

194. Washing Windows When Your Perspective Becomes Cloudy

[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: Today we're continuing our spring cleaning for the Soul Series. You know, it's been a fun month. We have discussed clearing out the cobwebs. We've discussed, dusting off, weariness, , decluttering our hearts. We've done all of that so far in this series. [00:01:00] And today, excuse me, we are continuing with a fresh and meaningful message that I believe you and I both can relate to.

Have you ever tried to enjoy a view through a dirty window? Or worse yet, through dirty glasses, if you wear glasses? You know, i, I don't understand how, how, how my glasses get so dirty so fast. And you know, I, I wear these most of the time now, but goodness, some days I'm looking through 'em and I'm like, I can't even see through, it's so dirty. Anyway, it's frustrating, isn't it? And you know that there's beauty on the other side, but smudges and streaks, they get in the way and we just can't see clearly.

Well, sometimes our inner perspective becomes just like that window - clouded, distorted and in need of a good cleaning. Right? When our [00:02:00] perspective gets fogged with discouragement and disappointment or negative thinking, we stop seeing life clearly, and we often, we stop seeing God clearly too. So what if we could take a moment, though to wipe away what is blocking our view and see again through God's eyes. Well I say it's time to get out the cleaning cloths and do some window cleaning. Some window washing is a good thing to do today. If you're ready, let's get right into this episode.

Not so long ago, I was scrolling through Instagram and I came across another woman doing something similar to what I do. But [00:03:00] it looked like she was doing it far better than me. More polished, more popular, more everything. My heart sank. You know, the feeling, right? Or maybe it's just me. Maybe I'm the only one that ever does this, and I don't like it when I do it. And I get caught in it, and I don't even realize it sometimes.

But I started doubting my own calling. Feeling behind and questioning my value. But the truth was, once I stepped back, my perspective had shifted to comparison instead of contentment. I had to pause and ask God to help me see my own journey through His eyes again, because seeing things through His eyes becomes much more clearer than seeing through mine. I needed to wash my windows. I needed to, and maybe you do too today.

[00:04:00] So what are some signs that you and I might need to wash our windows to see life a little more through God's eyes than our own eyes? Well, one is you and I are stuck in negative or critical thinking, and we find ourselves assuming the worst about others, about ourselves, and even about God.

Another one is, we're overwhelmed by our circumstances and we can't see hope. We're discouraged because we're focused on what's missing in life. This is another one we're focused on, what's missing in life instead of what's present. You know, just like a window gets dirty over time without us even noticing our perspective can too. And we go through life doing what we do, not paying any attention to our perspective until sometimes it takes a little soul spring cleaning to realize just how foggy it's become. [00:05:00] Has yours become a little foggy too? Well, don't lose heart, friend. Let's take this one step further.

What clouds our perspective? Well, there are many things in this world, goodness gracious, both eternally and externally that can cloud our perspective. But let's pause to ponder just to see if any of these maybe have affected us lately or are affecting us today.

The first one I would say is disappointment. When life doesn't turn out the way we expect, our outlook can shift towards bitterness or disillusionment. An example of this might be when we feel that our prayers are unanswered. We may begin to believe that God isn't even listening or He doesn't even care anymore.

Another one could be comparison and social media. This one's a big one. You know, as I [00:06:00] just shared in my little story a minute ago, when we are constantly seeing filtered lives through social media, this can skew our view of reality and make us feel like we're behind or that we're not enough, not now, and will never be enough. Yeah, just like my Instagram, scrolling that day. It happens too easy and it happens too quickly.

Another one could be, fear and worry. That's a huge one. Um, when fear becomes our focus, we start expecting the worst instead of the best. And we forget God's promises. When we fear the future, this is an example, instead of

trusting God to provide, we just, we, we miss, we, we miss the truth in Who He is and that He is with us now and He'll be with us in the future. We don't need to worry and we don't need to fear.

Another one [00:07:00] might be lack of time with God and sometimes it's easy to put God on the back burner, isn't it? A dusty Bible often leads to a dusty perspective. I have found that to be true again and again and again. I'm gonna say that again. A dusty Bible often leads to a dusty perspective. Without God's Word renewing our minds. It's easy to default to worldly and anxious thinking. In fact, that's what our brains will do. We will always go back to that. When was the last time that we read scripture. When was the last time that we dug into God's Word? We opened the Bible and we just read it.

