

the  
**PROVERBS 31**  
MINISTRIES  
podcast

Biblical truth for any girl in any season.

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Kaley: Hi, everyone. Thank you for tuning into *The Proverbs 31 Ministries Podcast*, where we share biblical Truth for any girl in any season. My name is Kaley Olson, and I'm here with my co-host, Meredith Brock.

Meredith: Well, hey, Kaley.

Kaley: Hi.

Meredith: We are back again with the second installment of “Therapy and Theology,” based on Lysa's new book, *Forgiving What You Can't Forget*. In this series, Lysa TerKeurst, along with our Director of Theological Research, Joel Muddamalle, and Lysa's licensed professional counselor, Jim Cress, talk through the hard realities of life through the lens of therapy and theology. Today's episode is on the daily cure for a heavy heart. And we can't wait for you to hear it.

Kaley: Absolutely. And before we jump into their conversation, we want to remind you that if you're a parent, some of the content in this series might be too mature for young ears. So, if you're in the car with the kiddos, we suggest waiting to listen and process on your own. All right, friends, here is Lysa, Jim and Joel.

Lysa: Hi. I'm Lysa TerKeurst. Welcome to “Therapy and Theology” with my good friends and ministry partners: Joel Muddamalle, he's the Director of Theological Research at Proverbs 31 Ministries — and my personal counselor, Jim Cress. Welcome, you guys. I know today we have a very important topic to cover. We've been in a series on forgiveness because we are celebrating the release of the book that I've written, *Forgiving What You Can't Forget*. And I know both of us, all together, we've spent countless hours working on forgiveness. Both — Joel, you and I have worked on it in the studying of God's Word and really seeking to understand what God's Word does and does not say about what forgiveness is and what forgiveness is not.

So we already had a session on that. If you missed that, we'll put a link so you can go back and listen to that one. But you don't have to stop today's in order to get into this topic. You can dive right in and go back and listen to the previous episode after this episode. And Jim, you and I have spent many hours working on forgiveness from a counseling, therapeutic standpoint. I so appreciate both of you adding your voices to this important discussion. Today we're going to be talking about the cure for a heavy

heart. I think all of us ... Well, I don't want to put this on you. I'm just going to give you an opportunity —

Jim: Put it on Joel.

Lysa: Okay.

Joel: Right.

Lysa: I'm going to give you an —

Joel: Thanks, Jim.

Lysa: — opportunity to say — we can all do it at the same time.

Joel: Okay.

Lysa: If you have ever had one of those times in your life where it's not that there's something big and traumatic happening in the moment, but you wake up on what could be a really good day but you feel like there is this unexplainable heaviness in your heart. So raise your hand if you've ever been there.

Jim: I got two.

Joel: Yeah, for sure.

Lysa: Yes. Me too.

Joel: I do too.

Lysa: Me too. Right?

Joel: Yes.

Jim: Yeah.

Lysa: And I think that there are many contributing factors when someone has a heavy heart. I know for me, my natural vent is on a peacemaker, and when there are situations in my life that I feel like I can't get to that place of peace, then it just creates a lot of heaviness, and it feels like a constant distraction to me all day. And so sometimes I can point directly to the reason why I'm feeling this heaviness, and other times I can't. Other times, I wake up, and I feel heavy, and I'm not even exactly sure why it's there.

But when we are studying forgiveness, one place in the Bible that I found to be so interesting is when Jesus told the disciples, "*Let me tell you how to pray. This is then how you should pray.*" And in Matthew Chapter 6, we find the recording of what Jesus then said, starting in verse 9, "*This is then how you should pray. Our father in heaven,*

*hallowed would be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."*

And as I read that, I'm struck by a couple of things. Number one: If I was given the task by God to write one succinct prayer that for all time would teach people how to pray, I'm not sure that I would have thought to write it so brilliantly like Jesus wrote it.

Joel: Right.

Lysa: And I'm afraid that if I was given the task — I was not, thank goodness. But if I was given this task, I probably would not have thought to put in confession and forgiveness, and make that the bulk of the focus of the prayer. And so, because Jesus did, if you count up the words, the majority of the words in this prayer that Jesus says, "*This is then how you should pray*," they're dedicated to confession, forgiveness, deliverance from the evil one and then a warning on forgiveness. And there's not a real clear break. Was that last little part, part of the prayer or was He just giving a commentary?

