

Encouragement for Real Life Podcast

Episode 213. Summer of Abundance Week 10: Speak Life, Live Full

[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: Welcome to week 10 of our Summer of Abundance series here on the Encouragement for Real Life podcast. We have had a great summer together so far, and we're not quite done yet.

We have been exploring what it looks like to live an abundant life through this 12-week series this summer, called Summer of Abundance and [00:01:00] we only have just a few weeks left. I don't even know how that can be, but it, it's true. That's where we are today. And I pray that this series has encouraged your heart. It's the longest series I've ever done. But I pray that it's encouraged your heart, that it's strengthened your walk with Jesus and that your faith has grown over this summer.

And so, goodness, we've covered a lot of territory over these last weeks. We've discussed the first nine elements of abundant living. The first was identity in Christ. The second renewed mindset. The third intimacy with God. The fourth spiritual surrender. Number five was purposeful presence. Number six was joyful gratitude. Number seven was physical wellness. Number eight, healthy rhythms. And number nine was Godly contentment. And you can always go back and listen to any of those that maybe you've missed in the past episodes.

But today we dive into number 10, [00:02:00] life-giving words. One of my favorite subjects to, to talk about. And I wear a shirt often that says, speak life. And it is so true. The words that we speak make a difference. So we are looking into the power of our words today, uh, both to ourselves and to others. And so if you're ready for a word upgrade, I invite you to stick around here and we're gonna find some hope and encouragement as we speak life and live full. So, let's get into this episode.

Julie Lefebure: In preparing for this episode, I, I paused last week to glance over my life and just take some time to notice the words that were spoken to me or over me throughout [00:03:00] the years. And I came up with some positive and negative ones. Now these words, even some that were spoken years ago, still stick with me today. And it's interesting how the negative words, they tend to rise to the top in my mind. And it makes me sad that that's the case. But I think that is with, with many of us. But, but I choose to dwell on the positive and the life-giving ones, the ones that serve me well. And I pray that you do that too.

So, just take for an example, one of the most hurtful things ever spoken to me were words from someone who, at the time was attacking my character and my intention, and the words were like death to me. And they felt awful, and they felt evil. And they were filled with lies and [00:04:00] accusation. And it's really impossible to know someone's intent. Yet this person thought that, that they knew my intent and they had no clue. And so I considered the source and moved on. Even though those words stung, and I really had to give them over to God to heal from them.

And then take for another example on the other side, the words of life that someone has said to me that greatly impacted me to pursue writing my next book. This was a recent instance that happened to me. And those words were, were filled with hope and encouragement and promise. And I also considered that source.

Life-giving words. These are contrasting examples of life-giving and life draining words. And I bet if you think back over your life, I'm sure that you're gonna [00:05:00] remember both kinds of words spoken to you and over you as well. This shows us how important our words are. You may even remember something that happened when you were a child. I do. And I'm, I'm guessing you do too. Our words matter, my friend. They either speak life or death.

And this leads us to our two key scriptures right off the bat today. The first one is Proverbs chapter 18 verse 21. And in the New International Version, it says, "The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit." Now The Message paraphrase says it in this way. "Words kill. Words give life. They're either poison or fruit. You choose." Wow. Those are some strong words, right? [00:06:00] But it's true, isn't it?

We get to choose our words, and our words are either poison or fruit. What kind of words do we typically speak on a daily basis? What have we spoken already today? Poison or fruit?

And the second key scripture for today is just as powerful. And it's Ephesians chapter 4, verse 29. In the New International Version also, it reads, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs that it may benefit those who listen."

Now also in The Voice translation, it reads, and I like this too, "Don't let even one rotten word seep out of your mouths. Instead, offer only fresh words that build others up when they need it most. That way your [00:07:00] words will communicate grace to those who hear them."

You know, this one hits home to me. Do I ever let rotten words seep from my mouth? Yeah, I do. Do I only offer fresh words that build up others? No, I don't. And do my words always communicate grace. No, I wish they did.

You know, I feel like I do pretty well with my words, but according to God's Word, as the standard to follow, I will always fall short. You know, I wish I could take back every careless and thoughtless word that I've ever said to anyone, or spoken to anyone or even thought about anyone. But the thing is, I don't remember all that I've said and to whom. But I'm guessing my words might be the ones someone [00:08:00] else remembers. But I pray that it's only the, the life-giving words that I've said, not the life draining ones.

