

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

159. The Secret to a Life of Joy and Abundance

Welcome to episode 159 of the Encouragement for Real Life Podcast today as we learn the secret to living the kind of life every person desires--a life of joy and abundance. But how do we go about doing this? It sounds a little complicated and hard to accomplish, doesn't it? Is there a magic formula or a hidden secret? Well, in this episode we uncover what I've found that secret to be and what's necessary to live this kind of life. If you could use a dose of encouragement and hope today, I invite you to stick around for the next short while. I'm glad you're here!

Believe it or not, I found the secret to living a life of joy and abundance!

It's crazy that it took me this long, but the process of learning it has been worth it.

What comes to mind when you think of joy? What do you think of when you hear the word abundance? Our culture tells us that joy and abundance come from acquiring lots of possessions such as owning a large home, driving expensive cars, holding down a prominent job, wearing trendy clothes, taking elaborate vacations, achieving important accomplishments, and having a large bank account. This is what our culture considers abundance, and if you have and do these things, it says joy will come to you.

The life of joy and abundance I'm referring to, however, has nothing to do with what we own or our work or what we achieve or the trips we take. When we put our hopes of abundance and joy in these things, well, we will find they don't measure up to what we expect them to. They don't satisfy our souls like we think they will. Believe me, I've been there and done that, and God has taught me through it.

Our culture and this world doesn't understand the true source of abundance and joy. And what I'm about to say doesn't make sense to them.

A life of joy and abundance comes from God, not our things.

But don't take my word for it. God's Word declares this. Here are a few Scriptures I found:

John 10:10 (Voice): "The thief approaches *with malicious intent*, looking to steal, slaughter, and destroy; I came to give life with joy and abundance." To pause here for a moment, in the original language the word "joy" means gladness or the joy of God. The word "abundance" in the original language means over and above, more than is necessary. So, John is saying here Jesus came to give us a joy-of-God, over-and-above kind of life.

Jeremiah 29:11 (ESV) reminds us of God's good, abundant plans: "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

The prophet Isaiah spoke words of hope to Israel in 58:11 which point us to abundant life today (ESV): "And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail."

1 Corinthians 2:9 (NLT) describes God's abundance for us: "That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, 'No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.'"

We'll never achieve a life of joy and abundance on our own.

We might think we can and we might attempt to do so, but our thoughts and efforts will be in vain. Here is the secret to a life of joy and abundance: we must partner with God. I share in Chapter 6 of my book, *Right Now Matters*, what this actually means.

I quote, "This isn't about partnering with God to get our way or to achieve something specific. It's not to treat God as a genie in a bottle who lives to grant our every wish. This is about building a vibrant, personal relationship with God. The God of the Bible. The One who created the heavens and the earth in Genesis 1, and the One who formed and made us magnificently as referenced in Psalm 139. The One who gave up His only Son for us as proclaimed in John 3. And the One who is making all things new, including you and me as stated in Isaiah 43. The One we can spend eternity with as promised in 1 John 2."

I continue later in the chapter, "...I want you to know God is for you. He's not against you. No matter where you are, God meets you. You don't have to clean up, shape up, or make up. He loves you as you are. He will take you by the hand and lead you on the best path for your life...He leads all who follow His Son, Jesus, and He will throughout eternity. And He won't give you anything other than His best."

His best *is* the best.

Period.

His best usually has nothing to do with what the world considers "best," like the tangible possessions, achievements, and activities we just discussed, but instead are the important things--the things we cannot necessarily see like faith in Jesus, an eternal hope, and spiritual growth. We'll talk more about spiritual things versus earthly things in an episode next month. But God's joy and abundance are lasting and not fleeting, they fill us up spiritually to make a difference in the lives of others and in this world. Not just for now, but on into eternity.

So, how do we go about partnering with God?

It's not about crossing things off a list and following a certain strategy, but we must first allow the desire to partner with God to drive us to Him. That must come first. It all begins in our hearts. Do we love Him? Do we know who God is or do we just know of Him? There's a difference of knowing of someone and knowing someone. What's our heart's motivation--to get more earthly abundance or to receive God's abundance?

