



A SHORT GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

CONTENTS

A NOTE FROM GLOBAL PARTNERS	02
RECOMMENDED RESOURCES	03
HOW TO DEEPEN YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY	04
WHY SOLITUDE WITH GOD IS A GAME CHANGER	06
TRANSFORM YOUR BIBLE READING WITH LECTIO DIVINA	08
SLOW DOWN AND LISTEN: TRY THE BREATH PRAYER	11
EXPLORE NEW WAYS TO CONNECT WITH GOD	14
BECOME MORE AWARE OF GOD'S LOVING PRESENCE	16
HOW DISCERNMENT CAN HELP YOU DISCOVER GOD'S WILL	19
SABBATH REST: HERE'S WHY IT MATTERS	22
DESIGN A RULE OF LIFE CENTERED ON JESUS	24
DON'T LEAVE IT TO CHANCE: MAKE A PLAN TO FOLLOW JESUS	27
P.S.	29

As Global Partners, we're here to help you explore God's calling...

...so you can confidently and joyfully live out the Great Commission—anywhere in the world.

That's why we put together this short guide to spiritual practices. We introduce 9 spiritual rhythms that can help you discover more of Jesus. We recommend ways to practice these rhythms in your everyday life. And, we suggest additional resources in case you want to dig deeper.

In his book, "Practicing the Way", John Mark Comer says: *"Transformation is possible if we are willing to arrange our lives around the practices, rhythms, and truths that Jesus himself did, which will open our lives to God's power to change."* (pp. xvi-xvii)

Even if you're not thinking about serving globally right now, we still want you to grow in your relationship with Jesus. And the reality is, these spiritual practices can be helpful for everyone—however you join God in His mission.

Side note: Community and spiritual friendship are so crucial as you grow in your relationship with Jesus. If you have friends who want to go deeper in their spiritual journey, shoot them a text. Invite them to join you. **Because this journey was never meant to be taken alone.**

The Global Partners Mobilization Team



RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

1

Book:
Practicing the Way
(John Mark Comer)

2

Book:
Sacred Rhythms
(Ruth Haley Barton)

3

Animated videos:
The Bible Project

4

Teaching videos:
Walking the Text

5

Prayer app:
Pray as you go

HOW TO DEEPEN YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Do you ever long for more?

More purpose? **More** meaning? **More** of God?

If you want to grow as a disciple of Jesus, **you're on a journey for more.**

But unfortunately, many of us *“never experience the life with God and formation into a person of love that we all ache for in the marrow of our bones.”* (John Mark Comer, *Practicing the Way*, p. 20)

This doesn't have to be your story.

You can choose a different way by becoming a disciple - an apprentice - of Jesus.

John Mark Comer says, *“To follow Jesus...is a lifelong journey in which we gradually learn to say and do the kinds of things Jesus said and did as we apprentice under him in every facet of our lives.”* (*Practicing the Way*, p. 10).



Spiritual Practice

This week, make space for 15 minutes. Find a quiet place where you won't be distracted or interrupted. Relax into a comfortable position as you breathe deeply, releasing any tension or stress you might be holding. Enjoy God's presence in the peaceful quiet for a moment or two.

When you're ready, read Mark 10:46-52. As you read slowly, imagine yourself as the person needing something from Christ. How might you approach him or try to get his attention?

Imagine that Jesus turns to you. You're looking into his face. You have Jesus' complete attention as he asks, *"What do you want me to do for you?"*

Sit with this question for a moment. As you consider your response, you might go for a walk, lie down in the grass, curl up under a blanket or write in a journal. It might help to start your answer with this statement: *"God, what I most need / want from you right now is..."*

As you think about your response, enjoy being with God. Share your longings with him. Take as much time as you need.

(Spiritual Practice from Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton, p. 28)

Community

If you invited others to join you in this journey, first complete the spiritual practice by yourself. Then gather together over coffee or a meal.

- Read the story from Mark 10:46-52. Have one or two people retell it using their own words.
- Have everyone share their response to the question "What do you want me to do for you?"
- Pray together, bringing your praises and burdens before God.

