

244 How to Love Your Mornings with Jennifer Dukes Lee

[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 back to the Encouragement for Real Life podcast. I am so glad you're here today. I am Julie and it's an honor that you would choose to spend some time with me here. And, I'm glad you've tuned in because it is our guest episode for the month uh, which happens the last Tuesday of every month. And [00:01:00] what I'm doing in my guest episodes, I started this last year and I'm continuing it this year, is that I'm inviting, uh, certain just, just people who have impacted my life in a positive way throughout the years. I'm inviting them to be my guests.

And so today's guest has not only impacted me personally, but she's also greatly influenced my writing life. And this person is Jennifer Dukes Lee. And Jennifer, uh, I think we crossed paths uh, the first time was at a writer's conference. And she just gently led me by the hand, showed me a few tips, helped me to see that the path I was going down, um, in my first idea of a book maybe wasn't going to be the greatest idea in the world. And, um, I just have appreciated her, her influence and her just her ability to just encourage me when I needed it most. She was an, [00:02:00] an endorser of my first book Right Now Matters. She was a big proponent of me writing that first book. And I, um in that season, I really needed someone like that in my corner just to say, keep going and you can do it.

And so Jennifer was that person, and I am so grateful. And I, I say, and I don't know if this is, it just comes from my heart, but I say that I'm not sure I would be a published author if it wasn't for her influence. But of course, God can use anything and I firmly believe that He crossed our paths, uh, in this way, for just a number of reasons and it's always good to reconnect with her.

She is an author. She's a mom. You'll hear some of her stories about that. She's a, um, a wife. They live on a farm in rural Iowa. We live on a farm in rural Iowa. Hours away, but it's still, uh, it's just fun to be able to, to connect with a fellow Iowan. I don't know, there's just something about that for me.

And Jennifer just put out a new book and, or [00:03:00] she's, she's putting out a new book in the days to come. And so we talk about that too. We talk about, um the, the content of the book, and it's about mornings, how to love your morning. And I am a morning person and so I really, uh, I really value when someone helps me to maybe, um, look at mornings even from a, a, a fresher perspective.

And so I, I think that this, this episode is gonna encourage you. It's gonna inspire you no matter if you're a morning person or not. But I wanna ask you that. Are you a morning person? Would you consider yourself a morning person? Well, Jennifer says that every person's a morning person, so. Hmm. We'll talk about that too. So, I'm excited to get into this episode. So if you are as well, let's go ahead and get into it.

[00:04:00]

Julie Lefebure: Well, I am so excited to have on the podcast today, a wonderful woman, a wonderful fellow Iowan, and, uh, a dear , person in my life, Jennifer Dukes Lee. Welcome. I'm so glad you're here.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Thanks for having me back. This is so fun! I'm excited!

Julie Lefebure: You know, I just thought when you just said that you were my very first guest.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Oh, I love that.

Julie Lefebure: On my podcast, I don't know, a couple years ago. So you're the first person that has come back as a second guest. So.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: I love that. I feel so honored. Thanks for having me again.

Julie Lefebure: Well, it's my honor. Um, I wanna hear about you. I know I know more about you probably than maybe some listening. But , we'll have you introduce yourself in a minute. But before we do that, I, you know, all year long, I am having guests on my podcast who have greatly in some sort of way, positively impacted my life. Um, maybe back in high school days or whatever. But [00:05:00] Jennifer, you've impacted my life, my writing life, in a very

profound way, that I firmly believe that I would not be a published author if our paths hadn't crossed, if God hadn't crossed our paths years ago. So it's an honor for me to have you and to thank you personally for, um, just being who you are in my life and lots of others' lives too. So thank you for the impact that you've made on my life. Thank you.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Oh, you're welcome. It has been a joy to connect with you in a friend way, but also in a writer way. And I'm so glad you took the leap and wrote that book. You know, I mean, so many people say, I'm gonna write a book. And they don't even really start past like the first paragraph. So, um, it's a big deal. It's, it sounds like an easy thing in a way. Like, a lot of people say it, but very few actually do it. I'm so glad you did.

Julie Lefebure: Well, thank you. And thank you for endorsing that first book.

Absolutely.

