

the
PROVERBS 31
MINISTRIES
podcast

Biblical truth for any girl in any season.

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- Kaley: Hi everyone. It's Kaley, and I want to thank Dwell for supporting the Proverbs 31 Ministries Podcast. Visit dwellapp.io/proverbs to get a 20% discount and start using your ears to renew your mind. That's dwellapp.io/proverbs for 20% off an annual or lifetime subscription. Now onto the show.
- Meredith: Hi, friends. Thanks for tuning in 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 cohost, Kaley Olson.
- Kaley: Well, hi, Meredith. It's great to be back with you today. We're recording this episode on the cusp of fall.
- Meredith: Sounds nice.
- Kaley: Meredith, I have a question for you: What are you most looking forward to about fall?
- Meredith: Cooler weather. I just am a hot-blooded person, and I don't like being hot all the time, so just the cool weather of fall is my favorite thing.
- Kaley: Cool weather is nice.
- Meredith: It's really nice.
- Kaley: I like making meals that I can put in the crock pot — soups or things like that.
- Meredith: That's nice.
- Kaley: Some good soup. A good chili.
- Meredith: That's so nice. We're not being very basic right now. Neither one of us said pumpkin.
- Kaley: I don't really like pumpkin.
- Meredith: Me neither.

Kaley: I don't know.

Meredith: We're going to get messages on Instagram right now because this is just the holy grail of most women.

Kaley: [crosstalk] into pumpkin. I know. Well, can we be honest though, we're recording this in August, and it's going to release later, but the Starbucks already came out with the pumpkin things.

Meredith: I know, and I just feel like that's obscene. What are they doing?

Kaley: I don't know.

Meredith: We're going to get serious DMs today.

Kaley: I know. I'm over here going to be wearing my shorts as long as I can, but anyway; do you know, Meredith, what else is super exciting about this fall?

Meredith: Tell me.

Kaley: Lysa TerKeurst is releasing her next book, *Forgiving What You Can't Forget*, in November, which is the best early Christmas present ever.

Meredith: That's right.

Kaley: But we've known about this, because every time Lysa releases a book, she compares it to the birthing process. Although I haven't been through that, I can see how she would compare it to that, because this is a labor of love. It started back in what, 2018? When she started getting the ideas together for this book, and it's 2020. Here we are, she's going to release it in November. This is a really big deal for her, and for us at Proverbs 31.

Meredith: That's right. You know what else is a really big deal in November?

Kaley: What?

Meredith: There's all kinds of crazy things happening in the world.

Kaley: Yes, there is.

Meredith: Just think about it. It's nuts. It's hard to imagine someone who doesn't need a message on forgiveness right now. It is so appropriate, so needed. I'll tell you more about pre-ordering the book at the end of this episode, but I understand if you're dying to get your hands on the first three chapters for free, you can go on over to p31bookstore.com and order it right now, and you'll get the first three chapters.

Kaley: We'll be here when you get back; we understand if you need to press pause right now.

Meredith: Go ahead.

Kaley: But if you want to stay on and order the book later, I'm excited to tell you what our teaching today is going to be. It's actually a message from Lysa. We asked her to teach on something from *Forgiving What You Can't Forget*, so that you could go ahead and hear a little bit about what the book is about. I honestly can't think of anyone who is exempt from this message.

Today, she's going to share about the perspectives you need for your hurt and heartbreak. Guys, wherever you are, buckle up and grab a notebook. We're going to hand it over to Lysa now, and we'll be back to wrap up.

Lysa: Do you ever find yourself replaying and reliving the details of the deep hurt in your life? That horrific season. The conversation that stunned you. The day of discovery. The divorce. The wrongful death so unfathomable you still can't believe that they're gone. The break-up. The day everything changed.

I understand this kind of defining devastation in such a personal way. If you've been following my story and my journey from heartbreak to healing, you know the details of my husband and I. Just the way that our life unexpectedly fell apart when I discovered that he was being unfaithful.

It has been five years of deep wounding and uncertainty of whether or not reconciliation would ever happen and a long process of healing. Then, a very surprising turn of events that created the opportunity for a rebuilding and a healing. But I want you to know the healing is slow, and it's hard, and it's full of triggers, and it's full of unexpected setbacks. Then, all of a sudden, it feels like things get better, then there's another day where things feel worse. It's very back and forth. It's very long.

