

the
PROVERBS 31
MINISTRIES
podcast

Biblical truth for any girl in any season.

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- Meredith: Hi, friends. Thanks so much for joining us on the Proverbs 31 Ministries Podcast. Every episode, you'll hear biblically based wisdom that applies to your season of life. My name is Meredith Brock, and I am joined with my friend and co-host, Kaley Olson.
- Kaley: Hey, everybody.
- Meredith: We're pretty new to this podcast thing here at Proverbs 31, and we are just a few episodes in, so we are so thankful that you have made the choice to join us today.
- Kaley: Yeah. Meredith, I'm so excited to be with you here again on the podcast and hear today's teaching titled "I'm Not Anxious, I'm C.A.L.M." You know, in our stress-prone world, I'm sure that everyone listening right now can relate to this topic at some level. I mean, you and I were just talking this morning about all the fun things going on here at Proverbs 31.
- Meredith: So much fun.
- Kaley: So much fun, but how even the good and fun things can cause a little stress and anxiety in our lives. So, pretty soon we'll be joined by our very own Melissa Taylor. She's the Senior Director of Online Bible Studies here at Proverbs 31. Melissa is one of our dear, dear friends, and we are so excited for her to give today's message. I know that she's gonna have some great things to share with us today that we can apply to our lives.
- Meredith: Well, I feel like Melissa has like super special permission to teach on the topic of anxiety, because she and her Online Bible Studies team led a group of, everybody pause, wait for it, over 51,000 women through Max Lucado's book, *Anxious for Nothing*. That alone gives me anxiety. It makes me sweat a little bit.
- Kaley: That's a lot of people.
- Meredith: That's a lot of women all doing one thing at one time. That's, whoa, anxiety. But she has also had some real personal things in her life that I think have brought on some anxiety as well, and I can't wait to hear from her. Welcome to the show, Melissa.
- Melissa: Thank you so much, Meredith. I'm so excited to be here with y'all, and I have some great things to share.
- Kaley: I'm sure you do, but Melissa, one thing that I want to point out before we let you dive into your teaching is that if this is your first time listening, you're gonna want to hang with us until the end. So, at the end of every episode of the Proverbs 31 Ministries Podcast, we don't just leave it at the end of a teaching. We take time to discuss what today's message means for different seasons of life. Meredith's gonna talk

a little bit. I'm gonna talk. You're gonna talk, and we're really gonna apply this truth to our life. If you think that the topic of anxiety is not for you, by the end of the episode I guarantee you'll have some great nuggets of truth that you can apply to your life. Melissa, I can't wait to hear what you have to say.

Melissa: Thank you. I am so excited to share with y'all today, and 51,000 people, I think not all of our studies have 51,000 people in them, okay?

Meredith: Whoa. Yeah. That tells me something right there, Melissa.

Melissa: Yes. That tells you something. Anxiety is indeed an issue, and even as I opened the book, *Anxious for Nothing*, by Max Lucado, which I'm gonna be talking about in some of the teaching I do today, is from ... Listen to how he opens the book. This is the first paragraph. "It's a low grade fear, an edginess, a dread, a cold wind that won't stop howling. It's not so much a storm as the certainty that one is coming, always coming. Sunny days are just an interlude. You can't relax, can't let your guard down. All peace is temporary, short term, and that is anxiety. For those of us who struggle and battle with it, it doesn't seem to end, and today it's worse than ever."

Melissa: I mean, you guys, anxiety can come from real fears. I mean, you turn on the news. Planes fall out of the sky. The stock market crashes. We don't know how we're gonna pay our next house payment. Our child needs braces, yet we can't afford it. The car needs repair. Terrorists are in our world today. Those are real fears. Those things do indeed happen. Then we can go to the what if. Let's say my husband's getting on a plane today. Meredith, your husband travels a lot. He gets on a plane. You could go to "what if that plane falls out of the sky? What if my husband dies today?" Sometimes we'll write a story that doesn't even exist based on [inaudible 00:04:43] all of these things that we know can happen, and they're real fears.

