



# God Hears Her Podcast

## Episode 178 – Internally Unsettled: A Bible Study

### Eryn Eddy Adkins & Vivian Mabuni

[Music]

**Vivian Mabuni:** It's as simple as Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd and He will lead. And as a sheep I follow. And when He says, go, I need to go. And if He says, stay, I need to stay and not run ahead of Him. And if He says to wait, to wait, and those times can be really challenging. It's not as simple as that, as what I just described. When we have to live it out.

[Theme music]

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**Vivian:** Eryn, I am really excited to have a conversation with you about an experience that I had. This was last summer.

**Eryn Eddy Adkins:** Okay.

**Vivian:** And I took my first sabbatical. So, working for the organization I work for, we're allowed a sabbatical every seven years of up to three months.

**Eryn Eddy Adkins:** Wow.

**Vivian:** And I had never taken one up until last year, so I was way overdue because I've been working for them for 35 years. And sabbatical is similar to the idea of Sabbath, where God on the seventh day after He created everything, He set aside a day of rest that He, God actually rested, declared everything as good. So fascinating is that the first people, Adam and Eve, their first day of existence was rest. And then from rest, God had given them the cultural mandate to take care of the animals and to work the ground and harvest the soil. God had just built this into the system. And so this rhythm of rest is one that God commands His people. You know, so every seven days. So, I had been taking, you know, for a good number of years now, I've tried to, like protect a 24 hour Sabbath. So for me, it's been like Saturday -



**Eryn:** I was about to ask, so what is-what does a Sabbath look like to you?

**Vivian:** Yeah, so it's a time to rest, to worship, and to enjoy. So, sundown Saturday, I usually take off my watch, I put my phone away and I just leave those until Sunday night at sundown. And then I put my watch and my phone, pick up my phone again, but I don't even take my phone to church on Sundays. And it's actually been really freeing. My husband does, so the kids know to text him.

**Eryn:** Yeah. I love that. Yeah. Because somebody has to have a phone.

**Vivian:** Somebody has to have a phone. But it really has been a wonderful rhythm that I've gotten into. So going into sabbatical was going to be an extended time where-

**Eryn:** Okay, of what you've experienced with the Sabbath.

**Vivian:** Yes, so I set it up so I didn't get emails.

**Eryn:** Wow.

**Vivian:** I took all social media off my phone and closed all that stuff down. And it really was a time to get away and to get replenished. Just a visual for you is, if you take a jar of river water and you just take a scoop of it and you put it on the table, it's kind of murky.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** And if you give it enough time, like overnight, the next morning, all of the silt and the sand, it all like settles and you can finally see through and it really works. I actually did this at a river, you know, as a talk illustration. And at the end of 45 minutes, it was still murky, but the next day it was completely clear.

**Eryn:** Wow.

**Vivian:** And so, I think that there's just times when we need to let everything settle so that we can see again.

**Eryn:** I love that analogy. I'm glad you brought up Sabbath and sabbatical and sharing the differences between the two of them. I dated a guy that viewed the Sabbath as no working, so not doing the dishes, no labor. Can you share more about what the Sabbath is? Because I've heard so many different things.



**Vivian:** Yeah, there's so many different things. And typically, if your work is inside, it's great to go outside. And if your work is outside, then come inside. Um, so that's kind of a framework and I think everyone kind of works with it and I've tried variations, but for me, if I am cooking slowly, it's very different than like the frantic, like, oh my gosh, we need to eat. So, I literally, if I'm chopping up something, I'm actually relishing it. I'm enjoying this process of making the stew, letting it cook slowly. And just slowing down, slowing down my walking, slowing down my chewing, slow, just slowing down and taking in and getting outside. So, I usually water my house plants and that could for some be considered work, but for me it's a miracle that they're alive. So, it's, it's enjoyable, but it's a very restful thing for me to take some time and take all the plants and put them in the bathtub and turn on the water. And it's just a rhythm that I've gotten used to. So, I don't think it's hard and fast as much as it is just to disconnect from the, the noise. And again, I kind of pictured in my mind that swirling water and just what it looks like to let it settle. What does it look like to be able to just sit down and read something just for the joy of it, you know, and not work.

