



# God Hears Her Podcast

## Episode 226 – Community Hurt: A Bible Study

Elisa Morgan, Eryn Adkins & Vivian Mabuni

[Music]

**Vivian:** You're listening to *God Hears Her*, a podcast for women where we explore the stunning truth that God hears you. Join our community of encouraging one another and learning to lean on God through Scripture, story, and conversation at [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org). God hears her. Seek and she will find.

**Eryn:** Hey, friends, we now have a study guide to go along with our podcast episodes that you can download or print to fill out when you listen. Make sure you get yours on our website to follow along with the episode. Now, let's dive into this conversation. I'm really excited to explore this topic with both of y'all. I want to preface before we dig in that there's somebody listening... that may feel really, really heavy right now with the topic. It may be very fresh to them. And... I know that each of us have experienced a level of what we're about to dive into. And so, I think in order to just encourage healing, cause that's what I hope at the end of this, is that women walk away feeling maybe a sense of freedom or... maybe a bravery to walk towards... forgiveness and healing that they never thought to do. But the only way I think sometimes to encourage that is for us to lead with vulnerability.

**Elisa:** Oh, goody. I like everything, except that part was challenging.

**Eryn:** You are good at this, Elisa.

**Elisa:** Okay. All right, all right. Rolling up my sleeves. Yeah.

**Eryn:** So, I want to talk a little bit about community hurt... church hurt, but... you know, not necessarily a physical building, but more so may... it can be... but also, it could be... community hurt, people of faith that hurt us, a group of people in the faith community that hurt us...

**Elisa:** Or even one person?

**Eryn:** ... Yeah.

**Elisa:** Okay.



**Eryn:** Or even, it could be one person, but it... maybe it's one person that represents a community...

**Elisa:** Oh, okay, I'm with you.

**Vivian:** That's right.

**Eryn:** ... maybe it's not necessarily, you know, five or six people, but it could be one person representing. We've all experienced that to some level, and I have a funny story to tell y'all. So, I... I've been working on this, cause I had and have, still healing from it, a lot of community hurt. I was betrayed by a group of people of faith, and it was so confusing to me because I felt like since a group of people all agreed on one thing, that one thing must be true about me. And then that must be true of how God sees me, and how He loves me, and how He hears me, how He listens to me. And, you know, of course that could be further from the truth. So, I went to a wedding this last weekend, and I got to do what's called exposure therapy.

**Elisa:** Whoa. Wait a minute, this is a Christian Bible study moment. [laughter] Okay, what is ex...

**Eryn:** Yes, yes...

**Elisa:** ... what... woah, what is exposure therapy?

**Eryn:** It's where you expose yourself into something that you're working on. I mean, that's my version of it. My therapist probably has a better term.

**Elisa:** It's kind of like vomit sharing...

**Vivian:** Oh, really? Is that what it's called?

**Elisa:** ... that's what I call it, it's just like [blah sound]...

**Vivian:** Or is it more the idea that you are choosing to place yourself in...

**Eryn:** Bingo.

**Vivian:** ... an environment...

**Elisa:** Okay, that's much more godly.



**Vivian:** ... where there was...

**Elisa:** Okay, go.

**Eryn:** Yeah, not...

**Vivian:** ... hurt...

**Eryn:** ... yeah, you're thinking of something else. I don't know what you're... [laughter]

**Vivian:** Yeah, so I... I'm just thinking that when you're talking about it, it's... it really is a... a willingness to step into a space where in the past you have been hurt...

**Eryn:** Yes.

**Vivian:** ... And seeing the faces of those people and...

**Elisa:** Wow.

**Vivian:** ... in a different environment...

**Eryn:** Yes.

**Vivian:** ... but still being in proximity once again with those who had...

**Elisa:** So, have you done this before?

**Vivian:** I have to some degree in terms of, not like a... not a... It actually maybe might have been a wedding. [laughter] You know, the things that bring us together...

**Elisa:** Why do you do this at weddings? Wait a minute.

**Vivian:** ... Like... Well, I think that they're... because our worlds tend to crisscross in different places...

**Elisa:** Oh.



**Vivian:** ... funerals...

**Eryn:** Yup.

**Vivian:** ... you get in touch with family again, or friends, or cousins, or extended family... weddings, again, it's based... Usually the guests that are at a wedding have had some kind of a... a history of... of... seeing, you know, doing life together in some capacity.

