



God Hears Her Podcast

Episode 44 - The Comparison Trap

Elisa Morgan and Eryn Eddy with Bree Rostic

Bree: Comparison has become so normal in our culture. It's what we do in every aspect of our lives as we're scrolling down our social media feed. As we're shopping in the grocery store, we start comparing our carts to everybody else. But when you think about the root of comparison, it's essentially saying that what God gave me is not enough for me, and I need what He gave them. And that is rooted in envy, jealousy, and all of these heart issues that we don't even realize are tucked under the surface.

[music]

Intro: You're listening to *God Hears Her*, a podcast for women where we explore the stunning truth that God hears you, He sees you, and He loves you because you are His. Find out how these realities free you today on *God Hears Her*.

Elisa: Welcome to *God Hears Her*. I'm Elisa Morgan.

Eryn: And I'm Eryn Eddy. And you may have heard it said "You become what you think." So what happens when all of our thoughts are focused on comparing ourselves with others? What happens to our heart when all our mind can think about is how much smarter that girls is, or how much fuller her eyelashes are, or maybe how spiritual she seems to be, or how good she looks with that guy? Join us as we talk to Bree Rostic about the dangers of comparison, and how God created each one of us uniquely.

Elisa: And here's a fun fact about Bree. She actually works for Our Daily Bread Ministries. And you may recognize her name from her posts on the *God Hears Her* blog.

Eryn: That's right! And we're so grateful that she was able to sit down with us to talk through the topic of comparison. This is *God Hears Her*. ...um... So I'm...I'm excited to talk about this topic because I don't think it's discussed enough, especially among women – and that is comparison. But I think before we get into talking about comparison, I want to know just a little bit about Bree. So would you share just a little bit about like where you're from and who... like what was Bree like at 17 years old, or 12 years old, or 20 years old?

Bree: Absolutely. So 17-year-old Bree was interesting, so we might skip over her. No ...um... I'm from Grand Rapids, Michigan. I was born and raised here. I had a single mom, played volleyball, basketball, godhearsher.org



cheerleader, did dance all of my life. So I was very active and outgoing and just loving to have a lot of fun, to engage with people. That's something that I've had my entire life. Yeah, so that's a little bit about me. I had a rebellious streak at 17...

Eryn: What did that look like?

Bree: Oh...

Eryn: Tell us about...

Bree: ...that was...

Eryn: ...that, if you want to share.

Bree: Sure. That was me dating the bad boy. And it was just a wild time. When I look back on it, I'm just so thankful for God's grace over my life and His forgiveness. And even though it was hard, it revealed a lot about who God is in my life. And so I appreciated those times, that even when we're rebellious, He brings us right back into the fold. He really goes after the one. So that was awesome.

Elisa: You know I...I appreciate that vulnerability, and I sure don't want to push you in a place you don't want to go. But, Bree, I think we all kind of – well, we all have moments like that. Let me just say that. So thank you for sharing that. But I think we also can wrongly conclude that God wasn't in 'em, you know that He wasn't...that we ran away and so we missed out on what He would've given. But I just heard you say you learned a lot about God in that season. And I just think that's a beautiful statement of redemption, you know, of how God scoops down – even and when we're running – and He is still present with us if we would but notice. Right?

Bree: Absolutely. For me – and I don't mind sharing at all – it was a season where I had all of my focus on this one boy and what he was doing. And he was a little bit edgy, and I want... left home to go live with him. That was just ...uh... He was my entire world. But when I was thinking about it and listening to you speak, I realized – even just now – that we start comparing to each other in our stories of: how are we coming up? We start comparing each other's histories. We start comparing each other's lifestyles. We start comparing each other's salvation stories. And for a long time, that was something that I wanted to hide. I wanted to tuck away that part of my life because it wasn't clean. It wasn't beautiful. It wasn't what I had witnessed in other people's lives or how I'd seen God work in other people's lives. But when you



have time to reflect and really see that He is on those hard times, that He's loving you even when you are running the opposite direction, it's a beautiful testimony of His grace.