This really, I'm really taking this to heart. Um, I just had a situation the other day that I, I lost my temper and I was frustrated and I said words to someone that were hurtful and were, um, were not great. And I immediately, I stopped and took a breath and I apologized. Because I thought about this episode. I thought about as I was preparing for this episode, are my words poison or are they fruit?

But, you know, our words don't matter just to others. They, they also matter to ourselves. Do we speak life or death to us? To what we say to ourselves?

For an [00:09:00] extra scripture this week in Proverbs chapter 3, verse 7, in the first part of, of this verse, in the New Life Version, it says, "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he." "As he thinks in his heart, so is he."

Friend, we believe what we tell ourselves we do. If I say, oh, I'm tired. Well I'm gonna feel more tired. Or if we say, I can't do this. Then we won't do it. And if I say I don't have what it takes, well I won't have what it takes. We believe what we tell ourselves.

And just to make it interesting, I did a search for the 10 common negative things we Christian women say to ourselves. This is interesting. Do you know what the results were? You may be surprised as I was. And I wanna ask you, do you say [00:10:00] any of these or maybe variations of these to yourself? Like, I'm not enough. Or I should be further along by now. Or I am a failure. Or I can't do this. Or I'm not as good as her. Or I'll never change. Or I don't deserve God's blessings. Or my voice really doesn't matter. Or I'm too broken to be used by God. Another one, if I slow down, I'll fall behind.

I wanna stress again, these are, these are, so, I've said, I think I've probably said all of these at some point in my life. And there's one or two that tend [00:11:00] to, to rise to the top most recently. But I wanna stress here, we will always believe what we tell ourselves. We always will.

When we're speaking death to ourselves, it's impossible to live an abundant life for Jesus. Bottom line. I'm gonna say that again. When we speak death to ourselves, when we are speaking words that are life draining, it is impossible to live an abundant life for Jesus. Whether it's self-criticism or negative self-talk or complaining without gratitude or gossip or sharing under the, the guise of concern or, or sarcasm, that that cuts instead of builds. Whatever it is, none of these honor God and none of these lead to an abundant life. They don't. They lead to destruction.

When we speak life to ourselves, we become better equipped to speak life to [00:12:00] others. The thing is you can't pour out what you haven't first received. None of us can. So we must speak truth to ourselves, speak life to ourselves, to be able to speak life to others.

So how do we do that? Maybe we're not naturally speaking life to ourselves and we, we say just not good things, about ourselves or to ourselves. Or maybe our words to others just aren't very kind lately. So what are some ways, and I, I came up with four here, that we could just start with four practical ways to speak life and to live full. Because when we do speak life, we will naturally be able to live a full life that Jesus came to give us. Because that's part of His design for us.

And so I came up with, I guess you could call it an acronym. Raid. RAID. We are raiding the words that we speak. We are attacking them. We are looking at them. We [00:13:00] are going to change them, and it starts with raiding.

So the first one is R, replace complaint with gratitude. And this could mean something like identifying one thing to thank God for, instead of focusing on the negative. All right.

The A in raid is affirm others daily. To make it a habit to speak, one specific encouragement to a family member, to a friend, to a coworker each day. Just one.

The I in raid is inquire before speaking, asking this question, will this bring life? Will, what I'm about to say, bring life or death?

And then the D in raid is declare scripture. Speak God's truth out loud over your own life, in the lives of others. That's why it's so important to know scripture too. Because when we know scripture, we can speak it. [00:14:00] And when we commit it to memory, we, we can share it at the perfect time. And sometimes when I am feeling down about myself, I just go to God's Word and say, what does God say about me? That just changes everything.

Now, just to make it easy, just for you as another gift for you, I've created a handy printable in my free resource library to help you speak life to and over yourself using scripture. Now you can also use this when you're praying for others. You can use it however you want to. But it is the Speak Life Declaration List. Speak Life Declaration List. It's in the Summer of Abundance section in my free resource library on my website. So you can find the link to the show notes and access it and begin using it today. It's for you and it's free, absolutely free.