Whether you've experienced pain through a certain event that happened, or maybe it's just a collection of hurt that built over time, because someone wasn't who they were supposed to be, or didn't do what they were supposed to do, or didn't protect you the way they should have protected you, your heartbreak deserves a safe place to be processed. That's why I want to give you three healing perspectives and scriptures today that I've really been hanging on to when I'm struggling with the realities of my own heartbreak and pursuing my own healing.

Also, I think these three questions will be good to reflect on that will really help you start to make progress with your own journey no matter what that journey involves, because you get to decide how you want to move forward from here.

The first truth I've been hanging onto is: Forgiveness is more satisfying than revenge. Let me just clearly state that maybe you see me here today, and I've got my hair and make-up done, and I'm sitting beside pretty flowers, and you assume maybe that this is the way my life always looks. That I'm always thinking in biblical principles and walking forward using great words and smart tactics, but that's not the way healing always

happens. It isn't pretty. A lot of the times, it's full of surprising reactions that you didn't even see coming.

I thought, in this first point, before I get into the teaching about “forgiveness is more satisfying than revenge,” I thought I would tell you about a time I messed up really badly. A couple of my family members decided that they wanted to do a business venture. When they presented their business plan to the family, everyone seemed on board except me. There were alarm bells going off about every five seconds in the presentation. The more excited everyone else got, the more my heart sank.

I think when you've been through a lot of unexpected heartbreak, you start to have this very hesitant feeling when things start moving forward, and those alarm bells happen. It's this discernment that you have that things are not going to turn out the way that everyone else thinks they're going to turn out. You want to hit the pause button on life and shake everybody and wake them up and say, “don't you see this train barreling towards you? This is disastrous.”

You see, that's the crazy thing about discernment. Discernment gives you this alarm bell that something needs to be approached with caution, but discernment doesn't give you details, so it leaves you in this weird place of telling people, “I have a bad feeling about this,” but not being able to give the details to properly give them enough information where they see what you're feeling. I would imagine if you've dealt with hurt and heartbreak, you know exactly what I'm talking about.

I decided to take the super spiritual approach and think to myself, “God's going to shut this down”. I know He is. But as the weeks and months unfolded, God wasn't shutting it down. It almost seemed like God was working in the exact opposite way. He was opening up doors. He was making everything possible. It almost got to this point where everyone thought, “do you not see how obvious it is that this is to supposed happen?”

And yet inside of me, I was still feeling so incredibly triggered by this every time it would get brought up. I still had the discernment that this is not going to go well. I had given a list of my family members of everything that needed to happen. If everything impossible on this list, and it was an impossible list, if everything happened, then I would override my feelings, and I would be okay with it. I was not going to be a negative Nellie forever, at least on the outside.

Like I said, all of the impossible things got worked out, and it seemed as if God was just opening up doors and smoothing over the impossible. When they got to the very last thing on the list and that worked out just fine, then they thought it was okay to just move forward. We didn't revisit the conversation.

I walked into my kitchen one day, and all of the sudden I see all the papers had been signed. This thing that I'd felt so resistant toward, it was going to happen. I remember seeing those papers and being shocked that we hadn't had one final conversation where we all decided to move forward.

I walked into my room. I was having one of those moments where I just thought, "this is not good. This is not good." I don't really know what came over me, except I walked into the kitchen after everyone else was gone. I stood there, and I stared at the papers, and I just thought, "I can't let this happen."

So I got these big gallon Ziploc bags, and I stood in front of the papers and, you guys, I ripped them up into tiny little pieces and put them in the Ziploc baggies. Even after I ripped up all the papers, the folders that the papers had been in were still there, so I decided to even rip up the folders and put them all in these baggies.

Then I went and took the baggies and put them in front of one of the family members that was involved. They just looked at me very calmly and said, "Wow, you've made quite a statement." Now I have to tell you that while I was ripping up the papers, which by the way, it was easy to redo the papers and the venture went on, and everyone's still alive.

While I do think my discernment had some good parts to it, things haven't played out quite as alarming as I originally thought. But I thought as I stood there ripping the papers, that this act of revenge, I guess you could say, that it felt so good in the moment, but afterwards, especially the next morning, it didn't feel good at all. I felt so foolish and almost immature.