Eryn: Mm.

Elisa: That's awesome. Yeah.

Eryn: Was there a specific moment that ... or was it a cumulation of a bunch of moments that brought you to experiencing God as vibrant as you have explained?

Bree: I think it was a culmination of moments. It was really just that reflection time of seeing that He personally knew me, that He personally was engaged in every aspect of my life. There are so many horror stories that I could tell you and some great ones, too, but it just really ... Looking at all of them and tracing God... You know that saying that you can trace Him when you can't see Him? It was like that.

Elisa: Can you unpack that just a little bit more? What do you mean by that?

Bree: Yeah. So I see it like this: When we're in the moment, we don't necessarily see what God is doing. We can't understand or comprehend His ways all the time. But when you look back and reflect, you can actually trace what He was doing. You can kind of say *Oh, that was God's hand there in that big disappointment in my life. That was God's hand there in that big celebration. He was in that too.* So it's really just tracing His footsteps down our history.

Elisa: I love that verb you're choosing to describe ...um... watching God work – to *trace* Him. And I...and I picture it. I picture you as a 17-year-old with like a magnifying glass, you know, going down your...your...through your life, looking for God. And, you know, you're right. We often can't see Him until we're beyond a certain circumstance, but when we look back – some people have used the metaphor of looking in the rearview mirror or whatever – but when we look back and intentionally look for God, we can trace His footsteps, trace His work in our life. Tha... that's awesome, Bree. Thanks.

Eryn: Mm. That's so good. I do remember a time in my life where I thought that I was looking for Him, trying to find Him, and I felt like I couldn't. And then when I hit a rock-bottom moment and brought Him into my circumstance, and then look back, I can see Him in those moments. But why is it that in the heat of the moment sometimes we don't see Him? Why is it that when we reach a point, and then we look back, that we can trace Him? Why is it sometimes we don't see Him in the ... in the midst? Or we feel like we don't see Him in the midst when He is there?



Bree: Yeah, I think sometimes we become so consumed with the circumstance that we metaphorically turn our back to God. Like, you know, we know that ... consciously, we know that He's there because He know...we know that, as believers, that He never leaves us. But the circumstance becomes so large, and we magnify that, and we minimize His presence because all of our attention is on that. But if we learn to turn, or switch our focus back to Him, then we can see Him in anything, in everything, because He wants us to acknowledge that His presence is there.

Eryn: How do we do that?

Bree: You know I think it's really just about being intentional, and the more time that we spend with our heavenly Father, it just ... Even taking out that "heavenly Father" word – I know that's who He is, but making it personal. The more time that we spend with our Father in acknowledging Him, the more that we can sense His presence. I think about it like when my kids are in the house with me, and I actually acknowledge their presence, they engage with me more. When I'm working, as we're all working from home right now, they kind of do their own thing, and they play amongst each other. But when I give them my attention, then they engage with me more too. And I think about that, in reverse, with our heavenly Father. When we give Him our attention, when we say, "*Father, I need You, Dad, I just wanna see You in this situation,*" that the more we can engage with Him.

Elisa: You know you brought up the topic of comparison in terms of our stories, you know, in terms of: *You've got a super dramatic story, and I have a wimpy little story. Or Your story is so beautiful, and mine feels so shameful.* But...but what I really heard, Bree, is how you spotlight comparison. Why do you think our comparison habit – if you will – is...is so concerning?

Bree: I didn't think it was a big deal at first. Comparison has become so normal in our culture. It's what we do in every aspect of our lives, as we're scrolling down our social media feed. As we're shopping in the grocery store, we start comparing our carts to everybody else. But when you think about the root of comparison, it's essentially saying that what God gave me is not enough for me, and I need what He gave them. And that is rooted in envy, jealousy, and all of these heart issues that we don't even realize are tucked under the surface. And so that's when God really pricked my heart about comparison and started nudging me that we have to do something about this, because women are suffering. Specifically, I believe women are suffering the most.