Melissa: One thing that Max writes in his book, he says, "Anxiety and fear are cousins, but they're not twins. Fear sees a threat. Anxiety imagines one. It writes a story that doesn't exist." Okay. I have some statistics for you that I got from the book, *Anxious for Nothing*, that are shared in here. These are pretty alarming. These made me wake up and say, "Wow. I really am not alone, if I struggle with anxiety." Okay. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, anxiety disorders are reaching an epidemic proportion. They're the number one mental health problem among women in the United States today and number two for men, second to only alcohol and drug abuse.

Female: Wow.

Melissa: Alarming, right?

Female: Yes.

Melissa: Number one, and then listen. They are costing us billions of dollars. \$300 billion are spent every year in the United States on medical bills, and that leads to loss of productivity in our lives and an increase in the use of sedative drugs, like Xanax and Valium. Between 1997 and 2004, Americans more than doubled their spending on those types of drugs, just to try and bring that anxiety level down. Y'all, listen to this. People of each generation in the 20th century, they were three times more likely to experience depression than the people in the preceding generation.

Melissa: I look at my grandmother's anxiety and depression. My mom's was probably three times more than hers. Mine is probably three times more than my mom's, which my children now, it could even get worse. The average child today exhibits the same level of anxiety as the average psychiatric patient in the 1950s.

Kaley: Holy moly.

Meredith: That's scary.

Melissa: Right?

Meredith: Man.

Melissa: Why? What would y'all think is causing some of this?

Kaley: Oh my goodness. So many things, Melissa.

Melissa: So many things. Right.

Kaley: So many things.

Melissa: Well, one of the biggies is change. There's been more change in the last 20 years than in the previous 300, so let's look at some of those changes, like technology, the existence of the internet, increased warnings about global warming and our planet, nuclear war, terrorist attacks. Changes and new threats are imported into our lives every few seconds, thanks to our phones, right? A text that comes through that says, "Hey. Did you hear about this?" We turn on our computer to work, and there's a pop-up telling us about something alarming that's happening in our world. It's on our TVs. It's on our computers and our phones.

Melissa: You guys, I even went to the gym this morning, a place where I go to get away, like my body is better just even physically, but also with anxiety, when I work out. But I get there. I get on that machine, and I look up, and there's 14 televisions across the wall, all on different stations, and they're all closed caption, so I look up and I'm like, "Oh, no. Look at this. What's happening over here?" All of that is going into my head. If I'm not careful, that's gonna completely wipe out what I'm trying to do for myself for the good. My point is there's a lot of things today that are bringing us ... that can bring us anxiety.

Melissa: Y'all, then there's also personal challenges, like probably someone you know is facing foreclosure, maybe even yourself. You know? Probably someone you know is fighting an illness or cancer, going through a divorce, or maybe even battling addiction. What does all this anxiety mean? What does all this fear mean? Well, Max writes in his book, "You might be surprised who all has struggled with anxiety in history, so listen to this. What does all this anxiety mean, all this fear, trepidation, restlessness, insecurity? What does it mean? Simply this. You are human." Okay. Well, that's good news.

Meredith: Take a deep breath, right?

Melissa: Yes. It does not mean you're emotionally underdeveloped. It does not mean you're stupid, demon-possessed or a failure. It does not mean your parents failed you or vice versa. This is important. It does not mean you are not a Christian.

Meredith: That's so good.

Melissa: Yes. Christians battle anxiety. Who battled anxiety? Jesus. Jesus battled anxiety, for heaven's sake. In the Garden of Gethsemane, He prayed three times that He wouldn't have to drink of the cup. His heart pumped with such ferocity that capillaries broke and blood dripped down His face. So, yes. He was anxious, but He didn't stay anxious. He entrusted His fears to His heavenly Father and completed His earthly mission of faith. He will help us do likewise. There is a pathway out of the Valley of Fret.

Melissa: Y'all, you know, we're taught that this Christian life is a life of peace, and so when we don't have peace, we can quickly just say, "What's wrong with me? How come if I'm reading God's Word and it says I can get this peace, why am I feeling this way? There must be something wrong with me." You know? Then

we not only feel anxious, but we start beating ourselves up, like now I'm feeling anxious and I'm feeling guilty, right? But we aren't without hope. Max goes on to write, "The presence of anxiety is unavoidable, but the prison of anxiety is optional."