Another one might be busyness and noise. A cluttered schedule always leaves little room for reflection, which causes us to react instead of responding with wisdom and clarity. An example of this might [00:08:00] be, well you know, we highlighted this last week in last week's episode about we looked at distractions and how they are damaging and depleting us day after day after day. They do not leave us room for reflection, but keep us enticed by those distractions.

So have you experienced any of these lately? I hope not, but if you have, which ones? And now, what can we do? What can we do now that we have experienced these, or maybe you're experiencing them right now? Well, good news is we're not left without hope. God never leaves us without hope, and I'm so glad we can cling to His hope. Our windows may need a good spring cleaning today.

So how to clean the window and renew our perspectives. Let's look at this. Well, I think a good place to begin would be to pause and ask God for His view. His view in life, not our view. [00:09:00] And preferably ask God, how do You see this situation or this person, or how do You see myself? When we reflect on that, we look at that, we ask God and we invite Him in, we will see, we'll start to see things from His perspective.

And a great verse to reflect on is Psalm, they're actually a scripture. It's two verses, Psalm 139, 23, and 24. In the NIV translation, it says, "Search me oh God, and know my heart. Test and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me. Lead me in the way everlasting."

Yeah. I love that scripture. Brings us right back to the heart of it all.

Step two would be just to use the Word, use God's Word as your cleaning cloth. To replace cloudy thoughts with truth. You know, and I have to get my cleaning [00:10:00] cloth. I even have it right here because I had to use it before I started um, this episode. My glasses were filthy again. It matters what we set our mind's on. So when we use that cleaning cloth using the Word as the cleaning cloth will help us truly focus on what, what, what matters.

A key verse for this would be Colossians, chapter three, verse two, and it says, this is NIV also, "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." That's how we do it through God's Word.

Maybe taking some time just to write down or memorize one verse. What if we did one verse a week? What if we did one verse a month? This will help clean away the, the false thoughts throughout the day.

Now I spoke recently at a conference and I created a tool before that and I just thought it'd be kind of fun to share it. Um, it was on Speak Life. Um, I, I talked about speaking life and [00:11:00] speaking truth over our lives and not believing the lies, excuse me, that are in our heads. And so I came up with these scripture cards. If you're on video, you're seeing this right now, but it is, they're scripture cards. And on here, I'll just show you an example of one. It has, this is Joshua one nine and it has on there, um, the scripture on top and a prayer, and a prompt. So you look up the scripture, then you can pray the prayer, and then you just follow the prompt that what it says to do. And this is one way, one easy way to start memorizing scripture and starting to replace the, the lies, the, the cloudiness with God's truth.

And so if you want, there's a, there's a set. One set contains 31 cards, one for each month, and you could begin next month with, a whole new, fresh perspective. Or begin now. Anyway, if you want these message me, I will put a link that you can contact me through my website and I can certainly send one off [00:12:00] to you. But they are \$20, including tax and shipping, and they come in this cute little cute little, um, card stand. So, that is one way that you can start memorizing scripture and filling your mind with scripture.

The next step would just, another practical step would be to practice gratitude, kind of as a daily wipe down for, for the things that you're thinking about and helps to keep that, keep your focus on where it needs to be. Gratitude does so much. It, it clears the fog and it helps us see what's already good and right. You know, it sounds so simple, but what are you thankful for right now? I challenge you to either start or restart a gratitude journal. You know, I'm all about journaling. But it doesn't have to be an elaborate journal. It could just be a

notebook or a sticky note and write down three things daily that you're thankful for. [00:13:00]

When our kids were young, uh, we did what we call thankfals. And I've shared this on the podcast before, that at night when we would say our prayers, we would go around all four of us, our two kids, my husband and I, and we would go around the room as we're winding down for the day in our prayer time and we would share some things that we're thankful for. And you know, the cool thing is my daughter is doing that with her sons. And so when they come and stay, they say, I wanna, you know, they wanna say thankfals. They, they, they wanna do their thankfals. And so we share what we're thankful for. It doesn't sound like it's gonna make a big difference, but it really does. Ending the day with what you're thankful for is a great practice to get into. That would be a great way to just keep what's important in the forefront of our minds.

Um, the next practical step I would say is just get quiet before [00:14:00] God. I found that stillness often reveals what noise tries to hide. And this world is noisy. But even a five minute pause can help you regain a heavenward focus. I suggest just turning off your phone for a portion of the day. Goodness, even if it was an hour. Just turning off your phone, not thinking about your phone, or going for a perspective walk. I love taking a perspective walk when I just get outside or even a perspective walk on my walking pad here in my office. Just looking for glimpses of beauty and truth around me. It helps to just kinda reset things and get me right back on track.

