

# 180 How to Live Intentionally and Make Every Day Count

[00:00:00] Welcome to the Encouragement for Real Life podcast. I'm Julie Lefebure, your host. Life is remarkable, sometimes raw and always real. And some days we could use a little extra encouragement for our real lives. Here, you'll find that, along with personal life impacting stories, helpful life hacks, timely inspiration, biblical insight, and a fresh perspective.

The Encouragement for Real Life podcast equips you to be a light in this world and to shine bright wherever God has you. I'm glad you're here today.

**Julie Lefebure:** Every day, you and I have the choice to live intentionally or accidentally. One of these ways, is living on purpose, and the other way is like flying by the seat of our pants. And let me tell you, I have been known to do both in the same day, [00:01:00] in the same hour. But seriously, you know, at the airing of this episode, it's just two weeks into the new year, and if you've set some goals and aspirations, you know, sometimes it takes a while to get new rhythms and routines set, right?

But we can choose to live intentionally with each new passing moment. It doesn't have to be at the beginning of a year, or it doesn't have to be some grand, great big gesture. No, it can be as simple as committing to do so right this very moment. So I invite you to hang with me here for this next short while. And together, we're going to find some hope and inspiration on how to live intentionally every single day and to make each day count. Sound good? Well, let's get into this episode.

[00:02:00]

**Julie Lefebure:** Live intentionally. What does that even mean? And why does it even matter? We probably don't think about it too much, but living intentionally means to live according to our personal values and our beliefs, and to make choices in life that reflect those values and beliefs. This may be something like making decisions, deliberate decisions to do what's important for each one of us. Or it may include living with a sense of purpose by following certain practices such as exercising every day or maybe drinking a certain amount of water throughout the day.

It may also be staying mindful and deliberate with our actions and activities, especially if we're focused on reaching certain goals. I'll give you a couple personal examples. When I was writing my book, Right Now [00:03:00] Matters, in 2023, I became extremely intentional about completing my book project before my self induced deadline of August 1st, and my daily routine centered around writing and editing and making all the decisions necessary to make that book come alive by my deadline. I lived intentionally during those months because that was my goal. And so that became my focus.

Another example, um, is more every day. Every day I intentionally want to spend time with God. And so I do this. Um, I, I carve out some time in my schedule every day. I spend time with Him by either through reading His word, the Bible or dedicated prayer time or playing worship music throughout my home, or even just talking with God throughout my day. Some of these I do all day long every [00:04:00] day when I'm really intentional and focused on it. But my desire is to live intentionally by communing with God every single day. So living intentionally helps us to focus on what matters to us, what's important to us. And because you and I are unique, this will likely look different for each of us.

And living in this way, in this manner, honors us and our values and our priorities. It's doing what is important to us. And so when we choose to live intentionally, though, we also honor God. Do you think that God desires for us to live intentionally too, and not just flying by the seat of our pants? Well, Jesus is the perfect example of someone who lived intentionally while on earth.

You know, I can't find anywhere in scripture where He flew by the seat of His pants or that He just was willy nilly [00:05:00] doing whatever He wanted to do. No. He was always on purpose. He always had a purpose. He was always focused on doing the will and the work of His Father.

And you know, I want to be like Jesus. I want to be that purposeful and intentional in my life. And I think of Ephesians chapter five, verses 15 through 17 and in The Voice Translation, it kind of makes me chuckle and it shares some really strong words. It says this. "So be careful how you live. Be mindful of your steps. Don't run around like idiots as the rest of the world does. Instead, walk as the wise. Make the most of every living, breathing moment. Because these are evil times. So understand and be confident in God's will. And don't live thoughtlessly." Yep. There it is. [00:06:00] There it is. God desires us not to be running around like idiots. Isn't that kind of funny? Um, but to walk as a wise person and making the most of the time that He gives us to live intentionally and not thoughtlessly. Because when we live this way, when we do this, when

we live thoughtlessly and unintentionally, we're squandering precious moments. We're not using our God-given talents. And we're wasting opportunities to serve Him and others. And I don't want to do any of that. And I'm certain that you don't want to either.

Not only this, but God blesses us when we live intentionally. He helps us keep a positive mindset. He equips us to achieve goals. He blesses us with clarity when we live intentionally. We are able to stay present in the moment much [00:07:00] better. That's for sure. And we experience much lower stress when we're intentional.

God shows us how to enjoy more meaning in life through intentionality. And He blesses our relationships when we live in this way. Psalm chapter 90 verse 12 in the Message paraphrase gives us the perfect prayer to pray and it's so simple. But sometimes we , complicate it, but here's what it says.

It says, "Oh teach us to live well. Teach us to live wisely and well." What a perfect prayer. Amen and amen Do you think it would make a difference if we prayed that simple prayer every day? I certainly do. And that's one that I'm going to start praying in this new year. Again, that was Psalm 90 12, in case you want to look it up and maybe find it in a different translation. But, a simple prayer is, Lord, help us to live [00:08:00] wisely and well.

