

Rule of Life Guide

Prayer

Rest

Abide
in God's
Love

Relationships

Work

Step 1: Write down everything you currently do or hope to do that fills you with joy. Don't only think of spiritual or church-related activities. Think of people you enjoy spending time with, places you enjoy going, activities you like to do, etc.

Step 2: Write down the activities you need to avoid, limit, or eliminate that pull you away from Jesus. This could be things that fill your mind with feelings that draw you away from Jesus, such as comparison or greed (maybe from too much time on social media) or things that fill your schedule so full that you no longer have space to prioritize Jesus (such as overcommitting yourself).

Step 3: What are the challenging things you have to do in the next 3-6 months that will impact your rhythm of life?

Step 4: Fill in the spaces on the page above with a focus on what you feel God is calling you to prioritize in the next 3-6 months. Ask God what He is inviting you to focus on in this season. Aim to be as specific as possible. For example, instead of saying, "Be more relaxed," think of things that will help you be more relaxed, such as, "Turn off my phone for 1 hour per day," or, "Sabbath on Sundays."

Here is a sample breakdown of what goes in each section. Don't feel the need to include all of these elements in each section of your rule. These are suggestions to help guide you as you think through what will best help you abide in Christ:

Prayer includes: reading the Bible, times of being silent with God, studying and meditating on God's word, fasting, attending church

Rest includes: Sabbath, sleep, play and recreation

Work includes: job/vocation, service activities, physical exercise and care for your body

Relationships includes: marriage and kids (if applicable), friends, ways of expressing your emotions, connecting with people in church and the community

Step 5: Think through what you've filled in as your rule of life. What do you think will be the biggest challenge in what you've written down? What's one thing you sense the Holy Spirit calling you to start doing now? What's one thing you need to stop doing? Who can you invite to encourage you as you seek to make these changes?

Step 6: Try living this rule of life for 2-4 weeks. After that time, meet up with a trusted Christian friend and share with them about how it's going. Make any necessary adjustments to your rule so it can be more effective moving forward.

Things to consider as you evaluate your current rule:

- Does it feel burdensome or boring? If so, what about it feels burdensome and boring?
- What's working in your rule? What's not working? What could be working better?
- What's bringing you life in your rule? What's draining you?

Step 7: Seek to use your updated rule of life for 3-6 months, and at the end of that time, re-evaluate whether the priorities you have set need to adjust for the upcoming 3-6 months.

REMEMBER:

- Take time to pray, and as you do, listen for what desires God is putting on your heart. He may be speaking to you through these desires.
- Make sure your rule involves some joy, play, and fun.
- Think through your personality. If you're introverted, prioritize time to be alone and quiet. If you're extroverted, make sure to prioritize time with friends. Find the balance that works best for you and the person God designed you to be.
- Take baby steps. Aim for what is realistic for you in the next 3 months. Don't try to start with where you'd like to be in 10 years.
- Try to have a few elements that will feel difficult for you and lots of elements that will feel natural, fun, and easy. The goal of the rule of life is to help us grow closer to Jesus, but this shouldn't feel like a constant burden.
- Feel free to experiment and try out different things to see what works best in this season of your life. This is a working document that will be updated and adjusted over the years. Don't feel the need to get it perfect on your first try.
- The goal of a rule of life is to help you live in a closer relationship with God. Structure your rule in a way that will best help you grow close to God. Some people need a lot of structure and discipline to prioritize God, others need less. Find what works for you.

If you'd like suggestions for where to start with your rule, we have compiled a "Recommended Baseline Rule" that you can try. It's on the next page.

Recommended Baseline Rule

Prayer

- Commit to daily quiet time with God away from your phone for 10 minutes
- Attend church each Sunday
- Commit to regular intake of truth and teaching through reading, podcasting, Bible Study, etc.

Rest

- Practice a weekly Sabbath, a 24 hour break from work. If you don't currently have any Sabbath practice, start by taking a few hours away from work on Saturday or Sunday afternoon.
- Sleep a minimum of 7 hours per night
- Have regular daily and weekly times away from your phone

Abide in God's Love

Relationships

- Commit to daily quality interactions with spouse and kids (if applicable)
- Commit to weekly quality interactions with closest friends
- Invite a friend who doesn't know Jesus to eat a meal with you

Work

- Exercise on a regular basis (as you are physically able to)
- Spend several hours per (non-Sabbath) day doing your most important work (for most people, that's your job/vocation)
- Commitment to generosity (If you don't currently have any practice of generosity, start by giving away 1-2% of your income, and aim to increase your giving over time)