

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. My name is Meredith Brock, and I am here with not one, but two of my very favorite people in the entire world! Lisa Allen, who's co-hosting with me today, and the lovely Shae Tate, who is bringing our teaching today. Say, "Hey," ladies!

Shae:

Hey, everybody. How's it going?

Lisa:

Hey, good. How's everybody?

Shae:

I'm doing good. How are y'all?

Meredith:

Awesome — awesome now that the two of you are here.

Lisa:

How exciting we're all together.

Shae:

This is so fun.

Meredith:

Well I know these two ladies are not strangers to our listeners, but for some of our new listeners that we have with us today, I'd love for the two of you maybe just to introduce yourself a little bit. Lisa, tell us a little bit about yourself.

Lisa:

Well, I have been with Proverbs about seven years now on staff. I'm the executive director of ministry and staff development, which means I get to lead the great leaders, like Melissa Taylor, First 5, OBS, and donor team, She Speaks — all that fun stuff.

Meredith:

Yes, you've got some fun, fun things going on.

Lisa:

[crosstalk] the ministry part of this.

Shae:

That's so fun, and I'm Shae Tate, nice to meet you guys. If we haven't met before. I am actually on Lysa TerKeurst's team at Proverbs 31 Ministries, and have been on staff for a little over three years. And my newer role is working on content and book projects. I love what I get to do!

Meredith:

I love it, love it, love it.

Lisa:

You're such a rock star.

Meredith:

I want to know, okay, I have a question for the two of you. We'll start with you, Lisa: What are you most excited about happening in the ministry right now?

Lisa:

So, so many things, but since you asked for one, I am excited about a new resource we have coming out. Okay, so our ministry is releasing a new devotional booklet, and here's the name of it: *40 Reminders that God is in Control: Devotions to Redirect Your Worry Into Worship*. Like, can we just pause for a minute? Worry into worship. So you can't turn on the television today, you can't scroll through social media without stress and anxiety. It seems like it just lives with us all the time if you're like me. And over and over again, the Bible says what? "Do not be anxious." But how do we do that? It's easier said than done, right? So when our circumstances leave us questioning, is it even possible to redirect our worry into worship? So now more than ever, I believe we need reminders that God is in control. And so worry might have defined much of your 2020, but let worship define the rest of your year.

Lisa:

It's never too late to start. So I'm so excited. Again, the name of it is *40 Reminders that God is in Control: Devotions to Redirect Your Worry Into Worship*. It's free with just whatever donation of your choice, and it'll be available in the show notes, but it's only for a limited time. So, see if you can get in on that.

Meredith :

That's good; that's really, really good.

Lisa:

I can't wait.

Meredith:

I love it. You can go to proverbs31.org/listen to find the link to that and make sure you grab a copy while it's available, because it really is available only for a limited period of time. Shae, what are you excited about? Tell me.

Shae:

Okay so what I'm excited about, I'm going to give a little bit of a shameless plug, because this has been such an exciting project that I feel like has been a huge part of my world for the last two years, but not necessarily the public. So Lysa TerKeurst is releasing her next book, *Forgiving What You Can't Forget*, in November, but depending on when you're listening and hanging out with us today, you can preorder your copy of the book at the Proverbs 31 bookstore and get the first three chapters right away, which is amazing.

Meredith :

That's awesome, and I also heard that if you preorder, you get access to this really cool Facebook group where you're going to hear from Lysa and her counselor and all kinds of really cool stuff. So if you are listening to this before November 17th, jump in there, preorder it, get those first three chapters, get access to the Facebook group. After November 17th, y'all, it's fair game. Get that book, get it in your hands, get it read. I can't wait. Good, I love, love, love what we get to be a part of here at Proverbs 31 and just seeing how God, His amazing sovereign timing — none of us ... Lord, help us. None of us saw 2020 coming, y'all.

Shae:

We sure did not.

Meredith:

Right, right, thank goodness we didn't see it coming. But I just looked back. We usually plan our resources a year in advance, a year and a half in advance. And we didn't know how desperately we would need this devotional of *From Worry to Worship*. We certainly did not see that we would need the message of forgiveness from Lysa's book as desperately as we're going to need it this fall, because we're headed into a hot mess this November.

