



## 251: Why Sabbath is For Everyone with Ruth Haley Barton

I'm Emily P. Freeman, and welcome to The Next Right Thing. You're listening to Episode 251.

This is a podcast about making decisions, but also about making a life. If you struggle with decision fatigue, chronic hesitation, or if you just need a few minutes away from the constant stream of information and the sometimes delightful, but also distracting hum of entertainment, you're in the right place for discerning your next right thing. Today I'm glad to welcome guest Ruth Haley Barton to talk about an important and often misunderstood spiritual practice: Sabbath. Ruth has spent over 20 years as a student, a practitioner, and a leader in the area of Christian spirituality and spiritual formation. She served on the staff of several churches before founding The Transforming Center, a ministry dedicated to creating space for God to strengthen the souls of leaders, equipping them to lead transforming communities. She reflects regularly on spirituality and leadership on her own podcast, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*. Ruth has written several books that have been transformational in my own life, and her most recent release is called *Embracing Rhythms of Work and Rest: From Sabbath to Sabbatical and Back Again*. This is what I cannot wait to talk with her about today. Listen in.

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Emily:

Well, Ruth, I've been following your work for many years now and I largely credit your book *Invitation to Solitude and Silence* back from 2009. Is that right?

Ruth:

I don't know.

Emily:

Never ask an author when the book came out.

Ruth:

Yes, I know, I know.

Emily:

Well, it's been some time. It's been a minute.

Ruth:

Yes.

Emily:

And I credit that book really as one of the first, if not the first, that kind of woke up the contemplative in me. And one of the things I love the most about your work is how you talk about our life as rhythm. Was

there a particular catalyst that woke you up from your own lack of rhythm?

Ruth:

Oh yeah. I mean, there have been more than one occasion when God woke me up again because I think teachers and writers, they teach and write what they most need to learn. So the fact that my writing keeps coming back around a rhythm says that I'm continuing to write about what I need to learn. And so when I wrote *Invitation to Solitude and Silence*, that came out of a time in my early 30s when I had been performing effectively in the Christian life, and was having some outward effectiveness and productivity, but had to acknowledge that there was an interior mess that was going on and questions that I didn't have any answers for unresolved emotional things in my life that came from early experiences as a pastor's kid. Performance oriented drivenness that I couldn't seem to slow down even though it was hurting me and hurting others.

And so at that moment, that was when God first began to draw me into solitude and silence through a good spiritual director. And so that was probably the earliest wake up call, but there have certainly been others since then. And I do write in the new book, *Embracing Rhythms of Work and Rest* about another kind of wake up call that I had that actually invited me into Sabbath. So I would say these wake up calls have come at different times throughout my life, but that was the first one.

Emily:

I wonder if you'd be willing to discern for us the difference between these three S words, silence, solitude, Sabbath.

Ruth:

Oh, thank you. Oh, I love that question because yes, I would like to distinguish between those three. Solitude by definition is the time that we're with God and God alone. So it's sort of like a date night with a friend or with a spouse or something like that. It's the time you have set aside to be with that person. But there are also then decisions and choices that you can make within that time. So say it's a friend, well you're giving this time to each other, but you're going to decide what you're going to do together, and where you're going to go, and how you're going to make sure that what you choose to do meets your desire for that relationship. If you're married and you have a date night, there's still lots of choices to make. You set aside the Friday night, but you still get to choose, are we going to a movie? Are we going out to dinner? Are we going out for a walk? What are we going to do together?

So solitude to me is the container for our spiritual practices. And then we have choices about what to do within that set apart time and space. And silence is one of the choices that we can make. In silence, we withdraw not only from our life and the company of others, but we withdraw also from our addiction to noise, and to words, and to activities as ways of shoring up our sense of self and distracting us really from our own inner realities. So silence is one of the choices we can make in our solitude time. And in fact, I suggest that people begin their solitude time with some silence because silence is a time of open receptivity to God, where we allow God to take the initiative with us, and where we allow the inner chaos to settle, and we're open to whatever God wants to bring, whatever God wants to do in that time.

And then we can add on some other things too. We can engage scripture, we can journal, things like that. We can pray with words, but silence is one aspect of what we can do in solitude. And the two coupled together are really, really powerful. I think a lot of Christians actually have solitude, they call it a quiet time, but they fill it up with so many Christian activities that they keep it as a time of productivity, and achievement, and getting things done and checking things off the list. And so even quiet times, if we're not clear on what they are, can actually be times of a different kind of Christian busyness and a different kind of achievement and performance, which is really sad. So I had to realize that about my own quiet times when God began to invite me into solitude coupled with silence.

