

Episode 151: Balancing Perfectionism and Humility
Life Repurposed Podcast
michellerayburn.com/151

Michelle Rayburn [00:00:22]:

Let's dive right in here. I took a little break for a while. I actually took a longer break than I had anticipated. When I decided at the end of October, early November, to go ahead and take a break from producing new episodes, I thought it was going to be a couple of months and then it ended up being a little bit longer. I was working on a writing project and working on publishing a new Bible study and I really wanted to focus on that.

Michelle Rayburn [00:01:32]:

I'll tell you about that project in a few minutes. I've been also working on a compilation book for Boy Moms that's coming out this summer. I wanted to focus on that and there were just family things and church things and I just was feeling a bit overwhelmed and so I've missed you and I hope that you've missed me too. And I am back. And so we are here with new episodes, new guests, more solo episodes included in this season, kind of like previous seasons and then some guest episodes. So last year in order to slow things down a little bit and cut down on some of the production time, I focused just on guest interviews and I brought you quite a few different guests. But this year I want to focus also on some of the solo episodes, just looking at where God is refining and shaping in my life as he continues to repurpose. I want to be honest and real with you and vulnerable.

Michelle Rayburn [00:02:25]:

And some of the things are things he's still working on or things he just brought to mind recently. So it's not going to be all tied up neatly in a bow with steps of how you can apply this in your life because I'm still working through it. And so let's work through it together. And God will continue to repurpose in all of us. The guest interviews will still be stories just like in the past from other people, sometimes authors, and how God has repurposed in their lives. I've been really blessed by some of the people that I've interviewed in the past, and you've probably discovered that other people's stories change us too. I want to tell you a little bit about some of the changes and what I've been working on. I want to provide more practical resources for you.

Michelle Rayburn [00:03:09]:

Some of the weekly emails that I've sent out in the past have just been, hey, there's a new episode and here's what it's about. And if you haven't subscribed to that email list, you can do that michellerayburn.com. There's all sorts of different places on my website where you can opt in with different freebies and things that are resources that will help you. But I really want those emails to be more than just informative. I'd really like them to be something that provides you with a resource so you'll see some of them coming through with some devotions. That devotion will be right in the body of the email, but there will also be a PDF file that you can save to your

computer. You can print it, download it, you can send it to a friend, you can do whatever you wish with that. Well, you can't publish it as your own, but you can share it with whoever you'd like to share it with.

Michelle Rayburn [00:03:57]:

And I want to provide that just something that just gives you a little pick me up in your everyday life, a little spiritual application. And you'll also see some information coming through when podcast episodes come out, other resources that are available. The other thing that I want to do is share with you more about what I'm reading, about what I'm listening to, keeping my eyes and ears open, because oftentimes I see things and I think, oh man, that would be really great for my listeners to hear or see. And sometimes I reach out to an author and they're not available for an interview coming on as a guest. I really still want to share that resource with you. And so I will go ahead and just give you a little blurb of something that I'm listening to or an article that I saw, something that I'm applying, something curious, interesting, and so I hope you'll find those interesting too when I talk about those in those solo episodes. Another thing that I've been really contemplating is budget. And I know it's like whenever you start talking about budget or money, it's just like, oh, close my ears, I don't want to hear it.

Michelle Rayburn [00:05:01]:

But I had to face it and really look at it during my break and deciding, do I want to go back to doing podcasting? What does it really cost? And it's kind of expensive because I've added up the cost of the software that it takes. There's editing software for audio, there's a cost for hosting, which means just having the episode sit out there on the internet somewhere. Those audio files take up space and you have to pay for that space. There's a website to keep up with posting on there and there's graphics and there's paying for zoom so that I can interview people. There's a service I use for transcribing all those things. So I had to look at all of that. And the other thing I had to look at was investment of time, because it does take quite a bit of time. And I did find some software that I want to subscribe to that will really help with the process of some of the things I do, like taking that transcription and summarizing it and pulling out some key points for you.

