

TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 190-TAKE A FLYING LEAP

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

This is Episode 190.

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)

Ever feel the pull, the nudge, the tug from God to do something that was on the outside of your safe space?

Maybe it was the idea to tell your story or write something or teach or start a business or ministry or make friends with someone very different from you or any one of a limitless number of possibilities.

And upon feeling that nudge, that tug, that invitation to exit that safe space, did you...resist, thinking "but I don't have what it takes"?

John Ortberg, in a message titled "Letting Go of Your Life," cites Lysa Terkheurst as saying that very often we have an idea of the person we want to be or the thing we want to do or the life we want to live and we get stopped by a simple two word phrase: "**But I.**" I want to get in shape but I'm tired; I want to live relaxed and confident but I worry too much; I'd love to eat kale and quinoa and tofu **but I** love sugar and butter and bacon and bbq.

But I—very human--often comes up in the Bible as an excuse when God calls someone to do something.

God wants Moses to confront Pharaoh; he says "**But I** am slow of speech."

God wants Gideon to deliver his people from the Midianites; he says, "**But I** am the least of my family."

God wants Jeremiah to bring his word to his people; he says, “**But I** do not know how to speak, I’m only a child.”

God wants Abraham to become the father of a great people; he says, “**But I’m** too old.”

However. If you don’t already know, I’ll tell you: in all those stories and many more, God comes through and engineers circumstances and enables people to follow his direction.

Later, in the New Testament, Jesus said that with God, all things are possible. He was not kidding.

So, says Ortberg, *stop excusing yourself from God’s calling on your life by whining about your inadequacy.*

Whoa. Well, okay.

But that’s easier said than done, right? You might ask, as I have, “What exactly might this look like? Where do we begin to learn to trust God like these people?”

Athena Avellanet has a great idea about a starting place. In a recent Instagram post, she said this

I was noticing something the other day. There are times in the Bible when God calls people to do something or they need something from him, and he asks, “What do you have?” For example when he called Moses and Moses was hemming and hawing and all that kind of stuff, and he was like, “Well, what you got in your hand?” and Moses had the staff and God was able to use the staff to do miracles.. When the woman who had the husband that had passed away and she went to the prophet and was like, “they’re about to take my sons. I need help.” And the prophet was like, “What you got?” And she was like, “Nothing...except jars.” And he was like, “perfect!” and was able to perform a miracle. In the New Testament the people are listening to Jesus and they’re hungry and the disciples are like, “send them away,” and Jesus was like, “You feed them.” And they were like, “What? We don’t have enough.” And he said, “What DO you have?” 5 loaves, 2 fish? Perfect.”

*And how often do **we** disqualify or discredit ourselves because we don’t think we have enough? We don’t think that what we have is sufficient enough to do what God is calling us to do—the resources, the talents, the support. And guess what? It’s not. But that’s the point. The point is to rely on him to use what we have and make it more.*

And you might say, “But I don’t feel called to anything big and world-changing.” And to that, Athena says,

I want to encourage you: Don’t disqualify yourself from being able to accomplish what God wants just because it’s not enough. Because our God is more than enough. And he’s gonna take

what you have and do something miraculous with it to accomplish his purpose. Do not discredit what you have. Do not discredit where you are.

Case in point: A few years ago, my husband and I were with friends at Yellowstone National Park, gathering at the trailhead to a fantastical natural wonder, Because of chronic hip pain, however, such a hike would have been slow and agonizing for me. I didn't want to put the skids on everyone else's good time, so I sent them all trekking on, while I hung out alone in the car, completely bummed and ticked off.

But soon after they left, a herd of buffalo came a-lumbering into the parking lot, like they owned the place, which they did, and I decided that if I couldn't have a good time with my old friends, I would make new friends. Friends with horns, snorting beady-eyed, beautiful, four-legged friends.

As the herd moved into the grass, I figured that a selfie with my new buds was in order, so I jumped out of the car and took one. (I wasn't even close to them, I promise. I have great respect for these wild animals, and have seen too many YouTube videos of them charging people and tossing them in the air with their horns.) I was six inches from the car door, which I left open, as I turned around and snapped the picture with me up close and them grazing in the background.

And you know what? It became one of my most beloved photos of all time, because it showed me that even when you're in a bad place, if you can manage to shift your focus, joy just might be right under your nose. Or in front of your car. Or wherever.

What did I have? Bad hips. But bad hips that gave me a vantage point like no other. And a writing habit that let me share the experience of that close encounter of the bison kind.

And that experience and that photo evolved into a talk, and I felt God saying, "Let's take this further and make it your life focus. And let's do a podcast, because you know you love talking into a microphone." And I said, "**But I** don't know anything about doing a podcast." And he said, "I'll show you the way." And I said, "**But I** have a mind that's a technology wasteland." And he said, "I'll show you the way." And I said, "**But I** am afraid I will fail in an epic way." And God said, "Trust me, will ya?" So I did. Mostly.

Author Henri Nouwen talked about trusting God by way of his fascination at one point in his life with trapeze artists, The Flying Rodleighs. He actually became good friends, with the troupe, and one day, the leader told him about the one nonnegotiable of trapezing:

'The secret,' Rodleigh said, 'is that the flyer does nothing and the catcher does everything. When I fly to Joe, I have simply to stretch out my arms and hands and wait for him to catch me and pull me safely over the apron behind the catchbar.'

'You do nothing!' [Nouwen] said, surprised.

'Nothing,' Rodleigh repeated. 'The worst thing the flyer can do is to try to catch the catcher. I am not supposed to catch Joe. It's Joe's task to catch me. If I grabbed Joe's wrists, I might break them, or he might break mine, and that would be the end for both of us. A flyer must fly, and a catcher must catch, and the flyer must trust, with outstretched arms, that his catcher will be there for him.'

Remember, Nouwen says, that you are the beloved child of God. He will be there when you make your long jump. Don't try to grab him; he will grab you. Just stretch out your arms and hands and trust, trust, trust.'

And so, my friend,

May you never discredit what you got,

May you never discredit who you are,

And each time God issues an invitation to fly, may you stretch out your arms and hands and let the Catcher catch.

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you know people who might need encouragement to trust, trust, trust, 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 a single one, because I so look forward to being with you again soon.

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

Till next time...

NOTES:

Avellanet, Athena.

https://www.instagram.com/reel/CkJGK_1A7Wf/?igshid=MzRIODBiNWFIZA%3D%3D

Nouwen, Henri, and Carolyn Whitney-Brown. *Flying, Falling, Catching: An Unlikely Story of Finding Freedom*. HarperOne, First Edition, March 8, 2022.

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