

Coffee with Phil. 24. My Heart is Full

Introduction

Well, hi and welcome to the studio, my name's Phil Strong and I'm delighted to be with you today, as I sit here in the studio enjoying my afternoon flat white. Today it's in the takeout Cup, but I'm noticing it's got a particularly nice nutty after taste, so that's the flavour that sits on the tongue as you consume the coffee and it's always good to notice the after taste of your coffee, wherever you are, whatever coffee you're enjoying check if it has an after taste, because it's the after taste that makes the experience worthwhile.

So, welcome to episode 24. My name is Phil Strong, and today I would like to say to you my heart is full. Well, you may have heard me say lately that I've struggled in my search for peace and joy. You know that's true. It's true. I've been pretty honest, pretty transparent, and I've been talking about the journey. But what I would say to you is that that's shifting, and I want to talk about it today, because what I was worried about was that my heart was bruised, and when your heart is bruised, there's a risk it can become numb, and a numb heart is an unhealthy heart. So I didn't want to stay there.

So, I'm going to talk about my journey today, and I want you to watch out for how this might affect you. How it might be important for you, what you're going to do with what I share with you today, because I've got in my, on my iPad here, a couple of moments on the mind map for today's session where I'm going to point the finger back at you as a way to encourage you to do something about what I'm sharing.

Our Baby Girl is Wed

So, let's get started. I want to say to you today my heart is full. It was an absolute delight for Kathy and I this month to celebrate the day of our daughters wedding. Our baby girl is wed. She has married her Prince Charming. They have ridden off into the sunset, and May God go with them. I was happy to give her away with the comment, no givebacks, and wish them all the best for their journey together.

But I want to say to you that the day was an absolute delight, Kathy and I, throughout the day we had lots to lots to manage. Lots going on. But there was lots to enjoy. We crawled into bed late that night. We were shattered. But we said, wow, are we absolutely delighted with what happened today? And yes, we were.

I want to say to you that the day was full of moments. Grace had choreographed the day. Careful, meticulous planning, lots of detail, and there were certain aspects of the day that she wanted to make into moments that were captured. So, she gave gifts to her bridesmaids in the morning, and there was tears and celebrations as they clinked their glass of champagne together and celebrated those gifts with each other. There was a moment where I was told to go and tidy myself up. Dad you need to be dressed. You need to look right for the moment you see me in my wedding gown. And I was like, what? Can't I just wear my slides and shorts, and like it is what it is, right? And she's like, no, dad, this is a moment that we're planning, and so sure enough, I had to come down the stairs holding my wife's hands and we turned the corner and we saw our daughter, me for the first time in her wedding gown, and it was a moment that's, that certainly was a moment, I can tell you that.

There was another moment that was precious to me, and we didn't choreograph this, but at the venue for the ceremony there was an entrance for the father of the bride to march the bride down the aisle. Well, that's normal, right? Well, to get to that point, we had to traverse this pathway that was between two hedges, and you know it was just 20 metres long, but that provided a moment for me, just me and my daughter's, arm and arm. She was looking gorgeous. She was looking nervous. She was looking excited. But it was just the two of us. Sure enough the photographer was there to capture it too, but it was a moment. You know, there was a moment when they said their vows to each other, there was a moment during the speeches where we shared some personal stuff and it got a bit emotional, but there was moments, you know, and that was the day that was just full moments and as a result of it, my heart is full.

It was just a privilege for Kathy and I as parents to watch Grace and her husband Kelan go through the day full of joy, like right from the beginning she was excited. She was looking forward to it.

But I would say this to you that the day has made her complete. Someone who conducts weddings, I take absolute commitment to the Bible verse that says and the two shall leave their mother and father and cleave themselves one to each other and the two shall be one, and so you know, they came together. They joined themselves together in holy matrimony. They confess their devotion and commitment to each other before God and others, and they became one.

So, she was made complete and it looked at too, you know, she looked the way she looked at him, the way that she smiled, the way she celebrated, she was made complete. The look of joy in her face is one of my absolute highlights of being a dad. The other thing that helped me for the day to be a joy giving experience was that we had family gathered together from all over the country, and in fact from overseas, and I discovered, well I knew this, but I've reinforced the fact that family gathering together is life giving for me.

