



PRACTICAL GUIDE

THE

VINE
THE
TRELLIS
AND THE
CROW

CITY
ON A HILL

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THE VINE

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me." - John 15:1-4



At its core, the imagery of the vine and branches is a vision for human flourishing. In John 15, Jesus explains that God the Father is the vinedresser, Jesus is the vine, and we are the branches. If we desire to lead fruitful lives, we must abide in Jesus, remaining close to Him - the source of all life. Jesus assures us that if we abide in Him, we will bear much fruit, but if we fail to do so, we will be cut off from the vine.

Vines require more attention and care than trees to thrive. They require a vinedresser who will carefully remove dead branches and prune fruitful ones. A healthy vine needs a trellis, as vines are unable to support themselves and require a structure to grow upon. A trellis elevates the vine from the ground and spreads its canopy to provide it with ample exposure to the sun. Without a trellis, the vine will wither and perish. Similarly, as followers of Jesus, we require a trellis to assist us in abiding in Christ.

THE TRELLIS

The word "rule" comes from the Latin word "regula," which means "a straight piece of wood." A Rule of Life is a trellis that helps us abide in Christ and live fruitful lives. Like a trellis, a Rule of Life, curbs our tendency to wander and supports our frail efforts to grow spiritually. In essence, a Rule of Life is a deliberate and mindful strategy to prioritize God at the core of all our actions. It comprises a personalized set of spiritual disciplines that offer guidance and organization for us to stay attuned to and mindful of God in every aspect of our lives.

THE CROW

"And he told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them."" - Matthew 13:3-4



A healthy vineyard needs to be pruned and protected. It needs a trellis to provide support and structure, but also netting and repellents to protect the fruit from birds or what we like to call - the crow. In the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:3-4), Jesus warns that some seeds will fall on the path and be devoured by birds. In this parable, Jesus explains that the seed is the Word of His kingdom and the bird who comes to devour is the evil one. The crow is the evil one, whose purpose is to destroy your faith. If we're not alert to the devil's tricks and schemes, fruit will be snatched from our lives.

"A good rule can set us free to be our true and best selves. It is a working document, a kind of spiritual budget, not carved in stone but subject to regular review and revision. It should support us, but never constrict us." - Margaret Guenther Wife



HISTORY

The practice of having a Rule of Life has a long history, dating back to the early church and monastic communities. Christian leaders such as Augustine and Saint Benedict of Nursia created written rules to form and guide Christian communities towards deep spiritual growth. Even though many Christians throughout history have followed similar spiritual routines without naming it a "Rule of Life", the German pastor and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer established a Rule for his students in Finkenwalde to guide them towards holiness amidst the darkness of Nazi Germany. While Rules of Life may seem intimidating and burdensome, many Christians today are rediscovering the wisdom, freedom and joy of having a written Rule that is intentional, personalized, and flexible enough to protect them from burnout, laziness, condemnation, or apathy.

"Your way of acting should be different from the world's way. The love of Christ must come before all else." - St Benedict of Nursia





STEP ONE

FOUNDATIONS

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HOLINESS

"Holiness is not the way to God, it is the result of coming to God. We are not holy to be saved, we are saved to be holy. Holiness is not a burden but a joy. It is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and as such, it brings joy, peace, and a sense of purpose to our lives." – R.C. Sproul



As we embark on the journey of constructing a Rule of Life, it is crucial to have a strong foundation in sound theology. Our understanding of God's character and the Gospel shapes our approach to spiritual disciplines. Holiness is a joint endeavour between God and us. It is the transformation process of becoming more like Jesus, which begins now, and one day will be made complete because of our faith in Him. At the outset of this journey, we must keep in mind the holiness of God, fix our gaze on Jesus, and rely on the Holy Spirit for strength. We need to understand the necessity of grace-driven effort, remain anchored in God's Word, and remain connected in community.

Read through the following passages on holiness and reflect on the question below:

"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." - 1 John 1:5

*"For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations."
- Psalm 100:5*

"Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?" - Exodus 15:11

"You shall be holy, for I am holy." - 1 Peter 1:16

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification" - 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4

*"Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord."
- Hebrews 12:14*

Why does holiness matter?

