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## EPISODE 20 | HOPE GUIDE

Holding on to Love after You've Lost a Baby  
with Candy McVicar

**LISTEN NOW**



## EPISODE 20 HOPE GUIDE

# Welcome!

Hello sweet momma. Oh, how I wish you didn't need to be listening to a podcast on finding hope after pregnancy or infant loss. My heart breaks for you that you've experienced the loss of a baby.

I am so incredibly sorry for your loss.

I wish I could give you a big hug right now and tell you that you're not alone in your grief. I am here to walk this heartbreaking journey with you. I know firsthand how devastating, life-changing, and sorrowful it is to lose a baby.

My sweet daughter, Bridget Faith, was born into Heaven at 24 weeks into my first pregnancy in 2014. In my deep grief and sadness, I questioned how a good God could allow this to happen to me. As I wrestled with my faith, I came to a place of absolute surrender.

It's a long story (one you'll hear throughout our podcast episodes), but I learned to trust God and allow Him to heal my heart. In doing so, He led me to start a nonprofit ministry called Bridget's Cradles.

You can read more about what we do on our website (and in this Hope Guide), but our mission is to provide comfort, hope, and healing to families grieving the loss of a baby in Heaven. The Cradled in Hope Podcast is an extension of our ministry with the same mission.

We firmly believe that surrendering our suffering to God will allow us to find joy again. He can heal our hearts and use our grief for good. And most importantly, through faith in His son, Jesus, we have the hope to see our babies again in Heaven. Jesus has defeated death and He promises us eternal life with Him and our babies. Though we may grieve, we do not grieve without hope.

With Hope,

*Ashley Opliger*





# Show Notes



## EPISODE 20 WITH CANDY MCVICAR

Join us for a conversation with Candy McVicar, author of [Holding on to Love after You've Lost a Baby](#), a book she co-wrote with Dr. Gary Chapman. Candy, who has two children in Heaven, shares how to use the 5 Love Languages to strengthen your marriage after loss. Learning how to love your spouse in the midst of sorrow is a powerful way to support each other and grow closer to God and one another.

Candy is the founder of the [Missing GRACE Foundation](#). She is passionate about providing resources and education to bereaved families and encouraging couples to love each other well in their grief.

### **In this episode, we discussed:**

- The 5 Love Languages - what they are and how they can help your marriage after pregnancy or infant loss
- How she connected with Dr. Gary Chapman to write her book, Holding on to Love after You've Lost a Baby
- Parenting your baby in Heaven and giving them a legacy
- Differences in how men and women grieve
- Marriage struggles she experienced after loss
- The Crazy Cycle of Love & Respect in marriage
- Discovering authentic faith by asking the hard questions
- Serving others to get out of the depths of dark grief
- The Missing GRACE Foundation

Find the full episode transcript [here](#).



**LISTEN NOW**

# Show Notes



## KEY VERSES FROM THE EPISODE

- For the LORD is good, and His loving devotion endures forever; His faithfulness continues to all generations. **-Psalm 100:5 NIV**
- He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. **-Isaiah 61:1b-3a NIV**
- And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. **-1 Peter 5:10 ESV**
- Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. **-Philippians 2:4 ESV**
- You turned my wailing into dancing; You removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, that my heart may sing Your praises and not be silent. Lord my God, I will praise You forever. **-Psalm 30:11-12 NIV**
- He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? **-Micah 6:8 ESV**
- For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. **-Romans 14:17 ESV**



## BLESS GRIEVING MOMS WITH A REVIEW

If you've been encouraged by our podcast, would you [write a quick review on iTunes](#)? Think of it as spending two minutes of your time to invite a grieving mom to listen in on the message of hope you've just heard. We would be so grateful for your review and 5-star rating. Click [here](#) for instructions/videos on how to leave a review in case you haven't left one before. Thank you so much!

LEAVE A REVIEW

# Show Notes



## + OUR GUEST | CANDY MCVICAR



Candy McVicar is an author, inspirational speaker, and devoted advocate for bereaved families. She is a mom to four, two on earth and two in Heaven.

She is the author of [Holding on to Love after You've Lost a Baby](#) with Dr. Gary Chapman and the founder of the [Missing Grace Foundation](#) which provides support resources and education to grieving families.