Michelle Rayburn [00:05:57]:

There is software that can do that, but the question was, how can I pay for that? That way it will help pay for some of those costs and in the future it's not set up yet. But one of the things I'm exploring is an option where you can subscribe to a commercial free version of the podcast if you really hate those. I don't really like the commercials either, but when you're watching a free TV show, you understand that that's just part of it. And so that's kind of how it works with free podcast too. So that's enough talk about budget. But I'd like to bring you in a little bit so you know what's going on behind the scenes, because it isn't quite as simple as just sitting with my phone and recording something and then just cranking it out there. There's a process that goes into doing a podcast and doing it well in a way that is produced. So it's interesting for you and that it's easy for you to access it online.

Michelle Rayburn [00:06:50]:

So what isn't changing? Well, my commitment to bringing you content to help you find hope in the trashy stuff of life is not going to change. That is why I keep going with the show. When I started to weigh out time and budget and all of those things, I still came down to the fact that I feel God has called me to bring this message of hope to people. And one of the avenues that he's given me is podcasting. I still want to do that and so I'll figure out a way of making this work and I hope you'll stick with me through all of that because that's my passion. And the other thing that really helps out in all of that is if you tell other people, if you share an episode with a friend, that really helps because then other people can be influenced as well. And maybe along the way you find potential guests. I'd also love to have you pass that along to me.

Michelle Rayburn [00:07:41]:

If you think someone would be a great fit for the show, just drop me an email at Michelle@michellerayburn.com and say, I have a guest idea for you. All right, that's enough of the businessy stuff. But I wanted you to know what's happening in season six. So let's get started officially with the season. What is God repurposing in my life right now? Well, I want to tell you about that because there's this old issue that keeps coming back, and I want to set this up for you a little bit. I love processes, and I love perfection. I like excellence. I'm fascinated with learning and applying new techniques.

Michelle Rayburn [00:08:21]:

And then I really like being nitpicky. I like being an editor. I love hunting and searching for mistakes that need to be fixed. I also tend to hold other people to a high standard, and sometimes my expectations are not off base. Sometimes they are, for sure, but sometimes they're not. But how I respond is part of my regular work is in the publishing industry, and as an editor, I'm paid to look for those mistakes and find them and fix them. But I'm often surprised by how few people geek out on grammar rules. I know if you're one of them, we're kindred spirits.

Michelle Rayburn [00:08:59]:

High five to you right now. If you're not, I know a lot of the people in my life are not. I don't get it. But I know a lot of you have no interest in grammar rules or anything like that at all. I have found that I get a little bit judgy when I see mistakes in social media posts. If you've made some, it's okay. I make them too. So just so you know, I am judgy, but I'm also pointing a finger right back at me.

Michelle Rayburn [00:09:24]:

It might be in emails, it might be in books that I find mistakes. And before you become completely self conscious, I want you to hold on, because you'll soon see why I know that God needs to work on me in this or work on this in me. I think that's what I meant. Editing myself right here on air as we go. Should I have high standards for others who are award winning editors, if that's in their bio? Well, yes, I think it makes sense that they should know the rules.

And here's the big but my attitude is where the challenge comes in. I have to stop acting as if I'm infallible and don't make mistakes of my own. And recently I was reading through a version of one of my books.

Michelle Rayburn [00:10:09]:

I won't even tell you which one, but I was reading through one of my published books, and it really helped me to put this into perspective, because as I'm reading through, I see all these places where I could have improved my own writing, and I think, Why didn't the editor? Oh, yeah, well, I did have an editor, but I was the final editor on that, reviewing all the edits, and I'm questioning, why didn't the editor fix it? Well, I don't know. Why didn't I fix it? Because I probably decided it was good enough and I didn't need to keep on nitpicking about it. But it gives me an opportunity, when I see that, to eat humble pie a little bit, because pride is such a thing for me. And I don't know, I asked the question, why is it such a rooted thing in me? Back in the day it was phariseeical pride about religiosity, and God convicted me of that and softened my heart. And I tell people stories about how that has changed in me. But now he's prompting me to consider if it's like a weed that keeps popping up in a different flower patch. This time it's in the thoughts and attitudes of my heart when I see someone else's mistake. And God is showing me that I can prize excellence without engaging pride.

