

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Course

Sermon 8: Go the Next Step to Develop a “Rule of Life”

Acts 2:42–3:1

THE PROBLEM OF EMOTIONALLY UNHEALTHY SPIRITUALITY

Seven Pathways

1. Know Yourself That You May Know God
2. Going Back in Order to Go Forward
3. Journey through the Wall
4. Enlarge Your Soul through Grief and Loss
5. Discover the Rhythms of the Daily Office and Sabbath
6. Grow into an Emotionally Mature Adult
7. Go the Next Step to Develop a “Rule of Life”

Os Guinness—*The American Hour* (adapted)

Information

Options

Comfort

Happiness

Entertainment

Skepticism

Control

Convenience

Time maximization (people
overloaded/anxious)

Feel good

Independence

Instant gratification

Image, style—(Beauty)

“RULE” OF LIFE

from the Greek word *TRELLIS*

A framework or structure to help enable us to continually pay attention to God



“Devoted” to:

1. Apostle’s Teaching
2. Fellowship (Greek for *sharing*)
3. Breaking of Bread
4. Prayer

Benedict’s Rule – “Your way of acting should be different than the world’s way; the love of Christ must come before all else.”

Members:

1. Submit to the oversight and shepherding of the leadership in the areas of doctrine, direction, discipline, and discipleship.
2. Are involved in a small group/community.
3. Discover and use your spiritual gifts.
4. Serve as appropriate and needed in the family.
5. Give financially (generously and sacrificially) to support the ministry.
6. Consistently take one step in developing your own personal “Rule of Life.”

It says a “Rule of Life,” very simply, is an intentional conscious plan to keep God at the center of everything we do. It provides guidelines to help us continually remember God as the source of our lives. It includes our unique combination of spiritual practices that provides structure and direction for us to intentionally pay attention and remember God in everything we do.

Your personal “Rule of Life” is a constantly changing document, a “live” work in progress—always. Give yourself lots of time for the slow development of what works best for you. As you examine your life, you may notice many areas that need work. The best approach is to start with only one or two elements for the first few months. Then, after you experience some success with those (you will soon notice that each element in itself is bottomless), you will want to add another building block to your “Rule.” Or you may want to stay with the same element to work on over a long period of time.

Prayer

Scripture
Silence and Solitude
Daily Office
Study

Rest

Sabbath
Simplicity
Play and Recreation

Activity

Service and Mission

Care for the Physical Body

Relationships

Emotional Health

Family

Community (companions for your journey)

Luke 18:9–14:

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

“I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalts themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (BCP)

Most merciful God

We confess that we have sinned against you

In thought, word, and deed,

By what we have done,

And by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart;

We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.

For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,

Have mercy on us and forgive us;

That we may delight in your will,

And walk in your ways,

To the glory of your Name. Amen.