### Connect with Candy

**Web:** [www.candymcvicar.com](http://www.candymcvicar.com)  
[www.missinggrace.org](http://www.missinggrace.org)

**Facebook:** [/candymcvicarofficial](https://www.facebook.com/candymcvicarofficial)  
**Instagram:** [@candymcvicar](https://www.instagram.com/candymcvicar)

↖ these are clickable!

## + OUR HOST | ASHLEY OPLIGER



Ashley is the Executive Director of Bridget's Cradles, a nonprofit organization based in Wichita, Kansas that donates cradles to over 1,250 hospitals in all 50 states and comforts over 26,000 bereaved families a year.

Ashley is married to Matt and they have three children: Bridget (in Heaven), and two sons. She is a follower of Christ who desires to share the hope of Heaven with families grieving the loss of a baby.

### Connect with Ashley

**Web:** [www.ashleyopliger.com](http://www.ashleyopliger.com)  
[www.bridgetscradles.com](http://www.bridgetscradles.com)

**Facebook:** [/ashleyopliger](https://www.facebook.com/ashleyopliger)  
**Instagram:** [@ashleyopliger](https://www.instagram.com/ashleyopliger)

# Show Notes



## HOLDING ON TO LOVE BOOK

Losing a child is among the most tragic experiences one can face. The crushing grief puts immense strain on the marriage, family relationships, and friendships that few can understand.

That's why this book was written. In **Holding on to Love After You've Lost a Baby**, Candy McVicar, a grieving mom who leads a ministry for grieving parents, and Dr. Gary Chapman, relationship expert and author of *The 5 Love Languages*, team up to help couples who are facing the unimaginable.

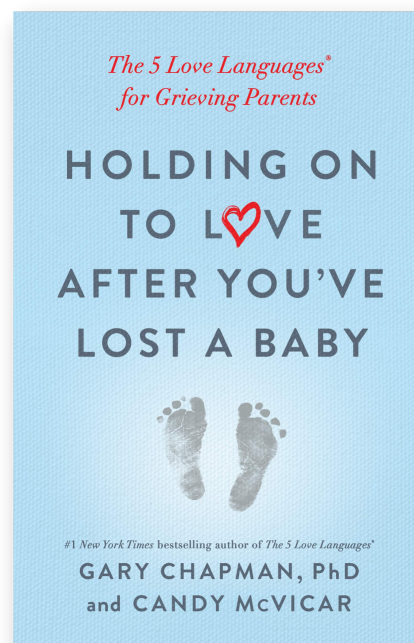
### They'll teach you how to:

- Cope with the complex feelings that come with the grief process
- Understand your spouse's unique grieving needs and support him/her
- Use the five love languages through grief

There is nothing that can make the pain of losing a child go away, but healing is possible with intentional hearts and the right resources.

### The 5 Love Languages:

People have unique personalities and give and receive love in different ways. By learning to recognize these preferences in yourself and in your spouse, you can learn to identify the root of your conflicts, connect more profoundly, and truly begin to grow closer. Take the quiz to discover your primary love language, what it means, and how you can use it to better connect with your spouse.



Click the button below to purchase your copy of **Holding on to Love** on Amazon.

**PURCHASE BOOK**

**? TAKE THE QUIZ**

# Show Notes



## MISSING GRACE FOUNDATION

### About Missing GRACE Foundation

The Missing GRACE Foundation is a 501(c)3 Nonprofit Public Charity based in Minnesota with a mission to serve grieving, infertile and adoptive families nationwide.



The volunteer-run organization offers phone, online and in-person support, grief support meetings, bereavement resources which include the GRACE Care Baskets and GRACE Care Totes (given to parents in the hospital or home at the time of a perinatal loss), memorial events, and education for care professionals and the public.



## MISSING GRACE RESOURCES



Missing GRACE Foundation's mission is to provide support, resources and education for families and professional care providers when there is loss of a baby, infertility or adoption challenges. They offer hope and healing opportunities to G.R.A.C.E. – Grieve, Restore, Arise, Commemorate and Education. Though their nonprofit primarily serves families in Minnesota, there are online resources available for non-local families..