Have you ever had one of those moments where it felt good to have that release of emotion in the minute and then later you just thought, "who was that person?"

I teach you this principle of forgiveness is more satisfying than revenge fully aware that our feelings can make us actually think quite the opposite. That revenge is what would truly satisfy us. If only we could see that the person who has hurt us is now hurting the same way that we would, things would feel a little more fair.

Well, I agree that the person who hurt you should have to pay for their offenses and crimes against you, but you shouldn't have to pay for them. Revenge is you paying twice for hurt that someone else did to you. You pay a price when they hurt you, and then you pay double when you carry that pain inside your heart, and it causes you to say things and do things that you would never otherwise say and do.

You may think that getting them back will make you feel better in the short term, but in the long term, it will always cost you more emotionally and spiritually than you'd ever want to pay. Trust me, I know from unfortunately personal experience, you don't want to trade in your peace, your maturity, your spiritual progress, your integrity, and all the other beauty you add to the world just to add a little suffering to your offender's life or to try and teach them a lesson.

The only thing that your revenge will do is add your wrongdoing on top of theirs. Forgiveness, it releases to the Lord your need for them to be corrected, or redirected, or even punished, giving it to the only one who can do this with the right measures of

justice and mercy. Forgiveness. It doesn't let the other person off the hook. It actually places them in God's hands.

As you walk through the forgiveness process, it softens your heart. Over time, I've discovered a softening inside of me that truly desires for no more hurt to occur at all. Not for them, not for me, not for any of the people involved. I just want peace. The peace that comes from forgiveness is so much more satisfying than revenge.

I love this verse. It's so powerful because it reminds me over and over and over that peace can come as long as I choose it. This is the verse, "*If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.*" Did you notice, "as far as it depends on you"? We can't control what other people do, or the choices that they make, or the peace that they don't have. But as far as it depends on us, if possible, live peaceably with all.

Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God. For it is written, "*Vengeance is mine. I will repay,*" says the Lord. "*To the contrary, if your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he's thirsty, give him something to drink. For by doing so you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good*" (Romans 12:19-21).

How does this perspective help you look at forgiveness in a different light for your situation? Maybe you want to pause right now and think about that because it's not just enough for me to tell my story and what I've learned. I want this to be experiential wisdom for us all.

Number two, your offender is also suffering from pain. I know it's really, really hard to forgive, but I've found that it's almost impossible to forgive someone without compassion. It's us making that choice to have compassion on this other person. It's very hard to have compassion on someone who's shown you no compassion at all. I understand that.

Instead of starting at the place of trying to have compassion on someone who has hurt you, start with having compassion on the pain that they had to have experienced in order to have made the choices that they did that hurt you so much. The one who causes pain is in pain.

I don't have to know anything about their wounding to know that hurt exists. At some point, someone brutalized their innocence or made them feel terrified, tossed aside, beaten down, invisible, unseen, unwanted or shamed. Chances are, it was probably a combination of several of those feelings.

I'll often picture the one who hurt me as a small child, desperate for someone to have compassion on them. If I can have compassion on them in their pain, I can have enough compassion so that my forgiveness for that person will be genuine. While this is a really helpful thing to keep my heart tender for forgiveness. I'm not talking about feeling pangs of guilt that excuse behavior that should not be excused in the name of

compassion, but I can let compassion help me never shame that person or refuse to give them forgiveness.

One of the people who hurt me most appeared to have had the most perfect life. There was absolutely, from what I could see, no apparent abuse or neglect or hardship of any kind. But what appeared to be perfect, I later found out years later was filled with secret pain. When I found out about that person's pain, this person who hurt me so much, I cried. I cried for their pain, for my pain, for just the fact that no human gets through life without being deeply hurt. At some point, grief finds all of us.

Listen to this verse from Ephesians Chapter 4, verse 32, "*Be kind and compassionate to one another. Forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you.*" Isn't it interesting that the instruction is to be kind and compassionate, which seems to be pointing to what comes next in the verse: forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you.

Another time to make this personal. How does this perspective help you see your offender in a more compassionate way? Maybe you could list out some things that you know about the person who hurt you that could really soften your heart toward them. If you don't know any of the ways that they've been hurt or shamed in their life, maybe just spend some time acknowledging that that surely has happened and let it tender your heart enough to have compassion — not necessarily for the person at first, but for the hurt. As you have compassion for their hurt, have compassion for the person, which paves the road to forgiveness.

