MARK & FRIENDS

# God Unwrapped, Part 2: Flourishing in God’s Love

Wednesday, November 18, 2026 | Ministry Package V5.1
Host: Mark Burns | Speaker: Michelle Hollomon

## Program Summary

Mark Burns continues his conversation with counselor, coach, and author Michelle Hollomon about God Unwrapped: God Is Love… But Not the Kind You Are Used To. Beginning with 1 John 4:18-19, they explore receiving God’s love, finding identity in Him, and approaching unexpected circumstances with trust. Michelle discusses legitimate needs for safety and provision, love and belonging, and meaningful work. Her story about a foster child’s fear of not having enough food introduces the chapter Refrigerator God, which pictures generous provision joined with relationship. Mark shares a personal refrigerator story about a simple change that helped him notice what he already had. The conversation encourages honest self-reflection, healthy support, and using God-given gifts to bless others. In a new closing clarification, Mark explains that the refrigerator story came from an archived interview about fourteen years earlier, when he was single and before he met Holly.

## Key Takeaways

- God’s love provides the foundation for receiving grace, facing fear, and learning to love others.
- My identity can be grounded in what God says about me rather than in other people’s judgments.
- An unexpected difficulty can become an occasion to ask how God may help me respond with trust.
- Needs for safety, provision, love, belonging, and meaningful purpose deserve honest recognition rather than automatic dismissal.
- The body of Christ can offer practical care and connection as well as encouragement.
- Michelle’s Refrigerator God illustration joins the picture of provision with the invitation to relationship.
- Familiar patterns of deprivation can narrow the way I see a situation; a different perspective and supportive relationships can help.
- Growing in Christlike love equips me to use my abilities and influence for the good of others.

## Scripture References

- 1 John 4:18-19 - Read at the opening: perfect love drives out fear, and we love because God first loved us.
- Matthew 6:32 - Read in connection with Refrigerator God: the Father knows what His children need.
- Matthew 6:31-34 - Recommended in the book discussion for further study about provision, trust, and seeking God’s kingdom.

- Exodus 16:16 - Named in the chapter’s extra-study references; the surrounding account describes God’s provision of manna.
- Mark 2:25-28 - Named in the chapter’s extra-study references, including the statement that the Sabbath was made for people.
- James 4:8 - Quoted in Mark’s closing reflection: draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.
- Genesis 1:26-28 - Companion reading for the discussion of humanity made in God’s image and entrusted with responsibility.

## Quote of the Day

“We really do matter to God, and He puts other people in our life to reinforce that.” — Michelle Hollomon

## Broadcast Notes

Host: Mark Burns. Guest: Michelle Hollomon, author of God Unwrapped: God Is Love… But Not the Kind You Are Used To. This is Part 2 of the interview, presented for Wednesday, November 18, 2026. Topics include identity, trust during an unexpected hotel mix-up, God-given creativity and purpose, and the book’s Refrigerator God chapter. Michelle shares a counseling illustration about a foster child’s food insecurity; it is retained as her account of a particular situation. Mark’s personal refrigerator story is followed by his present-day clarification that the interview was recorded about fourteen years earlier, while he was single and before he met Holly. That clarification and the complete supplied spoken content are preserved. References to a morning program, a homepage image, feedback email, and GodUnwrapped.com remain part of the original conversation. Current program resources and the author’s website are linked separately below.

## Practical Applications

- Read 1 John 4:18-19 in context and thank God that His love comes before my response.
- When a plan changes, pause and ask God for wisdom, steadiness, and an open heart.
- Name one legitimate need I have minimized, then bring it honestly to God in prayer.
- Consider how a trustworthy person or church community could help with care, encouragement, or belonging.
- Notice one resource or kindness already present in my life and give thanks for it.
- Make one practical change that helps me recognize provision rather than repeatedly focusing only on what is missing.
- Use an ability or interest God has given me in a way that serves someone else.
- Reflect on the question: If I trusted God’s loving care more deeply, what healthy step could I take next?

## Today's Challenge

Identify one need for provision, belonging, or meaningful purpose. Read Matthew 6:31-34, bring that need to God, and write down one healthy next step. It might be asking for support, making a small practical change, or using a gift to help another person. Take that step this week with gratitude for God’s care.

## Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for loving me first and knowing what I need. Help me receive Your love and find my identity in You. When circumstances change, teach me to trust Your character and seek Your wisdom. Give me courage to name my needs honestly, receive appropriate help, and notice the provision already around me. Lead me into healthy relationships and meaningful ways to use the gifts You have given me. Draw me close to You, and let Your love flow through my words and actions to someone who needs encouragement. In Jesus' name, Amen.

