

# ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

## **22. Hello, 2022: The Year We Are Ready For**

You are listening to episode 22 of the Encouragement for Real Life podcast! Happy New Year and welcome back today! Here we are just four days into this new year, so in today's episode titled "Hello, 2022: The New Year We Are Ready For," we are discussing all the things having to do with this brand-new year of 2022. And I believe this is the year we are ready for. Why? Well, no matter what kind of year 2021 was, this is a year we can look forward to. This is a year we can embrace a clean slate, a fresh start, a new perspective. And I say let's embody all the hope and promise that accompanies a new year. So, let's get into today's episode and find some much needed new year's encouragement along the way.

So, friend, are you excited about this new year? Are you looking forward to twelve brand new months, 52 unique weeks, and 365 fresh days in 2022? Or was 2021 such a harsh year that maybe you're not looking too far ahead in 2022 quite yet. You're not sure how you feel about it yet. And friend, that's certainly okay. It's okay to take it slow and settle in this new year. There's no rush. There's no right way or wrong way to begin a new year.

So, let's take some pressure off of us. Let's just accept this new year for what it is. I like to think of it as another leg on this journey of life. It's another season of this adventure with God. And no matter what this year is full of, we know God is with us.

### **Maybe the reason I'm most excited about this new year has to do with how 2021 ended.**

For the last ten days of 2021 I was ready for the year to be over. Both my husband and I were. Because the last ten days of last year were the worst we experienced all year long. I mentioned it in my year-ending blog post last week, but in case you missed it, we were met with the unwelcome guest of this nasty virus a few days before Christmas. It was our turn to deal with the reality of this pandemic. And neither one of us wanted it, planned on it, or were ready for it. I mean, how does one get ready to be sick and weak and miserable over Christmas and New Year's? And your birthday?

You can't.

At least we couldn't.

As you can tell with my voice and the stuffiness in my head today, I'm not 100% yet. But I'm slowly getting better and stronger with God's help. I stepped on the scale a couple days ago and was shocked at the number I saw. Both my husband and I have lost a lot of weight and muscle mass. Our taste and smell aren't normal. Brain fog is a real thing. Our energy isn't quite what we're used to yet. But we are trusting God will heal us and make us whole in His perfect timing. One day at a time.

Needless to say, we were eager to say goodbye to the toughest days of 2021, ready to embrace the promise and hope of 2022.

**So hello, 2022.**

We are here for you. We are ready for you. Yes, hello, 2022. And we trust God has you and us and everything that has to do with this new year in the palm of His hand.

Because I, your God, have a firm grip on you and I'm not letting go. I'm telling you, 'Don't panic. I'm right here to help you.'

*Isaiah 41:13 MSG*

Yes, God has a firm grip on us. And that's the best news all day and in the beginning of this new year. It's the best news for every day of this new year. So, no matter what awaits us in 2022, we can trust God is right here with us every step of the way.

And this reality gives us peace and confidence and hope. I pray it does this for us all deep down to our core of our souls today.

As I begin this new year, I am doing what I normally do.

**I choose a word for my year, and I align a few goals alongside of it.**

Do you do something like this too? Do you choose a #oneword for the new year? I actually appreciate the process of finding a word, and it thrills me a bit when I discover it. My process involves prayer, intentionality, discernment, and openness. As a result, God never fails in pointing me to one single word that illuminates hope for the year ahead.

My past words have been:

2014 - JOURNEY

2015 - IMPACT

2016 - BELIEVE

2017 - LIVE

2018 - ADVENTURE

2019 - REVIVE

2020 - OPEN

2021 - CONNECT

So, this year's word (drumroll please) is DELIGHT.

**My word for 2022 is DELIGHT.**

So, my hashtag for the year is #delight2022.

*delight :: a high degree of pleasure or enjoyment; joy; rapture; something that gives great pleasure; contentment; glee; jollity; satisfaction; rejoice; thrill*

I won't begin to try to assume how this world will play out in the year, because every year I thought I knew, I was dead wrong. But God guided me to this word in an unmistakable way while sitting on my couch on New Year's Day. So I will just trust He will use it to encourage me, prompt me, move me, challenge me, and bless me through it and with it throughout the year.

I also spend some time searching for a Bible verse to go along with my word. Here are a couple that encourage me and highlights DELIGHT:

Delight yourself in the Lord; And He will give you the desires of your heart.

*Psalm 37:4 NASB*

I delight to fulfill your will, my God, for your living words are written upon the pages of my heart.

*Psalm 40:8 TPT*

And this one might be my favorite:

For the Lord your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs.”

*Zephaniah 3:17 NLT*

What’s your word for 2022? If you have one, I’d love to encourage you in it throughout the year!