**Eryn:** Right.

**Vivian:** And that really is kind of something that I'm needing to figure out as well just in regular life with rhythms because a lot of times I speak at retreats or conferences on the weekends,

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** So, Sundays I'm working, and so I'm needing to figure out, okay, then do I switch that to a Sunday night to Monday night? So that I could stay in that rhythm. So that's still, you know, I'm still tweaking and there's grace I think in that. But the idea of having some extended time I think is good for the soul. And now having gone and spent some time on a sabbatical, I can't wait for the next extended time. But I would love for you to read Jeremiah 17: 7 and 8, and then I'll kind of share some of the highlights.

**Eryn:** The person who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence indeed is the Lord, is blessed. He will be like a tree planted by water. It sends its roots out toward a stream. It does not fear when heat comes, and it's foliage remains green. It will not worry in a year of drought or cease producing fruit.

**Vivian:** That's from Jeremiah 17:7 and 8. And that was kind of one of the verses, along with Psalm 23 and some other verses that I continue to meditate on, but this verse really speaks of blessed is the person who trusts in the Lord and whose trust is the Lord. So again, the focus of Sabbath and sabbatical, really, is the Lord and that investment of sending down our roots deep so that regardless of the



circumstances, whether it's a year of drought or flooding, that there's some stability that comes into that investment of our relationship with God. So for me, I had the three months,

**Eryn:** Okay, so three months.

**Vivian:** No social media, no emails.

**Eryn:** How long did it take you to prep for that? Or did you prep at all?

**Vivian:** Yeah, it was some prep,

**Eryn:** Okay.

**Vivian:** And I did have some friends who had resources that I looked into, and you know, it's just setting things up. And of course, now that I know a little bit better the rhythms if I can do it again later, I would probably start my sabbatical actually physically away from my home.

**Eryn:** Okay.

**Vivian:** Because I don't know if you're like this, but for me, if I'm at home, I get so distracted by all the projects around the house, you know,

**Eryn:** You look at the dishes,

**Vivian:** Exactly.

**Eryn:** Instead of the email you need to do. Working from home is very hard.

**Vivian:** It is. I work from home too. So it's just, it's not the same kind of rest as getting away. So,

**Eryn:** That's so true.

**Vivian:** So, um, we had a friend of a friend that he had a friend who owned a condo in big bear, in California.

**Eryn:** Oh, fun.



**Vivian:** But it was total man cave, so it was like, the upside was it was free, the downside was it was a single guy who, you know, you got there, there's a pinball machine in the middle, you know, it just was not the beautiful Airbnb,

**Eryn:** Deer hanging on the wall.

**Vivian:** Yeah, that's kind of, so I literally took a sheet out from, like, the linen closet to put over the chair and I had to, like, rearrange so there's a reading lamp by the chair next to the pinball machine. So, it wasn't like,

**Eryn:** Yeah, made it a little more feminine for you.

**Vivian:** I did some stuff, but I went up there by myself and I had not spent a week alone. So, I went up there and I went to the grocery store, so I bought the food they needed for the week, got to the condo, set things up and then literally I turned my phone off and I just said, I told, I told my husband, I will text you every night before I go to bed to let you know I did not get mauled by bears, you know, I'm safe, put my phone away and put post its over all the clocks. So I didn't even know what time it was.

**Eryn:** Oh, I love that.

**Vivian:** And I just set to think if I'm tired, I'll sleep and if I'm hungry, I'll eat and I will take this time to just pray, and read, and reflect and, um, it took some time for the water to swirl down. I did some fun things. I meet with the spiritual director pretty regularly and she sometimes has retreats, and, on the retreats, she does these really cool collages. And so, I also bought a glue stick and some magazines, and I did some collages.

**Eryn:** Oh, that's fun.

**Vivian:** And I ended up doing a past, present, future collage and it's like these words and pictures and it was a really, I mean all these things, and the way that I actually started sabbatical, which is something I want to encourage our listeners.

**Eryn:** Yeah.



**Vivian:** Even just when you meet with God, the way my spiritual director has us settle when we first start our, our little retreats is she has us list out all of the worries and concerns and cares that we have. And then she has us like fold it up and then put it into a bag.

