



God Hears Her Podcast

Episode 196 Seeking Pure Desires with Ashley Jameson

Elisa Morgan & Eryn Adkins with Ashley Jameson

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Ashley: It was brutally painful. But at the same time, because of my past, I didn't have any leader or trainer to help me. I was able to say, I've been there. I've sexually acted out. I've had an eating disorder. I've been in places where I said, how did I get here? And so I could understand how my husband was in a place where he said, how did I get here?

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Eryn: Hey friends, before we start this conversation, we wanted to mention that we will be discussing some adult things regarding love and sex addiction. So please be mindful if there are usually kiddos around you. Now let's get into the conversation with Ashley Jameson.

Elisa: Eryn, we like to promise each other that these conversations are safe conversations where you and I, with our pretty consistent and awesome relationship, get to challenge each other, but also get to know people who challenge us. And then the whole, *God Hears Her* community is impacted.

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: And this is one of those conversations that I know we'll do just that. We have a...a really...a really special guest who's also being invited into a safe conversation. Her name is Ashley, Ashley Jameson. And Ashley and her husband, John, found Pure Desire in the throes of the deterioration of their own marriage, the erosion of trust, the entrance of betrayal, the devastation that came through, uh, an addiction to pornography. And already, I want to say, Ashley, I'm so grateful for your willingness to be vulnerable and come and share a struggle that I know many, many, many, many people share. Ashley, we are really honored to have you today.



Eryn: Yeah, welcome, Ashley.

Ashley: Well, I am really, really thankful to be here. And I could already feel myself earlier this morning, like, I'm gonna cry. I know it. I just, um, you know, 10 years into...10 years...I guess we're going on 11 years into our recovery process. See, my eyes are wet. It still is emotional for me, and I love our work. Dr. Ted and Diane Roberts founded Pure Desire, and it's been around for a decade. We got to reap the benefits of the work that they pioneered in the church when really, I feel like nobody...I know we say that nowadays, but there are some people more and more starting to talk about betrayal and sexual addiction. But really when they founded it, it was...it was not a very common subject in the church. And so my husband and I, we...we needed help. About 11 years ago, I found out my husband had a pornography addiction. He had been hiding it, you know, from me for a few years. I went to the church for help. That was my first go-to was, *I'm gonna call my pastor. I'm gonna call elders in the church. I'm gonna call the women who are my mentors in the church.* And what I received was, "Are you sure you're reading your Bible enough? Are you sure you're praying enough? Are you sure you've forgiven him? How's your sexual life?" All the things. And at that time...

Elisa: So painful.

Ashley: It really is.

Elisa: Because it's all your fault. That's what those messages say, yeah.

Ashley: Yes, yeah. It's like another trauma on top of it.

Elisa: Yeah, yeah.

Ashley: You know when you're...when you're already traumatized.

Eryn: Exactly. You're being betrayed by your own community of faith.

Elisa: Yeah.

Ashley: Right.

Elisa: It's supposed to be your safe place.



Ashley: Yes, yeah. So now that's what I get to do. Um, I oversee the groups department, and I get to work with churches and organizations and people wanting to start groups and help educate them and train them on how to be a safe place for women, you know? So I have that betrayal side, but going through the healing work of betrayal, I realized I had my own messy love, sex, and addiction past that I needed to address. So I have both.

Eryn: Yeah.

Ashley: Both sides that I, you know, struggle with.

Elisa: Yes, don't we all? Yeah. Yeah. It's usually not just one isolated...

Ashley: No, no.

Elisa: Yeah, yeah.

Eryn: So I would love to know more of your story. Maybe take us back a little bit to 11 years ago. You discovered it at that time, you discovered it within your husband, but you hadn't addressed your own stuff, right?

Ashley: No.

Eryn: Until later on. Okay.

Ashley: Right, yeah. Because I was definitely a young teen, young twenties, searching for love in all the wrong places, you know?

Eryn: Mm-hmm, totally.