JESUS

"The best way to overcome the world is not with morality or self-discipline. Christians overcome the world by seeing the beauty and excellence of Christ" – Thomas Chalmers



Read and reflect on the lifestyle of Jesus:

Prayer: Jesus often withdrew to quiet places to pray and seek God's guidance (Mark 1:35, Luke 5:16, Matthew 14:23).

Regular worship: Jesus regularly attended the synagogue and the Jewish feasts (Luke 4:16, John 7:10).

Care for others: Jesus consistently demonstrated compassion and care for others, particularly the poor, sick, and marginalised (Luke 4:18-19, Matthew 9:35-36).

Time in solitude: Jesus would often take time away from crowds and even His closest disciples to spend time alone in prayer and reflection (Matthew 14:23, Mark 6:46).

Fasting: Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights before beginning His public ministry (Matthew 4:2) and encouraged His disciples to fast as well (Matthew 6:16-18).

Sabbath rest: Jesus observed the Sabbath and taught His disciples to do the same (Mark 2:27-28).

Serving others: Jesus spent much of His time serving others, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, and sharing the gospel (Mark 10:45).

Scripture memorisation and meditation: Jesus often quoted scripture and used it to teach and encourage others (Matthew 4:4, Luke 24:44).

Jesus had a practice of simplicity: Jesus lived a simple life, not accumulating possessions or seeking worldly comforts (Matthew 8:20, Matthew 6:19-21).

What do you find appealing about Jesus' life? And what do you find intimidating?

HOLY SPIRIT

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." - Acts 1:8



Calling the Holy Spirit the "Holy" Spirit underscores the centrality of holiness in the nature of God and emphasises the Spirit's role in transforming believers into the image of Christ, who is the epitome of holiness.

The Holy Spirit is often referred to as the Holy Spirit, not the loving spirit, warm spirit, gentle spirit, or powerful spirit. This isn't just some sort of linguistic coincidence or fancy wordplay, but a reflection of the essential nature of the Holy Spirit. The term holy means "set apart" or "pure", and it underscores the fact that the Holy Spirit is completely different from anything else we might encounter in this world.

The holiness of the Holy Spirit is a reflection of the infinite and perfect purity of God himself, and it reminds us of our own unworthiness and need for God's grace and mercy.

The Holy Spirit enabled Jesus to be holy and he enables us to be holy as well.

Read and reflect on the following passages:

"Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness." - Romans 8:26

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit." - Galatians 5:22-25

"And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent?" - Luke 11:9-11

Write a prayer thanking God for the Holy Spirit and asking God for an awareness of the Holy Spirit in your life.

GRACE DRIVEN EFFORT

"28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." - Matthew 11:28-30



Our culture believes that rules exist to control and limit your freedom, but paradoxically, a good Rule of Life exists to free you, not enslave you. A good rule is flexible; it bends and is adaptable. A healthy Rule of Life is not a heavy yoke that crushes you, but a light yoke that gives you rest. In Matthew 11, Jesus is inviting wearied and tired souls to find rest, and yet note: His solution to rest is a yoke - a tool, a wooden crosspiece that is fastened over your neck to guide you.

Everyone has a yoke guiding them. The question is, is your yoke, your Rule of Life; life-giving or soul-destroying? Notice the paradox of this beautiful invitation: you will find rest for your soul by doing work!

The Gospel is the good news that we are saved by grace alone, through faith in Christ alone. In Ephesians 2, Paul explains that we are saved not by works but by grace, and are created to do good works. The theologian Don Carson once said, "People do not drift towards holiness." A Rule of Life can guide us to intentionally grow in holiness and do good works in response to grace.

"Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning." - Dallas Willard



Read and reflect on the following passages:

"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure." - Philippians 2:12-13

"Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work." - 2 Timothy 2:21

"But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy,"" - 1 Peter 1:15-16

"Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God." - 2 Corinthians 7:1

COMMUNITY

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved." Acts 2:42-45



Becoming like Jesus and growing in holiness is a communal effort. We require the support of one another to recall our identity in Christ, to nurture virtues and eliminate vices, and to cultivate beneficial habits. Together, we can ensure our affections are rightly ordered and encourage each other in the love of Christ. The phrase "one another" appears over 100 times in the New Testament, with around 59 of these instances containing specific directives on how we should relate to each other. While there are activities we can undertake alone, one cannot be a Christian in isolation. We need a community to grow into Christlikeness, and in turn, our community requires us to do the same. We become like Jesus in the context of community, and when we're isolated, we become a worse version of ourselves.

"Sin demands to have a man by himself. It withdraws him from the community. The more isolated a person is the more attractive will be the power of sin over him, and the more deeply he becomes involved in it, the more disastrous is his isolation." - Dietrich Bonhoeffer



As you build your Rule of Life, we encourage you to learn from others, build communal rhythms, and build habits of loving and serving others. Finally, we encourage you to share your Rule of Life with others to encourage them and get their feedback.

Read and reflect on the Colossians 3:12-15 and what it teaches about holiness and community.

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful."
- Colossians 3:12-15



STEP TWO

EXAMEN

11

EXAMEN

OVERVIEW

In Step 2, we're going to look at the prayer of examen, before reviewing our limits, and our current Rule of Life.

RENOVATION

Dallas Willard often said, “everyone gets an education” and “everyone is spiritually formed.” The question is, “what type of education are you receiving, and how are you being spiritually formed?” All of us have a Rule of Life, whether it's written down or not. Functionally, we all have a trellis: a structure of habits, principles, and values that shape how we live and follow Jesus. The purpose of this guide is to help you build a Rule of Life or, to be more precise, renovate your current Rule of Life.

“My rule of life prescribed as an absolutely sacred rite smoking cigars and also the drinking of alcohol before, after, and if need be during all meals and in the intervals between them.” – Sir Winston Churchill



THE EXAMEN

The Examen prayer is a reflective daily practice that involves recollecting one's experiences from the day. Originally developed in the 15th century by Saint Ignatius of Loyola, this prayer follows five fundamental steps, inviting individuals to observe the presence of the divine within the mundane aspects of their lives. The Prayer of Examen can be practised at any time of day, but many find it helpful to do it in the evening as a way of reviewing the events of the day before going to bed.

Our initial step will involve practicing the Daily Prayer of Examen to acquaint ourselves with this spiritual discipline. Afterward, we will apply this methodology to review our present Rule of Life.

EXERCISE #1

DAILY EXAMEN

REQUEST

Invite the Holy Spirit's guidance and light during your reflection on the day's events.

Pray: Pause and take a deep breath. Breathe in and out, breathe in and out. Begin by acknowledging God's presence and inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your reflections.

REJOICE

Recall the events and interactions of the day. Give thanks for the blessings and gifts you received.

REFLECT

Consider the activities, people, and thoughts of your day. Do you notice any physical tension in your body? Name to tame your emotions.

REPENT

Identify where you've fallen short in your relationship with God, yourself, your family and community, or creation.

REST

Look to tomorrow and allow God's ever-present love to renew you as you move forward.

Pray: God of all seasons, the sun has set, the night has gathered in, my soul slowly sinks into your rest, trusting now in the resurrection to come and awaiting your morning mercies.

EXERCISE #2

A BROAD EXAMEN

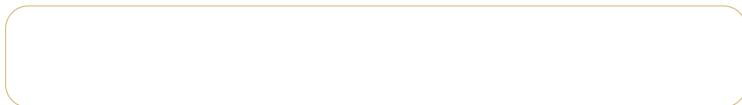
REQUEST

Invite the Holy Spirit's guidance and light during your reflection.

Pray: Pause and take a deep breath. Breathe in and out, breathe in and out. Begin by acknowledging God's presence and inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your reflections.