[READ MORE](#)



A GRACE Support Group is a safe place to find community with others who have had a pregnancy or infant loss, young child loss or who face fertility challenges. The groups are open to individuals and couples looking to work through grief in healthy ways, and to commemorate their loved ones who left this world too soon. Support groups meet in-person in Minnesota and remotely using Zoom.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)



The GRACE Care Basket resources were created for parents who are faced with a pregnancy or infant loss. The contents help guide, comfort and support parents who are experiencing a miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal loss.

Anyone can order their resources—nurses, doctors, chaplains, social workers, church staff, funeral home directors, friends and family and the parents themselves.

[ORDER A BASKET](#)



# Show Notes



## DISCUSSION / APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- Candy shares about her struggles in grieving with her husband after they lost a baby. Her husband felt like he needed to be strong for both of them, yet she felt disconnected from him. In what ways do you and your spouse grieve differently? Have you had a conversation about it (like Candy and her husband ended up having)? Share your experience below.

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- In *Holding on to Love after You've Lost a Baby*, Candy and Dr. Chapman discuss how to utilize the 5 Love Languages to strengthen your marriage while in grief. If you haven't already, take the [quiz](#) and find out. What are your and your spouse's love languages? Write down ideas on how to love your spouse using his/her love language.

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- Candy shares that relationships are the eternal stuff and that the best way to escape the depths of grief is to serve others. In what ways can you prioritize your relationships (e.g., marriage, family, friends)? Do you have opportunities to serve others in your sphere of influence? Take some time to pray over your relationships by name and to ask God how He would have you serve.

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# Pinnable Graphics

Bridget's Cradles  
Cradled in Hope



EPISODE 20  
#CRADLEDINHOPE  
@BRIDGETSCRADLES

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Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

- PHILIPPIANS 2:4 ESV

Bridget's Cradles

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For the LORD is good, and His loving devotion endures forever; His faithfulness continues to all generations.

- PSALM 100:5 NIV

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“

I wanted to be in the fetal position. I didn't want to go to work. I could barely function. And so all of that was really challenging. And my husband felt like he needed to be a good provider and strong for me. Men tend to want to fix things and they want to take care of us and they want to protect us. And God's wired him that way, and yet that wasn't helping me feel connected to him.

CANDY MCVICAR

Bridget's Cradles

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If anyone is looking for a way to get out of the dark cycle and out of the really depths of dark grief, one of my most important advice I could give to somebody for that is... step out of you and do something for others.

CANDY MCVICAR

Bridget's Cradles

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Applying the love languages is going to touch an even deeper level than it would outside of grief because in grief, we are so starved for the kind of love that is healing in our hearts.

CANDY MCVICAR

Bridget's Cradles

EPISODE 20  
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“

We can't take any of this stuff in this world with us; what we invest in is people; it's relational, that's the eternal stuff.

CANDY MCVICAR  
EPISODE 20  
CRADLED IN HOPE PODCAST

Bridget's Cradles



View and pin episode graphics from our Pinterest board [here](#).

# More Resources



## HOPE GATHERINGS ONLINE



Ashley Opliger  
BRIDGET'S CRADLES

**Join our Christ-centered monthly online support group** led by Ashley Opliger, Bridget's mom and Executive Director of Bridget's Cradles. The group is focused on finding hope and healing through God in community with each other and is open to any mom in the United States who has lost a baby due to miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant loss. For upcoming dates, please visit

[www.bridgetscradles.com/hopeonline](http://www.bridgetscradles.com/hopeonline).



## JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP

**Join our Cradled in Hope community of Grieving Moms:**



# More Resources



## CATCH UP ON PAST EPISODES



**EPISODE 1:**  
**Welcome to Cradled in Hope**  
*with Ashley Opliger*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 2:**  
**Finding Peace After Miscarriage**  
*with Alisha Illian*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 3:**  
**Navigating Pregnancy Loss**  
*with Sarah Philpott*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 4:**  
**Grieving a Life-Limiting Diagnosis**  
*with Amy Balentine*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 5:**  
**Wrestling Well with God  
through Recurrent Loss**  
*with Kristin Hernandez*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 6:**  
**Raising a Rainbow Baby to  
Remember Their Sibling in Heaven**  
*with Ashley & Branton Opliger*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 7:**  
**Improving Hospital Experiences  
for Grieving Families**  
*with Lori Beth Blaney*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 8:**  
**How to Nurture a Grieving  
Mother's Heart**  
*with Johanna Mutz & Denise Wolfe*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 9:**  
**Anchored by the Gospel after  
Losing My Baby to Cancer**  
*with Jess McClenahan*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