Ashley: More of a love addict doing...willing to do anything sexually in order to feel loved. But when I got married, I'm like, okay, I'm doing all the Christian things. I'm going to church. I have one sexual partner. I am reading the Bible to my kids. And I didn't realize that if you don't process the things that led you to do those things before, they just come out in another way, like the Whack-a-Mole game. And so I was struggling with eating disorders, shopping, hyper-vigilance, trust issues. And I didn't realize those were all ways that I was still trying to cope, but just it...it was very hard to identify.



Eryn: Wow, yeah.

Elisa: You know, can...can we pause on that love addiction thing?

Eryn: Yeah.

Elisa: I think a lot of women struggle with that. A lot of people do.

Ashley: Mm-hmm. Yes.

Elisa: But especially women. Can you help us understand just a little bit about how you grew up and why your heart was so hungry for love?

Ashley: Absolutely. I like to tell people that it is all about Jesus, but somewhere along the line, people hurt us. We stopped believing the truth. We started believing lies. And we started living through this filter that we weren't supposed to be living through. And so we do need to go back to the beginning to figure out what happened, to where we stopped believing what God said about us, to where we stopped understanding our value in Christ. And so it's not throw out psychology and you know, because it's only Scripture. It's both. That psychology can help us understand. And so my past was...my mom is, she's older, she's 77. She had a hard, hard upbringing being a black woman, you know, at her time. And so her focus of love was providing financially, since that wasn't what they had, meaning she was always out of the house. My dad was an addict of every kind, and he was out of the house at...when I was two years old. Love, sex, gambling, drinking, ev...abuse, physical abuse, everything. So he was gone out of the house. And so I grew up kind of like a latchkey kid riding the bus to church with people. I did have sisters in the house, but we're also separate. And, um, I also grew up in a really racist neighborhood, so nobody at home, raised by nannies, did some sexual things with nannies' kids, not supervised. No parent really around, and then at school, lots of racism. So I learned to be a chameleon of, who do I need to be in order to feel like I'm seen and loved and valued?

Eryn: Yeah,

Ashley: I was raped at 15.

Elisa: Hon.

Ashley: As a virgin because...



Elisa: Oh, baby.

Ashley: I'm...I'm not victim blaming my own self, but I kept pursuing these...

Eryn: Yeah.

Ashley: ...very dangerous, unhealthy situations and ended up being raped. And I felt at that time I was disqualified from ever marrying a Christian husband, having God's best. So I ended up going to the world saying, well, at least I don't have to feel like I'm two people here. They know who I am.

Eryn: Yeah, that's a good word.

Ashley: Yeah.

Eryn: There's two people, yeah.

Ashley: There's...there's two people. And so I felt weirdly desired after that rape. And so it was very, very confusing for me. And then at about 16, I ran into some Christians who were on fire, and I said, I want that. And so I tried to rededicate my life. I was an Awana teacher, worship, summer camp counselor, but the message I heard at church was, *stay pure. If you have sex, you're not pure.* And that was really shaming for me. So I went back into the world until I got pregnant with twins at 18 years old.

Elisa: Oh my goodness.

Ashley: Wow.

Elisa: Okay, let's...let's slow again. Woo. First I just want to put my arms around you and just go, okay.

Ashley: Yeah. Thank you.

Elisa: Cause that's a whole lot. Yeah. And anybody else who's listening who has such trauma, deep breath. Eryn, you heard something that popped out to you. You heard that I was two people.

Eryn: Yes. Well, I just think that's so refreshing to hear, um, somebody challenge our faith community. Because you do feel like the church can make you feel like you have to be two different people. Like you can't bring your full self.



Ashley: Yeah.

Eryn: That's been my experience within church hurt and then having to forgive and heal through that. And I think there's a lot of people listening right now that probably just feel really seen by you saying that bringing your mess, uh, to the church is something that is becoming more and more acceptable, but it still has so many challenges. And I know that you've seen that. How have you seen it change from, "Don't talk about mess" to churches being open to talking about the mess?

Ashley: Well, I, if we want to get very down to the numbers, the newest Barna...

Eryn: Yes.

Ashley: ...report that we just, you know, partnered and did, says that 10 percent of churches have something. And so that's...that's up from 7 percent.

