

the
PROVERBS 31
MINISTRIES
podcast

Biblical truth for any girl in any season.

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Meredith: Well, hello friends. Welcome to *The Proverbs 31 Ministries Podcast* where we share biblical truth for any girl in any season. I'm your host, Meredith Brock and I am here with my co-host, Kaley Olson.

Kaley: Well, hi Meredith. Great to be back with you today. You know, the other day I asked a friend a really fun question so I'm going to ask you. Are you ready?

Meredith: I don't know. I'm kind of nervous.

Kaley: Okay. I am putting you on the spot because you literally just walked in the room.

Meredith: Yeah, I did not prepare for this.

Kaley: This will be easy though. This will be easy.

Meredith: Okay.

Kaley: What are three things you love right now? It can be anything.

Meredith: I love that my husband's home from tour.

Kaley: Okay.

Meredith: He's been gone for three months and so I'm really, really happy to have him home. I love my French bulldog that I used to hate until about three weeks ago and I got him trained. His name is Boss. And I love, I don't know. Summertime!

Kaley: Me too.

Meredith: Summertime. I love the swimming pool. We just went to the swimming pool with the kids.

Kaley: Oh, fun.

Meredith: Yesterday and it was super fun. My son is at the age that he can jump off the diving board and do tricks and it's just fun.

Kaley: Oh, that's great.

Meredith: What about you? Tell me-

Kaley: Okay. Well you know this first one. We always talk about our Gap jeans that we love.

Meredith: Yeah, girl.

Kaley: And I have a newfound love for Gap. They have this 360 stretch denim, the best. Okay, I did think about this so I have it written down.

Meredith: She cheated.

Kaley: I cheated. I love ice cold lemon water, like a really big glass. It's my favorite thing now.

Meredith: That sounds delicious right now.

Kaley: And it's really healthy. And this one is like, I don't know, maybe it tells you a little bit about my personality that I like spray tans. Is that fake? I don't know, but it makes me feel like I can wear shorts in the summertime because I have a lot of freckles and I don't like my white legs.

Meredith: I'm always afraid to do the spray tan because I feel like it will look like an oompa loompa.

Kaley: No, you should do it.

Meredith: That's what goes through my head is an oompa loompa.

Kaley: No. You don't. You would not at all.

Meredith: If I started singing the oompa loompa song to you one day, would you be mad at me?

Kaley: Probably.

Meredith: Okay.

Kaley: I would forgive you in Jesus' name.

Meredith: Okay. Thank you, Kals.

Kaley: You're welcome.

Meredith: Well okay. I get the privilege of announcing our two, not one, but two guests this week. So let's go ahead and welcome Amanda Bacon and Anne-Renee Gumley. Am I saying that last name right?

Anne-Renee: You got it.

Amanda: Yes. Yeah.

Meredith: Okay, good. Ladies, welcome to the podcast!

Anne-Renee: Hey Meredith. Hey Kaley.

Kaley: Hi.

Amanda: Hey guys, or I guess I should say hey gals.

Meredith: Oh, that was very ... y'all will find out a little bit more about where our friend is calling in from here in just a minute. But that's exactly right. We've got one of our guests here in the studio which is Amanda Bacon.

Amanda: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-

Meredith: And then we have another one of our guests calling in from a remote location. Anne-Renee, tell us where you're at.

Anne-Renee: Well, I am joining you from my home in Wasilla, Alaska, which according to Google Maps is about 4,313 miles from where you guys are there in North Carolina.

Meredith: Just a short little jaunt.

Amanda: A long walk.

Kaley: Hey, well, you sound great.

Meredith: You're coming through loud and clear. How cool is that, you guys?

Kaley: So amazing.

Meredith: Technology is amazing. Amazing thing about Alaska is that Amanda used to live in Alaska near Anne-Renee. That's where they kind of started their ministry together. Am I right?

Amanda: Yep. Mm-hmm (affirmative)-I lived in Alaska for 30 years.

Meredith: Oh my word.

Amanda: Uh huh.

Meredith: Well, I also lived in Alaska for a short stint, for six years, in Fairbanks which is a little bit more north than these fine ladies. But you know, we're having a little Alaskan reunion in here today.