Meredith: Wow.

Kaley: Whoa.

Meredith: That's strong.

Melissa: I'm gonna say it again.

Meredith: Get a pen, folks. Write this down.

Melissa: Right? "The presence of anxiety is unavoidable, but the prison of anxiety is optional." We will have anxiety in our lives, but anxiety doesn't have to have the last word in our lives, and it doesn't have to rule our lives either.

Kaley: That is so good, Melissa.

Melissa: Okay. When we look in God's Word, there is a pretty famous passage actually, Philippians 4, verses 4 through 8. When I say that it's famous, it really is. Let me tell you how I know this, okay? Y'all know what a Kindle is?

Meredith: Yeah.

Kaley: Yeah.

Melissa: You know, like the device that you can get books on and read? Okay. Well, the Bible is the number one highlighted book on Kindle. Philippians 4:6-7, which I'm gonna read to you in a minute, is the number one highlighted passage.

Kaley: Wow. It really is [crosstalk 00:11:47]

Meredith: I can pretty much guarantee it's been highlighted in my Bible.

Melissa: Absolutely. When I read this to you, you're gonna know why, because what I read to you, if you've never read this before, you're gonna want this in your life. Okay? All right. Philippians 4, verses 4 through 8, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again, rejoice. Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation by prayer and petition with thanksgiving present your request to God, and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brother and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things." This passage of Scripture is what the book, *Anxious for Nothing* is based on. I read don't be anxious about anything, and I'm a little skeptical if that can happen —

Female: Me too.

Melissa: ... because it's such a struggle, right? Right. The thing is, we read it, and we want to believe it, and we know that the Bible is truth. I believe in the words that are here. Around here we say it a lot. When we know the truth and live the truth, it changes everything, and so I want my life ... I want to not be anxious about anything and have God's peace come to me when I pray to Him and I give it to Him, but, y'all, it

takes work on our part. I would love to say, "Read your Bible, and your life will be fixed," you know? "Everything will be good."

Meredith: Everything's unicorns and rainbows, right?

Melissa: Yes. Abracadabra. Yeah. It's fixed. But it's not like that. I don't want it to sound like I'm saying it's simple, just read the Bible, and you'll be fine, because I have been there. I know the struggle of a Christian who did feel guilty because of her anxiety and thought, "Why am I not feeling this peace? There must be something wrong with me." In fact, I felt it more than once. The worst was probably 10 years ago. Back then, God's healing of my anxiety included more than I would have ever expected. It included professional help. Y'all, let me just set the people free right now. There is no shame in asking for help.

Female: Amen, sister.

Melissa: No shame at all in getting help. If your anxiety is so high that you need to go get help, then why do you think God made all these people who are educated, and smart, and who can help us with these things, right? I saw a counselor and a doctor, and for a while I was on medication. So, I think as Christians we have to be careful not to criticize other people when we hear how they're working on their anxiety, you know? Today it's a lot different for me. I still struggle with anxiety, and I wish I could tell you that I, even today, read those words, and I'm like, "Yes. The peace of God. I'm good. Let's go," and I'm fine, but even in recent months and over this past year, it's been a challenge. Last year, my dog of 12 years unexpectedly died, and I know that can sound, you know, not a big deal to many people, but Kaley, you both know.

Female: Yeah. We've got our dogs, and we love them.

Melissa: You got your dogs in the house. Yes. It's like a best friend who always loves me and is happy to see me is gone.

Female: It's the one thing that's consistent in my life.

Melissa: Yes. Absolutely.

Female: I can count on Maybe. That's her name even though she's a maybe.

Melissa: Even though she's a maybe. You can count on maybe. It was devastating to me. Then I worry about my kids. I have four kids, and I worry about the choices that they're making. They're grown. Most of them are almost grown now, and so I worry about the choices that they're making. Just a few months ago, my father, who has been in a nursing home for the past year, passed away. The next month my aunt passed away. For two months of this year I was sick and pretty much couldn't leave my house for a while.

