

WORKSHEET ONE: BUILDING YOUR PERSONAL RULE OF LIFE DEFINING YOUR HOLY HABITS

Your goal: In this first worksheet, you are going to define which of the holy habits you want to include in the first draft of your rule of life, and how to begin including them in your everyday routine (Romans 12:1-2). Your main guideline is not to disrupt your present life rhythm. Find ways to add the holy habits to your day that fit your lifestyle now. Remember to start where you are and not where you think you should be.

James 1:22-25: But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.

1. We'll start that process by looking briefly at your daily and weekly commitments. Use your journal to answer:

- a. What time of day do you normally get up? What does your "morning routine" look like? What are the things you need to accomplish before you start your everyday routine? Do you currently have a "quiet time" with God in the morning. What does that look like?
- b. If you have a job and/or commitments during your day and week, what times do they occupy? Do you have regular times for standing in a medication line or visiting the health services? List in your journal.
- c. What times do you normally eat your meals?
- d. What does your "going to bed" routine look like? How long does it take?
- e. Do you have specific times during the day/week where you practice community and gather with friends?
- f. Do you attend weekly faith/church services or classes? What days and times?
- g. Are there clear times during the day that you have a break? When are they normally?
- h. Other time commitments during your day/week?

- i. As you look over your day, do you see regular times (as few as 10-15 minutes) where you would be able to spend some time in a quiet place (bed, desk, walk, quiet corner, whatever) where you can be by yourself?
 - j. If not, is it possible for you to get up 15 minutes earlier in the morning every day to spend some quiet time with God? Are there any activities (checking email, TV, social media, screen games, etc) that you could cut down on to spend some time in prayer?
2. **Next, we're going to look at the holy habits that we studied in chapters 7-10 of the book and some optional holy habits that might appeal to you: Write down which ones are important to you to include daily? Weekly? Rank them according to their importance to you.**
- a. **Bible study (SOAP)**
 - b. **Prayer**
 - c. **Worship**
 - d. **One-Anothering. Gathering with other believers in an informal setting for the purpose of encouraging each another. Or, to put it another way, making a point to seek out Christian women to hang out with.**
 - e. Sabbath. Setting aside one day a week to gather for worship **and** fellowship with other believers—regular church service.
 - f. Solitude. A regular time of finding a place to spend alone time listening to God with no distractions.
 - g. Fasting. Either one meal or a day devoted to the purpose of hearing from God, repenting, special prayer needs, etc. This may also be something you do with other believers).
 - h. Giving (Generosity). Sharing extra resources you have with others around you in need.
 - i. Service. Volunteering to do something on a regular basis to help others.
 - j. Witness. Sharing your faith with others as God leads you in a kind and compassionate way.

Some of these practices are not going to fit your lifestyle or your walk with God right now. Some of them are occasional practices (serving, giving, witnessing, solitude, fasting) and others are daily habits you want to work into your everyday life. Our suggestion is that you try to come up with a rule: Which ones are every day for you? Which ones, if any, would you like to pursue occasionally? Which ones are you not able to include in this season of your life? Remember that everything on this list isn't going to be in your rule of life. The bolded holy habits on the above list are the ones you need to start with.

3. **Your Daily Routine. Let's brainstorm how you can include these into your everyday routine. Where can you start so that you will be successful?**
- a. **Bible study** (SOAP with journal and Bible). The best time to do this is right away when you wake up or right before you go to bed. If you choose to put this in the evening, make sure you are adding a brief Wake-Up Call to your morning routine.

Chris gave an example of her wake-up call in the video (scripture verses by the side of her bed she reads every morning).

- i. You can start this routine in as little as ten minute/day. If you want some help with this one, go back through your journal notes and look at the Day Three exercises throughout the book. Start with chapter one. Always use the SOAP method no matter who much time you have.
- b. **Prayer.** As we learned in chapter eight of the study, powerful personal prayer can take on many forms throughout the day. We recommend having a variety of prayers you can use for different purposes throughout of the day:
 - i. Breath Prayers. Using the natural rhythm of a slow breath, breathe in and out while reciting (out loud or silently) a cadence of prayer. Breath prayers are a great way to calm anxiety, get wisdom, or turn your heart to God in trouble. For instance:
 1. Breathe in (“Come, Holy spirit”) Breathe out (“I give everyone and everything to you.”)
 2. Breathe in (“I receive your wisdom”) Breathe out (“I give this specific thing to You.”)
 3. Breathe in (“I receive your strength”) Breathe out: (“I give You my weakness”)
 - ii. Declaring Bible verses in the first person to make God’s word a prayer: It helps to try and memorize some verses that are special to you so you can use them anytime, anywhere. I (Chris) like to put these on pieces of paper and carry them in my pocket and read them while I am walking. Some of my favorites: Ps. 27:4, Ps. 121: 1-4, Psalm 51: 1-4 (when I need a heart of repentance), Psalm 23:4-6, Eph. 1:3-14(personalized), John 16:33.
 - iii. Setting aside a special time each day to bring your needs and the needs of others to God in prayer. You should also start keeping a dated prayer list in your journal if you haven’t done this already.
 - iv. Asking others to meet with you in prayer.
- c. **Worship:** In chapter nine we learned that true worship is more than a song. Worship is an offering to God. Romans 12:1, The Message: “So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life - your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life - and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.” The NIV Bible calls this “embracing” our “reasonable act of worship.” Make sure your holy habit of worship includes both corporate worship (gathering with others) and personal worship (one-on-one with God). And remember, worship is more than just singing. It can be anything creative you do for God: declaring personalized Bible verses, painting, sculpture, writing poetry, working in a garden, walking around the yard and marveling at creation. YouTube is an excellent source of worship videos. It allows you to put together libraries.

- d. **One-Anothering (gathering with other believers for the purpose of encouragement and growth).** Even though gathering together for worship can be an opportunity to encourage each other personally, it doesn't always work out that way. One-anothering is about spending intentional time with other Jesus followers. How can you do that in your everyday life? Consider joining or even starting a Bible study in your church or neighborhood. This week, start carving out time to do some one-anothering, even if it's just talking to someone after church or at the gym. If you attend church, introduce yourself to someone you don't know.

"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works. Not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing nearer." (Hebrews 10:24-25)