



Cultivating your life with God... Oxygen Workshop • Kerrell Ranucci

Reflection... Which word...

- Characterises the current season you are in ?
- Describes your life with God at the moment ?
- Describes God for you?

“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”
A.W.Tozer

1.Vision of our _____ in ministry

The Invitation from Jesus:

28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble 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 NIV

28-30 “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

Matthew 11:28-30 The Message

“This is the astonishing mystery of our life with God: The way into it is simply through coming to know, love, and follow Jesus Christ. As we learn to keep company with him daily, he steps out from the pages of the Gospels and becomes for us a living and empowering presence. Step by step, he leads us into the fullness of life that is the astounding promise of the gospel.”

Trevor Hudson “Seeking God”

What is your vision for your life with God?

How will you cultivate your life with God, so it is motivated by delight rather than duty?

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2. Jesus lived with _____

'Jesus is the ideal example of the embodiment of a Spirit-empowered personal rule of life. Jesus' ability to balance attentiveness to the Father and to his daily life is scattered throughout the Gospels.' Stephen Macchia

³⁵ Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. ³⁶ Simon and his companions went to look for him, ³⁷ and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" ³⁸ Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." ³⁹ So he travelled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons." Mark 1:32-38

3. Spiritual rhythms are a _____

"I'm still convinced that the good life is reserved for the person who fears God, and who lives reverently in his presence." Eccl 8:12

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved" Acts 2:42-47

"We have to find a central focus that pulls together the scattered fragments and shredded fringes of life as we must live it... We skip from thing to thing and are drawn in many directions of pleasure and grief." Dallas Willard

'A rule for life offers unique and regular rhythms that free and open each person to the will and presence of Christ. The spiritual practices of a rule provide a way to partner with the Holy Spirit for personal transformation.' Adele Ahlberg-Calhoun (SDH p35)



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4. Finding our _____

'You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand' Psalm 16:11

'Developing a rhythm of spiritual practices takes time. It takes time to explore a variety of disciplines so that you have some sense of their meaning for your life and how you might incorporate them realistically.' Ruth Haley Barton (SR p148)

'The way we structure our days not only reveals our character and priorities, it can also help to shape them. We may be wired to live by rhythms, but we can intentionally set the beat: we can structure our daily living as a loving response to the grace of God in Christ.' Chris Webb. (God Soaked Life)

'There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.' Eccl 3:1

'Ultimately a rule (Spiritual Rhythm) will help you love God more. If it becomes a legalistic way of earning points with God, it should be scrapped.' Adele Ahlberg-Calhoun

Mark Buchanan reminds us: **Seek to 'craft a rule of life which perfectly fits your unique temperament, bent, background and passion, and which day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year, decade by decade, makes God real to you in the inmost places.'**
Mark Buchanan

"We choose particular disciplines to help us reframe the whole of our lives around God, the true centre of all." Marjorie J Thompson

"The purpose of a Rule of Life is to help us grow into wholeness and Holiness."
Marjorie J Thompson

How can we structure our day so that it reveals our priorities and vision for our life with God?

How can we intentionally set the beat for our life with God?

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5. Cultivating my life with God... reflection...

1. What is the vision for my life with God?

- *What kind of person do I want to become?*
- *Where do I want to change?*
- *Which spiritual gifts, fruits of the Spirit and values have most profoundly shaped my life? What biblical texts best express these characteristics?*
- *In which of these do I especially want to mature in?*
- *If I wrote my own eulogy, what would I want to say?*
- *Where do I feel powerless to change?*

(Ask the Holy Spirit to help you do through grace what you cannot do through effort alone.)

2. What current spiritual practices in my life sustains this vision?

- *When and where do I feel closest to God?*
- *How do I enter most deeply into an awareness of his love for me? (Pay attention to experiences, practices and relationships that draw me toward God.)*
- *Why do particular practices open me up to God more than others?*

3. What is one new practice I'd like to add to my spiritual rhythm?

- *Which spiritual practices am I drawn to that are new?*
- *Which spiritual practices will stretch and grow me?*

4. What could my daily, weekly, monthly, yearly spiritual rhythm look like?

- *What limitations are built into my life at this moment?*
- *At what time of day do I experience peak energy?*
- *What longings remain steady throughout?*
- *What responsibilities and rhythms change with various seasons?*
- *What practices suit my daily, monthly and yearly rhythms and cycles?*

Choose disciplines that arise from your desire for God's transforming work that suit the limits and realities of your life. Begin your practice. Experiment, re-adjust, tweak, hold things lightly, give yourself grace, and have fun! If things get wobbly, try something different or simply begin again! Do as you can... and not as you can't!



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Developing a Rule of Life... (summary from "Soul Feast" by Marjorie J. Thompson)

1. Take a faith-illuminated inventory of your life as it stands.

Pay attention to your unique personality.

- **Are you introverted or extroverted, that is, do you receive your primary energy from time alone or from fellowship with others?**

Introverts take readily to solitude and silence, contemplative prayer and self-examination.

Extroverts find nurture in community, often drawn to communal expressions of worship or to acts of service and hospitality that suit an interactive personality.

- **Are you more attuned to the outer world of the senses or to the inner world of meaning?**

A sensing type of person generally needs more physical embodiment in spiritual practice, perhaps using candles, icons, or physical prompts for prayer and personal worship or taking a prayerful stroll outdoors. Those attuned to the inner world of meaning will be nurtured by metaphor and attracted to pondering symbolic meanings in sacred texts, poetry, art forms, or the created order.

- **Do you relate to life largely through reason or feeling?**

Those more oriented to the process of rational thought need study and reflection. Deep devotion may emerge through the careful reading of weighty theologians. Those more oriented to their feelings tend to see life through the lens of emotion. They seek inspiration and heartfelt relationship in spiritual practices such as singing hymns and songs; listening to inspirational speakers; or engaging in service that connects strongly with the needs, sorrows, and joys of others.

- **Do you like clear structure and regular habits or prefer spontaneity and variation?**

This final pair of preferences has particular impact on shaping a rule of life. If you tend toward clear structure and predictable, orderly patterns, you may have less trouble maintaining a rule of life than those who prefer to "go with the flow." It is challenging for those who love spontaneity to set regular patterns in any spiritual practice. Yet it is possible to create a workable rule even without the natural inclination to follow schedules.

2. Discern what you need to grow.

Recalling that union with God is the goal of the spiritual life, move to a process of discerning...

What will enable you to grow into deeper communion with God?

Take into account... **spiritual gifts and faith values that shape Christian character**

(Such as love, mercy, justice, truthfulness, kindness, and perseverance).

(a) the personality traits and preferences that help us notice how we derive our energy and what our natural physical-emotional rhythms teach us:

(b) the particular circumstances and seasons of our lives that present both opportunity and limitation in relation to spiritual practices.

As you note your responses, you will be clarifying an image of who you hope to become by grace.