

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

28. It Is All Going to Be Okay

You are listening to episode 28 of the Encouragement for Real Life podcast, titled, "It Is All Going to Be Okay." I don't need to tell you we live in a world of brokenness and uncertainty. We are faced with situations and circumstances beyond our control. And some days we feel like life is one long uphill battle. But we are not to lose hope. No. We are to remain hopeful and encouraged. In this episode we will find that hope and encouragement in discussing what God has to say about all of this. At the end of this episode we will hopefully walk away knowing it is all going to be okay. So, let's get into it.

Life is an adventure, isn't it?

And, in this adventure, we each experience ups and downs, high mountain top places where we feel on top of the world, and low valleys where dark days reside. Sometimes we experience both in the very same day, or in the very same minute! One thing is for sure, we love the sunny days, and the dark, rainy days? Well, not so much, but those days help us appreciate the sunny days, don't they?

The thing is, though, when we're walking through uncertain times we can begin to wonder, will we be okay? Will this situation end up okay? Will my children be okay? Is it all going to be okay?

Maybe you're wondering this right now. Maybe you're finding yourself in a dark season, in the middle of a very trying time, in awful circumstances where no relief is in sight. I may not know what you're dealing with today, but I wish I could make everything alright. I wish I could sit across the table from you today, to listen to your story, to support you, and tell you it's all going to be okay. Not in a fake, flippant, condescending way, because we all know how that feels. But in a promise-filled, you-can-take-this-truth-to-the-bank kind of way.

Even though I can't physically sit with you today, I pray God meets you through this podcast to encourage your heart. To point you to His truth, and to pass on His strength for your soul, no matter what you may be going through.

The thing is, we each have hard stuff in our lives.

How do I know? Because you and I are living and breathing. If we are alive, we're going to have hard stuff.

Relationships become broken. Bones and hearts get fractured. Bad news fills our newsfeeds and our inboxes. Trials test us and disappointments derail us. Disease and sickness come knocking as our stress increases and our pocketbooks decrease. There's disaster, fire, earthquakes, storms, and devastation, both literally and figuratively.

Our children make bad choices. A friend says unkind words. The disappointing actions of loved ones leave us feeling lifeless, and hopeless.

Untimely deaths, shattered promises, and unexpected tragedies may lead us to question God's timing, to doubt His love, and to disbelieve His promises.

Let's not forget the daily, dippy stuff that tries to trip us up. A car that doesn't start. A fridge that quits. A road that's blocked.

And, what about the past or recent poor choices you and I have made? The mistakes, the mishaps, the mess-ups that have originated from our very selves? Because, sadly, sometimes the hard stuff we experience is the result of our own actions. And, sometimes, this may be the hardest stuff of all.

How in the world can any of this be okay?

Well, friend, it's not. None of this is okay. It doesn't feel okay, and it certainly doesn't look okay.

So, why at times does life have to be so difficult?

We don't have to look too far for the answer. We can open our Bibles and flip through the first few pages to find it. The Bible begins with the book of Genesis, and we see God's design in the garden of Eden was perfection in every sense of the word. He created it all and saw it was good.

But man stepped in in Genesis 3 and chose a snack from the tree that was off-limits, prompted by the enemy of our souls. Everything changed in that bite.

- We were separated from our Creator and from the perfection that was once ours.
- It began a rebellion in our hearts against God and introduced denial and deception within us.
- Sickness and death entered the scene.
- Troubles began in our relationships with one another.
- Pain and suffering became normal, everyday occurrences.

The world we live in today is not how God created it, designed it, or intended it to be. It's a broken world. So, it's no wonder we have brokenness in our lives!

The good news is, however, God has not left us without hope.

Just because human beings messed up in Genesis 3, it doesn't mean God doesn't have a plan to fix the mess. He does. Our Heavenly Father is fixing the brokenness of this world. He is the healer of the pain in our personal lives. He promises to be with us always and to love us, no matter what. In fact, He loves you and me so much, He sent His Son, Jesus, to reverse the effects of this fall of mankind (John 3:16). Jesus has come to reconcile us to God, to each other, and to our true human nature.

