

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

You are listening to episode 12 of the Encouragement for Real Life podcast. Welcome back! I appreciate you joining me here today. Are you in a hurry often? Do you rush through the majority of your day? It's possible many of us do, without even thinking about it. After all, we live a fast-paced culture. With fast food, fast cars, and fast tracks to success. We have places to go and people to see. We've got stuff to do and things to accomplish. Our days fly by, don't they? Even so, why are we in such a hurry? Why do we think moving fast is better than taking our time? Well, we're pondering these questions and more in this week's episode and, as always, we will find some encouragement and hope along the way. Let's get to it.

Hurry. Most of us do it and many of us are caught in hurry's pace.

What is hurry, anyway?

[hurry](#) :: to move, proceed, or act with haste; a state of urgency or eagerness; rush; hustle; scurry; bustle

Do we live our days in a rush and on the fast track? If so, why? Is it to get more done? To feel the rush of busy? To believe it makes us important?

Do we hurry through daily moments? If so, why is that? Is it because we feel a sense of control when we do? A sense of *I've got this*? A feeling of *if I don't move fast I will miss out*? Or *if I don't hurry, I'll get run over*?

Isn't it true, if our pace isn't rushed, our minds are? We think fast, we try to make decisions fast, we move from one fleeting thought to another. We attempt to multitask, to plan ahead, to make lists to stay on track. Some days our minds are completely overloaded and overwhelmed, we find it difficult to concentrate.

When we are in a hurry, we stress and worry. We miss important details because our thoughts are scattered. We may think hurrying is best, when in reality, it generally causes more effort in the end. Quicker isn't always the best.

We are people in a hurry!

Last week I was nearly run over in the grocery store by a woman on a mission to the banana stand. (Do we need turn signals on our shopping carts?)

Another woman became increasingly agitated, tapping her foot loudly behind me in the checkout line. (Was I taking too long paying for my groceries?)

I was going two miles an hour over the speed limit on the way home and was passed by six cars on a two-lane road. (Do we need to raise the speed limit?)

All joking aside, today is a good day to pause and examine our hurry habits. Maybe you don't struggle with hurry. Maybe, quite possibly, your pace doesn't match the pace of the world. I hope that's the case.

Or maybe you're like most, who don't really think about hurry, but you just do it because that's what you've known for so long.

Honestly, I might be the one guilty of hurrying the most. I don't mean to be, but hurry tends to be my natural speed. Maybe it's because much of my life I've spent in hurry's beat. It's even possible I thrived off the adrenaline rush it gave me daily. It saddens me to think of the many times I told my children when they were young to, "Hurry up!" That's one thing I wish I could rewind time and do differently. Mommas of little ones, take my word for it. Don't allow "hurry up" to be a part of your mothering vocabulary. There are better words to use to spur our little ones on.

It's possible because hurry was such a part my life, that might be why I had difficult time adjusting when the pandemic hit and everything in my life came to a screeching halt. I found myself floundering here at home. Forced into an uncomfortable rhythm of slow, I didn't know what to do or how to act. Nothing was familiar to me, not my schedule, not my pace, not my normal life.

Can you relate?

Were you forced to change your pace, either to a snail's pace or more to the pace of a jack rabbit? Depending in your situation and your job, you likely experienced one or the other. For some of us we slowed way down. For others, hurry became our pace during that season.

Surprisingly, it didn't take me long to adjust to the slower pace of my life. I had no other choice! It felt refreshing, quite honestly, to be forced off the hamster wheel of life and compelled to take a hard look at how I was living. My life was good, and I was grateful, but not until I was forced to slow down that I realized the pace I had been keeping was too much and too fast. It was time for a change.

I began to enjoy my days at home, working from my office, taking part in Zoom calls from my own desk. I read more, relaxed more, and found a new unhurried rhythm. Mornings were slow, days were peaceful, evenings were quiet. All the while I wrote, I worked, I lived, and I loved. Looking back now, it truly was a beautiful season.

I promised myself when things lifted that I wouldn't return to the pace as I was keeping before. But here I am. Back to finding myself again in a hurry most days. Maybe not as hurried as I used to be, but my current pace isn't comfortable. This reality got me thinking the other day.

If God isn't in a hurry, why am I? Why are we?

