

the
PROVERBS 31
MINISTRIES
podcast

Biblical truth for any girl in any season.

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- Meredith: Hi, friends. Welcome back 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 friend and cohost, Kaley Olson.
- Kaley: Well hey, Meredith, I'm so glad to be with you today. I'm going to go ahead and welcome our guest so that we can get to know her because this is her first time on the podcast. Are you ready?
- Shae: Hey, everybody.
- Kaley: Hi, Shae.
- Shae: I'm so excited to be here. This is so fun.
- Meredith: Shae, we are so thrilled to have you here today. I feel a little bit like my worlds are colliding. You and I get to work together behind the scenes with our friend, Lysa TerKeurst, and so to have you on the podcast today feels really, really special to me. But before we jump into your teaching, I want you to answer two questions for me. Are you ready?
- Shae: I'm so ready.
- Meredith: Okay. Question number one: How long have you worked for Proverbs 31 Ministries?
- Shae: I have been with Proverbs 31 Ministries for three years now, which is so crazy because I'm only 24 [crosstalk], so I was truly hired when I was an infant.
- Meredith: Oh, my gosh. Well, I think that's important for us to all know that she's only been working for the ministry for three years because word on the street is before you worked for Proverbs 31 you may, or may not, have known a man named Nick Saban, who is this mystery man that I hear about, and how do you even know him? Please tell me [inaudible].
- Shae: So Nick Saban is the Head Football Coach at the University of Alabama, roll tide, and he is ... I guess you could say he's my ex-boss, but I used to work for him in college for about three years in somewhat of a similar capacity of what I do now on Lysa

TerKeurst's team. But obviously the worlds look very different. Football, ministry. But I guess I do technically know him. Now, if he knows me, I'm not sure. But yeah, that was my past life in college, I guess you could say.

Meredith: That's wild. That is really wild. I'm pretty sure that my husband wants to be your best friend because at one time you may have been in the same room as Nick Saban, so you've really got brownie points in the Brock household.

Shae: There we go. That's awesome. Oh, my gosh. Well, if Mack plays his cards right, maybe we can get him something from Nick Saban in the coming years. We'll see.

Meredith: That would be amazing.

Kaley: Well, I just do want to jump in and say, for those of you who are listening and maybe don't roll tide, Proverbs 31 does not have any football allegiances. We accept everyone of all believer football types here and so please don't leave this podcast if you're not an Alabama fan. We still want you here. Thank you, Shae.

Kaley: [crosstalk 00:03:20]. Well, I'm excited because Shae today is going to give a teaching that addresses the question, "what does God want me to do next?" And I know for me, I for sure asked this question, probably whenever I was Shae's age, whenever she started here, when I was maybe choosing a college and then graduating into the real world. And I guess in my very young and naive mind, that I thought I'd eventually graduate, you could say, from asking that question, because the path would be just laid out for me and I would have this singular fixed calling, like a career calling, or a calling to be a stay-at-home mom, or whatever that is in my life. But what I found is that the older that I get, in my long 28 years on earth, that it's actually not true.

Meredith: Well, and let's be honest here, no matter where you are in life, this subject matters to every single one of us and is a real thing that we wrestle with, is how do I know God's will for my life? How do I stay in the center of that will? Is it even possible to do exactly what God wants me to do with my life? What is my calling? All of these things are wrapped up together.

Meredith: And I think Shae and I had a conversation a few months back, she's got a really special perspective on this that we couldn't resist. We really wanted our listeners to hear, because I think it's going to help a lot of people who may be in transition right now, whether it be from going from college into a career, or maybe your transitioning from being not married to married, or maybe you're transitioning from having kids in your home to being an empty nester. No matter what, knowing how to decipher God's will and what is God's will for your life is important. So Shae, I can't wait for our audience to hear from you. Why don't you take it away?

Shae: Guys, what a dream. This is so fun. Y'all are my favorite podcast duo for sure. Meredith, I love how you just talked about how our calling and God's will for our life is translated into so many different seasons of our life. And I think it's not something that we just decide one time. It's not just for the young person who is trying to decide, like Kaley

said, where we want to go to college, or what career path that we want to take. I think it's something we have to solidify and reaffirm over and over and over again.

Shae: And I think especially during such a crazy time in a world right now where we are right smack in the middle of this global pandemic called COVID-19, we have such an opportunity as believers to rise up like never before and I think God is ready for us more than ever before to step into our callings.