Female: Gracious.

Melissa: In fact, the night of my dad's funeral I had to go to the emergency room by ambulance, because I couldn't breathe. Those are real things. Those are big, but then there's also things like I mentioned earlier. Our cars, both of them needed repairs, expensive repairs, not little repairs. Right before Christmas, the stove, oven, everything broke, so we used the toaster oven for a little while.

Meredith: Oh my word.

Female: There's no shame in a toaster oven.

Meredith: That was resourceful, resourceful.

Melissa: A whole pizza can fit inside our toaster oven. I've learned that.

Meredith: You have a big toaster oven.

Melissa: Yeah. Walmart's awesome, y'all. Go get one. A toaster oven saved Christmas. But, you know, y'all get it. You live this life too. I know I'm not alone. Just think about those statistics we heard earlier. It's big, but here's how it's different for me today than it was 10 years ago. Over the year, my body's reaction to stress has changed. I've learned to deal with it better, and today I'm choosing to slow down, scale back, exercise regularly, even though there's 14 TVs in front of my face, exercise regular, not watch too much of the news, and apply limits to my social media, and implement intentional times of meditation, and prayer, and getting into God's Word.

Melissa: But while I may struggle, y'all, I believe with all my heart that God made me for more than perpetual angst, to be anxious, and worrisome, and fearful. I honestly do believe that His Word changes everything. So, the verse that I read to you early from Philippians, they have helped me so much. I go back to them. That would be the most highlighted probably in my Bible. I go back to them a lot, but I still read, "anxious for nothing"? Don't be anxious about anything? God, is that possible? Is that really possible? Can those five verses really make me anxious for nothing, and how can I remember them when I'm feeling anxious? Because I might not be in a situation where I can whip out my phone and look up those verses or pull my Bible out and look at those verses. So, sometimes it's just good to commit some verses to memory. Max Lucado gives us an acronym to help us remember what these verses say. The acronym is with the word calm, C-A-L-M.

Female: That's good.

Melissa: Right? When I think of the word calm, I think peace, tranquility. I think I can breathe, right? I might not be debt free, but I could be worry free, you know?

Female: That's right.

Melissa: This acronym for calm is based off the scripture that I read, Philippians 4:4-8. Okay. Y'all ready for it?

Female: Ready.

Kaley: Yes.

Meredith: Give it to me, Melissa.

Melissa: All right.

Meredith: I need some calm.

Melissa: You're gonna get it, and you're gonna remember this. C, celebrate God's goodness. We have got to quit focusing on all of that and celebrate that God is good. Philippians 4:4 says, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again, rejoice." So, when we get our eyes off of our own circumstances of the mess that's going on in the world and our thoughts off of what's happening and the troubles around us, and instead praise the lord, C, celebrate God's goodness. All right. A, ask God for help. Remember, there is no shame in asking for help. Verse 6 tells us, "Present your request to God." So, you can go to Him with anything. Fear can lead you to freak out. It can lead you to get worried, or it can lead you to get on your knees and pray. We need to talk to God, tell Him about it, ask Him for help.

Melissa: All right. The L, leave your concerns with Him. Verses 6 and 7 in Philippians 4 say, "With thanksgiving present your request to God, and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." That is what we're looking for. That is what we need. So, we need to let God have our burdens. There's another verse that says, "Cast your burdens on the Lord, and he will take care of you." God wants us to give our burdens to Him, and then we have to trust Him. That's the hard part, right? But let Him take over. Let Him do what only He can do, which is to guard our hearts and our minds. He doesn't need our help. We can trust Him to do it, right?

Female: What?

Melissa: He doesn't. Okay. So, we have C, celebrate God's goodness, A, ask for help, L, leave your concerns with him, and then M, meditate on good things. In verse 8 of this passage that we read it says, "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent and praiseworthy, think about such things."

Melissa: So, you can't have control over all your circumstance, right? But you can have control over what you think and what is in your mind. SO, don't let those anxious thoughts ... We need to not let them fill our minds. There's a reason this verse tells us to meditate on things that are praise worthy, and lovely, and excellent, you know, all that good stuff. To be calm and to live out Philippians 4:4-8, celebrate God's goodness, ask for help, leave your concerns with Him, and meditate on good things.