Shae:

And I just love that God's before us just giving us these nuggets in His timing.

Meredith:

Amen, so good, so good. Well I am excited about today's teaching. I have had a little preview of it, but our listeners don't know the good stuff that's coming. So Shae, why don't you tell them a little bit about what you're learning in your life right now? Because I think our listeners are going to love it.

Shae:

For sure. So, today's podcast is called "Can I Admit My Quiet Time Is Not Cutting It?" And can I just say that I chose that as the title because that is exactly how I feel. I think there's so many of us that feel that way. Not only right now in the midst of such a crazy year, but just anytime that we're experiencing transition or just life circumstances. I think that pursuing God through daily devotional time, maybe you call it a quiet time, maybe you call it something else, can just get really hard. And I think I remember

back in March, when everything fell apart, and I was like, "I really want to know Jesus better on the other side of this." But I had no idea that the rest of this year was going to look like how that March looked. So the girl that was super fiery and committed, had her priorities in check, was spitting time with the Lord, that it has been a really hard attitude to continue to keep when it comes to pursuing the Lord.

Shae:

And I don't know if y'all can resonate with that, but it just feels like every time that something gets hard or something comes up, my quiet time is unfortunately one of the first things that can fall in my priorities if I don't keep a watch on it. So I don't know if that resonates with you guys, but that's just really where this message and this teaching came out of, because I feel like I was not only wrestling with this personally, but just talking to so many of my friends who are believers or just even, hello, honest moment, staff members of ours, we're coworkers, and we work in ministry, but that doesn't mean that our quiet times are better and more glorious than anyone else's. So this is a message that really just came out of honest conversation and all of us taking a minute to just say, "Can I just raise my hand and say that this is hard for me too?" And so no matter where you find yourself today, I hope that this message encourages you and you feel safe in the comfort of some really good friends today.

Shae:

And I wanted to start by talking about, even if you're like, "Actually, 2020 hasn't been that bad," even though there's been so many things going on. When I look back at this year, there really have been some good moments — even when things are really good, we can still find places in our life that feel dry and it may not be a dry season or as full as an extent of like a dry couple of seasons, but you might have a place in your heart that feels like a dry place. And a lot of times, when we find ourselves in that dry place, connection with God can feel really hard and that can be through pursuing him, quiet time, whatever that looks like. But just like when you have a friend or relationship with your spouse or something like that, there's definitely seasons that feel more dry than others.

Shae:

And it's not because you are doing anything wrong, but just because maybe life is just handing you a tough hand. And so the same thing can happen with our relationship with God. And I just think that I have a fear that some Christians have found themselves in that dry place, and they've stayed there for so long that they started feeling like, "This is my new normal, this is as best as it gets. I've just lost that delight in my relationship with God and pursuing Him and making time for Him just feels like a chore. But at the same time, I feel like a bad Christian if I don't." And so I just want to expose that fear and just say I've been there and that the enemy would love for you to stay in that place. And so I do want to expose that today, but I just want to say it's totally normal if you feel that.

Shae:

It's totally normal to feel like time with God has felt really ritualistic, lifeless, recently. We can kind of fall into two buckets where we're either not doing it at all, or we're showing up but not getting anything out of it. And so I just want to be completely human just from the beginning and just say that I've been there. So you can trust me as your friend today on the other side, wherever you're listening, and just know that you're not alone. And I hope by the end of today, you've got some new things in your toolbox that you can use as a catalyst to come out of that dry place and pursue the Lord in a new way. So as far as I can remember, I've heard this phrase "quiet time," basically my whole life. And I feel like it was always one of the three action steps from a message in youth group.

