



### 303: The Quiet Collection 2023

I'm Emily P. Freeman, and welcome to The Next Right Thing. You're listening to Episode 303. I'm an author, a spiritual director, and an occasional workshop leader. I live in the Piedmont of North Carolina with my family and through my work I've helped thousands of spiritually thoughtful people overcome decision fatigue, so that they can discern their next right thing in faith, in work, and in life. You are enjoying this podcast ad free because of the generous support of subscribers to The Soul Minimalist on Substack. You can learn more and subscribe at [emilypfreeman.substack.com](http://emilypfreeman.substack.com). That's where we continue the conversation about discernment and decision-making that we start here, and that's for anyone who wants to move beyond the pro/con list.

If you struggle with decision fatigue, with chronic hesitation, or if you just need a few minutes away from the constant stream of information and the sometimes delightful but also distracting home of entertainment, you're in the right place for discerning your next right thing. Well, it's the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving, and that means it's time to share the scoop about this year's Christmas resources in The Quiet Collection app. Spoiler alert, I've got good news, I've got not great news, and I have some fun news. You want to hear it all? Listen in.

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The first time I created The Christmas Collection was back in 2017. That was the year of audio, I guess because it's also the year I started this podcast. But I created it because I wanted something we could count on for December. So, if every other solitary Advent intention flew out the window, all somebody would have to do is pop in their earbuds on the way to the grocery store and be reminded of the story of Jesus. So, often during Advent, especially here at the very beginning, I know for me I can get really excited about Advent devotionals or readings and I maybe bite off a little bit more than I can chew. And then when I get behind, I feel weird about picking it back up. It's a whole thing, and so I thought, wouldn't it be great to have something that comes alongside of readings that was audio so that you could take it with you as you go along the way?

So, it was short, and it wasn't something that you had to have the lights on for. And so, that year, 2017, I wrote out a daily offering for the Advent season. I recorded myself reading it. I

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found some royalty free music online, and I thought that would be it. I would create one resource for the Advent season. Well, little did I know at that time I was creating a whole thing because the next year I decided to offer it again, the very same one, one that I had created in 2017, I offered in 2018. Then the year after that for three years, we offered that same little audio collection for Christmas, and for three years new people discovered it. They enjoyed it, they bought it, and they bought it once and they could keep it forever.

Well, then along came 2020. You know how the story goes with the disorientation of that year. I was compelled to create a new version of that little Christmas collection, something that would reflect not only the celebration of the season, but also weaving some of the sorrow. I hired Caleb Peavey to create an original musical score for that collection that I created in 2020. And that began for me a beautiful personal rhythm of life where every September for the last three years, I would write a new audio collection, especially for Christmas. I would send Caleb the score sometime in the beginning of October and then I would offer it to you to purchase right after Thanksgiving. We did it that way in 2020, 2021, and then logistics behind the scenes got to be, shall we say, a bit much for my small team, and I used the word team really loosely because the team was me and Ginna, who was my at the time, my executive assistant/everything.

We have had tens of thousands of people purchase these collections for themselves over the years or give as gifts for teachers, small groups, family members, book clubs, neighbors, faith leaders. The list goes on, and like I said, at that time it was just me and Ginna. Now, I had Caleb's team doing the audio part, but as far as the customer service and the delivery, all that fell on us. Well, she worked her tail off to make sure everybody received their collections, and if they wanted to gift one, those gifting codes had to be sent out properly. I'm giving you way more information than you probably need or want, but I do want to just reiterate to you that I mean, we have people who would buy 10 or 20 collections as gifts and we were thrilled, but that kept Ginna real busy behind the scenes.

And so, last year in the spring, as you probably know, we decided to partner with a developer and create an app that would deliver not only the new Christmas collection for that year, but also house other collections like borrowed prayers and readings of the Psalms, some for sale and some for free. Well, listen, while the app was meant to solve a lot of our customer service problems, it also created a lot of problems. It's a whole thing. Most of the work I do in general starts in my head and in the head of my small team members and then we make it happen, but this one started in my head and then I had to hand it over to someone else to make happen. I've told people that creating this app over the last year and a half has been the thing I have spent the most money on and I have had the least control over because I'm not a developer, so I had to rely on other people, their timelines, their capacity to get the work done as is true for anything that we don't know how to do ourselves.

Well, I'll spare you the technical details, but I will just say that in 2022, this time last year, we had the newest collection for Christmas available on the app. Yay. But it was only available

for iPhone and not Android, boo. And the gifting functionality was not yet ready to go either, double boo, which meant that we not only were managing this new app, but we also still had to do gifting manually. But that brings us up to now, I'm going to start with the not great news. Are you ready? Are you ready? I hope you are. I had to make the difficult decision to not create a new version of the Christmas collection this year. That's the thing about being a person and not a machine is that you have to honor your own limitations.