Shae: And I think we've all wrestled through this word "calling" in a few different ways and even though we've all probably asked different questions, they all really come back to the same themes of "What am I supposed to do and where am I supposed to go?"

Shae: And I think a lot of these questions stem from a few different things. Maybe depending on your season, or your personality, or just your background. Some may be asking, "What am I supposed to do?" Because they need direction or because they're fearful of doing the wrong thing. And some may be asking, "Where am I supposed to go?" Because they're overwhelmed by the amount of options of things they have to do. Or on the other side, they feel like I have one skillset, how in the world does this actually play out into the Kingdom of God? I don't feel like I'm good at that many things. Does God actually have a calling for me? How can I find God's will in the midst of this?

Shae: And I think we all want to know what that is. And I even remember growing up and looking at people in ministry thinking that they were the only ones that had a calling. And I think that's a really easy disclaimer that I want to break down of just saying, as long as you have breath in your lungs, you have a calling on this earth, you have purpose, you have a calling. It's not just people who are on the stage. It's not just people who are in ministry. It's every single one of us.

Shae: So I just want to start that just by saying you belong into this conversation simply just because you have breath in your lungs today. So just know that no matter what season you find yourself in, this applies for you too. And so I was talking with my friend Joel. We all know Joel. He's a well-loved friend on the podcast. A few months back, just about calling, and I really feel like it's taken shape in the 21st century of this quippy word that people are like, "I want to find my calling," or "I'm called to this," or whatever.

Shae: And I just always remember looking at people that would say that and be like, "how do you know?" God, did You pour out their calling upon them and you're not going to do the same for me? Is there some secret sauce that they have where they know their calling and I'm still waiting for mine?

Shae: But after looking into the scriptures, I'm just so encouraged and I feel so known by God. Just seeing Him, how He deeply cares just as much as we do about our calling. So if you have your Bibles today or if you want to turn to this passage later, we're going to be camped out in 2 Corinthians Chapter 5, and just to give you some orientation of the scripture, the Apostle Paul is the one that wrote this book, and I'm just going to break down a few of the sections of the verses before we dive into the last part of this chapter, where we're going to spend most of our time today.

- Shae: So in verses 1-4, Paul talks about the state of the world that we're in, the struggle and the groaning of this temporary fallen world. So if we were going down this checklist, I think we can definitely check that box by saying that we definitely relate to the struggle and the groaning of this temporary fallen world.
- Shae: And in verses 5-10, Paul talks about how even though we're in this temporary fallen world, Jesus enters the scene in the midst of all of that. And God makes those really hard, temporary things that we all experience on earth beautiful again because of Jesus. So amen to that. That's the good news of the gospel.
- Shae: And then verses 11-21, your Bible might have a heading at the top of that called God's Ambassadors, or Christ Ambassadors, or the Ministry of Reconciliation, and for the purposes of today's conversation, I'm going to read verses 17-21 and then we're going to talk about it for a little bit.
- Shae: So it says, *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. That is in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the ministry of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ. God is making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God."*
- Shae: So when I see the breakdown of this chapter, I feel like I can really see myself in the midst of Scripture. And I don't know if y'all have those moments where you're reading a story, maybe in the Old Testament, or you're reading a verse in the New Testament, and you just pause and you feel so known by God because you actually feel like you can see yourself in the midst of this passage.
- Shae: And that's how I feel combining Paul talking about the groaning and the struggle of this temporary fallen world, and then on the other hand, how Jesus enters the scene, that married together is really where we're at today as we talk about our calling.
- Shae: And so there's just a few truths that I want to point out in those verses that I just read. And I think it'll just be some truths and some takeaways hopefully to bring some clarity of wherever you find yourself today.
- Shae: So the first thing is that God has called us to himself. In those verses it talks about how, because of Jesus, we've been reconciled to God. And like I said, as I was reading those verses, this is the good news of the Gospel that we are seen by the Father as righteous as His Son is when the very present needs of a fallen world collide with a very present Jesus, everything changes.
- Shae: Jesus absolutely changes everything. And you might be wondering what this point has to do with talking about your calling and what God wants you to do next. But I truly think from earlier in the chapter, our callings begin with knowing and fearing God and everything else stems from that.