It's great to have people together and by family, I mean, loved ones, people that are part of our family, circle, people that are part of our journey. They're part of our tribe, they've given themselves one to each other, and committed to the journey. I shared this with Grace that you know, the moment that was most impacting for me aside from getting married on my wedding day, was seeing the family that arrived, and friends that arrived from all parts of the world and I was a mess, even before the bride got to the church because I was greeting the guests at the door and family gathered is life giving for me. So that was a privilege.

And then this, you know this time in my madness and in my excitement I decided that we would host family for breakfast the next morning. So, we get up, we're pretty, jaded, a little bit wary, certainly are tired, but not wanting to be grumpy, and Jackson and I cooked breakfast for 18 guests, and we're churning out the coffees, the coffee machines going crazy, we're giving cups of tea to those that want cups of tea, and we had green eggs and ham for breakfast. Yeah, and I won't go into the details, but it was just a joy to have the cross full of family, some of them from overseas, some of them from different parts of the country, and we spent time with each other, and we told stories of the day before, and we shared the experience together, and it was life giving, and as a result of it, my heart is full.

But I would also add this, that beyond the wedding day, the ripples have gone far and wide into the community. Just this week, Kathy and I were out shopping. We were in a retail store and looking for something specific, and someone came running up to us, and they said hello, how are you? Have you

recovered from the wedding? And he went on to tell us just what a privilege, what a joy, what an experience it was for him and his wife to be part of the wedding celebration, and we shared stories, and moments, and some weeks later we're reveling in the joy of the celebration of family. And he said this, he says, you know, we're all the same family, aren't we? And it really hit home that events like this, we need to take advantage of, we need to make the most of, and we need to be sure that they fill our heart.

And I want to talk about that because I want to ask this question to you. When was the last time you sat at home with your loved ones and felt the warm glow of happy life moments. And for some of you, that might have been a long time ago. Some of you, it might be never. Some of you, it might be recently. But when was the last time? What did it feel like? What? Was happening. How did it make you feel?

Kathy and I took some time out after the recent wedding, and we wanted to rest. We wanted to rest. Well, but part of that rest was to revel in the joy of the moment, and we looked at photos, and we reminded ourselves of the story, and we laughed, and we cried as we relived the celebration. See there's a warm glow that you don't want to disappear. But when was the last time you had that? And I would say to your friends that if that was some time ago that's not good. We need to change things and this is what I want to speak about in this podcast. So, let's go on a journey together and see what's important about our hearts being full.

Why was this important?

I've asked this question of myself many times. Why is this important to me, and why should it be important to you? I was careful as I wanted to share this, but I wanted to make sure that I had long preparation, and slow preparation, and thoughtful preparation, because I didn't come here just to boast, I came here to share my heart, but in a way that might take you on a journey as well.

So, I asked myself this question. Why is this important to me, and why would it be important to you? And I've come to the realisation that I think we should live our heart, our lives, with our hearts full. I think we should live our lives with our hearts full. Now I acknowledge that life's full of seasons and we have our ups and downs, and you've heard me share about that recently, but we should live a life with our hearts full to have those moments, those monuments in our lives where we go, remember that time where we sat and enjoyed the pleasure of that life story, and I don't think we do it often enough.

And here's the risk, if we don't have those moments in our lives. Then there's a huge risk that our hearts become cold, and cold hearts can easily become hard hearts. I'd suggest to you that our hearts are like a sponge, and they soak up what's around them. They soak up what's around them, and if what's around them is not good, or is absent, then they can quickly become dry and brittle, and in fact become like a hard heart.

And you know, for me, I must confess, I've been pretty worried in the season I'm traversing that my bruised heart would become a cold heart, and that my cold heart would become a hard heart, and I say that in reflection, but I say it also as a challenge to you. Look at yourself. Is there a risk that the bruising in your heart, or the issues of your heart would potentially give you the risk of your heart becoming cold, and then even rock hard, and this is what's really important to us.