Now Sabbath is different than that and I think that's one of the areas of confusion that Christians often have is that we think about Sabbath as being the same thing, as solitude and silence. And it's really not because Sabbath is a communal discipline. By definition, the Sabbath is a practice that we engage in with others, with those we live with, hopefully with the faith communities that we're a part of our, hopefully our faith community's existence is ordered around this time for Sabbath. But it was given as a communal practice to the Israelites and it is meant to be a communal practice to this day. So I think one the real downsides of thinking about Sabbath as being the same thing as solitude is that then people who have young families think, "Well I can't do Sabbath because I can't get any solitude." Well, yes you can. You do it with your family. You find out ways to practice Sabbath with those that God has given you to love and to do your life with.

And so it can be slightly different and then, in that you find more restful ways of being with each other, more delightful ways of being with each other as you cease your work and you're fully present to the gifts of God in your life. But Sabbath is fundamentally different than solitude and silence because it is a communal practice. Now, if you can get some time in solitude and silence within your Sabbath practice, thanks be to God. Amen. Take it. But we shouldn't set up the expectation that Sabbath is going to be the same thing as solitude because it is not, in the way it was given and in what its intentions are.

Emily:

I so appreciate the distinction between those. And I'll say I'm embarrassed to admit, embarrassed maybe isn't ... Maybe that's a strong word. I confess to you that when I read that portion in your new book, *Embracing Rhythms of Work and Rest* about Sabbath being a communal practice, I think I maybe knew that in my bones, but I don't know that I've brought that to language yet. So I thank you for stating it that way because that did begin to shift for me how I see it. And it took maybe the pressure off a little bit to have to create something that feels very sacred and set apart. And while it maybe is that in some ways, inviting one another into it, I think that's a whole different perspective on it.

Ruth:

Yeah. And when you see it as a communal discipline, you see it as a time for being present in some different ways with the people that you love and that you usually do your life with versus I'm trying to get away from the people that I usually do my life with, which is really sad if it gets reduced to that, where we're all trying to get away from our loved ones in order to have Sabbath. That is just so wrong in every way, it's just wrong.

Emily:

Ruth, you know this as a spiritual director and just as a leader and as a person, people are desperately hard on themselves. And you talk about Sabbath as a gift from God, we don't know how to receive. And I have to say there's a part of me that feels like this is a gift we have to work for. I don't think that's true, but in my practice sometimes that feels true. And so what would you say to the person listening who feels like Sabbath or practicing Sabbath is just one more action we're supposed to do that we're not very good at?

Ruth:

Yeah, yeah. Well I thank you for picking up the thread of gift because I was raised in a very fundamentalist environment in a pastor's home where we did practice Sabbath but in a very legalistic way. And I think that's part of the reason why I resisted Sabbath for so long. So here I was in my 40s practicing solitude and silence and teaching people about spiritual practices, but I was actively resisting the Sabbath, which is one of the most clearly given practices in scripture. But I was actively resisting it. And I think part of the reason for that is the very thing that you just named, is that I didn't see it as a gift. I saw it as an obligation, and I saw it as something that was devoid of delight and joy and I just didn't want it because I hadn't experienced it as a joyful thing. But once you begin to see it as God's great gift, and maybe you can't see it as God's great gift until you get tired enough. I don't know.

Emily:  
That's a great point.

Ruth:  
But it was my tiredness then in my early 40s where I had been achieving for God and doing really important Christian things for a long time, where I realized I was so tired that now the idea of Sabbath started to look like a pretty good thing to me. And so I started having this guilty pleasure of reading these beautiful books about the Sabbath, Abraham Heschel and Wayne Muller, and I'd read them, but I thought it was outside of my ability to have, because I was a mother with young children. And I thought, I can't have that but I can at least have the pleasure of reading about it and knowing that some other people get that, but I don't think it's realistic for my own life. But eventually, as I did let myself see it and read about it as the gift that it is, then eventually the desire deepened into a certain kind of desperation. And I said, I want that gift and I want to order my life to receive it.