Kaley: I know. I'm feeling very left out right now. That's fine.

Meredith: Uh huh. You should be left out because Alaska is amazing.

Kaley: Thank you.

Meredith: And you won't really reach your prime until you've visited.

Amanda: Yeah, we'll take you.

Meredith: We will. Okay, so Amanda and Anne-Renee just released a book called *Shiny Things* a couple months ago and it's a book all about mothering in a world full of distractions. But it's actually a book that's for anyone because isn't it more difficult to stay focused now than it ever has before? So we're excited to have them talking about choosing lasting things over the lesser things. So ladies, we're excited to hear your message. Why don't you go ahead and share it with us?

Amanda: Thanks so much Meredith and Kaley. Well, the two of us have a long standing crush on all things Proverbs 31 Ministries. So much so that as you both know, we moved our family across the country to be a part of what's going on here at the ministry. And now I'm on staff and my work here is one of my favorite parts of life. But before that, Anne-Renee and I traveled from Alaska together for several years each July to attend the She Speaks Conference. So I guess you could call us P31 groupies.

Meredith: Aww, we love that about you.

Amanda: So it's a real pleasure to be here on the podcast with you. To start us off today, we'd like to pose a question based off of what you mentioned at the top of the show. Why is it so enticing to choose lesser things over lasting things? This is a question that has plagued us for years, and this question is in part why we wrote *Shiny Things* in the first place.

Amanda: *Shiny Things* is a book written for distracted moms everywhere, but truly it's a message for all women. We've heard from readers who don't have kids and we've heard from readers who have empty nests and are in a different phase of life than they once were and they say there's something in it for everyone. And we're really glad about that. It was one of our goals in writing it.

Amanda: So you might be asking, why is the book titled *Shiny Things*? Well, you know, it's all those shiny things. Those little things that we let distract us. Those enticing and exciting little deviations from what we want and/or need to be doing in the moment. And we all know how that feels. And we thought it was enough of a problem in our lives that we needed to write a whole book about it even if it was just to help us get honest about how we struggle with being distracted and work through it together as friends.

Amanda: But even better than that, we're so happy it's resonating with women everywhere.

Anne-Renee: Yeah, I think we can probably all see ourselves in this dilemma. It's that elusive desire to choose the lesser over the lasting because we want to love and serve our people well, right? And we also long to engage in other activities we enjoy. And goodness knows, there's plenty of wonderful and also not so wonderful things clamoring for our attention in today's noisy world. So one of the things we wanted to do today is to talk through and identify those areas that we are most distracted.

Anne-Renee: So maybe it's social media and the magnetic pull to lose yourself in someone else's reality. Maybe it's Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Pinterest or my personal favorite, Instagram. I love me some Instagram. But honestly, I am amazed at how much time I can spend scrolling through the beautiful accounts on my Instagram feed and actually I just started using the activity feature that shows the average amount of time you spend each day and I have to admit, it's really convicting, you guys.

Anne-Renee: So maybe for you it's not technology at all. Maybe you love to organize. Maybe you love to craft or clean. That's definitely not our struggle, is it Amanda?

Amanda: For sure not.

Meredith: You mean you guys aren't like compulsive cleaners?

Amanda: No. Uh uh.

Anne-Renee: No, not so much. But maybe it's a combination of all these things that are grabbing for our attention. Maybe it's busyness and the to-do's that pile up that those things that clutter our calendars and clutter our souls. Maybe it's comparison, looking at how everyone else is living their lives. Maybe it's fear and you're distracted by all of the what ifs and could be's. Maybe you're kind of like me and you struggle with worry, allowing anxiousness to rule your thoughts and control your schedule. Maybe it's discontentment. Yearning for greener pastures or just a different life. Or maybe it's guilt. Maybe it's all the things that haunt you and make you feel like you're failing in your current season.

Anne-Renee: So we wanted to take a really honest approach here today and dig in and ask ourselves some of these harder questions, like what is pulling us toward what is satisfying in the moment? And what is making our hearts and our minds itch yearning for something else? Are there ways that we're procrastinating? And maybe what are some of the things we're trying to avoid?