Eryn: What was it? Was there a specific time in your life that you recognized you were comparing, or that your heart was kind of, you know, made up of some of these not-so-pretty or flattering things that we do



when we start to compare with our life or our shopping cart? I love that you used that reference, cause that's so true. You look, and you're like *They don't have almond milk. They are doing whole milk.*

[Laughter]

Elisa: Or they have twelve boxes of...

Eryn: We go to *that* level, you know?

Elisa: ...sugary cereals. Bad! Yeah.

Bree: Yes, exactly.

Eryn: And then we go into like... It goes from that to like our just inherent worth that we have and our purpose. And so it's so interesting how it goes so extreme from one to the other. But was there a specific time in your life that you kind of recognized *Oooh! Like My heart is...is doing these things, and God needs to... He pointed this out to me?*

Bree: Yeah, there was a very specific moment. It was actually when I was on a run with some people from church. And so we talked about my past lifestyle just briefly. I wasn't in church growing up. I hadn't experienced church. My mom went to church on and off. She taught me about Jesus. She loved Jesus. But that wasn't our lifestyle. And so when I got into church, I was immersed into this totally different world. And I noticed the people who – how do we say “the shined?” The people that... what it really was was God's light shining through them. But you've noticed that *Wow! She seems to have it all together. She's a great mom. Or She's great on the praise team. Or She's an amazing intercessor. Why do I not have those qualities?* And so all of those things started to just open my eyes that there's something going on here. But when we went on this run with a group of ladies from my church, and I hate running! I do not like running at all, but we decided that we're gonna go on a run. And I wanted to have some fren... I wanted these ladies to be my friends, so I go with them on this run. And immediately they are like taking off down the trail, and I'm trying to keep up with them. And it wasn't working. And all of these thoughts of comparison flooded my mind. There was one girl – she'd just had a baby. How could she run already? There was another girl who was pushing *her* stroller. How was she running pushing this stroller? Even the thought that she was pushing another mom's stroller, and they had that camaraderie [camaraderie] and that relationship just brought up all of the things that I didn't even realize that I was missing in my life. Thoughts that I didn't understand where they were coming from, but they were deeply rooted from my entire childhood, from my entire life where I was hanging on to this bag of comparisons over my shoulder.



But it was like it was invisible. I didn't know it was there. So on that run, I just began to break. And I am talking about full-on sobbing on a trail. And I'm so thankful that they were so far ahead of me, so nobody could see me just bawling my eyes out. But that's what was happening, and it was in that moment I heard God start to speak to me – not audibly but in my heart – and just giving me reassurance about who I was, and also explaining to me these feelings that I was wrestling with so I could have a better understanding of what was happening.

Elisa: So, man, we can kinda all relate to that. Can't we?

Eryn: Yeah. It's...it's like a slow killer to our self-esteem and...and our relationships – comparison is. I love how you use the analogy of it was like a bag you were carrying over your shoulder. Like I envision just like this giant like Santa-Claus bag that you're carrying, you know. And it's just like a burden on your back that you're just bringing into the relationships. One thing that you said in this book that you wrote. You said "When comparison is unchecked, it becomes like a cancer to your soul."

Elisa: Mm.

Eryn: ...That gives me chills just even me reading that, because that's so true. When comparison is unchecked, how do you check it? How do you acknowledge it? Because sometimes I think, at least for me, I've experienced where I'm like *I'm fine. Like I...you know I'm okay.* And I don't do anything, but that's like the moment that I'm so susceptible when I think I'm not susceptible to things. So how do you check your soul so it doesn't become a cancer inside?