So yeah, it's fun, been fun to journey with [00:06:00] you, so thank you. And so for um, maybe someone who doesn't know who Jennifer Dukes Lee is, would you just introduce yourself. Tell us a little bit about who you are and maybe one thing that God is just doing in your life right now that you, you just can't help but see. You can't help but notice.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Yeah. So I am, um, a writer. I am an author of several books and bible studies including one we're gonna chat about today.

Julie Lefebure: Yeah.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Um, I live on a farm in Iowa. This is the Lee Family Farm. My husband's farm. Five generations. So they've been farming this land since 1870. It was a really cool place to raise our children. We are now empty nesters. And I guess the thing that comes to mind about what God is doing in my life really relates to that, to our children's lives. Both of our girls, uh, we like to say that we gave them roots, but we also gave them wings.

Julie Lefebure: [00:07:00] Mm-hmm.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: And they've really taken the wings part seriously. Uh, our younger daughter, Anna, is on full-time mission and ministry in uh, in Indonesia, ministering to Muslim people who've not heard the Good News. It's just a real passion for her.

Our, our older daughter, Lydia, uh, studied over in Cambridge after she graduated from Iowa State University. So she went to England, um, fell in love with a British boy. Yeah, but she's, she's actually in the US right now. She's at Yale Divinity School, but her heart is very much in England. So it'll be interesting to see where that pans out.

But the, the thing that God is showing me there is how, um He did plant these seeds long ago, knowing where the girls would end up. And I suppose in a way, preparing my heart, even though I never would've predicted this.

Julie Lefebure: Mm-hmm.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: But because of that, I, [00:08:00] I'm really grateful for a couple things.

Number one, that God doesn't fully reveal His plans for our kids to us when they're young. I think I would've panicked.

Julie Lefebure: Sure.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: I would have liked them up. I would've put a big fence around the yard. Um, you know, guards, whatev, whatever it would take. Like put them

Julie Lefebure: Yeah.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: On leashes, um, when they were younger. But like you, you get, He gives you little hints of it along the way. And so people will ask, well, how are you dealing with this? I can't imagine that. You're so close to your girls. Well, that's the thing. I just have a real peace about it.

Julie Lefebure: Mm-hmm.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: I have a real peace about where the girls are, and that can only be God. Because I am

Julie Lefebure: yeah.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Not the kind of person who would naturally have peace about those kinds of things. With, um, yeah, kids being so far away. Um, you know, Anna's situation in particular just feels kind of

Julie Lefebure: yeah.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: I wouldn't say scary, but, um, it's, there's just so many unknowns to it and it's a huge shift in culture. So, um, as a mom, I naturally have [00:09:00] moments of worry and find that I am, you know, laying my kids down before the Lord and surrendering them to God over and again.

Julie Lefebure: Yeah. Yeah. That's such a huge part of, well, we just never know where, where God's gonna take our kids. And, and it's exciting that they get this opportunity to do all that they're doing now. You know, I never had that opportunity at, you know, so many years ago. So good for them. and good

Jennifer Dukes Lee: And I don't know if I would've done it. Like if I had the opportunity, if it were placed in front of me, I would've been, I mean, it was enough for me to go two hours away to go to college. But like to go a world away, half a world away, I'm like, wow. You know, I mean, but it's cool. Grateful for technology.

Let me tell you that Julie.

Julie Lefebure: Yes, yes, yes. Absolutely. Absolutely. Yes. Uh, so I'm excited for you and for the season of life that you are in and what God is doing, um, in and through you.

And I also love the [00:10:00] opportunity if we could talk about your book. You just, you have, um, launched this, well, you are in the process of launching this book. Um, when does it officially come out and what is the title? And tell us just a little bit about it. Anything you wanna share about the book.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Sure. So the book comes out April 7th. I'm so excited. A couple days after Easter,

Julie Lefebure: Yeah.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Which seems appropriate because this book is all about mornings and it's called How to Love Your Morning. God has a soft spot for mornings. We know that God is a morning person. He completed the biggest miracle known to mankind on a morning, that being resurrection morning.

Julie Lefebure: Mm-hmm.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: So I think it's so cool that it's coming out right after Easter. The book is really, um, really helps women to wake up with hope, with joy and with purpose. I, um, intentionally started this process of writing this book by studying all [00:11:00] 200 plus mornings mentioned in scripture.

Julie Lefebure: Wow.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: And from there, built a book and a Bible study that's foundationally built on the scriptures. Like what does God have to say about mornings? How did Jesus approach his mornings? And then what does that mean for me today?

