



Episode 45: Receive a New Beginning

I'm Emily P. Freeman and welcome to The Next Right Thing. You're listening to Episode 45.

We're continuing our summer series this week so if this is your first time listening in, you may like to know that my podcast episodes are always short, but this month and some of last month they've been even shorter. It's a partial solution to my needing a break this summer but also loving the podcast and not really wanting to disappear completely from your Tuesdays.

That's something I've learned this year from my friend Tsh Oxenreider who says this, "Life is full of partial solutions where there's a way to get a need met, and it might not be the ideal way, but it's a way that *works*."

She's teaching me the art of partial solutions.

If you're working to discern your next right thing, it's a good skill to develop.

I've been practicing it this summer with these shorter episodes because, as a one-woman show, shorter episodes practically mean less time to record and less time to edit which offers me a much needed break.

As always you can find me on Instagram @emilypfreeman or online at emilypfreeman.com where you can find a recent post I wrote called 10 Favorite Things of Summer that's something else I'm learning. If you feel overwhelmed with a full schedule, make a list of your favorite things! It's super fun and a small way to encourage yourself and remind you that even though you might be busy, and even though this season might be full, there are still lovely gifts to hold onto and making a list can help you remember them.

Speaking of lists, we are over six months into this new year and if you are someone who makes a list of resolutions or goals this could be the time of year where it feels like any good intentions we had at the beginning have faded into dusty memories. But each morning we get a new chance, and today is no different.

So give yourself the gift of 5 minutes, the space to listen to scripture and see if God has anything to say to you today. Let all those contradictions that might feel tangled up inside you rise up to the surface, the motivation and the exhaustion, the desire to savor the moments and the longing to rush ahead.

As is our practice this summer, I'll read to you a portion of scripture and then share a short reflection. So, settle in and listen without an agenda and see how you might receive a new beginning today.

“Remember my affliction and my wandering, the wormwood and bitterness.

Surely my soul remembers
And is bowed down within me.

This I recall to mind, Therefore I have hope.

The Lord's loving kindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail.

They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

‘The Lord is my portion,’ says my soul, ‘Therefore I have hope in Him.’

The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, To the person who seeks Him.

It is good that he waits silently For the salvation of the Lord.

It is good for a man that he should bear The yoke in his youth.

Let him sit alone and be silent Since He has laid it on him.

Let him put his mouth in the dust, Perhaps there is hope.

Let him give his cheek to the smiter, Let him be filled with reproach.

For the Lord will not reject forever,
For if He causes grief,
Then He will have compassion
According to His abundant loving-kindness.”

Lamentations 3:19-32

This is the word of the Lord, it is absolutely true, and it is given to us in love.

As we make our way through the middle of the year, we admit our resolutions have been covered over by the daily task. We've entered into the rhythm of ordinary days even as we may be transitioning into a new season.

We continue to carry habits we want to put down but they keep following us, as if they are tied to our ankles, trailing heavy behind us no matter where we go.

It could be easy to resign.

It could be easy to be swallowed up by defeat and overwhelm, not all at once but such that by this time next year, the idea of freedom from the burden of these habits will seem foreign and far off.

But God has made each day new. And that means today we can choose to begin again.

I used to think maturity would mean I would stop engaging in bad habits, destructive patterns, and all of those things I do I wish I would stop doing.

I'm learning ever so slowly that maturity and a growing faith show up not in our ability to stand up straight and blameless, but in our willingness to turn, again and again, back to the face of God. Not once, but a thousand times once and then a thousand times more.

We would be without hope if not for our Kind Companion. Jesus came not to make all new things but to make all things new. Not some things, but all things. Not easy, not quick, *but new*.

Our work is to acknowledge the old. His work is to bring forth the new. Our work is to turn. His work is to transform.

Our work is to believe it has been done, and then to live like it's true. His work is to make it true indeed.

May we acknowledge the loving kindness of God as he walks with us in the new light of morning, both today and then again tomorrow.

“The Lord’s loving kindnesses indeed never cease, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

May our friend, Jesus, work in you and through you to enable you to receive new beginnings and discern your next right thing in love.