**Elisa:** Okay.

**Eryn:** That's...

**Vivian:** So...

**Eryn:** ... That's it. Well, because those environments, there could be one person, again, that's, like, attached to a situation that maybe you were a part of... and one person decided to not speak with you anymore, right? Or...

**Elisa:** Yup, yup.

**Eryn:** ... and then the other person decided to be your friend, but then a wedding brings all...

**Vivian:** All...

**Eryn:** ... of those little cookies together...

**Elisa:** Sure.

**Eryn:** ... And you're all there. And I have been in those environments... in the last seven years of, you know, we've talked about it with my divorce. I've talked about that often... with being hurt by the faith community... and just really asking God, like, where is He and how does He see me? And then how does He also see those people that really hurt me? Some things that were just unjust...

**Vivian:** Right.



**Eryn:** ... that weren't right. And I've been in environments in the last seven years, you know, I can't avoid it. I can't live in a cage...

**Elisa:** Bubble.

**Eryn:** ... yeah... bubble... but a wedding did bring it... bring it together.

**Vivian:** So how was it for you, Eryn?

**Eryn:** I think it's ironic that we're talking about this topic and I just had the wedding on Friday. But, you know, I was so surprised. Going there, I carried myself so differently than I did four years ago. And I think that had everything to do with trying to pursue... or trying... Well, yeah, sometimes it just feels like you're trying to pursue it... pursuing forgiveness... and so, I really... you know, this study, I do want to... I want to... first, I want to ask y'all a few questions, and then we're going to dive into some Scriptures that really show how Jesus had relationships knowing He was going to get hurt. And then how did He continue to love, and forgive, and extend grace. And of course, there's boundaries in everything that we can talk about later on, and I want to just talk about that later, but now I just want to know, like, what has, like, community hurt or church hurt looked like for you specifically? For me, it was what I walked through, and then walking into a room and realizing, "Wow, I've done a lot of work..." And I held myself... my, like, with such, like, I knew my worth, and I knew my value, and I knew they had their own stories...

**Vivian:** Right, right.

**Eryn:** ... when they... when they were very hurtful to me... that allows me to give compassion...

**Vivian:** Wow.

**Eryn:** ... But it's taken me a long time to get there. So, I'm curious, you know, I don't know who wants to dive into the deep water, who has their swimsuit on first, but... [laughter]

**Vivian:** Well, I'm thinking about a situation where I... well, I... just for backdrop...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... I tend to be much more of an avoider, so I... I avoid conflict. I... I just avoid. So... it... things can be falling apart and I'm like, *what thing*, you know...?



**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... So, that's generally my posture. So, I'm thinking about in... in particular, a... a situation where I knew I was going to see some people that had been hurtful, but we had never ... The thing was the hurt was never with me. Like, we didn't ever talk about it. It was that they canceled without... they canceled... an event that I was putting on without having a conversation with me, even though they had my number in their phone...

**Eryn:** Oh.

**Vivian:** ... They just decided that they weren't... And we had had so many years of life together.

**Eryn:** Oh, wow.

**Vivian:** And so, it was extremely painful because it's like, I don't think if you had a conversation with me you would conclude what you did. You would still have the freedom, but at least it would...

**Eryn:** Yeah

**Vivian:** ... feel like you honored our relationship enough...

**Eryn:** Yeah ...

**Vivian:** ... to be able to have...

**Elisa:** Yup.

**Vivian:** ... a conversation and say, *can you help me understand how this came about?* So, in seeing people again... unexpectedly, there are two things. One is my husband had to remind me, *Viv, you were not the one that walked away. They were the ones that chose to walk away.* And so, that was helpful for me because it can feel like sometimes, like, *did I do something wrong...?*

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... I needed to keep that piece in mind. And then there's also the emotional part of feeling so hurt. And that part, to be honest to... with both of you, I think I'm still in the process...



**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... of being able to forgive and to wish well on...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... Like, I think that that's the... that's when you know that...

**Elisa:** Yes, when you want their good.

**Vivian:** ... there has been healing, when you want their good...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... and you really genuinely... So, for a long time, there are a lot of people that I just kind of hid their profiles...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... on Instagram because it was just too hard.

**Eryn:** You just pretended like they weren't there for a while.

**Vivian:** Yeah, just avoided...

**Eryn:** Yeah, avoided.

**Vivian:** ... Avoided. And I think that that's... probably a... a good litmus test for my own soul...

**Elisa:** That's good.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... to know, like, have I really moved into a space where I have forgiven so fully that I wish well on them, and their children, and their children's children. So...



