

RULE OF LIFE GUIDE



church on the hill

Practicing the Way of Christ

**Growth doesn't happen
by accident.**

We need a plan.

What is a Rule of Life?

A rule of life is a set of guidelines and commitments that help structure a person's life and direct their growth in holiness.

Why a Rule of Life?

Because deep, growing faith in Christ is the goal.

- **A Rule of Life can bridge the gap from aspirational ideas to authentic transformation.**

Without a Rule of Life, good intentions remain dormant and un-practiced.

- **A Rule of Life will help us pace our spiritual growth in Christ and keep us accountable to the habits and practices that assure our growth.**

We can do too much too soon, accelerating us to a hurried pace which kills our spiritual lives, and hurts our hearts. A Rule of Life will help pace us so we don't burn out.

- **A Rule of Life is an act of defiance against the poor habits and powers that are shaping us right now.**

It helps us to subtract habits that are destructive and replace them with habits that provide steady, healthy growth in Christ.

When we are born we look like our parents.

When we die, we look like our habits.

Crafting a Rule of Life

Step 1:

Write down everything you currently do (or hope to do) that nurtures your spirit and fills you with delight (e.g. people, places, activities).

Think more broadly beyond such activities such as prayer, going to church, worship and Bible reading. Your list may include gardening, walking your dog, hiking, spending time with family and friends, and hobbies. List them all!

Step 2:

Write down the activities you need to avoid, limit, or eliminate that pull you away from remaining anchored in Christ.

This refers to avoiding certain things that impact your spirit negatively such as media consumption, negative attitudes, and commitments that take you beyond your limits.

Step 3:

What are the challenging ‘have-to’s’ in the next 3-6 months of your life that will impact your rhythms?

(e.g. caring for parents, additional daily family needs, demanding seasons at work, moving, health issues, etc).

Step 4:

Take a few moments and consider the following questions:

- **What do you think will be your biggest challenge in creating a Rule of Life?**

- **What is the one thing you sense the Holy Spirit directing you to start doing right now?**

- **What might be the one thing you want to stop doing?**

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- Is there someone you can invite to encourage you in making these necessary changes to your habits?

A few things to remember...

- God will guide the process of assembling your Rule of Life. You are free to change it as necessary depending on your circumstances, season of life, or goals that were too big to start with.
- Take baby steps. Don't make your Rule of Life impossible to follow.
- Make sure your Rule of Life includes play, joy, and fun.
- Give yourself a lot of grace to experiment, engage in trial and error, and discover the rhythms and habits that best fit your season of life.

Rule of Life Example

MY MISSION - ADAM LEWIS

Be With God. Be Transformed. Be A Gift.

PRAYER

- Solitude and silence daily (contemplative prayer)
- Plan a personal retreat each year
- Read Sections of Scripture for understanding.

REST

- Exercise 5-6 times a week
- Elimination of social media
- Take intentional day off each week
- Planned & spontaneous trips with family

WISDOM

RELATIONSHIPS

- Time with Cindy daily
- Time with Josh, Brian & Lainey daily
- Meet 4 new people each Sunday
- Self-Differentiation
- Listen, Listen, Listen.

WORK

- Calm is power
- Lead with wisdom
- Practice empathy
- Vision & Mission
- Write frequently

MY VALUES

- 1.) **Become A Non-Anxious Presence.**
- 2.) **Be proactive & Plan for the 2nd half.**
- 3.) **Self-differentiate.**
- 4.) **Calm is power.**
- 5.) **Lead Yourself First.**

TIME TO BUILD YOUR OWN!

You can use www.practicingtheway.org/ruleoflifebuilder as a tool to help build your Rule of Life OR you can use the templates on the following pages.

RULE OF LIFE WORKSHEET (VERSION 1)

MY MISSION

PRAYER

REST

RELATIONSHIPS

WORK

MY VALUES

1.)

2.)

3.)

4).

5.)

