



Kaley:

Well, hello friends. Thanks so much for tuning into the Proverbs 31 Ministries podcast, where we share biblical Truth for any girl in any season. I'm your host Kaley Olson, and I'm here today with my friend and co-host Meredith Brock.

Meredith:

Well hey, Kaley. We just recorded an amazing teaching with our friend, Ellie Holcomb. You guys might recognize that name. Ellie is a singer-songwriter turned author, and she is here on the show today to give us a message all about using scripture to get through whatever you might be facing today.

Kaley:

Yeah. Yeah, it's such a good teaching, and we are pumped to share that Ellie's book *Fighting Words*, which she talks about today, is our next online Bible study. And y'all, we are gearing up for summer over here, and I don't know about you, but it can be really hard to stay consistent with anything when you're juggling events, vacations and for some of you —your kids' crazy summer schedules. And that's why we have chosen to create a simple but transformative study just for you, in whatever season you're in.

Kaley:

So when you join the study, you'll read through *Fighting Words* for 100 days and know, while you're doing it, you're building a solid foundation that will launch you well into the next season. The study starts May 31, so you can sign up for free today at proverbs31.org/study. All right, friends, here is our conversation with Ellie.

Kaley:

Well, guys, we are so excited to have our friend Ellie Holcomb join us on the podcast today. Welcome, Ellie.

Ellie:

Hi, it's so good to be here. I love y'all so much.

Meredith:

Well, Ellie, you are no stranger to the Proverbs 31 family, because you've actually done several events with us and our President Lysa TerKeurst, which was so fun a few years ago. And when you do those

events with people, there's this special bond, guys. I want all of our podcast listeners to know, I refer to tour and these events like adult summer camp.

Meredith:

You go away and you have these kind of crazy experiences together, and you just bond really fast, and you get to know each other really fast. And it was just such a joy to be able to do those events with you. And so I know you, but I want our listeners to get to know you a little bit better. OK, Ellie? So I'm going to ask you two questions.

Ellie:

OK.

Meredith:

The first is what is your absolute favorite road trip snack? Like you're driving for four or five hours, what are you going to grab at the gas station?

Ellie:

Oh, I love it. OK. I'm a weird, I'm a really weird snacker. And this is probably because I've been on the road for a lot of my life. So this is going to sound so lame. I'm going to sound so lame right now, but pretty much my number one snack is a can of green beans.

Meredith:

What?

Kaley:

Oh my gosh.

Meredith:

I did not see that one coming.

Kaley:

Wait a minute.

Ellie:

I drain it all —

Kaley:

Wait a minute.

Ellie:

Yeah. Uh-huh. Believe it or not, most gas stations, you can look. It's usually right next to where they have paper plates, toilet paper and oil for the cars. Right next to that is some canned goods: mac and cheese, ramen and usually a can of green beans.

Meredith:

That really —

Kaley:

Oh gosh.

Meredith:

— is a testament to somebody who has spent a large amount of time on the road.

Kaley:

Oh man.

Meredith:

You just rattled off what ... how they organize the shelves in the gas station.

Kaley:

You did. I feel a lot better about myself right now. I don't know about you, Meredith.

Meredith:

Me too. I was going to go straight for the Chex Mix and like a can of Coke, y'all.

Kaley:

Yeah.

Ellie:

I do love a Diet Coke, especially if it's a fountain drink with a little pop of Dr. Pepper in it, if you're mixing your own.

Meredith:

Yeah.

Ellie:

And I do love salt and vinegar chips, but typically... This was before, I was touring in the times before —

Meredith:

Yeah.

Ellie:

—you could get pretty good salads at most fast food places or whatever. And I am kind of lame, and I love peppers and cucumbers. I love fruits and vegetables. And I was just like starving for those.

Meredith:

Yeah.

Ellie:

So I figured out you can get green beans at a gas station.

Meredith:

Hey, I ...

Ellie:

They're a little squeaky when you eat them cold from the can.

Meredith:

Squeaky is the right word, because right now I can envision them. They kind of squeak out of the can.

Ellie:

They do. Yeah, I know. I'm making this sound really appetizing, guys.