Resource

[Check out "Rabbis and Disciples,"](#) a teaching series from Walking the Text on what it means to be a disciple of Jesus (a Jewish rabbi!).

WHY SOLITUDE WITH GOD IS A GAME CHANGER

How can we hear God's still, small voice if we don't have quiet space in our lives to listen? Our schedules are full, technology is everywhere and distractions buzz around us.

If you're going to explore God's calling in your life, you need an intentional place to be with God.

Solitude is that place.

Ruth Haley Barton describes solitude as *"a place in time that is set apart for God and God alone, a time when we unplug and withdraw from the noise of interpersonal interactions, from the noise, busyness and constant stimulation associated with life in the company of others."* (Sacred Rhythms, p. 32)

If our goal is to be with Jesus, then solitude is how we get there - by slowing down and sitting in his presence for five minutes, an hour or even longer.



Spiritual Practice

Set aside 15 minutes this week. Find a place that feels comfortable, quiet and safe. Where can you be open and available to God? Maybe it's a favorite chair, a hammock outside or even a quiet chapel nearby.

Relax and settle into a comfortable position. Sit quietly for a few moments, breathing deeply. Acknowledge God's presence with you and your desire to be present with God.

As you breathe slowly and calmly, begin to notice what is true about you these days. Don't rush through this or make anything up. Just let your soul explore; perhaps it will surprise you.

Consider: *Is there a particular joy you are celebrating? A loss you are grieving? A question that is stirring? An emotion that needs expression?*

Sit with whatever comes to mind. Be conscious of God's presence with you. Don't try to push or scare what you're thinking of away. **Instead, what does it mean for you to be still and let God fight (or work) for you in this particular area?** Maybe you will be surprised at what your soul wants to say to God.

(Spiritual Practice from Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton, pp. 43-44)

Community

If you invited others to join you in community, first complete the spiritual practice by yourself. Then gather together for conversation and reflection.

- Have each person share about their experience with solitude. Have you tried solitude before? How did it go in the past? How did it go this time?
- Read Psalm 46 then have everyone share their response to the question "What does it mean for you to be still and let God fight (or work) for you in this particular area?"
- Pray together, bringing your praises and burdens before God.

Resource 

[Watch this video series](#) on solitude by Practicing the Way.

TRANSFORM YOUR BIBLE READING WITH LECTIO DIVINA

Do you remember a time when you truly found delight in reading a passage of Scripture?

So often, reading the Bible can feel like it's all about gathering information and knowledge. But *“when we engage the Scriptures for spiritual transformation, we engage not only our mind but also our heart, our emotions, our body, our curiosity, our imagination and our will.”* (Ruth Haley Barton, Sacred Rhythms, p. 50)

Engaging with Scripture might look like savoring the text. Listening to God. Sitting in quiet contemplation. Asking questions. And it doesn't have to be chapters at a time - it can be a couple verses. Or even just a single verse.

One way to slow down our approach to Scripture is through the practice of Lectio Divina. Dating back to the early mothers and fathers of the Christian faith, *“Lectio involves a delicate balance of silence and word - speaking and listening.”* (Ruth Haley Barton, Sacred Rhythms, p. 55)

As you explore your calling and find your place in the world, Lectio Divina might be one way you can read the Bible and seek God with curiosity.



Spiritual Practice

This week, try to find 10-20 minutes when you won't be interrupted or distracted. Find a quiet, comfortable place. Choose a short passage of Scripture (6-8 verses) to use throughout the movements of Lectio Divina.