It's sort of like if I could say receiving the gift of a baby, you have to get ready for that. You have to get a crib, and you have to get some diapers, and you have to have a room. And it is a great gift and we would never say it's not, but it is a gift that you have to order your life for. You have to order your life to receive it and enjoy it and actually have it. And so that is the same thing with Sabbath. You have to order your life to receive it and to experience the gift that it is and to actually have it in your life takes a certain level of intentionality. So I like your phrase that you have to work for it. Maybe another way to say it is just that you have to order your life for it. You have to arrange things for it so that you can actually have it and receive it.

Emily:  
In your experience, did it take some time for it to begin to feel like a gift or was it immediate?

Ruth:  
The idea of it, actually, let's put it this way, I had to start to see it as a gift and know that it would be a gift before I could actually enter in. And because I entered into it as a gift, something that I was receiving as a gift, at that point, I never did see it anymore as an obligation because of the way I entered in. And I think that that's a really important nuance right there, that we enter into it as a gift and that's the only reason that we enter into it. And even though, yes, it is the fourth commandment, Sabbath keeping is the fourth commandment, which to me indicates to me how important it is to God for God's people. But in terms of entering in, I began to really explore it as the great gift that it is, and biblically and historically the Sabbath was one of the best things the Israelites could have ever imagined for themselves. And I think we really do need to locate ourselves within the context of when and how and to whom Sabbath was given.

Because for the Israelite people, they had never had a day of rest in their life. They were in captivity, they were subject to the Pharaoh and to the task masters to keep producing seven days a week. When they were given the Sabbath, it was signed symbol and lived reality of their freedom from oppression. Like it was nothing but a gift to them. That was a day when God provided for them and they could stop working and they could stop being subject to harsh task masters. Somehow we have lost this fine nuance that is so present in the historical context of Sabbath keeping. Is that for them, it wasn't an obligation at all. It was the greatest gift they had been given in a long time. And it can be the same for us as well, because I believe that we also live in places of bondage and need liberation from our addictions, and from the way in which the culture continues to push us to produce and produce and produce. And that Sabbath, even for us is signed symbol and lived reality of our freedom from oppression.

Emily:  
Well, speaking of that, I would love to hear you talk a bit about Sabbath's privilege because especially in the last few years, I'm asking more and more of the question, is this also good news for the poor? Is this

also good news for the marginalized, for the single parent, for the person working several jobs, for the person who looks at their literal calendar and says how and when?

Ruth:

Well, I asked that question too, and obviously you read and know that I questioned myself about that as well in finishing up this book. And began to really search out answers, good answers to that question with people that have passion around identifying what privilege actually is and what's actually involved. And again, it was helpful for me to go back to the original giving of the Sabbath and to realize that it was actually given to an oppressed people. It was not given to privileged people. It was given to an oppressed people as signed symbol and reality of their freedom in God, the freedom to live their life on God's own terms for them, and to trust in God's provision and to experience God providing for them. So we have to be really, really careful about assigning the Sabbath to the category of privilege because it didn't begin that way, and it's not how God gave it and it's not what God's intention was in giving it.

Now I realize though that there are certainly issues for the very kinds of people that you've mentioned. And I think that's another reason that points to how important seeing Sabbath as a communal discipline actually really is that we are actually creating communities who are envisioning their life together in community as a community that actually enables and guides and makes decisions and practices that which is consistent with the rhythm of Sabbath rest. And that whole communities, I think it's very hard for individuals to solve these issues for themselves, but whole communities can start to solve these issues and can start to have the conversations about how can everyone in our community experience the gift of Sabbath? And so on my own podcast, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*, I had a fantastic conversation with Rich Villodas about how they are working really intentionally around the question of how can we make sure that everyone gets a sabbath?

And I love hearing what they're doing concretely, they're talking about generosity and how can small communities generously make Sabbath available through financial support for those who think that they cannot take a sabbath? Because if they give up that day of work, then they give up income. That's a small community sort of feeling to it. But then also dealing with political aspects and the actual rights that people have to a way of working that is doable for them. And so I even think that communities, when we elevate this conversation about Sabbath, we can actually start to brainstorm together what could we as a community do to make sure that everyone here can experience a sabbath? And then eventually use even political means to bring more equity to our life together as human beings. And to see the Sabbath as something that is a right for all of us. I mean it is a God given, not privilege, but right to work six days and then rest on a seventh day. So how can we as Christians begin to bring this to our economic realities? One of the authors that I quote in the book, Norman Wirzba talks about a Sabbath economy that actually exists to ensure that each person in that economy is able to have that Sabbath rest that they need. I do not think it's associated with privilege. I think it's actually associated with the oppressed and with God's intention to liberate us all from being in bondage to the forces of culture that convince us that we have to work 24/7. They're very, very big forces at work here that need to be confronted through our own individual practice, but also to what we could even call prophetic communities that begin to confront economic realities. And the way in which many of us believe that we're not free.