Eryn: Oof.

Ashley: Which is up from 0 percent probably at one time. So I'm like ...

Eryn: [inaudible] silver lining.

[laughter]

Ashley: We're trending in the right direction, but still 10 percent is not very much. You know, so if you're...if you're in one of those churches of 10 percent, that you're allowed to bring your hurt; you are in a great place. The good thing is we have all these other supplemental ministries that are Christian. And they are coming alongside the church, and so...

Elisa Morgan: That's good.

Ashley: That's what Pure Desire does. That's what so many different ministries that I bump shoulders with we do, because it's a slow change in the church. I mean, my husband has a pa...a past with prostitution. What would a pastor do if he's like, "Hey, this weekend I'm struggling with prostitutes". Like we don't even, we're not equipped to do that. And so that's what Pure Desire tries to help with.



Elisa: Yeah, and you know, that's really fair, Ashley. I mean, some of these issues that people in the church struggle with are beyond our typical pastoral training.

Ashley: Yeah.

Elisa: And so what a service. So yeah, thank you for...for talking about that "two-ness" of us and how we split almost when we were in the church and kudos that ten percent have some options, but we've got 90 percent to go and...

Ashley: Yeah.

Elisa: ...that's part of our conversation. The...the topic that hit me as you were talking, and I want you to finish your story, of course. And forgive me for interrupting you so strongly, but it's so sacred and precious what you're sharing. I didn't want to just rush through it. What I heard you say was, after the rape and some of the exploitation, you felt weirdly desired.

Ashley: Mm-hmm.

Elisa: Can you help us understand that? Because I think a lot of women would be so confused by those ambivalent feelings.

Ashley: Yeah, ambivalent's a great word. We push-pull. I call myself the wave, you know, like I want it. I don't. But you know, with that childhood of my mom experiencing so much racism, so her comments to me regularly were, "Don't be too black. Straighten your hair." I never...I never felt like I could be myself. And then going to school and have them be very racist, call me all the names, not want to accept me. Then when this person, this man, this full grown, you know, 21-year-old man came along, I was like, *oh, somebody does like me for me. Somebody does.* I mean, as weird as that is, I mean, I...I know now...

Elisa: It is, yes.

Eryn: Not weird, yeah.

Ashley: ...what it means. But somebody does want me, somebody does think I'm desirable just the way I am in my blackness, in my who I am. And so it really gave me this false sense of feeling accepted and then going forward, because I was a Christian who had already experienced sexual things, and I didn't



have anybody to teach me what to do with those normal sexual feelings; when I would get myself in a situation...

Elisa: There you go, yeah.

Ashley: ...I didn't know how to navigate that. And so sometimes I would do things to just have control of the situation, because I was afraid of the unknowns. I needed somebody to tell me more than put a promise ring on and save yourself till marriage. Like what happens when a guy is pushing me and I don't know what to do?

Eryn: Yeah, right.

Ashley: So, um, yeah, so it ended up being like I was afraid of what was gonna happen. So sometimes I would just go ahead and go through with something because at least I then could predict the outcome and that needed a lot of work. There're so many layers to it. And that's why our women that we take through group, it's 10 months long, because there are layers on, layers on layers on layers.

[music]

Elisa: When we come back, Ashley will share how she met her husband, John, and together how they found real healing.

[music]

Eryn: When life's answers don't come easily, you need real conversations with real women who want to give everything back to God. That's what *Unshakeable Moxie* is all about. It's a love letter praising our Heavenly Father for his faithfulness. This six part Bible-study journey explores the topics everyone is afraid to discuss out loud and then sees what Scripture has to say about them. Get a copy for you and give one to a friend with our special buy-one, get-one deal. You can find a link for that in our show notes.

Elisa: Now let's get back to our conversation with Ashley to find out how she met her husband, John.

Ashley: Yeah, so I hadn't fully dealt with my issues, and so when I walked back with the Lord fully with my kids, once a year-ish. I would find myself in a situation with a man. And I would've never identified myself as a love and sex addict back then. But that's absolutely what it was. My pattern was just way more stretched out. And that can be a challenge for Christians when they can't see the full, that it is a



pattern. And I found John in a bar. I found John in a bar when I was off the wagon, but luckily, God told him, go ahead and say what you need to say. And he said, "I'm ready to settle down and change my life and be with a Christian woman. And...and if you're not ready to do that, then we need to part ways."