1. **Preparation.** Take a moment to come fully into the present. Close your eyes, let your body relax and become aware of God's presence with you. Express your willingness to hear from God by saying a brief prayer ("Come Lord Jesus" or "Here I am").
2. **Read.** Read your chosen passage slowly, pausing between phrases and sentences. It may be helpful to read the passage out loud. As you read, listen for a word or phrase that sticks out to you or catches your attention. Give yourself a moment of silence to reflect on this word or phrase - repeat it, ponder it, savor it.
3. **Reflect.** Once you have heard the word that is meant for you, read the passage again. Listen for the way the passage connects with your life. Ask yourself, "What is it in my life right now that needs to hear this word?" Give yourself several moments to be silent and explore your thoughts, perceptions and sensory impressions. You might ask yourself questions like:
 - a. *Where am I in this scene?*
 - b. *What do I hear as I imagine myself in the story or hear these words addressed to me?*
 - c. *How do the dynamics of this story connect with my own life experience?*
4. **Respond.** Read the passage one more time. Listen for your own deepest and truest response. As you sit in silence after the reading, allow your prayer to flow from your heart as fully and truly as you can. Engage in a personal dialogue with God, being completely honest. Share your feelings such as love, joy, sorrow, anger or repentance. Pay attention to any sense that God is inviting you to respond in some way. It might be helpful to write your prayers or journal your thoughts.
5. **Rest.** As you read the passage one final time, return to a place of rest in God. Lean into God, waiting and resting in his presence. Spend a few moments here.
6. **Resolve.** As you emerge from this place of personal encounter with God, resolve to carry this word with you. Consider what it looks like to live it out in the context of daily life and activity. As you ponder the word throughout the day, allow yourself to be led deeper and deeper into its meaning.

(Spiritual Practice from Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton, pp. 59-61)



2. Community

If you invited others to join you in community, you can practice Lectio Divina together in a small group. Find a quiet, comfortable setting where you can gather.

- Decide who will lead the practice. This person will read the passage each time and guide the group through the movements using the directions above.
- At the end of the practice, have each person share the word or phrase God impressed on them. Ask everyone to share their response to the question “what is it in my life right now that needs to hear this word?”
- Pray together, bringing your praises and burdens before God.

Resource

Lectio 365 is a free daily devotional app that helps you pray the Bible every day.

[Check it out!](#)

SLOW DOWN AND LISTEN: TRY THE BREATH PRAYER

Have you heard the story about the professor who went to visit a famous, wise monk?

The monk welcomed the professor into his temple and offered him a seat. As soon as the professor sat down, he began speaking, sharing his own accomplishments, knowledge, theories and opinions. The monk quietly listened for a while, then asked, “Would you like some tea?”

The professor nodded and kept right on talking. The monk handed him a teacup and began to pour the steaming hot tea from a large pot. The tea filled the cup, but the monk kept on pouring as the professor kept talking. Eventually, the professor realized what was happening and cried, “What are you doing? Don’t you see that the cup is overflowing?”

The monk calmly replied, *“This cup is like your mind. It can’t take in anything new because it’s already full.”* (Story adapted from Sacred Rhythms, p. 69)

When it comes to prayer, do you ever feel like the professor?

So often, we pour out words without ever stopping to hear if God has a word for us. That’s why we need to make space for another kind of prayer in our lives - a quiet, calm, listening kind of prayer. It’s in the quiet that we can hear from God.

As you explore God’s calling in your life, try the **breath prayer**.



Spiritual Practice

This week, plan 5 minutes a day for 5 days. It might take longer - that's ok. Take as long as you need.

Start by spending time quietly in God's presence. Allow yourself to settle into a place of comfort and intimacy. Then, imagine Jesus calling you by name.

He asks, "_____, *what do you want?*" As the truest answer to this question comes up from your heart, express it openly to God.

It might help to journal the following phrase and let your response flow out of it. "*God, what I most want from you right now is...*"

Pay attention to the words or phrases that come until you find one that captures your desire as truly as possible. **This word or phrase will become the heart of your breath prayer.**

Next, choose a favorite name or image for God as you relate to him right now - God, Jesus, Father, Creator, Spirit, Breath of Life, Lord, Shepherd or whatever best captures your sense of you God is to you at this point in your relationship.

Now combine your name for God with the expression of your heart's desire. You're looking for a short prayer of about six to eight syllables that flows smoothly when spoken aloud and captures the core of your deep yearning for wholeness and well-being in Christ.

A breath prayer might look like:

- Father God, I need your comfort.
- Holy Spirit, cover me with your peace.
- Here I am, Lord.

Pray this breath prayer into the space of your day - when you're waiting, when you are worried or anxious, when you need some sense of God's presence. May it be a grounding prayer that guides you through your daily interactions and activities.