## About Today's Speaker

### Michelle Hollomon

Counselor, certified professional coach, and author

Michelle Hollomon is a counselor, certified professional coach, and author of God Unwrapped: God Is Love… But Not the Kind You Are Used To. Her counseling, coaching, and writing explore relationships, identity, and personal growth. In this second conversation, she reflects on receiving God's love, recognizing legitimate needs, and finding belonging and purpose.

Featured on Mark & Friends - Listen anytime under the Mark & Friends tab at GreatNewsRadio.org or WLUJ.org.

## About Today's Host

### Mark Burns

Host of Mark & Friends

Mark Burns is General Manager of the WLUJ Family of Stations and Great News Radio Network and host of Mark & Friends. With decades of experience in Christian radio and ministry, he presents Scripture-centered programs intended to educate, edify, and evangelize.

## Additional Ministry Resources

- Mark & Friends Program Resource Library
- Great News Radio
- WLUJ
- 1 John 4 - read the chapter
- Michelle Hollomon - author website
- About Michelle - author biography

## Complete Proofread Transcript

[Opening theme: “We’re Glad You’re Here.”]

Hi, listening friends. I'm so glad you've joined me for Mark and Friends.

For those of you that were tuned in yesterday, I'm sure you're back to hear some more about God's love, how to receive that love, and how to flourish in that love, through counselor, certified professional coach, speaker, and author Michelle Hollomon. As yesterday, you might have heard part one of our interview about her book, God Unwrapped, God Is Love, But Not The Kind You Are Used To. Well, today you're going to hear part two of our conversation.

So you can hear my interview with her in its entirety by staying with us for the next 20 or so minutes. For those of you that missed yesterday's broadcast or can't stay with us, stop by greatnewsradio.org and listen on our archived programs link. You'll also be able to see the book cover and a picture of Michelle right there on our homepage, greatnewsradio.org. And you can leave a comment there or go to our streaming page so you can listen to our broadcast on your computer or iPhone.

Check it out, try it out, and email some feedback at staff at greatnewsradio.org. Before I launch into part two of my conversation with Michelle Hollomon, let me read from 1 John 4, 18 and 19. There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

We love because he first loved us. Thank you, God, for your love. Thank you, God, for the listeners that are tuned in right now.

And thank you for Michelle Hollomon, who is going to help us understand how we can flourish in God's love, see you for who you really are, see ourselves as you see us, pursue the God-given unique calling on our lives, and walk in the freedom of God's love so that we can love others and be a part of God's redemptive work. I'll begin where we left off yesterday, asking Michelle about flourishing in God. I love where you state, I am not defined by other people.

I am who God says I am. Talk a little about thriving in God's perfect love, where it says in 1 John 4, 18, about God's love for us. Thriving in God's love.

There's a statement that I heard from someone, and it was another author, and she said, what if we could see everything in the light of God's love? And really changing our perspective to see how is God going to show up in this? Instead of maybe getting anxious or thinking that we're feeling out of control, we really look and see, well, how is God going to show his love toward me in this? And my husband and I took our family on vacation just last week, and we arrived in the airport, and he looked at the confirmation email on the hotel that we were supposed to be in, and it was different than the one he thought he registered for. And so he was feeling terrible. He's like, I don't even know where this new hotel is.

I must have messed it up. And he just felt awful, because our plans drastically changed. It was about a two-hour difference, driving difference, where we thought we were going to be compared to where the hotel really was.

And at that time, all the hotels were already booked, so we had to sort of take the one that we already had confirmation in. And I just kept thinking, wait a minute, this is a real mishap, and we don't know where we're going, except that maybe God has something different and better. And it really was pretty amazing.

The hotel we were at was pretty good. So he didn't feel bad for long. But what if we could take those crisis moments and just say, all right, God, what is it that you have? And I know that it's something good and something holy and something pure for me.

So what is it? Show me. Yeah, and I think over and over again, you restate and help us understand that God is out for our best interest. He wants us to experience his love, to draw close to him, to flourish in him, to recognize the greatest gift of all, the Lord Jesus Christ, that he's given to each and every one of us as we turn to him.

But how oftentimes we just struggle with that sense of love just because there's disappointment or things go on in our lives, and we forget God's character, and we have to be reminded over and over again, he is a great, awesome, good God that's looking out for us. Yeah, and gives so many chances. He just, he really wants us to succeed at this thing called life, but not just because he wants us to be growing, healthy adults, but because he has a plan and a purpose for the worldwide church, for the world in general.

