

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

Welcome to the old fashioned on purpose podcast. So prepare yourselves. This may be a slightly controversial episode today, but it's been rattling around in my brain for a while and due to some continual themes I'm seeing in comments that we've been receiving on YouTube videos and Facebook videos. I thought it was time to hit it head on so we haven't getting some comments. Some are snarky, some are just inquisitive about how we have tractors or a nice shop and how our homestead looks different than other homesteads they may know of either locally or online. So I'm hitting these head on today. We're going to bust through some common beliefs surrounding homesteading and it should be interesting. So here we go. I'm your host Joe winger and for the last 10 years I've been helping people just like you who feel uninspired by modern life. I'll show you how to leave the rat race and create the life you really want by learning how to grow your own food and master old fashioned skills.

Speaker 1 ([01:14](#)):

So in case you missed it, I recorded an episode, it was earlier this month. This is January. At the time of this recording, it was January 1st and I called it, I'm not hiding anymore. And in that episode I told you how my focus for this year is all about being bold and not being afraid to talk about topics that I have previously kind of kept in the background and really just hit things head on. So this topic in this episode is definitely one that can be a little bit uncomfortable to talk about because money can make people weird, like talking about money makes people weird and uncomfortable and it brings up all sorts of beliefs cause we all have a lot of beliefs around money, whether those are perpetuated by our families or our culture or whatever. Money's one of those topics. But in the interest of my new found boldness this year, we are diving right in.

Speaker 1 ([02:20](#)):

So here we go. Okay. So the backstory on this, like I alluded to in the intro is whenever we post a video on YouTube, which we have been doing with more regularity lately, Christian has been taking over our YouTube channel a little bit and creating that content. Inevitably you're going to see kind of our homestead in the setting in which we live. Just in the background of those videos and you'll see that we have a big red shop and you'll see that sometimes Christian will walk by the driveway and you'll see we have a skid steer or some tractors, or a horse trailer, things like that. And so we've been getting some comments in those videos even though the videos aren't focused on those things. People have been noting, noticing them and saying things like, Oh, it must be nice to be well off and well, how do you afford the nice tractor and the shop or you're pretty lucky because most farmers are always struggling or my personal favorite, you must come from a rich family to have those things.

Speaker 1 ([03:32](#)):

Now, like I said, some of them are just honest questions and they don't bother me a bit. Others are a little more snarky, which aren't my favorite. But I will say that whenever we get these comments, it kind of sets me back a little bit, like every single time, number one, because people have no idea what we have been through to get to where we are today. And I'm just like, Oh my gosh. Like I don't expect everyone to know our story. Obviously that's impossible, but I'm always like, Oh, if they only knew. And number two, because I have felt and noticed this subconscious belief floating around in the homestead world that in order to be a legit homesteader or farmer that you kind of have to be broke. Like you only earn your badge of honor if you're a broke homesteader who's struggling to make ends meet.

Speaker 1 ([04:31](#)):

And I am tired of that belief. I'm just tired of it. So first off, I want to take you guys on a little bit of the trajectory of how we got where we are today. And if you've listened to our intro episode or heard our story elsewhere, some of this will be things you've heard before. Some of it will be new. And then after we get through that, I want to offer some personal advice and encouragement for you. Sound good? Alrighty. So as many of you know, we started off Christian and I as a very typical young newlywed couple. Um, we didn't have grand aspirations. We thought pretty small. We were just expecting to follow the path that everyone around us followed because we did not realize you had a choice to do life differently. We had not yet had that revelation. So we had gotten married, Christian was working as an electrician.

Speaker 1 ([05:35](#)):

I was working as a vet tech, not 100% full time, more like three quarter time. And so we had an income and a half ish, no kids. But you know, we live in Wyoming. Incomes here are definitely not on the super high end. And so we had a budget and it was a tight budget. Now at that we had started following the Dave Ramsey model and if you're familiar with that, you know, it's staying on a debt, not putting things on credit cards, living below your means. So that was definitely helpful. And so we had been married about a year and a half. We had money in savings. We were living very, very, very frugally. And we decided that we wanted to start shopping for a property. And I won't go through all the details of that cause it's in other episodes. But long story short, we found the property we have now and we were able to afford it because it was actually less money than a lot of starter homes in town.

