

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

You're listening to episode 5 of the Encouragement for Real Life podcast. Welcome back, friend. I'm so glad you're here. In this week's episode we're peering into truth, the truth about who we are. Do you think you're special? Not in an egotistical way. That's not what I'm referring to. But truly, do you think you're special? Or do you only see every flaw, every weakness, every imperfection and draw the conclusion you are nothing but a mess and a mistake? Well, friend, let me tell you right now, you are not a mistake. Let's get into this episode where we'll find truth and encouragement on this all-important subject. Let's jump right in.

I firmly believe many of us are living our days thinking unkind thoughts and saying not-nice words to ourselves and about ourselves.

Why do I believe this?

Well, because I hear it from others and truthfully, I do it myself. If you never do this, or if you've mastered this, then friend, I applaud you with the loudest of applause. Go ahead and keep listening, because you likely have a friend, or a co-worker, or a daughter, or sister who struggles with this.

But, why do you think we say and think unkind things about ourselves and to ourselves? Is it because we're bombarded with how this world says you and I are supposed to be, look, act, and think? Is it because of social media? Could the answer be we're consumed with how others see us? Are we trying to be the perfect, all-around woman? Maybe it's some of all of these or none of these. The reason may be different for each one of us.

But what I do know is what I've experienced personally.

And that is the enemy of our souls does not want us to accept or appreciate or live out our God-given identities. He will do all he can to keep us believing the lies that proclaim, 'you're nothing special.' And he's pretty good at it, too.

He whispers such things as:

- You're a terrible mother. You're messing up your kids.
- You can't do anything right.
- That woman over there is skinnier than you. And her hair is prettier too.
- Don't bother applying for that job. You won't get it. Just spare yourself the rejection.
- You're a failure. You always have been and always will be.

Heard any of these lies or similar ones lately? Sadly, when we hear them often enough and loud enough, we begin to believe them. We begin to believe those lies are who we are. And when that happens, of course we don't think we're special. How could we? We think we're the worst and the least. We think we're unimportant and insignificant. And then we pile on our own negative thoughts and words about who we are.

Sometimes we believe the negative words others have said about us.

Sure, I remember the encouraging words my assistant high school basketball coach shared with me my senior year, and the many times my parents told me they believed in me. But what stands out to me is the time as a young adult I was told I had “thunder thighs.” When a boy I liked in high school told me I wasn’t pretty enough. When my boss at my first big girl job said I talked too much.

I remember these almost as if they happened a couple years ago.

Some scientists believe our brains retain and recall more often the negative experiences rather than the positive ones. Some say that’s how our brains are wired. I’m no scientist, but I believe this is a tool the enemy of our soul uses to try to prevent you and me from becoming all God created us to be. This enemy knows our weak points. He knows where and how to push our buttons. If he can keep us labeled with lies and distracted with discouragement, we are less likely to thrive and flourish and bloom in the ways God desires and has designed us to.

This enemy even uses the negative words of others to affect us... sometimes for many years.

No wonder we don't think we're special.

If you get nothing else out of this episode, I pray you hear these words. Friend, you are special. You are worthy. You are incredibly important. And this world needs you and what you have to offer. The lies you and I have been listening to are not reality. They are not what our Creator says about us, nor are they truth.

Listen to this from Psalm 139:13-16 (VOICE):

For You shaped me, inside and out. You knitted me together in my mother’s womb long before I took my first breath.

I will offer You my grateful heart, for I am Your unique creation, filled with wonder and awe. You have approached even the smallest details with excellence; Your works are wonderful; I carry this knowledge deep within my soul.

You see all things; nothing about me was hidden from You as I took shape in secret, carefully crafted in the heart of the earth before I was born from its womb.

You see all things; You saw me growing, changing in my mother’s womb; every detail of my life was already written in Your book; You established the length of my life before I ever tasted the sweetness of it.

Psalm 139:13-16 VOICE

Friend, God knit you together in your mother's womb. You are wonderfully made. He took His time creating you... 264-270 days to be exact for most of us. He didn’t miss a single detail. You are not an accident or a mistake. His fingerprints are all over you. And for that fact alone, you're incredibly special. No one in this world is like you. You are it. There's no duplicate. And no one can do exactly what you can do.

You have every reason to think you're special.

Because you are. According to those who love you, according to me, and most importantly, according to God. You can think you're special because you are.

The thing is each one of us is special. What if you and I woke up every day and said something like this, "Thank You, God, for making me special. I'm going to live today as the amazing creation You made me to be"? What do you think would happen? The more we proclaim who we are as God's daughters, the more we will believe it. And friend, that can change everything. It can change how we treat ourselves, how we treat others, how we share our faith with others, how we think, how we talk, how we live our everyday lives. It can change our attitudes, our desires, our perspectives, and our habits. What a difference this can make!

A free printable is awaiting you on my Resource page on my website. It's called, "Don't Think You're Special? Think Again." It's a list of 26 truths about who you are with the correlating scriptures to back it up. Such as you are worthy, you are gifted, you are victorious, you are brave. I encourage you hop over there and print it off. Find one or two that really touch your heart, then look up the scriptures and be encouraged by God's Word. Write them out if you can, then continue to proclaim the truth of who you are in Him until it becomes a deep-rooted belief. God's Word is the best encouragement we can find. The link to this is in the show notes.

God does think you're special. And so do I.

I invite you to think you're special, too!

We're talking about this very subject today in our Encouragement for Real Life Community Facebook group. I invite you to join the conversation and be encouraged. You'll find the link in the show notes.

We'll end this episode with this parting thought: No matter what anyone says, or does, or tries to convince you otherwise, you are special. You matter. Thank you for joining me here today!

Julie Lefebvre