- Shae: So step one, bare basics, cookies on the bottom of the shelf, the very first step is for you to answer the call that God is giving you, which is to come to Himself. And I think that that is so encouraging, but also so crucial before we talk about anything else because we cannot find our calling outside of God Himself. It is only possible through first answering the call that He would have us come to Him, that He is now able to see us as righteous as His Son, which is the good news of the Gospel.
- Shae: And although that's not the primary part of today's conversation, I think it's a crucial step, because sometimes I feel like it can be easy to be living life alongside God, but then you're trying to live your job or things that you're called into, your leadership positions, outside of your relationship with God.
- Shae: You keep God on a shelf or we're able to think about, "I love doing these things like for God, but I'm not really doing this with God." And I just want to pause and say, bare basics again, is just to answer the call of God on your life first, which is just to become a believer and come into the family of faith. And that plays so much into the other parts of what I want to talk about today.
- Shae: So the second part is that we all have a calling and we all have a purpose. And I know I said that at the beginning, but just seeing it even further revealed through this scripture, I see it played out of using this word reconciled, which just means we've been made right with God. So we're reconciled to God so that we can help others be reconciled to God.
- Shae: And I may not be able to tell each of our listeners today what their unique calling is and how that plays out in all of our lives, but I can say with absolute confidence, absolute assurance, that every single one of us have a purpose. And a lot of times, when I'm looking in Scripture, I see God use words like "chosen," "purpose," "mission," "co-mission" to describe probably what all of us would say, that collective calling word that we use a lot. And I think when we say "calling," we're really wanting God to give us a personal next step of what we're supposed to do.
- Shae: But just like my previous point, God has called us to himself. And so through that, we do have a calling and through our calling that God's given us, I really see that God's more concerned with who we are becoming than what our next step is. And I think we may be worried about what the next step is because we're trying to be responsible or maybe we have some fear that we're not sure what we're supposed to do, but we can rest assured that because God has first called us to Himself, our calling doesn't just depend on ourselves; it depends on God because He's the one who first called us.
- Shae: And so every single one of us has a universal calling. Our personal calling lived out from that place may look different, but all of us have the same call, and that is we've been reconciled to God so that we can help others be reconciled to Him.
- Shae: And how that's lived out may look differently. Even between me, Kaley, and Meredith, each of us are living this out differently in our own different ways, all of us in different seasons. But all of us living out that universal calling that God has asked us to do.

Shae: So I just want to pause right there and just say, how does it feel as a believer just to simply know, “Okay, I have a purpose and I have a calling.”

Kaley: I think for me, that just gives me peace in the middle of maybe asking questions about always what's next? Because my personality type is I just want to be sure all the time that I'm on the right track, that I'm doing the right thing, that I don't fall off course. But just knowing that God is working on who I am right now gives me peace and assurance that as long as I do that foundational first step that you said and just give my life to Him and make it a daily habit to stay centered on His will, then whatever happens today happens and I'm focused on Him and so I'm on track.

Shae: That's so good. I love that.

Meredith: That's so good, Kaley. I would add to that, I feel like our Western culture is so focused on productivity, on what are you going to do rather than, who are you becoming, so much more doing than being, and I think that when you really look at it, that's not — Western mindset, the American culture — is not Kingdom culture. And so we so much let our Western American productive mindsets drive our relationship with the Lord. And so we oftentimes want to jump over that first step and go right to our calling, which is productivity in the American mindset. And we want to jump over that fear of God.

Meredith: As you were talking, Shae, I was remembering Proverbs 9:10 where it says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."

Shae: So good.

Meredith: And when we ask that question, “God, what am I supposed to do next?” Well, you're looking for wisdom, you're looking for knowledge, and all God is saying is “Come to Me. Come and be intimate with Me. And from that intimacy with Me, from that deep relationship with Me, will come knowledge.”

Shae: Right. That's so good.

Meredith: And will come a healthy fear of the Lord. And from that you will know what your next step is because it flows from that place. And so I think it's so good to remind us that just because we've been taught since we were children, since we were tiny, “What are you going to be when you grow up?” You're asked that from the time before you're even in kindergarten. And so you naturally want to equate productivity and your job and what you're doing with your calling, when it's so much more than that. If you can strip away your American presuppositions and really boil it down to intimacy with God is what you're called to. And [crosstalk] everything else.

Shae: That's so good. And I love how you pointed out Meredith, just again, that we are first called to God Himself and that out of that intimacy with God, that's where we find out how our personal callings may be lived out. Because we all have the same universal calling. And so I think it's hard to even be asked, “Hey Shae, will you come on the podcast and talk about your calling and God's will.” And it's hard because it doesn't play

out the same for each believer and each person. And I think it's challenging to talk about this topic and it may feel like at first a little bit of me giving you a cop out by just saying, "Seek God," but truly the best place that I could point you is to seek God's will for your life. And he'll tell you. Absolutely, He will tell you.