Female: So good.

Female: Wow.

Melissa: Right?

Meredith: So good. Honestly, I feel like this is such an important topic. I mean, obviously you stated all those stats. You pointed to the fact that Philippians, this section of Scripture is the most-often highlighted section in the Kindle. There's so many things pointing to this is real, and it's happening, and I think a lot of people in our world, it's like they just want to turn the other way. They don't want to admit that it's really happening, you know? I have to be honest. For me personally, I have ... anxiety has been such a large part of my life. I've struggled with anxiety since I was a little, tiny, little girl.

Meredith: I remember staying up at night and I would bite my nails so bad that I would make my fingers bleed, you know, and really it's centered around ... I love what you said there from Max's book, is that the anxiety for me always came back to change. It was change that I couldn't control, that I was afraid of. Something new was happening, or something wasn't happening that I thought should be happening. There was absolutely nothing I could do about it. It would bring intense anxiety for me. The Lord has really brought me on a long journey in how I have worked through my anxiety. I also love that you said, "It takes work."

Kaley: Yes.

Melissa: Yeah. It does.

Meredith: Like real work. You have to set your mind on saying, "I am gonna conquer this thing." One of the biggest things that played a large role for me was Scripture memory. I used to write scriptures, and this is so kind of high school girl thing to do, but this was like as a grown women. The people at the office here at Proverbs 31 have probably even seen me do it. When I'm trying to work through something with the Lord and wrestle with leaving my burdens with Him, you'll see, I'll write scriptures on the inside of my wrist, because it's the only thing ... I'll look down at my hand, and you'll see I have to remind myself of the truth of God's Word and that my feelings are not truth.

Female: That's right. That's right.

Meredith: The other thing that I think was really important that you said, Melissa, is that sometimes it really is ... it requires professional help, you know? That can come in the form of a counselor. I want to point everyone to a really, really good resource.

Melissa: That'd be great.

Meredith: There is a website called the American Association of Christian Counselors. You can go on there, and under their resources tab you can click, and it says, "Find a counselor."

Melissa: That's great.

Meredith: They will help you find a counselor in your area that is certified with the American Association of Christian Counselors. Such a great resource for people, so don't be afraid. Counselors are not taboo, y'all.

Melissa: Right. And some people get hung up on the search.

Meredith: Right. How do I find someone?

Melissa: How do I know?

Meredith: This right here will help you find a Christian counselor today if you need one. So, start there. The other thing is medical doctors. It's true. Anxiety can be a legitimate chemical imbalance in your brain and in your body that you need a little bit of help bringing some balance together, because maybe there's a circumstance that's creating that chemical imbalance that you need a little bit of help with, so nothing taboo there at all.

Melissa: No. Not at all.

Meredith: I will also say one of the other things that I've really struggled with with anxiety, now that I'm an adult and I seem to go through seasons of anxiety, I kind of pass in and out of it, but I think one of the things ... and I would love to hear from you, Melissa. I have a six-year-old boy, and I have watched him go through some of the same anxiety battles that I have, and it has torn me apart to watch him, and little things, like the start of a school year, causes so much anxiety for him, you know? How to help him process that. Your kids are grown. I have a little boy who's six and little girl who's three. Kaley —

Kaley: I can't speak into this at all.

Meredith: You've got nothing.

Kaley: I'm just gonna listen and take notes for later.

Meredith: But take notes, because this is that seasons thing. I want to learn from Melissa, as she's helped her kids process change and anxiety in their lives, and you write this down, because one day you're gonna have kids.

Kaley: Okay. Yes.

Meredith: You're married. You're gonna have kids eventually maybe. Maybe you can help Penny, your dog, deal with anxiety.

Kaley: There we go. Yes.

Meredith: Lay it on me, Melissa. I want to hear.

Melissa: Okay. One thing I would want to say is I have four kids, and the way I parent each of them, we learned, had to be different. Dylan, our third child, and we talk about this, and he has allowed me to share this, but he struggled with anxiety greatly as a child. I mean, at the sight of a bee, the fire alarm at school. You know?