Michelle Rayburn [00:11:23]:

I can prize excellence without engaging pride. My commitment to excellence can be a form of worship to God, but not if self importance creeps in. And that's something that I'm aware of. And like I said, I don't have things all perfectly tied up and neatly fixed because I am a work in process and I have a feeling you're in the same situation where God keeps peeling back layers and discovering. Here's another thing that needs to be fixed. One of the verses that I really like, that has helped me in my perspective is Colossians three, verse twelve. In the New Living translation. It says you must clothe yourselves with tender hearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Michelle Rayburn [00:12:10]:

And that same chapter goes on with so much wisdom if you keep on going through it. You'll see in verse 17, whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. And verse 23 work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Would I like to undo some of my recent thoughts? Yes, some communication with others? Yes. But repurposing is moving forward. I can't go back. I can issue an apology if that's needed. But my new question to ask myself is does this thought or does this email, these words that are flowing, or the literal words coming out of my mouth show tender hearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience like that verse talks about? Will I get it right every time? No.

Michelle Rayburn [00:13:10]:

But I'll keep asking God to peel away those layers of pride that I didn't notice and keep on working on me. If that's something he's working on in you too, I'd love to hear from you. It's just great to encourage one another so you can always reach out to me and email me at michelle@michellrayburn.com or message me on any of my social media channels. I'd love to hear from you. Now, before we get into what I've been reading and what I've been listening to, I want to tell you a little bit about my newest book Project I'd like to tell you about the brand new Bible study I just released. Renewed is book one in a four part series called Remade. Each book in the series centers around lessons titled with words that begin with re and contains a main lesson and five microstudies for each week. Those are sort of like daily devotionals for you.

Michelle Rayburn [00:14:08]:

These six week Bible studies are a combination of story and study with biblical exploration, humor and insights from practical examples. They can be done in a group or on your own. There are also additional insights in the sidebar, and you'll find some places for solo work, for journaling and prayer. If you're thinking of trying Renewed with your small group or on your own, you can download a free sample chapter at michellerayburn.com/Remade. Let's talk about what I've been reading and listening to lately. I want to give you a little bit of a disclaimer here, because as I share things, it doesn't always mean I endorse 100% of what somebody says. I often like to read and listen out of curiosity and to learn and to grow, and so I'd like to encourage you to do that as well. I might share authors from different perspectives, or articles from different perspectives, or sometimes ones that are similar but cover something in a different way. And so that's always helpful to me because it helps to gain perspective and learn something, study about something that I'm not familiar with.

Michelle Rayburn [00:15:17]:

So I just want to share a little bit about what I've been reading. The first book is becoming free indeed. My story of Disentangling Faith from Fear by Ginger Duggar Vuolo. And you might remember Ginger Duggar from the TLC show, I think it was 19 kids in counting, and then 20, or no, 17 kids and counting, then 18, then 19 as the Duggar family continued to expand. And now a lot of the kids are grown up and on their own and married. And Ginger tells her story of realizing that there was an irony in a lot of what she was taught and in the legalism that she was brought up with and how she's kind of sorting through all of that now that she's an adult, she's married, she has kids of her own. Ginger mentions that she has a loving view toward her parents and family.

Michelle Rayburn [00:16:06]:

So she's not walked away from faith, she's not walked away from family, although many of the young people that were in her circle growing up have walked away from faith. And she talks about that in a few places in the book. I could see some parts of my own story and a little bit kind of woven in in places. I could relate to some of the legalism and rules and different things growing up. There are a lot of differences. Obviously, her family was more conservative than mine. I don't think Ginger's journey is done yet. I don't think mine is either.