Bree: Yeah, that is actually one of my favorite lines too. I was just like *Yes, thank You for those words, God, cause that was good.* That was not me. But even to go along with that analogy of cancer ...or of comparison being like cancer to the soul, we go in for our checkups. We know that it's important to make sure that we're eating right, that we're taking care of bodies, but that we're also seeking treatment if we need it. So going in for your checkup is something that we have to learn to do with our soul. We have to be our own doctors and say: How am I right now? And then not just pushing that thought off to the side. So a lot of times what I did in my life, especially in this realm of comparison, is be nonchalant about it. *It's not a problem. It's no big deal. I'm not doing anything harmful. ...um... It's normal to compare yourself in these ways. It just means I need to step my game up.* But when you that self-check-in and allow yourself to feel these feelings, allow yourself to know *Hey, something's not okay here.* And then ask yourself why. Why do you feel this way? Why is this pricking your heart? For instance, one of the things that was a really big deal for me was finishing college late because I had a child early. And then all of my friends were finishing college early, and they were getting these great jobs. And I was struggling on the way just



to get my homework turned in, just to get this degree. But then, when I look back on it and say *Why did I feel that pressure to be done with something when I needed to take my time on my path?* And so asking yourself “why” really breaks down those societal standards that have been placed on us or placed around us, and allow us to just think clearly. And then the second thing with checking in on your soul is replacing that thought. So a lot of times we start rehearsing the lies. For instance, in this college situation, I would start rehearsing that *I’m a failure*, that *I am behind*, that *I’m not succeeding*, that *I won’t get it done*, because that’s what I’m feeding my soul. When I do that check-in on myself and say: *What are the things that God says about me? Even on a college journey, what does He say about me?* “I’m fearfully and wonderfully made.” This is an intentional process that I’m going through and being okay with it. So I think that we have to acknowledge what we’re going through, but also we have to combat that lie with the truth.

Elisa: You’re making me think of one area that has been challenging in my life regarding comparison. And I’m pretty sure everybody out there struggles with this. We should do a whole program on it, or maybe a series, Eryn. [Laughing] But...but it’s body type...

Bree: Mm-hmm!

Elisa: ...body image. And...and I can remember in my pre-teen, then my teen, then my young adult years, and now years. Yeah, I can remember especially looking at my thighs. Okay, I’m just going there, you know... [Laughing] ... and...and kinda measuring them to my friends’. You know like maybe we’d be at the swimming pool or at the beach, and everything’s like all exposed. And I would always be like *Oh no! I’m just bad! You know it’s just not okay! Mine are terrible!* And I...I read a book. It was a book of essays by kind of a...an irreverent, wonderful woman who in...in her older years – 65 up – she wrote an essay about what she called “the aunties. ... [laughing] ... And she talked about learning to love her thighs as you would beloved old aunties. Appreciating their jiggle, you know, appreciating their texture, you know, and giggling about knowing everybody was looking at them and becoming endeared to them...

Eryn: Oh!

Elisa: ...And there’s kinda this – as you’re talking, Bree, about acknowledging and then understanding how God views our comparison and how disastrous it is when we stay in that negative of *I’m not ... bleh...* fill in the blank, you know? And how my...my writing friend turned it around and embraced and endeared those parts of herself that she saw as lacking. ...eh... It...That’s what is coming to my mind right now is...is how dearly our Father loves all parts of us. And maybe we can turn around and...and look at ourselves the way He looks at us.



Eryn: I love that. I la... I wrote down “endeared to them.” Endeared to the thing you’re comparing [comparing]. So if it is your thighs, if it is your...if it is your body, if it is your circumstance, that ... I...eh... you know when I hear “endeared to them,” I also think about when you said, Bree, there’s an acknowledgement. And the way that you explained that – and, Elisa, what you’re saying about being endeared to – there’s this freedom we can experience when we extend compassion to the acknowledgement, just like the Lord extends compassion and grace to us. It’s like to be endeared to the thing is to show compassion to the thing, because that’s what the Lord does for us. And He so badly wants us to extend compassion to ourselves. And I think that’s what stops that shame spiral, because what happens – at least in my brain, and Elisa knows this on our _____ [calls out?] . . . because we just talk about life on like a, you know, day-by-day basis. [Laughing] She’s been a part of my shame spirals probably more than she’s wanted to. But it will be like a thought ... [laughing] ... It’ll be like a thought, and then it’s like a zoom. It’s like a vortex. It just goes down, and then you start to feel shamed...ashamed for that thought that you had. So then it makes us scared to acknowledge the thoughts...