(Spiritual Practice from Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton, pp. 76-77)



Community

If you invited others to join you in community, first complete the spiritual practice by yourself. Then gather together in a setting that is comfortable and safe.

- Read Romans 8:26-27 and have everyone share their experience with the breath prayer practice. What was it like? How did it feel?
- Have each person share their breath prayer and how they have used it in their daily life. It might take longer for some to discover their breath prayer.
- Pray together, bringing your praises and burdens before God.

Resource

[Breath as Prayer by Jennifer Tucker](#) is a book that will guide you through the practice of breath prayer.

EXPLORE NEW WAYS TO CONNECT WITH GOD

When you think of spiritual disciplines, do you think of: a quiet, candlelit room? A small chapel in the early morning hours? A warm blanket curled up in a comfy chair?

These things can be good, and for many of us, they are truly life-giving.

But what would it look like for us to give physical activity and movement a more prominent role in our spiritual practices?

Ruth Haley Barton says, “...*Spiritual disciplines do not all have to be practiced while one sits quiet and still. There are many creative ways to forge a life-giving connection between our spiritual life and life in our body...*” (Sacred Rhythms, p. 85)

- Going for a walk, run or hike can become a time of prayer and conversation with God.
- Sharing a meal with friends and family can become a time of communion and gratitude.
- Tending a garden or caring for a landscape can become a time of meditation and delight in God’s creation.

Activities like these can help us connect with God in new and creative ways. And whether you’re serving your community or serving globally, that’s a win!



Spiritual Practice

This week, set aside an hour: you'll want at least 15 minutes for reflection and another 30-45 minutes for an activity. As you start this practice, find a comfortable position and take time to breathe deeply. Allow your breathing to release any tension you are holding in your back, your shoulders, your arms. Allow yourself to relax as a physical expression of your trust in God.

Pay attention to what gives your body and your spirit a sense of life or drains life from you. Listening to your body - tension, discomfort, lightness, joy or wonder - can help you stay connected with God's guiding presence. Express gratitude to God for those things that bring you life. Ask God to help you wisely manage those things that are draining.

Then notice if any of your spiritual practices have some connection with physical activities you enjoy. How and where do you experience God's presence most fully? Jot down some ideas, if possible.

As you close your reflection, choose a physical activity that is life-giving for you. It doesn't have to be extreme; it can be as simple as going for a walk, riding a bike or setting up a hammock. **Use the rest of your time to delight in God doing an activity that helps you feel connected with God.**

(Spiritual Practice from Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton, pp. 86-90)

Community

If you invited others to join you in community, first complete the spiritual practice by yourself. Then gather together - you'll spend a short time sharing and then do an activity together.

- Have each person share what gives their body and their spirit a sense of life and what drains life from them. What did you notice through this reflection?
- Choose an activity you can do together. Use this time to connect with each other and with God. Feel the joy of your creator as you spend time in his creation.
- Pray together, bringing your praises and burdens before God.

Resource

[Read God Walk by Mark Buchanan](#) and discover what can happen when we quite literally walk out our Christian life.

BECOME MORE AWARE OF GOD'S LOVING PRESENCE

John Mark Comer defines spiritual formation as *“the process of being formed into people of love in Christ.”* (Practicing the Way, p. 73)

And on this journey of being formed, God helps us see ourselves more clearly. Because *“we long to be seen and celebrated for that which is deeply good and worthwhile in us, and we long for a love that is strong enough to contain our frailty and sinfulness.”* (Ruth Haley Barton, Sacred Rhythms, p. 92)

Self-examination is the Christian practice that gives us an opportunity to receive this depth of love. It begins and ends in the knowledge that I am secure in God’s love - no matter what.

The process of self-examination has several parts:

- **The examen of consciousness** (reviewing the events of the day and acknowledging where God was present)
- **Celebration** (expressing joy for who God created us to be)
- **The examen of conscience** (reviewing the attitudes, actions and moments when we fell short of exhibiting the character of Christ)
- **Confession** (acknowledging and accepting responsibility for our sinful behaviors)

You can become more aware of God’s loving presence in your life through self-examination. *And when you’re more aware of God in your own life, you have more to share with others.*



Spiritual Practice

The following practice incorporates all the elements of self-examination, so you may need more time this week. Try to find 30 or 45 minutes when you can be still with the Lord.