Michelle Rayburn [00:16:40]:

I can see some similarities in that I've gone through phases of transformation and so when I listened to the audiobook of her story, I could hear as she was talking. There are some maybe perhaps some legalistic ideology still showing up in some of her more newfound beliefs, but definitely there's a freedom releasing of a lot of old legalism. So I'm curious, I want to see what happens with her journey as she continues, because sometimes when you take a step towards freedom, you gravitate toward a version that has similar flavors to what you knew before. So for now, she's pursuing truth and that's an example of a life repurposed, even if her path is still unfolding. And isn't that where we all are? There's the link in the show Notes to Ginger's book if you're curious about checking it out yourself. So you'll find that there another thing that I recently finished reading was all my knotted up Life a Memoir by Beth Moore. This is an exploration of Beth's childhood, of finding love, marriage, motherhood. It's like really her story from childhood all the way to where she is now.

Michelle Rayburn [00:17:51]:

She uncovers the heartbreak of abuse and its long term effects while also showing her resiliency. And this is something that part of her story I really wasn't aware of and really showed her human side and just how down to earth she is. I really appreciated that she doesn't come across flashy, even though if you've ever seen Bethmore speak and maybe you've had a different impression of her. And this is really a nice look into her everyday life. She talks about her 2018 break with the Southern Baptist Movement, she talks about the origins of her ministry, Living Proof, Living Proof Ministries, and she talks about how she learned to study the Bible and I could relate to her experiences with legalism. Another theme here coming through in this book, a lot of things just growing up in a really traditional church environment that I could relate to. She tells her story in a careful way so that she doesn't hurt family members that are also included in that story. So I really like how she did that.

Michelle Rayburn [00:18:52]:

And then what's remarkable to me is that we have no idea what's going on in someone's life. I like to be this armchair person, especially on Twitter. You see a lot of people talking on Twitter about other people in Christian ministries and they have opinions and I think it's really helpful sometimes to just hear someone's story. So for me, I saw just how Beth's life has been repurposed and really appreciated her vulnerability in telling her story. I will link to that in the show notes as well. I'm currently listening to a book called Fulfilled. Let Go of Shame. Embrace Your Body and Eat the Food You Love by Alexandra McKillop.

Michelle Rayburn [00:19:30]:

This is one that came recommended by somebody in an intuitive eating for Christian women group that I'm part of on the Past episodes. You've probably heard me talk about intuitive eating. This is really something in my own life, a journey that I've been on over the last year of really looking at my beliefs about food and how I've tied it into my beliefs about God in kind of strange ways for me. And everybody's journey is different, but this is my journey. And this author wants

readers to know that God longs for you to embrace your body, to eat with freedom, to live with a deep sense of confidence, that you and your body are loved exactly as you are. Alexandra is a nutrition expert. She encourages readers to respect your body, to honor your hunger, embrace the unique size and shape that God created for you. And her focus is on intuitive eating.

Michelle Rayburn [00:20:19]:

I have found that so far it isn't fully non diet, as some intuitive eating books are, because she does follow a few methods that remind me of diet advice. Here's one, for example. Take sips of water between bites to eat less and feel full. That is more diet culture advice. And generally with intuitive eating, it's really focused on not intentionally trying to reduce how much we eat, but more being focused on being satisfied. And she does talk about that a lot in the book, too. So, just so you know, she has some excellent advice for releasing dieting and changing our focus. And just as I read any book, I pick and choose kind of take in a broad perspective, read multiple books on something, and then sort through the advice and find what helps you.