Anne-Renee: If you're like me, some of these questions make me squirm a little bit because it's not always a super happy, fun, fun thing to look beneath the surface. But we promise you it will be worth it in the end.

Anne-Renee: Often without realizing it, we're looking for a temporary fix. Something to just soothe or comfort ourselves with, like a little boost of dopamine. Of course, these temporary

things can only fulfill and soothe for a short while, band-aiding the real problem, and will leave us unsatisfied in the end and wishing for more.

Anne-Renee: So, when you really start thinking about it, like Amanda mentioned, there are so many shiny things we allow to capture our attention every single day. And these are the things that keep us from what matters most. Our faith, our families and the callings that God has put on our heart.

Anne-Renee: For me personally, comparison is something that I've really struggled with through the years. Like looking at how other women are living out their faith or looking at how they're raising their families or what they're doing throughout their day. Who works, who's a stay at home mom. Maybe what kind of clothes they're wearing. Does she wear Gap jeans? What kind of house does she live in? Or what kind of car does she drive? And don't even get me started on education and vaccinations and denominations and vacations and all of that. But comparison is a distraction that is a bottomless pit. And God did not create us to be cookie cutter versions of each other. He created each one of us to be totally unique and one of a kind and there is no one in the world just like you. I love that about God's character because He's so creative.

Anne-Renee: Like Ephesians 2:10 talks about, we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago.

Anne-Renee: But when we're pulled in a million different directions, it's easy to lose track of what's important and we forget we're made in His image and we begin to think we should reflect the women around us. And let me tell you, that's a dark and lonely road to walk down. Amanda, could you think of a time or an example in your life when you were pulled away by something shiny?

Amanda: Well, yeah. I'm sure there's probably a brand new example each and every day of my life, several times a day. So I'm the mom of a large family and have eight children, and as cozy yet chaotic as that might seem, it can be really, really difficult. So when a child is struggling, causing me to be on guard at all times or there are just some mundane parenting tasks that need to be followed through on, I can get pulled into distraction in a hot minute. And that usually looks like retreating into the internet or social media rather than deal with the hard things in front of me.

Amanda: We all have areas of life that are difficult so I'm sure our listeners can relate to this pull to put aside what's difficult and needs to be dealt with in favor of something temporarily easier.

Anne-Renee: Yeah, so really this issue of distraction is a heart issue and we may try to blame it on our circumstances or what's happening around us, but it all comes back to what is going on in the inside. We can point fingers all day long, but at the end of the day it all comes back to the heart. We're distracted people in need of a Savior.

Anne-Renee: Luke 6:45 says, *"The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good. And the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil. For out of the abundance of the*

heart, his mouth speaks." So the heart reveals what is most important to us, but sometimes we don't like what it reveals because it shows the yuck of our hearts, right?

Anne-Renee: Isaiah 26 verses three and four says, *"You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You because he trust in You. Trust in the Lord forever. For the Lord God is an everlasting rock."* We want to be focused people with our eyes fixed on Jesus who's the author and finisher of our faith. But in order to be intentional in where we set our gaze, we first need to figure out what our priorities are.

Amanda: And then that leads us to the question, how would we list out our priorities? Perhaps most of us listening today would say number one, God. Number two, our priority people, and that might include our families, friends, etc. And number three might be the work God has given us to do. And I think most of us could say what our top priorities are with no problem at all. If I were to ask any one of you, you could probably just nail out your top priorities in a second. But as we find day in, day out, is that listing them out is easier than living them out.

Amanda: So here are some questions for us to consider as we think about priorities. So number one, are we keeping our priorities in the proper order by the way we're living our lives? If we say having healthy relationships are one of our top priorities, are we living in such a way that creates an environment for those relationships to thrive?

Amanda: Number two, okay this questions stinks a little bit. Are we more talk than action? Do we speak in a way that makes us sound a little better than we are? Do our actions match what we say is important to us? Yeah.

Amanda: So number three, what would it take for us to keep our priorities in the order we list them? What would it take?