And so to transition, you know, I think there's a there's a, the TV show that Kathy was watching years ago, that of course, I ended up having to be part of, because it affected me, and this little Asian lady

called Marie Kondo helped Kathy to sort me out. And Marie Kondo had a TV show where she would work with people. On the TV show, is a reality show, the little Asian lady should come in and help them tidy up their homes, and she would sit with them in the pile of clothes in their wardrobe, and sometimes mountains of clothing items, or memory items, and she would hold them up, and she would say, does this spark joy in you, does this spark Joy in you. And it was a phrase that she used that was helping people to unlock connection, healthy connection, and identify unhealthy connection.

Our search for...

And so I want to talk about that, because I think we need to do the same with our hearts. I think the key to accessing a season of life where our heart is full, is to apply the Marie Kondo principle, and really examine our heart, and say to ourselves, does this spark joy in me? How do I find joy?

So, I want to talk about that, 'cause I find that we're all on a journey, and we're on a journey where we're searching, we're searching, and what I think we're searching for, we're searching for many things, but let me just focus today on two things. We're searching for peace and we're searching for joy.

Now peace. I would describe peace as that settled feeling, of contentment, settled feeling of contentment. Being content with how I am and what's around me.

Now I'd also say that we would be searching for joy, and joy is far greater than happiness. Joy is far greater than a reaction to a circumstance or an event that happens in our lives. Joy is deeply rooted in connecting with what's good and right. And joy is what we want. It's lasting. We can be unsettled in some sense, and still reach for joy. We can go through hard times in life and still reach for joy. But if you're worried about happiness. Happiness is here for a moment, and it is very much of our external circumstances. Whereas I find joy is all about the internal state of our heart.

And so what I discovered in my journey, is in my state of having a bruised heart, I was worried about it becoming cold, but I found also that my heart was not able to receive what was available around me if I didn't take the time to search for peace, and to search for joy, and so that's what I want to speak about. So, I would say this to you. You can't find joy without peace. So, joy can only come when we're settled in a peaceful state, well, then how do we access peace?

Peace requires us to remove clutter in our heart, so just in the same way Marie Kondo would come into someone's home, and it would be full of clutter, and memories, and boxes, and bags of clothes, and she would help them to declutter the home, to be organised, and to access the joy that was in the items that they chose to keep. So, I reckon it's a good idea to Marie Kondo our lives. And so how do we do that?

So, to find peace, we've gotta declutter our hearts, and I would say this to you, that one of the things that causes clutter in our hearts is unforgiveness, and I've spoken about this to you recently. Just looking at the podcast, it's Coffee with Phil episode 22. And I confess to you that forgiveness doesn't come easy, so if you haven't yet listened to episode 22, you want to save that to your list, and grab that later.

There's some resources there, there's some references there, and there's some biblical stuff that will help you, because I found that I couldn't find forgiveness without the help of the Holy Spirit. I needed Jesus and his spirit to come and help me.

So, the key thing that clutters your heart is unforgiveness. So how can you access forgiveness? How do you get rid of the clutter. And so one of the things that I find helpful is to invite Jesus to help you, and to

say, Jesus, is there someone I need to forgive that would help me declutter my heart? And let's call a spade a spade, let's be real, let's be honest with friends. I can call it like it is. It's junk. It's junk that you're carrying around that is not helping you, and I would say the same to me. This is why I'm on the journey.

So, is there someone I need to forgive in this area of my life? And I find when I ask those questions, a face comes to mind. A situation comes to mind, and then I say this, I say, oh my gosh, OK, I choose to forgive that person for that event, that situation in my life, the circumstances, and I let go of. I no longer have the right to hold on to unforgiveness or offence, or feeling sorry for myself. I don't want bitterness. I don't want hatred. I don't want unforgiveness. I let go of it all. I let go of it, ask God to take it away, and I choose to forgive the person, and I let go, and I turn away from that, and I ask God to bring me the peace that he has for me.

So, the first thing that clutters our heart, that robs us from the peace, is unforgiveness. But the second thing is also sometimes we carry what I call lies or false truths. You know we've got a belief structure that comes from circumstances, and our reaction to circumstances, but it creates a false truth, and sometimes when we live in false truth, well it quite simply, it's just deception. We live in a false reality.

And so here's the second thing that I would suggest to you, is that you might ask Jesus, to say, you might say, is there a lie that I'm believing, that's unhelpful. And this is a little more difficult to access. But give it a go.