To me, that's kind of an irrelevant question because it's all right there together. And it's all still in the words of Jesus. And so I feel like so much, when Jesus was teaching us to pray, is focused on confession and forgiveness. There must be a reason for that. And as I decided to start implementing confession and forgiveness as a more daily routine, it started to lift some of the heaviness in my heart. And I started to think to myself, "Wow, I've never been taught this before." I've never been taught that the daily cure for heaviness in our heart is confession and forgiveness. What are your thoughts?

Joel: There's a lot. I think one, very personally, just the last couple weeks — I had a friend who is walking through a really difficult season in their marriage. Been married seven years, got three kids, and he found out some things that he was horrified at. And his wife and him, they're working through the realities of forgiveness, betrayal, trust rebuilding. And it was really interesting. Just the other day, he called and said, "I realized that there were a lot of things that I had been doing that I wasn't aware of until my wife made me aware of it.

And I find myself during the day, randomly, where those things will just pop into my mind. And when they pop into my mind, I stop what I do, and I just go to her, and I just confess that. I say, "I'm so sorry for being short with you." And then she responds in this awkward, "Am I supposed to say something back because we're just making dinner, making lunch?" But he used that exact same phrase, Lysa; he said, "It took a heaviness from my heart off, and it replaced it with a sense of being able to really connect." And I think there's a beauty there that takes place with confession that Jesus is trying to teach us, and he gets that.

A couple quick notes about this. Why is it that Jesus ... You brought this up so brilliantly. Why use these words? Why these sentences? Why this structure? One of the things that

I love about the Lord's Prayer is that the Lord says all the things that He has enacted in His earthly ministry.

Lysa: Wow.

Joel: So think about that. That the Lord is saying, "*Give us our daily bread.*" Well, Jesus Himself gave daily bread, you know? He says, "*Forgive us our debts, as we have also forgiven our debtors.*" Jesus knows He's coming to the cross where He is going to do the judicial declaring of people being free of their guilt. "*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*" Jesus is the one who delivered the people of Israel, the people of God from a greater enemy than Pharaoh in Egypt, which is what they would have thought when they're saying, "*Deliver us from evil;*" they're thinking the Red Sea.

Lysa: Right.

Joel: They're thinking, "This is our past story." And this is what Jesus is doing. And then, how would the people who are hearing this, what are they thinking of when they hear something like, "Debts?" I think sometimes we miss this, but the majority of the hearers of that time are people who are borrowing, not lending. They are steeped in debt. They are steeped in the reality that some cases they can't pay this back, and Jesus is giving them a model for this extravagant forgiveness that is modeled by Jesus Himself and He's going to show that in the cross coming up.

Lysa: And, Jim, I know you and I have talked about, we think it's interesting that when forgiveness is mentioned here, the weight of the offense is referred to as a debt.

Jim: Well, and we have referenced now many times in these series of podcasts and videos that one of the words [foreign language], in Greek, means to cancel the debt. And as we've talked a lot about fact and impact, fact, this is what you did, but how much is the debt? Credit card companies do it all the time. If they were to write off debt or they were trying to assess you, where are you with your credit score? How much is the debt? So what's the weight, is it a \$5 debt or a \$5 million debt? But the weightiness of what is the debt as we go to forgive? And sometimes that just takes time for me to even be in touch with. Well, how big is this for me? How much has this bothered me? What is the size of the debt?

Lysa: And I think as we assess the hurt that we've been through and so much of the reason why we even bring up the topic of forgiveness is, it's attached to something has happened, somebody has done something that has caused us pain. And because of that there was an emotional, maybe even a financial, maybe even a physical cost. But regardless, there was a cost. Somebody did something that cost us a lot. And I think, when you and I have talked, Jim, about — we make the decision to forgive for the facts of what happened.

Jim: Right.

Lysa: Then we also have to walk through the process of forgiveness to better assess and understand how to forgive the impact, not just the facts of what happened —

Jim: That's right.

Lysa: ... originally, but the impact of what the effect has been, what the cost has been to us because of the actions. So we can forgive the action, but the process of forgiveness is going to be a much longer process because sometimes we don't even know the full impact of how this is going to affect us or what this will cost us. I mean, it leaks into our life for years and years and years to come. And so it's important to recognize when we become aware, "Oh, there's actually more debt here." Or, "Oh, there's actually a bigger cost here than what I realized." Or, "Oh, I'm now having emotions that are a direct tie back to the original event that hurt me, but now these emotions have leaked into my life and they're affecting me today." The fact could have happened years and years and years —

Jim: That's right.