Amanda: So, for instance, if your top priority is God, your relationship with Him and living for Him, then what would it take to keep that at the top of your lived list and not just on your spoken list? Well, Jeremiah 29 verse 13 sums up how one might keep relationship with God and living for Him in the top spot. It says, *"You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all of your heart."* So we want to be undistracted women who have clear priorities and direction, choosing to spend our hours on the meaningful things like our relationship with God and growing in Him, engaging with our people and pursuing the work He's put before us.

Amanda: So not only are we asked to name what's most important to us, life begs the question, how will you honor and care for these important things?

Amanda: In the book, we talk about lasting things versus lesser things, and it began a conversation about what we choose on the daily. For instance, what do we choose on a regular basis that falls into the lesser category? So what might some of those things be? Maybe it would be ignoring our most important people while we're looking at our phones and computers. Maybe it's putting off important tasks around the house or an assignment from work and choosing to binge watch a show instead. We want to make

sure to say that devices and shows aren't bad and the internet is not bad, but what we put them in front of, those important people and things, can be troublesome at times.

Amanda: Other choices that fall into the lesser category might be spending our days in toxic patterns of thinking and it might be using our words to tear others down either in person or from behind the keyboard.

Amanda: So, Anne-Renee, how would you say on a regular basis we could move toward choosing what is lasting?

Anne-Renee: I think one of the best ways we can avoid choosing the lesser over the lasting is to grow in our relationship with the Lord. To regularly communicate with Him through His Word and through prayer. And you know like with any valuable friendship, our relationship with God needs time and effort. It's not just something that magically happens. It takes time to develop healthy habits and godly disciplines. And the thing about discipline is it's a learned skill and one we must practice to improve.

Anne-Renee: I don't know about you, but I don't automatically wake up with a hunger and thirst for God's Word. So sometimes I just need to start somewhere to open the pages of His Word and allow the Spirit to work. And the thing is, the more we do it, the more we learn to love it. To appreciate His Word, to see that God is not just some dictator demanding our allegiance. He's a loving Father that desires good things for His kids. And He loves to give loving commands that will protect us and provide for us. And I don't think we'll ever regret precious time spent hearing God's heart through the power of His Word. Not ever. Because His Word won't return void.

Anne-Renee: God's Word can be our anchor helping us gain and maintain an eternal perspective and giving us eyes to see what really matters. Maybe some of the practical ways we can do that of choosing the lasting would look like looking people in the eye when they're speaking to us and truly listening to them. And putting those first things first like Amanda was talking about. Choosing to do the tasks we might not feel like doing before we move on to something a little more enjoyable. There's so much lasting value in doing good work for the Lord and seeking to truly see the people in our lives like God sees them and treating them accordingly.

Anne-Renee: But sometimes to see the value of something, we must first understand the cost.

Meredith: Ooh, that's good.

Amanda: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-so there's always a cost for choosing lesser things and there's always a reward for choosing lasting things. If we continually choose lesser things, we might have a breakdown of relationship with our important people. We might distance ourselves from God and we might get really far behind on the assignments God has placed before us in our work, our homes and the ministry we engage in. But on the other hand, when we consistently choose lasting things, we are setting ourselves up to receive God's best for us. We'll be more content when we keep our named priorities in the order we meant them to be all along. It's a challenge, but it's so worth it.