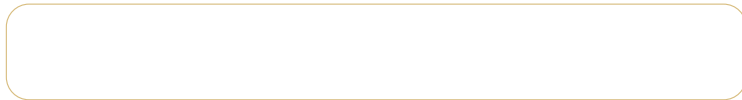
REJOICE

Identify and give thanks for aspects of your life where Jesus has grown you, such as the formation of habits or character development.



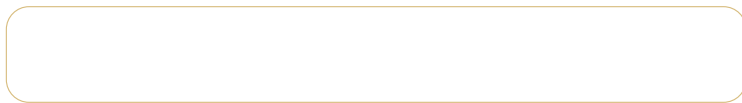
REFLECT

Take some time to pray and consider the ways in which Jesus is calling you to grow and develop.



REPENT

Ask the Holy Spirit disclose hidden areas of weakness or habits that are hindering your relationship with God, self, others, or the environment.



REST

Remind yourself of the gospel of grace and humble yourself before God, accepting your limits and your frailties.

Pray: Reflect and pray over "The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable." - Isaiah 40:28

EXERCISE #3

SEASONS

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: 2 a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; 3 a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; 4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance." – Ecclesiastes 3:1-4



A healthy Rule of Life is realistic. As we begin this journey, we need to be honest about the season of life we are in. Read through each season, and reflect on your life and relationship with Jesus.



Take note as you build your new rule:

If you're in an *Autumn season* - your current Rule of Life needs to be reduced and reviewed.

If you're in a *Winter season* - your Rule of Life needs to reduce stress and responsibilities.

If you're in a *Spring season* - your Rule of Life needs to include new challenges.

If you're in a *Summer season* - your Rule of Life can be added to and refined.

Which season are you in right now?

How long have you been in this season?

What do you think it would look like for you to be flourishing in your faith?

EXERCISE #4

LIMITS

A healthy Rule of Life is realistic. As we begin this journey, we need to be honest about our responsibilities and limits. Take time to reflect on your life, your health, your family and your roles in life. Each of us have limits in life that hinder us, instead of being frustrated by them, we need to recognise them as means of grace that God places in our lives to limit us and grow us in holiness.

*"The truly spiritual life is not an escape from reality but
a total commitment to it" – David Benner*



Take time to name constraints, wounds, struggles and stresses that are limiting you.

BODY

MIND

TIME

ENERGY

FAMILY

WORK

*"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made
perfect in weakness." – 2 Corinthians 12:9*



EXERCISE #5

ELEMENTS OF LIFE

"Author Marjorie Thompson, defines a Rule of life as "a pattern of spiritual disciplines that provides structure and direction for growth in holiness."



A healthy Rule of Life is holistic. One way to break down the elements of our lives is to place them into the following five categories. These categories are not perfect, they are all related and overlap, but are a good model to use when building a Rule of life. Keep in mind that certain categories may be more relevant to your life than others.

SPIRITUAL Your relationship with Jesus	/10
PHYSICAL Your intellectual, emotional and physical health	/10
RELATIONAL Your relationships with family and friends	/10
MISSIONAL Your church and gospel ministry	/10
VOCATIONAL Your study, paid work and voluntary work	/10

Spend some time reflecting on these areas of your life and then mark them out of 10.

Try your best to not use the number 7! For example, if you are loving your career put a 9 and if you're feeling distant from Jesus put a 2. This is just a quick gut check on the next page you will do a more detailed review.

EXERCISE #6

A DETAILED LOOK

Assign a rating out of 10 for the items listed below.
1 being the lowest and 10 the highest.

SPIRITUAL

Love for Jesus		Bible reading		Prayer life	
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PHYSICAL

Physical health		Mental health		Intellectual growth	
Rest		Sleep		Joy in life	

RELATIONAL

Spouse		Children		Family	
Friends		Church			

MISSIONAL & VOCATIONAL

Serving		Work		House work	
Mission					

EXERCISE #7

CURRENT RULE

SPIRITUAL Your relationship with Jesus

a) Write down your current habits, activities, or routines you do as an individual or in community. Be okay with empty boxes.

DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	ANNUALLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bible reading• Prayer• Grace at meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sunday church• Gospel Community• Sabbath	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Giving• Serving• Reading a Christian book	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conference

b) Which habits, activities, or routines do you enjoy? Why?

- Sunday worship because I get to sing praises to God
- Gospel Community because it's where I find encouragement

c) Which habits, activities, or routines do you find difficult? Why?

- Sabbath because I like to be busy.

d) In this area of your life how do you think Jesus wants you to grow? If you can narrow your answer down to one word.

- Prayer

EXERCISE #7

CURRENT RULE

SPIRITUAL Your relationship with Jesus

a) Write down your current habits, activities, or routines you do as an individual or in community. Be okay with empty boxes.

DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	ANNUALLY

b) Which habits, activities, or routines do you enjoy? Why?

c) Which habits, activities, or routines do you find difficult? Why?

d) In this area of your life how do you think Jesus wants you to grow?

If you can narrow your answer down to one word.

PHYSICAL Your intellectual, emotional and physical health

a) Write down your current habits, activities, or routines you do as an individual or in community.
Be okay with empty boxes.

DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	ANNUALLY

b) Which habits, activities, or routines do you enjoy? Why?

c) Which habits, activities, or routines do you find difficult? Why?

d) In this area of your life how do you think Jesus wants you to grow?
If you can narrow your answer down to one word.

RELATIONAL Your relationships with family and friends

a) Write down your current habits, activities, or routines you do as an individual or in community.
Be okay with empty boxes.

DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	ANNUALLY

b) Which habits, activities, or routines do you enjoy? Why?

c) Which habits, activities, or routines do you find difficult? Why?

d) In this area of your life how do you think Jesus wants you to grow?
If you can narrow your answer down to one word.

a) Write down your current habits, activities, or routines you do as an individual or in community. Be okay with empty boxes.

DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	ANNUALLY

b) Which habits, activities, or routines do you enjoy? Why?

c) Which habits, activities, or routines do you find difficult? Why?

d) In this area of your life how do you think Jesus wants you to grow?

If you can narrow your answer down to one word.

VOCATIONAL Your study, paid work and voluntary work

a) Write down your current habits, activities, or routines you do as an individual or in community.
Be okay with empty boxes.

DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	ANNUALLY

b) Which habits, activities, or routines do you enjoy? Why?

c) Which habits, activities, or routines do you find difficult? Why?

d) In this area of your life how do you think Jesus wants you to grow?

If you can narrow your answer down to one word.



STEP THREE

BUILD

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✧ WRITING YOUR RULE

"It is unlikely that we will deepen our relationship with God in a casual or haphazard manner. There will be a need for some intentional commitment and some reorganization in our own lives. But there is nothing that will enrich our lives more than a deeper and clearer perception of God's presence in the routine of daily living." – William O. Paulsell



Now you're ready to construct your Rule of Life, but be aware of two traps:

1. ✧ TRYING TO LIVE LIKE JESUS RIGHT AWAY

When you start, it's easy to overreach and attempt to live like Jesus from the very beginning. However, this is a recipe for failure! Start where you are, considering your limitations, personality, responsibilities, and stage of life. Keep in mind that as humans, we tend to repeat what we enjoy. This isn't an excuse to skip habits and tasks that Jesus wants us to grow in, but it's permission to appreciate and enjoy the gifts of life. Constructing a Rule of Life takes time, and building momentum can help with motivation. Begin with small, easy wins, and where feasible, habit-stack by starting something new on the back of an existing habit.

"Discipleship is the process of becoming who Jesus would be if he were you." - Dallas Willard



2. ✧ COPYING SOMEONE ELSE'S RULE OF LIFE

While following Jesus entails keystone habits like studying God's Word, praying, and obeying Him, creating a one-size-fits-all rule is insufficient. It was easier for monastic communities to follow a common rule since their lives were ordered and similar, but modern society is diverse, digital, globalised, and connected. As a result, it's critical to develop your own Rule that is specific to your unique circumstances. Your Rule should include keystone Christian practices but should also be practical and tailored to your life. You may find inspiration in other Rules, but avoid copying them exactly. Copying someone else's Rule can set you up for failure and leave you disheartened and disillusioned.