Lysa: — ago, but the impact is still affecting me. So it's important to understand, we forgive for the fact, and then we go through the process of forgiveness. And that process may take years, and years, and years.

Jim: True.

Lysa: The process of forgiving the impact as we become aware of the emotional costs that this has had to us. Just because we now have to forgive the impact, that doesn't negate the original decision —

Jim: That's right.

Lysa: ... to forgive.

Joel: Right.

Lysa: The original decision to forgive is there, and it's secure, but forgiving the impact happens over time, and it's a decision and a process.

Jim: I like both of those, and it's like calling the forgiveness adjuster. Everybody that's had a car wreck, first thing you do, call the insurance. They're going to send an adjuster, and you go to the body shop, and they're going to give an estimate of what the damage is. Now, they got to look under the car, damage to the chassis. Everybody who's driven a car knows this. Or hail damage, or something on a house. The adjuster comes out and says, "What is the extent?" "I don't know, a couple of holes." "No, you need a whole new roof." So that forgiveness adjuster, as we do this work, I especially have been able to do that with people in counseling is, let's just stop and look at the impact. And I even say, "Naming, not blaming." We're not here to do blame work of people. Blame is often an attempt to discharge pain and discomfort. But it's to say, "What has this cost me?"

And, to go back to another thing you said a moment ago, remember, as you land your plane of harm on a person's runway, that runway was built before you. And so we always want to assess the post-traumatic stress part, that you are hurting a person and that can open up old unhealed wounds or maybe scars that have healed. It's often a buy one, get two (or three) free.

Lysa: Wow. Yeah. Well, I think we also need to incorporate the awareness here that Jesus intended for this to be a daily prayer.

Joel: Right.

Jim: Yeah, good. Yeah.

Lysa: When he says, "Give us today our daily bread," Joel, would you agree that's an indication that this is not just something we forgive a few times in our life for the really hard and horrific stuff —

Joel: Yeah.

Lysa: — but what this seems to indicate, as I was studying it because I needed this. I started to realize, "Wow, forgiveness and confession are supposed to be part of my daily routine." And I wonder if, because confession and forgiveness has not been part of my daily routine, that's why I'm carrying this heaviness in my heart. And the way we get into an issue is often a clue of how we can get out of it. So if I got into this realizing like, "Wow, I really haven't been incorporating confession and forgiveness on a daily basis." Then maybe by realizing that, I can implement, including confession and forgiveness. And it has started to lift the heaviness of my heart.

Joel: Yeah. I think it's the saying "wash, rinse, repeat," is that right? [Inaudible].

Lysa: It's on the shampoo bottle.

Joel: Yes. Wash [inaudible].

Jim: Shampoo bottle theology.

Lysa: I'm so impressed if you just pulled that out from somewhere like —

Jim: I don't know.

Lysa: — typically at sports analogies —

Jim: Right.

Lysa: — when I'm having to nod my head like —

Jim: Sure.

Lysa: — it goes right over [inaudible].

Jim: Sports to shampoo we are making progress here.

Lysa: But wash, rinse, repeat. I have got that, Joel. I've got it.

Joel: And I think what we want for forgiveness is to be a one-and-done. Wouldn't that be so nice?

Lysa: Be nice.

Joel: Wouldn't that be nice? And this is what you're talking about is the fact, the impact, the consequences. A couple things that I think is instructive of what Jesus says here. When He says, "*give us this daily bread.*" I want to think of the Israelites and the deep story that they have, where they recollect. I just think of the Israelites like us with campfires. We sit around a camp, you're going to tell stories. We tell stories of our families, things that we love, they're all instructing us in some way. And when Jesus says, "*Give us this, our daily bread.*" For the Israelites, the people of God, they're thinking of the manner in the wilderness and Lysa, you taught this once. And it was so profound. I remembered that She Speaks, listening to one of your teachings.