- Amanda: Maybe take some time this week to list out the activities and thought patterns you engage in on a regular basis and sort them by what would be considered lesser and what would fall into the lasting category.
- Anne-Renee: Matthew 6 verses 19-21 says, *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*
- Anne-Renee: So asking, what treasure are we looking to store up in our lives? What things are we pursuing? When we think about what we do and say throughout our day, what is at the root of our words and our actions? Is it love and kindness? Or is it greed and selfishness? That can kind of hurt when we ask ourselves those kinds of questions, but that's the kind of treasure we want to store up.
- Anne-Renee: Personally, I love the drumbeat of the proverbs about how many times it mentions "get wisdom" and "get understanding" because sometimes I need those constant reminders. But I think this is the kind of treasure that Jesus was talking about in Matthew 6. To have this kind of eternal perspective to look at each day as a gift and seek those things that will leave a legacy of love and example of godliness. But the reality is we can't do it on our own.
- Amanda: Yeah. So to end this teaching we thought we'd speak right to those of you who might feel as you're listening to this that maybe you've messed up too badly to be able to turn back now. Maybe you've been too distracted, too distant, too everything to be able to repair the relationships and wreckage that might lay around you. Let me encourage you with this brief story from my own life and that of the life of someone in the Bible who knew this and lived this firsthand.
- Amanda: When I was eight years old my family took a giant leap and moved to Alaska. I had never even visited there before. In the middle of all that snow and ice I was convinced we'd be living in an igloo and entertaining pet penguins. I was just so uneducated about it. Thankfully once we arrived I saw that people there lived in real houses and I learned that penguins only lived south of the equator. We were starting all over in Alaska, my parents and us three kids, but little did I know that starting over would mean truly that.
- Amanda: Two years after settling into our new life, my parents divorced. And I don't remember the fights leading up to it, but I do remember moments of explosive anger from my dad. I remember that so well. But who my dad is now is who I know him to be. He has long since changed and that's so, so good. When I look at him, I don't see someone who had angry outbursts in the past. I see my supportive, kind and healed father. He's the guy who gets choked up on the phone when we hang up now because we live in different states.
- Amanda: I see and love who he is now with no bitterness attached. And that's the way God sees and loves us. He redeems our past failures to make them an integral part of a larger story He's weaving. It's all useful. It's all redeemable. And if we've had bad moments,

bad seasons or bad years, we can move past them and be different. Jesus makes us whole again when we go to Him in humility and repentance. And not only that, but we can help bring healing and wholeness to the people we've hurt, pushed aside and ignored with our actions and words.

Amanda: It's important that we speak to those people, especially our children, to help them move forward as well. And if we push for our own healing and never look back to remember who we've harmed in the process, then the process won't feel complete.

Amanda: In this whole thing about my dad makes me think of the Apostle Paul and his conversion story in the book of Acts. Paul, who previously went by Saul, was a devout Jew. A Pharisee who thought he was doing what he was called to as a vicious persecutor of Christians. He was punishing those he thought were blaspheming God the Father by following Jesus of Nazareth who he didn't believe was the promised Messiah. So, Paul was first mentioned in the Bible at the stoning of Steven and that's in Acts 7 verses 54-60. And Steven was the first person martyred for believing in Jesus. So it's an important moment in the early church.

Amanda: And Saul was standing there and he approved of the murder of Steven and he stood by and watched him being pummeled with great satisfaction. And in Acts 8, it goes on to chronicle the horrors Saul inflicted on the church as he dragged believers from their homes and threw them in prison. He was feared far and wide and no one could have guessed what would happen next.

Amanda: Well, Acts 9 opens with Saul traveling to Damascus on foot to continue his pursuit and horrific treatment of Christians. And that's when Jesus met him with a bright light from heaven that left him blind for three days. Saul didn't see Jesus, but he certainly heard His voice. Acts 9, 4 through 6 tells us, "*Falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' And he said, 'Who are you, Lord?' And he said, 'I'm Jesus whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city and you will be told what you are to do.'*"

Amanda: After this, Saul was led by hand to Damascus where he stayed, still blinded, and neither eating nor drinking. Meanwhile, Jesus visited a believer named Ananias in a vision telling him to go find Saul, the man with the awful and scary reputation, and put his hand on him to bring healing that would restore his sight. Three days after the blinding light on the road to Damascus, Saul was visited by Ananias and his vision was restored just as the Lord said. He was filled with the Holy Spirit and baptized and he spent time with the Christ followers in Damascus before beginning his public ministry.

Amanda: And that's when he started using the name Paul, a Roman name, rather than his previous Greek name, probably to signify his new nature in Christ and to prepare for his future work in Rome. Whatever the exact reason, he's referred to as Paul in the rest of the Bible from Acts 13:9 on.

Amanda: And raise your hand if you thought Jesus changed Paul's name. I mean, I always thought that. And I'll just blame it on my Sunday school years, just say that. Or maybe it was just

me. I don't know. But Paul's conversion story is important for us to keep in mind because it shows us what God can do with the most impossible situations and most unlikely people. God loves to use unlikely people like ourselves in impossible situations for His matchless glory.

