

Encouragement for Real Life Podcast

202. Summer of Abundance Week 2: Train Your Thoughts for Truth

Julie Lefebure: [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.

Welcome to the second episode of the Summer of Abundant Series. This summer, we are having so much fun already. We are stepping into a 12 week journey toward living a full and joy filled life, the life that God has for you and for me. And so [00:01:00] each week we are looking into one key element of abundant living, rooted in God's Word and relevant for our real lives today.

And so last week we began this series by discussing the element of abundant life that really is the foundation for all of the rest, and that is our identity in Christ. So now that we know who we are in Christ, let's talk about how to think like women who believe that. It matters what we think. And we'll see why in this episode.

If you haven't already , grab the Summer of Abundance companion pages on my website. They're in my free resource library. The link is in the show notes. You can pause the episode right now, grab those, print those off, or you can fill them out online and these pages are for you. They can help you journal your reflections, your prayers and some action [00:02:00] steps so you can actually apply what you're learning, with whatever, whatever God prompts you with as you listen to each episode for the next, the next weeks, this summer. So they are there for you.

And so, I am so glad you're here. So if you're ready to get started, let's get to it.

Julie Lefebure: I would love it if my brain was naturally wired to always dwell on truth. And maybe you have this gift, but I do not. You know, I don't know, maybe nobody has this gift. But I know I certainly don't. I have to work at it. Excuse me. Training my thoughts for truth is a deliberate action that I have to

take every day. Because I've learned the hard way that if I don't, my thoughts tend to drift southward to [00:03:00] lies that are untrue.

So take for example, just the other day, my grandsons were with me. I watch 'em a couple days a week. And the buzz prompted me to switch my focus from them to my phone. The words that I read next in the text caused my thoughts to take a downward spiral and I was shocked with how quickly, how quickly it happened. It took me just like that to switch from the fun-loving grandma to a snippy and grumpy woman. And I remember exactly where I was, where it happened. But good thing I realized what was happening.

You know I think with experience of this, you start to catch on a little sooner. Thank goodness. Thank the Lord for that. But I knew that I had to get a grip and change my thoughts to truth instead of the lies that the enemy of my soul was bombarding me with, all because of that [00:04:00] text. So I was determined to not allow that text to affect my time with these boys. Because my time with them is precious and I should not have even looked at my phone in the first place. But now that I had, I needed to do something about it.

So I shot up a quick prayer and I asked God to remind me of his truth. And you know what happened? His peace replaced the panic that I was feeling and I returned to the fun-loving mana - that's what they call me - that my grandsons know. And you know, actually it all happened so quickly, I really don't even think that they realized what was happening inside my brain, but I sure did. Hopefully they didn't. But it was a good lesson for me in that moment.

But what if I would not have realized what was happening? That text could have not only affected my thoughts, which it did quickly, but it could have [00:05:00] also affected the rest of my day and the rest of the boys' day. And that's not fair to them.

Our thoughts just affect not only us, but so many people. And this is why training our thoughts for truth is so vital. You know, we who believe in Jesus and whose identity is found in Him, truth is the foundation of our belief. Right? But have you ever thought about why? Well, I did, and it really got me thinking, why is truth the foundation of my belief?

Well, it's because Jesus is truth. And He says that in John chapter 14, verse 6. And also the Gospel message is truth. And the Holy Spirit guides us to understand truth. And our faith and reason work together to seek truth. It's all about truth.

But you know, we do have a choice in the matter, either [00:06:00] believing this truth, God's truth, or the lies from the enemy. And so I ask you today, what are you believing and what am I believing?

The element of a renewed mind, which is the element that we're talking about today, is a must if we want to live an abundant life. We can't begin to live an abundant life if our thoughts are cluttered with lies or negativity or fear.

Yet so many women today are stuck, not because of their circumstances, but because of the thoughts that they rehearse daily. They're telling themselves the same thing over and over and over, and they may not even realize it. And it's not based on God's truth.

You know, just to say this right out of the gate, that we do not need to, and we probably shouldn't, believe every thought we [00:07:00] think. We must continue to train our thoughts for truth, not to react to them like I did with that text. Because our minds continue to be a battlefield and they will be on this side of eternity. Christine Caine says this - she's an author and a speaker and, uh, a, a woman that's I think is well known in Christianity - she says this, "We have to think God's truth and say it daily because it is the only truth we know that sets us free." Yeah. Amen to that.

You know, today's key scriptures help us do that. Help us to train our thoughts for truth. And so they're in your companion pages if you have those. But let's look at them. The first one is Romans 12:2, and in the New Living Translation, it reads, "Don't copy the behaviors and customs of the world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the [00:08:00] way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."