- **Preparation.** Spend a few moments in silence. Be still and know how much God loves you. Hear God say to you, *“I have loved you with an everlasting love.”*
- **Invitation.** Invite God to go with you in your search for evidence of his presence throughout your day.
- **Review the day.** Identify the major events of the day, including your spiritual practices, meals, appointments, interactions with others and significant events at work. As you reflect on each of the events, notice where God seems to be loving you, speaking to you, guiding you and showing you something new about himself.
- **Thanksgiving.** Thank God for each part of your day, for his presence with you in the midst of it and for those moments when you sensed a growing freedom from sin. If you have any unresolved questions or issues, express these to God as well.
- **Confession.** Using Psalm 139:23-24 as your guide, invite God to bring to mind attitudes, actions or moments when you fell short of exhibiting the character of Christ or the fruit of the Spirit. Reflect on what might enable you to respond differently in the future.
- **Ask forgiveness.** Express your willingness to take any concrete steps needed to allow Christ’s character to be more fully formed in you. Ask God if there is anything you need to do to make things right relative to the situation you have confessed.
- **Seek out spiritual friendship.** Seek out a spiritual friend and tell them what you are discovering about yourself, your confession and your resolve to pursue transformation in this area.

(Spiritual Practice from Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton, pp. 108-109)

Community

If you invited others to join you in community, first complete the spiritual practice by yourself. As you gather together, find a place that feels comfortable, safe and peaceful for everyone in the group.

- Read Psalm 139 one or two times. Offer a few moments for quiet reflection, then have each person share something in the passage that resonates with them at this point in their life.
- Have everyone answer the question, “What did you discover about yourself through the practice of self-examination?” Allow people to share as much or as little as they are comfortable with.
- Pray together, bringing your praises and burdens before God.

Resource

[Check out this guide for self-examination from Practicing the Way.](#) It's written to be used in a small group but can be easily adapted for individual use.



HOW DISCERNMENT CAN HELP YOU DISCOVER GOD'S WILL

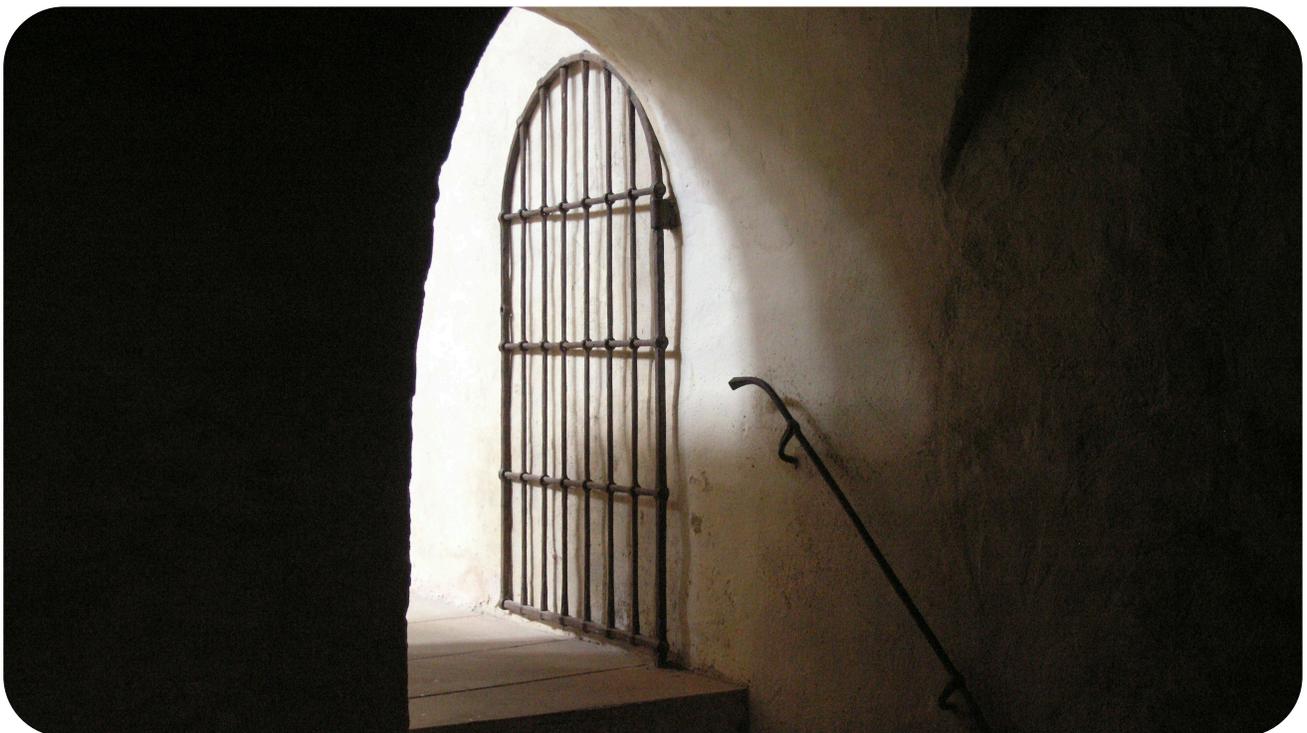
So often, we want to know God's will, but it's a struggle to know exactly what that is. And if you're thinking about serving globally, you want to be sure it's really what God is asking you to do.