And he sees, oh, Michelle, if you would follow and know and be caught up in my love, how impactful, how powerful your influence will be in the people that desperately need to know God's love. And so he has this view of the people around us, that as we grow into Christlikeness, he knows that it will just overflow into the other people around us, and then all of us together get to experience his love and goodness. And then there's redemption in that, and we have a part to play in the redemption of the world, redemption of our neighbors, of our community.

Michelle has mentioned, I think each and every chapter that I read became my new favorite. Chapters 9, 10, and 11, I've read a couple times. I love the titles, The Inmate Inside, A Knock Off the Old Block, Refrigerator God.

And on page 75, let me read a little excerpt, because I'd like you to comment on this, but it states, God's original creative order is different than what we experience today. People were designed to be blessed, to be successful in deed and in relationship to one another. People were created to be stewards and to master the earth.

People were created to have authority and power, creativity and ownership, responsibility and security. People were to be kings and queens of the earth in perfect harmony with one another and with their God. Though the current state of the world is quite different than how we originally intended, humankind still bears the mark of divinity.

Share a little about that mark of divinity that we all, especially those of us that follow the Lord Jesus Christ, can exhibit to a hurting world. Well, when I think of when I am most at peace, most thriving, and most in tune with God's hand in my life, it's usually when I'm doing something that I really love. I'm doing something that I think probably has influence.

Maybe I'm creating something. Maybe I create something that produces more than what I thought it was going to, like a good crop. It was like, wow, that was even better than I thought it was going to be.

That's that divinity, that Christ in us, that I feel the inspiration, and then I also see the impact. And then I get all this good stuff going on inside when I'm doing whatever it is that God has placed in me to do. But then I get to see the reward of it, too.

Now, sometimes that comes later, or sometimes I just get glimpses of the reward until later. But then we know, oh, this is just a taste of the divine. This is just a taste of what's on the other side for us, of what we were really created for.

And the atmosphere of heaven, we get just kind of this wonderful God taste. Michelle, I want to take someone through maybe a chapter, because as I mentioned earlier, I love how each of your chapters begins with a scripture, and then at the end you have questions for self-reflection, an intention statement, something that we can grab onto or hold onto or think about, really put into practice into our life, apply to us, and then extra studies, various extra verses. But Chapter 11, Refrigerator God, I'd love to have you talk about how you chose that title name, and then talk a little about Ryan's story, and then the importance of the various needs.

I'd almost like you to break down our need for safety, our need for respect and love, and our need for meaningful work, and then we can talk about a little of the self-reflection at the end of the chapter. But just take our listeners through maybe Chapter 11, entitled Refrigerator God. Well, I think sometimes we as Christians confuse dying to self as thinking that our needs aren't important and that we should deny our needs.

And maybe later on in maturity in Christ, we can do some of that by choice, and that would be a good and a healthy thing, but a lot of us need to admit that we have certain needs and that those needs are legitimate. The first one is just we need to feel like we're safe, that we have some sort of provision, like I'm going to be cared for, I'm going to be kept in God's hand. And even if the worst case scenario, maybe that hand would lead me into my death at some point and then into my life with Christ and beyond the shores of this life, that's still in God's hand, and so I can rest in God's safety toward me, God's provision toward me.

But then we also have needs for love and belonging. We need to know that we're important to somebody, and God can meet that need, but He also provides the body of Christ to meet that need. I need to know that I matter to other people.

That's a need that a lot of us feel like, oh, well, you know, that's just selfish or that's just self-indulgent. I shouldn't matter, I don't matter, it's all about God. But that's not really what the Bible talks about.

We really do matter to God, and He puts other people in our life to reinforce that. And then also we have some needs for being able to create and to create purpose for ourselves, but also to fulfill God's purpose, and so maybe that's in meaningful work or doing something that makes a difference. That's another need that we have, maybe a higher-level need than safety and provision, but it is another need that we have.

And denying these needs just stunts our growth. So once we admit them and accept them, this is a real legitimate need, then we can surrender them and say, okay, God, how do You want to provide for us? And so once we do that, then He comes up with all these out-of-the-box ways to provide for us. And one of the stories in the book is about Ryan, and he had what we call in the land of clinicians is attachment disorder.

So he was a foster child from very early on, and we just weren't quite sure what his past history was in the foster homes and his previous biological home, but we knew it wasn't good. It was probably full of neglect and maybe even some abuse from the beginning, early, early on in his infancy. So his current foster home was really trying to make a difference, and they were trying to show him love and what they would do to maybe one of their own sons or daughters, but it just wasn't working.