Shae:

No matter what the topic was, it was, "You got to use your quiet time or devote that first 15 minutes of your day to the Lord," or, "What's your devotion time looking like?" And it just always felt like it was definitely a rhythm, but I found myself a lot of times being like, "Does anyone else struggle with this? Because it sure does show up a lot, but it doesn't feel as easy to live it out all the time." And as this topic was just brewing in my heart, I gathered some of my staff members that I work with every day, including director theological research, Joel Muddamale, who is no stranger to the podcast. And we had a study day just diving into this topic of quiet time and all of that. And what we actually found is that the phrase "quiet time" is actually not in Bible.

Shae:

I know, can you believe it? And that is not to hate on any of the youth pastors growing that used it as one of the action steps, and that is not permission for myself or any of us today that we don't have to pursue the Lord. But it does just say just to show you that the actual phrase "quiet time" was not in the Bible. And so I started just diving into, "Well then, if it's not in the Bible, then what does actually pursuing the Lord look like?" Because when we're talking about quiet time, that's really what we're talking about is that personal pursuit of time with God. So I went and found some scriptures all throughout the Bible in Old Testament, New Testament, that show: What does pursuing God look like in different capacities and through different pursuits? So Meredith and Lisa are going to help me share some of these verses, but I'll go first. The first one I want to share is Jeremiah 29:13. It says, "*You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all of your heart.*"

Meredith:

And James 4:8 says, "*Come near to God and He will come near to you.*"

Lisa:

Joshua 1:8 says, "*Keep this book of the law always on your lips, meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.*"

Shae:

Proverbs 4:20-22 says, "*My son, pay attention to what I say. Turn your ear to my words, do not let them out of your sight. Keep them within your heart, for they are life to those who find them and health to one's body.*"

Meredith:

Psalms 105:1-4, "*Give praise to the Lord, proclaim His name, make known among the nations what He has done. Sing to Him, sing praise to Him. Tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in His holy name. Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice, look to the Lord and His strength. Seek His face always.*"

Lisa:

Colossians 4:2, "*Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.*"

Shae:

Hebrews 4:16, "*Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*" Thanks Lisa and Meredith for helping me with all of

those verses. Some of the things I just wanted to pull out of those verses that we read, because I know that was a little bit of a lot. So just to recap, we see pursuing God look like seeking Him with all of our heart, drawing to Him in nearness, keeping the law on our lips, meditating on it, lifting our ear to wise words and instruction for living, praising the Lord, singing to Him, telling of all that He's done. Looking to the Lord, seeking His face always, being devoted to prayer, approaching God's throne of grace with confidence. See, there's so many different expressions of what pursuing God looks like. And what's funny to me is that even though we're talking about quiet time today, a lot of those verses don't sound quiet to me at all.

Meredith :

Singing and speaking to the Lord.

Shae:

Exactly, yeah. So what if our time with God actually has less to do with quieting the atmosphere and the environment and everything around us, and instead it actually has everything to do with making an appointment with God to quiet our souls.

Meredith :

Hold on, say that again. Because that's too good not to take in a second time.

Shae:

What if our time with God actually has less to do with quieting everything around us, and instead has everything to do with making an appointment to quiet things within us, to quiet things inside of our souls? So that we can really meet with God, sort out what's weighing on us with an undivided heart and full attention, and give Him just all of ourselves in that moment. And the reason I want to show you all those different expressions is just to say that all of us are made so differently, uniquely, yet so beautifully. And God knew that. So you have so much freedom in what pursuing God can look like. And I think that is just one of the things I just want you to walk away with today and remember.

Shae:

And right now, you might be saying, "Shae, I so agree with you. I am so for all those verses you just read, and those sound awesome. I do love God. But I'm just totally in that rut right now, that dry place that you're talking about. I can't seem to shake it. I cannot seem to make my personal time with God not feel like that dry place." And this is where I would not be a good friend if I didn't sit across from you and just get real with you for just a second, because I think I've been there too. But maybe we're thinking about this wrong. Our personal time with God has a lot more to do with the discipline that we keep rather than an activity that we pursue because it makes us feel good. There are definitely mornings, and honestly, even seasons, where I just feel like I'm seeing God and the Bible in such awe and wonder, I see Him everywhere, in every person I come in contact with, and I feel so close to Him. I feel like I'm experiencing revelation after revelation.