Amanda: So what do you remember Paul for? What marks his life in our minds? It's his latter missionary work and the colossal impact he had in the world for Christ. No question. I mean, we're not remembering who he was as a persecutor and a murderer. That's not our first thought when we think about him. It's his latter years and what he did next.

Amanda: And this brings me back to us. I love Paul's story because it further proves the notion that we'll be remembered for who we are starting now more than who we've been in the past. So let me say that once again for the people in the back. We'll be remembered for who we are starting now more than who we've been in the past.

Amanda: So let the story of the Apostle Paul encourage you today. He was "distracted" by his own false beliefs that caused him to become a man who committed grievous acts. Now if God can use a man like Paul, he can certainly forgive and continue to use us. Distraction doesn't get the final say with us. I mean, praise God for that.

Amanda: How about we end this part of the show with a prayer to God? Anne-Renee, would you pray for us?

Anne-Renee: I would love to. Father, we love You. We desire to honor You above all else. Thank You for making us Your daughters and for trusting us with the lives You've given us. We come before You, hands open, asking that You would be our help and our strength as we seek to be women who are undistracted. May we bring You glory and honor as we walk toward living a focused and intentional life for Your Kingdom's sake. In Jesus' name, amen.

Meredith: Amen. Amen. Wow. Thank you guys so much for bringing such a powerful and tremendous message. First of all, I'm very convicted personally.

Kaley: Yeah.

Meredith: And just realizing distraction is a real thing in my life, you know? But the thing that I really loved about what you taught that I wrote down is that I don't know that I've ever defined distraction in the way that you guys define distraction. I think I've always just looked at it as procrastinating. Like I'm distracted from doing and I've always put it on a small level, you know? Or like I'm distracted from getting my work done because I'm talking to my daughter. You know, where it was like a small moment.

Meredith: But I really love that you guys unpacked it on a bigger, like, heart level that it affects your whole life, not just one small moment.

Anne-Renee: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-

Amanda: Yeah.

Meredith: And I love that line that you said, choosing lasting things over lesser things. I saw a quote on social media the other day. It was actually like a picture somebody had hanging on their wall. It wasn't even the point of the picture, but this quote caught my eye so much that I was like oh my gosh, that's so good. It said more quality over more things. And I thought it's the same idea of the quality of your life, of your global, your long life rather than this moment.

Amanda: Yeah.

Meredith: Those little moments build and create the bigger life. I love that. I also love and I would love for you to unpack this a little bit more. I'm putting you on the spot here. But in my life I've always defined distractions as screen time or television, screen time. I don't know. Those are it.

Amanda: Yeah. Like digital distractions.

Meredith: Yeah, digital things. That's how I've defined distraction. I loved that you listed off, and I think this is powerful. This is a powerful thing for us to recognize. Guilt. Fear. Those can be distractions. Unpack that a little bit more for me and tell me what have you found in the writing of this book? What does that look like for people?

Amanda: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-I think that it's anything that gets us off the course either we mean to be on or that God has us on. So a distraction like, we listed toxic thinking. I mean, how often is it our own thoughts that distract us from doing the work we have before us? It's our thoughts. It's not always we're at a computer. We might be driving down the road and completely distracted by what we're thinking and we don't even remember where we're going or how we got there.

Meredith: Right. Or what I think is even more interesting, Amanda, is that those toxic thoughts are distracting your mind from the things they should be focused on. Maybe not just from the things you should be doing tactically with your hands and with your body, but where your mind should be or the productive places it could be. Like instead of worrying, you could be thinking about, I don't know, that project that you need to complete. You know, there's just so many other more productive things from those places. I just had never thought about it that way.

Anne-Renee: Or like building that relationship or you know like it says in Scripture, set your mind on things above, not on things that are on the earth. And we can so easily get our minds set on everything we see in front of us that feels hopeless, that feels fun, that feels whatever. And we forget to set our minds on things above.

Meredith: It's true. And so our distractions ... I mean, I think a major point that I'm taking away from today's teaching is that our distractions aren't always tactical distractions, but they can be kind of dark and twisty in our minds. You're distracted by your own thoughts, by your own baggage, by your own past even. So good. Good stuff.

Meredith: Kals, tell me what's on your mind. You're over there, brow furrowed.