In the next three exercises, you will build your rule of life by considering the elements of your life and the timing of the habits and practices you wish to embrace. Before completing this, take a few minutes to pray, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide you.

EXERCISE #1

ELEMENTS

SPIRITUAL Your relationship with Jesus

What is one word or one sentence that summarizes how Jesus wants you to grow in this area?

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." - Galatians 5:22-23



What are some new habits you can develop for this area of your life? Circle or write your own.

Suggestions

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Read the Bible | • Prayer of Examen | • Confession & Repentance |
| • Lectio Divina | • Prayer walk | • Memorise Scripture |
| • Pray | • Prayer with a friend | • Retreat / Conference |
| • Silence | • Pray the armour of God | • Community |
| • Solitude | • Read a Psalm | • Sabbath |
| • Read a Christian book | • Journal | • Limit Technology |
| | • Fast | |

Describe your own idea:

PHYSICAL Your intellectual, emotional and physical health

What is one word or one sentence that summarizes how Jesus wants you to grow in this area?

"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body." -1 Corinthians 6:19-20



What are some new habits you can develop for this area of your life? Circle or write your own.

Intellectual Suggestions

- Read the Bible
- Read a book
- Listen to podcast
- Listen to Audiobook
- Formal Study
- Online Courses
- Read the news
- New hobby

Emotional Suggestions

- Journal
- Counselling
- Rest / Sabbath
- Prayer of Examen
- Delighting in God's gifts
- Vacations
- Weekly Review
- Time in nature

Physical Suggestions

- Strength training
- Physio training
- Cardio work
- Sport
- Sleep
- Dieting or feasting
- Dental care
- Medication & supplements

Describe your own idea:

RELATIONAL Your relationships with family and friends

What is one word or one sentence that summarizes how Jesus wants you to grow in this area?

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God." - 1 John 4:7



What are some new habits you can develop for this area of your life? Circle or write your own.

Family Suggestions

- *Dinners*
- *Celebrations*
- *Weekly call/visit*
- *Games night*

Friendship Suggestions

- *Communication*
- *Movie Night*
- *Celebrations*
- *Games night*

Spouse Suggestions

- *Date Nights*
- *Planning meetings*
- *Holidays*
- *Weekend away*

Church Suggestions

- *Serving together*
- *Mission together*
- *Gospel Community*
- *fun nights*

Children Suggestions

- *Bible reading*
- *Fun days*
- *Individual time*
- *Movie night*
- *Homework*
- *Sports*
- *Weekend away*

Describe your own idea:

MISSIONAL Your church and gospel ministry

What is one word or one sentence that summarizes how Jesus wants you to grow in this area?

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," – Matthew 28:19



What are some new habits you can develop for this area of your life? Circle or write your own.

Suggestions

- *Sunday Church*
- *Gospel Community*
- *Serving*
- *Compassion Sponsorship*
- *Prayer*
- *Leadership Team*
- *Hospitality*
- *Generosity*
- *Mission Trip*
- *Mercy ministry*
- *School P&C*
- *Connecting with Neighbours*
- *Joining a community group*
- *Investing in friendships*

Describe your own idea:

VOCATIONAL Your study, paid work and voluntary work

What is one word or one sentence that summarizes how Jesus wants you to grow in this area?

*"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord
and not for men" - Colossians 3:23*



What are some new habits you can develop for this area of your life? Circle or write your own.

Suggestions

- *Staff Meeting*
- *1-1 meetings*
- *Deep work*
- *Work trips*
- *Admin time*
- *Development*
- *Dishes*
- *Weekly shopping*
- *Laundry*
- *Landscaping*
- *Daily tidy*
- *Renovations*
- *Wash the car*
- *Wash your pet*
- *Make the bed*

Describe your own idea:

EXERCISE #2

TIMING

Now that you have reviewed your life and thought of the habits and practices you want to cultivate or continue, it is important to be specific and realistic about the timing. Some practices you should aim to do daily, but others you should consider doing weekly, monthly, or annually. Finally, as you fill this in, be okay with empty boxes!