Shae:

But then there are other times, and honestly, even seasons, where it feels like pulling teeth, and I'm showing up, I'm being consistent, but I feel far away from God even though I'm spending time with Him. And so I think that's where we just have to say pursuing God is a spiritual discipline, and we can have the best intentions of pursuing God, but if we don't have that spiritual discipline component to keep us in

check, that's where things can get hard when our life is hard. So it's not a conversation of "is quiet time of discipline or is it a delight?" I think it is both. It's not just a discipline, but it also is a delight. It's a discipline because it's a priority that we want to have when we're in relationship with God, right?

Shae:

Just like I'm friends with Meredith and Lisa Allen. If I didn't have the discipline of pursuing time with them as friends or as coworkers, time could go on and we could still have that mutual understanding that we're friends. But if we don't have that devotion or that dedication to have that discipline of, "No, I know every so often I need to make sure I'm checking in with them. I'm reaching out to them. I'm doing life with them." Then that relationship is going to suffer. And it's the same way with God. So because God and His merciful grace, He gives us the freedom to actually enjoy time with Him. So not just have the discipline of getting to know Him, but to actually leave that place and enjoy it. We get to meet with God. We are the new temple, which means that in the Old Testament, before Jesus was here, people actually had to go into a physical temple to meet with God.

Shae:

And that's where God's presence reside. But now we, as the new temple, have God inside of us, which means that wherever we go, we can actually meet with God. That means that whenever you're driving and maybe you see an accident passing you, you can pause and pray and God's right there with you in that moment. Or you get in your car after leaving a meeting, and you're frustrated, and you can pray. Or if you're out with your kids somewhere in a restaurant and they're acting all kinds of crazy, you can pause and ask the Lord for help in that moment. There you go. So our ability to commune with God can now go with us. And the law has been written on our hearts. I know this because Jeremiah 31:33 tells us, *"This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time declares the Lord. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people."*

Shae:

So in conclusion for that, some days, we have to lean more on that discipline side. And some days we're bursting with so much delight for God's Word, and some days it is both. And I hope right there that brings somebody just some freedom today.

Meredith:

That's good. That's good.

Shae:

And I want to just remind us too, that even when a discipline gets hard, it's easy for us to think that we're doing it wrong, but we're not. That's the point of the discipline; even when it's hard, even when it's painful, it is producing something so good in us. And I see this in Scripture where Jesus is talking in Matthew 7:17, and He tells us that every good tree bears good fruit, but when you plant a tree in the ground or you plant flowers, it doesn't start blooming day one. You have seeds that go in good soil and over time, with nurturing and commitment and discipline, they produce good fruit. And it's the same for us. Sometimes we're spending time with the Lord, maybe it wasn't exactly what we needed to hear that day but then I don't know if this has ever happened to you, but you end up having a conversation with your friend or your husband later in that day, and they're telling you something that they're processing and you're like, "You know what I just read this morning, Lisa? Let me tell you about it."

Shae:

And so that just goes to show that it's seeds that go down into good soil. It's so much bigger than just that 24-hour parameter. So Meredith and Lisa, is there any part of that when you're thinking about the word "discipline," how does that play out in your life? Do you have any examples or just encouragement, whether that is with your time with the Lord or just how you've had a hard fought scenario with discipline in your life before?

Meredith:

I would love to hear from you, Lisa Allen. Because I honestly think you're probably one of the most disciplined people I've ever met.

Shae:

I would agree with that for sure.

Meredith:

Seriously, and I mean that in all honesty — I've watched you over the years. No, it's a beautiful thing. I've watched you over the years that we've been friends and just how consistent you are in prayer and other areas of your life. You're just so incredibly disciplined. So I'd love to hear what that journey has looked like for you.