And I don't know how I'd have not thought about it, it was just so brilliant. You talked about the necessity for the manna to be on a daily basis. And as I think about the necessity for the manna to be on a daily basis, it brings us to the realization that if that manna could have sustained multiple days, it would have put the people in a position where they could have stopped trusting God and begin to trust in themselves. And the necessity of a dailiness of prayer, a necessity of looking to the Lord on a daily basis, it's actually forming our heart. It's creating us to be a type of people that recognize our limits, that realize that we are in deep need of a great God who is good and gracious and who can and does save us. And that is the exact same thing that happens with the very next phrase of the idea of forgive us, our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors, because it is an ongoing action, and we are incapable.

I just believe we're incapable of doing this to the fullest degree, aside from the power and the presence of the Spirit.

Jim: Amen.

Lysa: So here's a moment where I can practice confession. Okay. So I'm just going to confess.

Jim: You know this is documented for [inaudible].

Lysa: Yes recorded. Yes it is. But here's what I want to confess: I find it much harder to forgive — sometimes even impossible to forgive — when my view of the situation is that I'm the saint and they are the sinner.

Jim: Sure.

Lysa: And I think it's so important to recognize before — Jesus says that we should also forgive people who've created emotional, physical, spiritual, whatever the debt is. People have heard us, so now they have created a debt for us before we forgive other people that we recognize our need to receive forgiveness from God, which helps me remember the same grace that I desperately need is the grace that I should be all the more eager to give. Grace is not giving someone else permission to continue to hurt you. Grace is recognizing that you're human, I'm human, you hurt me because someone else has hurt you.

So you are carrying burdens of hurt. And while I may not be able to have compassion on you because you've hurt me so much that would be hard to just muster up —

Jim: Sure.

Lysa: — compassion for the person that hurt you. But I can have compassion on the hurt. You must have suffered that led you to making some of the decisions that you've made against me. And I don't even have to know what hurt they have suffered, but I can always assume rightly most of the time we say don't assume things, but it's not a far stretch for me to remind myself that person has suffered hurt because every person has suffered hurt. And it's from their own places of hurt that they would then do something that would cause hurt to me. But it's so important first that I recognize: God, I need Your forgiveness.

Because if I am hesitant to recognize that I need God's forgiveness, or I only think that I need this much forgiveness from God. If I only think I need this much forgiveness from God, then I just let that little tiny bit of forgiveness flow to me. And I have very little forgiveness to then let flow through me.

Jim: Right.

Lysa: But when I throw my arms open wide and say, "God, I need abundant forgiveness from You." When God's forgiveness flows to me in such abundance that He wants to give me in full abundance is absolute forgiveness. When I let it flow to me, I can then let it flow through me. But so much of me, remembering I have done wrong too. And I need God's forgiveness. It shifts my mindset from "I'm the saint you're the sinner" to God has simply called us all to be servants. And I am not better or worse, or worse or better. I am simply human.

I'm a human who has the tendency to make mistakes. And when I can remember that I need grace, I can more freely give grace. When I remember I need forgiveness, I can more freely give forgiveness. And so that's part of this process. The order is important. I confess. And sometimes for me, when I sit before the Lord, I will say, "Speak to me, Lord because I don't want to only bring my perspective to this issue." Like, "Speak to me Lord and help me see where maybe a word I said or a thought that I had has skewed my perception of this whole thing. Because more than proving that I'm right, I want to improve this relationship." But I often need God's help to bring to mind things that I probably wouldn't be capable of thinking of on my own.



And so confession does all that good work for this whole forgiveness process. But also I think just for the sake of my heart, not for just the sake of our relationships, but for the sake of my heart.

Jim: I love that.

Lysa: When I have things that I'm carrying in my heart, that I haven't confessed, my God, I'm carrying so much unnecessary weight. And I wonder why we are more eager to get rid of that weight with this beautiful provision that God has given us of confession. Why do you think that is?

Jim: I think for one — Duke University did a study a number of years ago that found that the number one killer in America was unforgiveness, bitterness, I'm not going to do what I need to do to forgive you. I think in my experience, and at times I know this myself by holding on to unforgiveness and a sense of justice knowing, as I turn the page in my Bible to Matthew 7, there's a little story about, I think, in there it's coming up about a log and in my own eye, it feels good.

So I have this self-righteousness by unforgiving. I feel like it's not right, but I feel like I'm getting justice now — no way will I forgive you. And I then maybe in my anger not even aware to go vertical to say, "God, will You forgive me?" So whether that's pride, but I think there's a real sense of immediate justice: I will not do this. Neurochemically, that's a jolt, that's an upper; I feel all this power inside. It's very powerful. It's toxic and deadly because it harms the container me that it's held in more than it does you that I need who I need to forgive, but I think it's very functional to not forgive.

