

TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 136-BE MORE THAN A HUNKA BURNIN' LOVE

I'm Jill Baughan, and you're listening to the podcast called Find Joy...No Matter What.

This is Episode 136.

If you're in a tough place right now, your joy may seem like it's hiding--or gone.

I understand. But it's still there, I promise, just waiting to be resurrected. And this podcast is designed to help you do just that...no matter what else is going on in your life.

For just a few minutes each week, I'll tell you a story. --one that just might inspire a way to uncover a piece of joy you might be looking for.

Then we'll consider how it might speak to your life, because even though you'll hear quite a few of my stories during our time together, I believe you'll find your own in every one of mine.

Then I'll offer a benediction to send you into your day--or into your night.

So. If you're up for doing joy shots with a friend today...have a listen.

Years ago, I had the privilege of hopping onto a Harley with Elvis.

Not the real one (Elvis, that is. It was, indeed, a real Harley.) but an amazing imitation.

And it was probably just about the last place many people would expect to see an amazing imitation of Elvis—at a national conference for Baptist ministry assistants, where I was one of the speakers. For some reason, a few people have the mistaken idea that a bunch of church ladies are a rather prim and proper crowd...to which I would say: “Not so much...”

The opening night of the conference, as I made my way to the gym, I was looking forward to lots of food, lots of music, lots of free stuff and lots of fun. However, as soon as I walked in, I heard some major shrieking and screaming. Alarmed, and fearing that some catastrophe was in process, I asked my friend, “What’s going on?” to which she replied, “Elvis.”

Yes, Elvis was “going on,” in the corner of the room. And he was “going on” with a whole bunch of church ladies. It was a sight to behold, watching him drape a silk scarf around the neck of everyone who came to meet him, watching him wrap his arm around each woman who wanted her picture taken with him, and watch him sing about his inability to keep himself from “falling in love with you.”

They loved every minute of it...and so, I must confess, did I....mainly because I adore the unexpected and, seriously, who was expecting Elvis to show up in the middle of a

conference full of workshops about financial record keeping and dealing with difficult people?

But wait. There's more.

Imagine my surprise when I asked someone, "Who is he, really?" and she told me, "Oh, he's a minister. This is his other job."

And at that moment, I thought I would actually *die* with delight, if that's possible. Really, who would even think about dozing in the pew, with Elvis in the pulpit, right?

And this gentleman was no hack. I later learned that he had been chosen as one of North America's top ten Elvis tribute artists and represented the United States in an International show case performance in Montreal, Quebec Canada.

So of course, a few days after the conference, I had to talk with this guy, whose real name is Matt Hagle, and when I did, he left me totally inspired.

"When I was six or seven years old," Matt said, "I remember riding in the car and hearing Elvis' voice on the radio, and thought I wanted to sing like him. So I listened to his records, and started training my voice to sound like his. When I was eighteen I went to Bible college and felt called to preach, and did so—but Elvis never left me."

After he married, his wife Elda (who also sang and did impersonations of Patsy Cline, Dolly Parton, Loretta Lynn, Miss Piggy and Reba McEntire, and used to be a backup singer for Wayne Newton) (oh my gosh, you cannot make this stuff up), convinced him to comb his hair in an Elvis 'do. Then he invested in a couple of signature suits, and got a chance to perform with the Jordanares (Elvis' backup group), which was a springboard for invitations to sing at private parties, assisted living and Alzheimer's residences, hockey arenas, theaters and more.

But here's the thing: his favorite kind of performing wasn't for performing's sake; it was to encourage people who needed anything from a kiss on the hand to a reason to laugh to financial assistance—like the benefit he did for a young lady in Middleton, Ohio, who had been in a car accident. The day before the benefit, she died...but the event went on anyway.

Matt said, "First we did an hour of gospel music, because people were hurting, their hearts were so heavy. They needed to talk, needed encouragement. But then we had a ten-minute intermission...and Elvis actually cut loose for 45 minutes."

And they loved it. Obviously they knew in their souls that fun and joy could actually walk hand-in-hand with deep sorrow.

They raised \$3000 that day—not to mention the spirits of everyone there.

“It’s all in the focus,” he says. “Are you here to make yourself a star, or make a difference for Christ? That’s what I’m all about.”

Maybe you, too, would like to do something fun and really unexpected to lift the spirits of someone whose heart is heavy right now.

So what makes your heart sing? How could you use that joy to rustle up your Inner Elvis, cut loose with your own bad self...and bless the blue suede shoes right off of somebody?

As you figure that out, my friend,

May you find joy in recalling the words of the author of Ecclesiastes who said *He who refreshes others will himself be refreshed...*

And may you take to heart the words of the apostle Paul who said, *Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people...*

May you remember the reminder of Jesus who told us *Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends...*

And may you respond to that with a most enthusiastic *Thank you. Thank you very much.*

And thank *you* so very much for joining me.

If you know people who have a passion and could so lift the spirits of others with it, I invite you to share this podcast with them, and subscribe yourself on iTunes, or wherever you listen to podcasts. Or you can go to my website at jillbaughan.com, click on a podcast episode and sign up to receive episodes in your inbox. Just don't miss an episode, because I so look forward to being with you again soon.

Be even more to someone than the hunka burnin’ love that I know you are, my friend. And always, always remember, if you go looking for joy, you’ll most likely find it.

Till next time...

NOTES:

“Elvis Impersonator to Present July 3 concert July 3.” *KPC News*, February 28, 2006. (I know. I’m still trying to figure that headline out...)

https://www.kpcnews.com/article_a714fa40-6398-5c3d-8a65-40949dffd1b3.html