He was stealing food. He was an early teen, stealing food. He was showing up at school, stealing food from the lunchroom, hiding it in his locker.

He would never eat the food. Well, sometimes he would eat the food, but a lot of times it would just sort of sit around in his room or in the sheets of his bed, in the bottom of his bag at school. It would sit around in his locker.

Finally, the principal had had enough. We can't have this stealing food anymore, and his parents were like, oh, there's just food everywhere, and we'd have to put a lock in the refrigerator and lock on the pantry, and they just didn't know what to do with this kid, this kind of sneaky kid who stole food and was good on all the other accounts but just had this real need for provision and probably points back to is that he just didn't ever feel in control of providing for his own needs or having responsible, trustworthy adults provide for his needs from an early, early age. So we stepped out of the box and we said, well, what do we need to do? So Mom went to the store and bought him a huge tub of whatever food he wanted, within healthy limits, and put it in his room and then lifted all restrictions from the refrigerator and said you can have what you want when you want, but you do have to come down for dinner every day with the family.

So eat what you want, do what you want, try to put it in the trash if you're not going to eat it, but you have to join us for family dinner. And wouldn't you know it, he stopped stealing food. So I called the chapter Refrigerator God because he knows what we need, and he will, even though sometimes unconventional and it won't make sense, he will step in and he'll figure out what we need and he will give it to us with open arms, more abundant giving than we even knew was possible.

And he will show up for us even when we don't feel like anybody else will. Yeah, and what a great way to bring about healing and hope and stability to this young little person's heart as he saw that things were being provided and he was going to be cared for. And he then realized that God was going to look out for him.

Yes, and his parents, I loved the way that they decided, well, he can get his needs met, but we don't want him to just have his physical needs met like the food. We also want to be his family. So come down for dinner because we want to be here and connect with you too.

And that's another picture of God too. Yes, I want to meet your needs. And let me tell you, you've got a lot of them.

But I also want to be in relationship with you because that's when the true healing happens. Well, I have my own little refrigerator story, and I guess on Mark and Friends oftentimes I can get up close and personal, but I'm going through some trying times. And in our kitchen we have a big refrigerator and then another one out in the garage.

And what was happening because of circumstances, whenever I'd open up my refrigerator in the kitchen, it was always so empty. I eat out a lot, and there was just not much in there. I mean, a jar of Miracle Whip, maybe a two-liter, and just maybe sometimes one of those pre-made salads or something.

But it was depressing. Every time I opened it up, it was depressing. And out in the garage, because we had overflow out there oftentimes, it just was like the waste of, now that I'm here alone, it was a waste of two refrigerators.

So I got so depressed every time I'd open up my refrigerator, just like, eh. So what I did is I moved all the overflow, all the bottled water. I had Gatorade.

I had those little juice drinks for little kids with the sippy straw. I filled the lettuce crisper area drawer with that, a whole case of bottled water, Gatorade on this shelf. And I'm telling you, it's the funniest thing.

I open up the refrigerator, and I kind of get happy because it looks really full and loaded with things. And I'm kind of thankful to God I'm saving the energy. I'm not running the other refrigerator in the garage.

And then I look at it, and the bottled water, hey, it stays there for a long time. And I have those miniature Gatorades, like a full case in there, and the larger ones and some other things. And it's something as simple as that.

And I share that with our radio listening family because I know we have a lot of listeners that might be widowed or singled or in a situation where there's not much in the refrigerator. And maybe just fill it up with some other things, maybe bottled water or something that will be in there for a month or two. Think of a creative way because God does want to bless us and encourage us.

And if there's an area in their lives, in my life, that is maybe troubling or hard, think of a creative way to maybe breathe life into it or change some habit or pattern. That's such a great example. And I think of that God's hand dripping with bounty, and it's just us reaching up and grabbing it.

And you putting all of that bounty in your refrigerator was just a mental reminder. Wait a minute, I'm in God's hands, and He has good things planned for me. It is interesting, when deprivation, when deprivation is familiar, whether it's emotional deprivation, physical deprivation, maybe affection deprivation, when that's familiar to us and we have experienced it and it's just something that we feel is natural, like we are just going to be the recipients of deprivation, then when we get it in our adult life or we experience deprivation again, it leaves us hopeless and depressed, kind of like you looking into that refrigerator and it being empty.