Meredith:

OK. I have one more question and that is, apart from your squeaky green beans, what is one thing you absolutely have to bring with you when you are out on the road traveling? Like that one thing, if you don't bring it, you're going to be super bummed because you realize —

Ellie:

I'm going to be bummed ... OK. Oh gosh, I kind of have two. Am I allowed to cheat and say two?

Meredith:

Yeah, sure. We'll allow it.

Ellie:

If had to choose one, if I had to choose just one, y'all, I do not leave ... I'm holding two cans in my ... I have a travel size and a regular of dry shampoo.

Meredith:

Yes, ma'am.

Ellie:

This is essential. These are the essentials, OK. I just ... It's really helpful when you're on the road. So I've got a small and a big can of dry shampoo, not anything fancy, Batiste. It's like \$1.39. And then I have this crazy ... Do y'all remember Big Fat Greek Wedding?

Meredith:

Yes.

Ellie:

That movie and how the dad was obsessed with Windex and he thought Windex could heal anything?

Meredith:

Yes.

Ellie:

I have a version of Windex. It's not Windex. It's called Unker's, and it's multi-purpose therapeutic salve. And it is amazing for colds, for headaches. It says that it kind of heals most anything. It's like joints, muscle soreness, skin irritations, bug bites, colds, coughs, sore throats. And I really do ... my kids like roll their eyes at me, because if they're feeling sick, I'm like, "I'm just getting, Mom's going to get, you some Unker's."

Kaley:

Oh my gosh. Can you send some to my house, please?

Meredith:

Yeah.

Kaley:

That would be, that'd be great.

Meredith:

Kaley could use it right now.

Kaley:

I could use that.

Ellie:

It's kind of like Vick's VapoRub, but maybe a more natural version of that with like peppermint oil in it. It's great.

Meredith:

OK. OK.

Ellie:

If you're an essential oil person, Unker's Multi-Purpose Therapeutic Salve is for you. And there's a little mountain man at the bottom of it that says, "To God be the glory."

Meredith:

OK.

Ellie:

So I don't know. I'm going to send y'all a picture so you can share this with your listeners, but it is a really good thing to carry with you.

Meredith:

All right.

Kaley:

I mean, the value that we just got from learning about green beans and Unker's stuff —

Meredith:

Unker's.

Kaley:

— for all the things, Ellie, it can literally only go up from here, my friends. And so now that we've learned all this, I'm going to turn the mics over to you, so that you can dive into what you came here to talk to us about today. We can't wait.

Ellie:

Awesome, y'all. Well, I am so, so grateful to be here with y'all today. I have a very special spot in my heart for the Proverbs 31 family. And I love Lysa TerKeurst so much, and have been so honored to get to work with her a lot over the years and admire her so much. I wanted to tell the story of something that has absolutely changed my life, and it is the Word of God.

Ellie:

So I just, about 13 years ago, I started memorizing scripture with a friend of mine who battles depression. I was sitting across the table from her at a Young Life camp and she was just sharing her heart with me, and in the middle of the conversation, I realized ... Man, I started to get really frustrated because I realized that there were so many lies that she was believing about; lies about who she was, lies about who God was, and how He loves her and how He loves us. And in the middle of this conversation, I realized, Oh my goodness, there are so many lies that I believe too. And so, sort of in the middle of this conversation, I just got angry because I had this realization that there is an enemy. He is called the father of lies. And when he speaks, lies are his native language, that punk!

Ellie:

So I was just like, you know what? I am so sick of the enemy stealing our joy, stealing our peace, stealing the John 10:10 life to the full, that God comes to offer us. And God calls his Word a sword, and I am going to use it. I am not going down without a fight. And I realized maybe it wasn't enough for us to just say, "Oh, that's a lie. Oh, that's a lie." It's super important to acknowledge the lies that we believe, but I think even more so than that, it's really more important to replace the lie with something stronger, to replace the lie with the Truth. And there is so much strong and sturdy Truth in God's Word.

Ellie:

And so I, in the middle of this conversation, I was like, "Hey, you know what?" My friend's name is Annie. I was like, "Annie, you need to pull out your journal right now." And I did what sometimes you do. I don't know if y'all have ever done this. I just started flipping through my Bible for anything that I'd ever underlined before. Because I was like, Gosh, if I've underlined it, I know it's good. Of course, all of God's Word is good and useful for teaching, but I just was like, "OK, write this down. Write this down." And so she starts writing down all these scriptures and I just say, "You and I are going to start memorizing scripture." And we have called the scripture that we've memorized our "fighting words."