Such a good verse. This is also known as renewing your mind. And some translations actually say those words in the verse. Only when we renew our minds by allowing God to transform us, can we become aware of God's will for us. We cannot renew our minds on our own. It begins with God's transforming power at work in us. And so this changes the way we think, and I'm so grateful that it does.

The next one is Philippians chapter 4, verse 8, and in the New International Version, it reads, "Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or [00:09:00] praiseworthy, think about such things." That's one of my favorites. This is what it means to tangibly change our

thinking, for training our thoughts for truth. To switch it from the things that aren't so good to the things that are good, that are praiseworthy and are good and noble and true.

And this kind of just sets us up for a real powerful thought here. This truth right here, whatever we think we live out. So think about that. Whatever we're thinking, that's what we're living out every day.

So I'm adding a bonus scripture because even though it's not in the literature that I've shared, it's, it's one that continues to motivate me to watch my thoughts. And it's Proverbs chapter 4 verse 23. Are you ready for this one? It is a good one. It's in the Good News Translation. All scripture's good, but this one [00:10:00] just hits me smack dab between the eyes.

It says, "Be careful how you think. Your life is shaped by your thoughts." You've probably heard me say it before. Be careful what you think, your life is shaped by your thoughts. Let's let that sink in for just a minute. Our lives are shaped by our thoughts. I pray that our thoughts, they come from a renewed mind that's rooted in God's Word. Because if they don't, our lives are gonna reflect them. We don't wanna live out lies. We wanna live out God's truth. And your translation may read differently, but no matter. God's Word speaks nothing but truth. It's all truth.

I would encourage you to write these scriptures somewhere. Maybe in your journal. Or in the companion pages. Or just something that you have that [00:11:00] you're just collecting scriptures. And could you begin committing these verses to memory this week? These can powerfully renew our minds. They speak such truth that we just wanna embed them in our, in our brains, because our lives are shaped by our thoughts, right? And a renewed mind is part of the transformation that God works in us. We must become active in this process. To be intentional about training our thoughts. Because not every thought we think is truth. I certainly know that mine aren't truth. All my thoughts aren't truth. So we must filter them through scripture and this is one reason why it's so important to know scripture.

So what do we do at this point? We're seeking out scripture. We're realizing maybe we shouldn't be believing, every thought we think. So what do we do now? Well, I came up with a three step [00:12:00] process to train your thoughts. It's very simple to say, but we have to be intentional to carry it out.

So the first one is to notice. To pay attention to your thoughts. And I ask this kind of question, is this true? Yes or no? And is this helpful? Yes or no? Is this true and is this helpful?

The second step is to name it, to identify the lie or the pattern. It may be a fear or, uh, something have to do with comparison or shame. So that's the next step is to identify it.

And then the third is to replace it, to swap the lie with God's truth. Which would be something that's scripture based.

So to make this process a little more simple for you, I have included in the Summer of Abundance section of my free resource library, a printable of a tool that I created for a talk that I gave recently. [00:13:00] And it's titled Lies We Believe versus Biblical Truth. It contains a list of 36 lies that we tell ourselves sometimes without even realizing that we're telling ourselves these. But, it contains the lies, then it contains next to it the truth from God's Word to combat that lie. And next to that is the scripture reference to back it up. And so I've personally used this tool a number of times, even just recently, and it has been extremely helpful for me. So I believe it's gonna be helpful for you too. So as you train your thoughts for truth, the lies, the truth and the scripture are all there just for you. And it's all free. You'll, you'll find the link, like I said earlier, in the show notes to my free resource library and everything is there.

So based on that three step process, I wanna share another personal example of how I applied this [00:14:00] recently and, and the power of renewing our minds.

A number of times in the last month I've really struggled with something. And I won't go into all the details 'cause the details aren't necessary. But I have sadly felt left out and I kind of felt forgotten. You know, if you've ever felt that way, you know how that can wear on you. Your fear of missing out and that kind of thing. And, um, it has truly challenged my thoughts and my emotions. And so I came to some really negative conclusions about this situation and about why I was feeling the way I was feeling. And so it really started to, to grieve me. And so I, I thought. Okay, is this really true? I had to back up. And then I decided to walk through my three step process of just analyzing, is it true? You know, step one, step two, step three.

[00:15:00] So I asked that question, is this true? And I thought, probably not. It's probably not true because my emotions are getting the best of me. And is this helpful? And I said definitely not. Definitely not. Because it was consuming

my mind and I knew that God was not the author of those thoughts. So He showed me though that this is the step two part, that the pattern of feeling left out, that I was just stuck in, was actually a form of comparison. And when He showed me that, I was just blown away. I thought, oh my goodness, this is it. It's a form of comparison. And so I realized that I needed to let go of that and I needed to lay it down. 'Cause again, it was consuming me and I surrendered it to Him.