RULE OF LIFE SUGGESTIONS/IDEAS

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES:

Sabbath, Prayer, Fasting, Solitude, Scripture, Community, Service, Generosity, Evangelism

SABBATH

- Weekly
 - Spend time enjoying beautiful things (poetry, art, nature, music)
 - Refrain from shopping on your sabbath
 - Host or attend a sabbath meal
 - Power off all digital devices on your sabbath
 - Get together is close friends
 - Spend intentional time with family
 - Tap a nap (not sleeping the whole day)
 - Go on a walk outside
 - Spend time is quiet
 - Take a 24 hour sabbath

PRAYER

- Daily
 - Practice thankfulness in prayer
 - Petition God with your needs
 - Pray for others needs
 - Take time to listen for Gods voice
 - Pray through scripture or Psalm
 - Worship with music
 - Journal your prayers
 - Practice contemplative prayer
 - Pray a chosen times in the day
- Weekly
 - Go on a prayer walk
 - Pray with your family
 - Take longer in prayer
- Monthly
 - Host a prayer night

RULE OF LIFE SUGGESTIONS/IDEAS

FASTING

- Weekly
 - Give money you would have spent on food and donate it to the poor
 - Fast for a full 24 hours
 - Fast one meal
 - Fast two days weekly
 - Fast from sun up to sun down
- Monthly
 - Fast with friends
 - Fast for more than one day

SOLITUDE

- Daily
 - Take a undistracted lunch break
 - Schedule a 10 minute window somewhere in your day to sit in stillness
 - Journal
 - Have an hour of no technology before bed
 - Set aside morning time of quiet prayer
- Weekly
 - Take one day of no phone
 - Schedule one night of no activities
 - Schedule an hour of relaxation to connect with God
- Monthly
 - Go hiking, Backpacking, or camping

SCRIPTURE

- Daily
 - Memorize Scripture
 - Listen to scripture
 - Meditate on a Psalm
 - Go through a daily reading plan
- Weekly
 - Read an entire book in a single sitting
 - Listen to a sermon
 - Study a Bible commentary
 - Read spiritually themed books
 - Read scripture with a friend or loved one

RULE OF LIFE SUGGESTIONS/IDEAS

COMMUNITY

- Daily
 - Ask deep questions to start conversations
 - Schedule time of emotional connection with spouse or close friend
 - Call a friend and check in
 - Practice active listening
- Weekly
 - Eat a meal with a friend
 - Give intentional blessings for people around you
 - Attend a Bible study or small group
 - Attend a Sunday gathering
 - Confess sin that you have done to a close friend
 - Family night
 - Give words of encouragement to someone
 - Take a friend to coffee
 - Write a sweet note to someone
 - Exercise with a friend

SERVICE

- Daily
 - Do a kind act and tell no one
 - Embrace your role as a student, or employee
 - Help with chores around the house without being asked
 - Look for ways to bless or serve others.
- Weekly
 - Volunteer at a local non profit
 - Visit a retirement home
 - Bring a meal to someone
 - Bless or serve your neighbors
 - Build a relationship with the poor
 - Mentor someone younger than you

RULE OF LIFE SUGGESTIONS/IDEAS

GENEROSITY

- Daily
 - Actively look for an opportunity to bless someone
 - Wait 24 hours before online shopping
- Weekly
 - Budget weekly gift to the church
 - Prayerfully review your weekly spending
- Monthly
 - Give to a ministry or local cause
 - Go through belongings to give away
 - Do a random act of giving
 - Tithe
 - Sponsor a child

WITNESS

- Daily
 - Look for ways to pray with people
 - Listen and share what the Lord has been teaching you
 - Be present and unhurried
 - Pray for coworkers and leadership
 - Look for opportunities to listen to someone's story
- Weekly
 - Invite a friend to church
 - Show the love of God through acts of kindness
 - Invite a non believer to coffee

OTHER IDEAS

- Sleep 7-9 hours each night
- Exercise regularly
- Read a book
- Drink more water
- Limit caffeine intake
- Do a wind-down time before bed
- Do morning stretches
- Learn a new skill
- Pick up a new hobby