Julie Lefebure: Wow. I am curious as to why did you , why did you feel led to, to look at 200, the two, you know, all the mornings and found out that there were 200 or how, how did all that come about?

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Yeah, so any book that I ever write, because I am a Christian book author, um, I don't like to go to the scriptures and find the scriptures that prove a point that I'm trying to make. I go to the scriptures as a writer to see first what does God have to say, what's His character about, you know, whatever the [00:12:00] topic is that I'm writing about, and then how can that inform the way that I write a book.

Julie Lefebure: Mm.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: So I didn't know what I would get into. I mean, obviously, you know, I knew a lot of the mornings of scripture, but just how vast they were. It's really easy to figure out, uh, how many mornings there are in scripture, you know, with the different Bible study tools that we have. I've got a lot of those apps on my phone. So it was easy to quickly identify them. But I didn't just read the stories about mornings. I read the Bible in a year . So I was able to see the mornings, how they fell within the larger Biblical narrative.

Julie Lefebure: Yeah.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: And then after this, as I was reading about the mornings, I was able to build out this book and find practical lessons from what Jesus teaches us, um, how God operated in the Old Testament, as well as the New Testament. One of the most remarkable things that I discovered, was early on in my research. I've started in [00:13:00] Genesis, of course, and it doesn't say morning. But it occurred to me that, oh my goodness, the very first thing that

God created on Earth was a morning. when He said, let there be light. And that was so cool to me.

And then you go on through scriptures and in the Old Testament you see these Biblical heroes and characters, um, getting instructions from God to get going in the morning, like sometimes very early in the morning. You know, it'll say very early in the morning, Abraham. In the morning, Jacob. In the morning, Joshua. In the morning Abimelech. In the morning, David. I mean, again and again and again. And it was so clear to me, like God meets us in the morning with instructions for what we're supposed to do. Are we going to listen to those instructions and carry them out, or are we going to just go on with our plans for our day?

You know, I think it's, I think it's so interesting, like nobody hit snooze, the snooze button in the Old Testament times. They're like all right, let's [00:14:00] go. God's calling us to this thing. We're not gonna procrastinate until noon. No, we are gonna do the thing God called us to do.

Then you move on into the, into the, uh, new Testament and you see some really major events unfolding on the backdrop of a morning. One of them, of course, is crucifixion morning.

And you know, you think about the fact that not all mornings are rainbows and sunshine.

Julie Lefebure: Right.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: It's not all beautiful sunrises and warm coffee. Like there's really hard mornings in the scripture and they have something to teach us.

Of course, as I mentioned, resurrection morning. Wow. You know, that's, that's pretty cool. Like the whole narrative is built on this particular morning. It just shows me like what hope there is and joy that comes in the morning.

Then in the, in the last chapter Revelation, we see Jesus identified as the bright morning star. Then in between, there's a lot of what I call metaphorical mornings. Mornings that aren't like a timestamp, but that say something to us. That [00:15:00] mean something. That maybe we even already hold dear. Like the verse in Lamentations 3:22-23 that says that his mercies are new when? Every morning. Yeah. Every single morning. And Psalm 30, verse 5 that says, weeping may last for the night, but joy comes in the morning.

Over and over again. And through that Biblical research I was able to take that and build out a book and a process for helping women fall in love with their mornings. Whether they already kind of like their mornings and just want some Biblical habits to help those mornings be better. Or if they're like, literally like, I'm allergic to mornings. I don't like them. I don't wanna deal with them. I don't, I I just, they, they just make me feel very unhappy and I wake up on the wrong side of the bed every day.

So don't tell me to love my mornings. I don't like 'em. But really the book is [00:16:00] for anybody that, that loves their morning already or just not so sure about 'em.

Julie Lefebure: Yeah. That's, that's great. And what's the title of the book?

Jennifer Dukes Lee: How to Love Your Morning.