Meredith: Oh my gosh. Yes. Yes. All of these things.

Melissa: That would go off. I had to meet with the teachers, and they eventually started telling him, "We're gonna have a fire drill today."

Meredith: Oh. That's so good.

Melissa: So he would know it was coming, or the way they disciplined him, the way we disciplined him had to change, because of that anxiety. But I will tell you, Meredith, he struggled so bad we did have to get help.

Meredith: Yeah. Of course.

Melissa: I will say, the help that he got through therapy, I think it was life changing. Now, not every child needs that, but I think if we can look at our kids and think, "Are there things you can do to reduce it?" It's like you have to prepare them from the real world, so you can't shelter them from everything that could make them anxious, but then also, we have to shepherd our kids, and we have to teach them how to navigate through this. So, sometimes that might take extra patience, and extra explanation, or just a little bit more time, because it's real. That anxiety is real. They're seeing the same news that we see at times. You know? We can turn the TV off, but they go to school. They hear about it. Now, going to school can be stressful for kids, because of things that they hear happening.

Meredith: Absolutely. Well, and I think so much of it really comes down to ... I've seen with my little boy it's trying to teach him how to deal with change, because it's going to happen. There's no getting around the fact that he's gonna have change in his life, so how to process that in a healthy way and how to ... I consistently try to ... I mean, he's six, so I try not to overwhelm him too much, but pointing back to Scripture for him in simple, tiny, little ways to say ... I say to him a lot, "You know what, Buddy? The Bible is 100% true, and it's full of promises for you. One thing I know about God is if God ever breaks one promise, He can't be God anymore, and so we can trust what He says." It seems to kind of calm him down.

Meredith: The other thing, I got some really great advice from a friend of mine who is in the psychology field. She said, "You know, Meredith, when you are in the middle of an anxiety attack, when a child is in the middle of a highly emotional moment, they are 100% functioning in the feeling part of the brain, and you need to help them move from the feeling part of their brain into the logical thinking part of their brain. So, she gave me a tool that ... y'all, it is the craziest thing to watch my little boy all of a sudden switch from one side of his brain to the other.

Meredith: He'll be super worked up about something, and I'll say, "Harvey, what color is the sky?" He'll say, "Blue," and he's still really worked up. I'll say, "How many fingers am I holding up?" He'll say, "Two." I'll say, "How old is your sister?" He'll say, "Three." I'm transitioning him from the feeling side of his brain over to the thinking side of his brain, and usually we can take a nice, long, deep breath, and then we can start to process, but if he's still in that super anxious, high feelings place, don't even try to process what's actually happening. They can't even think straight. You know? I know the same is true for me.

Melissa: That's right. That's the exact therapy, like she was very wise, that Dylan went through in his teenage years that we felt that turn, that changed everything for him was when he learned how to go into that logical, to shift-

Meredith: Make the shift. It's a tool.

Melissa: ... and not just stay over-

Meredith: It's a real tool that we need to give our kids.

Melissa: Well, listen to this. If you keep reading in Philippians, like verse 9, the verse that follows those verses I read to you, it says, "Whatever you've learned, or received, or heard from me, or seen in me, put into practice" that word, practice, stands out to me, because that tells me I'm gonna need to work on it. I'm gonna need to practice to get better or to help myself learn to experience that peace. It's gonna take practice. Then it says, "And the peace of God will be with you." I think it is gonna take work.

Meredith: It is. I know it has absolutely taken work in my personal life. If those statistics that you gave were true, that my children are gonna have heightened levels of anxiety, beyond what I experience, my goodness, I need to learn the tools to teach them, to give them to be able to deal with their anxiety.

Melissa: Right, because there's hope.

Meredith: Yes. Amen to that.

Melissa: That's where we want to just remember, this is not a hopeless thing that you're dealing with.

Meredith: You're not trapped. You're not trapped.

Melissa: You're not in a prison.

Meredith: Nope. So good. Kaley, you haven't spoke much. You're in a different season of life.