Shae: And I want to end today with talking just about how the reason again God has called us is to make this possible for others to make a relationship with Him possible for others. And that's what that ministry of reconciliation is talking about. It's talking about how the first step is for us to be reconciled to God. And then the second step is for us to live out that ministry of reconciliation by calling others to come into relationship with God.

Shae: And I was just thinking about what is the very best thing that I could do with my life? Is it a job? Is it a calling? Is it a status? Is it a title? Is it an accomplishment? Like Meredith, you were saying, is it this productive thing that I could do? And I just parked my brain after just looking in the scriptures and reviewing the passage again, and I just landed with the greatest thing I could do with my life is to tell the world about the great things God has done in my life.

Shae: So our message is that right there and our mission field will change through different seasons of life, but our message always has to be solidified before our mission field comes. So I think that we have to have settled in our message, which is, "Hey, God has done amazing things in my life. I want to tell you about it." And our mission field, and the way that that plays out, that could change daily, I think. Whether you're talking with someone at a coffee shop, or you're talking with a mom as you're dropping off your kids at school, or you're having a conversation with your husband, or one of your girlfriends, your message of "God's done amazing things in my life. Let me tell you about it." That could be translated out through so many different conversations and it feels small and it may not feel like you are participating in God's will and God's call for your life, but you are because you're participating in that ministry of reconciliation.

Shae: And I just want to urge every single person that's listening today just to be comforted in the fact that God chose us to be His vehicles on earth — that He's making His appeal to people through and what a high calling. That is amazing. We are truly the voices of Heaven on this earth and our ministry is carrying that message reconciliation. And from that place, we will exhaust all of our efforts and all of our passions and talents and everything that God has equipped us with to tell every single person that we come in contact with about God and how much love He has for them. And that right there is your calling.

Shae: And I just see so many people around me living this out so well and I love how it all looks so differently. Meredith, I see you and the way that you build incredible teams and you think strategically and you troubleshoot problems and the way that you serve your family, you are living out the message of God in your mission field. I see you doing it every single day. I see you living out your calling.

Shae: And Kaley, I see the way that you intentionally pour into young leaders in our ministry and the way that you create beautiful spaces for conferences and video shoots and just beautiful settings for people to encounter God and just even the way that you support

your husband in ministry. I see you living out the message of God and your mission field. And I see you living out the calling of God on your life.

Shae: And I found this quote from Frederick Buechner and I just want to share it as we close today because it might give you some clarity of, "Okay, today, what is my next step? What can I actually do? And how can I know I'm actually making a difference in this world?" And this is what Frederick Buechner says: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness meets the world's deep hunger."

Shae: And I just think about that in this time where we're in the midst of this global pandemic and there's so much chaos, there's so much change, there — feels like there's so much disorder. And I would just ask each of our listeners today, what brings you deep gladness and how can you meet that in the world today where there's deep need and deep hunger? And I would just say, do that.

Shae: And if that means in this season, homeschooling your kids because they're not going back to school until the end of summer, do that well and live out that message in your mission field in that place. And if that means working from home and doing that excellently during this time and asking God to meet you in that place, that is your message and that is your mission field.

Shae: And so I just love how it's really a lot more simple than we think. And God has called us to live out His message in every season, not just one season where we're making a job change or it's about our vocation. Yes, we may live out our calling through our vocation, but it's way more simple than that. And so before I read our closing verse today, I'd love just to hear if y'all have any last thoughts, Kaley and Meredith.

Meredith: Shae, I think this is just so good. Especially given what we're currently facing. And who knows? Somebody might listen to this podcast a year from now and be like, "Y'all, it wasn't that big of a deal," or they could be listening to it a year from now and be like, "Wow, that really was a pivotal time in our history."

Meredith: But no matter what, just like you said, you're facing a global pandemic or you're trying to figure out what college to go to, this place of being and everything that you just said, I keep coming back to that verse, it's Matthew 6:33, that says, "*But seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well.*" And so starting there, your calling, whether you're in the will of God or not in the will of God, whether you should take this job or that job, whether you should go to this college or that college — all of those choices, all of those things that you're faced with, and they're real things and they're scary things.

Meredith: Even just this morning my husband and I were talking through just the state of our finances because of what's going on in the economy right now and it feels scary. And so I sat down and I put on this little sticky note in our kitchen, that exact verse, to remind myself, my only job in this situation right now is to seek the one true King. And from that relationship, it will lead me into all the knowledge that I need.

