

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

106. When I Make Life All About Me

You're listening to episode 106 of the Encouragement for Real Life Podcast titled, When I Make Life All About Me. Thank you for joining me on the podcast today. I'm thrilled you are here. A sentence has been ruminating in my brain for the last few weeks. So much so, I made it the title of this episode. What do you think? Is life really all about us? Are we the center of attention in our lives-and are we supposed to be? Is it all about our goals, our dreams, our own successes? Or is it about something else? What do you think? Join me here for the next short while and together we'll take a look at the possibility that life isn't maybe what we make it about. Maybe this life isn't really all about me and you. So let's get to it.

Right out of the gate, I need to confess. So often I make this life all about me.

All about my wants, my needs, and my desires.

All about what I think is correct, what I believe, and what I see.

I make it all about my schedule, my plans, my goals, and my dreams.

Do you ever do this, too?

I don't think I'm the only one who struggles with this, however.

I see it in both my grandsons, too, now 2-1/2 and 1 year old. Life, in their little minds, revolves around them, and they make that known. One might have a toy in his hands and the other wants it, so he takes it. You know how this goes, don't you? The one with empty hands screams and cries. Or like when the older one wants cookies for breakfast instead of eggs and pancakes and yells in frustration that Grandma won't give him what he wants.

Do you struggle with this too? Maybe not wanting cookies for breakfast (or maybe you do), but do you struggle with making life about you, too?

Max Lucado, in his book, *It's Not About Me*, says this, "We've been demanding our way and stamping our feet since infancy. Aren't we all born with a default drive set on selfishness?" He continues, "Self-promotion. Self-preservation. Self-centeredness. It's all about me!"

Yep, I can relate with Max's words here. Life, some days, can be all about me. But it's not supposed to be.

Not just because Max says so, but because God in His word clearly states this, too. In Ephesians 1:20-22 MSG it reads, "God raised him from death and set him on a throne in deep heaven, in charge of running the universe, everything from galaxies to governments, no name and no power exempt from his rule. And not just for the time being, but *forever*. He is in charge of it all, has the final word on everything. At the center of all this, Christ rules the church."

Nope. This life is not all about me.

Even when I expect all green lights to make my drive easier. Even when I expect my husband to make me happy. And even when I desire my friend to notice the effort I put forth into meeting up for dinner. Or when I want my way, or think my idea is best, or believe everyone should live the way I live. Oh goodness! Life is not all about me.

It's all about God, instead. And rightly so. God doesn't look to me when He considers the center of the universe. He doesn't trust me to hold this world together and everything in it. Nor does He consult with me how to handle the travesties and unfortunate events of life. (I'm so glad He doesn't!)

Imagine the mess we'd have on our hands if He did. I shudder to think of it. God is God and God is good. I think He loves us too much to let me (or any of us) be in charge. There is no one like Him, beside Him, or as powerful as Him.

Isaiah 46:9-11 NLT says, "Remember the things I have done in the past. For I alone am God! I am God, and there is none like me. Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish. I will call a swift bird of prey from the east—a leader from a distant land to come and do my bidding. I have said what I would do, and I will do it."

It's a good thing He's in charge.

It's a good thing this life is all about Him.

This stance of life being all about God and not about us is not popular with the world. In fact, the world tells us something different. It tells us "We deserve to be happy," or "go make a name for yourself," or "if it makes you feel good, then do it." People say to "do whatever it takes to be successful," to "put yourself first," or to "consider yourself more important than others." The world thinks it's in charge. The world thinks life revolves around it and the culture of the day, and it wants you to think you're in charge of your own destiny. Goodness, it's so easy to slip into the ways of this world, isn't it?

But remember what God said through the Apostle Paul in Romans 12:2 (NLT)? "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."

Maybe today is a good day to change the way we think? Maybe we've slipped into the thinking that life is all about us. And maybe this is a timely reminder that this kind of thinking isn't true.

What if we think of it this way?

The moon is a big, dark rock. I used to think it created its own light until I was taught differently in school. The moon doesn't shine on its own, but rather, when it's positioned in the right way, it reflects the light of the bright sun. Even though it may appear as if it generates its own light. Its beautiful, soft glow we experience here on earth comes from the reflection of the sun's bright light.

Just because it's the lesser of the two lights, however, I don't believe anyone considers the moon less important than the sun. After all, God created it on the fourth day of creation to govern the night (Genesis 1:16). The moon may not be the greater of the two lights, but it certainly has its place in the universe.

So do we. What if we were more like the moon? What if we accepted our purpose of reflecting the Son's light? Instead of trying to be the Son, generating our own light, what if we simply reflected the light we

receive from the Son to others? Putting God in the center of our lives, instead of ourselves, allows us to shine bright for Him into the lives of others and throughout this world.

We can't shine very bright on our own, but with God, our shine is the most beautiful shine because it's His.

Here are 3 ways we can put God in His rightful place in our lives, so we reflect His light:

1) Spend time with God.

The only way we can reflect God's light is by spending time with Him. That can be done through prayer, reading our Bibles and applying what we learn, or seeking time alone with Him. Again, we are unable to properly shine on our own.

2) Seek God's will.

When we ask God to show us His will for our lives, we can't help but keep Him in His rightful place and us in ours. God has good plans for our lives, and He won't give us anything than what's best for us. We reflect His light when we're in His will.

3) Keep our eyes on God and not the world.

No matter what enticing thing the world throws at us or tempts us with, nothing can compare with the joy and peace we receive by keeping our eyes on God. It's in Him we find our true meaning and purpose, and fixing our eyes on Him daily helps us keep it there.

When I make life all about me, I don't glorify God. I don't reflect His light into the lives of others and to the rest of this world. I can't shine well on my own, and I miss out on the blessings God has for me as a light reflector. When I make life all about me, I lose my joy and peace, and I get stressed because I'm not meant to be the center of the universe. God is. Life is about God, not me.

I pray this reminded us of truth today. God is so good to us, isn't He? May God meet us where we are, encourage us, and lead us to lives that reflect everything of Him.

I encourage you to visit my Free Resources page on my site that's filled with all sorts of tools that will help you stay encouraged on your walk with God. They will help you stay focused and keep God first. The link to this page is in the show notes.

Also, if you are encouraged through this episode, would you please consider rating or reviewing it or others can find this encouragement, too? Be sure to subscribe to the podcast so you never miss a new episode.

Thanks for being here today, friend. God bless you.

Links in this episode:

[Ephesians 1:20-22](#) MSG

Max Lucado quote, *It's Not About Me*, Integrity Publishers, 2004, pages 6 and 7

[Isaiah 46:9-11](#) NLT

[Romans 12:2](#) NLT

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Julie Lefebvre