Speaker 1 ([06:37](#)):

We're like in the neighboring towns because it was tiny, like 900 square feet. Nobody in their right mind wanted to live in that except us. And we probably weren't really in our right mind. And it was way far away from civilization and Walmart, which most people aren't willing to sacrifice for. So we took on the sacrifice of small house, no contact with civilization because we were able to get the land in some sort of kind of outbuildings, uh, and kind of get us rolling. So that's how we started with the property. It was not a dream property was not a beautiful property. In fact, it was a sad little neglected property that most people would've passed over. But that's where we started. We borrowed less than we were approved for and we had no other debt at the time. I'm not saying we were rolling in the dough at that time, but we had no other debt.

Speaker 1 ([07:33](#)):

And so that also enabled us to be able to afford our first mortgage payment, which really, like I said, comparatively to other houses in the area, the mortgage payment was on the lower side, which was good for us. Now when I get to this point in this story, sometimes I'll hear people say things like, when I, when I talk about being out of debt, Oh, that must be nice, right? Oh, well lucky you, you didn't have debt. And I just want to underscore that staying out of debt and not having car payments and credit card payments was a very, very conscious choice. And it was hard. People literally made fun of us for the cars we drove. Like we drove ugly old Ford Tauruses and beat up trucks that always were breaking down. And I didn't like it. Like there was no glory in that for me.

Speaker 1 ([08:29](#)):

It was not the path of least resistance. It was extremely difficult. It was frustrating. We would see people around us getting nice trucks and nicer vehicles and getting toys and we were always like feeling kinda like the losers because we were driving the \$2,000 Ford Taurus with a dent in the door. However,

thankfully we had the foresight to know it was still the right path for us, even though it was hard. So when people come up to me and act like we were lucky to not have debt, there really wasn't luck. Now that being said, I don't want to discourage any of you who do have debt, who do have credit card payments or car payments like you are. It is not the end of your story. You 100% can get rid of those payments with some strategy and with some work and with some sacrifice and you also can have that clean slate.

Speaker 1 ([09:24](#)):

People are paying off debt every single day. So that is, you're not stuck. And just because maybe you didn't start off debt free like we did, doesn't mean it's too late for you. But regardless, either way, it's difficult whether you are debt free, living below, you know, beneath your means or you're trying to get out of debt. It takes consistent sacrifice and consistent choices that are generally counter cultural. And when you do anything counter cultural, Hey, the culture doesn't like it. So you get some pushback and you have to learn to be okay with that. Okay. Off that rabbit trail, back to the house. So once we were in our house, slash, homestead, we were super strategic because we had to fix it up like it was livable in the home. The outbuildings and fences were not very usable. So in order to fix the fence and fix the roofs and all of the things that were broken down, we were very, very strategic.

Speaker 1 ([10:20](#)):

We had to go slowly, like we had to budget out, okay, we can afford this fence line this summer. We're going to have to wait on this fence line until the next year. And you've heard me talk before, but we sometimes would cut corners in projects. We would use cheaper materials, we would use less materials just to try to keep it within the budget. The cutting corners never worked out so great for us. Like we always ended up costing us more in the long run because we had to rebuy materials cause they would break and snap and bend. But you know, we were doing the best we could and I know some of you are in that stage right now where you are budgeting your fence posts or you are saving every scrap of pennies for a land purchase someday or you're trying to do what you can with what you have.

Speaker 1 ([11:08](#)):

And I see you and I'm so proud of you for keeping on, keeping on putting your one foot in front of the other and not giving up. Cause we were there 100% for a good couple of years. That was us. Now it was in this timeframe when we were working our same jobs in town and I at some point I got pregnant with our firstborn, so I quit working. I came home to be a stay at home mom. So we only had Christian's income and for a while we kind of just stayed in the box. We believe the same story, that everyone around us with believed that once you had your job, the job, your grownup career, that that was it. Like you just kind of stayed there, put your head down, did your thing, your salary was X amount of dollars and you just stayed in the system at that same pay range until you die or retire, whichever comes first.