But it kind of closes off our options, and we don't think about what we can do to make our situation better. That's why getting into counseling or getting some people in the Body of Christ to kind of show us a different way, like, oh wait, no, that's the pattern of the past. Really, God has something better and different for you.

Let's figure out what we can do to make you not feel that way. Because reality is, you have a whole other refrigerator full of stuff. That's reality.

But when we keep looking into the empty refrigerator, it just reminds us of the familiarity of the old way. So, great example. Well, thank you, God, for that.

And thank you, God, for your book entitled God is Love, but Not the Kind of Love You Are Used to, written by Michelle Hollomon. You can purchase a copy by going to godunwrapped.com. Godunwrapped.com. And let me just close out with, to finish this thought on, chapter 11, Refrigerator God. You begin the chapter with a verse from Matthew 6, 32.

The people who don't know God keep trying to get these things, and your Father in Heaven knows you need them. And so then you write about this in various ways. And then at the end of this chapter, you have questions for self-reflection, because I want our listeners to recognize that you don't just tell delightful stories or encouraging words or means and methods to heal or to grow or to learn about God, but then you give some questions at the end of each and every chapter with an intention statement, an extra study.

But your questions for this chapter were, how did the God figures in your life take care of your needs growing up? How do you attend to your needs now? At first glance, what emotional needs have been denied or minimized in your life? And then you have parentheses. Common examples are grieving, resting, validation, affection, nurturing, affirmation, attachment, encouragement, and respect. And then, if you had full access to God's refrigerator, what would you consume first? And then your intention statement, My needs are important, and God enables me to meet them in healthy ways.

I will look for the ways he wants to meet my needs. Thank you, God, for that statement, Michelle. And then you have extra study verses, Exodus 16, 16, Matthew 6, 31 through 34, and Mark 2, 25 through 28.

Again, listeners, I can't more highly recommend you purchasing a copy. It will revolutionize your life. It will help you draw closer to God.

It will see his intent to love on you, to bring healing and hope and transformation. He wants to love in and through you to others. The book is entitled, God Unwrapped, God is Love but Not the Kind You Are Used to,

written by Michelle Hollomon.

And thank you, Michelle, for being available, being a part of our morning program, our morning programs. You had so much to say, and we only scratched the surface. There are so many wonderful chapters, and I'm thinking, you need to come out with daily devotional spots or work with a radio station and maybe record one-minute encouraging moments where you cite one of the many illustrations or the stories that you convey through this book and then reference your book.

It would be wonderful, and think about that someday, maybe. I will. You and I can work together.

And I do want to just thank the Great News Radio family and your listeners. If they have a heart like yours, it is just a blessing and inspiration. So thank you, Mark.

Thanks. Awesome. Thank you so much, Mark.

This was a lot of fun. Well, I know it can probably get tiring, you know, one after another, these interviews, but I love the book, I love the concept, and it will be easy for me to promote it. So kudos to you, and keep up the good work.

Thank you so much. You too. Take care.

Okay, bye. Bye-bye. Well, what a sweetie, huh? Michelle Hollomon, author of God Unwrapped, God Is Love, But Not The Kind You Are Used To.

You can probably tell by our conversation, it was great to get to know her and get to learn about flourishing in God. It's one of my favorite topics. As you've heard me over and over again throughout the years quote James 4:8, one of my favorite life verses, draw near to God and he'll draw near to you.

What if we could see everything through God's love towards us? What if we looked at the mishaps or various circumstances or crisis moments and asked God, what do you have me to learn or see through this? God wants us to succeed, friends. He wants us to learn and develop and be caught up in his love. He wants us to grow in Christlikeness so we can play a redemptive role in his plan for the world.

So, friend, today be encouraged, be blessed, and recognize God loves you. This is Mark Burns with the Ministry of Great News Radio. God bless you and have a great day and night.

And to purchase copies of Michelle Hollomon's book, God Unwrapped, log on to GodUnwrapped.com. GodUnwrapped.com Now, if you're scratching your head a little bit and wondering about that two-frigerator illustration, this was an archived program from about 14 years ago when I was single and before I met Holly who keeps that refrigerator full and packed with all sorts of tasty treats and fixings for meals, so I don't have that issue anymore. But it was fun going back into the archives and pulling out this interview and helping us all realize God's love for us. If you missed a portion of today's broadcast, want to listen to it again or pass it on to a friend, stop by GreatNewsRadio.org or WLUJ.org and listen to the program anytime.

Thanks for listening. Thanks for being a part of our radio listening family. This is Mark Burns with the Ministry of Great News Media.

God bless you and have a great day and night.