Kaley: Hey, friends, before Lysa gets to her third point, we're going to pause for a minute and let you know about this week's sponsor, the Dwell Bible app. Lysa just mentioned softening our hearts towards the person we need to forgive, and I know for me, softening my heart always starts with Scripture.

My friends, Dwell is an audio Bible app that I've recently found and love using because it's got playlists I can tune into based on what I need in the moment. Perfect for when I'm in the process of forgiveness. Also, Dwell mode allows me to meditate and pray while listening to Scripture. How cool is that?

With Dwell, you can use the search feature to go straight into a verse or a collection of verses with just a few taps on your keyboard. Let's say after this teaching, you want to meditate on some forgiveness scriptures. It's easy with Dwell.

Visit dwellapp.io/proverbs to get a 20% off discount and start using your ears to renew your mind. That's dwellapp.io/proverbs for 20% off an annual or lifetime subscription. Now back to Lysa.

Lysa: Number three, the enemy is the real villain. Yes, people do have a choice to sin against us or not, and certainly when we are hurt, the person hurting us willingly played into the enemy's plan. But it helps me to remember that this person ultimately isn't my real enemy. The devil is real and on an all-out assault against everything good. All good

things. He hates the word together, and he especially works with great intentionality against anything that brings honor and glory to God.

But we're told in Scripture that we can take a stand against the schemes of the enemy. I have an enemy, remember that, but it's not this person. I've found some interesting information in the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament in Ephesians 6:11. In that verse I just read, that word can in the original Greek form means "I am powerful." I have the power. We aren't powerless when the enemy stirs up trouble amongst us. The secret is to be aware of this. The power is not in question, but our awareness of the power often rises and falls on our willingness to do what God's word says to do in times of conflict.

Excuse me while I seriously flinch because this steps on my toes so much. It's often when I don't want to live out God's Word with another person that doing what God's Word says is an epic defeat of the enemy. There is nothing more powerful than a person living what God's Word teaches.

Ephesians 6:11-12 encourages us to put on the full armor of God so that you can, remember that word we just studied, so that you can, in the power that is available for you, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the Heavenly realms."*

How does this perspective help you identify the possible schemes of the enemy in your relational tensions and heartbreaks? I think it's good to think about this and to think about the fact that we have an enemy, but that person isn't our real enemy.

I know this is a lot, but I want to hit the pause button here. But I have more teaching on this. Actually, I have more perspectives, more scriptures, and more reflection questions that I don't want you to miss, so be sure to download my free resource that my team and I put together for you called "The Five Healing Perspectives That You Need for Your Hurt or Heartbreak." You can find out more information about that in the show notes.

As we end today, let me acknowledge the heartbreaks you carry. They're big. I know that. If no one else in this world has been kind enough to say this, I will. I'm so sorry for all that's happened to you. But I also want to encourage you. Healing is possible. Progress is possible. But we must believe it and embrace it if we're going to live it.

Kaley: Wow. What a helpful teaching. I'd love to do a little recap of Lysa's points for our listeners. The first point was, forgiveness is more satisfying than revenge.

Meredith: So good.

Kaley: Wow. It's hard to swallow that one.

Meredith: I know.

Kaley: But it's true. The second one is, "your offender is also suffering from pain." It's not just you.

Meredith: Finding that compassion.

Kaley: So good. The third is, "the enemy, not the offender, is the real villain in the story." Lysa mentioned that she's got two more perspectives in addition to the three she shared in today's episode. We don't want you to miss out on those, so visit the show notes for today's episode at proverbs31.org/listen and click the link to get the download.

It's absolutely free and it will be such a valuable resource, I think, to help you continue getting perspective on your hurt and heartbreak.

Meredith: Absolutely. Also, don't forget about preordering Lysa's book, *Forgiving What You Can't Forget* at p31bookstore.com. When you preorder, you'll get access to the first three chapters of the book immediately. So you can start reading right now. I'm telling you, that's something that you're going to want to do.

Guys, thank you so much for listening today. Friends, we pray this episode was meaningful and encouraging for you. At Proverbs 31 Ministries, we believe when you know the truth of God's Word and live out that truth, it changes everything. We'll see you next time.