Julie Lefebure: There you go. I love it. I, I love that. So I, um I keep thinking about this, these 200 mornings that you've. Do you have a favorite that, besides resurrection, that was an easy one. But is there a favorite, um, scripture that you came across? I know I'm probably putting on, putting you on the spot

Jennifer Dukes Lee: No that's okay. Um,

Julie Lefebure: Or one that you're thinking about now. Maybe one of those.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: So, so one that really strikes me now is, um, a morning after Jesus has risen and He'd been appearing to people, um, a lot of people. And uh, you know, I imagine him waking up on this particular morning thinking, what should I do today? And then thinking, you know what, I, I know that my buddies are fishing today. think [00:17:00] I'm gonna go to the beach and make them breakfast. And that morning He builds a fire and He calls them in and around that fire, Peter is restored 3 times, one for each of his denials just a few days earlier. And to me, that's a beautiful picture of what Jesus offers to us in terms of one like He wants to spend time with us. Like He wants to spend time with us in the morning.

Uh, and number two, um, how He cares about our bodies. And there's a lot in the book about, um, how we like should fuel our bodies, the sleep that we need, the movement that we need in our bodies. So He values that. He's making them food.

And then three, how each morning is an opportunity for restoration and forgiveness. An opportunity to start over again with Jesus no matter [00:18:00] what happened in the day or the days previous. So that's a, that's a beautiful picture of a morning that immediately came to mind.

Julie Lefebure: That is a beautiful picture. Oh my goodness. Yes. That's one of my favorite stories. I just love how He restored Peter in those, you know, , cooking over a, a fire for breakfast. But I never, never really captured that, that how you've tied that to the morning. That's really cool.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Yeah it was pretty cool.

I can't wait to read it.

It's so funny. Like in the book, I'm like, start underlining 'em and thinking about 'em. Because it's, there are so many. And even though I wrote a whole book and a whole Bible study, there are still so many mornings that I was not able to fit into this book. I, I mean, like you know the story about the Ravens. The Ravens were delivering, uh, food to Elijah? Yeah it's like the, original DoorDash. Like, you know, I mean in that story, like , the, the Ravens came in the evening too. But of course the fact that they came in the morning to bring, deliver [00:19:00] breakfast by their beaks, um I was like, wow, that is so cool. Like what would it be like if we were to open our eyes every morning and to look for the creative ways that God provides for us? Like really unexpected ways that God provides for us. That's another thing that mornings offered for Elijah and also for us.

I mean like the Raven wasn't just like an unusual way for God to provide. It was scandalous. Like those birds, ravens were considered unclean. To me that just shows like God can use whatever He wants in order to provide for us. And when we wake up in the morning knowing that, when we wake up knowing that God can even provide food by raven, like what, what can we look for and expect in our day? And starting the morning with our eyes open for the ravens could be a really great way to begin the day.

Julie Lefebure: Yes, absolutely. Wow. That, that just, that just gives you a whole new, fresh [00:20:00] perspective as soon as you wake up in the morning. Instead of thinking, oh, I got this to do today. I got this to do today. Which I can fall into that trap, but yet. Like instead thinking, what, what will God will do today through me or through in my life? And

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Yeah you might be the raven. You might be somebody's raven. I'm not saying you're an unclean bird. I, I, we're not gonna take the

metaphor that far. But I think that it, I think it's an interesting way, you know um, I, we can look around and, and see God using ravens, um, in our lives metaphorically, to bring us provision and to bring us comfort and love.

But also we have these opportunities to be the one that's like unexpected. Like, I can't believe Julie showed up in that situation and did that thing for me.

Julie Lefebure: Yeah. That's so powerful. Wow. Lord, help me be a raven today. What a, what a simple prayer that would be.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: I know right?

Julie Lefebure: Oh my goodness. So this episode will air on, uh, the 31st of March. So, uh, [00:21:00] friends, you can pre, can you pre-order, you can pre-order, right?

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Yes you can preorder. And I've got some amazing pre-order gifts for people.

Julie Lefebure: Good. Okay. So friends, you can go ahead and, and look that up on Amazon or Baker book, Baker

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Baker Book House. Yes it's 40% off on Baker right now.

Julie Lefebure: Okay. There we go. So I just wanted to plug that before we get too far. Yeah. Um, so can I ask you what your morning, not a, because you, I know you, you talk about rituals instead of routines. Right. Explain that if you would.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Oh I love it.

Julie Lefebure: And I would love to hear what does a typical morning look like for you?

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Sure. So this idea of morning routines is something that we all have heard about. I mean, you can easily like look on Instagram or TikTok and you'll see lots of people showing us what their morning routine looks like. And it's often very beautiful, very aesthetic. Um, mine will not end up on [00:22:00] a Pinterest board.