Lisa:

Well thank you for those words, and thank you. This teaching is so good. I'm taking notes like crazy already. One of the things for me is, first of all, some of us have wiring toward discipline, so it's easier than others. So for those of you that don't, God bless you. Okay, God can help you in it, but don't compare yourself to your best friend who's super, super disciplined. I remember a very, very dry season of my life, very dry. It would be compared to the dark night of the soul that you hear theologians talk about. And all I would do, and this is not pretty guys, this is not pretty, but I would get into this rocking chair and I would, every morning, I would get in and I wouldn't hear God, I wouldn't feel God. And I just remember asking Him, "Would you just bless the fact that I showed up?"

Lisa:

And I just felt like the seeking of God honored Him. And I feel like in His own way, He was testing me, "Are you here? Because it's this exchange because you show up and I give you something?" And I think that grew my faith because I showed up. But the other thing, I think there's an interesting connection between the word "discipline" and "disciple," which both mean "learn." There's a learning component. So a couple of things that I've done is I've disciplined myself — not only my time with God, but think of all the ways we discipline ourselves in our lives. We get mammograms. Who wants to do that? Discipline. You just do it. Does anybody ... I don't love working out. You know what I mean? I discipline myself and say, "We can do it. We have it in ourselves in other areas. And we can draw strength for when we want to do it with Jesus."

Meredith:

I think that's really, really good. I look back on my life. When I first became a believer, I was 17 years old, and the Lord was so kind to put some older mentors in my life who really taught me a lot about you've got to get in the Word. You have to know what it says, and you have to have consistent time with the

Lord. And so I remember probably from the time I was like 17 all the way through college, y'all, I was incredibly disciplined. I look back on it now, and I'm like, "Wow, I was kind of robotic about this," but I woke up every morning, spent an entire hour reading my Bible; I was committed.

Meredith:

And that was probably well into my 20s, like mid-20s, even, then I got married, and I started a career, and that time had to shorten because I was in a different season, and then whoa Nellie, I had kids. And that was a whole 'nother layer of "this looks different." But looking back on my life and the discipline in the different seasons looked so different. And I still, to this day, draw on that probably five years where I woke up every day and had an hour in the Word of God, praying. I draw on that time where I was investing so deeply in my mind and in my spirit. And so I can't remember where I heard this, but it's some analogy, it's like an athlete analogy or whatever, but where they say you've got to stack your days. Stack your days of just discipline, discipline.

Meredith:

Because you're going to draw on that later. And so I'm in a season now where just recently had an upheaval of having a baby in my life and all that kind of stuff. And right now, my quiet time is maybe 10 minutes, and it includes lots of screaming children. But just a month ago, it looked different. And so I just think, man, when you are in a season where you can invest deeply and discipline yourself to really dive in to the Word of God and spend that special time with Him for long periods, it will pay off. It's not an empty investment. It comes back to you.

Lisa:

That's so good. I love just hearing how, I guess, what I'm taking away just from hearing y'all talk is that discipline can always be a part of your life, but the way that it takes shape in different seasons looks different. And I think we would just be good to lean into what our current season and what our current needs are and make adjustments on that. And so —

Meredith:

Can I give a pointer to my mom friends?

Lisa:

Yes, go for it.

Meredith:

Because this is a discipline I recently started putting into my life so that I could have a quiet time in the morning. And it really started a couple years ago when my daughter was really little, but I started and Shae has been at my house at night time, and she's probably watched me do this. Every night, before I go to bed, I preset my coffee, I get my kid's lunch and snacks out. I remove every obstacle I can before I go to bed so that when I wake up, and I try so hard to wake up before my kids do, so that I can have my brain. Even if it's just 10 minutes, y'all. Even if it's just 10 minutes, I remove all those obstacles that normally, that 10 minutes would have been me scooping coffee into the coffee pot, getting all the things ready, making bottles, doing whatever.

Meredith:

I try to do all of that before I go to bed, just so that I can get that 10 minutes before my kids come pitter patter down stairs going, "Mommy, I need breakfast, mom." All that kind of stuff. And so the discipline isn't always getting to the Word; it's preparing to get into the Word. And so that's such a small thing to do, but it made a huge difference in my life when I started doing it because I actually got the time with the Lord I wanted. Even if it was 10 minutes. Sorry, Shae, please carry on.