Kaley: Well, you've been talking about kids.

Meredith: I'm sorry. But tell me for you. You and I have talked about this personally a little bit, where I remember I'm not in my twenties anymore, guys. We've passed that heyday. You know what? I'm actually glad I'm not, because my twenties, you and I have talked about this a little bit, where in your twenties you have this sense of like I kind of need to prove myself. For me personally that brought on a lot of anxiety for me. So, you tell me. What's your journey been with anxiety?

Kaley: I mean, definitely it looks different than what your season of life is, because I'm not a mom, but in my life, just in my career life, I've thought a lot about how adaptability is one of the things that we look for in people and flexibility. It's like how quick to go for change can you be? If I give you this something, are you gonna do it? I think that it's a really good thing that I wrote in my notes here, and I said, "We all want to be adaptable, but we please people in that, and what does it cost us?" I'm not really at liberty to say, "No, Meredith, I'm sorry. I'm not gonna be able to be adaptable today," but how much am I letting it affect me, and how often do we stay quiet about it, like in our twenties? You know?

Kaley: Am I going with the flow? Am I pleasing people so much that that change is causing me anxiety in my job? Do I have a good enough relationship with my boss to be able to process that with you? So, thankfully, thank you for always being willing to talk. Melissa, I know that your team can come to you as well, but for those of us or the people listening on this podcast who are struggling with that right now, I

would say create and cultivate that relationship with someone who's your boss or works at your organization that you can trust to processes those things at work that you might be struggling with, because I feel like we do change very fast. I mean, Proverbs is an online ministry, and so everything that we do we change. We're always changing, but that change can a lot of times affect us, especially depending on what our personality types are.

Meredith: Nope. That's exactly right.

Kaley: [crosstalk 00:33:37] about that. Then I also thought about the part where ... it was the C-A-L-M acronym, and the A, where it said, "Ask God to help you." I so often don't go to God first. This is so embarrassing to admit, but you go to your friends first. Lysa TerKeurst, love her so much, but she has this saying that she says sometimes, "Am I praying more words about this than I am speaking?" So, I don't always pause and think about that, but whenever I do and the Lord brings it to my mind, I think, "Oh, no. I have spoken more words about how I feel, and it's kept me in that state, where I'm stuck in a funk, and I can't get out of it." I'm like Harvey.

Meredith: You're in the feeling place, rather than the truth place of God's Word and His promises.

Kaley: Except I don't feel bad for Harvey for being in a feeling place, but as a 26-year-old, you'd think that I'd be past that by now.

Melissa: No. We all do it. We all do it.

Kaley: Right. Am I going to God first whenever I have those feelings? Do I really pause and say, "Lord, I need your help. Here is how I'm feeling. Will you help me process this?" Then we can't really grow unless we have people who know what we're going through in our life. If I kept it all bottled in, I'm the only one who's measuring my success, and that's not a good thing. So, who are my trusted friends? Do I bring it up to my husband? Do I bring it up to a trusted counselor? We talked a lot about Christian counselors or your boss at work, but when I get in that funk, you should know someone who knows you well enough to be able to say, "Kaley, you got to get out of it, girl. You are going down that rabbit hole again. We just processed this last week over coffee. I don't want to buy more coffee. Let's don't go there. Go to God, but you don't need to get in that state of mind again. It's gonna be okay."

Melissa: Someone who's gonna speak the truth to you.

Meredith: Point you back to Scripture, get you out of your feelings place and into ... I mean, it sounds so cliché, but guys, that's why I love the Bible, right? Because it can move me from feelings into truth, into real-life truth that I can build my life on. You know? And that's what I need more of. I need less anxiety and more of God's truth in my life.

Melissa: Absolutely. We do. We all do.

Meredith: So good. Wow. I could honestly talk about this all day, because it's such a pertinent subject, and just it's everywhere I look. I have multiple friends who struggle with this. We could go on and on, but I think we need to stop there at the point where God's Word is good, and it is truth, and you can build your life on it, even when your feelings are telling you otherwise. Great. Great discussion today. Thanks for joining us, Melissa.