But one thing that I will say about my morning, and one thing that I encourage everybody to do is to stop calling it a routine. The reason is a routine feels routine. It feels like this thing that we have to do. Um, it feels performative. It feels like a box that needs to be checked. And it feels like if it doesn't look like the one I saw on Instagram, I must not be doing it right.

A ritual, a morning ritual, gives this impression within us of being connected to God in something meaningful. That there's an even sacred tone to it. Because most of us might be familiar, um, with, you know, kind of religious rituals. And I don't mean that in a legalistic way, but in a beautiful way. It's why we light candles at the beginning of [00:23:00] a service. It's why we light candles on Christmas Eve. It's why, you know, at our church, if we baptize a baby, they get a tiny little white cloth. It's given to the parents. And it's just this sweet ritual that says God is present in it. So when we drop. This kind of that I have to do my morning routine. Instead say I get to do this morning ritual with God.

So what does that look like in my life? Well, I wake up most mornings I wake up naturally around 6:30 to 7. So to some people that's not even really a morning person. And we can get to that later, what a morning person really is. But I get up at that hour. And to some that might sound really early.

Some mornings I get up at exactly 5:07 AM. Because I have a workout at 5:30 AM and that is the latest I can sleep in and still make it on time. I do not prefer [00:24:00] to go to a workout at 5:30 AM. But I live in a small town where that is the only time that the fitness center has a group workout. So on those mornings I will share with you that I, um, go have my workout with my friends, which I love. And then I come home and this begins my ritual. I go to the coffee machine, which I've been dreaming about coffee since the night before. I can tell you that. And I have my coffee ritual. Sometimes I will even say out loud, this is my coffee ritual. I have a Breville espresso machine, so it takes a bit of time to get the beans in there and let them grind and let the, hot water move through the espresso shot. And then to add the water. During that time, I, in this simple act of getting coffee, I am feeling the warmth and presence and comfort of God with me. Because it's a ritual.

At the same time I have [00:25:00] a list of people in my church who need prayed for. We have what are called bulletins. Do you remember those? The old fashioned bulletins. And on the back of the bulletin are the people in my church who need prayer.

So I combined my coffee ritual with my prayer ritual. It's nothing fancy. Nothing Instagramable. I just got home from a workout and my hair is sticking out in seven different directions. It's still a ritual.

Then I sit down at the kitchen table and often I will light an actual candle, uh, whatever candle I have. And I love to use wooden matches. Because it just feels very ritualistic and I love the sound of the strike of the match.

I light a candle and right now for my time with God, with the quiet, what we normally call as quiet time, I am going through the Bible recap by Tara-Leigh Cobble, and I am reading the scriptures, uh, for the day, and I'm filling out my prayer journal that [00:26:00] has things related to confession, uh, gratitude, people I'm praying for, and what God is nudging me toward.

Now sometimes, like many of you, potentially listening, time is tight. And it can be tempting then to say, well, since I don't have 20 minutes to do the Bible Recap today, I'm just not gonna do anything at all because it doesn't count. And that's not true.

Sometimes my ritual of quiet time with God looks very small. Like, you know what? Today I don't have time to do the full Bible Recap, but I am still going to sit here and write out a prayer to God. I'm still going to sit here and ponder a particular verse from the Psalms or what have you. Like it doesn't always have to look the same way. It has to fit in with your real life. And sometimes you have to shrink it.

Julie Lefebure: Yes.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: After that, I have breakfast. And I try to always eat a nutritious breakfast. This is a temple of the Holy Spirit and God would like us to take care of our bodies.

Julie Lefebure: Yeah.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: And taking the time [00:27:00] to steward our bodies well is important.

Julie Lefebure: Mm-hmm.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Um, I always, um, am a proponent for some kind of movement in the morning. Which on those particular days I am working out with friends. But for the other mornings of the week, I don't have that fitness

class available. But I do have a desk treadmill. I'm actually standing on it right now. And after I'm done with all those other things I mentioned, do my Facebook and Instagram posts for my friends on Facebook and Instagram while walking on this desk treadmill. In fact, I wrote all of *How to Love Your Morning*, the whole book while walking. So that is, in essence, my morning ritual.