The practice of **discernment** builds on the idea of self-examination. Ignatius Loyola (founder of the Jesuits) defined the aim of discernment as *"finding God in all things in order that we might love and serve God in all."*

It's becoming familiar with God's voice and seeing evidence of His presence with us. It's distinguishing the difference between what draws us toward God and what draws us away from Him.

Ignatius describes this tension as **consolation** and **desolation**. *"Consolation is the interior movement of the heart that gives us a deep sense of life-giving connection with God, others and our most authentic self in God. Desolation is the loss of a sense of God's presence...feeling out of touch with God, with others and with our most authentic self."* (Ruth Haley Barton, Sacred Rhythms, p. 112)

If you long to find your unique path and contribution in the world, discernment can help you live your life in accordance with God's purposes for you.



Spiritual Practice

The practice of discernment covers a lot, so you may want to set aside two times this week for at least 15 minutes each time. Find a quiet, comfortable place where you won't be interrupted. Journaling may be a helpful tool during this process.

Consider: *Are you facing a decision right now that could benefit from the process of discernment?* If so, identify the question or choice for which you are seeking God's wisdom then move through the following process. This may take days, weeks or even longer depending on the decision.

The practice of discernment begins with **a prayer of indifference**. This means coming to God with the attitude of being indifferent to anything but God's will. *It's saying, "I want God's will, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else."*

It may take time to get to the point where you can say, "I am truly indifferent - I want God and his will more than anything else." It's ok. **Wait for God on this**. Tell him your concerns, your inability to let go and your attachment to particular outcomes. Then ask him to help you become indifferent.

As you move through the process of discernment, ponder these questions:

- **Direction and calling.** How does this choice fit with the overall direction and calling of God? Is there a word that captures my sense of calling these days?
- **Consolation and desolation.** Which choice brings the deepest sense of life, inner peace and freedom? Is there a growing sense of wholeness, authenticity, congruence with who I am in God?
- **Scripture.** Is there a particular Scripture that God is bringing to me relative to this choice? What is it saying to me?
- **Life in Christ.** Is this choice consistent with what I know of the mind and heart of Christ and his redemptive purposes in the world?
- **Character and growth development.** How will this direction nurture the fruit of the Spirit in me? What does love call for? Will this choice continue the nurture the spiritual growth God is doing in my life?
- **Eternal perspective.** Does this choice reflect the value of what is eternal and permanent? Does this choice hold the deepest value rather than what is transient and impermanent?

- **Community.** How does this choice fit with others' observations of who I am and what God is doing in my life? Am I willing to open up every facet of this decision to a trusted spiritual friend for their wisdom and insight?

At some point, a way ahead will start to become clear to you. You might even have a few options that seem good. God gives us the opportunity to make a choice and seek inner confirmation.

Is this in harmony with who you are - the person God created you to be and the person you want to be?