**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... that would be me real and raw.

**Eryn:** That's so good. That's good. Viv, thanks for sharing that.

**Elisa:** Thank you, Viv...

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... And... and I remember walking through some of that with you...

**Vivian:** Yeah, yeah.

**Elisa:** ... so, I know that's really fresh for you still, even though it's been a bit.

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** You know, stuff doesn't happen really fast. I'm going to give an example of a... a lighter one, but it's not, but it's a little bit lighter. I moved through it quite quickly, and I was really surprised. And that is, I'm in a book group in our neighborhood, and some of the people know God, some of them don't, some of them are in a different faith than... than the one I practice. But it's a... just a group and... and I don't know them terribly well. But we had had a tragedy in our family, and I had been away from them from a long time, and I'm actually really just trying to get to know them better. And I decided before I went to the last meeting, I was going to share about the tragedy. I was just going to go, you know, zip, [brrrt sound], you know, here it is...

**Eryn:** Yeah, yeah.

**Elisa:** ... because that's who I am. And I'm much better at sharing than hiding...

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... So, Cuteness, there, we... we complement each other well.



**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... and you're good at sharing, too... so, I asked the hostess if I could just have a couple of minutes before we started the discussion, and so I, [brtt, brtt sound], you know, shared it all. And they all were just, like, [gasping sounds] you know, gasping, and I'm going, *Oh my goodness*, you know, *just too much, maybe?* And when I left, that whole month nobody sent me a card, or a text, or anything. It was all, *what a great night that was*, and da, da, da, da, da, and all the texts, and I'm going...

**Vivian:** Wow.

**Elisa:** ... [yee-hor sound] Nothing...?

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... you know?

**Eryn:** Not like, *hey*...

**Elisa:** No.

**Eryn:** ... *hey, Elisa, I'm praying for you right now*, or...

**Elisa:** And I was really scared to go back. And I decided, I processed this through with another friend, but also with myself and with God. I thought, *if I go back and they're just* [brtt sound] you know, don't say a word, then I'll kind of know...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... that they're just not going to be safe to be real around, and that's okay...

**Vivian:** Right.

**Elisa:** ... But maybe they all just were dumbfounded and gasping...

**Eryn:** Yeah.



**Elisa:** ... and didn't know what to say. And I went back, and sure enough, everybody asked me, *how's it going in your family, and how's this...*

**Vivian:** Wow.

**Elisa:** ... *and how's that?* And I was like, *okay*. So, if I hadn't shared...

**Vivian:** Right.

**Elisa:** ... and gone through that month...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... of questioning, I didn't... I know it forged a deeper depth...

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... because I took that risk...

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... And I'm sorry I didn't know what exposure therapy was. It just sounded really weird to me. But anyway. Keep going. Okay.

**Eryn:** I... I love that you had the bravery to go back... cause I think oftentimes we decide to create a narrative in our head, and we live in that narrative cause it feels safer than being vulnerable and subjecting ourselves, exposing ourselves...

**Vivian:** Right, right.

**Eryn:** ... to the thing that hurt us.

**Elisa:** And see, I would've just... if I hadn't have gone back, it would've just legitimized...



**Vivian:** Right, right.

**Elisa:** ... what I thought...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... rather than free and let us all move to a new place.

**Vivian:** That's right.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** So.

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

**Vivian:** And I think that there's a... there's something so healthy about that. I mean, I... I think we all have to exercise discernment because...

**Elisa:** Sure, sure.

**Vivian:** ... certain levels of vulnerability require certain responses. But I do love that because of that, your narrative was rewritten...

**Eryn:** Yep.

**Vivian:** ...about...

**Elisa:** I'm so glad.

**Vivian:** ... people that you're still living in proximity with, because how easy would it be to just cancel...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** Yeah.



**Vivian:** ... and decide, *okay, they... they're heartless, careless people...*

**Eryn:** Yeah. [Laughter]

**Elisa:** Horrible humans! Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... Yeah. But really, they're... they... you know, really understanding that was so shocking, they didn't even have words. And maybe in the text thread, they felt like it was just too tender to...

**Elisa:** I think so.

**Vivian:** ... be texting about...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... but they really did care, and that's... that's really beautiful. It... it... I don't think it always ends that way...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** No.