Joel: Yeah, I think the question specifically, why, it's a good question. Why is it that we're hesitant to it? I wonder if because there at times becomes a familiarity with that weight. And even though it's crushing us like, I think of my own life, my own situations at times, this is crushing me, but at least I know what it is. At least I can feel it. At least I can you know, and over time that becomes familiar to the point where if I release this weight and if I do what Jesus says, right? And take his yoke upon myself, because his yoke is easy and His burden is light. Like if I were to do that, I still don't know how that's going to feel. And I don't have any familiarity with it; I don't know what that outcome is going to look at.

And to some degree, I think it also means that I put myself at jeopardy and risk because I don't know what the other person's responses while I bear this weight; at least I'm in full control of what I'm going to do or what I'm not going to do.

Jim: Wow.

Joel: But the minute I open myself up to allow this great exchange to take place. There is this moment. I'm going to give you the football illustration now —

Jim: I knew one was coming.

Joel: It's like a handoff; I teach my sons all the time. That is the most important time. When you do the handoff, you watch the football go into other person's hand. And you imagine that thing going and being caught tight because most fumbles happen in that exchange because there is this curiosity, is that person going to grab it? Am I going to release it? And when does that timing take place? And I think there's a bit of fear that is wrapped around it.

Lysa: I think you're right. I think there is fear. And I also really like what you said when we're holding onto the anger, the bitterness, the frustration, the disappointment, it does feel like I was powerless to make sure you didn't hurt me. And now that you have hurt me, I am not going to put myself in a position of powerlessness again. So if I hold onto all of this, this proof of how bad you've hurt me, becomes a sense of power for me to remind you, but even more so remind myself: I will not let this person hurt me again.

Jim: And even though I'm unaware in the moment that I'm really not powerful, but that's potent. I'm impotent, I'm lacking power. It feels like all this power, but in reality, I'm really out of control. It's far more chaos inside. So false power.

Lysa: Because when we're holding onto the pain, the pain really I've said before, when the human heart lets hurt sitting too long, it eventually turns to hate, and we can manage it with our words, but the raw feelings are still pain. And if we're holding on to pain, pain never grows and blossoms in beauty. It can only travel from pain to something else; we have to turn the pain from pain to perspective. Perspective is where the beautiful seeds can grow new thoughts, new maturity, new growth, but pain can't grow that. Pain is too toxic of a soil.

Jim: Pain will only grow more pain is really what you're saying —

Lysa: Right.

Jim: — it's exponential too. It just keeps breathing more like the root of bitterness. The Scripture talks about the pain will just breed more and more pain. Kind of like weeds do in my yard. I can spend money and time to try to get the grass right. And in fairness, in case she's watching, which she will, my wife would do that. She loves taking care of the yard that way. But I do nothing for the weeds to grow; it's like, they're resilient. So I love what you're saying. That pain will just feed like weeds taking over a yard, choking out the life that is there.

Lysa: And even though we do have this false sense of power, and maybe even out of fear, like you said, Joel, protection. Like if I hold onto this, it'll protect me from it not happening again. But what we don't realize is that it will leak out as a toxic atmosphere and affect every other relationship that we're in, because hurt from one relationship doesn't sit still and only come up in that relationship. It affects us, and it'll start impacting every other relationship that we have. And it's a false sense of power because it cannot protect us, and it cannot prevent that person from hurting us again. But I think when we allow the confession and forgiveness process to come about, just like what Jesus is

teaching us in this prayer, I think that's where that pain can go through a process to become eventual perspective. And perspective is powerful.

Jim: Very much, yes.

Lysa: Perspective is the maturity and the wisdom that we can bring into this dynamic that actually could help us draw better boundaries, navigate future situations with this person. If they never said they were sorry, if they were never willing to grow and mature in their part of what they've contributed to this relationship, then perspective can help me feel empowered enough to say, "Okay, I'm going to draw a boundary here, not to shut you out, but to hold myself together."

Jim: Protect you.

Lysa: And I think that perspective also can help us better navigate the fears, because then we're bringing wisdom. Experiential wisdom is some of the best wisdom to bring into complicated situations, to help inform us the navigation process that will be healthy.

