TRANSCRIPT FOR PODCAST EPISODE 209-DON'T MISS THOSE YOU HAVE

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

This is Episode 209.

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.

As really newlyweds, my husband and I honeymooned in several exotic, romantic places: we started by spending our wedding night in Anderson, Indiana, then traveled to Mammoth Cave, Kentucky, sprinted to St. Louis, Missouri, for a claustrophobic ride to the top of the arch, and then headed to Rantoul, Illinois, where we stayed in the luxurious Holiday Inn Junior. Yes, Junior. I don't think they exist any more, but as I recall our accommodations were located in something that looked like a mobile trailer. Our room was so small, the only place to put a TV was on an attachment on the wall over the bed. If the thing had fallen off, it would have broken our legs. Who would put up with these overnight arrangements, you ask? Well, the Holiday Inn Junior was adjacent to an army base. You get the picture.

Anyway, we were so entranced with each other, we obviously didn't care where we were staying, as long as we were together.

We had to return to my hometown in Indiana to collect my belongings before we headed to Virginia, where we'd be living. And as we pulled out of my mom's driveway, she—who was not a "crier"—was in tears, and I was suddenly consumed with grief about leaving her, leaving the rest of my family, leaving a stage of life that would never return.

I cried all the way home. Like all 15 hours home, as we pulled that U-Haul full of my worldly belongings, and all I could think about was how I would never live near my family again. I cried buckets over all I was losing, I lost sight of who was right in front of me…and beside me…and behind me—my new (fairly bewildered) husband, wondering what in the world a man does with a blubbering, grieving wife.

And I'll be honest, it took me a good long while to focus on the joy of being married to someone I loved, instead of zeroing in on my grief. And the truth is, even after 43 years, I have never stopped missing the nearness of my family…but I have learned to appreciate and love Virginia, and the friends and additional family right in front of me.

So, my friend, it's really been on my heart this season to ask you:

Are you missing someone this Christmas? Especially someone who has died?

Because as we all know, Christmas is a terrible time to be missing someone—not that any time is actually a good time, but in this emotion-laden month, grief can be even more acute.

If you are struggling in this way, I'd love to share a compassionate wakeup call from Beth Moore. There's a link to the video in the show notes, and I'd encourage you to watch that, too. For now, here's the story she tells:

My father-in-law and mother-in-law just had their 61st wedding anniversary and my father in law said, "I want to take my family to a nice restaurant for our anniversary.

We drove, they live next door, so we got them in the car, and they looked so handsome and so beautiful in their early eighties and we drove to a steak house. Keith has two sisters, and it was us sitting around this table. And the conversation at supper—it was like he was very deliberate about what he wanted to talk about. He meant this dinner to be memorable. He meant it to. He talked about things that were very very much the story of the family, and at one point—I'll just never forget it—he began to go around…he started with me and I was so taken aback I don't even know what he said to Keith. But he went around to us one by one, said our names and said, "I love you so much." And then he said a sentence as to why. It was just magnificent, we'll never forget it. He spoke it. But then he said something at the end of the supper I found so absolutely powerful, the next day I cried and cried and cried; I could not pull myself together over it.

He looked at us all at that table before dinner was over and said, "We lost two of you."

And I mean he let it just hang in the air. And when I say they lost two of them, they're not kidding. I mean to the grave. Keith's three-year- old brother when they were little bitty boys to a fire, a house fire; his twenty three year old sister to an aneurism. I mean, she was gone within just hours. By that time I'd just married into the family. He said, "We lost two of you" and he let that hang in the air for a moment, and then he said, "but look at what we still have."

It was so powerful. Because you know what he was saying? He made sure that we knew that any family gathering where those two parents were concerned, was not complete because they were missing two children that they had never forgotten. It just had to be brought up at that time because we were celebrating family, and to them and to us, but to them as parents there was no replacing them, that all these years later, as much

relationship as we've had, nothing has ever replaced them. But you know what he said when he said to us, "Look what we still have"? He said, "But I did not miss you because I missed them."

I need somebody to go with me to a very tender place. We can miss somebody so much that we can miss the people who are right in front of us. I know this is tender. I know this is hard. I know this is a subject we do not want to touch. But I am going to say this to you: In Jesus' name and through the help of his Spirit, DO NOT MISS THOSE YOU HAVE BECAUSE OF THOSE WHOM YOU MISS.

Who do you still have? Who is still there? Don't miss them. Do not miss them.

Friend, please know this season and every season, that your grief should not be denied…but it doesn't have to be your address.

Four years after her son took his own life, author Jamie Wright began to see and feel the gifts in front of her. She wrote,

Feeling sad is as natural as blinking, as ever-present as breathing. I don't even have to think about it. It's just part of being alive when your [loved one] is not.

The hard part is being happy.

The hard part is letting in love and fun and awe and wonder and pleasure and peace. It's allowing all of the things you think should have died with your [loved one] to go on living.

I was thinking about this last night, as I lay in my comfy bed after a super fun trip to a gorgeous part of the world with the love of my life, where I smiled, and laughed, and sipped wine, and ate great food.

I played in the sun and kissed in the rain, and after a wonderful week of travel, I'd finally fallen into bed exhausted from the goodness of it all. And I felt happy.

Like really, truly, deeply happy.

I know nobody would condemn me for crawling into a hole, alone, and burying myself in grief for the rest of forever. And, trust me, I could do that. In fact, it would be easy.

But I'm working hard to let myself love life and live well, not despite grief and not because of it, but right alongside it.

The bad part will never not be bad, but it turns out, the good parts can still be good.

And so, my friend, if you are navigating life without someone you love, and if you are finding it hard,

May you open your teary eyes to the wonder that lives alongside your grief,

May you focus your gaze and your heart on those you still have,

And may you thank God for all that is filling your heart, and all that is really, really good.

Thanks so much for joining me.

If you or someone you care about happen to be missing someone these days, 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.

Don't' miss those you have, my friend. And always, always remember, if you go looking for joy, you'll most likely find it.

Till next time...

NOTE:
Moore, Beth."Do not miss those whom you have because of those whom you miss."
https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1082604531776075