**Eryn:** Oh cool.

**Vivian:** Right?

**Eryn:** So, all the worries and concerns that you have going on the sabbatical or just in general?

**Vivian:** Coming into the time.

**Eryn:** Or just coming into the time, and you put it in a bag.

**Vivian:** Coming into the time and literally just putting it into a bag.

**Eryn:** That's so practical. I love that.

**Vivian:** Yes, so I had my whole list and then I put it on a bag, and I just put the word trust over that bag and I just put it in there and I just thought these are the things that I'm not focusing on.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** During this time, because they're in the bag, and that really helped kind of clear the time out for me to just be able to think on other things. And so, I took some hikes. I, you know, just did some exploring, went and looked at the stars at night, and it was really, amazing. And I reflected on my relationship with God, and this is the part, Eryn, that I couldn't have planned. This was in August, and I realized that sitting there in this little condo in Big Bear next to the pinball machine, but I looked back and I realized that it had been exactly 40 years from the time that I had prayed a full surrender prayer to God, as a 17 year old in Hong Kong. Which is part of my spiritual journey story, my dad moved our family to Hong Kong right before my senior year of high school. And I just kind of had my ultimatum prayer and God answered it. Part of my prayer is like; I'll give you my whole life. You will have control of everything. I'll do whatever you want me to do. And I had no idea that 40 years later, I would be sitting there and looking back over four decades, and I can say with full honesty that God has been faithful.



**Eryn:** Wow.

**Vivian:** There have been really challenging things within these 40 years, but since that point of surrender and where I've needed to kind of re-up that decision, but I've really can say that our truest freedom comes through surrender and trusting. And so that was kind of the theme that came out of, was trust.

**Eryn:** Was trust, which is what that scripture says. I think walking into something where, I mean, I know there's preparation, but walking into knowing there's going to be solitude and silence and reflection. Was there something that was exposed to you in that time that was convicting and like, kindly convicting where the Lord just kind of wanted to share some things that you weren't able to see in the daily.

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** That you were able to see being placed in silence and solitude.

**Vivian:** I think I was confronted with my lack of trust. So, on one hand, it was so simple, like trust, of course. But really it was deep in my soul like the invitation, Viv, will you trust me?

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** Will you trust me with the things that are in the bag?

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** And they're very real things. Will you trust me?

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** And let me show you how I have been trustworthy. I have been faithful and those kind of reminders and I think about throughout the scriptures,

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** God is always calling us to remember. The Israelites kept forgetting, and we're called to remember to remember to remember and I think that is a good reason to set aside time as well, as just a



time of remembrance. So, in the same way, I believe it was Joshua when he was crossing the Jordan, into the promised land and they pulled out these rocks of remembrance.

**Eryn:** Mm hmm.

**Vivian:** I actually picked up a rock that looked like a bear. It was like, it was during one of my hikes, but it sure looked like a big bear. And I was just remembering my big bear time and, and I took that rock, and I wrote trust because it just kind of, I'm an ENFJ on the Myers Briggs, so everything,

**Eryn:** I'm an ENFP.

**Vivian:** Okay, so the NF.

**Eryn:** So, I get it.

**Vivian:** So, everything has meaning. So, the rock has meaning, the word has meaning.

**Eryn:** Everything has meaning. A bird, a cardinal flies by during my quiet time and I'm googling,

**Vivian:** Butterfly. Yep, I totally get you. So, so there was definitely, the sense of that, but that was what I was confronted with again was like, will you trust me. And these are the things, as I did like a past and a present and a future.

**Eryn:** Yeah,

**Vivian:** It was like will you trust me with the future?

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** And I think it's so easy for us to run ahead and to have our minds run ahead, experience anxiety.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** Because we don't know.

**Eryn:** Yeah.





**Vivian:** And God just keeps inviting us into this place of, will you trust me? And it's as simple as Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd, and He will lead. And as a sheep I follow. And when He says, go, I need to go. And if He says, stay, I need to stay and not run ahead of Him. And if He says to wait, to wait, and those times can be really challenging. It's not as simple as what I just described when we have to live it out.