**Vivian:** ... it could've been re-hurtful...

**Elisa:** Right.

**Vivian:** ... But then you would've actually then had the...

**Elisa:** Information I needed.

**Vivian:** ... information to know.

**Eryn:** Yeah, exactly. You know, the... how I feel like I've been able to heal from all the muck and mess from... and the... just the... the pains of what people had said about me, and even... I mean, I had my own stuff to own too... but the thing that helped me was recognizing that I can be so honest with God



about my anger towards Him and them, and then see how confident, and loving, and kind, He is still towards me really convicted me to learn how to forgive... and love those that hurt me...

**Vivian:** Wow.

**Eryn:** ... by the way He responded to me...

**Elisa:** That's good.

**Eryn:** ... being angry at both. You know? Why don't we dig into some Scripture?

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** ... since we're talking about it, we can get a little bit more into it. Okay, so... open your Bible to Luke 22...

**Elisa:** Okay.

**Eryn:** ... and... Elisa, what version do you have?

**Elisa:** I've got the N... NIV. NIV.

**Eryn:** What do you have?

**Vivian:** ESV.

**Eryn:** Okay.

**Vivian:** English Standard.

**Eryn:** I have NIV. Oh, that'll be fun, so we'll see what your ESV says...

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** ... differently... so we're going to be in Luke 22. Let's go ahead and go down to verse 20. I would love it, Vivian, if you would read verse 20.



**Vivian:** Sure. And just a little context, it's like the... this is the Last Supper...

**Eryn:** Yes. Yeah, you can give it, yeah.

**Vivian:** ... the Feast of the Unleavened Bread... Jesus is speaking to His closest disciples... and saying His final words, and...

**Eryn:** Yes.

**Vivian:** ... verse 20, "And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. For the Son of Man goes at his... as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!' And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this."

**Eryn:** So, I looked up the definition, what it means, woe, in Greek, and it's a prophetic warning... What I've picked up in this is that Jesus knew what was... He knew everything that was going to go down...

**Elisa:** Yeah, right.

**Eryn:** ... and yet He was still sitting at a table with people that were about to betray Him. I think what's so beautiful and heartbreaking about this is that Jesus, I said it earlier, He had relationships knowing He was going to get hurt. And inevitably, we will be hurt in our own communities, and I think just that demonstration alone... I thought was really beautiful. But go down to, Vivian... read verse 31...

**Vivian:** Verse 31...

**Eryn:** ... to 35.

**Vivian:** Okay. "Simon, Simon," or Peter, so, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." Peter said to him, 'Lord, I am ready to go with you, both to prison and to death.' Jesus said, 'I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day until you deny three times that you know me.'"

**Eryn:** Oh. What do you... what do you think about that?



**Elisa:** Oh, breaks my heart. Breaks my heart every time. And you know, when you go from this passage, and you keep reading on, and Jesus goes to the garden, and He's praying in the garden, and He's praying that His disciples...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... would pray with Him, and they fall asleep...

**Eryn:** Let's go to that...

**Elisa:** Ugh!

**Eryn:** ... Let's go to, yep, let's go to... go ahead and go to verse 39.

**Elisa:** Okay. "So Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, 'Pray that you will not fall into temptation.' And he withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down, and he prayed, 'Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.' And an angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. And when he rose from prayer, he went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. 'Why are you sleeping?' he asked them. 'Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.'"

**Eryn:** "So you will not fall into temptation."

**Elisa:** It breaks my heart every time, because He's so alone. And then you go on and here's Judas betraying Him with a kiss, and then after that Peter denies Him. And every time I read this, I want it to turn out differently. You know how you read...

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... a really good traumatic tragedy kind of a... a novel...

**Vivian:** Right.

**Elisa:** ... you think, *oh, just please make another choice right here...*



**Eryn:** Yeah. Well, and especially because in here He... He tells them often... like...

**Vivian:** This was going to happen.

**Eryn:** ... this is going to happen. But then He also is like, "I'm praying that your faith may not fail..."

**Elisa:** Yep.

**Eryn:** ... you know, "Why are you sleeping?"

**Elisa:** Yep.

**Eryn:** "Get up so that you won't fall into temptation."

**Elisa:** Yep.

**Eryn:** It's almost like His heart was breaking, that He knew that they were... Oh, it makes me emotional. I didn't think I was going to cry on this episode...

**Vivian:** Uh-oh.

**Eryn:** ... shocker, Eryn's crying... but I think... I just... I could just see Him wrestling with this idea of, like, *I'm going to be betrayed*, and knowing it. And it's almost like He's like... like... I can't even see my words anymore... it's almost like He's just like, *please, like... like, fight the temptation*, even knowing, though, what their choice is going to be at the end of it. I can't imagine.