Emily:

The systems are strong, Ruth.

Ruth:

They are. They really are strong. And I wonder if part of the support of a Sabbath community, and as you know, I really go there, I go to the place of talking about Sabbath communities versus just, I do not leave this book just resting within an individual practice. I actually push us in this book towards the communal elements. And I also wonder if part of the function of Sabbath communities could be to create forums and conversations where people who believe that their life does not make Sabbath possible, could actually



brainstorm ideas, and actually be resourced to think in different ways. And even to receive support if they have to go back to a boss and make significant decisions in their lives, that there's communal support for that person, if there was retribution for needing to make these important decisions. But feeling like you have a community behind you who is not only teaching and guiding but actually supporting you as you make your important decisions for how you and your family are going to live sanely.

I really hope that some communities will embrace this as part of their call. Because I also talk in the book about the fact that the Sabbath teaching and the Sabbath guidance needs to come from the senior leadership. Because it was given to Moses, and Moses was the one that walked with the people to help them when they were confused. It was Moses who helped them understand what Sabbath really meant and the depth of it in terms of its coming from the heart of God. And I'm really praying that part of the result of this book will be that people, leaders in particular see this as part of their leadership task, creating communities that actually not only teach and guide but also support people in making really important decisions around their rhythms.

Emily:

It is such a counter church cultural way of thinking unfortunately because a lot of times, as you mention, and I've heard you say this before, is a lot of my kids' generation, for example, and even just behind me, they look at some of our busyness or the generation ahead of me, and think absolutely not. So I join the church so that I can burn myself out and then I have to ... It's the cycle.

Ruth:

Yeah. So I can be busier.

Emily:

Maybe I just won't start that, maybe I'll just avoid it altogether. But this idea of having a Sabbath community, it's like turning it inside out and upside down in all the best ways.

Ruth:

Yes. And wouldn't it be wonderful if younger people could say, "I joined that church and they taught me how to have a Sabbath. I joined that church and they taught me how to have sane rhythms of work and rest. They taught me how to have a way of life that works." Wouldn't that be amazing. But I don't think most young people see the church as being that at all right now. But I'm hoping that we could be, we could see a new vision because you're absolutely right. The younger generation, they are so disillusioned with what they see and what they see in the generations before them, that I think that this could be a place where the older generation and the younger generation could meet.

And that is in our shared desire for a way of life that works, and in our shared desire to establish these rhythms of work and rest that sustain us as human beings in God, in God's way. I don't think we can say that too strongly that Sabbath, the Sabbath rhythm is God's way of saying to us, "I already have an idea for a way of life that works." I already have this idea and it's what I want for you. In my love for you, it's what I would like for you.

Emily:

Well, speaking in terms of rhythm, it's a rhythm we keep having to come back to and remind ourselves, learning and unlearning. You talked about during the early days of quarantine and lockdown, you developed an addiction that I think a lot of us shared with you, Ruth. Could you tell us a little bit more about that?

Ruth:

Yeah. Oh, it was kind of embarrassing. So in the beginning of COVID, I'm not a person who watches the news, I have never been a person who watches the news, not ever. But during COVID, it was also if we

could use that hackneyed word, unprecedented. And I know we hate that word, but it's true. I have never lived through anything like what COVID was. I had never lived through these COVID numbers, people dying, hospitalizations, the rules that kept changing for going out and getting groceries and all that. There wasn't really any way to navigate through without being connected with the news. And so I began this habit. We began this habit of watching the news every evening at the end of the day. Well, you never knew when they were going to do the COVID numbers. And so you had to make your way through all sorts of other bad news to get to the COVID numbers and whatever new regulations there were. And it was also a very volatile time politically, if anyone remembers what was happening politically at the time. And so I got drawn in.

So what I began to realize was that sometimes not only would I listen for the COVID numbers, but an hour or two later and I was still watching the news and there was nothing else to do. So in a way it wasn't as impactful. But then eventually I realized, oh my goodness, I've gotten into this pattern. It is really not good. It gets me riled up, it keeps me having dark thoughts. I'm so frustrated with what I'm seeing on the political scene, and I realized that it was becoming very, very detrimental. But even though I knew that I couldn't stop it, which is how you know what an addiction is, that even when you know it's not good for you, you do it anyway. And that's how I knew it had gone over into a place of addiction.