Jim: May I speak real quick too? And I know you've much to say on the very, one of the Greek word [foreign language] means to say the same thing as confession. I think a lot of times, in my experience, I, people I know or work with, they will admit things to God. I admit it. That's not a confession to agree with, say the same thing. And then when it comes to this horizontal, that's the vertical between you and God, but the horizontal piece of going to a person, saying "this is what I did" in a confession. Not only do I agree, this is what I did, a confession should never be caveated. You'll catch it.

I did this, but everything before the "but" really negates what just happened. So a confession should not be caveated with God: "but it's the home I grew up in," or "I was upset, God," or to the person, you know, "I did this to hurt you, but of course you did this," and it should not be caveat. I think there is my experience in the counseling world. There is a massive vacuum around authentic confession, both vertically to God and horizontally to each other.

Joel: Yeah. And I think in terms of our relationships with each other, within our families, within our relationships in church we have lost it seems like the discipline and the practice of mutual confession of sins, because for the people of Israel in the old Testament, this was all communal activity. In our Western culture, we have individualized so much of how we look at Scripture, and we read it, and yet there would be a time when you would go to the temple, and you would offer up communal confession of sin, not just for yourself, but for your people as a nation; we see this all the way throughout the minor prophets. You see the Kings of Israel who'd come on behalf of the people, King Solomon, one of the most brilliant prayers at the temple dedication.

Jim: And Nehemiah did it when he came before King Artaxerxes. I confess my sins in the sense of my fathers.

Joel: And so I think what we have is when we're in the practice of confession, and when we're in the practice of forgiveness, like what Jesus is saying, this is some of the things that I'm thinking through. And Lysa, with your example of almost like soil, your heart is soil. And when you allow unforgiveness to settle into that heart into that soil, it actually spoils that soil where fruit, can't bear, right? It's going always to be standing.

Jim: Almost like cement.

Joel: Cement?

Jim: Where seeds can't even get in. And if they do get in, they can't flourish.

Joel: And I even think about that, it takes a lot of hard work to till the ground— like it is not an easy thing, you know? And I'm curious. I just think that confession and forgiveness are acts that we participate with the Lord that is actually forming our hearts and transforming us in order to be a type of people that can live in the kingdom of heaven that is coming to earth. There can be a type of people that are citizens of the kingdom of heaven. And I think it is as a witness to a world that is desperate to see the hope of the kingdom. And so there's something about participating in confession, participating in the act of forgiveness when it's hard that it's doing something inside of us to form us, but it actually is also simultaneously is an act that's inviting other people outside to take part of the goodness that we've experienced.

Jim: [inaudible].

Lysa: I would say in my experience, the softer my heart is, the more set up it is to have beautiful things growing in it. Soft hearts don't as easily break. It's hard riddle hearts that are more prone-

Jim: It's true.

Lysa: ...to getting broken.

Jim: Shattered. Yeah.

Lysa: So how do we do this? Because I think we've made a strong case to do it, but how do we do it? And so in the book *Forgiving What You Can't Forget*, I decided that I needed a system. I'm a real systems person. And so you can convince me to do something, but if I don't have a system to implement it, then it probably won't get done. So the best way, if my heart has been hardened about something, the best way for truth to break through is God's Word and me getting into God's Word and letting God's Word get into me starts to tenderize me in a way that very few other things can.

And so I decided to look up some verses that dealt with relational issues or topical issues from situations that I've been through and just list out some of those verses. And then in my journal, I decided to take myself through this system. And so maybe this will help. I wrote down these words: progress, suppress, digress, regress, confess, forgiveness. So

it's six words. So first progress, I read the verse and I say, "Where am I making progress with this verse?"

And typically, I can think of some situations, some relationship where I am making progress with this verse. Then second, "suppress," what is a situation where I'm feeling resistant to living out this verse? So then the next word I write is "digress," is there a situation where I'm taking steps backwards with this verse? So I'm not just feeling resistant to live it. I'm actually doing the opposite of what this verse says, and then "regress," where am I living in rebellion against this verse? Well, once I take myself through those words, "progress, suppress, digress, regress." Now I have something to "confess," and so-

Jim: That flows right down at amazing, down to confess.