**Elisa:** And we get upset about, you know, somebody canceling an event or, for me, somebody maybe being too quiet when I'm sharing something. This is leaving Him to die...

**Vivian:** Right.

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... This is turning Him in to the authorities, this righteous man. This is a big, big, big, big betrayal...

**Eryn:** Right.



**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... I cannot fathom it. And... and, you know, Eryn, you're... you're so sweet talking about how He hurt, He befriended people who would hurt Him. I mean, I think about when He's praying, I think it was on the Mount of Olives over Jerusalem, and He says, "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how I long to gather you like a hen would gather her chicks..."

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... "but you would not..."

**Vivian:** Yeah. That wound.

**Elisa:** ... And that compassion, that image of a hen over her chicks, that compassion, that's what He longed for. But they would not. But we would not. What betrayal. Yeah.

**Vivian:** Yeah.

[Music]

**Jade Gustman:** Hey, friends. Have you checked out any new Our Daily Bread Publishing Bible studies? Go to the link in our show notes to learn about the TEND Bible study series that slowly takes you through a book of the Bible. Or check out the upcoming *Unshakeable Moxie* Bible study for season two of the docuseries that you can pre-order now. Check out the links in our show notes to learn more. Now back to the show.

**Eryn:** So then, let's go down to when Jesus was arrested. Will you read verse 47?

**Elisa:** Sure, sure. "And while he was still speaking," that's like why you said, "Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation..." "The crowd came, and a man who was called Judas, one of the Twelve," we kind of know him, but anyway, it explains him. Okay. "He approached Jesus to kiss him, but Jesus asked him, 'Judas, why are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?'"

**Eryn:** And read 49.

**Elisa:** Okay.



**Eryn:** Read 49 to... and 51...

**Elisa:** Okay.

**Eryn:** ... to 51.

**Elisa:** "When Jesus' followers saw what was going to happen, they said, 'Lord, should we strike out with our swords?' And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear." And I think we know from another passage that's Peter...

**Vivian:** Peter, yeah.

**Elisa:** ... "But Jesus answered, 'No more of this.' And he touched the man's ear, and he healed him."

**Eryn:** And this was... this was, like, the last miracle before the crucifixion...

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** Really good, Eryn, yeah.

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** And I think that that's what's even more profound in this, is that all the disciples watched Him, that he cut the ear off of a servant who was... Who was the servant? What was his name?

**Elisa:** His name was Malchus.

**Eryn:** That's right.

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** Who was Malchus?

**Elisa:** He was a dude.



**Eryn:** He's just a dude.

**Elisa:** He was a s... He was a soldier, another soldier...

**Vivian:** And my understanding is Peter was probably trying to kill him...

**Eryn:** Yes.

**Vivian:** ... and he's just not, he was not equipped. Like, he wasn't trained, so, you know...

**Elisa:** He's a fisherman.

**Eryn:** Wow, you think so?

**Vivian:** ... so he like... So I... I mean, because the crowds are coming. I mean, it's... it's a... it's, like, heightened. Everyone...

**Eryn:** Yeah

**Vivian:** ... so the adrenaline is pumping...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... and he grabs a sword, but he's n... he's a fisherman. He's not a military guy...

**Elisa:** That's good.

**Eryn:** Right.

**Vivian:** ... So, he's trying to kill, and he misses, and the guy's ear gets, you know...

**Elisa:** Sliced off, yeah.

**Vivian:** ... sliced off. And how tender of Jesus to heal and... and repair, even in the midst of betrayal...

**Eryn:** Chaos.



**Vivian:** ... and chaos.

**Eryn:** Oh, I'm sure that there were so many people panicked at that moment.

**Vivian:** Yeah, yeah.

**Eryn:** I can't imagine. You see an ear on the ground, blood everywhere...

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** ... And Jesus is so calm and still performing His last miracle before...

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** Yeah... the next miracle that He does. So, let's then, Vivian, we're talking about Peter. Let's go to 54.

**Vivian:** "Then they seized him and led him away, bringing him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, 'This man also was with him.' But Peter denied it, saying, 'Woman, I do not know him.' And a little later, someone else saw him and said, 'You also are one of them.' But Peter said, 'Man, I am not.' And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, 'Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean.' But Peter said, 'Man, I do not know what you're talking about.' And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, 'Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.' And he went out and wept bitterly." Wow.