Meredith: And so I just want to encourage our listeners: start there, you guys. Be wise. Seek out wise counsel. But start with counsel from the Lord.

Shae: Amen. That's so good.

Kaley: That's so good, Meredith. I've also been thinking about how so much of this is the vertical relationship with us and the Lord and, if you have seen those cross diagrams on a whiteboard or whatever, where they've got an arrow that goes up and down and they've got an arrow that goes side to side and it makes it cross. And I think for me, Shae, this has been so helpful because it's reminded me that the more sure I am of who I am in Christ, the better I'll be able to love and encourage others.

Kaley: And I think that you do that so well because I walked around the office and I have seen sticky notes on almost every staff members' computer of you taking a moment out of your day to stop and write down things like, "Natty, you are good at this, you serve others well, have a great day, Shae," or whatever.

Kaley: And to me, I'm just reminded right now in the midst of this isolation, it's so easy to be consumed with our progress because others can't see us and they can't be with us, that it can become something that is almost we get selfish in that. It's like, "God, are we doing okay?" But then I'm so consumed with what I'm doing because I'm not able to actually be with others and hear from others, "Yeah, you're doing good. This is good, Kaley."

Kaley: And my calling as a believer is to build someone else up, and so instead of getting stuck in that "how am I doing? Am I doing enough?" Or whatever. Taking time out of my day to reach out to people like you just did to us a couple of minutes ago by saying, "Meredith, I see you living out your calling through this." "Kaley, I see you living out your calling through this." We can do that every day. We can be the body of Christ to one another by encouraging each other and building them up where they are today.

Shae: That's so good. I just love this conversation so much because I think when we get back to it, we really realize that the more freedom that we feel in who God has called us to be, the less worried that we'll be caught up in comparison, or worried that we're getting it wrong, or looking to our right or to our left to see what our neighbor is doing. But truly, when we just feel confident in what God has called us to do, and when we realize ultimately He has called us, so it's really Him doing all this work through us. It's Him living out through us in all the different capacities, the things that we're working on and people that we're speaking to, and all of that stuff. It's really Jesus being lived out. It's really not Shae. It's not Kaley. It's not Meredith.

Shae: And so even just as I'm living out my calling, I would hope that people see more and more of Jesus and less and less of Shae doing this, or Shae leading this meeting, or Shae being on this podcast episode. I would pray that Jesus would be front and center through that.

- Shae: And so I just want to close out today with 1 Peter 4:7-11, and I think it is so timely, and so I just want to read this, maybe even speak this over our listeners today, just that you would listen to this and receive these words. It says, "*The end of all things is near. Therefore, be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. Above all, love each other deeply because love covers a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have been given to serve others as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides. So that in all things, God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power, forever and ever. Amen.*"
- Shae: So friends, if you're in the midst of a season of not knowing what to do, I want you to know that I've been there too. I'm in there right now in the midst of this global pandemic and I just want you to put your finger on your pulse or just put your hand on your heartbeat right now, and that right there, your heart pumping, is purpose. That is calling. God has called you to Himself. He has called you to be someone who has purpose and He's called you to then be someone to call others.
- Shae: So if you've ever doubted that you have a calling, I just want you to sit and soak in that today, whether you're speaking, or you're serving, or you're offering hospitality to others, you're living out who Jesus is on this earth.
- Meredith: Shae, thank you so much for coming on the podcast with us. This has been such a meaningful and I feel like God-ordained episode for exactly what we're going through as a nation. And for our listeners, if this teaching was helpful for you, we've got a really helpful resource that we just rolled out at Proverbs 31. You can go to proverbs31.org and take a look at a small booklet called *Thy Will Be Done*. It's a resource we wrote right here at Proverbs 31 [inaudible] authors and it walks you through six weeks of content to help you really trust God more and process that question, "what's next for me with the Lord?"
- Kaley: Yeah, Meredith, that's one of my favorite resources ever that we've developed. And like she just said, you can get this booklet online at proverbs31.org. And remember that when you make a purchase through Proverbs 31, you're helping us continue to fund resources like this podcast that are available for free. And we love free things. We love being able to meet you right where you are with content that helps you and points you to Jesus.
- Meredith: Absolutely. Well, friends, I'm sad to say it, but it's time to say goodbye. We pray today's message to help the Truth of God's Word and then live that Truth out, because we know that when you do, it really will change everything.