



A Guide for Building a Rule of Life

Introduction: The Great Invitation

Jesus said, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”
(Matthew 11:28–30 ESV)

We all live by some rhythm—some set of habits that shape how we spend our time, engage our relationships and pursue what we think will bring life. But for many of us, life feels chaotic, reactive, or exhausting. We want to follow Jesus, but our pace and patterns often leave us feeling distant from Him and from the people and purposes that matter most.

A Rule of Life is a grace-filled way of returning to what matters. It’s not a rigid set of rules or another to-do list—it’s like a trellis that helps a vine grow strong and healthy. It offers structure and support so that your life can flourish in alignment with Jesus. Over time, a Rule of Life helps reorient your desires, renew your habits, and create space for joy, peace, and purpose.

How to use this guide:

This booklet has both **a beginner’s guide to a rule of life** and **a guide to go deeper with your rule of life**.

The goal isn’t perfection—it’s grace-filled practice. Start where you are. Be a learner.

Let this be a tool for walking with Jesus daily and learning His restorative approach to life.



Begin Your Rule of Life

Start here for a simple way to begin cultivating a more restorative way of life. For each area below, reflect on one or two questions and write a simple and sustainable practice.

1. COMMUNION WITH JESUS

Deepening relationship with God through presence, prayer, and the Word.

- When in your day do you feel most open to spending time with God?
- What simple daily or weekly practice helps you stay close to Jesus?

My practice(s): _____ **Frequency:** _____

2. REST & REPLENISHMENT

Embracing rhythms that honor your limits and restore your soul.

- When can you practice Sabbath or designate meaningful space to rest and restore?
- What activities truly restore your energy and joy?

My practice(s): _____ **Frequency:** _____

3. FAMILY & COMMUNITY

Loving well and being present with the people God has placed in your life.

- What are your core relationships, and how can you be more intentional with them?
- What small rhythm would help you invest in meaningful connection and care?

My practice(s): _____ **Frequency:** _____

4. WORK & MISSION

Living with purpose in your work, calling, and service to others.

- How can you approach your work or service as an act of worship to God and service to others?
- What rhythm would help you serve others with joy and purpose?

My practice(s): _____ **Frequency:** _____

5. DIGITAL BOUNDARIES

Creating space for presence, reflection, and freedom from distraction.

- How are your current digital habits shaping your attention, emotions, or relationships?
- What limits or habits could help you engage tech more intentionally?

My practice(s): _____ **Frequency:** _____

VISUALIZE YOUR RULE OF LIFE

Use the chart on the following page to outline your initial rule. Keep it simple and specific. Look over the sample rule of life on this page before thinking through your own with the blank chart on the next page.

A Sample Rule of Life

Domain	Practice(s)	Frequency	Notes
Communion with Jesus	Corporate Worship	Weekly	Volunteer 1x month
	Morning Scripture/Prayer (Lectio365)	Daily	15-30min each; use app or journal
	Evening Prayer/Examen (Lectio365)	Daily	
Rest & Replenishment	Sabbath	Weekly	Saturday Sabbath;
	Get Outdoors on the Weekend	Monthly	Get to the mountains
	Daily Walk	Daily	Evening walks
	Reading for Fun	Daily	Reading before bed
Family & Community	Date night	Weekly	Meaningful connection On my commute home
	3x Tech-free dinners	M/W/F	
	Friend call	Tu/Th	
	Small group	Tuesday	
Work & Mission	Work startup/shutdown prayer;	Daily	From <i>Every Moment Holy</i>
	Weekly review;	Weekly	Invite co-workers to lunch
	Hospitality at work	Weekly	
	Volunteer with ministry to youth	Weekly	
Digital Boundaries	No phone in the bedroom Prayer before phone in the morning <1 episode per evening <20 min social media per day	Daily	

Your Initial Rule of Life:

Domain	Practice(s)	Frequency	Notes
Communion with Jesus			
Rest & Replenishment			
Family & Community			
Work & Mission			
Digital Boundaries			

Go Deeper with Your Rule of Life

Use this expanded guide to explore additional thoughts, ideas, resources, and reflection to support you in the process of building a more robust rule of life.

STEP 1: CONDUCT A TIME AUDIT

“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,
making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.”
(Ephesians 5:15–16 ESV)

Before building a Rule of Life, it's important to understand your current rhythms. Track your time for a few days or reflect on a typical week.

What to Pay Attention To:

- Daily routines: Morning/evening habits, meals, sleep
- Digital practices: Screen time, social media, TV/streaming
- Work and responsibilities: Work hours, meetings, commuting
- Regular Commitments: Activities, hobbies, regular responsibilities
- Relational time: Time with family, friends, church
- Unintentional time: Where does time get lost or wasted?