Speaker 1 ([12:09](#)):

Right? So we believe that for a while, and then the light bulb came on and at that point, business ownership was totally not in our brains at all. But Christian started to realize that he could very strategically move up the ladder with his career. Now he doesn't have a college degree. He was an electrician. Right? It's a skilled trade. So he had started to, you know, he got his journeyman's license. Then he kept studying and got his master's license and he kept improving himself with different certifications and different trainings. And he rose the ladder. And when, you know, he was obviously super responsible and super on the ball and his employers would recognize that and either give him

raises or give him more responsibility. And so we started to become very strategic with his career and seeing how he could climb the ladder and he actually changed jobs there.

Speaker 1 ([13:09](#)):

It was probably a five or six year period where he switched jobs fairly frequently. He went from working as a commercial electrician over to a wind farm, like with a giant wind turbines. He had no clue about wind turbines but he learned and then he went to teach at the local college and teach wind energy there. And then he went to a, a pipeline, a gas pipeline in our area that was being built and it wasn't, he wasn't switching jobs because he got unhappy with them necessarily or he couldn't get along with his boss. On the contrary, he would learn everything he could at a job. And if you felt like you could not continue to move up the ladder, he would just shift a little bit and he would stay in his industry. Like he was still using his electrical knowledge, but he kept shifting.

Speaker 1 ([13:56](#)):

And what that did is it would allow him to build his resume and, get more responsibilities and he became more sought after. So when he did apply for these higher skilled jobs, he usually got them and the employers were, you know, chomping at the bit to hire him and it bumped our budget capacity up. It increased our income. So that was really crucial. And it was kind of like this strategy game for a while. And um, it took some thinking and planning and a lot of hard work on his part and a lot of focus because at first glance you would think that, Oh, I'm in my job. I can't move forward. Here's why I'm for 40 years. But I'm telling you all this because I know that not all of you want to be an entrepreneur. Not all of you want to start your own business, but I'm assuming most of you or your spouse has a job or a career.

Speaker 1 ([14:50](#)):

I feel like there's always a way to move up the ladder, maybe not in your exact field, but maybe in a neighboring field or a neighboring niche. And I just wanted to tell you Christian's story because he was able to do a lot, even without owning a business at that point, or creating or inventing his own thing. That was a game changer. So you can do a lot, even as an employee to not only increase your income potentially, but increase your skillset and make yourself more valuable if you're meeting, uh, to increase your budget for your homestead stuff. So anyway, um, in addition to moving up the ladder like he did, we also, you know, we're budgeting out what projects we could do and what extra money we needed. We started looking at what sort of odd jobs we could take on. Um, some of you heard me talk before, we cast lead bullets for awhile.

Speaker 1 ([15:42](#)):

That was super fun. We would trade with neighbors. Christian would do electrical work in exchange for hay or the use of the tractor or we would borrow the backhoe if we needed to like dig up our sewer system, Leechfield, which was a wonderful project. I hope we never do again. But we were able to do some bartering and some strategic trading either with, uh, actual items or with skillsets that helped us get some projects done without renting equipment in town or buying as much stuff. So that took some creativity and some definite sacrifice. I remember those bullet weekends when we'd be sitting out in the cold shop casting bullets for like 12 hours and I'd be sitting on a bucket and I could, like, my butt was numb by the time I walked back in the house. But I knew we had to do it cause I wanted to build the fence lines and I wanted to fix the barn and that's what it took.

Speaker 1 ([16:38](#)):

So that's the early years. Right. Fast forward to where we are now. A lot of, you know, the rest of the story, but we got into building businesses started off as a blog for me. There's, I have another episode. I think it's in the number 40 or 50 ish where I talk about my blog becoming a business if you want to go check that out. But starting the blog, which then transformed very strategically into other business income streams, whether it was creating digital content of courses and eBooks that we offered for a fee or getting into essential oils. And that was a huge, is a huge income stream for us, which again, took a lot of thought and a lot of sacrifice. But that was a huge game changer. Right now we're working on some grass fed beef we plan to sell to the public.