And eventually as things started to even out and it was no longer so necessary to know the COVID numbers and hospitalizations and all that sort of thing, then I started to wonder, how do I get myself out of this? Now that I have been so patterned now, I watch the news every night, how do I get out of this? And I realized that the Sabbath was part of God's way out for me, and that was that on the Sabbath we wouldn't watch the news, and that that would be a part of the resting that we would enter into. And so it began to break the addiction and I began to feel again how good it was not to have the news taking up so much of my head space, and weighing so heavy on my heart and on my psyche. And it was the Sabbath that reminded me of how good it is not to let just everything in and to be more wise. And it really sort broke the hold that the news had begun to have on me. So it's amazing what Sabbath can do.

Emily:

It's amazing what Sabbath can do, what God can do through Sabbath. You mentioned watching the news wasn't inherently bad. It was my addiction that made it bad for me. And we can say that about so many things. And I think rhythm, living in rhythm, the more we do it, the more we recognize when we're out of it. And so it's kind of like my mom was a bank teller for years and she talked about how they didn't show you the counterfeit money, they just showed you the real money. And so you knew when the counterfeit came through, it was easier to identify because you know what the real thing is supposed to look and feel like. I've never forgotten her telling me that story. Well let's say we want to build a rhythm, begin to build a rhythm of Sabbath keeping in our lives, in our communities. What are some key movements for us as we're beginning?

Ruth:

Well, first of all, I think it is really important for the leader. And I know that probably many people listening are not necessarily the leader in their community. But I'll tell you, it goes a whole lot better when the leader is leading out on these things. Because when the leader is not leading out, it just leaves individuals to try to figure out stuff all by themselves. And oftentimes the work of the church and the rhythms of the church can actually work against an individual's Sabbath attempts. And that is tragic, if I could say when normal people in the pew or in the chairs or whatever have a desire for Sabbath and start to attempt it and then they realize that, "Oh my goodness, it's no longer the secular culture that's working against my Sabbath practice. It's actually the church and everything that they load into my Sundays and everything that they load into the week." And that was my experience. It was quite eyeopening to have that experience.

So my deepest hope is yes, that individuals would embrace Sabbath, but my deepest hope for this work

in particular is that leaders would get ahold of it and that they would begin to recognize their need for Sabbath, that they would begin to learn about it, live it, really embed it in their own lives and then out of the inner authority that comes from our own practice, that they would start to lead their communities in these things. And so I do offer a story of one pastor who begins to realize that he's in very, very bad shape and that he is exhausted and disillusioned. And honestly, if he had a choice, he would be leaving ministry. And so in a relationship with a spiritual director, he began to look at this issue of Sabbath and realized that his collapsing in the recliner and watching football for three hours was not exactly a Sabbath practice that was replenishing.

And so as he began to really work with the Sabbath in his own life, and to get it squared away, and to come back from his own dangerous levels of exhaustion, then he began to share it with his staff, with his elders. They began to have a passion for it. And then eventually they began to sense God's calling to share this with the community as a whole and also to begin to make their decisions, to really establish their own rhythms as a church, as a way that they were going to order their lives. And so they started to change their own rhythms, like for instance, finishing up church on Sundays at noon or whatever. And then nothing else happened in the church building that would require staff or volunteers or anyone else to be there. And so everyone would enter into Sabbath then, and everyone knew they were all entering into Sabbath together. And that was one of the ways that they began to establish it as a rhythm for themselves communally.

And then even when new opportunities and ideas would come, they would have more freedom to say, "But wait a second, how will that affect our ability to keep a Sabbath? How's that going to affect the staff? How's it going to affect the volunteers? How's it going to affect the congregants? How is this going to still make it possible for real people to practice Sabbath?" And sometimes it would actually stop them from putting something new on the calendar because they were so committed to the practice of Sabbath. So every decision now had the Sabbath component. That is becoming a Sabbath community versus individuals trying to practice by themselves. And that's a huge distinction in my mind as this book goes out into the world, is that communities would start to grapple with this together.