Julie Lefebure: That's wonderful. And I love how you say if time is short, I mean, we, every day does not look like that. You know where you have it, I'm sure where you have it just, you know, planned out and it's okay. But as long as we do something,

Jennifer Dukes Lee: [00:28:00] That's right.

Julie Lefebure: I think that. We can modify our rituals, right? We don't have to get so stuck. Like you said, no routines anymore. But we can modify that to whatever season we're in. And you talk about that in your book, right? You talk about that in your book. No matter what season you're in,

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Yeah,

Julie Lefebure: may look different.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Absolutely. Because you know, when I, when I wrote the book, I really was hoping that I could find a one size fits all, tried and true routine. That's what I was calling them back then, um, to kind of plug, everybody could plug into their life.

And there's a lot of secular books that are like that. Like everybody needs to get up at five. And then you do these three things in the first 30 minutes of your day. And it became clear really early that that was not gonna happen with this book because that's not realistic.

Julie Lefebure: Right.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: The morning ritual and habits of a college age girl are very different from a working professional, very different from a stay at home mom, very different from an empty nester, a widow. So at the back of the [00:29:00] book, I have lengthy morning guides for people in various seasons. So there's the College Girls Guide to Mornings, the Widow's Guide to Mornings, the, you know, working moms guide to mornings. All these guides so

that you have some, some other tips and ideas to look at. And I interviewed hundreds of women to put those together.

Julie Lefebure: Wow. Very, very, it sounds like a, uh, what I wanna say, a, a resource for us to be able to guide us to those, even those of us who don't like mornings. Right. So, but you said everybody's a morning person, right?

Jennifer Dukes Lee: I did! Well, isn't that remarkable? And, and, and I think it's true. I think that we get this idea that whether we're a morning person is based on our chronotype. And the word chronotype basically means like what time we wake up, what time we go to bed. So people will say, well, if you're an early bird, that means you're a morning person. But if you're a night owl, you're not a [00:30:00] morning person. You're a non morning person right?

And so when I read those scriptures, I discovered that God has a soft spot for mornings. That God is a morning person. And because we are made in His image, then we are morning people too.

Julie Lefebure: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: And it is, it is not a clock thing, it's a God thing. But

Julie Lefebure: love that.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: we do a disservice to ourselves if we let our chronotypes alone drive our mornings. Because how you name yourself shapes how you live. So if you see yourself as a non morning person, like I'm just, I'm not a morning person, this is not my thing, you're gonna always enter the day defeated before you even begin.

Julie Lefebure: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: But when you begin to believe that you are a morning person because of God, not because of the clock, you're [00:31:00] not just claiming a label, you're setting the trajectory for your day and how you wanna live. You're stepping into the rhythm of God's creation and aligning your life with His renewing work.

Julie Lefebure: That's powerful. I love that. Wow. So good. That is wonderful. So, um, okay, what about the woman um, I know we're kind of getting close on time here, but what about the woman who is just feeling overwhelmed and she doesn't even know. Maybe she's has two toddlers and, uh, who, you know, who

knows, or maybe she's has a loved one that is, is in the last days, or just someone who's just overwhelmed. What does she do with her mornings? How can we give someone, excuse me, hope today in that? Because I know that's a real situation for,

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Yeah,

Julie Lefebure: for women out there.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: So first thing I'd want to say to that woman is that if you dread mornings, you are not a failure. You are a human.

Julie Lefebure: Mm-hmm.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: [00:32:00] And you may not be waking up thinking about sunrise walks and your coffee ritual. You might be thinking about, um, you know, what is in the inbox or you know medical news or a kid that didn't sleep. You're really tired. It could be, you know, the grief that you're facing. Many of the stories that I tell in the book are, um, coming out of the story of the loss of my dad. So I understand this deeply, what it is to try to get through a morning and to wake up with hope when it feels like there's just a heaviness. What I learned during those months when my dad was on hospice and I was very regularly helping take care of him in his home, is that, um, my morning ritual isn't just for my best days. I need it, especially on my hardest days. It can seem [00:33:00] like a morning ritual is dispensable. Like that's the thing that can go. But we need the stability and the predictability and the comfort of God more than ever on those difficult days.

So my morning rituals looked different, uh, than, than on days when I had the luxury of more time. But I always made time with God. Whether it was listening to worship music while I was brushing my teeth and combing my hair. I would, you know, step outside. Um, just to remind myself that I'm a part of something bigger. I would make sure that not only was I feeding breakfast to dad but I was making it for myself.