Elisa: Wow.

Ashley: And I, being my love-addict self was like, "What do you need? Write me a list. I'm gonna do it."

Eryn: Aw.

Ashley: So...so he just, you know, told me like, "I need you to not go to bars ever again." And we...we got married thinking, *Okay, if we follow these parameters of we don't go to bars, we don't talk to other men or women. We go to church, we'll be okay.* But neither one of us, like I said, he had a two-year history with prostitutes. Neither one of us had dealt with the root issues of our stuff. And so four years later, our marriage just started eroding because we were just using the tools we knew how to use, you know? And trying to follow the Christian checklist of how to be a good marriage.

Eryn: After the four years, was there a specific thing, like circumstance that happened that kind of brought that forward of going, whoa, we...we don't have the tools.

Ashley: Yeah. I was just getting a sense that something was off, like the...the emotional intimacy was off a little bit. And I kept praying, *God, there's something going on in my marriage, so either reveal it so I can deal with it. Or help my trust issues that I dragged into this marriage be gone.*

Elisa: That was honest.

Ashley: Counseling was hard back then because I felt like it would put a stigma on us that there was something wrong with us or mentally unwell. You know, even...even just 14 years ago, I struggled to get counseling. And so probably like two weeks after I prayed that and I had been praying for a year, just regularly of what's wrong with our marriage; John brought a cell phone home that he got from work, a...a work cell phone. And when he went to work one day and left it, I, you know, diligently went through it to see what was going on...

Eryn: Diligently.

Ashley: ...see what was going on. And I found all kinds of porn and I was just like...



Elisa: Ooh.

Ashley: ...at that point in my life, because I had so many betrayals from parents, family, friends, men, everybody, my twins' father; I thought, *Okay, this Christian man, even though he has a colorful past, I'm doing it right this time.* And so I felt really...

Eryn: Yeah.

Ashley: ...betrayed by God in that that moment too.

Elisa: It's like a triple betrayal, yeah.

Ashley: Yeah.

Eryn: Yeah, he was your safe space.

Ashley: Yeah.

Eryn: Your husband was your safe space in a lot of ways.

Ashley: You know, we got along, we...we laughed. We had a normal sex life, so I was so confused...

Eryn: Yeah.

Ashley: ...why he would do that, you know? And then of course, why am I not good enough? What's wrong with me? And that same night I was in the shower, and I remember God just giving me...you guys remember that Mercy Me song, like, "Jesus Bring the Rain," even if it's like paint. I don't even remember all the lyrics. It's in my journal, but all the lyrics. And I was like, right at that moment I was like, this is really hard, but I know God is gonna use this for good.

Elisa: Wow.

Ashley: And so I just kind of held onto that. And we didn't have help. We had to...we had to dig and find for it. And that's why we're so passionate about helping people now.

Eryn: When he got home, what happened?



Ashley: Yeah. I am a pretty hot person, like tempered. It's part of my recovery. I'm...I'm way layers in. I'm doing so good now, but back then I wasn't as healthy. But I...I...

Eryn: I love your honesty.

Elisa: I do too.

Eryn: It's so refreshing.

Ashley: Oh, well, and I...I went to him and I said, "I can't believe you're doing this. I found porn on your phone." And he tried to deny it. And I was like, "No, you're no." And so the, again, just like with the rape, my person who's supposed to protect me and the person I always ran to for comfort and support is now the person who's lied to me and betrayed me.

Eryn: Yeah.

Ashley: And so that day I kept pushing him away, having boundaries. "You need to sleep in the other room." And then I'd...and then I'd say, "Well, come talk to me," 'cause I had nobody. And so...

Eryn: Aw.