Michelle Rayburn [00:21:09]:

So if you're looking for something like that, I'm going to have a link to fulfilled in the Show Notes what am I listening to? Well, I just listened to two different podcasts about Revelation and the Rapture. And if you're somebody who grew up like, you come home and nobody's in the kitchen and you think everybody has left because they were raptured and you were left behind, then you grew up in the same culture that I did, and the Left Behind series of books and movies really messed with my thinking. You might be surprised if you learned that in the long range of Christian history, rapture theology has really only been around for about 200 years. And I'm going to give a disclaimer here because I don't take a firm stand on end times. I'm not one who's going to argue theology in that way with you, but also you won't find me using words like tribulation on the show very often. But if you're like me and you're curious and you're open to learning about how your thinking might have been warped by a teaching that wasn't rooted in church history, then you might be curious too to listen to these. So I will link in the Show notes to two episodes of The Holy Post podcast and one episode of the Untangled Faith podcast on The Holy Post. Daniel hummel talked in two episodes about the history of rapture theology, and it was in understandable terms.

Michelle Rayburn [00:22:27]:

And if you're not familiar with the holy post, you need to know that the host, one of which is Phil Fisher of Veggie Tails Fame, they banter back and forth a lot in the beginning of the show. That's their format. The interview happens in the second half, so if you don't care about silly banter and hearing a lot of crazy news stories and just off the wall chatting, you jump to the interview. When I'm out for a walk, I love to listen to the banter, but not everyone does, so I will link to that one. And then on Untangled Faith, my friend Amy interviews Scott McKnight and he talked about his new book on revelation, End Times. He also boils it down in a way that's understandable. So if you're just curious and you're like, you know, I grew up in the church and I have no idea where I got the ideas that I have. You will like both of these, so I will link to them.

Michelle Rayburn [00:23:19]:

The final thing that I have to share with you today is an article that just came out from Chris Martin, who has been a guest on my show before. And this article is titled ukrainians Aren't Dancing on TikTok. Chris explains that the people in Ukraine aren't creating and posting silly videos on social media because they're fighting for their lives. And I found this insightful because he shows Maslow's hierarchy of needs, if you remember, learning about that in school, and how the Ukrainians right now are focused on food and shelter and safety in this 15 month war that's been going on. And here in America, our focus is often on much more shallow things, and we forget what's happening in the world because we're safe and we have food and we have all those things, and so we're just doing silly stuff on social media, myself included. Chris said in the piece that he put out on Substac, our relationship with the social Internet warps our minds into thinking that whatever issues go viral, or whichever users are the loudest are of utmost importance. This simply isn't the case. The tunnel vision caused by our feeds leads us to care more about frivolities than we ought and completely ignore matters of greater importance because we simply forget they exist.

Michelle Rayburn [00:24:36]:

The problems that get the most attention on social media are rarely existential because the people dealing with existential problems are too busy trying to keep existing to complain on the Internet, end of quote. I thought this was a good reminder that when I talk about searching for hope in the trashy stuff of life and how we can have a life repurposed, it really shows my American point of view, because I have no clue, no awareness of what true difficulty is. And so I'm going to link to Chris's article on Substac. If you're curious about that too, just to open your awareness and really think about it. Because it's such a great reminder for us, especially as Christians, that when Jesus gave us a new purpose in life and following him, yes, we can be silly. And yes, I like to goof around on TikTok sometimes, too, and on videos on any other social media platform, but these are people dealing with existential problems. And Chris's article reminded me that I need to care. I need to care about what other people in the world are going through.

Michelle Rayburn [00:25:44]:

So I will link to that in the show notes. And there you have it. That's what I've been reading and putting in my earbuds in the last week or two. I want to thank you for listening to this episode. You will find everything I talked about here in the Show Notes at michellrayburn.com/151. It's just the episode number each time and if you can't find it, you will just find a podcast tab at michellrayburn.com and you'll be able to find the Show Notes. I also give transcripts there that helps you if you like to just skim through and find everything that I talked about.

Michelle Rayburn [00:26:22]:

Some bullet points takeaways, all those things are there. Thank you so much for joining me at the beginning of season six. I can't wait to have the interview next week and to get rolling on this season of all the wonderful things that guests have to say to you. So have a great week and I will

see you next time. You've been listening to Life Repurposed. If you'd like bonus resources sent to your in box each week, be sure to sign up at michellrayburn.com.