Kaley: My brow furrowed because I was like ooh, I'm having a flashback to a conversation you and I had recently and I feel like, I mean, I'm okay with sharing this. But I feel like it is kind of what people might be going through right now. If you are talking about being distracted by like fear or anxiety or those things, I think you can also be distracted by believing the worst about someone because it's the easier choice than choosing to believe the best about a situation.

Kaley: So a couple weeks ago, you and I were in a meeting and you just stopped and you were like Kaley, do you feel like you have to prove yourself to me? And I was like well, I didn't think about that, but maybe I think that I actually do because I feel like my personality style is to work, work, work and always assume ... and this, I mean hello world. Here I am.

Meredith: Atta girl. Way to be vulnerable. I'm proud of you right now.

Kaley: Assume that ... this is ministering to someone else and me. Let me know. Help me feel better. That just sounded like I was proving myself. Anyway, back to the point. But in those moments where I'm like, I need to have everything together or it's all up to me or whenever I believe that it's all up to me, I can be a distraction to myself.

Meredith: Right.

Kaley: Or I can get in the way of just being myself.

Meredith: Or being present with me.

Kaley: Yeah.

Meredith: Like I'm really going to unpack the moment here on air, folks.

Kaley: Mm-hmm (affirmative)-

Meredith: I felt like I could feel from Kaley when she came in to these meetings with me, she wasn't fully present because she was distracted by trying to prove herself to me. And so I was like, I feel like I'm not getting all of you. Like where are you, Kaley? I know you're in there, but you're trying so hard to show me I have all these things. You know?

Kaley: Yeah.

Meredith: So you're distracting.

Kaley: Right. Well, we were talking about it and I think you said it at the very beginning so maybe we can wrap this up right here, but Anne-Renee, when you said that the verse that was like we're created to do the good things that He has in store for us and you were talking about whenever we compare ourselves to other people or I think even, I

don't want to add to God's Word, but also for me it means whenever I think that I can't do it because maybe I don't have the skillset that this person has or I lead in a different way, then I'm distracting myself from the good things that He has for me to do.

Meredith: That He has put in you.

Kaley: For me.

Meredith: So good.

Kaley: So the longer I focus on what I can't do well or the longer, I don't believe that I've just been given everything that I need to do something well, the longer my calling is going to be prolonged. And I don't want to miss it. And so the more I can just be confident not in like a headstrong, I've got this, confident way, but just like a I don't know, what'd you say a couple years ago, relaxed confidence? Something like that where you're just like-

Meredith: Yeah, relaxed confidence.

Kaley: This is fine.

Meredith: That God has this and He has you.

Kaley: I've got this. I've done all I can. I know what I've got to do, but I'm going to focus on the things that I can control today. And one thing that I can control that is lasting is my mind and my state of mind.

Amanda: That's so good.

Meredith: So good you guys. Thank you so much for being here today. I loved it. But before we let our audience go, I want to point out a couple resources for you. You heard us talking about the book. Make sure you get a copy of it. *Shiny Things*. It's a fantastic resource for all of us I think, obviously, because it's really speaking to us today.

Meredith: You can go to P31bookstore.com to grab a copy of that awesome resource, and in the meantime, while you're getting a copy of the resource, you're also supporting the ministry here at Proverbs 31, so thank you for making your purchase through our bookstore.

Kaley: Absolutely. And we also want you to stay connected to the ministry online. We know we just talked about distractions and talking about choosing lasting over lesser, but when you're on social media, we think you should fill your feed with encouragement, right?

Meredith: That's right. Come on.

Kaley: Yeah. So if you're not already following along, join us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest, et cetera. All the social media things at [@proverbs31ministries](https://www.instagram.com/proverbs31ministries).

Meredith: And make sure you hit up our friends Amanda Bacon, Anne-Renee Gumley on the old social medias because they're going to be bringing you God's Word and the right kind of encouragement that you need in your life to not get distracted. So last but not least my friends, let's help get this podcast to other listening ears. Please give us a review and rate our podcast on iTunes. It helps us get all these great messages out into the world so more women can know the truth of God's Word and live that truth out because we believe it really will change everything. Thank you for joining us today and we will see you next time. Bye.