Tip: Use a blank weekly calendar or time-blocking sheet. Color code by category to get a clear picture.

Weekly Time Audit

Use the provided grid on the next page (or something like it) to fill in actual activities and notice your default patterns for a typical week. Don't feel like you need to fill in every box. You can approach this by:

- Looking through your calendar and recording recurring commitments
- Looking through screen time tools and streaming history
- Considering your typical morning, evening, and weekend routines
- “Logging” time usage from an actual week

Reflection:

After completing the weekly time audit table on the next page, consider a few questions:

- What observations do you have about the way that you have been using your time? What's good? What's wrong? What's confusing? What's missing?
- Are there habits that you want to eliminate, limit, or add?

Time Block	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning (6-9am)							
Midday (9am-12pm)							
Late Afternoon							
Evening (6-9pm)							
Night (9pm-12am)							

STEP 2: BUILD YOUR RULE OF LIFE

Design intentional rhythms in the four domains below. Begin with small, achievable practices that you can gradually build upon over time.

1. Rhythms of Communion with Jesus

Goal: Cultivate a deeper relationship with Jesus through daily and weekly practices.

BASIC PRACTICES:

- A daily moment of silence, scripture, and prayer (10-30 min)
- Weekly worship with God's people

EXPANDED PRACTICES:

- Midday prayer (pause for a few minutes of stillness and a “breath prayer”)
- Evening examen (reflect on your day with God)

TOOLS & RESOURCES:

- Apps: Lectio 365, The Bible App, Reimagining the Examen, One Minute Pause
- Books: Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Day by Day
- Scripture: Psalm 23, the Lord's Prayer, Lamentations 3:21-23

Key Insight: Your evening routine sets the tone for the next morning. Establishing thoughtful evening practices helps you end your day resting in Jesus.

TOWARD MY RULE OF LIFE:

What regular practice(s) will help me to rest and replenish my life in a sustainable way?

Practice	Frequency	Potential Challenges

2. Rhythms of Rest & Replenishment

Goal: Embrace your human limits and receive God's gift of rest and renewal.

BASIC PRACTICE:

Practice Sabbath: set aside one 24-hour period each week to stop working, rest and restore your soul, delight in the goodness of God's creation, and worship the Giver of Life.

Four Sabbath Tips:

- Make it a “big rock”: For sabbath to become a sustainable part of your life, you will need to make it a governing priority around which you make your other plans and commitments.
- Designate a “Day of Preparation”: Plan your schedule to create space to prepare for a day of rest.
- Start with a prayer or ritual: Find a ritual—like lighting sabbath candles, reading Scripture, and saying a prayer—to begin your sabbath in a way that orients you toward God and His gift of rest.
- Learn what restores you: Learn what restores you and what restores the people around you. This will take time, honesty, and patience.

EXPANDED PRACTICE:

Create regular space during your week for soul-replenishing activities.

Ideas for Replenishment:

- Enjoy nature, cook a favorite meal, read for pleasure, take a nap, journal, or unplug from devices
- Care for your body with exercise or physical activity that builds health and joy.
- Read books or find podcasts or resources that renew your mind.
- Engage in hobbies or activities that cultivate delight and peace

Helpful Thought: Sabbath is a gracious gift from God designed to restore and bring joy, not a dutiful obligation. “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.” (From Mark 2:27)

TOWARD MY RULE OF LIFE:

What regular practice(s) will help me to rest and replenish my life in a sustainable way?

Practice	Frequency	Potential Challenges

3. Rhythms of Relationships

Goal: Invest in key relationships where you can be known and loved as you seek to know and love others.

BASIC PRACTICE:

- What are the key relationships—family, friends, community, neighbors—that God has given me?
- What does faithful presence look like with each one?

EXPANDED PRACTICE:

- Are there other relationships that God might lead me to invest in as a way to extend His love?
- What would be a sustainable way to make those relational investments?
- Am I trying to maintain too many relationships that are stretching me beyond my limits and undermining my ability to be present with my most important relationships?
- What steps could I take to own my relational limits?

Ideas:

- **Marriage/Significant Other:** Weekly or biweekly date night, shared spiritual practice or check-in, daily moment of meaningful connection
- **Children:** Dedicated one-on-one time with each child, shared Sabbath practices, tech-free family meals 3–5x/week
- **Friendships:** Regular connection with close friends (weekly or biweekly walks, meals, texts, calls)
- **Christian Community:** Consistent presence in a community group, church gatherings, mutual care and prayer
- **Neighbors:** Monthly or seasonal meals, simple check-ins, spontaneous conversations, being interruptible

Key Insight: Love requires time. We don’t drift into meaningful relationships—we build them intentionally. Rhythms of connection create the space where love can grow.