Melissa: Oh. Thank you for having me. It was so fun to be here. Even though this topic is kind of like, uh, anxiety, there is hope, and so it was great. It was good for me just to talk to y'all. I feel like I was taught a lesson here from you sharing.

Meredith: Well, I think we'll have you back more, Melissa.

Melissa: All right. This was fun.

Meredith: Thanks for joining us today. You know, Kaley, we don't do this on every episode, but right now, as I just processed this, I feel like we need to pray, just pause for one moment and focus our minds back on God. Let me pray for just one moment. Lord Jesus, we just thank You so much that You are generous, and You gave us Your Word for us to build our lives on, and so, Father, when anxiety overtakes us, when it seems that those feelings are more than we can handle, Father, I pray that You would put Your Word right in our way, that You would send a friend, that You would send something along the way to point us back to You.

Meredith: Father, I don't know what people are dealing with who may be listening to this podcast, but I pray that You would intervene in their lives and that You would give them the tools and the resources they need to fight the anxiety that they may have in their lives. We love You, Lord. In Jesus' name, amen.

Melissa: Amen.

Kaley: Amen. I think that was a perfect way to wrap up Melissa's teaching. Before I get into a couple of housekeeping items for our listeners, I do want to point out a great resource on the Proverbs 31 website. Meredith, you just prayed, and so that triggered in me our prayer wall. If you go to Proverbs31.org and scroll all the way down to the bottom, under Get Connected, there is something you can click on that says, "Prayer requests." It is a resource. I think it's invaluable for —

Meredith: Yeah. I love it.

Kaley: ... those of you who might not know someone that can pray with you right now. If you go on and type in what you're struggling with, then we have staff members every day who are assigned to go on, and look at the prayer wall, and you can —

Meredith: Tuesdays are my day.

Kaley: Tuesdays are our team's day.

Melissa: Thursday is my day.

Kaley: There you go. If you're listening to this and you put a prayer on there, you at least know who is praying for you, but every time someone prays for you, you can click I prayed for this.

Melissa: Because you can pray for each other on there.

Meredith: Yeah. It's so good.

Kaley: Yeah. That is just a really great resource that I think our listeners need to know about. But in regards to our housekeeping items, if you are interested in joining Melissa and her team for an online Bible study, do it. You guys seriously have the most fun every single day. I walk by their office, Meredith, and there's always —

Meredith: Too much fun.

Kaley: ... always some kind of chatter.

Meredith: There's always hullabaloo, hullabaloo coming out of the online Bible study.

Melissa: Because studying God's Word should not be boring, right?

Meredith: Yeah.

Melissa: It should be fun.

Meredith: I'm totally into it. I love hullabaloo. So good. How do you sign up for an online Bible study?

Kaley: It's so easy, and it's free. Meredith, I love free things.

Meredith: I love free stuff.

Kaley: Yes. Every study is free. For more information on the current study or for future studies, you can go to Proverbs31.org. Click study and then online Bible studies. Take a look. Sign up for a study, or look at our old studies. I think we have some that are archived on there.

Melissa: We sure do. [crosstalk 00:39:37] Easy-peasy.

Kaley: So, you can go back and do those.

Meredith: One thing I love about the online Bible studies has a slogan that I think is just the best, because it's true of my life. It says, "Your life is crazy, but your Bible study doesn't have to be." I know, for real, y'all, my life is crazy. So, if you're anything like me, online Bible studies is a great place for you to get connected to get deep into God's Word and apply it to your life in a real way.

Kaley: Lastly, the book that Melissa referred to in the teaching is called *Anxious for Nothing*, by Max Lucado. It's available for purchase in our bookstore at P31bookstore.com.

Meredith: An interesting little fact about our bookstore at Proverbs 31: all proceeds go toward helping us keep our programs totally free, folks. We'd be so thankful to have you purchase that book or any of our other great resources from our bookstore today. All right. I think that's it for today. Thank you guys so much for joining us. At Proverbs 31, our goal is to always help you to know the truth and live the truth, because we know that when you do, it will change everything. We pray that you'll be able to take the truth you learned today and apply it to whatever season of life you're in. We'll see you next time.