Elisa: That’s good.

Eryn: ...of comparison because we don’t want to be in the shame spiral. But to be endeared, to show compassion, gives us that freedom to walk towards them and acknowledge them, which is just such a beautiful gift, that once we can get there. I just love how you...you shared that that’s...that’s part of the journey of learning what’s growing inside of us that might be infecting the soul, creating cancer in the soul.

[Music]

Elisa: And when we come back, Bree shares the steps she took after taking that run with her new friends, and how she continues to be on a journey of learning how to deal with the nastiness of comparison when it starts to grow inside. That’s coming up on *God Hears Her*.

[Music]

Eryn: If you’re a fan of this podcast, sign up for our *God Hears Her* email newsletter and find even more inspiration and encouragement from women just like you. These weekly emails are filled with stories you can relate to and other fun goodies that will brighten up your walk with Jesus. Go to godhearsheer.org and sign up today. That’s godhearsheer.org. Now back to the show.

Eryn: So what did you do after that run? I’m curious. Like what did you do after that run...



Elisa: Mm.

Eryn: ...and you recognize *I am talking this way to myself*. What was...what happened after that point?

Bree: I would love to tell you that everything magically got back into place and that I lived life comparison free. And that was not the case at all. I ...

[Laughter]

Bree: ...I still...

Elisa: Oh geez...

Bree: ...I still struggled with this issue of comparison. And even being in the relationships with these women was a struggle because I had these...

Elisa: Mm.

Bree: ...thoughts in my mind. You know *I'm not good enough. They're great. They won't like me because I don't fit here. My life isn't tidy here*. And so I began to hide the things about me that I thought other people wouldn't understand, that they would say *That's different*. So I started to hide those things about me, and I wanted to become the perfect, ideal Bree. I wanted to be the perfect, ideal woman that fit with everybody, whose life was perfect. And that began to crumble. You can only maintain this façade for so long. And so God wouldn't let me forget that moment on the track. It just kept coming back to me. You...you know how He kind of whispers something to you. *Remember that? Do you remember what I said to you here?* It was like that, and He kept reminding me of that. And I said, *Okay, I'm gonna sit down, and I'm gonna write this in a book, just to get these thoughts out*. And as I started writing it, He was revealing so much about comparison to me, and it was ministering to myself. So when I started writing the book, it was really just about healing myself. And that's the journey that we went along.

Elisa: So for you, and you expressed it, you vented it, you processed it, you prayed it ...eh... to God by writing. And a lot of us journal, and we may not need to write a book. But, you know, a lot of us journal. Other people might see a therapist. Some people might choose to unzip in vulnerability with a friend and take a risk. Do you think we ever can really escape it, Bree? You know this...this comparison cycle, you know, I mean... I just saw a thing on Facebook this morning. Hysterical! It's one of my vulnerable friends posted this picture – beautiful picture of her... it looked like her living room. It was this gorgeous couch



with a fireplace behind it with a fire in it and beautiful flowers and books all neat in the shelf. And she posted: “You know everybody sees this gorgeous picture behind me when I’m doing a Zoom call for work or whatever,” she said. “And finally, I...I turned my laptop around and showed them the other side of the room.” And it was just this bomb had gone off. Desks with papers and chairs and stuff under construction. And...and, to me, I thought *That’s beautiful!* Her name is Amy. Thank you for sharing that, Amy, because ... Does this comparison cycle ever go away unless we start to reveal the both/and, you know? Here’s the product of what God’s done with me, an...and here’s the process I go through 24/7 for God to shape me.

Bree: Absolutely. You hit the nail on the head. As long as we keep ourselves hidden, as long as we try to present these perfect pictures, we leave people comparing to something that’s not even real. I think about eyelashes are a huge trend right now...

Elisa: Oh gosh!

Bree: ...And I barely have any. I...

Elisa: I don’t either, Bree! ... [Laughter] ... Yeah, let...let’s start a new trend.

Eryn: Yes!