**Eryn:** Well, and how do you wrestle with that? I struggle with reflecting back on who I know Him to be in my circumstances, how I've seen Him show up, how I've seen Him take what was so painful and make something really beautiful out of it, when I didn't think it'd go that way. And then other times where He's answered prayers and done miracles that I'm shocked by and yet I still do struggle with the trust. I don't know if it's like there's a fear or anxiety that I don't know which one I'm gonna get. Sometimes I'm like I don't know which am I going to be prepared to see Him turn beauty out of pain and this will be a longer road. Or will this be a shorter road and He does something like a miracle.

**Vivian:** And that waiting time, it's a real time of needing to lay down our will and trust Him with the outcome, which may not be necessarily what we want. So, one of the seminary professors in one of my classes said, you know, we need to make sure that we aren't determining who God is based on our circumstances. We need to determine who God is based on His Word and our circumstances in light of who He is. But a lot of times when our circumstances are not going the way we thought they should, we decide that God is silent, or He doesn't love us or He's no longer good. And there are definitely really hard circumstances that you and I have walked through, and I'm sure our listeners are currently walking through, but not allowing those circumstances to determine who God is. God has revealed Himself and we need to evaluate our circumstances in light of who He is. But I feel you in that. And I think over and over it really comes down to laying down our will. And choosing to walk in His ways, knowing that His ways are best, even when it doesn't make sense. And that's where even going back to the verse, it's like, we have to send those roots deep because there will be seasons of drought and there will be seasons where there's plenty and that even sometimes when life is going great, that can be a dangerous time because we stop trusting because everything is, we're self-sufficient.

**Eryn:** Yes, exactly.

**Vivian:** And sometimes it's in the hardest times that we're actually feeling closest to the Lord. And so, in any and every season, I think those are the points in times to trust and reflect. And I think that that's what Sabbath does on a more regular basis. And then to have a sabbatical time to actually do some of that



reflecting to listen, to take time to listen. I think it's so noisy out there and I'm uncomfortable. I realize how uncomfortable I, I am in silence.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** And it's sometimes deafening, you know, and I think people in a previous generation didn't have all the noise, but I had to evaluate like, why is it that I have to always have a podcast playing or my Spotify playlist or whatever it is just to fill the space instead of really like allowing the silence and the solitude to learn to sit in that and be comfortable in that too, and invite that and be invited into that space.

**Eryn:** What did that look like? Like, were you squirmy? Or were you like trying to play music all the time? Or like, what did that look like for you in the silence? I'm just kind of, let us be a fly on the wall in this little bear cabin.

**Vivian:** Yes, in the man cave, in the man cave. As the days went on. It was easier, but initially it was kind of like, oh, I need to, you know, set up camp and I'm going to, you know, put a sheet over the ugly chair, but once I settled and then, then I realized, you know, it's actually internally that I'm not settled. It's not even externally. And so that's where some of the harder work came in. But once I moved through that and it was like, oh, you're going to be okay. I can do this. And then it was just really sweet.

**Eryn:** What advice would you give to the woman? Me, this whole podcast is giving me advice. The woman that is just overwhelmed and busy with, uh, running errands, getting groceries, having the kiddos pull her here and there, and you're making slime, and then this teenager wants to go to the movies, and then the dishes are piling up, and you've got to wash their clothes, and you've got to do a load of towels, and everything is just everywhere.

**Vivian:** Everything is everywhere. Boy, that is relatable, and that is a season. And I would say that there is grace for that season. Those things that you're putting your hands to, they're important and they matter. Little people need food. Big people need food, and food is a thing and, um, the different activities and the investment. So, there's grace for that. It's not meant to be a shaming kind of thing at all. And I would just say it might be good to just pray and ask God to show you where the pockets are when there is silence. I'm thinking of the, the woman that just has so much noise, but I really do believe that there are going to be places and spaces of silence and it may not be a full 24 hours, but it is possible to kind of get those moments and instead of picking up my phone,

**Eryn:** Yeah.



**Vivian:** I can actually choose to just sit and take deep breaths and just be present and not even have to say the words and pray, but just recognize that God is here, that He loves me and I'm going to be okay and it's going to be okay. So, I would like taking those moments.