Then the third step, I replaced the lie that I was believing about this, this whole situation and the baggage that came with it, with God's [00:16:00] truth. Because I started to believe that I was not loved, that I was not wanted, that I was not chosen, that I just was unworthy because I was feeling so left out. So it's no wonder that I was feeling the way I was feeling. Again, it's all these thoughts that we believe. But they were not based on truth. And so I changed the way I was seeing that, and the way I was thinking, and I began to remind myself that I am loved, I am accepted by Christ and I belong to and with Him.

And even in my fear of missing out, I rested in the truth that with God I will never miss out. So now every time that that lie tries to resurface, you know what I do? I rehearse the truth of God that I am standing in. I stand in it and I rehearse it. And this has [00:17:00] completely transformed my thoughts and my emotions.

And recently it really hasn't bothered me because I'm fixated on God's truth instead of the lies. I'm so grateful of the power found in God's truth, and it's at our fingertips. We can read God's truth in our Bibles or our Bible apps. It's available for us. All we need to do is open and read it and apply it to our lives.

So friend, you and I are not stuck with the thoughts that we have always believed, or even just the most recent ones we we're believing. God gives us the power through His Word and His Spirit to think differently and to live freely.

I love thinking of biblical affirmations that we can just say to ourselves. And so here's, here's a few.

I have the mind of Christ.

I choose truth.

I think on what is true, noble, and good.

Repeat those to yourself [00:18:00] throughout the day. Today, tomorrow, all week long. And we can say yes and amen to each one.

Some reflection questions that may be helpful today because reflection questions are always helpful for me, just to help me address where I'm at. And so one of them might be, what thoughts am I rehearsing that are not true? That's a good one. The second one could be, how does God want me to renew my mind this week? What's one way I can do that? And the third could be, what truth do I need to speak over myself today and every day.

I invite you to write down one recurring negative thought this week. Write it down today. The one that you've had. And ask yourself those questions. Is this truth or is it a lie? And walk yourself through that three step process. Find a scripture to replace it, and then [00:19:00] speak it out loud. Speak it out loud every single day this week, and start to train your thoughts for truth.

Maybe start a a thought journal. That would be something fun to do. Um, you know how I am about journals. Or use this week's companion page to track the lies that you notice and how you can replace them with God's truth.

So let's stop right here. Will you pray with me before we go any further?

Heavenly Father, we just give You this subject. We give You this element of abundant life, of the renewed mind. We ask that You would renew our minds. Transform our minds, Lord, every single day. Help us not to believe the lies of the enemy, but to trust and believe in Your truth. And when we start to get those lies that just bombard our brains, Father, prompt us to stop, to pause and to think of truth. To think of what You would rather have us think than these [00:20:00] lies that we're believing. Father, we are inundated with lies and we want to replace these with good things. The things that Philippians 4:8 speaks of. Lord, we know that we live out what we think and so we ask that You would help us to think only truth. To think good. To think worthy things, and that that will come through in our lives to not only affect us, but to affect the lives of others around us. We thank You for the power in Your Word, and we thank You for Your transforming power in our lives. We love You Lord. In Jesus name, amen.

Well, we've covered a lot of territory today, and I pray that you are encouraged. And I invite you back next week for our monthly guest episode. And I'm excited because I'm inviting another special person in my life on the podcast. And this person has greatly influenced my life and my faith. [00:21:00] And so I believe that you will be touched and inspired by her offering of hope and

encouragement in next week's episode. I can't wait to share this conversation with you.

And I just wanna say if you would like some assistance in how to renew your mind, you just don't know where to begin, or you're stuck with a, with a, a thought or a a pattern that you don't know how to get out of, I would love to help you through my one on one abundant life mentoring. You know, each session is personalized to you and your circumstances. And we just walk through it together and we just help you live the abundant life that God has for you. That's really what these are about. And so you can find more about, um, this, this mentoring in the show notes. A link is there. But I just want you to know that I am here to assist you in living the life that God desires for you to live. The abundant and joy filled life that He has for you.[00:22:00]

So in the meantime, remember that you do not have to believe every thought you think. Let's take them and just transform them by God's truth. Continue to renew your mind with God's truth today, tomorrow, and in the days to come. I am cheering you on, friend.

God bless you.

Thank you so much for joining me here today. You can find more at julielefebure.com. And until next time, stay encouraged.