The story doesn't end with sickness, sadness, sin, and suffering. No. The Bible ends with a restored Eden in the book of Revelation.

Let's take a look. Reading Revelation 21:1-5 NIV:

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. 2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from the

throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. 4 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." 5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

A restored Eden is what's awaiting us. Everything will be restored! Including no more death or mourning or crying or pain. The old order of things will be gone. Life will be perfect again as we dwell with God and He with us. What a glorious promise!

Today, however, we await that promise as we find ourselves in this imperfect garden, smack dab in the middle between two perfect gardens. We see where we came from, the old Eden, and we see where we're headed, the new Jerusalem. But, how in the world are we to live in hope and live victorious, in between these two gardens? We question how do we make the best of this imperfect, broken world when perfection is both mankind's origin and our destination? How do we find strength for the hard days?

How do we know it's all going to be okay?

Our answer? Jesus. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Yes, Jesus is our answer to all these questions. He is the One who can help us navigate the rough waters of this world. He's the one who can make right what's wrong.

After all, Jesus warned us. He said in John 16:33 that in this world we will have trouble. But He ended that truth with a promise. He said to take heart, for He has overcome the world.

We can be confident that Jesus has overcome it all. He overcame the corruption of this world, the hard days, our faults and failures, every evil act, and every bit of brokenness. He overcame everything through His death on the cross and in His rising from grave three days later. Those who believe in this truth will experience this very same reality. We just can see it yet, but we will! What we experience in this world does not have the final say. Amen!

Paul said in Romans 8:18 NIV I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. What we are walking through today cannot compare to what's ahead for us. That's the best news of all today, isn't it?

But what about today?

How do we deal with today?

Let's look at an example of a woman who came face to face with Jesus and trusted He would make everything okay (Mark 5:25-34 NIV).

25 And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. 26 She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. 27 When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, 28 because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." 29 Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. 30 At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

31 “You see the people crowding against you,” his disciples answered, “and yet you can ask, ‘Who touched me?’”

32 But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. 33 Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. 34 He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

Help and healing are found when we draw near to Jesus.

For 12 years this woman bled. 12. Just imagine that. The crowd was pressing around Jesus. Imagine how this outcast woman (anyone bleeding was an outcast) had to fight her way to get to Jesus. Do we believe as this woman believed? Do you and I think the same way, “If I can just touch Jesus’ clothes, I will be healed”? Are we close enough to Jesus to touch Him? Do we draw near to Him every day to receive what He has for us? Even though Jesus is not physically with us, we can figuratively reach out and touch His garment for healing by spending time with Him in prayer, reading and soaking in God’s Word. The closer we are to Jesus, the more we’ll experience His undeniable presence.

Jesus has compassion for the hurting and hopeless. Isn’t it interesting how Jesus calls the woman “Daughter” (5:34)—the only time I could find He addresses a woman in that way. Maybe there is another instance in scripture, but I couldn’t find it.

The VOICE translation says it this way: Daughter, you are well because you dared to believe.

Imagine Jesus saying the same words to you today. Daughter, you are well because you dared to believe. Daughter, your situation is well because you dared to believe. Yes, daughter, your life is well because you dared to believe. Friends, dare to believe. Dare to believe in the One who loves you most.

Yes, it’s all going to be okay.

It is, friend. We don’t have to worry or fret one minute longer. Dare to believe in the truth of Jesus. No matter what happens, He has got it under control.

I invite you over to the Encouragement for Real Life Community on Facebook. We’re discussing the hope we have in knowing it’s all going to be okay as we trust Jesus in whatever circumstances we’re walking through. The link to check it out is in the show notes.

I pray we draw near to Jesus this week, close enough to touch His garment. Close enough to receive what He has for us. Close enough to live in His presence. Friend, it’s all going to be okay. God bless you.

Julie Lefebvre