Now, it could be that one role that a congregant could play or the layperson could play is to share the book with their leadership and say, "Hey, I have a longing for Sabbath. I'm having a hard time figuring out how it works here with my own commitments to being a part of this community. Is there any way that we could read this together, and discuss this together and consider whether or not we could become a Sabbath community?" There's a guide for conversation in the back of the book, and I call it that because I think that's where it needs to begin. We need to start having some conversations and they shouldn't be threatening, they ought not be threatening, they ought not be blaming, they shouldn't be top down. They should be a deep, gentle kind of listening to people's longings and desires for a way of life that works, and that a community can enter into a season of, I would like to say a season of conversation about Sabbath and how we could have it alone and together.

And I just pray that there'll be some beautiful, wonderful, open-hearted receptive leaders who might be willing to receive this message into their hearts and into their community's lives and see how God might lead them in the midst of these conversations, and in the midst of these opportunities to pay attention to what our longings really are as Christian people on the Earth now.

Emily:  
Maybe so. Maybe so.

Ruth:  
I hope so. I pray so.



Emily:

Well, Ruth, in closing, I have two more things. One is a question and one is an invitation that I would like to extend to you to read just a small portion from *Embracing Rhythms of Work and Rest*. But first the question which is one I like to ask all guests here on the podcast and that is, what is your next right thing?

Ruth:

Well, right now I am deeply in launch season and so if anyone who has written a book knows that the launch season of a book is always very demanding. And so I am trying to be very faithful to the demands of this season and reassuring myself and everybody around me that this is not going to last forever.

Emily:

There's an end.

Ruth:

There is an end. But I will say that I'm staying, if you can pardon the pun, ruthlessly committed to my Sabbath practice and that is always the next right thing for me. And as a result of this book coming out, I find myself challenged about my own Sabbath practice, and my husband and I have been doing some new things, and trying some new things and having some new conversations about Sabbath ourselves. So this message is alive and well inside me, and I'm going to stay faithful to this moment, and I'm going to stay faithful also to my practice because as I say at the beginning of the book, I do not think I'd be alive sitting in the chair today if it wasn't for this beautiful, beautiful practice.

Emily:

Well, on that note, would you be willing to read for us just this little portion in the middle of the book called *On Time*?

Ruth:

Yeah, it's a little interlude that I give people to take a break from sort of the heavy writing and just the chance to feel our own desire and to be in God's presence."There have to be times when you light a candle and find the tender place inside you that loves or sorrows or sings and you pray from that place. Times when you let yourself feel, when you allow the tears to come rather than blinking them back because you don't have time to cry. There have to be times to sink into the soft body of yourself and love what you love simply because love itself is a grace. Times when you sit with gratitude for the good gifts of your life that get lost and forgotten in the rush of things. Times to celebrate and play, to roll down hills, to splash in water or make leaf piles, to spread paint on paper or walls or each other. There have to be times to sit and wait for the fullness of God that replenishes body, mind, and soul. If you can even stand to be so full. There has to be time for the fullness of time or time is meaningless."

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Thanks for listening to Episode 251 of *The Next Right Thing*.  
I hope this simple practice of building a Sabbath community c

an be just one more rung on the trellis upon which your rhythm of life can continue to grow. Because while it's true, this is a podcast about making decisions, you know our daily decisions are making our lives. You can find Ruth Haley Barton at [transformingcenter.org](http://transformingcenter.org) where she also hosts her own podcast called *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*. Her brand new book, *Embracing Rhythms of Work and Rest* takes us from Sabbath to sabbatical and back again, and you can find a copy wherever books are sold. Well as always, you can find me on Instagram at Emily P. Freeman and online at [emilypfreeman.com](http://emilypfreeman.com) where you can also find a transcript of this and every episode thanks to Leah Jarvis who does our transcripts and show notes. And also a thanks and a shout out to the team at Unmutable who edits our audio every single week.

*The Next Right Thing with Emily P. Freeman*

Well, in closing, here are a few more words from Ruth.

“The human body and soul is accustomed to living in rhythms, rhythms of a night and day, rhythms of the seasons, rhythms of eating three meals a day and so on. Part of the restfulness of Sabbath is knowing that it always comes at the same interval so we’re not making decisions about it every week. To enter Sabbath time, despite all the challenges, there must be a real yes deep down inside. Yes to our need, yes to our desperation, yes to God’s invitation and the rightness of it before we even know how we’re going to make it real in our own lives. This is the very definition of faith, to say yes when we have no idea how it’s all going to work out.”

Thanks for listening and I’ll see you next time.