Ashley: ...I was so confused on what to do. And...and like I said, the church, you know, didn't have advice to offer me. And so I just kept praying that God would bring me people and resources. Because I was reading, I read my whole Bible that summer. I read 50 to 70 chapters every day. I was listening to worship music nonstop. I quit drinking. I quit social media, TV for like three years.

Eryn: Wow.

Ashley: And I was like, *what is...what is gonna work?* And so when I heard, *oh, you need to just trust God and let it go and forgive and move on, and all marriages have problems*, then when I would trust God, you know, I imagine like letting this balloon go like, *okay, I'm trusting You. I'm doing this act of like trusting you*. And then my anger would come out sideways on my children. Then I felt like a bad Christian. I'm like, I don't have enough faith to move mountains. I can't get over this. And so I just started praying that God would bring us people and resources. And He...He dropped Pure Desire right in our laps. And so we just took it by the horns and ran with it. I don't even know if that's a saying, but...



Eryn: I like it.

Elisa: So what is Pure Desire, and what made the difference in it?

Ashley: I honestly feel like I wish they would've made me go through this content before I left the hospital with my baby, before I graduated high school, be....before they put a promise ring on my hand.

Eryn: Wow.

Ashley: Like, because this helped me put all the pieces together. And that's why I can say I'm thankful for the betrayal, like genuinely thankful. Because what happened was we moved, got a job transfer. And I said, "We're gonna go to church the next day. We're gonna find a church the next day so we don't fall off the church wagon." And we went to church, sat down, and the pastor said, "We're trying something brand new. And it's called Pure Desire, and it's for men who struggle with pornography." And I was like, "You are going. You are going."

Eryn: Wow, that's amazing.

Ashley: Um, and at that time I didn't think I needed help, because I'm like, "You are the one with a problem. If you get help, we'll be better". But I didn't realize how traumatized I was. The betrayal, and then of course all my...my own things I brought in.

Eryn: Yeah.

Ashley: So when I started, again, diligently looking through all of his workbook and homework, which I shouldn't have done, and I don't advise to do it, I know better now. I started asking myself, why does this addict material apply to me too? I'm the betrayed spouse, and it was applying. And so John and I just dug in completely because his background of a really conservative church home, and then mine of just like running the streets; we didn't know how to parent in the Christian way that we wanted to. And we felt like going through all of this was helping us get to the root of why we did what we did. It was brutally painful.

Elisa: Wow.

Ashley: But at the same time, because of my past, even though I didn't...I didn't have anybody, any leader or trainer to help me; I was able to say, I've been there. I've sexually acted out. I've had an eating disorder. I've been in places where I said, *how did I get here?* And so I could understand how my



husband was in a place where he said, *how did I get here?* We just navigated our way through the material, and I went to the pastor and said: I need a woman to help me lead this. You're leading the group for my husband, and I'm new here. I think I'd been at the church a month. And he said, oh, I've been praying for a woman, so why don't you lead it? So...and so I did, and I showed up crying half the time.

Elisa: Wow.

Ashley: But within three...within three years, I had helped start over 25 women's groups for betrayal, for the woman who struggles. And then the youth asked me to come in and help their students. And so I started, uh, groups for young girls in there as well. And then I got hired on at Pure Desire a year later. I wasn't even fully recovered, you know, God must have just told 'em, *it's okay, take a risk*. And now I get to help men, women, and churches, and leaders, parents, children, whatever angle you're coming from, I get to help.

Eryn: That's awesome. So, Ashley, would you share what is love addiction and the difference between love addiction and sex addiction?

Ashley: Okay. Really simple way to just separate those two, if I am a sex addict, that's...that's what I'm using to cope, the...the chemical release, the...the physical connection. I'm searching sex or sexual anything to...to cope with what I'm feeling. A love addict is looking for validation, I like to say outside of where we're supposed to find it, which is the Lord. And that's why many of us fall in this category. And love addicts can often do sexual things in order to try to get that love from somebody, or they're afraid of being rejected. Like, I don't...I...my boyfriend will break up if I don't do, you know, X, Y, and Z. And so one is you are actually seeking validation for yourself through somebody else or something else. And one is you're going after that sexual high.