**Eryn:** What really stuck out to me was how Peter went from so passionate, right? Striking an ear, trying to cut off a head, to... then in this section, it says, "Peter followed at a distance." It was, like, the reality, I guess, of it all was coming forward, and he was maybe getting scared, witnessing... I don't... I... I don't really know why. I mean, you think if after you watch a miracle of an ear getting put on, that you would... that would give you more energy, but instead it created more... He continued to distance himself. And what's so interesting is that Peter, he disowned Jesus, and when he did, it wasn't that he was being pressured by officials. He was being pressured by random people, and one of them was a servant girl.



That's who he denied Jesus with. It wasn't something that you could go, *well, that kind of makes sense*. You know? Like... pressured by...

**Vivian:** He was intimidated, right.

**Eryn:** ... yeah, by officials in their attire, and it's a servant girl. I mean, what do you think of that?

**Elisa:** And you're going to see him later in his life when he writes, like, 1 and 2 Peter to the church. You're going to see him so bold, and so strong, and so clear about, "Don't be surprised at a painful trial you're suffering as though something strange were happening to your faith." You know? "You're a holy people. You're a royal priesthood. You're a chosen people." You know, he's going to have these crazy bold statements. You know what I love, too, Eryn, and I read this in what Viv just read, verse 61, "The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter." And I... I've just... I've sat and just stared at that verse for the longest time, and I... I like to imagine, what did Jesus look at him with?

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** I mean, it's all in how we view God. Was it like, you know, *you lousy*...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... or it... was it, *Sweet Pea*...

**Vivian:** Right.

**Elisa:** ... *told ya*...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... or was it just the revelation of Peter to himself, of God knowing the worst of the worst of the worst in him and still loving him. And you're going to see that, you know, later on in John, where he shares the whole restoration of Peter. But I love that, that, "The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter." And then the Peter remind... was reminded by what Jesus had warned, and then he weeps.

**Vivian:** Yeah.



**Elisa:** ... So, a... you know, he did warn him a thousand times...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ...just like me...

**Eryn:** Yup.

**Elisa:** ... just like you...

**Eryn:** Yup.

**Elisa:** ... And off we go, and we do exactly what we said we wouldn't.

**Eryn:** Yeah, we do exactly what we said we wouldn't do. Yeah. He wept bitterly.

**Vivian:** I also think with Peter, he's... it's relatable, but there's also a loyalty that he still has, because we don't read of any of the... of the other disciples... you know, though he was following at a distance, he...

**Eryn:** Yeah, yeah.

**Vivian:** ... was still following. We don't know where the others scattered to, but Peter was still...

**Elisa:** That's a good point.

**Vivian:** ... you know...

**Eryn:** That is a good point.

**Vivian:** ... just I... I think that there was a loyalty... and fear... and I think Jesus, knowing the future, would have understood this would be a... an important part because He had said... right before them, "I... Satan has demanded to sift you like wheat..."

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... So, there was a... there was other things that were going on as well in this...



**Eryn:** True.

**Vivian:** ... that we don't have full access to understanding. But there was some kind of a sifting that was going on with Peter as well. So, I... I love Peter because he's... he's... such a combination of passion and... and... just kind of he's the one that walked on water...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... I mean, my goodness, none of the other disciples walked on the water...

**Eryn:** Yup.

**Vivian:** ... and he also was one that, you know, failed miserably and was so incredibly loved by God. So, I think there's something that we can relate to in all of that. There's...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... that God even knows that loyalty piece, too. I think... when I think about Jesus turning and looking at Peter I think the... the... the eyes were of love. They were not condemning eyes...

**Eryn:** They have to be.

**Vivian:** ... they were not judging eyes. They were loving eyes... and I think that there was probably, because of their friendship, I think there was hurt...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... you know, like, there's love, but there was hurt...

**Elisa:** Disappointment maybe.

**Vivian:** ... and I think that that's why Peter wept bitterly...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... because of their friendship...



**Eryn:** That's good.

**Vivian:** ... because of the... the memories that all of them, you know, that... that they had shared, all... the whole group...

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... but specifically Jesus and Peter together.