When you have a sense of peace about the choice or decision, enter into it knowing that God is with you and loves you unconditionally.

(Spiritual Practice from Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton, pp. 123-129)

Community

If you invited others to join you in community, first complete the spiritual practice by yourself. Then gather together to share about your experience.

- Take some time to discuss the ideas of consolation and desolation. Have each person share where they have experienced these in their life.
- Invite people to share about the process of discernment. How was it? What did they learn or discover? What challenges did they face?
- Pray together, bringing your praises and burdens before God.

Resource

[Watch this short teaching from Walking the Text.](#) It provides a 7-part framework to guide you through the process of discernment.

SABBATH REST: HERE'S WHY IT MATTERS

The spiritual journey begins with rest.

In fact, John Mark Comer writes that *“rest is essential to apprenticeship under Jesus.”* (Practicing the Way, p. 182)

Imagine this: an entire day with nothing to do but rest and delight. Go for a long walk. Take a long nap. Linger with loved ones over a cup of coffee or a shared meal. Read a book for fun. Go for a bike ride. Lay in the hammock.

This, my friends, is **sabbath**.

In her book Sacred Rhythms, Ruth Haley Barton suggests 3 principles for practicing Sabbath:

1. The heart of sabbath is that we cease our work so that we can rest and delight in God and God's good gifts.
2. It is important to establish a regular rhythm of sabbath if at all possible.
3. Sabbath is and always has been a communal discipline, or at least a discipline that people enter into with those closest to them.

One of the best ways you can spend time with God is to begin practicing sabbath. Your life - and the lives of those around you - will never be the same!



Spiritual Practice

Try one sabbath. To truly embrace this practice, find one entire day that you don't give to anything else. Think through what preparations and planning are needed so that you can set aside all types of work and worry on this day.

Here are some things to think through:

- What activities will you refuse to engage in so that it is truly a day of rest, worship and delight?
- What activities bring you delight, and how will you incorporate them? (This is not a precise plan, but some ideas to refer to if needed)
- Put the date on your calendar, and pray that God will help you to honor this sabbath and keep it holy.

Enjoy your sabbath. And see where it takes you.

(Spiritual Practice from Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton, p. 145)

Community

If you invited others to join you in community, see if your group can take the same day for sabbath. You may want to spend the day alone or together. Plan to gather together in the late afternoon or early evening.

- Prepare a meal together including a food each person enjoys.
- Share the meal together. Don't rush. Leave time and space to linger. Ask each other about your sabbath experiences. Talk about ways you can continue practicing sabbath. Encourage each other.
- If possible, end the meal with communion. Then pray together, bringing your praises and burdens before God.

Resource

[Listen to the BEMA podcast episode 1: Trust the Story](#) for a deeper dive into sabbath and why it matters.

DESIGN A RULE OF LIFE CENTERED ON JESUS

Transformation doesn't happen by accident. The truth is, we won't accomplish our goals without some sort of plan.

That's why a rule of life call when you can be so helpful.

A rule of life is spiritual practice that helps you arrange your life so that following Jesus at the center. It can help you bring all the practices we've learned about into a regular, realistic rhythm.

Ruth Haley Barton shares a few key thoughts about a rule of life:

- An effective rhythm of spiritual practices will take into account your unique personality, spiritual gifts and place on your spiritual journey.
- It needs to be balanced between the disciplines that come easily to you and those that stretch you.
- Once you have identified a basic rhythm of spiritual practices, remember to approach it with a lot of flexibility.
- Remember that God's work is not limited by your spiritual disciplines. Even when you can't maintain your disciplines like you planned, God will still find a way to meet you in the midst of your real life on that day. (Sacred Rhythms, Chapter 8)

A rule of life can help you lay a strong foundation for thriving ministry - anywhere in the world.



Spiritual Practice

Schedule at least 30 minutes of silence and solitude so you can reflect on the spiritual practices we've explored. Take a few moments to enter into a quiet rest for your soul. You may find a journal helpful during this time of reflection.

First, ask: *"What words, phrases or prayers seem to most consistently capture my sense of longing for God and for spiritual transformation these days?"*

Then consider: *"In what areas of my life am I most aware of my need for transformation?"* Express your desire to make yourself available to God so that he can do his transforming work in you.

