

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

71. The Distraction of Hurry Says, “You Are Behind”

You are listening to episode 71 of the Encouragement for Real Life Podcast, titled, “The Distraction of Hurry Says, ‘You Are Behind.’” Welcome back to the podcast and thank you for tuning in today. As I prepared last week’s episode, I knew this week’s had to be about hurry. Because it seems as if stress (which was the subject of last week) and hurry go hand in hand, don’t you agree? Because when we’re stressed, we tend to hurry, and when we hurry, we get stressed. Yikes! It’s a viscous cycle, isn’t it?! At the airing of this episode, Christmas is a little less than two weeks away. Even though Christmas is in the back of my mind these days and this episode is slightly facing that direction, what we discuss in it can be applied to any season of life and any time of the year. So, even if you’re listening in after the Christmas season, you can still apply the encouragement offered this week. Because doesn’t the distraction of hurry like to entice us any time of year? So, let’s get into this episode and find timely encouragement for our real lives today.

Hurry. Are you ever in one? Do you move fast, talk fast, listen fast, drive fast? Do you think fast, sleep fast, eat fast, scroll on your phone fast? Or do you feel like you’re constantly behind, and the only way you can catch up is if you hurry?

If I can be honest with you here today, I realized not so long ago that fast is my normal pace. Hurry is my tempo. I think deep-down I’ve always known this, but I wasn’t fully aware until one day when I chose to intentionally slow down. I decided to work at a slower pace and to not be in a hurry about anything I did. Interestingly, I did really well in the morning. I took my time, I drank my tea as I worked and created, and I listened to some soft music in the background. You got this, Julie! Until about 2 p.m., when I felt the familiar tug of hurry. My pace picked up, my thoughts began to swirl, and I slid right back into my habit of hurry.

The distraction of hurry had me in its grip.

And I wasn’t fully aware until that afternoon. Could it be you’re not aware either? Oh, I hope you aren’t caught in the grip of the distraction of hurry, but just in case, here’s a little exercise to try. For the remainder of today after listening to this episode, refuse to hurry. Intentionally slow down. Your pace, your thinking, your work, you’re driving. Everything you do, relax while doing it, and again, refuse the temptation to hurry. See how you feel. See what rises within you. And be aware of your thoughts while you’re choosing to decelerate. You’ll know if the distraction of hurry is tugging on you. You’ll become aware if hurry is your typical pace. And becoming aware is the first step to making a change.

So, what is hurry anyway? If you’ve been around here awhile, you know I like to understand the definition of words. Dictionary.com defines hurry as: to move, proceed, or act with haste (often followed by *up*). Thesaurus.com added the synonyms of hustle, rush, haste, dash, and scurry.

And during this season especially, you probably know as well as I do, just how easy it is to slip into hurry mode. We have places to go, people to see, gifts to purchase and homes to decorate. We are hustling and bustling and jockeying our way to get more done in less time with less effort. All the while we thrive off the rush of busy and maybe, just maybe, hurrying makes us feel important.

If our pace isn't rushed, our minds certainly are. We have become masters of multitasking, of planning ahead, of making lists and checking them twice. And we aren't content to do one thing at a time anymore.

Not only this, but we rush through our moments. We move on to the next thing without soaking in the moment we're in. Because if we don't move on, well, we'll get left behind, right?

We are in such a hurry!

But maybe it's not our fault. We live in a world that's in a hurry. We're told we need to be more efficient, more active, more on the go. Because we'll be happier when we do three things at once. We'll find more joy when we're getting to where we're going faster. And we'll experience more peace when we're climbing the ladder of success faster than anyone else.

Because if we don't, we feel we are falling farther and farther behind.

The distraction of hurry says, "You are behind." God says, "Hurry is not my way."

Because when do we ever see Jesus in a hurry in scripture? When we read the gospels, we do not see Him ever hustling or bustling. Even when His friend Lazarus was sick, he didn't rush to get to him before he died. Or when the synagogue leader's daughter was ill. Jesus didn't race to get to her before she died. Or when thousands of people showed up to hear Jesus speak, He didn't rush to find a way to feed them with two fish and five loaves.

I'm reminded of two proverbs that speak of 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

Careful planning puts you ahead in the long run; hurry and scurry puts you further behind. Proverbs 21:5 MSG

Jesus was never in a hurry, so why are we?

But hurry is familiar. Hurry helps us get things done (or so we think). And we believe if we don't hurry, we won't be able to keep up. Well, keep up with what? Keep up with whom?

This distraction of worry actually has a name. It's called hurry sickness. And in an article from Kelsey Borrens in Huff Post, she describes it this way, "Hurry sickness is a behavior pattern (not a diagnosable condition) characterized by chronic rushing and anxiousness and an overwhelming, persistent sense of urgency — even when there's no need to be moving so fast."

The more I read about this, the more I see how living continually in a state of hurry can affect us negatively in all areas of our lives... physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. It can affect our work, our sleep, our relationships, and our ability to relax.

So, what do we do? How do we begin to slow things down?

I believe the first step is recognizing when we're in a hurry. We must pay attention to how we're functioning throughout the day. And when we notice we're on the run, it's then the time to make a abrupt change. To intentionally slow things down--our feet and our thoughts. To consciously slow our go. Our walk, our thoughts, our words, our actions. And the thing is, it's likely not going to be easy, because this is living differently than the rest of the world lives. This is thinking differently than the rest of the world thinks. And this believing differently than the rest of the world believes. But friend, slowing down is worth the effort.

Because if we don't, we will miss the moment we're in. 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 instances with our children, the special smile from a friend, the beautiful flower poking through the crack in the sidewalk. All because we were distracted with hurry.

Jennifer Dukes Lee, in her book, *Growing Slow*, writes, *"We need a way to recover from hurry sickness. Healing will come from the inside out, in our hearts, where Jesus dwells and where the wild things grow."* Amen! Yes, healing from hurry sickness begins on the inside, and we need Jesus' help to stop the madness. We can begin by turning our hearts toward Him. Maybe add a simple prayer such as, *"Jesus, heal my hurried heart and feet. Guide me to a slower-paced life. I'm tired of the rushing and I desire to journey at your pace, instead. Help me, Jesus."* And as a side note, Jennifer's book, *Growing Slow*, is one tool I use often to help me slow down. You can find it wherever you purchase books.

Friend, let's begin stepping away from the distraction of hurry today. What if we walked our errands instead of running them? What if we actually drove the speed limit (not five over like I do)? Could we pause long enough to notice what's around us? To notice the trees, the neighbor who is waving from across the street, the person next to us at the stop light (okay, that might be a little awkward, but who cares?). To not be in 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.

As they say, slow and steady wins the race.

We are continuing this conversation over in our private Encouragement for Real Life Community on Facebook. There all week long we're discussing this distraction of hurry and how we can practically slow life down a little in this season and beyond. I invite you to stop in. You'll find the link to this private group in the show notes.

If you're looking for more ways to stay encouraged on a daily basis, check out my Free Resources on my website such as printables, bookmarks, lockscreens, and social posts. All designed to add a lift to your step and joy to your heart. The link to these Resources is also in the show notes.

As always, if you found encouragement for your real life here today, would you please rate this episode and/or review it? This will help others find this encouragement too. Subscribe to the podcast so you never miss a new episode.

God has good things in store for us in this season, friend, and we don't want to miss anything He has for us because we hurried through it. Hurry is not God's best for us, so let's slow our go today and in the days to come. I'm with you in this, and I'm cheering you on. God bless you!

Julie Lefebvre