Elisa: That's so helpful, yeah. Your marriage now, would you say it's restored, would you say, I heard you use the word *recovery*. How would you describe it, and what's been the result for y'all?

Ashley: Yes. So John is my best friend, and he is also my greatest source of material to write from.

Elisa: That sounds pretty normal.

Ashley: Yeah, I would say we are restored. But I would hope that people can learn what I learned, is that learning to trust and being in a...in a relationship where it's restored or recovered health, whatever word you use to have a realistic expectation. And so I hit this moment in my life where I realized I can't expect



perfection. I can't idolize my husband that he is the one that I find value in, that he's his own messy person with his own messy relationship with God. And I get to have my own boundaries and what I will and won't put up with. But he probably will hurt me again, and I will hurt him, and I will hurt my kids; and they will hurt me. And so that was really freeing rather than fearing somebody may never mess up. And one example is, you know, as...as new things are introduced, so let's say social media. Let's say somebody gets social media for the first time, they may have an experience where they're exposed to something and they need to reengage their recovery plan or realize, *Hey, I'm edging with this. I'm playing with it more than I should and kind of tiptoeing and dancing around these images, even though they're not really pornography.* And each new thing that technology that comes out, we may have an experience where we have to pull our tools out and reign ourselves back in.

Elisa: That's good.

Ashley: And that's been really helpful for me just as a mom. Like I'm not a failure at a mom...as a mom if one of my kids starts struggling. It means this is a new territory we need to work on again and rein it back in until the end of time. But I am so thankful for our relationship and just what God has done with the way it's changed our parenting is probably number one, the way it's changed our relationship with our own parents and through our job. And yeah, we're not perfect, but we are really happy and really thankful and glad that we did the hard work.

Eryn: Ashley, what would you say to somebody that may have just discovered that their husband or their wife has been looking at porn and escaping to images, and they may have the mindset that if they go through this program, or if they go to church more, if they pray more, if they do all these things that they're gonna be fixed.

Ashley: Yeah.

Eryn: And they're never gonna struggle again. What would you say to them?

Ashley: Yeah, we see all the things at Pure Desire, illegal porn, lust, pro...I mean everything. And it doesn't surprise us. And...and so my first advice to this woman would be to take a pause. Even if you feel you want a divorce, even if you feel you don't want to do it, it does not hurt to not rush it. You can separate; you can get help. But don't layer the trauma of making life-altering decisions like that on top of your trauma brain now, because betrayal is trauma. It impacts your brain completely. And so I say give yourself the grace and space to say, I'm not even gonna make decisions; because they may put pressure on you. Like, "Well, I don't want to do all this work if you're not gonna stay in the marriage." That's...



Eryn: Right.

Ashley: ...no, no. You still get to say, I'm not gonna give you an answer right now, because right now all I need to do is focus on healing what I've just experienced, taking some steps to heal myself and get the betrayal trauma support I need. And then I'll decide what this needs to look like. And so give yourself that space. Know that if both of you are willing to do the work, it will absolutely change. It will be radically different.

Eryn: Mm-hmm.

Ashley: And it won't always hurt as much as it does now. Because at the time of betrayal, you're seeing two sides of the same coin. If he's been hiding for decades, which a lot of times is the problem, he is saying, *I'm finally free. I'm...it's finally on the table; I can finally move forward. I didn't realize how bad I've been treating her and I want to do the right thing.* Where she is just having her world shattered and saying, *I never knew you were such a liar. This seems like it's gonna take forever.* And so just recognize that and give yourself the grace and the space that you need to let the reality set in and get the support you need. And then think with a clear head what you want to do.

Eryn: Yeah. How will someone know that their person is willing to do the work?

Ashley: Yes. To boil it down to just like three things for them to grab onto. But sincerity is that remorse. They're not showing up with denial, making excuses. *Well, you just had a baby and you've been gone at your sister's all summer; and I'm under a lot of stress at work.* I mean, they're showing up brokenhearted, sincere in their remorse. And you feel that. Second step on that little thing. So if you like find the graph, it's like a step and it's...it's, um, the ability. So the ability would be they're reaching out to counselors, and you want to make sure you're not just going for any counselor. You want to make sure you're going with somebody understands sexual addiction. So a certified sex addiction therapist or a pastoral sex addiction professional, somebody that understands that world. The ability would be counseling. Group is so, so important. Doing the homework, making the calls, and reaching out to guys and their...their support and their mentors. You see them actively going after their own recovery. That ability...the part where couples fall off because her trust isn't built back up yet.