Ellie:

And y'all, it has absolutely changed us — memorizing God's Word together. And I need to be really honest with you here and say that we're not super great. We're not really good at memorizing scripture. It does not come naturally. It's very hard and a little bit awkward and clunky, but it is one of the most fruitful practices and spiritual disciplines that I've leaned into in the last decade of my life. Because as we have started memorizing God's Word together — burying light and treasure and truth in our hearts — it has started changing us from the inside out. And it hasn't necessarily changed all of our circumstances. It's not like we started memorizing scripture, and it completely got rid of my friend's depression or fixed all the extenuating circumstances or trials or heartache that we had, had.

Ellie:

But man, it started giving us solid ground to stand on and anchor down in when the shame storm started rolling in. And I am so grateful that God isn't lying when He says, from Isaiah 55:9-11, that *"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is the word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it"*(NIV).

Ellie:

Y'all, that is a major promise, and that is what I've seen God do as we've buried His Truth in our hearts. I've seen it cause a garden of flourishing, a garden of hope, a garden of comfort to begin to grow from within my very heart. And I am so, so grateful for this. So I started ... So we've been doing this for over a decade, trying to memorize scripture together. In John 8:32, God says, "You'll know the truth, and the truth will set you free." And in Hebrews 4:12, it says, *"For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing the soul and the spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart"*(NIV). Y'all, God's Word has convicted ... It has pointed me back to Jesus, back to the cross. It has brought comfort. It has brought light in some of my darkest moments.

Ellie:

And so I just was kind of undone. This is why I started writing. It's actually why I started writing songs because I have a hard time memorizing the scripture, even though it is so beautiful. So I just thought, "Man, what if I could — this is nothing new under the sun — but what if I could sit in God's Word and let music come out." And just sing, say, God, I believe. I believe this truth, but help my unbelief. And for whatever reason, when I sing, it helps me believe. And so, I think what I want to encourage you and invite you into today is to invite you, almost dare you, to join me on a journey of memorizing God's Word; to bury some light in your heart so that when you get into those dark, heavy moments, you don't even have to have God's Word with you. It just literally resides inside of you.

Ellie:

It has been ... I can think of so many stories, but one of them, I went through a really scary, scary time with my husband. He got really sick. He had meningitis actually, viral meningitis, and he ended up in the hospital. I am freaking out driving him to the hospital. I'm making wrong turns. I'm panicking. And all of a sudden, I'm just like, "OK, God, God. Jesus, be near. Jesus, be near. Jesus, be near." I start, I had buried all of these scriptures in my heart, and they start coming up, and that's what I start praying. "Rejoice in

the Lord always. I will say it again, rejoice. Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Don't worry about anything, but in everything, with prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, that transcends our understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:4-7)

Ellie:

I start saying that verse. I start saying the verse, the beautiful verse from 2 Timothy 1:7, "*For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love, and a sound mind*"(KJV). And y'all, it was like, I can't even describe it. It was just like, all of a sudden, this peace came over me that didn't make any sense, as I was holding on to God's promises in this really scary time. I actually made it to the hospital, and Drew ended up being OK. But it was the balm and the comfort and the hope and the light that I needed to calm me in that really scary circumstance with my husband. So I was memorizing the scripture. I was kind of blown away by how it was changing me and encouraging me. And I know this. I grew up in the church, y'all, but it was, I was like, "Oh my goodness, I have not practically memorized scripture since I was a little kid."

Ellie:

So I was telling my friend Sarah Gilmore, who is a beautiful spirit and pastor's wife. And I was just like, "OK, Sarah, I am memorizing scripture. It is absolutely flooring me. And I just want to encourage everybody to do this. It is changing my life and my heart. And in the times that I'm feeling bitter or weary or tired or full of doubt, it's bringing me back to the source of life, to the source of Truth, to the living Word, Jesus." And she was like, "Well, Ellie. Yeah, that makes a whole lot of sense."