Now regarding declaring scripture, this leads us to our Biblical affirmation for this week. And you know, I love to give just [00:15:00] a little Biblical affirmation of speaking scripture over our lives or speaking over a situation. And I invite you to write this down in a journal or in your Summer of Abundance companion pages, which are also on my website, and they're free. They're free for this series. You can grab those at any time. Um, and then just repeat this over and over. Are you ready?

My words carry the power of life today. So I choose to speak grace, truth and encouragement in the name of Jesus. I'll say that again because that's a lot.

My words carry the power of life today. So I choose to speak grace, truth and encouragement in the name of Jesus.

The more we speak scripture, the more our minds and words will be filled with it. So speak scripture often. And of course, read scripture often so we can speak it.[00:16:00]

Some good reflection questions for today are, uh, what words have shaped me the most recently? Were they life giving or life draining?

Another question, do I speak to myself the way God speaks to me? That's a good one.

And another is, how can I intentionally use my words to bring more life this week?

Then what we reflect on, we can put into action.

So some specific action steps that we can take this week is to pick one person each day to intentionally encourage. Maybe it's through a text or a note or your own spoken words. Just encourage one person a day, see what happens.

Another is practice a no complaining challenge for 24 hours. All right. This is a big one. For some of us. Um, when tempted to complain, [00:17:00] speak a blessing instead. And speak to yourself the way you would expect Jesus to speak to you with love, grace, mercy, and compassion.

Some great action steps. Just simple, but they make a difference. So give those a try. Give those a try this week and see, see what happens. And for that 24 hour, um, no complaining, see how hard that is. Because that can be a real difficult thing for those of us who tend to get in a complaining mode. But if you're anything like me, it could depend on the day too. But try it and just don't complain and just speak blessing instead. Just some interesting ways to apply what we're learning and to allow God to work through us.

So let's pause here. And let's pray. All right?

Father God, I just thank You that You've given us the gift of words. And Lord, You've also instilled in us the importance of our words and that they either will speak life or they will speak death to those who [00:18:00] hear it. And that even goes for ourselves. And so, Lord, I ask that You would help us Lord, to speak life in all situations. That we would speak life to others, we would speak life to ourselves. When we are tempted to, to blurt out words that are hurtful or to say things that are hurtful about us, Lord, I pray that you will just stop us and that You will change our thinking right then, and that You will replace the

negative things with the positive things. Because Lord, we can't do this without You. We know. We've, we've tried. We've tried to do this on our own and we can't. And so Lord, we wanna honor You with every word we speak, 'cause we know we're gonna be held accountable for every careless word that we've ever spoken.

And so Father, today we wanna make a change. We wanna trust You. We wanna hand this over to You. We wanna surrender this part of our lives to You because we know that when we are speaking life-giving words, we are honoring You, and that is the most important [00:19:00] thing. So Lord, help us today. Help us to keep our eyes fixed on You. Align our words with Your words today. And we love You so much. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Friend, I love praying together by the way. But your, your words have the power to shape your world and your life, especially the ones that you speak to yourself. When you choose to speak life, you're agreeing with God's truth instead of the enemy's lies. And we are just taking those enemy's lies and casting them away. Because they have no place in our lives, but God's promises do.

So this week, catch yourself in those moments of self-criticism or complaint or gossip, and replace them with the life-giving words that your Father says, that your Father instructs you and Father encourages you to say. Pay attention to those. He's gonna guide you this week. He will. [00:20:00] You are his masterpiece, my friend. His beloved and He has equipped you for every good work for. Amen to that.

If this episode encouraged you, I invite you to share it with a friend who could use just a little reminder to speak life too. We all need that reminder.

And if you're ready to go deeper in living the abundant life that God designed for you, I would love to walk alongside of you through my abundant life mentoring. And just check the link for the show notes and you can schedule your free 20 minute connection call with me to see if it's something that's even for you. But I would love to journey with you.

And next week we explore the 11th element of Abundant Living, which is faithful generosity. And it'll drop early next Tuesday morning and I can't wait to journey with you then. It's gonna be another, uh, I believe, impactful episode that will encourage your heart and that will help you be a little more generous [00:21:00] and me too, in our everyday lives. I can't wait. Can't wait to keep going with you in this series.

And until next time, keep speaking life. Keep living full. And remember that you are deeply loved by God. So thankful you're here. 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.