**Eryn:** Yeah, that's so good. Vivian. Those words remind me of a memory of my mom, where I would walk downstairs and I would see her in her chair with her coffee, with her Bible, and her journal.

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** And she would be journaling, and I don't know how long she was up. She could have just sat down. Which most time that happens. For I'm sure any mom listening you just sit down and the little feet come.

**Vivian:** That's right.

**Eryn:** But oftentimes it would seem like she would be just in scripture and journaling and reflecting, and that's something that I, it just sticks out in my mind. And I try to do that when we have our daughters, I try to wake up early. I try. It's hard sometimes because I'm tired and I want to sleep in, and I want that extra sleep. But then I love the feeling of quiet time with God more than sleep. Which that makes me sound super Holy, and I'm not trying to be. It's just, I genuinely love that time that I will get six hours of sleep to have it.

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn Eddy Adkins:** It's a, just a spiritual discipline of mine now that I now enjoy, when for a while it felt painful, and then it became enjoyment. But our youngest came down the stairs, and she's eight, and you know, I want a squeeze, and I want a, I want this, and I want that, you know, and I, I said to her, I said, alright, sweetie, I, you know, give her breakfast or whatever. I said, listen, I'm going to be outside. I'm going to be out there for 30 minutes, and I'm going to be in quiet time right now. And she now knows I have quiet time.

**Vivian:** I love that.

**Eryn:** And I think that to your point of choosing, whatever moment you can, however your situation is. I also believe it's; you are setting an example for your family and your kids and your husband and for yourself of what's priority and important. And so, to choose that is sending a message just like my mom did.



**Vivian:** Yes. It's that age old thing where you have the big old jar and you have the rocks and the pebbles and the gravel and the sand. And if you put the big rocks in first, everything fits in order. But if you wait until everything is done, the laundry will never be done. And recognizing, okay, put the big rocks in and everything else fits. And I really believe God is a God that multiplies time. So, when we honor Him, I think He multiplies our time. And I think we're in step with the spirit that way. And it doesn't mean that life is easy, but it definitely is a completely different way of going about the day.

**Eryn:** Yeah, I've gone on retreats, and I'm like, I had this spiritual moment. I'm so excited. I feel refreshed. Can't wait to get home. I can't wait to tell my husband. And then I'm also expecting him to meet me at the same enthusiasm and his spiritual walk. Even though he didn't have a sabbatical or a retreat.

**Vivian:** Right.

**Eryn:** And so, then there's that wrestling when you come home and not everybody else encountered it.

**Vivian:** Right.

**Eryn:** Did you experience that?

**Vivian:** I did.

**Eryn:** Okay.

**Vivian:** I think my husband and I had a fight that first week.

**Eryn:** That's normal.

**Vivian:** You know, it happens. Sometimes that reentry can be a little bit tricky.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** I'm trying to learn to not go all bad when things like that happen. It doesn't mean that the situation was all bad if we have conflict.

**Eryn:** Right.



**Vivian:** I need to learn to hold both. You know, and there's a Daniel Tiger, a song that he sings where you can have more feelings, two or more feelings at the same time, and it's okay. It's okay. And so I need to like channel that Daniel Tiger because I can tend to go all bad and think that, oh, it was just all a waste because I've done it right. And then, so that, that's a learning spot for me.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** Even today, you know, just learning to be able to walk through the good and the hard and hold both. And, my husband still can be a hundred percent supportive, but also feel disappointed, you know, and me too. I can be feeling like a hundred percent on a mountaintop and also feel frustrated and that's okay. That's okay. Daniel Tiger, that's okay.

**Eryn:** Also, thank you for being so honest to saying that we had a fight when we got back because that's just, I've had those coming back from some sort of just beautiful experience with God and then have experienced disappointment coming home and then you do the inner critic or the enemy's whispers wants to tell you that you shouldn't have done it.