Shae:

No, I love that, I think that is so important. Just to point out, I want this to be just as much inspirational as it is practical. So I hope some of you moms, that sets you free today. And if anything, that's the reason that you were listening. That's the token that you needed. And so for our last part of our conversation today, I want to tell you about a revelation I had when I was talking to my friend, Carly, as I was working on this message and just processing through this topic of quiet time. Pursuing God and discipline ultimately was what I found, and what Joel really helped me understand is that pursuing God is a spiritual discipline. And so Lisa kind of mentioned it, but talking about food and exercise led me to this conversation I had with my friend who's a nutritionist. And I asked her about something I've always heard about just through different diets and food plans and things like that, which is if you keep doing the same thing in food and exercise for too long, you could actually reach a place where you plateau.

Shae:

And I wanted to ask her about this because I thought that maybe God would have something to teach us about how this same thing can play out in our time with Him. And so she actually told me "yes," confirmed that that can happen for three different reasons normally. So I've got three different scenarios with some questions that you can ask yourself depending on where you think you fall today. And I think that this was going to be a really great place for us to end our conversation today. So reason number one, scenario number one would be a patient seeing a nutritionist says that they're sticking to their regimented plan, they are committed to it, but when they actually are meeting with their nutritionist and going through what their day to day looks like, they actually realize that they're not being fully transparent, and they have deviated from their plan just a little bit.

Shae:

So an example for that would be if they are supposed to follow a certain food plan and they did actually add back in that afternoon snack they said they wouldn't, or they cut down their number of exercise times they were supposed to do that week. So the solution for this patient is to get honest, get transparent, and get back to your plan. So no shame, no condemnation, but come on back to the plan that you know works for you, and how this plays out in our time with God could be maybe you've got some stuff on your plate that has caused your time with God just to fall in priorities. And it could be something as simple as the example that Meredith just gave about doing something the night before so that the next morning, you can wake up and make sure that priority is protected.

Shae:

There's a lot of different ways that could play out in your life. But if this is you, I just want to say there's no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus; that's what Romans 8 tells us. But if you do feel like there are some distractions that have crept in, here's some questions I want you to ask yourself today. Am I doing something that is regularly distracting me from God, and how might I pivot from this? So if this is you, get back to your plan, maybe pick up something new that you could add back in, and get back to that priority of spending time with God. So that's scenario number one.

Shae:

Scenario number two would be, this would be our sweet ,rule-following friend. And I wish that I was the rule-following friend, but I am just not. I admire her, I think she hung the moon, and she is keeping all of our worlds turning, but I'm just not her. But this friend is sticking to their plan religiously. This would be our super-committed friend that you have not seen them have a cheat day in forever, but for some reason after doing the same —

Meredith :

I feel like this is Lisa Allen.

Lisa:

I was like, "I feel like this is me too," except for I do enjoy a pizza now and then.

Meredith :

If that's your cheat, Lisa Allen, God bless you.

Shae:

Yeah, seriously. I'm like, "Oh, oops."

Meredith :

"I just ate a whole chocolate cake."

Lisa:

I can eat a whole pizza for sure.

Shae:

Oh my gosh, okay. So when you do something for so long day after day, week after week, like maybe Whole 30 is your jam, and you've been doing it for 60 days, you are beyond Whole 30. You are at Whole 60. And maybe you felt like your body is just not responding in the way that it used to. You didn't do anything wrong, but for some reason, your progress has stalled. So it's time take some inventory. And the solution for this person would be to change up their plan with small little things they can add in that might restart their progress again. So they've got to mix up their food and exercise. And one thing Carly said that I thought was so good was she said, "I'll ask my clients, 'Are your workouts still challenging you?' And they're like, 'Not really.'"

Shae:

And she said, "Well then maybe it's time to up your weights." So for this friend, if this is you in terms of spending time with the Lord, I would just say, maybe it's time to up your weights. It's not that consistency is your problem. You're that super-committed, regimented person. And I really admire that because I am not that, but maybe it's time to up your weights. And that looks like changing up what resources you're using. Even the time of day that you're meeting with God or just the location. If you've had that same chair that you sit in in your living room for years and years, maybe it's time to just do a change of scenery, go outside maybe, or just pick a new time of day. Anything like that that can just be a small change where you're keeping that discipline, you're keeping the commitment, but it just adds a

little spark and joy and delight back into that routine because disciplines need to be tended to and maybe refreshed.