	DAILY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	ANNUALLY
SPIRITUAL				
PHYSICAL				
RELATIONAL				
MISSIONAL				
VOCATIONAL				

EXERCISE #3

YOUR RULE OF LIFE

SPIRITUAL

PHYSICAL

RELATIONAL

MISSIONAL

VOCATIONAL



STEP FOUR

MAINTENANCE

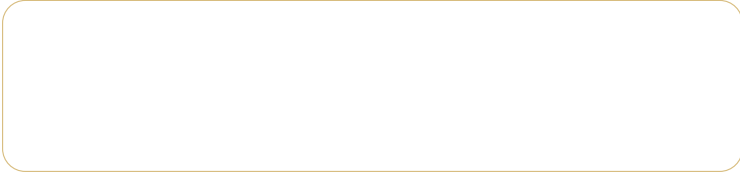
34

EXERCISE #1

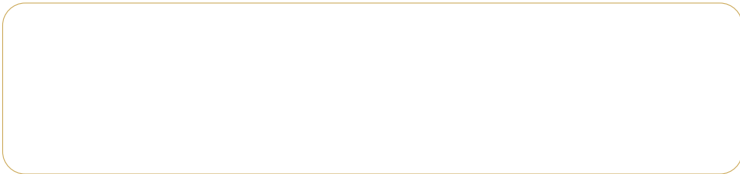
PEER REVIEW

Share your Rule of Life with someone else and get them to answer the following questions.

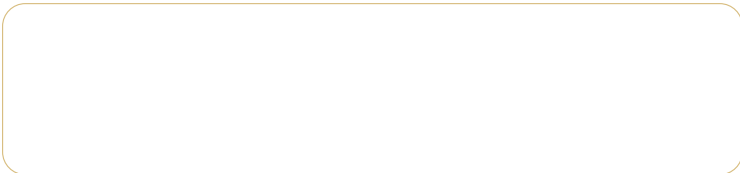
What encourages you?



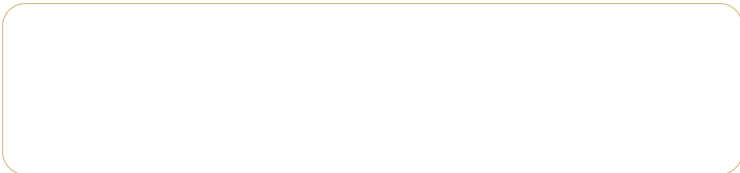
What surprises you?



What seems unrealistic?



What do you think is missing?



Use the feedback of friends and family to update your Rule of Life.

EXERCISE #2

WEEKLY REVIEW – PART 1

"A good rule can set us free to be our true and best selves. It is a working document, a kind of spiritual budget, not carved in stone but subject to regular review and revision. It should support us, but never constrict us." – Margaret Guenther



REQUEST

Holy Spirit, bring light to my heart and soul.

Pray: Holy Spirit, with your eternal wisdom and comfort, guide my reflection on this current week, and how I'm living my Rule of Life.

REJOICE

What are you grateful for?

REFLECT

What lessons did you learn this week?

THE CROW

What hindered you this week?

REFOCUS

What ideas would help this week?

Pray: Holy Spirit, with your eternal wisdom and comfort, guide my reflection on this current season of life. Draw my attention to your loving presence.

EXERCISE #3

WEEKLY REVIEW – PART 2

Assign a rating out of 10 for the items listed below.
1 being the lowest and 10 the highest.

SPIRITUAL

Love for Jesus		Bible reading		Prayer life	
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PHYSICAL

Physical health		Mental health		Intellectual growth	
Rest		Sleep		Joy in life	

RELATIONAL

Spouse		Children		Family	
Friends		Church			

MISSIONAL & VOCATIONAL

Mission		Work		House work	
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You will never hit 10 for all areas of your life. But you can focus on a few each week. Based on your ratings above, write down three areas in your life you want to focus on this week.

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CITY
ON A HILL