And this year I've had many of them, but here is the good news. You like how I turned real quick to the good news? We've repackaged not only the 2022 collection, but also the versions established in 2020 and 2021, and we've brought them all over to The Quiet Collection app, and not only that, they're available now for iPhone and for Android. Also, they're named so that the same if you bought it last year, you still have it, but it has a new name now, their name closer to what they are, which is Advent collections because they're meant to be listened to during the season of Advent, which is now. So, this is the first time we're making 2020 and 2021 available, again, since they were first released. So, if you're new around here, those collections are evergreen, so you can enjoy them now as much as you would have back then.

Now, if you previously purchased those collections, you still have access the way you always did, either through your email or on our website. You might have to reset your password, but if you want access to those previous collections in the app, you will have to repurchase them. It's just the only way. Now, if you already have the app and you don't have automatic updates set up, just go to the App Store and update your app or the Google Play Store and update it there. And you'll see the brand-new Advent collections page where you can access the newly packaged former collections now called Hope, compassion, and love. And you'll see the established dates there so you'll know which year those collections belong to, and you'll know whether or not you already have them. These are also available for Android, like I said, so if you're missing a collection, you can get it now and we've made it super easy for you to gift any or all of the collections right there in the app. You just enter the email addresses of your recipients, and we'll take care of the rest.

Okay, so that was the kind of not great news. The good news, are you ready for some fun news? Well, I can't say a ton about it yet, but I can say that just because there's no new Advent collection this year doesn't mean there's no new collection at all. I have been working hard to create something special for those of you who have pre-ordered my next book, *How to Walk Into a Room*. It will be the newest collection in the app. It will be available in January. That is all I can say for now, but I'm so excited about it and I don't think you'll want to miss it. So that's something to look forward to and that's what I've had to give a lot of my time to this year during the time when I would have been creating a new Christmas collection.

Okay, Emily, sum it up already. Got it. Here's the review. There are no new collections this year for Christmas, but we've brought former collections onto the app for iPhone and

Android. So, there are three Advent collections available now, and if you want access to all of them in the app, you can learn how to do that right there in The Quiet Collection app. If you already purchased the form of collections, you can still access them in the old way that you got them the first time, whether through our website or your email or maybe you had a private podcast feed and you can go back and find it that way. If you want access to the former collections in the app, you will have to repurchase them there. You can also gift collections, all right there in the app. If you're brand new and you've never got a collection before, you can get all three at a discount. So, check out the Advent bundle. Again, that's in The Quiet Collection app for iPhone and Android.

Finally, stay tuned in January where I'll announce a brand new never been heard of before collection for anyone who pre-orders How to Walk Into a Room. Well, in closing, I wanted to leave you with a sample from track one of the Advent collections called Love. It's the first two and a half minutes of that collection to give you a taste of what you can expect. Listen in.

God said, let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night. They will mark events, sacred seasons, days, and years. They will be lights in the dome of the sky to shine on the earth, and that's what happened. God made the stars and two great lights, the larger light to rule over the day and the smaller light to rule over the night. God put them in the dome of the sky to shine on the earth to rule over the day and over the night and to separate the light from the darkness. God saw how good it was. There was evening and there was morning, the fourth day. This is Genesis 1:14-19. Thanks be to God.

We've rounded the circle again. We can see the space from a distance where the arc will close, and a new arc will begin. The end of the year is near. We may mark it with lights and plans and bubbly toasts and make it a big to-do, but when the last night comes, we'll engage our routine, brush our teeth, turn out the lights, and go to sleep like every other night. Even though we know it's just another day, we've all decided to market as both an ending, and a new beginning, and I'm glad for that.

We are a people who need to mark time. It's a way of naming and naming has a way of grounding. Another day we've agreed to name is the birthdate of Christ at the end of December, even though it's widely known that the person of Jesus was almost certainly not born at that exact time. Some say it happened in the springtime months, others say his was a mid-summer arrival and still other historians infer Jesus was born in autumn. If there was a way to know for certain the date of the birth of Christ, it seems we would've found it by now. Perhaps that is as it should be.

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Thanks for listening to Episode 303 of The Next Right Thing. I hope this simple practice of pausing in December can 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, the deeper truth is our daily decisions are making our lives. I hope checking out The Quiet

Collection is your next right thing because at some point during the month, you might feel extra frazzled, a little distracted, or a lot distracted, and maybe flustered despite your best intentions. When I get that way, it's difficult for me to sit and read or to focus my eyes on a page or to still my body long enough to settle into the story of Jesus, and that's where I hope this collection can meet you.

If you miss the former versions of the Advent Collections, I hope you'll be glad to get them now. All of the Advent collections include both audio and transcripts of every track. And if you have questions, just visit [thequietcollection.com](http://thequietcollection.com) to learn more, and hopefully they'll be answered there. As always, you can find me online at [emilypfreeman.com](http://emilypfreeman.com) or on Instagram at [emilypfreeman](https://www.instagram.com/emilypfreeman). Well, in closing, a few words from one of the Advent collections as we head into this season of Advent. No matter the shadows or the light, the presence of God is here. Let's travel together and look for God in every ordinary, and unexpected, and long awaited place. Thanks for listening, and I'll see you next time.