### **What about goals or resolutions for 2022?**

Do you set goals or resolutions for yourself? Personally, I stopped setting outcome goals and resolutions a number of years ago. Because I ended up feeling defeated and discouraged if I missed the goals or didn’t keep the resolutions. *Who needs any more reasons to feel bad? Not me.* So my goals look a little differently now. My goals for 2022 are what I call “process” goals. They have less to do with outcome and more to do with progress.

- Actively participate in an accountability group for my writing.
- To find delight in every day.
- Write something daily to bring delight to myself and/or others.
- Be a light and bring delight into this world through encouraging posts on social media, through my podcast, and everything I do.
- To experience deep delight in time with God through prayer and Bible study.
- Delight in living healthy, journaling, reading, seeing myself more as God sees me.
- Saying no to things that rob me of delight.

I’ll likely add to these or change them if necessary throughout the year. So, friend, what are your goals/resolutions for 2022? I’d sure love to encourage you in them! In a moment I’ll share where you can share your word for the year and any goals and resolutions for this new year.

### **As we say hello, 2022, where do we go from here?**

Well, I suggest we do what we know to do. We take each day one day at a time. Sometimes one moment at a time. We live each day in the grace and hope of Jesus. We seek God first and His will for our lives. And we ask Him to help us make a difference in this world and for His kingdom.

We cling to His promises, and we trust Him to provide all we need. We understand we can't do anything on our own, but in His strength, we are more than conquerors.

Yes, hello, 2022. Just like all prior to this one, we will be invited to embrace our real lives. With a mixture of blessings and blunders, happiness and heartaches, memory-making moments and moments we'd rather forget. No year is perfect, and 2022 won't be either. But we'll journey through it together with God leading us every step of the way.

He will give us opportunities to grow into the people He desires for us to be. He will teach us and mold us and equip us to be more like His Son, Jesus. We can trust He won't leave us as we are today. Oh no. God is good at meeting us right where we are today and transforming us and our lives into something unexpected and beautiful. Even if we are met with challenges and hardships, we can trust we won't be venturing through them alone. Just as Jesus is Immanuel, God with us, at Christmas, He will be every day in this new year. He will be with us.

### **Yes, hello, 2022.**

Will you and I be willing to grow in His grace? Will we accept His plans and purposes for our lives, even if they are different than our plans? And will we do all we can to make a difference and shine His light in this dark world? Let's love more than hate. Let's believe the best and not the worst. May we focus on the good more than we do the bad. And may we love and live and bless and give in all the ways we can.

I want you to know I am here for you and I'm praying for you. I will do all I can to encourage you through the means God calls me to. Just know I won't do it perfectly and I won't always say the right words or do the right things. But my heart will always be desiring God's best for your life and mine. So, I ask ahead of time for your forgiveness when I mess up. Because I know I will. I wish this wasn't the case, but yours truly here is flawed and imperfect. But I love Jesus and I care about you. And together I believe we are stronger and better than we are apart.

I invite you to return here weekly and to continue journeying with me as we navigate 2022 together. We might show up messy and mish-mashed, but we'll show up no matter. With or without make up on. With or without our hair done. And either way is fine and acceptable.

So, let's boldly say hello 2022.

We are trusting God with this new year.

### **Would you pray with me?**

*Father God, You are sovereign, majestic, and amazing in all Your ways. Thank You for this new year, 2022. We look back over 2021, and we are grateful for Your presence in our lives. For many of us it was a challenging year, however You never left us, and You didn't abandon us. No, You were with us every single moment of every single day. Thank You. So, we trust You will be with us in every moment of 2022. We look ahead with great anticipation of this new year. Father, we ask that You will draw us close to You. Help us to keep our eyes fixed on You and Your will for our lives. We ask for Your peace, Your presence, and Your provision this year. Consequently, may You be glorified in all we think, all we say, and all we do. Thank You in advance for new opportunities to share You and Your light with others. We trust You in 2022, and we love You so very much. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

I invite you over to the Encouragement for Real Life Community on Facebook where this week we are encouraging one another in this new year. We are sharing our words, our goals, our hopes, and dreams for 2022. Come on over to be uplifted and inspired. The link for this community is in the show notes.

Also, I would love to connect with you through social media in this new year. You can find me on Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, and on Facebook. Those links are in the show notes as well.

And on the first Thursday of each month, I send out an exclusive email of encouragement and hope to those who are a part of my email group. I include content that's I don't share anywhere else. You can receive this monthly email at the link in the show notes. Plus, I do a fun drawing each month which you will have access to through this email.

Thank you for joining me here today, in this first episode of 2022. I look forward to journeying together throughout this year with you. May God bless you and encourage you, today and every day!

*Julie Lefebvre*