

Creating a Rule of Life

Rules of Life are tools that religious people have used for centuries to grow in relationship to one another and to God.

In some ways, even the Torah could be understood as a Rule of Life. OT Scholar Walter Brueggemann once remarked that the community of Israel is first and foremost a community that is ordering and reordering itself towards Yahweh, and by its example calling the nations around it, to orient and reorient themselves towards Yahweh.

Unlike the Torah, the rules of life that are used today are not commandments handed down from on high for all people, instead being habits one commits to practice that will grow us in love of God and neighbor.

How do we create a rule of life?

Remember: you are creating YOUR rule of life. Not your neighbor's. It may be helpful for a family to craft this together, but we do not craft a rule for someone else. Each one will be slightly different.

Give yourself grace.

STEP ONE: PRAY

The first step in the journey of the faithful is always to go before God our Father. Ask God to soften your heart to his leading, and ask for the courage to face your inadequacies, disorientation, and deficits.

STEP TWO: REFLECT

Who do you sense yourself becoming? We are all on a trajectory towards something, and are who we are because of the decisions which brought us here. Next, ask yourself “Who do I want to become?” What aspirations or role models can you look to for inspiration? Out of this question, it is important to ask “What aspects of my life are keeping me from becoming that kind of person?”

STEP THREE: NAME

As you reflect on the aspects of your life, what are some practices or habits that will help you become the person you want to be? Are there practices that will reorient you to God and/or neighbor? Name them.

STEP FOUR: COMMIT

It is not enough to know that there are habits which will help us. We must commit to them. As specifically as possible, the better. For example, do not only commit to praying, commit to praying at a certain time, or before a certain activity, or during something.

My Rule of Life:

Use the space below to help craft your rule of life! Need more help? Give the church a call; we'd love to help you!

I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME...

Use specific words. Perhaps you want to become more of something (generous, prayerful, etc.). Perhaps you want to become less of something (anxious, jealous, etc.)

SOME HABITS THAT MIGHT HELP ARE...

Think about the people who are like the person that you want to become. What habits do you see them practicing? Perhaps you can ask them if you are unsure. What habits do you know you need, but are afraid to do? These might be the very things you need most.

I WILL PRACTICE THESE HABITS BY...

Commit to no more than 4 things. This is a journey, not a sprint, and overcomplicated rules of life scatter the floors of spiritual lives who overcommitted.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

I AM COMMITTING TO THIS RULE FOR _____ DAYS

This needn't be forever. Commit to a time, and re-evaluate when it's over.