

# Finding Rest

*Crisis can be exhausting*, and exhausted leaders usually do not perform at their best.

Endless studies powerfully demonstrate that our sleep, both the quality and quantity, is incredibly important to a leader's health and everyday effectiveness. Yet it can be hard for a leader to sleep well in a crisis. There are often few available hours and your mind is working overtime.

To help you maximize your sleep in the midst of crisis, there are some important spiritual realities to consider:

- First, we are designed by God to require sleep.
- Second, sleep is a reminder that we are not God. He doesn't need to slumber or sleep (Psalm 121:4), but we do.
- Third, when we sleep, we are forced to relinquish control. In this act, we have the opportunity to choose to trust God to watch over all the pieces of our lives. As David wrote in Psalm 4:8, "In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety."

To help you with the spiritual side of sleep, here are three questions I seek to use each night before seeking rest:

## ***What are you thankful for?***

Start back at the beginning of your day. When were you blessed? Surprisingly, there can be many blessings during crisis. Sometimes these blessings are big and unforgettable. But also look for blessings in the ordinary and even in difficult moments. Keep searching until you find at least three things you are thankful for from the day. Then, thank God. This simple act of thanksgiving can positively change your heart and mind as you get set for rest.

## ***Is forgiveness needed?***

Taking guilt, shame, anger or hurt into your sleep won't help your rest. Psalm 139:23-24 reads, "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Pray this simple prayer, reflect on your day and confess to God if/when you identify any offensive ways. As you seek forgiveness for yourself, by God's grace also extend forgiveness to those who have trespassed against you.

## ***What do you need to entrust to God?***

Are you carrying some emotional, mental or practical burdens from the day and the crisis? Are there some people, situations, circumstances or unfinished business that you need to entrust to God? Taking this weight into the night, even subconsciously, will hinder your rest. Instead, pray a simple prayer like, "God, I choose to trust \_\_\_\_\_ into your good care this night."

Another helpful and beautiful night prayer from A New Zealand Prayer Book (p. 184) was given to me by a friend. I've shortened and slightly modified it. Find it on the backside of this tool.

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“Lord, it is night  
after a long day,  
what has been done  
has been done,  
what has not been done  
has not been done,  
I entrust all to you.”

**About Dr. Steve Brown:** Steve is husband to Lea and dad to three teens - Luke, Ainslea and Lauren. Based near Vancouver, BC, Steve develops Jesus-centered leaders as President of Arrow Leadership, an organization focused on developing Jesus-centered leaders. He's the author of "Leading Me - Eight Key Practices for a Christian Leader's Most Important Assignment", "Great Questions for Leading Well" and [www.sharpeningleaders.com](http://www.sharpeningleaders.com).

He loves communicating, coaching, and creating resources for leaders. Steve also teaches at Tyndale Seminary's Doctor of Ministry Program.



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