You know, God wants us to see clearly. Not just through our own tired lenses, because some days they get really tired, don't they? But through His perfect, beautiful lens of [00:15:00] grace, truth, and purpose. When our perspective is renewed, our energy returns, our hope rises. Yeah. And our hearts, they find peace again. Which I know you and me both want. And everything becomes clearer.

Second Corinthians chapter four, verse 18 - this is also in the New International Version, says something profound and beautiful. It says, "So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but what is unseen. Since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal." Seeing through God's eyes changes not only how we view life, but more importantly how we live it.

Wow. We shared a lot here in this episode, haven't we? But we're not, not quite finished yet. But let's just stop and recap . We're gonna stop and recap these points. So we can recognize when our perspective is clouded, right? We can stop and [00:16:00] recognize that. Which we've just done today. And we can

identify what's fogging our view. And then the next thing is just cleaning that window with truth, gratitude, stillness, and God's Word.

So friend, what is one area in your life where your view has felt foggy or distorted lately? This week, I encourage you to ask God to help you clean that window or to clean those lenses so you can see His truth more clearly.

And I just wanna say, if you could use some help in this cleaning of this window, and you are ready to live the life that you've always desired to live, well, I can help you do that. I can walk with you to equip you to live the abundant life that you are designed to live. The life that Jesus came to give you. My one-on-one abundant life mentoring is designed to refresh your faith, to renew your [00:17:00] mindset, and to embrace the abundant life that yes, you are designed to live. I invite you to check out the link in the show notes for all the details. And you can even schedule a one-on-one appointment with me, a free 20 minute, what I call a connection call just to see if this abundant life mentoring, if it is right for you. So no strings attached, but that is there for you as well. So you can look for that in the link in the show notes. And I look forward to working with you one-on-one to help you refresh your perspective, to find clarity and confidence in life and in your faith. You know, life is too important to live it any other way.

Also, uh, an exciting thing, if you live local to me, I invite you to join me for a life-giving morning at a local church here nearby. Prairie View Christian Church in Norway, Iowa is hosting a women's morning of Inspiration and hope. [00:18:00] It's on Saturday, May 3rd from 9 to 11:00 AM called She Speaks Life. And I'm honored to share how we can stop that negative inner critic, that internal critic that's in each one of us, and to replace her with God, God's life giving, transforming truth of how He sees us instead. It's gonna be a powerful and fun time together, and I would love for you to attend. It would bring me so much joy to see you there. It's free. There's no cost to attend. And even better, refreshments will be served. So I would love to, to share that morning with you. And, uh, you can click on, you can click on the link in the show notes, which will take you to some more details regarding that if you need it.

But thank you for also leaving a rating or review from wherever you're tuning in today. And make sure that you subscribe so you never miss an episode. Connect with [00:19:00] me. I would love this if you connect with me on social media and share this with a friend who could use some renewal and encouragement in her life today too.

Can we close in prayer? Let's do that. That would be really good. Let's pray.

Oh, heavenly Father, oh goodness. I just thank You for this time together with, this view of spring cleaning for the soul. I pray that the one listening to this today, Father, that You will renew her mindset, that You will refresh her spirit. You will clean, help her clean, uh, wipe off the lenses so she can see you more clearly and see the life that You've given her more clearly. Lord, I pray that at this time of this month, of this renewing and refreshing, of this spring cleaning has been, um, encouraging for us all. And Father, we know that You are, You are with us in every day. That You are transforming us little by little every day.

Father, I [00:20:00] pray that we will put You first in our lives. I pray that we will, we will not just do that, but we will also spend some time with You, seeking You, reading Your Word, talking to You, and just being quiet with You because we know that this world is noisy and we don't, we don't hear You when we're listening to the noise.

So Father, I just again, thank You for this time. I ask that You would bless the one listening or watching today, and that You will, uh, continue to just remind her how very important and special she is. We love You, Lord. In Your name we pray, amen.

So thank you. Thank you for, um, joining me here today and whatever you're facing, I, I just know God is with you and He will help you through it.

Spring cleaning is good for the soul, right? In more ways than one. I'm glad you're here. God bless you.

[00:21:00] Thank you so much for joining me here today. You can find more@julielefebure.com and until next time, stay encouraged.