Shae:

So if this is you, I want you to ask yourself, "What makes me love Jesus more?" And then I want you to pursue that as much as possible in any different way that you can. And then the final scenario that I want to tell you about is patient number three, reason number three. So this person has something going on in their life a lot bigger than food and exercise. So when they come in to meet with their nutritionist, they're following their plan, they aren't cheating, they are not being deceitful about what they're sticking to, but they've just got a lot going on in their life. What they've got going on is so much bigger than weight goals they're trying to hit or exercise things they're trying to reach.

Shae:

Maybe their mom's in the hospital, or they just lost their job. And because of that excruciating weight of that stress, their progress has plateaued. So the solution for this friend is to give themselves a lot of grace for what is going on in their life and not get discouraged by the dip in their progress. And if that is you today, I just want to sit and encourage you for a second, because if you haven't had anyone sitting across from a table from you in a while telling you that they see you, I want to be that friend to stand in the gap just for a second. Because things going on in life, especially in this crazy year of 2020, they really can infiltrate just the weight that we're feeling. And that can totally affect our time with the Lord.

Shae:

And so you're not doing anything wrong. It doesn't make you a bad Christian. It makes you a real human. And so I just want to say that I see the sacrifices that you're making, and I see the kids that you're having to show up for more than you ever have in your life. I see what's stressing you out. That thing that's the last thing you think about before you go to bed and the first thing you think about in the morning, I see you. And I just want to emphasize even more than me standing in the gap for you today, God sees you too. And even when we feel depleted and disappointed and overwhelmed with what's on our plate, I want us to pause and all remember: This is not a conversation of just my quiet time pursuing God; He is pursuing you too. And so if this is you today, I actually have three questions for you.

Shae:

And I want you to ask yourself, "What is my current need? What is my current season? And what do I have to give?" And so I hope that through those different scenarios, you may have not thought about food and exercise having a connection with time with God, but just as I found that discipline theme, it just became so evident. And I just had to share it with you today. So just to recap, scenario number one would be, you need to get back to your plan. Scenario two would be, you need to add something new into your plan. And scenario three is give yourself all the grace in your plan. So I definitely know which one of these scenarios is me right now. Lisa and Meredith, I don't know if y'all can find yourself in them, but how has this maybe just encouraged you today? Or have you seen yourself in one of these buckets in a past season maybe?

Lisa:

I've seen myself in all the buckets in a past season, and I can tell you that. And I have two thoughts about this. First of all, sometimes, especially for that season where there's something big going on, sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is take a nap. You know what I mean? And then you're

refreshed and renewed rather than push, push, push. But for me, I could relate to the add something new, and I loved how you said it's up your weights. And so I shifted a Bible that I used in 2007, I changed one and went back to an old one rather than ... You think about a new Bible, you think something brand new. And it was filled with all these answered prayers because what I recorded in 2007, now I could see how God had answered the prayers throughout that Bible.

Lisa:

And then I went old school. I used to do this discipline of just writing one verse on an index card. Just one verse. I wouldn't do it in a journal. I just have a spiral bound thing of index cards that just show verse after verse after verse of God's Truth. And so I went back to doing that. So I upped my weights.

Meredith:

I love that. Looking at these three scenarios, I certainly have seen them in different ways in my life, but I would say right now, I'm for sure in scenario number three. Recently, just two and a half weeks ago, got our first little foster baby. I have a 5-year-old little girl already and a 9-year-old little boy tomorrow, which is wild, but we also got our first little foster baby two days before we went into our annual She Speaks conference, one week before my husband recorded his live album, and one week before, as my job here at Proverbs 31 is to launch us into our planning for 2021. And so I carried the weight of that —

Lisa:

On the heels of homeschooling.