We then begin to build a relationship with God. Not a just go-to-church-on-Sunday kind of relationship, but a kind of relationship we build with anyone who is special to us. It's difficult to build a relationship with someone we never spend time with, isn't it? So we spend time with God, reading His Word, communicating with Him in prayer, pondering His ways, seeking to grow our faith in Him through Jesus. We walk with Him through our days, going to Him with our concerns and our celebrations, and we trust He will provide His best for us in all situations and circumstances.

When we walk with God and trust Him wholeheartedly, our lives are filled with the joy of God and become exceedingly over and above (as described in the John 10:10 passage).

Even if we experience disappointments and discouragements in this life, and even if life doesn't go as we plan. Because our hope isn't on our circumstances, but is on God, we will still be living a life of joy and abundance. It matters where our hope lies. That's the key.

It's not just about life here on earth, however. Sure, this joyful and abundant life is great here, but it's nothing compared to what's awaiting us in eternity.

After looking at the truth of John 10:10, a number of verses later in that same chapter of John's gospel, in verse 28 (ESV), Jesus says, "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand."

This is the ultimate life of joy and abundance, isn't it? Receiving eternal life through Jesus, never perishing, never being snatched out of His hand? Friend, what a hope we have!

Eternal life with Jesus is the ultimate joy and abundance.

I desire that for you and for me.

Eternal life is found through faith in Jesus. We might hear these days that "all roads lead to heaven," and "there is more than one way to get to God." But God's Word is very clear about this. Eternal life is through Jesus. He is the way, the truth, and the life.

Jesus says in John 14:6 (ESV), "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." He is the key to this amazing life with God. A life abundantly more than we can ever imagine.

Also in Chapter 6 of Right Now Matters, I share how I came to faith in Jesus and how that decision changed the course of my life. I even offer a prayer for anyone desiring to make the same decision I did. I don't know where you are in your faith journey, but I do know that life with Jesus is better than life without Him. If you're ready for the joy-filled, abundant life I'm referring to today, and you aren't sure how to go about that, feel free to message me through my website at julielefebure.com. I'd love to chat with you about this! A life of joy and abundance is available to everyone, yes even you and me.

Sometimes we could use some encouragement in our faith journey, am I right? Well, have you checked out my free Resource Library recently? It's full of tools and helps to equip and encourage you in your faith walk with Jesus. You'll find inspiring printables, lockscreens, social posts, and extras to keep your focus on God. You'll find the link to my Library in the show notes.

Last week on August 9, was the official three-year anniversary of the Encouragement for Real Life Podcast! Three years! How can that even be? So I celebrate this with you today! Thank you for listening, for showing up, for sharing this podcast with your friends, and for your continued love and support. I appreciate you more than you know, and I thank God for you. I look forward to beginning year number 4 here with you!

We will be resuming our Right Now Matters Bible Study group sessions in the fall. Of course, you can always walk through the *Right Now Matters Bible Study: A 28-Day Guided Adventure to Living as a Right-Now Woman* on your own, but it's much more fun and enlightening with other women. I host these both online and in person. If you'd like to be notified of the next sessions, find the link in the show notes to join the waitlist. They will likely begin in September.

If you found some hope and encouragement in today's episode, would you please consider leaving a rating or review from wherever you're listening today? Doing so might just help another find this encouragement too. If you haven't already, subscribe so you never miss a new episode.

So now we all know the secret to a life of joy and abundance and what it truly is. How will we partner with God today and in the days to come? I am praying for you and for your life of joy and abundance today. Thanks for tuning in. God bless you!

[John 10:10](#) Voice

My book--[Right Now Matters: Empowering Right-Now Women in a Culture of Distraction](#)

[Jeremiah 29:11](#) ESV

[Isaiah 58:11](#) ESV

[1 Corinthians 2:9](#) NLT

[John 10:28](#) ESV

[John 14:6](#) ESV

[Access my free Resource Library](#) filled with tools and helps to equip and encourage you

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie Lefebvre". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a simple horizontal line.