**Vivian:** Right.

**Eryn:** And it cheapens the thing that you that was so beautiful that you just experienced.

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** So what would you say for somebody, okay for me, like it's hard for me to do a sabbatical, right now, but I would still love to be able to practice some of the spiritual disciplines maybe that a sabbatical can gift you or what do you say to the person that's busy like me where it's like blended family, work, both working parents trying to get the kids places and then in the in between trying to have quality time with your husband and you have small group and then you have church and then like all of that. So, what advice do you have for somebody that still longs to be disrupted? In the ways how they have a relationship with God and how can they incorporate some of those things now?

**Vivian:** Yeah. Well, I think every person's circumstance will be different. And I think about the amount of hours that I waste on social media. It's one thing to stay connected with people. It's another thing to numb out and just keep on doom scrolling. And in that way, in my own life, if I do an inventory of my time,

**Eryn:** Yeah.



**Vivian:** I actually have more time than I think.

**Eryn:** Wow.

**Vivian:** And in that way, I would say to you and to listeners that we actually may have more time than we think. It's being intentional about protecting that time. For me, one of the biggest hindrances for me to have that settled, clear vision, the jar to settle, is my phone because it's such an easy thing to pick it up and check my email or, you know, check on text messages and respond to this thing. And that's a new disruption.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** That we are needing to learn to navigate. So, what does it look like for me to actually turn my phone off?

**Eryn:** Right.

**Vivian:** Completely off. Like, do I even do that? Like learning to do that on a somewhat regular basis to actually go and have a quiet time without my phone because I keep thinking, well, maybe I want to listen to this worship song too. Like maybe I want to be able to like google something if I can't find something or whatever. And honestly, we'll be fine. Leave the phone in another room. Or turned off, you know, it's like making little choices like that, I think really does expose what's really going on because it's like, for me, it's an, it's exposing like, okay, I am a little bit too dependent on this device right now. I need to really kind of do a little inventory on my time there.

**Eryn:** Yeah

**Vivian:** I do think there is something. Significant about the weekly rhythm of Sabbath that there's some really beautiful benefits that come with that.

**Eryn:** I will say if I take a break, if I do one day, that's going to create more work for me than maintaining the machine.

**Vivian:** Right, right.



**Eryn:** The emails, text messages, or showing up to the places that need me. But what would you say to somebody that's like, listen, if I take a break, it's going to just create more work for me.

**Vivian:** Well, I would probably challenge that person. So, I want to challenge you.

**Eryn:** Challenge me. Yes.

**Vivian:** Just, I would say try it. There's not a formula and it's going to be different for each person, but it's the same idea as like, if you are a creative person and you create things, how much more creative you are when you're rested. You know, like if you are just on fumes and just caffeine nonstop, the work that you do is actually taking longer because you're so spent and depleted. So, I think about a tree that's planted by streams of water that yields its fruit and it's season. There's an abundance that comes from that kind of investment of rest for your body, rest for your soul. Rest in being able to reconnect with people in real life and eat really good food and celebrate and understand that it's going to be okay. Yeah, and I think some of that is for at least for me it's a release of control. Yeah, like to trust that God is in control. So yeah, there's more to be shared, of course, but we ran out of time. But if people want to hear more, they can go check out the Discover the Word sabbatical series, Lessons on Sabbatical, but I'm so glad we got this time to chat.

**Eryn:** Thanks for letting me pick your brain on all the things.

[Theme music]

**Vivian:** Well, before we go, be sure to check out our show notes for a link to the *Discover the Word* series on sabbatical. You can find that and more at [GodHearsHer.org](http://GodHearsHer.org). That's [GodHearsHer.org](http://GodHearsHer.org).

**Eryn:** And if you liked this episode, or you've been listening to the show for a bit, please leave us a rating and review wherever you listen to your podcasts. Be sure to share your favorite episodes on social or with a friend.

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

**Eryn:** Today's episode was engineered by Anne Stevens and produced by Jade Gustman and Mary Jo Clark. We also want to thank our listeners in New Zealand for all of their help and support. Thanks everyone.



**Vivian:** Our Daily Bread Ministries is a donor-supported, nonprofit ministry dedicated to making the life-changing wisdom and stories of the Bible come alive for all people around the world.

[ODBM Theme]

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