Bree: We’re showing up with our no-eyelashes, okay? [Laughter] ... But, yeah, these ladies... I was looking at ladies with eyelashes like *Oh my gosh! Why don’t I have those eyelashes?* I’mma be real, yall. I was just like *What is this? Why were they born this way?* But when I found out they were fake, I was mad! I was like ... [Laughter] ... I’ve been looking at these for so long questioning why God did not give me these eyelashes, or hips, cause I don’t have those either. But I was questioning Him in this way, and it was something that wasn’t even real. But to the point of your friend Amy exposing that – *Hey, on the other side of this, I need to be transparent and show that it’s not always what it looks like.* I think that’s how we escape comparison together. And, Eryn, you mentioned at the beginning that we never talk about this as ladies. It’s like our dirty little secret. But when we expose it to each other, when we expose our shame, when we expose our insecurities, we are glorifying God; because, as we know, in our weakness His strength is perfected. And so for us to really bare to everybody that we’re in relationship with – at the right time. You don’t have to go broadcast it on social media, like some may. But even your closest girlfriend, and say *Hey, I was struggling in this area yesterday, or I had this thought last week,* we really – what I like to say – shame the devil; because he wants to keep us thinking that we are stuck in this comparison cycle. And it’s not that at all. So I really think what you said is the solution.



Elisa: So to be honest, to be vulnerable, to show the...the less-than parts that we all have.

Eryn: What encouragement would you give to somebody that might be reflecting right now and finds themselves in a community of women that they are surrounded by women that all they do is compare? So there's no breathing room for compassion. I think about ... In my past I've had friendships where we all just compared. It was like the normalcy, but like we quietly did it. So we were all quietly competing. And then we are also not experiencing true intimacy with each other and true intimacy with the Lord. So what encouragement would you give somebody that is looking around, saying *Well, all of my friends and I do that?* What would we... what kind of advice would we give them?

Bree: Well, I would say, one: Do not feel guilty, because that is the first response that I think we go to, is when somebody is speaking about something that we deal with, we go to guilt. *Oh no. I'm wrong because I compared. Oh no, I'm...* And then we start to wear this burden of we're responsible for this thing that was really cultivated outside of our control, this idea of comparison in our society. So I would say One: Girl, don't feel guilty! Number two: Take some time to spend with your Father. And I really think that that is so crucial, because once we understand that our identity in Christ and our value, we can learn what we bring to the friendship. We can learn what I am bringing to the community is essential, just like what my girlfriend is bringing to the community is essential. And I don't have to be her, and she doesn't have to be me, and I can authentically say: *I really appreciate that you're organized because I'm not.* I'm just telling you guys my life story. But I can really say that I appreciate the things that are missing in my life are found in you. And that's why we're in community together, because once we understand that we're to complement each other and not compete with each other, those walls can fall. Comparison doesn't stand a chance, because I know that I need you, and you know that you need me. And that really heals our relationship. So I would just say: Spend time with our Father and really understand who you are and what you bring to your community.

Eryn: Bree, I have found myself comparing who I am right now to my past self. And there have been times where I have kind of eat myself up – whether it's like my body's changed, cause like people may not see your body change, but you see your body change. And then you just know that like it's just gonna continue down that path. Or my hair... like I... My hair used to be like super like full of dimension. And I have extensions because I wanted...I wanted to have more dimension in my hair. And so...so like...but, you know, you start to just start to compare what you used to be, what you used to have versus where you are now. Elisa, can you speak into that? I mean what do... what do we do with that?

Elisa: Yeah. Yeah. You...you know I'm...I'm trying to learn from my friends who are modeling it, you know, who are showing: *This is what the rest of my life looks like.* Or, *yeah, I used to look like this, and*



now I look more jiggy. ... [Laughter] ... eh... One of my friends, Lisa, calls it "I try to embrace my fluffy parts." I love that. Yeah, I've gotten older and fluffier. ...eh...eh... Gosh, you know, I...I think, Bree, I want to hear what you have to say about this. But I'm hearing a lot back to compassion, you know. An appreciation for what we were, but also compassion, you know, that that person is not dead. She still lives inside me. She just looks different on the outside. What do you think, Bree?

