



109: Wait Until The Morning

I'm Emily P. Freeman, and welcome to The Next Right Thing. You're listening to Episode 109.

This is a podcast all about making decisions but also about making a life. Here we are, entering a new year and a new decade, and surprise, I still have things to say about decision-making and doing the next right thing. A special thanks to Girl on a Rock, who recently left a review on Apple Podcasts, saying this. "My friend sent me a link to one episode, *Becoming a Soul Minimalist*, and when I finally came to, I had listened to six episodes. Let's just say I've now listened to every episode, in order of creation, on my morning walks."

Well, thank you so much. P.S., she says, since she started listening to The Next Right Thing, she's also joined hope*writers and read all my books. So of course I trust everything she says. Anyway, thanks for listening, Girl on a Rock, and for leaving a review. Clearly she's a long-time listener, but if you're new around here, new episodes drop every Tuesday and we keep them short, usually under 15 minutes. That's on purpose so that you can listen in one sitting, or on a short commute, or on an around-the-block walk, and you can hear a thoughtful story, a little prayer, and a simple next right step.

For the first time since starting this podcast, I didn't take any time away from recording episodes during Christmas and New Year's, so if you're just now getting back into your listening rhythm after the holidays, there are two episodes waiting for you. One was a bonus, *For Anyone Longing for Home*, and that dropped on Christmas Eve, and the other one was Episode 108, an encouragement to walk at your own pace, which is a good reminder, especially here at the beginning of the year.

Well, back in Episode 70, we talked about the best time to make a decision. Spoiler alert, being a good decision maker has less to do with having a certain kind of magically decisive personality and a lot

more to do with timing. In today's episode, I'll share one simple practice that's helped me this very week to make better decisions for my own life. Listen in.

I spent the first morning of 2020 with a solid, dependable morning routine of reading and prayer. Seventeen hours later, I spent the first night of 2020 hysterically recounting to John the 748,000 things I had to do before Monday and the zero time it felt like I had to do it in. There may have been shouting. There were definitely tears. It's a whole thing, being a person. I share that with you, not in an effort to be vulnerable or whatever, but as a reminder that even when your morning routine is solid, by the evening you can still crash and burn.

Upon reflection (P.S., looking back is how I process the world, you might already know this) but looking back I can identify a few reasons why that night was particularly stressful. One, it was New Year's Day, which meant the kids have been home for 12 days straight, and while I was able to take about a week of that completely off, for the last part of the break, I'd been trying to fit my full-time job into, laughably, part-time hours.

So that was one thing. But the second thing is that it was the night before our twins turned 16, which I could get into, but I won't because you probably already know, or could guess, the emotion that comes on the eve of milestone birthdays, both our own but also those of our children.

Both of those are good things. I have a job I love and healthy girls growing up, cry me an actual river, right? But I share that just to say that even good things carry weight, and the truth is neither one of those things on their own led to my New Year's Day tearfest. It was actually the third that was, I think, the biggest culprit. And that was that I had an unmade decision looming over my head. Actually, I had several unmade decisions. And those unmade decisions were piling up past a deadline, and I sat there at 11 o'clock at night feeling like I needed to make them, and now.

Unmade decisions hold power. The less control we have over the outcome of those decisions and the less choice we have in the decisions themselves, the more power they seem to hold. Let's just say this at the top. Not everyone wakes up on New Year's Day with lots of options. I know that, I get that, and

it's humbling to admit that. If you're listening to this right now though, chances are you have some options and the weight of choosing between them can be a heavy one, especially as you consider them at the end of the day.

As it turns out for me that night, John listened to me say all of my words and list out all of my woes. Have I mentioned to you how lovely he is? We'll talk about it later. But then he offered this simple next right thing.

"Okay." He said. "Let's go to bed." And so we did. Nothing was decided. Lists were not made. Choices were not carefully weighed until midnight. It wasn't the time for that. Instead, it was time to close the day, to lay down my body in surrender, to trust the Lord is my shepherd, who says he gives me everything I need.

My friend, Traci, told me once that she and her husband don't make any decisions after 6:30 at night. I might have that time wrong, but the principle is the same. If at all possible, they hold off until the morning, when the hope of a new day is bright and the mind and body have been renewed. Sometimes the morning brings new mercies, and other times it's true, those mercies seem far off. But to give that unmade decision its best chance, I've found I've never regretted waiting until the morning.

If you have a decision hanging over your head and you can feel yourself becoming irritable, anxious, weary, and weighed down, maybe your next right thing has nothing to do with the decision and everything to do with getting some rest, taking a breath, closing the notebooks, the computers, the phones, the lists, and just going to bed. This decision cannot wait forever, but can it wait until the morning? And then, and this is key, when morning comes, have hope. Weigh your options, listen to your life, trust God and do the next right thing. Make a choice. You can't base that choice on what you don't know, but you can go by what you do know. So choose in confidence, trust yourself. Not that the outcome will be what you hope, but that your process for getting there was as healthy as you could make it at the time. And then, dare to trust it.

This time, don't second-guess yourself. One of my favorite authors, I quote her often, Leean Tankersley, she says, "My mom has always told me that the most transformative decisions are made from a place of strength, not weakness. We do not bully ourselves into decision making. We believe

ourselves there.”

I love that quote, and now I’ll join my voice with hers and remind us all to make our decisions in the morning and trust the path it took to get us there was one paved with stones of belief beneath our feet, not rocks of warning thrown in our face. We can make good decisions, and most of them can wait until morning.

No matter what, remember these words from Romans 8:38 and 39, that say, “Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present, nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

When it seems the morning forgot to bring your dose of new mercies and instead shows up rude with no more coffee in the bag, love and trust become a more difficult choice. It still counts when it’s easy, but it means more when it’s hard. Some mornings are like that. Difficult to see, weary for the day, longing for time to slow down or hurry up, depending on the list in front of you. So heat up the water and make yourself some tea. Wrap your hands around that steamy cup, close your eyes and receive the abundant gift of your own belovedness. You are the object of God’s great affection and he gives you the discernment to do your next right thing in love.

Thanks for listening to Episode 109 of The Next Right Thing. I hope this simple habit of waiting until the morning can be just one more rung on the trellis upon which your rhythm of life can continue to grow. Because it’s true, this is a podcast about making decisions. The bigger truth is that our daily decisions are actually making our lives.

As always, you can find me at emilypfreeman.com, or on Instagram @emilypfreeman. Of course, I always appreciate hearing what you think about the podcast, so to help more people find their way here, it’s especially helpful if you leave a review at Apple Podcasts. And tell your friends. Maybe you have a friend like Girl on a Rock from the top of the episode, who’s just waiting to binge all 109 episodes of this podcast.

Well, in closing, I'll leave you with a few words from a Psalm of David, found in chapter 143:8.

“Let me hear your loving kindness in the morning, for I trust in you. Teach me the way in which I should walk, for to you I lift up my soul.”

This is the word of the Lord. It's absolutely true and given to us in love. Thanks for listening, and I'll see you next time.