Next, invite God to show you which spiritual practices have been most life-giving to you. Notice points of consolation and desolation. Ask: *"Which spiritual practices and relationships seem to be most powerful in fulfilling the desires of my heart right now?"*

Start to develop a plan based on your reflections. What are your daily / weekly / monthly needs for ongoing spiritual formation?

Finally, talk about it with God. Ask for his guidance in putting together a rhythm of spiritual practices that will meet your desire for life-giving connection with him and authentic spiritual transformation. Jot down some ideas and notes - even if they're not fully formed.

Now take a break. Let your thoughts rest and come back to it at a later time. If the plan feels personal and realistic, put it into practice. Start to explore and experiment. You can always make adjustments along the way.

(Spiritual Practice from Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton, pp. 162-166)





Community

If you invited others to join you in community, complete the spiritual practice on your own first. Then gather together for celebration. Celebrate in whatever way feels best for your group.

- Ruth Haley Barton says, *“It is impossible to overstate the importance of community in the spiritual transformation process.”* (Sacred Rhythms, p. 160) Share some highlights from your journey of spiritual practices together.
- Have each person share a highlight from exploring the spiritual practices. Perhaps answer the question, “Which spiritual practices have been most life-giving to you?”
- Then pray together, bringing your praises and burdens before God.

Resource

[Watch this short video](#) and see why John Mark Comer thinks every follower of Jesus should have a rule of life.

DON'T LEAVE IT TO CHANCE: MAKE A PLAN TO FOLLOW JESUS

“We must arrange our days - our morning routines, our daily habits, our schedules and budgets and relationships, the entire webs of our lives - so that we are deeply enjoying everyday life with God.” (John Mark Comer, Practicing the Way, p. 159)

A rule of life can help us do this.

A rule of life is *“a schedule and set of practices and relational rhythms that create space for us to be with Jesus, become like him, and do as he did, as we live in alignment with our deepest desires.” (John Mark Comer, Practicing the Way, p. 161)*

It's having a plan to follow Jesus. Because if we don't plan for something, it usually doesn't happen. Your relationship with Jesus is too important to leave to chance.

John Mark Comer shares a few tips about a rule of life:

- Start small with joyful, easily attainable practices.
- Make it fun. Ask yourself, “How do I enjoy God?”
- Work with your personality, not against it (think introvert and extrovert).
- Take into account your season of life. Don't fight against the season you're in; embrace it.
- We need others to help us stay on the path and to help us back up after we fall. (Practicing the Way, pp. 190-202)

Try the Rule of Life Binder. This customizable website allows you to create a rule of life that is unique and realistic for you. And it's flexible, so you can move it around and change it as you go.

Whether you're planning to stay in your hometown, move to another city or serve globally around the world, having a plan to follow Jesus matters.



P.S.

When God nudges you to serve globally, it can feel overwhelming.

That's why Global Partners provides a **no-pressure process to help you explore God's calling** so you can confidently and joyfully live out the Great Commission – anywhere in the world.

Whether or not you're exploring opportunities to serve globally, you can make a difference right now. *Wherever you are.*

1

Watch how we're reaching the unreached - together.



2 Partner with a missionary.

(or with all 130+ Global Partners missionaries [through Team Amplify](#))

"I joined Team Amplify after I became acquainted with Global Partners while attending Indiana Wesleyan University. I have always had an appreciation for missions and the hard work that missionaries do each day to spread the Gospel to unreached places. I do not know if God will ever call me to go and serve overseas or in unreached areas, so I want to financially support those who do feel led or called to go and be missionaries. I love and appreciate Global Partner's emphasis on reaching people who have never heard of or had access to the Gospel. That is a vital calling and mission, and it's one that I will readily support!" (Christina from Indiana)

3 Pray for the unreached.

Use this [7-day prayer guide](#) to help you discover more of God's heart for the world.

4 Go on an internship.

[NEXT](#) is a mentored, cross-cultural internship designed to help you deepen your relationship with God and find your place in the world.



Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you; and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

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Winfield Bevins
Living Room Liturgy
A Liturgy for Spiritual Renewal
p. 35