Bree: Absolutely. This is something that I love to talk about because I don't think people realize how harmful it is. Society absolutely tells us to compare ourselves to ourselves. There's these mantras of: "We are our only competition," or "The only person that you're comparing yourself to is you and your yesterday." And that locks us into this space of *I have to remain that person*, when God is taking me on a path to evolve. God is growing me. He is pruning me. And so, if we think about that idea of we're a branch and that He prunes us...

Elisa: ...eh...

Bree: ... We keep trying to go backwards and keep trying to pick up the bad fruit, and we keep trying to pick up the rotten twigs. We're not doing ourselves any justice. And not saying that everything was rotten. Some stuff could be really good, but if you're going backwards, you're going against the path that God has for you. He didn't intend for us to go backwards. And so I think I would just encourage all ladies to ask God this question: "Where are we going today? What do You have for me tomorrow?" And that keeps our eyes focused on the future. I don't have to be my pre-baby weight. It's gonna take me a long time to get there, so I'm not focusing on that. But now do...do I need to be healthy in the future. So that's kind of how I think of it. *God, we're going on this journey together. Show me who You want me to be, who You've called me to be, and not who society tells me that I need to get back to.*

Eryn: Ah, I love that! And...eh... you know you touched on something in the beginning of ... when you were talking about, again, like extending compassion. How... you know I think sometimes we also can compare our growth for where we are now and belittle who we were then also.

Elisa: Hm.

Eryn: ...And, you know, when you talked about like... you were talking about like your rebellious time. Like that rebellious Bree made Bree this deep soul that you now have. And like I would love for you to just kind of maybe speak to...to the woman – me ...uh... – that can compare poor choices that I've made then and who I am now, and how to get out of that cycle. What would you say? What would you say to...to, you know, yourself, looking back on old Bree?



Bree: That is a really good question...

Elisa: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Bree: ...I think the one thing that I would say is that God's character doesn't change. And so what I'm gonna... how I'm gonna bring that into this is that His character didn't change when He created us. His character didn't change when He allowed circumstances to happen to us. And it didn't change where we are now. And so if God has always loved us and has always seen value in us all along the way, then we should be like our Father and learn to see that value along the way too. Just as you said, Eryn, those choices made me who I am. And they made you who you are. And they made all of us who we are today. And so...

Elisa: Mm-hmm.

Bree: ...you know... I really think that that's it, just learning to appreciate that – in your words – extend compassion to ourselves in those moments, and saying *Girl, you were stuck on stupid back then!* However, *"stuck on stupid," Bree, gave you a little bit of grit when you pray* You know what I mean? Just acknowledging that it's okay to have made a mistake. It's okay to have been at highs and to have been at lows all through our lives, but that every single moment no tear was wasted. No situation was forgotten. And, really, the cornerstone verse for my life – Romans 8:28 – God works it all out for our good.

[Music]

Eryn: What a strong message! Acknowledge our thoughts of comparison and show compassion towards yourself. This is *God Hears Her*. And before we close out today's episode, just a quick reminder that the show notes are available in the podcast description. The show notes not only contain the talking points for today's episode, but you will also find a link to connect with Elisa and me on social So check out the show notes on our website godhearsher.org.

Elisa: And while you're at godhearsher.org, we encourage you to read the *God Hears Her* blog that Bree is a part of. It features articles and stories from women just like you and me who are discovering just what it means to be seen and heard by God.

Eryn: Thank you for joining us, and don't forget: God hears you, He sees you, and He loves you because you are His.



Elisa: Today's episode was engineered by Ann Stevens and produced by Daniel Ryan Day and Mary Jo Clark. And today we also want to recognize _____ [Londa?] and _____ [Kriscynthia?] for their help in creating and promoting this episode of the *God Hears Her* podcast. Thanks, friends!

Eryn: *God Hears Her* is a production of Our Daily Bread Ministries.