Two weeks ago, on the podcast we talked about seasons of waiting, and how waiting times don't need to be wasted times. And sometimes we find ourselves waiting on God or waiting for God to act or answer. His pace rarely matches ours, does it? God never seems to be in a hurry! In fact, I found many verses in the Bible that refer to God's character of being slow, especially slow to get angry, such as Psalm 103:8:

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, **slow** to anger, abounding in love.

Psalm 103:8 NIV

The verse that encourages my heart regarding God's pace is found in none other than Habakkuk. When Habakkuk was disheartened with God's slower pace, God said these words to him:

“These things I plan won’t happen right away. Slowly, steadily, surely, the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass. Just be patient! They will not be overdue a single day!”

Habakkuk 2:3 TLB

God takes His time.

He sees the beginning from the end, which is something we cannot see. So, He doesn't need to be in a hurry. And, friend, I don't think we need to be either.

If God wanted us to be in a hurry, He would be in one. But because His pace is slower, it makes sense for us to follow His example. When we look at Jesus' examples throughout the Bible, we never see Him in a rush. He took His time to get where He was going. He was intentional about His time and His pace, never needing to hustle or bustle. We see how He often waited and rested and drew away to be alone with God. But He was never in a hurry.

Following His example after example, I don't believe being in a hurry is God's best for us. I really don't.

I don't worry about being in a hurry anymore, because my faith in God will always deliver me on time.

Martha Reeves

Is it time to slow things down for you, too? Is it time to have a pace more like God's?

How do we go about doing that?

Well, in order for us to keep a slower pace, both in our feet and in our minds, I say we must be intentional. We must choose to intentionally shift into slow gear. Slowing our walk, our thoughts, our words, our actions. It's going to take a conscious effort to live differently than the world lives. To think differently than the world thinks. To believe differently than the world believes. Especially if that's all we've known for a very long time.

Because if we don't, we will miss the joy that's right in front of us. We will likely miss the good God has planned for us, and the gifts He is placing right in front of us. We will overlook the sweet moments with our children, the special smile from a friend, the beautiful flower poking through the crack in the sidewalk.

All because you and I are in a hurry.

Getting excited about something without knowledge isn't good. It's even worse to be in a hurry and miss the way.

Proverbs 19:2 NIRV

Let's not miss the way. Let's be intentional about slowing things down today. What if we walked our errands instead of running them? What if we actually drove the speed limit (not five over like I typically do)? Instead of ordering fast food for dinner, what if we chose slow food—the kind we take time to prepare—instead? Could we pause long enough to notice what's around us? What's in front of us? To notice the changing leaves, the neighbor who is waving from across the street, the person next to us at the stop light? To not be such a hurry in wishing time away but appreciating the moments we are given?

Let's choose a different way to live. Slower. More intentional. Meaningful. Unhurried.

And enjoy the journey instead of rushing through it.

What are some ways we can intentionally slow down?

Think about your typical day. Are there times when you normally rush? When you're getting ready for the day? Or do you fly out the door to work? Does rushing happen while you're eating lunch or preparing dinner? Do you feel rushed going to the grocery store or while you're driving? Pay attention to the moments you feel in a hurry. Then intentionally slow down. It's even okay to whisper to yourself something like, "I don't have to be in a hurry in this moment. Let's slow down and enjoy getting groceries today."

The thing is, though, we can't expect to master slowing down in a day. It's likely going to take some time. Just as it took time to get in the habit of hurrying, it might take a while to replace that habit with a slower pace. So, give yourself some grace. Be patient with yourself. Understand slowing down may feel uncomfortable. Show yourself compassion. Each moment of intentionally slowing down builds on another. You'll soon find you won't be in a hurry like you used to be. Take it one day at a time, sometimes one moment at a time.

Then celebrate your slower pace each time you succeed at it. Begin to notice the little blessings God has placed on your path. Lift your gaze to the beauty that's around you. Find joy in every moment as you savor your slower pace.

We don't have to be in a hurry any longer.

I invite you over to our Encouragement for Real Life Community Facebook group. We are discussing hurry all week long and the benefits of living at a slower pace. We call it the most encouraging space on the internet. Stop on in and join the conversation. The link is in the show notes.

If you found encouragement and hope in this episode, I invite you to also review and rate it so others can find this encouragement as well.

In closing, if God isn't in a hurry, we don't need to be either. I pray you and I are able to slow things down a bit this week, to stop and smell the roses, and to enjoy each moment a little more. Life is too short to live it in a hurry. Thank you for joining me today. God bless you!

Julie Lefebvre