Julie Lefebure: Mm-hmm.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: And I was, you know, you mentioned the word overwhelm. Like I was always constantly saying, God, I am overwhelmed right now, but overwhelm me with your love and your kindness and your faithfulness. Like, I wanna be overwhelmed by You in the best way possible.

And reminding yourself of His presence in those [00:34:00] overwhelmingly hard seasons

Julie Lefebure: Yeah.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: gives you a way of seeing that he is overwhelmingly good inside of them.

Julie Lefebure: Hmm, so, so wonderful. And I, I'm also thinking about the woman who, whose morning routine has become routine. She no longer looks forward to her time with the Lord. It's just something that she has to check off her list or she feels that way. What would you say to her?

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Yeah, I, I'd say just, just shake that thing up. You know, if maybe you're in like something like the Bible Recap and you're on day 150 and you're thinking, well, I have to get through this because I'm on day 150. No, you don't. Just set that aside and pick something else. And maybe it

Julie Lefebure: Hmm.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: listening to the Bible on audio. Maybe it is starting a new prayer journal. Maybe it is having a text thread with friends where you each share about the verse that you read that morning. Maybe it is having a memory verse that you and the kids and your husband are all memorizing [00:35:00] together. Maybe it is just deciding you're gonna have the best worship playlist and that's gonna be the way that you drive to work today. So I would just encourage you just to kind of set aside the thing that isn't working right now. Start fresh and find something that works for you in this season of life.

Julie Lefebure: So encouraging. Thank you for that. Jennifer, how can people find you and yeah, how can people find your book? I will put the links in the show notes of course. But, uh, all of those details, can you share some of those?

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Yeah, so if you are interested in the book, head over to HowtoLoveYourMorning.com, there's a book, there's a Bible study. I also have six free videos that go with the six sessions of the Bible study. Right now I have a lot of really cool pre-order gifts. I'd love for you to check 'em out .And um, yeah, follow me on Instagram and Facebook and I am in those places at Jennifer Dukes Lee.

Julie Lefebure: Wonderful. This has been so refreshing and enlightening, and I thank you for making [00:36:00] time today to join me here.

Jennifer Dukes Lee: Thanks for having me.

Julie Lefebure: Yes. We'll see you next time.

Wasn't this conversation encouraging and enlightening? And I love how Jennifer took her time to just search the Biblical accounts of mornings. And I, I was very intrigued by that. And I would love to know what, what inspired you, what encouraged you the most with Jennifer's words?

And I appreciated too how she, I can't get the idea of a raven out of my head now. Maybe that impacted you too. But I would love to know, I'd love to know. If there's a way you wanna share that with me through social media or message me through my website, that would be great.

But you can find Jennifer at all the links below and , you'll be encouraged and, uh, refreshed, I believe through, this new book that she has out. So [00:37:00] connect with Jennifer and I think you're going to, uh just have a new, what I wanna say. Just, I love it when God just inspires us with maybe a new idea or a new perspective, or our eyes are open to something of Him that we did not see before or that we did not know. So I think this book will help us do that.

Anyway, I'm so glad that Jennifer joined me, and it's, it's just a joy to be able to share this space with you and with others, and I am just very grateful that you tuned in today.

Next week is a brand new month. Can you believe it's April? Gonna be April? Oh my goodness. But we are excited for a new month. Spring is finally here, and we have a new series and it's all about being made for more. My new book launches April 14th. Called Made for More: 365 Devotions for the Woman Who Refuses to Settle. [00:38:00] And if you are a woman who is just tired of going through the motions, who just feels like you've lost your zest for life, maybe you feel like you're even just surviving the day instead of thriving through it. Well, we're gonna be talking about this all next month in our series about being made for more. So, um, come back next Tuesday and it's just gonna be a time where we can just grow together and a fresh new month and a fresh new season. And I believe this series, this next month is just going to be impactful and also refreshing. So can't wait to share this with you.

You can find my book that's coming out in just a couple weeks, you'll be able to learn more. But you can go to, of course, my website, julielefebure.com to find all the details. So that link is in the show notes as well.

Thank you for tuning in today, and until next time. God bless you.

Thank you [00:39:00] so much for joining me here today. You can find more at juliefebure.com. And until next time, stay encouraged.