TOWARD MY RULE OF LIFE:

What regular practice(s) will help me to engage in relationships in a sustainable way?

Practice	Frequency	Potential Challenges

4. Rhythms of Work, Service, & Mission

Goal: Join Jesus in His redemptive work through your vocation and calling.

BASIC PRACTICE:

- Begin and end your workday with a simple prayer or liturgy
- Find a regular and sustainable way to serve others

EXPANDED PRACTICE:

Reflect on your work through the lens of the biblical narrative (Creation, Fall, Redemption, Restoration):

- **Creation:** How does it contribute to the flourishing of others?
- **Fall:** Where do you encounter brokenness in your work?
- **Redemption:** How is Jesus transforming your approach to your work?
- **Restoration:** How can you help restore goodness and dignity to your work, workplace, or industry?

Tools & Resources:

- Find or create some simple “Startup” and “Shutdown” liturgies to help mark the beginning and end of your workday.
- Use Every Moment Holy (Douglas Kaine McKelvey) to help cultivate a worshipful approach to everyday moments and work.
- To learn more about God's good design for Work and why it matters, see books like Every Good Endeavor (Tim Keller), Work Matters (Tom Nelson), Liturgy of the Ordinary (Tish Harrison Warren)

Key Thought: Your work matters to God. Do it with Him and for Him.

TOWARD MY RULE OF LIFE:

What regular practice(s) will help me approach work and service to others in a worshipful and sustainable way?

Practice	Frequency	Potential Challenges

5. Setting Digital Boundaries

Goal: Create space for presence, attention, and rest by setting healthy boundaries around screens and media.

WHY IT MATTERS:

Our phones, social media, and entertainment platforms are designed to capture and hold our attention. Without boundaries, they often shape our days more than we realize—disrupting sleep, draining focus, and crowding out what matters most. Setting intentional boundaries helps reclaim your time and attention for rest, relationships, and communion with God.

PRACTICAL STEPS:

- Evaluate your screen time (use built-in phone tools or apps like Screen Time or Digital Wellbeing).
- Choose device-free zones or times (e.g., bedroom, meals, Sabbath, mornings/evenings).
- Set time limits for apps or platforms that tend to consume your attention.
- Designate 1-2 days per week as “low-tech” or “no-scroll” days.
- Replace default scrolling with life-giving alternatives (reading, prayer, nature, conversation).

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- When do I turn to screens out of boredom, anxiety, or habit?
- How does my digital life impact my presence with God and others?
- What simple boundaries would create more space for rest and replenishment?

Key Insight: Digital freedom is less about restriction and more about reclaiming your attention for the things that lead to life.

TOWARD MY RULE OF LIFE:

What regular practice(s) or limits will help me cultivate a more healthy relationship with technology and media?

Practice	Frequency	Potential Challenges

STEP THREE: VISUALIZE YOUR RULE OF LIFE

Use the chart below to outline your rule of life. Keep it simple and specific.

Domain	Practice(s)	Frequency	Notes
Communion with Jesus			
Rest & Replenishment			
Family & Community			
Work & Mission			
Digital Limits			

STEP 4: PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Once you've created your Rule of Life, take a step toward living it. Decide when you will start. Get it on your calendar. Share with trusted friends and invite their encouragement and prayer. Give yourself plenty of grace as you begin. New habits take time to take root; it's okay to adjust and grow as you go. Most importantly, pay attention to what Jesus might be teaching you as you step into the ups and downs of practicing new rhythms for your life.

Some things to consider as you begin:

- When will I start?
- Have I put this in my schedule and calendar yet?
- What obstacles do I anticipate? How can I seek to address them?
- Who will I ask for prayer and encouragement?

Closing Thought: Walk With Jesus Daily

This journey isn't about achieving perfection or proving yourself. It's about abiding with Jesus and learning His restorative approach to life. A Rule of Life is simply a framework to help you live in loving alignment with what matters most. When crafted with prayer and humility, it becomes a gentle guide toward a more meaningful, present, and joyful life with God.

Start small. Stay flexible. Let the grace of Jesus lead the way.

A Prayer of Surrender

Lord, my life is Yours.

*The rhythms I choose, the time I keep, the relationships I tend,
and the work I do—I place them all in Your hands.*

Teach me to walk with You each day—

not by striving, but by grace.

Meet me in these simple patterns.

Shape my desires. Renew my heart.

*May this Rule of Life not be a burden,
but a pathway to deeper communion with You.*

*Lead me in Your love and empower me by Your Spirit,
that in all things—great and small—
I might live for Your glory and abide in Your love.*

Amen.





PARK CHURCH