

Heather Thompson Day

it's  
not  
your  
turn

what to do while you're waiting for your  
BREAKTHROUGH

EXCERPT

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## ***It's Not Your Turn***

What to Do While You're Waiting for Your Breakthrough

June 29, 2021 | \$17, 208 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4776-1

*"Tired of clichés about counting your blessings? Then you'll love this book! It's Not Your Turn throws out those tired, guilt-inducing admonitions to just put on a happy face for Jesus and shows us the surprising, practical—and even fun!—way to wait in God's upside-down kingdom. My soul felt lighter just reading this book—and yours will too!"*

—*Sheila Wray Greaoire*, blogger at ToLoveHonorandVacuum.com and author of *The Great Sex Rescue*

# Living Life Intentionally Makes Lasting Ripples

We are always in competition with one another because we have constant access to each other. There was a time when you only competed with your neighbors over Christmas lights and tacky lawn ornaments. Now you can't pee without seeing how much better than you two hundred fifty of your "closest" friends are. Newsfeeds are filled with all the awesome philanthropy, money, and stardom your old college roommates have found. Then we look at our own lives and we feel like crap and so we talk crap. I can't tell you how many group chats I've exited. Friends screenshotting people's posts to poke holes where we can. It makes us feel taller if we can assure ourselves others are small. And so we keep racing. We race to be better, smarter, happier, healthier, and more successful.

We name our kids things like Apple and Atticus because we wouldn't dare allow one other kid in their class to have the same name as them (no offense, Janet). Our kids are an extension of us, and we are special. We are different. We are so happy and fabulous. Except studies show our depression rates keep increasing. A study in *Psychological Medicine* found "the prevalence of depression increased from 6.6 percent to 7.3 percent between the years 2005 and 2015 with an even greater increase (8.7 percent to 12.7 percent) among those ages 12 to 17."

I have unfollowed people I couldn't clap for. I remember that age-old adage, "If you don't have something nice to say, then don't say anything at all." The problem wasn't them; it was me. If someone is milking their work with missions for IG likes, that's on them. But the second I start a text thread scoffing, well, that's on me. Why are we competing with people who aren't competing with us?

I realized I hindered my own prayers by trying to block someone else's blessing. My refusal to just shut up and clap wasn't decreasing their success, but I do think it prevented mine. God isn't as worried about changing your circumstances as he is with changing you. The best thing that ever happened to my faith was watching other people open packages I had ordered. I learned to smile from the bleachers, even though they wouldn't have noticed if I had walked out. I had to accept it wasn't my turn, but it didn't mean mine wasn't coming.

And so, I faked it. I started to say I was happy for them, even when I wasn't. I would literally say over and over, *Heather, it's not your turn*. And while something inside me started to die, something better was born. I started competing with myself rather than with others, and in so many ways, started to truly live my life again.



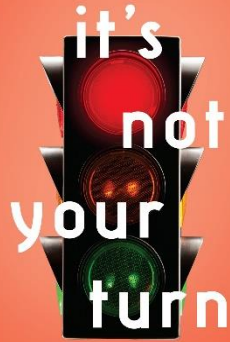
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*"I have spent my fair share of time in the waiting room, that place of sitting and waiting for it to be my turn. Anyone who has waited for the next step, the fulfilled dream, or the break of the glass ceiling will benefit by reading this book. Dr. Day gives us practical steps not just to wait but work, until it is our turn."*

—**Aaron Duvall**, teaching pastor at Victory Highway Wesleyan Church in Painted Post, New York, and former director of spiritual formation at Ohio Christian University

Maybe it's not your turn right now. Maybe you've been overlooked and underappreciated. Maybe you have ten bridesmaid dresses but no groom, or enough rejection letters for a bonfire. Maybe you can't stomach another baby shower or to type the word "congratulations" one more time. What do you do when everyone else gets the move, the relationship, the success, and the accolades?

You show up anyway. At the end of the day, all we have in life is our integrity. Our followers won't get us to heaven, and our success and riches can't come into our caskets. However, a life lived intentionally can make ripples that continue long after you are gone. You can't control your circumstances, but you can control how you show up to them. Suddenly, I realized obscurity was a really safe space to grow, and I could stretch further if no one were watching. If I lived each day walking toward my destination, how would that change the way I went through each step? What if some seasons are temporary, and we can make ourselves better in the waiting room? What if you don't have to wait until it's your turn to live like your turn is coming?

I woke up one day and realized who I am when it's not my turn is more important than who I will be when it is. Anyone can stand on a stage for a crowded stadium. It takes conviction to get up when no one would have noticed if you walked out. I want you to get up. Not for them, but for you. Not to outdo Sydney, but to outdo yourself. Now, I'm not saying that if you manifest hard enough all your wildest dreams will come true. Some people never get the wedding. Some writers never get the book. And some singers never see a stage. There is no magic wand for life that can put bows around all our broken pieces. But what if we commit to the journey anyway? What would happen to who we are as people if we committed to do the work in the dark with no guarantee of light? What if we don't quit just because we're tired? What if we don't run to win, what if we run to learn? What if we do our best, not for raises, but to grow? Is it possible we can end up with something better than a happy ending someone else gave us? What if we finish our lives with a dignity we could only have given ourselves?

I want to be a real Christian who follows Jesus where he is headed, rather than tells Jesus to follow me where I am headed. That starts when it's not my turn for accolades.

In fact, there's no better place to start, than when *It's Not Your Turn*.

—Adapted from chapter one, "It's Not Your Turn"



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Q & A



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Heather Thompson Day is associate professor of communication at Colorado Christian University and an interdenominational speaker and contributor for Religion News Service, Newsweek, and the Barna Group. She is passionate about supporting women and runs an online community called [I'm That Wife](#). Heather has been interviewed by BBC Radio Live and believes her calling is to stand in the gaps of our churches for young people. She is the author of six books, including *Confessions of a Christian Wife* and *How to Feed the Mediavore*.

# Learning to Clap When You Feel Like Crying

Share a little bit about a time when you realized it wasn't your turn.

**Heather Thompson Day:** When I couldn't get hired with a full-time job in academia anywhere, one of my best friends, Jewel, called and said she had just gotten hired by NASA. I literally choked on my congratulations. I was happy for her, but I was struck by immense sadness for myself. That's when I realized, *Heather, it's not your turn, but it is hers*. It's human to feel more than one emotion. I had to clap while I wanted to cry. I wasn't a bad person for feeling sadness or bitter for feeling jealous. But I did have to learn how to clap anyway. Because today, it was her turn, and she deserved to be celebrated. Just because it's not your turn right now doesn't mean your turn isn't coming.

What is the main theme of this book?

**Heather:** Who you are when it is not your turn is actually foundational to who you will be when it is. At some point I realized that who I chose to be when it wasn't my turn was more important than who I would be when it was. Anyone would get up for a crowd of people clapping for you. But it is people with integrity who show up when everyone else has walked out.

What three things do you hope readers will take away from your book?

**Heather:** You don't have to wait to start living your life when you get there. Life starts here. It's okay to watch someone else succeed. Their success doesn't rob you of your own. As you watch other people receive what you have been praying for, use that time of waiting to better yourself.



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