But you know, our environments aren't always conducive to living intentionally, right? We get distracted easily. Read my book, Right Now Matters. That'll help. Um, we are enticed to follow less important endeavors, like scrolling, spending hours on our phone. And we don't always know how to live this way. We don't know, maybe, how to live intentionally. Yet sometimes, we are our biggest distractions. We are the ones that get in our way. We get into habits of just living on autopilot. And pretty soon, we pause to realize we are not anywhere where we'd hoped to be by now. Or am I the only one that has done this? Oh boy. And instead of being proactive, we sometimes just react to life, which may feel easier in the moment, but it's much more difficult in the long run. [00:09:00] You know, I say it's a good day to live intentionally and to begin making this a habit and to make every day count.

So are you as ready as I am to make some changes and to live more intentionally than you have in the past? Well, today's a new day and right now is a new moment. So let's explore some ways to begin this habit today. I've come up with a short list. It's four practical steps to live intentionally every day.

And the first one, you know what I'm going to say, right? I always say this usually as the first point when I, when I have a list is to start with God, because that's where it all begins. Let's begin by talking to God, opening our Bibles, and seeking Him for His desires and plans for our lives, because He will guide us in living intentionally if we ask Him. He [00:10:00] won't make us guess. He won't make us figure it out on our own. Matthew reminds us in his book Matthew chapter 6 verse 33 in the New Living Translation to "seek the Kingdom of God above all else and live righteously and He will give you everything you need." That sounds great, doesn't it? Let's seek Him first.

The second is to set daily intentions. How about asking God, what do You want me to focus on today? If we started our day like that every day, even before we got out of bed, let's try that tomorrow. You know, If we listen and be aware and be more open He will guide you and me in ways that we can't even expect.

Maybe He will guide us to be lights in this world and to spread joy everywhere we go. Maybe He'll prompt us to spend more time, uninterrupted time, with [00:11:00] our families and to put our phones away for a while. Or maybe He might ask us to slow down and prioritize rest. That sounds pretty good, doesn't it? Again, if we ask, He will guide us and He'll guide our focus.

The third is to eliminate distractions. And you probably know that I am all about eliminating distractions in life. Friend, from my personal experience, this can be done. It can be. So what is the biggest distraction that prevents you from intentional living? Think about that for a moment. What's the biggest distraction that prevents you from intentional living? Is it scrolling on your phone? Is it your too full schedule or is it choosing how you feel over taking necessary action?

If I may offer some suggestions to [00:12:00] eliminate distractions, I suggest silencing your phone at certain times throughout the day. Those important times where you really want to focus or where God's leading you to focus. Give yourself some breathing space in your schedule. And do not let your schedule run and rule your life. Or find 15 minutes throughout your day to simply focus on living intentionally and nothing else. Friend, get creative. Yeah, we will always experience distractions because we live in a world of distraction. But we don't have to allow them to keep us from doing what's important.

And the fourth is to reflect and adjust. The truth is we will not do this perfectly. Nobody does. We must remember that this is a process. It's not perfection. End the [00:13:00] day asking some questions like, "What went well today?" Or "what could I change tomorrow?" It's helpful to ask God to show us these

answers as well. And we don't have to figure this out on our own. And friend, that's the best news, isn't it? One step at a time. One moment at a time. Even one day at a time.

And this all sounds great. Doesn't it? Well, it is. And one of the biggest results of living intentionally every day is receiving God's peace and joy. Gosh, there's nothing like it. And some days I feel that peace and joy and some days I don't. And please know that I do not do this perfectly. I wish. You know what, I don't need to say I wish. I pray that I can do better at this because again, none of us do this perfectly. But if we keep trying and putting one foot in front of the other and seeking God and [00:14:00] doing those four steps, we will begin to live intentionally.

Speaking of peace, do you know that scripture about God's peace that surpasses all understanding? Well, it's Philippians 4, 7, and in the Living Bible, it reads this way. "If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus." But did you catch that? It said, if you do this, so what is the, this? The verse before that describes seeking God in all things and thanking Him for His answers. Which is what we've been talking about to seek Him first.

His peace accompanies intentional living. His presence is always with us, but when we live intentionally, we will feel Him so close to us. [00:15:00] And He will bless us with the joy, His joy, as we live this way daily.

And if you'd like some help in living intentionally and making every day count, I'm excited to announce that I am soon offering the opportunity to work and walk with me through one-on-one mentoring. More details will be coming later this month, so stay tuned. But good news, you no longer have to feel stuck or stagnant in life or in your faith. I can't wait to tell you more. It's coming soon.

So friend, what friend is on your mind today? Could this episode encourage her or give her some hope? She'll know that you were thinking about her when you forward this her way. Also, if you haven't subscribed yet to the podcast, click the subscribe button so you never miss a new [00:16:00] episode. And if you're not watching this on YouTube, remember you can find the Encouragement for Real Life podcast over there in video form.

Well, before we close out this episode, let's just do a quick recap. We can define, prioritize, eliminate distractions, and walk out intentional living every single day. This isn't about doing more. It's about doing what matters most. Are

you ready to put this into practice? I am. So let's do this together. This week, let's commit to one intentional act every day. You can do this, friend. You can. I'm cheering you on and I am praying for you. God bless you.

Thank you so much for joining me here today. You can find more at [JulieLefebure.com](http://JulieLefebure.com) and until next time, stay [00:17:00] encouraged.