Meredith :

On the heels of homeschooling.

Lisa:

Oh my goodness, and working.

Meredith :

I mean just a lot, a lot. And I would say in the last three weeks, I have made my coffee the night before, I set out — y'all should see my kitchen counter before I go to bed, all the pre-made bottles ready to go so that I don't have to think about it in the morning. But I'm still only, and I've had to give myself grace because only just a month ago, I was waking up before the kids, but I didn't have bottles to make, and I was getting a solid 30, 40 minutes with the Lord alone in a quiet house. It was awesome because my kids were five and almost nine.

Meredith :

Now I've got a baby, I'm getting maybe 15 minutes in y'all, and I am struggling through a Psalm because my eyes, that baby's still waking up in the middle of the night and I'm having to feed him, and my eyes are wanting to fall asleep. But I know I keep telling myself, "Meredith, this is short, and it's worth it for this little baby. So just show up, the Lord will show up for you, just keep doing it." And so Shae, I appreciate your words so much because I'm the girl that needed to hear that.

Shae:

Well I love that, I need to hear them too.

Lisa:

And for the moms that are out there — I'm sorry, I interrupted you Shae — one of the things that makes me think of ... You've mentioned a couple of times, Meredith, 10 minutes, 15 minutes, and there's this old hymn, old-school hymn. And it says, "Little is much when God is in it. Little is much," and God will take that 10 minutes, and He will make it feel like an hour and a half in someone else's quiet time.

Meredith :

That's right.

Shae:

That's so good. I love that. I think my big takeaway from just even listening to you guys talk today is that there's still that part of me that is that middle school girl in youth group that is just learning about all of these new things of what it means to walk with God for the first time. And I think sometimes it's really easy for me to revert to that and pick up on the rituals that are good disciplines, but almost that the religious side of what is supposed to be just a flourishing relationship with God. And so I feel myself go on that ritual side and the discipline is good, but it sometimes doesn't have the light side back into it.

Shae:

So I think just adding something new in for me has been a really, really good thing for the season. And as we just wrap up today, the last thing I just want to remind you is that I want to remind you of who is on the other side of your quiet time. I want to remind you of who your God is, because whenever you make time with God, you have the undivided attention of the God of the universe. And whether that is 10 minutes, five minutes, a prayer in your car that you whisper through tears, or a worship song that you are singing to the top of your lungs because that's the best you have to get today, I just want to remind you that you have that God right in front of you and that He's pursuing you too.

Shae:

And so instead of approaching your time with God as just a box to check, I want you to realize that it is a feast to receive, and that He has a full table out in front of you for all of these things that He wants you to know, and that He wants you to hold on to you. And so whatever adjustment you need to make in this season to get back to a place of really feeling like you're in a flourishing thriving relationship with Him, I pray today that this conversation blessed you and made you feel normal and human, and that you feel encouraged to pick up your bootstraps and march forward in victory for what this next season looks like.

Meredith:

Wow, Shae, I love that so much. I hope all of my sisters today wrote down, "It is a feast to receive," because that is a beautiful thing, we don't look at it that way very often. So it's so helpful. I hope it helped all of you today as you've listened to this podcast. If you're anything like me, sometimes I can listen to a podcast, and there's so many things that I want to act on, or how do I process this? Well we have got a great resource for you. It's called *Now What: A Practical Guide to Process and Apply Biblical Messages*. Our team has worked super hard at this to put together just an easy way to process podcasts or sermons, or maybe you're reading through something right now that you just need some help figuring out what are the next action steps. What other scriptures apply to this? You can go to proverbs31.org/listen to find this free resource in our show notes so that you can act on what you've learned today.

Lisa:

So good. Well Meredith and Shae, since I'm co-hosting, can I wrap us up today? I don't want to wrap us up. I wish it would keep going. It's so, so good, but Shae, thanks for joining us. This was so wonderful, took so many notes, and I know so many people were blessed. And thank all of you out there for listening. We are so glad you joined us today, and we pray that what you heard helps you know the Truth of God's Word and live out that truth because we believe when you do, it changes everything.