And to help you, we're going to dig out some resources that we'll put in the in the description of the podcast. There'll be links to resources that will help you, and you know, sometimes I think what might be helpful, is for you to use a private journal and a pen, and write these things down because until you develop the discipline of doing this, sometimes it's helpful, one to have a CHEAT SHEET, which is what I'm giving you and two, to write your answers down, cause what it does when you write your answers down, it slows you down. It slows your mind down, to keep in pace with your heart, and it helps you not to lose the juice, the gold, or whatever comes when you ask the questions.

So, I would say to you, we need to remove the clutter. We need to Marie Kondo our world, and we need to clear out the clutter in our hearts. So, does this spark joy in me, is one way that Marie Kondo does that, and I'm suggesting that the practical way that you would do that is to remove some of the clutter, being the unforgiveness, and the lies that we're carrying.

And so when we remove the clutter in our hearts, we can access the peace that Jesus has for us. And when we access the peace that Jesus has for us, then our hearts are ready to receive the joy that is all around us. We can be living in the moment, and in the joy of the moment. And look friends, what's been really interesting for me is that this has allowed me to access the joy in other people's situations because you see, when my heart was hard, or hardened, if I say it that way. If it was cold, then I wouldn't really get into the joy of someone else's moment. But when I've got a healthy heart, when I've got a soft, pliable heart, when I'm ready to give and receive love, then I can love other people in the joy of their moment, and life is much, much better.

Is your heart full

So, as I close I would ask you, is your heart full? Or would you like your heart to be full. And so, if you would say yes, then join me in the journey and let's both of us do ourselves a favour and remove the clutter from our heart, and the clutter from our world. So external and internal.

Firstly internal, to remove the clutter from your heart is about going on a journey to remove unforgiveness and to replace lies with what God says is true. So that's how you declutter your internal world.

How do you declutter your external world. Well, I would suggest that when we examine our lives and our patterns, we would find habits and lifestyle choices that are actually robbing us of the joy that life might want to give us. Habits and joy.

So, working too long is one. Watching TV for too long, or just bingeing Netflix as a way to turn off the world. Look, that's not bad and short doses, but if it's become a bad habit, then it's robbing you of joy. I'd absolutely suggest to you that for some people, social media is a bad habit that needs to go. You just flick, flick, scroll, scroll and you're absorbing, just the junk that people share on social media, and it's just clogging your mind up. It's like just piling up crap in your head space that's affecting you. So that's a bad habit. In a more extreme sense, perhaps physically, some people are using alcohol, or drugs to self-medicate, and you might be saying to yourself, hey, look, it's only a little, I can handle it, but I need it to get through the week. Look, that's a signal that it's not healthy, and therefore it should be removed. So, I'll let you examine that for yourselves.

And the final thing is perhaps I might suggest to you that there are people in your life that are causing clutter, that are stealing joy from you. And cutting people out of your life is absolutely necessary for your own sanity and your own health, and so perhaps we'll do a podcast on that another day. I've got some stuff that I can share on that, but this is not the time or the place.

But I want you to think about, you know the people that bring tension, that bring hatred, that bring bitterness, that brings sadness, and they just like, negative and you don't need that. So perhaps you want to put some healthy boundaries in place, protect yourself and declutter your circle, and that might mean that you don't see those people.

Well, interesting session today as I share with you the positive experience of my heart being full, but I also share with you the process that I've been on, the pathway that I've been on, that would help me search for peace and for joy, and I would hope that you've taken something from this that might help you on a journey to search for peace and joy in your world, so that you can truly join me and say, yes my heart is.

So, as I close, I would say don't forget to access the resources that we have for you. They are in the description below and you can find that on any podcast channel. You can find it on our website. You can find it on Spotify, Apple, Google Play, or wherever good podcasts are. But make sure you access the resources, so there's a transcript there if you want to search through what I've been sharing. There is a download for you that's like a CHEAT SHEET that will help you work through the declutter of your internal world. And of course, make sure you subscribe so you get notified. We're dropping episodes every week, and I would love to spend more time with you as I share my heart, my journey, and my life of faith with you.

So, May God richly bless you. May you have an amazing week, and I look forward to catching up with you soon.