Ellie:

Because if you look back in the story from Matthew 4, it's the first thing. Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist, and then He goes into the wilderness and is tempted for 40 days. And it's like, that is a crazy circumstance. Like Jesus's first ... He's been baptized. God says, "This is my Son with whom I am well pleased."(Matthew 3:17) And then He goes off into the desert alone. And I love... It seems like kind of a crazy first thing to do for the ministry of Jesus, but I love it because I think every single one of us knows what it feels like to be in the wilderness. And I love that God sent His Son, literally into the wilderness, to show us how to navigate the wilderness.

Ellie:

And this is what my friend said to me. She goes, "You know, Satan comes and tempts Jesus when He's in the wilderness for those 40 days. And every single time that Jesus responds to the lie, the living Word responds to the lies of Satan with these words, 'It is written ...It is written.'" So every lie that Satan tells, every lie, all three lies, Jesus responds with, "It is written." And then He quotes scripture back at the enemy. And my friend just said, "If Jesus used the Word of God, the written Word of God ... If the living Word of God used the written Word of God to combat the lies that the enemy was telling Him, it is probably good for us as well to do that."

Ellie:

In Matthew 4:4, Jesus answered Satan. So I'm going to read just this little section of Matthew 4, starting in verse 1. "*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert [wilderness] to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.*" No kidding. I'd be hungry too. We're talking about snacks. I'm feeling hungry now. "*The tempter,*" verse 3, "*The tempter came to him and said, 'If you are*

the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." And in verse 4, *"Jesus answered, 'It is written: Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"* (NIV)

Ellie:

I feel like there is this beautiful table that has been set for us. It is a feast. There is a feast of truth and light and hope in God's Word. And I guess for me, what I want to do is invite you to come. Sit at that feast, eat to the fill, drink all that you can of His Word, hold on to it. I think so often I am willing to settle for... I am willing to starve. I'm willing to just settle for crumbs under the table, where God is inviting us to sit down in green pastures, to come to a table that He sets for us even in the presence of our enemies, and to feast on every word that comes out from His mouth.

Ellie:

And I am so delighted to invite you to bury the light of God's Word, the Truth in God's Word and the hope from God's Word deep in your heart, like a treasure that you will always have no matter what you are facing. And this has been the joy of writing. I've started doing this on Instagram, Fighting Words Friday, just trying to memorize scripture and hold on to scripture, weekly, in my little corner of Instagram. And then, it's been a really beautiful thing because that has turned into this devotional that I've written. And when people ask me if I've written a book, I'm like, "No, I haven't really written a book. I've mainly just written an invitation." That's what I feel like it is. It's an invitation to come and sit at the feast of God's Word.

Ellie:

It's called *100 Days of Speaking Truth into the Darkness*, is the subtitle of the book *Fighting Words*. But really what it is, it's just an invitation to come sit and feast at the table of God's Word and to bury that treasure in your heart. And so I just want to invite you to treasure the living and active Word of God. It has been a balm and a comfort and a light in the darkness. And ultimately, God's Word has become a song that I've sung into the darkness inside of me and into the darkness of the world around me. And I just want to invite you to join me in burying God's Word in your heart.

Ellie:

I think one of the things that I've done with my kids... Throughout the book, there's these 10 beautiful, beautifully written pages, that I call them Scripture Memory Invitations. And one thing, I've tried to memorize scripture with my kids, and it's so interesting because I think we were just all kind of made to sing in one way or another. Y'all may be hearing me say that, and you're like, "Trust me, Ellie. God did not make me to carry a tune." But I do think what I end up doing whenever I'm trying to memorize God's Word is, especially with my kids, I end up just singing it. And so because of that, it has been so beautiful for my family.

Ellie:

We just had... This is another... I'll just close with this story of just a practical application of memorizing God's Word and seeing that bringing light and life and hope into the darkness. We had a really scary 2020. March 3 of 2020, I woke up in the middle of the night. My husband was out of town, and we've got three little kids, Emmy Lou, Huck and Rivers, and our entire house was shaking. An EF4 tornado was passing right behind our house in Nashville, and I have never been more scared in my life. Run into my kids' rooms, we all run down to the basement. It was just so, so scary.

