

A Rule of Life is the intentional structuring of our lives together around Jesus with certain practices that He modeled. The pattern of developing a Rule of Life is not new – it’s old, very old. Followers of Jesus for centuries have done this. Here’s how John Mark Comer describes/defines it: “A rule was a schedule and a set of practices to order your life around the way of Jesus in community. It was a way to keep from getting sucked into the hurry, busyness, noise, and distraction of regular life.” (REH, p. 94) We hope this tool will begin to help you develop a Rule of Life that works for you.

Getting Started With A Personal 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).

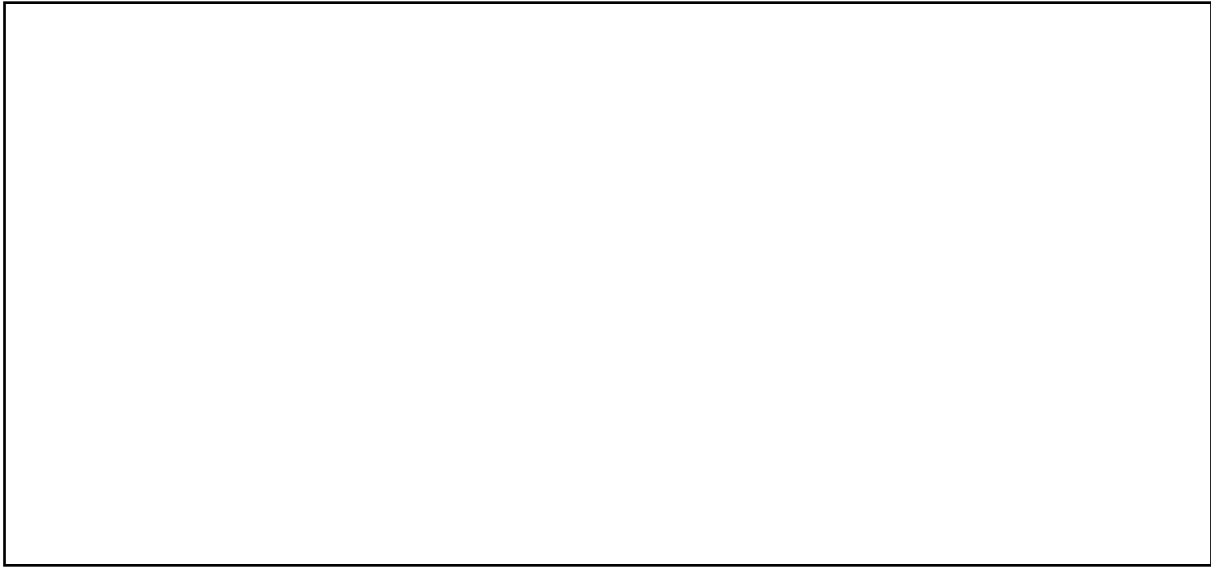
We ask that you think more broadly beyond such activities as prayer, going to church, worship, and Bible reading. Your list may include gardening, walking the dog, being in nature, talking with close friends, cooking, painting, hobbies, or any number of other possibilities. List them all!

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write down their list of activities that nurture their spirit and fill them with delight.

Step 2

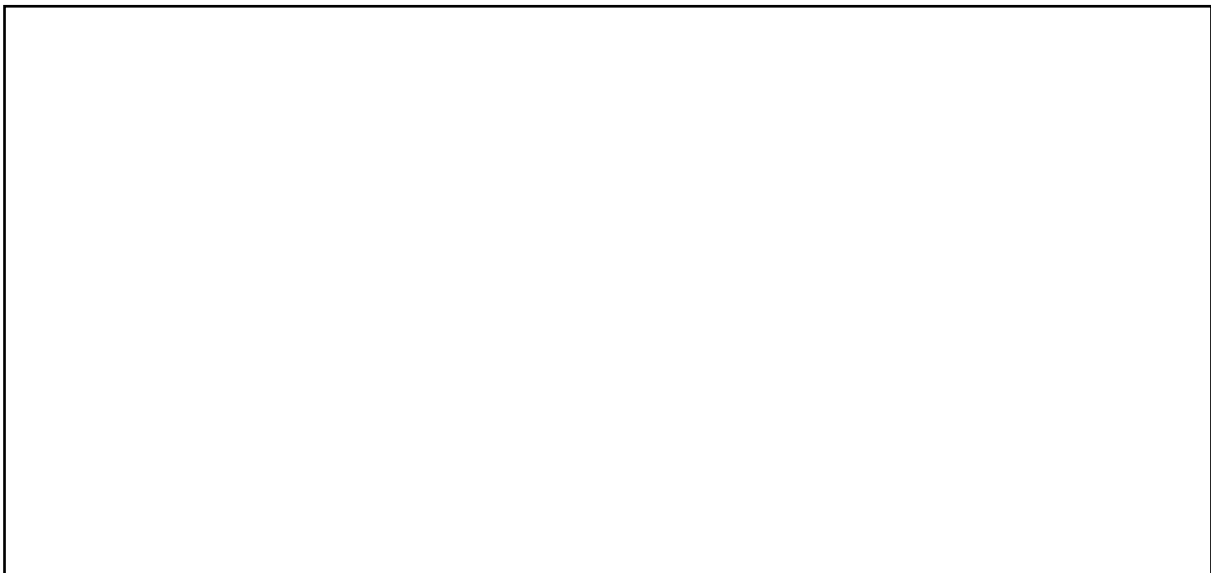
Write down the activities you need to avoid, limit, or eliminate that pull you away from remaining anchored in Christ.

This refers to avoiding certain things that impact your spirit negatively such as violent movies, excessive social media involvement, commitments that take you beyond your limits.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write down activities to avoid, limit, or eliminate.

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 aging parents, a special needs child, a demanding season at work, moving, health issues)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write down challenging “have to’s” for the next 3-6 months.

Step 4

Begin to jot down elements that you would like to include in your rule of life. Be sure to consider your next 3-6 months. Ask God what He is inviting you to focus on during this season? What habits would you like to develop? How do you want your schedule to look?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their responses to the questions in Step 4.

Step 5 - Dig Deeper

Take a step back and consider the following questions:

- What do you think will be your biggest challenge?

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

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

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

REMEMBER:

1. Listen to your heart's desires when discerning your rule. God often speaks to us through them.
2. Make sure your rule includes some joy, play, and fun.
3. Take baby steps. Don't make your rule impossible to follow.
4. Give yourself a lot of grace to experiment, engage in trial and error, and discover the yoke that fits you and your season of life. This "trellis" is meant to free you not enslave you. Reject perfectionism and a heavy yoke that crushes.
5. Figure out how much structure you need – a lot or a little. Debra Farrington in her book, *Living Faith Day by Day* writes:

"Over the years I've also struggled with the amount of structure to build into a rule. People I respect deeply have detailed rules with set times for prayer, and so on. They tell me that if they don't get up at 6:30 each morning and take a half hour of prayer time that they will never get to it during the day. But that doesn't work for me. It makes my spiritual life into something to add to my to-do list, and it becomes a chore and not a blessing. Over the years I have found that my rule for prayer needs to be more open-ended. I am committed to praying daily, but how and when I do that varies from day-to-day."