# More Resources



## CATCH UP ON PAST EPISODES



**EPISODE 10:**  
**Walking through the Valley of  
the Shadow of Death**  
*with Avesha Stanley*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 11:**  
**Pressing into the Pain  
after Infant Loss**  
*with Lindsay Johnson*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 12:**  
**Renewing Your Mind after  
Pregnancy Loss**  
*with Alicia Michelle*

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**EPISODE 13:**  
**Coping with Hope  
Through the Holidays**  
*with Ashley Opliger*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 14:**  
**The Power of Community  
for Grieving Mothers**  
*with foreknown Ministries*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 15:**  
**Grieving with the  
Gospel**  
*with Casey Nestor*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 16:**  
**Courageously Expecting  
After Loss**  
*with Jenny Albers*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 17:**  
**Real Talk on  
Pregnancy Loss**  
*with Rachel Lewis*

[LISTEN NOW](#)



**EPISODE 18:**  
**Strengthening Your Marriage  
after Pregnancy Loss**  
*with Matt & Ashley Opliger*

[LISTEN NOW](#)

# More Resources



## ✚ FIND HOPE + HEALING

Please visit [www.bridgetscradles.com](http://www.bridgetscradles.com) to find resources for hope and healing after the loss of a baby. We pray that something there will be helpful to you and provide hope as you grieve and remember your precious baby in Heaven.



### Memorial Ideas

Ways to honor your baby in Heaven by remembering them in your home and daily life.

✚ ✚ ✚  
CLICK HERE  
TO READ  
MORE ✚ ✚



### Important Dates & Holidays

How to face difficult milestones and holidays in ways that bring peace and remembrance.

✚ ✚ ✚  
CLICK HERE  
TO READ  
MORE ✚ ✚



### Grieving & Healing

Ashley shares practical ideas that she found helpful in her grieving and healing journey.

✚ ✚ ✚  
CLICK HERE  
TO READ  
MORE ✚ ✚

# More Resources



## ✚ FIND HOPE + HEALING



### Recommended Books

Christ-centered books that provide hope and healing after the loss of a baby

CLICK HERE  
TO READ  
MORE



### Quotes & Bible Verses

A list of quotes and Bible verses to offer hope and healing for families who have experienced pregnancy or infant loss

CLICK HERE  
TO READ  
MORE



### Helpful Resources

A list of organizations and websites focused on providing healing to families grieving the loss of a baby

CLICK HERE  
TO READ  
MORE

SIGN UP TO RECEIVE HOPE-FILLED EMAILS  
+ PODCAST UPDATES + FREE RESOURCES

SIGN UP NOW



# Our Organization



with  
**ASHLEY  
OPLIGER**



## ABOUT BRIDGET'S CRADLES



Bridget's Cradles is a 501c3 nonprofit organization based in Wichita, Kansas. It was founded after Matt and Ashley Opliger's daughter, Bridget Faith, was born into Heaven on October 22, 2014. Ashley's mom, Teresa, had knit a small cradle for Bridget, and it allowed them to hold her in a special and dignified way.

Since then, Ashley and a team of amazing volunteers have been passionate about comforting bereaved families across the country. Bridget's Cradles now donates cradles to over 1,100 hospitals in all 50 states, hosts support groups & remembrance events, and provides hope-filled resources online.



## WHAT WE DO



**DONATE CRADLES  
TO HOSPITALS**



**PROVIDE SUPPORT  
& RAISE AWARENESS**



**HOPE GATHERINGS  
SUPPORT GROUPS**



**WAVE OF LIGHT  
OCTOBER 15TH EVENT**



## GIVE HOPE

**Together, we can provide comfort and hope to more grieving families.** Your support will allow us to carry out critical program services so that together we can comfort bereaved families now and in the future. Visit [www.bridgetscradles.com/givehope](http://www.bridgetscradles.com/givehope).



# Let's Connect

## CONTACT

If you'd like to be in touch, please email us directly at:

[info@bridgetscradles.com](mailto:info@bridgetscradles.com)

## FOLLOW US

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