Ellie:

And so, as you can imagine with little kids, any storm that comes after that is just a little bit like, almost like post-traumatic stress disorder. I mean, if they just, like they hear thunder and they're super scared. And so I just thought, you know what, kids, I think that we've got to find some "fighting words" for this fear. Because obviously fear can teach us things, like when we hear storms, we know that we can do everything practically, check the weather and do everything we can to be safe. So there's a use. There's somewhat of a use for fear, but God has not given us the spirit of fear. We can learn from that, and then we don't have to stay in that fearful place. We get to move into a place of power and of love and a sound mind.

Ellie:

And so y'all, we just started in the basement. There's a storm, there's crazy wind happening in Tennessee in Nashville. We always have crazy storms in the spring. And so it has been so beautiful. This has become our storm anthem. And I've got my guitar here. I am, I'm a singer before I ever wrote an invitation or a book, but I'm a singer-songwriter. And so, this is ... I'm just going to sing this over you. I don't know if you have ever had ... I have a lot of ... Yeah, I call myself a warrior in progress, and it has been a beautiful thing to walk around, marching around the basement in my house, even as a storm is passing through, and to sing this truth with my kids.

Ellie:

And as we have sung that over and over and over again, as we've really held on to God's Word, all of a sudden, His Word is the thing that we're holding on to, not the fear. And it has been so beautiful to watch this little song and this Truth from God's Word transform my own trembling heart and my little kids' trembling hearts. Sorry, it just makes me want to sob. It has transformed our house, from a house full of fear to a house full of faith, proclaiming God's Word even in the face of the storms — of literal storms that we face. But I have seen God bring such hope and companionship and comfort and empathy and grace and light in the face of, not just actual storms, but just the storms that we face of loss and ache and struggle and fear and doubt and pain, that we inevitably face here in a broken world.

Ellie:

So I'm just going to sing this little verse, 2 Timothy 1:7, to close out our time here today. And then I'm going to pray for us, to close this out today. So this is 2 Timothy 1:7. This is our storm song.

Ellie:

(singing) I'm going to just invite you, wherever you are, to sing that with me. (singing)

Ellie:

Jesus, I thank You that You are the living Word. I thank You that You have given us the Word, Your Word, God's Word, the Bible, full of Truth, full of the most beautiful story I know, of You, Jesus, coming to be broken for us, so that we could know that our brokenness is never the end of the story, so that we could know that death doesn't have the final word — love does. Father, I thank You for all the wisdom that is on the pages of Your Word. And I pray that You would help us to be women who are full of Your Word, who bury this Truth that is on the pages of the Bible, deep in our hearts, deep in our children's hearts, that we would be women who bury truth and light in our hearts, and then who speak truth and light to our own hearts and to the world around us, Father.

Ellie:

I pray that You would help us to be women who can laugh at the days to come, Father. Because even though we don't know what the future holds, we know that You are the same yesterday, today and forever. I thank You that all the days ordained for our life were written in Your book before one of them came to be, and that You are a God who is with us in the morning and in the evening. You're a God who ... Darkness isn't dark to You because You are light. So Father, I thank You that we get to be God carriers, that we get to be the hope. People who walk through this broken and weary world with a knowledge of a hope, with our peace, with our feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace, Father.

Ellie:

And so I ask that You would help us to move about this broken and weary world as citizens of the Kingdom of heaven. That You would help us to hang onto Your Word. That You would use Your Word to transform us and make us to be people who are more like You, whose lives are shaped more like You, full of love and grace and truth and peace and hope, Father. I thank You for the hope that I've found on the pages of Your Word, for the way that it has been a balm and a comfort and a song that I've sung, into the darkness within me and into the darkness in the world around me. And I pray that we would be people who sing your Truth, wherever that we go.

Ellie:

And I thank You that You know what, whoever's listening today, You know what they're carrying. You know what they're walking through. Father, You know the fears that we face. And I thank You that You didn't give us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind, Father. So would You help us to ground our minds and our hearts in the truths from Your Word and the promises from Your Word. And that You would help us to be seasoned like salt in this world, to be ready with an answer of hope. For when people ask us, "Hey, what is the reason for this hope you have?" that we would be the people who tell the stories of Your Kingdom coming and Your will being done here on Earth, as it is in heaven. Amen.

Meredith:

Amen. Amen. Amen. That was beautiful, Ellie. That song ... OK, is that ... Can our friends get that somewhere? Can they listen to that? Because I just feel like somebody's going to need to listen to that today after this podcast.