Eryn: Right.

Ashley: She sees the remorse, sincerity. Okay, now he's jumping to do the work. But a lot of times that's where people fall off and it, and either the addict will say, *I'm doing all this work and you still don't trust*



me. And we're still not having sex, and we're still not blah, blah, blah. So I'm not doing it anymore. Or she says, Okay, he's sorry. He's doing the work, but I still don't feel anything to him. I don't feel any trust. The last part is durability. So when you're able to do all those things over an extended amount of time, that's when trust starts to come back, and you are able to see I can trust the stability of this situation.

Eryn: That is really, really helpful.

Elisa: What do you say to the woman who's just going, *Oh my goodness. For the first time somebody is describing me. This is me. This is what I'm going through.* And whether it's the love addiction part or the betrayal part. What does she do right now? What do you say to her right now? How can you meet her right here?

Ashley: Yeah, you see, I get teary because I was that woman and remembered opening my first resource. And so if you hear we have so many resources. And depending on what your situation is, I will find a resource for you. If it's not our ministry, I bump shoulders with lots of people in this world and can find something, at least for you to start. There is a starting place, and you are not alone. And so many well-educated women who are confident and never thought this would happen to them are going through the same thing. But like I said, I...I know some people will never say they're thankful for the betrayal like I did. But what it's done for me and my life and my job and my kids, you don't know what you don't know. And I promise you that when God says He can transform you by the renewing of your mind, that that is very real and you don't have to feel this way. And...and I know that according to the Barna report, there's 46 percent of women who say they don't feel recovered from their husband's betrayal. And so if that's you, it doesn't have to be that way.

Eryn: Ashley, would you close us in prayer and maybe just say a prayer over that woman?

Ashley: Yeah, I would love to. *Heavenly Father, I just thank you for this space where we can talk about real things as Christians. As your Word says, nothing is new under the sun. And You take us as we are. You hurt with us, You cry with us. You feel our pain. As much as we may be thinking it about it, You are not our betrayer. And I just pray that the woman listening to this can find You as their safe place, as their refuge and that they would know, they have a whole band of sisters in Christ that have been there. We've done that. We know the way out, and we want them to come to us for help. We want to be able to support them and hold them and just walk with them through the ups and downs of this next chapter. And I thank You that they found this podcast. And I pray that this would be a moment where if they feel an...a little prompting to take a next step, that they would do it. They wouldn't leave this podcast and go on with their*



life, but they would follow that little voice and...and take the steps they need to do to heal. In Jesus' name, amen.

[music]

Eryn: Amen. That conversation really hit close to home for me and I'm sure for a lot of you listening, it was great to hear Ashley's testimony and how to overcome certain addictions we may not even know we have.

Elisa: I agree. Eryn. What a beautiful conversation. Well, friends, we'd love to hear from you. After listening to an episode of *God Hears Her*, take a moment to share what stood out to you—your reflections, questions, and insights. They all help us grow together as a community of women seeking God's presence in every part of our lives. You can find a link to share with us in our show notes. Thanks for sharing your voice and your heart with us.

Eryn: Speaking of show notes, you can also find a link for Pure Desire Ministries to check out the resources Ashley mentioned. And we're so excited to share our new *God Loves Her* devotional. Check all of that out at godhearsher.org. That's godhearsher.org.

Elisa: And one more exciting announcement. Our 200th episode is coming up. As part of the celebration and a thank you for all of your support, we're doing a giant giveaway full of goodies. So check out our social media for entry rules and keep an eye out for our 200th episode.

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 Anne Stevens and Ryan Clevenger, and produced by Jade Gustman and Mary Jo Clark. We also want to thank Brian and Barry for all their help and support. Thanks everyone.

Eryn: 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.

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

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