Lysa: Yes. And so then now that I'm at the word "confess." I'll say, "Now that I'm aware of some confessions, as I write these out, I will ask God to give me a spirit of humility in this process." And then the last step is "forgiveness," because oftentimes as I'm confessing, I'll start having something come to my mind. Well, what, wait, God, wait, there's this person who isn't living out this verse with me. And so I say, "Okay, we'll tend to that in a minute. I'm going to set that on the shelf and finish my confession."

Now, the last word, "forgiveness": where is someone not living this verse with me? This is an opportunity for me to forgive. It doesn't excuse their behavior; it frees me from being hindered by unforgiveness. And so once again, this is just a system that works for me. You guys may have your own system, you may have your own system, and that's great. But I needed a way, not just to say, "yeah, I should confess" or "yeah, I should be practicing daily forgiveness." But if I really want to implement the daily cure for a heavy heart, I take myself into God's Word, and I say, "Progress, suppress, digress, regress, confess, forgiveness." And doing that, and writing that out in my journal has really helped me to practically apply what we've been talking about.

Jim: And for me, if I get to apply just Jimbo here by himself, then that leads me to wholeness —

Lysa: Wow I love that.

Jim: ... at the end, just a wholeness of yes. Designed to be evermore, moving toward wholeness. When it's times to clear back from childhood and unforgiveness keeps me in a place that's very painful and a place that's toxic. And I want to embrace wholeness in my life, but I love your system by the way.

Lysa: Thank you.

Jim: That is in the book?

Lysa: That's in the book?

Jim: Okay. Because it flows down. And I just said for me, so my personal application —

Lysa: So good.

Jim: ... is wholeness, and I long for wholeness. Man, do I long for it.

Lysa: And once you get past the confession and forgiveness, I love adding the word “wholeness,” but now you can go right back up to the top of the chart, and now I'm making progress.

Jim: Wash, rinse, and repeat.

Lysa: Right?

Joel: That's right. There you go.

Lysa: There you go. Look how you did that.

Joel: You did that.

Lysa: Any last thoughts, Joel?

Joel: I just think about, and not to get too cheesy here, but since we're gone with all the wholeness and confess, I think that when you're whole, and you've done this practice, it puts you in a posture, in a position to experience God's goodness.

Jim: I love that.

Joel: And I really think that's what we're desperate for.

Lysa: I agree.

Joel: We want to experience the goodness of God, and what if when we confess, when we do acts of forgiveness, it positions us in a posture to truly experience the goodness of God?

Jim: Holiness even seriously what's not cheesy [inaudible], and I long for that one too.

Lysa: That's beautiful. Thank you so much. Thank you for joining us today for this episode of “Therapy & Theology.” One challenge I want to give you: Don't just listen and think, “Yeah, that's a good idea.” Take what we've given you and implement it however it works in the situations in your life because we don't want to just give you the truth. We want to help you know the Truth, so you can live the Truth because we're convinced it changes everything.

Kaley: Well. What a great second episode in this series, right, Meredith? We know, friends, that forgiveness is not an easy topic to unpack, and we can't imagine where you are in your own journey of forgiveness, but whatever your circumstances are, know that

Proverbs 31, we're praying for you as you do your own wrestling and trusting the Lord to bring about the healing that only He can provide.

Meredith: That's right. And we do have a couple of resources that we think would really help you on your own forgiveness journey. The first is Lysa's book, *Forgiving What You Can't Forget: Discover How to Move On, Make Peace with Painful Memories and Create a Life That is Beautiful Again*. And it is available right now. Lysa herself shares a lot of her personal journey with forgiveness in this book. And we believe it's going to be a really powerful tool for you as you walk through your own forgiveness journey.

And the second thing is a great companion to the book called *The Forgiveness Journal*. This journal includes short prayers and key scriptures related to each topic of Lysa's book, as well as journaling prompts from her own personal processing, as well as beautiful pictures from her home, in the places that she actually processed forgiveness in her life. It's really special. You can grab both of these resources at [p31bookstore.com](http://p31bookstore.com).

Kaley: Yes. And at Proverbs 31, we are big fans of counseling and processing what you're going through with a trusted guide. If you'd like to get connected to a counselor, we recommend the American Association of Christian Counselors. And you can find more information at their website at [aacc.org](http://aacc.org). Well, friends, we'll be back next week with another episode of "Therapy & Theology." So be sure you're subscribed to get the episodes as soon as they release at Proverbs 31. We believe when you know the Truth of God's Word and live out that Truth, it changes everything.