Ellie:

Yes.

Meredith:

So can we find that?

Ellie:

Yeah, absolutely. So I've actually ... A lot of people are asking me to make an album of this, which I haven't done yet, but on my Instagram, I basically, I actually sing every promise. Every scripture memory invitation, I have a song for every one. I'm basically singing scripture every Monday on Instagram. And so if you go on my Instagram feed, you can go to Memory Mondays, and there's this song from 2 Timothy

and, I don't know, probably 30 others. I just keep sitting in God's Word and letting a melody come out to help —

Meredith:

That's awesome.

Ellie:

— to help myself carry Truth around in my heart and to help little hearts carry big truths around in their hearts, too.

Meredith:

I love that so much, Ellie, because I think, like you said, song helps so much for it to just kind of stick better. But I do have a question for you. I love in your teaching — this kind of stuck out to me and grabbed a hold of me, because I think I wrestle with this a lot. And that is, that scripture that says, I believe this, but God help my unbelief. (Mark 9:24) And oftentimes, I think there's this gap between, I think logically I read scripture and I say, "I do believe this." I really do believe what it says here, but there's this gap between what I believe in my head, what I'm experiencing in my heart and what I'm experiencing in my circumstances. And so, often that gap is the perfect place for skepticism to really begin to grow.

Meredith:

And so what would you say to the gal that's in that place, that says, "You know what, Ellie, I believe God's Word. I really do. I don't think ... I believe that it's in the inherent Word of God, but this is not what I'm experiencing right now. And so I'm not sure this whole scripture memory thing really works."

Ellie:

Yeah. Well, I would just say I have been there. I still feel there today. I love God's Word, and in the same breath, there are times where I'm like, "this is confounding. This is crazy. This is... It feels backwards and upside down." And the gospel usually does feel that way. But I would just say, I remember there was a season — and this really was one of my first encounters with really hanging on to scripture. There was a time, I guess over a decade ago now, where our house got broken into, which is kind of, I don't know, crazy. Nothing ... just someone took our TV and a couple other things from our house. We weren't there, but for whatever reason, it just ... I was so afraid. I was so afraid. And all of a sudden, it didn't, it wasn't like they just took my TV. It felt like they kind of stole my peace. I would go ... I just was having a really hard time falling asleep.

Ellie:

And so I had a friend come over and she was like, "Ellie, I really think you need to hang on to God's Word and just keep saying it over and over again." So there were several verses that I would say over and over again. "*If God is for us, who can be against us.*" (Romans 8:31, NIV) That same one from 2 Timothy, "*For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power of love and a sound mind*" (2 Timothy 1:7, KJV). And y'all, I would say these verses over and over and over again for, I think I just said them for like, I don't know, a month and a half, I was holding on to these. And honestly, not really feeling much different, if that ... just to be truthful with you.

Ellie:

But all of a sudden, I will never forget the night. It was probably a month and a half of holding on to these verses and just almost saying them, like a meditation, over and over at the end of, as I'm trying to fall asleep in my bed at night. All of a sudden one night, I was like, "Man, my friends told me to do this. This isn't ... I still kind of feel the same. I'm going to hold on to Truth, out of obedience, out of hope that somehow this will click." And there was a night where all of a sudden I just believed it. It just, something shifted for me. It was like, I had held on to that so much, and I'm like, "Oh, I actually, I actually believe that this is true." I was praying the whole time, God help my unbelief. And it took a really long time.

Ellie:

But I guess I would just say, what's really good about the Truth is that it's just true, whether or not we believe it. And so I'm really thankful for that. God doesn't change based on how we feel about Him, based on the fact of whether or not we believe in Him. And so it is really sturdy. The Truth is always there for us to go hang on to. And so I would just say, I would just encourage you, maybe try memorizing some scripture. No, it may not make you feel better overnight, but I think, ultimately, I mean, this is like science, right? It's creating a new neural pathway in our brain, of saying, "OK, I can choose to believe this."

