

## TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 188-TAKE A BREAK

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

This is Episode 188.

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.

Finally, 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. (Music fades)

What if you had an invitation to spend 24 hours a week doing whatever would fill your soul with deep joy—whatever would make you “spontaneously combust with wonder, awe, gratitude and praise”?

Who could resist, right?

Well, here's the good news! You've already received your standing invite to this kind of delight!

The bad news? Many, many of us ignore it completely.

Why?

We're just too busy.

John Mark Comer, in his book *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, says, *We get tired and worn out; our immune systems start to falter, miss a step. Another cold. It's like our nervous systems are trying to get our attention.*

*Yet we push on. Until, inevitably, we crash. Something in our minds or bodies gives out, and we end up flat on our backs.* He himself was so burned out from pastoring, he required a sabbatical. And I'm guessing he's not the only one who's needed a big ol' break in the form of Sabbath.

*...We all come to Sabbath, he says, voluntarily or involuntarily. Eventually the grain of the universe caught up with me, and crashed, hard. My sabbatical was like playing catch-up on a decade of missed Sabbaths, come to collect with interest.*

He goes on: *I'm guessing you have a story too. If not, you will. **Sabbath is coming for you, whether as delight or discipline.***

***Maybe that's why God eventually has to command the Sabbath. Does that strike you as odd? It's like commanding ice cream or live music or beach days. You would think we'd all be chomping at the bit to practice the Sabbath. But apparently there's something about the human condition that makes us want to hurry our way through life as fast as we possibly can, to rebel against the limitations of time itself. Due to our immaturity, dysfunction, and addiction, God has to command his people to do something deeply life giving—rest.***

*This rhythm isn't the byproduct of human ingenuity—the ancient version of The 7 Habits of Highly Effect People—that we're free to adapt or change as we see fit for the modern era. It's the way a brilliant mind designed our souls and society to flourish and thrive.*

*Fight it, fight God.*

*Fight God, fight our own souls.*

*[The command to observe the Sabbath] was a life-giving practice—the way to break our addiction to the West's twin gods: accomplishment and accumulation. Again, accomplishment and accumulation aren't evil in and of themselves, as long as they don't take advantage of the poor...But there's a limit. At some point you have to draw a line in the sand and say "I'm good. I don't need another pair of shoes, another decorator item for my book shelf, another toy for my garage, another day at the spa."*

*I have enough.*

*What I really need is time to enjoy what I already have, with God.*

*Rest and worship.*

*The Sabbath is the day I feel most connected to God. Most connected to my wife and family. To my own soul. It's the day I feel most awake and yet most at peace. The day I expect joy. The day that sets the tone for my entire week.*

*Sabbath will take you a little while to master. After all, Shabbat is a verb. It's something you do. A practice, a skill you hone. It took years of trial and error for me. As our kids age into their teens, our practice continues to adapt and iterate.*

*Point being: this practice is so foreign and alien to our culture, even our church culture, that it might take you a while to dial it in. That's okay.*

*Remember: you're not in a hurry.*

*To begin, just set aside a day. Clear your schedule. Turn off your phone. Say a prayer to invite the Holy Spirit to pastor you into his presence. And then? Rest and worship. In whatever way is life giving for your soul.*

*My family and I do this every week. Just before sunset on Friday, we finish up all our to-do lists and homework and grocery shopping and responsibilities, power down all our devices (we literally put them all in a box and stow it in a closet), and gather around the table as a family. We open a bottle of wine, light some candles, read a psalm, pray. Then we feast and we basically don't stop feasting for the next twenty-four hours...We sleep in Saturday morning. Drink coffee. Read our Bibles. Pray more. Spend time together. Talk. Laugh. In summer, walk to the park. In winter, make a fire. Get lost in good novels on the couch.*

Now. I can hear your objections. If you're new to the Sabbath, you probably have questions. Much has been written about the Sabbath, so there's no shortage of information about how people in different stages of life navigate it.

But it can be difficult if you're taking care of small children or elderly parents or anyone else in need; if you're insanely busy, if you share space and relationship with someone who doesn't want to observe Sabbath. What can you do when it seems like life actually conspires to keep you exhausted and soul-weary—far away from rest and worship?

Well, maybe you can practice a mini-Sabbath.  
Maybe you could go without screens for a day. Or even just an afternoon.  
Maybe you could just go without social media.  
Maybe you could just leave the TV off.

Or, in past episodes, I've talked about the infinite value of starting an ongoing list of things that help you experience joy as "deep delight that fills your soul." Start that list today. Keep it where you'll see it, so you can add to it every time your heart fills up. We often need a tangible to remind us of what—and who—gives us life.

For instance, a mini-Sabbath based on my list might include

Going to church

Visiting someone. With goodies in hand. It's something Ben and I love doing, keeping a stash of baked treats on hand, and delivering them to someone who's having a hard time. Or someone just because. People don't do a lot of "just visiting" any more like Ben's great-aunts, Edith and Marion used to do. All they had to do was sit on their own porch back in the day, and within 30 minutes, they'd have a porch full of folks, just sitting. Talking. Resting.

My list would also include

Making music—by myself or with others

Reading

Playing with grandchildren

Cookies. Dessert. Especially with friends.

Or taking a nap. Is there anything more restorative and delicious than giving in to sleep on a Sunday afternoon? You can learn more about naps in podcast episode 127.

Just be careful about this one. A friend of mine, who chooses to remain nameless, was in Europe one summer years ago, staying in hotel where there was no air conditioning. She was very tired, and decided to take a little snooze minus her clothing, because it was sweltering, and the hotel had no air conditioning. When she woke up, she was surprised to find their dry cleaning hanging up in the room. Obviously, she'd had a visitor who obviously got a little surprise when he made the delivery. Oops.

Also on my list, and maybe yours: Spending time outdoors.

A couple Sundays ago, Ben went for a hike on a nearby trail. When he came back he told me there was a bench on the trail, halfway through, and he sat down...for an hour.

“What on earth did you do for an hour?” I asked, since he's not prone to do things that can't be crossed off a list. “I sat and thought about all the things I'm thankful for,” he said.

Sabbath at its finest, friends.

What's on your list? How might you incorporate joy and worship into your Sabbath? For a day or even an hour? How might you make room for it and anticipate it?

Comer says this: *Think of how we observe a holiday like Christmas or Easter. We gear up for it, plan out the day in advance, do all we can to make it special, approach it with anticipation.*

*The Sabbath is like that: a holiday every week, but without all the stress and family drama. A once-a-week celebration of all that is good in God's world.*

And so, my friend, as you learn to practice such a celebration, may you be inspired to do so by the words of Jesus who looked into the weary eyes of a crowd of people like you, and asked,

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with

me—watch how I do it. **Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.** I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you know people who need to just rest, reconnect with God and breathe in some delight, 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](http://jillbaughan.com), click on a podcast episode and sign up to receive episodes in your inbox. Just don't miss a single one, because I so look forward to being with you again soon.

Take a Sabbath break, my friend. And always, always remember: if you go looking for joy, you'll most likely find it.

Till next time...

NOTES:

Downs, Annie F. "Rhythms: Sabbath and John Mark Comer." *That Sounds Fun Podcast*, January 2018.

<https://www.anniedowns.com/podcast/that-sounds-fun-podcast-january-2018-rhythms-sabbath-john-mark-comer/>

Comer, John Mark. *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*. Waterbrook, 2019.

The Holy Bible. Matthew 11:28-30 (MSG)