

READ THE BOOK

One Way to Live Effectively

Chapter 8: Resting in the Power

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Resting in the Power

Almost nine years ago my husband and I were serving at my parent's church. I was on the staff, and he was a volunteer at the highest level. We loved the people in that congregation, the youth and their staff, the parents and their children. We still do. Yet something inside us was stirring, and we started to ask God where He wanted to take us in our walk with Him. As it turns out, we were put into the position of having to choose whom we wanted to serve—the opinions of people or God's plan for our lives. I must be honest: this was the hardest decision I have ever had to make in my entire life. Marrying Trevin was an easier decision than this. Can I be honest again? Living for God is harder than just living as everyone else does. In the quiet of our first home, as there were no children yet, the walls were familiar with the voice of my prayers, and the pillows were soaked with my salty tears. The year was 2010, and we had been married for only two years, but we agreed God was moving us.

The decision to make a move was huge. Trevin was working at Costco when he asked God for a Bible verse to confirm the word he had received. And the Lord delivered. We don't necessarily need a Bible verse for every decision, but for life-

altering decisions we ask God for one. He has always been so faithful to us despite our perfectionist personalities; we're both firstborn. After receiving the word from God, Trevin and I received counseling from our pastors to help us process the transition from Nampa, Idaho to Portland, Oregon, which is where we are now. In that time of counseling many seasons changed for us, including the fact that we became parents! I gave birth to a healthy baby boy, and we named him Boston Matthew. His name means "a place that is a gift from God."¹ Little did we know our son's name had a special meaning in our story, as it still does today.

During this same time period, our church entered a tumultuous season, and one of our dear elders developed a neurological disease called Lou Gehrig's Disease, also known as ALS. Because of these three very big shifts in our lives, Trevin and I stopped talking about the idea of moving; we stopped dreaming about it, and we really didn't even ask God for clarity. We put the idea "on the shelf," knowing that if moving was God's will it would happen in His timing and we would just know. We decided to put our hands to the plow and continue to be faithful with what we had been given already, to be strong support and examples in the church, and to enjoy our little boy's first year of life. Our word wasn't more important than the season in which the local body of believers found ourselves.

In 2011 we celebrated our first Christmas as a family of three in our first home. Oh, how I loved watching my little guy rolling around under the real pine branches and playing with the bells. I remember specifically just lying there looking at the lights and soaking up every moment, as I thought about the Christmas

story and how much my God had changed my life when He granted salvation to me as a nine-year-old little girl. We were blessed, and we knew it.

On December 31st we decided to stay home instead of going to a New Year's party. After all, we were parents of a six-month-old and still needed to catch all the sleep we could. I put Boston in his crib, and I went to my room to sleep around 9p.m. Trevin came to bed later and also fell asleep. It was a quiet end to a year we never imagined, a year of blessing and a year of breaking.

Midnight came, and all of a sudden I was wide awake. Trevin's breathing patterned changed, and he woke up too. We both looked at our clocks, sort of confused, and asked, why are we awake right now? Trevin looked at me and said, "This is it. This is our year." I didn't even respond. I knew exactly what he meant. I hid those words in my heart as I wondered how the year would play out. I remember that moment so vividly.

The new year came: January 2012. Our church was in a season of prayer and fasting, seeking God for His direction for the year. I was sitting in the back row with my sister and her toddler while my dad shared a word with the leaders of the church. The word was this: "It's time to cross over!" The text was from the book of Exodus, when Moses was leading the children of Israel out of Egypt into the promised land. And there it was: the pastor confirming Trevin's word with his own words. I continued to hold each moment in my heart, and we emailed our pastors to ask if we could continue our pastoral counseling on the idea of transition with two great leaders who supported me during my years of Bible college.²

So, there we were, two years later, with the word confirmed by our pastor and two other mentors guiding us in our transition. Our lives had changed dramatically, and we were better for it.

At the end of our prayer and fasting season my parents, the pastors of our church, invited us into their office and asked us what we thought God had in store for us for the year 2012. Trevin looked at me and said, “Well, here we go!” I just cried, and so did my mom. We talked briefly about the timeline and how my dad would like us to go about transitioning our responsibilities to those who were on our teams; and we did our best, loving on our friends, saving our money, researching cost of living in Portland, and raising our firstborn.

Fast forward to May 24th, 2012, Trevin was in his truck, my dad was driving our moving truck, and my mom and I drove with the baby in our car to Vancouver, Washington to an apartment just outside of Portland, Oregon. We unloaded and unpacked, cried, and unpacked some more. The weather was cold but bright, and our apartment had new paint and new carpet, which I was grateful for, even though the apartment and streets were ghetto. We made it our home. During that month we got to know the area, visited our new church, made friends, and got reacquainted with individuals I knew from college who were now married with children themselves. When Trevin wasn't working at Costco, our schedule was filled with dinners and coffee appointments and exploring the area. Then it happened.

Only a few weeks had gone by when our new church was hosting a leadership team meeting, and we were invited to join. Trevin and I grabbed one of the executive pastors and asked if this was even appropriate. We weren't leading anyone; we had

just moved there. We had no fruit to show in this new season and nothing to prove—just us, our baby, and our choice to move there. The pastor looked at us and said, “Well, you’re leaders, aren’t you?” To which we smiled and replied, “Yes, we are leaders.” We do have influence.

We were excited to be at this meeting; but, of course, we didn’t know what was going to happen or who would be there. We were just happy to be with people who love to serve the people of God. These were our people. We took Boston to childcare and got to our seats, somewhere in the middle and kind of on the right side of the room, but definitely nowhere that was special. It was just the two of us, worshipping and hoping God would help us settle into this new land He had led us to. It was during this worship service that the pastor of this congregation, walked on stage and stood at the pulpit with his eyes closed. He was listening for the Holy Spirit to give him direction. He didn’t say a word. He didn’t move. He just focused on the Lord.