Ellie:

But we also have a choice in what we believe, and I'm actually going to choose to hold on to this Truth. Even though I don't believe it, I'm going to cling on to it. And I would just say that I'll be praying for you, if you're in that place of having a hard time to believe. I'm holding out hope that God is who He says that He is. And His Word is alive and it's active and that it will accomplish the purposes for which He sent it. And we ... that may not happen in the time that we think or wish that it would, but I do really believe that it's like planting seeds in the ground sometimes. And sometimes you just look at a seed in the ground and you're like, "Wow, it's, that's just dirt. That just feels like soil." But over time it really does grow.

Ellie:

I was just actually out in my garden this morning. And I planted these arugula seeds this last winter, and it was so crazy. It honestly didn't do very well. My arugula really struggled this winter but it's been so beautiful this spring. It's all turned into these beautiful flowers that are taller than my kids. And my kids were just saying yesterday, they were like, "Mom, this was a tiny seed. And now these flowers are taller than us." I didn't really realize that arugula flowered in the spring, but it does, and these beautiful little white flowers. And so I would just encourage you to continue to bury Truth —

Meredith:

Yeah.

Ellie:

— in your heart. Because even though it may take time, like in the winter. I love in creation, God writes this all over creation. The leaves. And in the spring, even when the storms come, it's a really good reminder for me, because I have a lot of fear. I have a weighted blanket that we pull out. We have different things when the storms roll in that help practically and physically. But when I look at the trees that just look absolutely dead and barren, I know that there is life underneath that. And so I just would encourage you, if you're having a hard time believing and you feel like you've been in a really long winter, that the winter doesn't have the final word. Aslan is on the move.

Meredith:

That's so good.

Ellie:

Spring is coming.

Meredith:

That's so good, Ellie. I think, even just giving that example of, it was a month and a half of you deciding, and I think it's just so appropriate that that's what you called your book, *Fighting Words*, because it's fighting against that unbelief. I also think it's so on point and right that you used the example of Jesus's temptation in the wilderness.

Ellie:

Yeah.

Meredith:

I think oftentimes we think about temptation like, "Oh, I'm going to be tempted to go into the Circle K and snatch up a candy bar and not pay for it." Well, I would go as far to say that the three of us, we're not going to be tempted to do that. That's not going to be the sin we're tempted into. We're going to be —

Ellie:

Maybe green beans, maybe a can of green beans.

Meredith:

Maybe a can of green beans, because you know our girl likes the green beans. But we're going to be tempted to not take hold of God's Word and really believe it. And we have ... that's temptation, that's our temptation towards sin. And so I just think this is such a good and powerful teaching for our listeners to hear today, because you do have to step into this and fight. Fight the temptation to doubt even when you can feel it creeping in.

Meredith:

And y'all, I have ... Ellie, I didn't tell you this beforehand, but I got ahold of your book. I've been reading it over the last month, and it has just been such a blessing to me in some of the places that I feel doubt creeping in, I feel fear creeping in. And I am really excited that we are going to be hosting your book as our next online Bible study. It starts May 31, and we want you to spend — we're doing 100 days — 100 days of us walking through Ellie's book, *Fighting Words*. Fighting that doubt, fighting that temptation towards fear with the Truth of God's Word. And so y'all, please come do it with us. Spend the summer using your fighting words with us, because I know I need it. And I hope our friends here listening today will join us. You can sign up for that — completely free — online Bible study at proverbs31.org/study.

Kaley:

Absolutely. And Meredith did just mention that the study starts May 31, but because we're doing this over the entire summer, this is the perfect study to jump into really at any point. You can catch up — and the book can be read at any time — and so don't think that you have missed your opportunity to

join us. This is a book that if you're listening to this, you need to join us for the study so that you can learn how to fight, too, whatever doubts that you're facing. And while the study is free, we do want you to take the next step and grab Ellie's professional *Fighting Words* to make the most of your study. We've got it in our online bookstore at p31bookstore.com. After you sign up to join us, before the study, for free, you can prep your book there. We've linked it for you in the show notes.

Meredith:

Absolutely. And like Ellie said, if y'all want to join her for these Mondays where she is just singing scripture, go check her out on Instagram. Her handle is @Ellie, that's E-L-L-I-E Holcomb, where she shares just encouragement and the latest projects she's working on, and just these beautiful songs. So thank you so much for joining us today, friends. At Proverbs 31 Ministries, we believe when you know the truth and you live that truth out, it really will change everything.