Speaker 1 ([17:26](#)):

I do business coaching, so our business has like, I think of it like an octopus with all these little arms out there floating around. But that now has been the number one thing, the number one driver that has allowed us to increase our income and write our own paychecks. So I'm a little bit biased. And if you ask me, you know, what's the best way for me to increase our income and get the home set of our dreams and buy the land and get the things I'm going to generally say start a business, does not have to be a blog. In fact, blogging is a really rough way to try to start a business these days because the internet has changed so much. But it can be, there's millions of different businesses, service based, product base, online, local retail, whatever. Think about your strengths and your interests.

Speaker 1 ([18:18](#)):

And for us business ownership was the secret sauce. Now all of that being said, I don't want to paint that with this big romantic brush that, Oh, we started a business and our life was instantly just different because building what we have built has required insane amounts of sacrifice. Like people have no idea, where the rest of the world is off on the weekends, going to the Lake, going to the movies, like doing their thing. Christian and I work and yes, we still rest. And yes, we still take time off and do fun things, but we work a lot. We love to work. Building my businesses is one of my biggest passions in life, but it creates more, I don't know what the right word is. More stress or more things to put in the calendar and it's not for everyone, right? So, um, building a business is wonderful, but on the other side it takes a lot and you have to be willing to consistently sacrifice for weeks and months and years on end sometimes before you see the payout and not everyone's willing to do that.

Speaker 1 ([19:25](#)):

Right? So yes. Getting out of debt was key. Being strategic with our budget is key and then building the businesses have been key. And here's the deal. As our businesses have grown or income has increased, here's our strategy, here's what we do. Um, we use money as it increases in our life to create more time. Right. Let me say that again. We use money to create more time cause the number one question I get is how do you do it all? And I do not do it all. I hire help and we invest in systems and things that help maximize our time because time is more valuable than money to me. Time is more valuable. And so with our increase in funds that our business has brought us, um, we buy things like skidsteers that save us time and moving hay and drilling postholes and moving gravel and rocks and dirt work around the homestead.

Speaker 1 ([20:28](#)):

The stuff we used to do with a shovel back in the day, it's now, you know, a tiny fraction of the time thanks to the skid steer or the tractor. We bought haying equipment or actually just a bailer and a tractor, not all the haying equipment quite yet. We bought that a year or two ago. It was a big

investment. It was a strategic move that would actually save us money in the long run because we have some partnerships on hay ground and if we make our own hay, it's actually cheaper to feed our cattle than buying it all outright. Right? So it's a lot of math. It's a lot of number crunching. It's a lot of strategy. But we use income to increase our time. And that's why you see some of the things around our property that you see. It's not an an effort to be flashy.

Speaker 1 ([21:17](#)):

It's not an effort to have, uh, keeping up with the Joneses vibes going on. We use those things to create more time and yes, even with all of that, we still follow the Dave Ramsey thought of no debt, right? We still buy everything used. Haying equipment, used tractors, used skidsteer, used trailers, used and we still pay cash, right? We do not put things on credit cards or on payment plans. But that is our story and that's how we got to where we are. And we started off like really anyone else and have built it very slowly and very gradually and very strategically to what we have today. And you know what, I'm going to, I maybe I couldn't have said that several years ago, but I'm not ashamed of it. And I'm, I'm kind of getting tired of this feeling, maybe not always spoken, but underlying this a little bit of shame from the homesteading community towards people who they deem having it good or having it easy or that we don't count because we've built it to a different level.

Speaker 1 ([22:31](#)):

And if you've ever felt like that or felt a little bit of animosity towards someone homesteader or not, that you perceive as, you know, having it easy. I just going to ask you like, isn't that the American dream though? Isn't that what we're all technically striving for? And I think most people would pick if they cut a choice, right? They'd pick a tractor and a postcode driller over digging post holes by hand if they could. And all we did was get very, very strategic. So we were able to ultimately choose that tractor over the post hole Digger that you use with your two hands and go from there. So that's the story. Hopefully it wasn't too rambling. Um, hopefully I was able to express the things that I felt like I needed to express. I have a prediction here that two things will happen in response to this episode.

Speaker 1 ([23:25](#)):

Cause I've seen this happen before. So number one, I expect that some people will email me with all the ways that their story is not like mine. And I will get some excuses as to why they're really truly stuck in their situation and they really truly can do nothing to change it. And if that's you, and that's what's been going through your mind as you've heard me talk or maybe you wouldn't email me, but you've just thought it, I'm going to say this with all the love that I can, but I, this is the truth and this is what I want you to hear is that if you want it bad enough, you will find a way. Otherwise you will find an excuse. And I know your story isn't mine. No one's story like mine. My story isn't yours. We all have different paths and different nuances to our lives.