This particular moment of waiting on the Lord is seared in my mind, like a long, drawn out pause of time ticking slowly. There was silence. Then the pastor broke the silence with four short words: “You have crossed over!” My breath was taken away from me as my tears started to pour for probably the thousandth time in the last two years. With my hands over my mouth and my eyes shut tight, I remember saying “We did it!” We obeyed God, and it was hard.

Is there an area of your life where God is asking you to obey? Is it difficult to obey? If so, why?

Learning To Rest

When God gives us a word, it's important we rest in His timing, rely on those with spiritual authority in our lives, and never respond alone.

Resting in the power means resting in the knowledge that God's plans will happen when He is ready. Until then, we stay faithful to accomplish the responsibilities with which we have already been entrusted. This includes our physical health, finances, jobs, serving regularly at church, attending college, and our relationships.

Our job is to accomplish those things with a high standard. That can include such things as not acquiring debt, finding a good job (it doesn't have to be a fancy one, just not an illegal one), working to live (your job might not be your passion, but let it finance your passions), treating people with kindness, getting good at running errands, forgiving, and showing mercy. It means showing up on time and keeping your word when you make a promise.

Resting in the power means not avoiding the stuff in the corner of your room that needs to be dealt with. Resting in the power means taking care of what God has given to us and letting Him take care of what is coming to us.

God gives us great responsibilities in our work, our families, and our communities. We must take care how we talk *about* people and how we talk to people. We must take care of our homes and our places of work or education.

Resting in the power means trusting that God will make the seasons change in His timing. It means controlling our thoughts,

words, and attitudes; and not allowing them to wander until the day the seasons change. Resting means not rushing transitions.

Resting is feeling all of the emotions but not letting them change your mind or your actions. Resting in the power is an active trust to believe in more but steward what you have. It means reading your Bible until you understand and until you hear God.

As we make decisions about the plans God has for us, we have to consider two things: (1) God's moral will and (2) God's sovereign will. These two ideas are very complex, but we can simplify them. God's moral will is exact; it's a list of dos and don'ts. For example: lying, murdering, racism, pornography, and committing adultery are not acceptable. God's sovereign will allows us to make our own decisions as we learn and understand the Bible. For example: deciding on a career or a college. A practical guideline is to submit applications to locations for which you are qualified. It's OK to choose a place you think you would enjoy and make great pay for your age and experience. God's sovereignty covers all of our choices. He is so much in control that He can allow us imperfect humans to make choices, and each choice can lead to an understanding of His love for us. As we rest we must trust. As we rest God will see us through.

Love Is the Foundation for Powerful Living

One Saturday night I woke up in the middle of the night from a bad dream. I remembered all the friends I hadn't seen in a long time and some friends I had lost touch with since moving to Portland seven years earlier. I woke up grieving the loss, and I

felt so far from God. I didn't regret our choice to move, I just missed some people and wondered if they missed me back; and I recognized for some they probably didn't, which is why my heart was aching.

That next morning I woke up, and instead of sleeping in, I went to church to reaffirm my commitment to the Lord and this new church family. During worship, the Lord brought to my mind Romans 8:31-39:

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written:

“For Your sake we are killed all day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.”

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

When we spend time reading the Bible every day, and we need it to comfort us, it will!

A Picture of God's Love

Picture yourself on the edge of a cliff. Across the canyon is another cliff, and your goal is there—that healthy family lifestyle, healing from heartache, the power to forgive, starting a business, growing a team—it's on the other side, out of our reach. When we make decisions that help us reach those goals, we are building a bridge across the gorge. Each step we take is a step of faith, believing that we are closer to the goal than when we started. But how can we be so sure we are getting closer? We can be sure because the love of God is the foundation of the bridge. His love bridges the gap from one side to the other.

Just as Romans 8:39 says, “nor height nor depth . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God,” rest assured we can rely on the love of God to be the solid foundation for each step we take on the bridge we build.

We should focus on not just moving but moving in the right direction. That is progress. No matter how dark the situation, the Bible says in Psalm 119:105 that His word is a “lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” You can still make progress! And a little progress in an entire lifetime is better than no progress! A life lived focusing on obeying the voice of God is a life that will progress.

If you are looking to live a powerful life in the practical areas, rest in the power of the Bible, trusting that each step forward is supported by His love and nothing can separate you from that solid foundation. The more you read the Bible, the more you will see how much God loves His people and how well He treats them. Actually, you will find that mistake after mistake, dream

after dream, God is present being faithful to humanity, and to you, through all of it. He believes in you. Jesus wants to be your Lord.

Do you want to live a life that is effective? Work hard to accomplish the responsibilities you have on your calendar right now, believe God for opportunities to be effective, like my husband did when he had the opportunity to serve others in Japan, trust in His perfect timing, and read your Bible every day. Together, we can spread this idea of living powerfully and practically—living a life that is surrendered to Jesus our Lord and Savior, the expert of living by faith (Hebrews 12:2)—by allowing the Bible to shape our everyday decisions.

Start with the decision to read the Book.

Sources Chapter 8: Resting in the Power

1. “Boston,” SheKnows, accessed April 24, 2019, [https:// www.sheknows.com/baby-names/name/boston/](https://www.sheknows.com/baby-names/name/boston/). Also, “Matthew,” Behind the Name, updated May 31, 2018, [https:// www.behindthename.com/name/matthew](https://www.behindthename.com/name/matthew).

2. We originally started receiving pastoral input on our decision to move from the elder who developed ALS, it was after his diagnosis that we transitioned to receiving pastoral guidance from another pastoral couple who supported me during my years of Bible college.

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