**Eryn:** Let's go to where he gets restored in John...

**Elisa:** Okay.

**Eryn:** ... So, John 21... verse 15. Elisa, do you want to... do you want to read it?

**Elisa:** Sure, sure. Okay, so, this is after Jesus has risen from the dead...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... and He encounters Peter and the disciples on the beach, and they don't know who He is and finally figure it out... okay, "When they had finished eating," the fish that Jesus had helped them catch, "Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?' And, 'Yes, Lord,' he said, 'you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Feed my lambs.' And again Jesus said, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' And he answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Take care of my sheep.' The third time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' He said, 'You know all things; you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Feed my sheep. Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you're old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.' And Jesus said this to indicate what kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. And then he said to him, 'Follow me!'" Do you want me to keep going?

**Eryn:** Yes!

**Elisa:** [laughter] Okay. She's such a kid...

**Eryn:** No, I got it. I'm good, I'm good.



**Elisa:** Okay, good. Okay, okay. "Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, 'Lord, who's going to betray you?') When Peter saw him, he asked, 'Lord, what about him?' Jesus answered, 'If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? But you must follow me.' Because of this, the rumor spread among the believers that this disciple would not die. But Jesus did not say that or he w... that he would not die; he only said, 'If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you?'" So, He's talking about Peter and... and John and the manners of their death.

**Eryn:** God did not disqualify Peter after what he did...

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** ... What do you think about that with Vivian?

**Vivian:** I think it's really powerful... I did a study on this once, and I looked up some of the words in the original language. And... when Jesus asks Peter the first and second time, he asks, "Do you agape love me? Do you unconditionally love me?" And Peter answers each time, "I... I brotherly love you." And I always found that interesting... I'm sure there are a lot of different perspectives and... views that different people have in a Bible, like to kind of dig up that word, but to me I think that there is a question to me, like, do I love God because of what He gives me, and, you know, these outcomes that I expect in my life? Do I love Him conditionally, like a vending machine...?

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ...Like, I say the prayer, and out comes the blessing, and it's transactional...

**Elisa:** Yup.

**Vivian:** ... or do I love Him...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... unconditionally? Like, do I love Him come what may...?

**Eryn:** Yeah.



**Vivian:** ... and that's kind of the challenge to me in my relationship with God. I'm also then challenged, like, do I love in that kind of way with others?

**Eryn:** Right.

**Vivian:** Is the type of love that I display to others conditional...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... or is it an unconditional love because of how God has loved me...? So, I think when... as I read this, and that restorative piece that, you know, Jesus is asking Peter three times... and Peter had denied Jesus three times...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... and so there's something significant about...

**Eryn:** Yes.

**Vivian:** ... a restoration of the asking and the...

**Elisa:** That's so good.

**Vivian:** ... you know, the restoring. And then I just find it curious with the usage of agape love, unconditional love, and phileo love, this brotherly love. And I know they had all of that, you know...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... it was... it's a blend in relationships. But I... I'm personally challenged with wondering: do I understand that God loves me unconditionally? And I'm challenged: do I love others unconditionally?

**Elisa:** I think it's stunning too, to look at the context, this is in the Book of John. John wrote this story of Peter. And... it's contrasted in these verses that you just asked me to read with the disciple whom Jesus loved, which is how... John always referred to himself. Well, that makes me just wonder, I mean, we know that Jesus didn't love John more than Peter, or more than Matthew, or more than whoever...



**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... we know that. But John uniquely understood that Jesus loved him...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... so, he's couching Peter's restoration...

**Eryn:** Yeah ...

**Elisa:** ... within the cushion of the fact that God loves his disciples. He's the disciple whom Jesus loved. And... and I love that too, and to... to, you know, put a tail on what you just said, Viv, you know, they had all of that. They had all the kinds of love. But it's like Peter was able to... to illustrate one facet...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... humanly...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... and John was able to illustrate another facet humanly, just as we are different.

**Vivian:** That's good.

**Eryn:** What do you think we can take away from this in regards to forgiveness?

**Elisa:** My takeaway is that God's love extends to all. "He so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that we would have eternal life with him, whoever believes in him. And he didn't come to condemn the world," you know, but to really free us. So, when I look at that, I... I see Him very clearly forgiving...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... Peter, and that forgiveness is available to us. And it's based on God's love, which John had absorbed.

**Eryn:** Yeah.



**Vivian:** That's good. I think about the response that... Jesus gives to Peter when he's like, *hey, what about him?* Like, there's... I think that's a very natural question....

**Elisa:** We compare.

**Vivian:** ... like, we compare...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... like, *what about him?* And when it comes to forgiveness...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... I've... I've heard that... unforgiveness is like drinking poison hoping the other person will die. A lot of times the other person has no recollection or is living life just fine...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** It's us that's left...