Speaker 1 ([24:11](#)):

But I know that you can create your own story and your own path of getting to where you want to go. It doesn't have to look like mine, but it can look like what you want and I know you can figure it out if you want it bad enough because trust me, like it might hear as I was telling our story, not mine, not here. It might seem, it might seem to you as I was telling our story that it was easy, but trust me there was a million obstacles that we had to figure out along the way. And that is really what it's all about is finding those obstacles and overcoming those obstacles and the people that are dedicated enough to do that. That's where the magic starts to happen. And number two, I predict that the other response to this

podcast episode will be some emails that I'll get from folks telling me that they're just cool where they are and they don't want to feel like they have to go to the next level.

Speaker 1 ([25:12](#)):

And honestly, if that's you, that's so awesome. Like you don't have to get the land or buy a hundred acres and a milk cow to do your version of homesteading or living old-fashioned on purpose or whatever you want to call it. If you're doing your thing in your backyard and you're loving it and it is rock in your world, then you do you. And that is so awesome, right? Not everyone is cut out for off-grid homesteading like the whole hog homesteading or entrepreneurship or business ownership. So I'm not telling you by any stretch of the imagination that you have to suddenly create a want for this. If you don't have a want for it, you're not feeling it. If you're cool where you are then just relish in that and do your thing. Now. However, if you do have the fire in your belly, right, if you do want what I have described and you, you kind of want to branch out and get the land and get the cows, then I'm going to encourage you to go after it and change the story that maybe you've been carrying for awhile, that it's not possible for you or you can't do it or your income is the way it is and you can't change it, or you'll never have enough money or you'll never have enough funds because I'm going to challenge you that that's just a story and you get to rewrite that even if it doesn't seem possible at this point in time because it sure as heck didn't seem possible for us at the beginning.

Speaker 1 ([26:48](#)):

If you would have told me we had the power to create what we have created, we just had to be committed to that and figure it out. I would've told you you were crazy. Like I wouldn't have believed you. But looking back now, right? Hindsight is 20-20. I see that we were keeping ourselves basically at the beginning, beginning in a cage of our own making and telling ourselves we had to do things a certain way and we had to stay in the certain jobs and we had to do things like everyone else. And that literally was just that a cage that we created. And we had the power to bust out of that. And we did eventually. But when you're in the cage, sometimes it's really, really hard to believe that you can break it down and get out. And so the first step is changing your story and changing what you're telling yourself is or isn't possible.

Speaker 1 ([27:33](#)):

And I know your situation is definitely different than mine, but I have faith that you have the guts and the creativity to make it happen. And only you know what you really want truly down in your gut. Right? And it's your job to go after it. But here's my request to the homesteading community as a whole. We have got to stop acting like staying broke is a badge of honor in the home set or farming world, right? There's nothing wrong. And there is no shame in starting there or being there right now, but we have got to stop perpetuating the stories that we have to stay there. Right? I do not believe that being broke is a more noble way to homestead. It's a reality for some, it was a reality for us at the beginning, but if you want to change that, you can.

Speaker 1 ([28:30](#)):

It's a choice and I know that we'll make some of you uncomfortable. Maybe we'll make even some of you angry. That's okay. It's not easy to hear, but it's vital that if you want to do something else, you know that you can, you can get creative, you are not stuck and you can think outside of the box. Will it happen overnight? No way. It doesn't happen overnight. Didn't for us. It won't for you. But it is possible with enough grit and enough perseverance. And the good news is those are two very, very

homesteaders traits anyway, so they're good to have. They're good to develop. And you got this my friend and that is it for this episode. I'm curious to see what kind of emails I get out of this one. It may be good. It may be sketchy. We'll see. Um, but anyway, I had to say it, so I did. Thanks to everyone for listening. Thanks to everyone who leaves a review over on iTunes. I read every single one. I appreciate your support and that is all for this episode, but we'll chat more next time on the old fashioned on purpose podcast.