those opportunities that He provides for me to to join Him in His work and to enjoy it. So one came from, "I am just one person, but with God's power inside of me, nothing is impossible." So I want to always be available and always be pliable to what He wants. So one came from that and I took the inspiration of 10 different people that changed my life within a 10 year period of time, and what one thing they did that impacted my life, that has now gone to impact others because I wrote it down, and that book is sharing their stories and planting seeds of their planting seeds in my life to other people. So, that's where one came from, and I believe that one really has made the difference in a lot of people's lives because the one that it's about, Jesus Christ, you can't leave His presence without being changed.

STEW [00:46:31]: Yeah, it's it's interesting, I was talking to Dave White this morning, and mentioned that our podcast was this morning, and and, you know, it's kind of like, you know, the you have you have a tremendous amount of energy and and and joyous energy coming out of you, right? Um and and your ministry passage comes from Matthew 5, "You are the light of the world." Your life has been about encouraging people to discover their purpose and let that light shine. So when I'd like to kind of close with this, when somebody encounters Trish Wilson, whether it's for 5 minutes or 50 years, what do you hope that they see in you that points them to Jesus?

TRISH [00:47:30]: I hope that they see faithfulness, that they see a real person who is striving, not to do more or be more, but who is striving to sit and be still. Somebody who is, and that sounds funny coming from a person with a high energy. Um, but I always want to be still in the Lord. I want to be able to hear His voice, to see His hand, to hear His words that He wants shared with other people, and I can't do that if I'm busy doing what I want to do. And so I always pray over my agenda every day, and I always say, "Lord, there are things planned for today, however, the plans are fluid because Your plan is what's most important. Your agenda is what's most important." And so I'll get phone calls that I wasn't expecting or people dropped by that I wasn't expecting, and I always see it with a smile as divine appointments, that He is giving me the opportunity to join Him in His work and to enjoy it. You know, when I talk to people about Matthew 5 and talk about being the light of the world, I want to be a chain puller. And people go, "What? What does that mean?" Well, you see on a ceiling fan, there's a little chain

that pulls the light on and off. I believe that my job on this earth, my mission, my ministry, is to walk into people's lives and help to pull the chain above their head that is that light that is a connection to the Lord that whenever it's pulled, it comes on and their life is changed forever. That my light helps to pull the chain of their light to get their light lit and shining bright. And I hope at some point in time, my light bulb shatters, because I don't want just this body, this person, this Trish Wilson, to contain the true tremendous, life-changing, life-altering, eternal value of Jesus Christ shining in my life. I want to shine so bright that the glass breaks.

STEW [00:49:34]: I love that. It's great. Um, thank you for being on. Uh, you know, thank you so much for the joy that you bring to serving others and for encouraging people to follow uh uh follow God and discover the gifts that God has given them. Um, and I mean and you, you, you it's inspirational to me to talk to you. I mean, we did a prep call for this, and I was inspired by that. Um, and I I just, you know, it's interesting how, you know, in a way, you know, we have we have something in common, which is, you know, which is this concept of sewing seeds, um and and letting God take it from there. You know, so um, you know what, I, I just want to say, sincerely, thank you. I know our audience our audience is going to love this, and uh it's going to it's going to change some lives, so, uh you know, Trish Wilson, thanks for being on.

TRISH [00:50:35]: Thank you so much for the opportunity, Stew, and I just pray that you are blessed beyond measure each and every day as you walk with the Lord, and that this podcast, along with the others, not only sows seeds for now, but sows seeds for eternity, because the things we do in life echoes in eternity, and I think what you're doing is not only bringing God glory, but it's going to bring others to know Him in a mighty way, and I thank you for that opportunity to be a part of it. You have a great and blessed day.

STEW [00:51:30]: Oh, thank you so much, it's very humbling, uh you know, I'm I feel like I'm very blessed uh to have the opportunity to do this. Um, I've done a bunch of podcasts in industry, and um, and and I I feel like I, I was called to do this, and I really, yeah, really appreciate it. So, thank you, and uh, if you would, uh just tell one person about this podcast. Uh, my name is Stew, I've been your host, I'm known here as that Texas Pod-vangelist, and until next time, que Dios te bendiga, may God bless you and yours. We'll see you next time, on the O.G. Pastors podcast.