**Elisa:** It's us. It's already done.

**Vivian:** ... you know, carrying that burden...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... and so, it is our part to forgive...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... and... I think it's Corrie ten Boom that talks about forgiveness in one of her books, where she said, *it's like forgiveness is like a big church bell*, and, like, you ring that bell, and so, *the decision to forgive means you let go of that big rope*...

**Eryn:** Yeah.



**Vivian:** ... and it's still going to gong for a while, but you're not pulling on it anymore, and that's what unforgiveness... and that is our part...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... and a lot of times we're like, we want vengeance. We... we want... someone else to...

**Elisa:** Right.

**Vivian:** ... feel what we felt...

**Elisa:** Right, pain, yeah...

**Vivian:** ... or walk through the pain, and *what about them?*

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... and... Jesus is like, "You follow me." And I think that that's been my challenge. Aan I continue to follow the Lord...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... and do what He asks, which is to let go of pulling on that rope and walking in not only the forgiveness...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Vivian:** ... that He's granted me, but also that I could... grant that to others.

**Eryn:** That's so good, Vivian. I think sometimes we struggle, especially with community hurt, to forgive because if we do, that might mean that what they did was okay. And it's not about that at all...

**Elisa:** Right.

**Eryn:** ... It's about learning who Jesus is inside us and having a relationship with the Lord... loving Him... learning to love others because we are learning how to receive His love. I loved this. I thought this is...



this really just, what you just said, it kind of brings that in. This is... *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*... I think y'all had Adele on *Discover the Word*...

**Elisa:** *Discover the Word*, yep.

**Eryn:** ... but she says, "True forgiveness is more than a high ideal. It is a costly, heart-rending process that refuses to ignore or minimize wrongdoing. It places blame. It condemns the wrong. But it also gives the wrongdoer a gift. Forgiveness separates wrongdoers from their wrong by refusing to label them as all bad. It refuses to add this one injustice to the injustice done to them..."

**Elisa:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** ... "A person who forgives," and this is what you said, and I loved... I loved this, "A person who forgives joins his or her heart to Jesus' heart for sinners, and risks that love that can lead a wrongdoer to repentance and into the arms of God." And I want to preface, like, you know, if you are in a situation where it's toxic and there needs to be boundaries...

**Elisa:** Yup. Right.

**Vivian:** Right.

**Eryn:** ... right? I still believe this type of forgiveness can exist. It just exists further away.

**Elisa:** A little more boundaried...

**Eryn:** ... yeah, more boundaried... but I also think, you know, when I walked into that wedding, I... side hugged somebody that really hurt me, I mean, just felt like a Judas kiss. And I had more heartbreak for maybe where her walk may be than I did how she treated me...

**Vivian:** Yeah.

**Eryn:** ... And I think if we can start to reframe some of that, like you said earlier, like, you know... all it takes is just one thought to make us go into a really wild direction. I could've... I could go in that direction. But the reframing and the learning of, like, not only how God forgives me every day and my many betrayals with Him, learning how to... be honest and really vulnerable about them makes it... harder for me to receive His love, honestly... But learning that and then applying that to what I see in other people



that have hurt me, especially the church, and seeing that this may be an in... this is not... like, what has happened... is not... excusable, right...? But there's forgiveness.

**Elisa:** C.S. Lewis said that forgiveness isn't excusing a wrong...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... It's looking hole in the face of... of it...

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... acknowledging what it is and choosing to love. So, you know... you're right on. It... it... and that's where I think we get very confused... We're not *beepity-boppity-boo, bing...*

**Eryn:** Yeah.

**Elisa:** ... *you're all good now*. We don't have that power. Only God has that power to excuse, to truly forgive. But we can apply His forgiveness for us into a given situation, looking wholly at it. It was wrong for my dad to divorce my mom. It was wrong for so and so to steal, wrong for so and so to kill. These things are wrong. I look fully at that offense without excusing it, but choose to love with the love that comes from God, cause I can't muster that up either.

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

[Music]

**Elisa:** Well, friends, be sure to check out our website to subscribe to our email list, read the newest blog article, or check out the *God Hears Her* books and devotionals. Find all that and more at [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org). That's [godhearsher.org](http://godhearsher.org).

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

[Music]



**Eryn:** Today's episode was engineered by Anne Stevens and produced by Jake Gustman and Mary Jo Clark.

**Jade Gustman:** We also want to thank Marian and Pono for all of their help and support. Thanks, everyone.

**Elisa:** 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.

[Music]

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