

WHAT'S IN YOUR BACKPACK?

Rule of Life

Psalm 16:11; John 15:1-8



Small Groups

Getting Started

Describe the routine for one of your “normal” days.

Which side (choose one) do you lean more toward in your approach to each day:

Proactive-----Reactive

Read and Reflect

Read the Bible texts listed above.

Do you live with a strong confidence that God has shown *you* the *path of life* (Psalm 16:11)? Why or why not?

Read John 15:1-8. Put on your gardener’s hat and describe the allegory Jesus is using in the last of his “I am” statements in John.

What is the job of the vine, the vinedresser (gardener), and the branch?

Who is the fruit for? How is abundant fruit produced?

What does it mean to abide or remain in Christ? Try to move from theory to a true-to-life understanding.

Engage and Discuss

Each week, it will be helpful to have your weekly Adventure Guide with you at your small group. Please pick up a copy at the church each week.

We all live with a rule of life that we follow everyday that impacts our use of time, priorities, values, attitudes, behaviors, and daily rhythms for ourselves and families (whether with intentional clarity or unknowingly). Do you feel you are being intentional or living a little “unknowingly” (reactive) in your daily life?

Author and Pastor Pete Scazzero describes a rule of life as, “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 a unique combination of spiritual practices that provide structure and direction for us to pay attention and remember God in everything we do.” In what ways does a plan like this sound inviting to you? How do you see a rule of life impacting your daily life if it were to be clarified and applied?

Over these past several weeks, we’ve been laying out some of the key elements that make up a good Rule of Life.

- We’ve said that to STEP forward on the Great Adventure in Christ, first of all, you need *Sight for the Pathway*. You need to be stopping periodically to examine where you are today when it comes to your spiritual and relational health and to scope out where you want to go.
- Secondly, you will benefit greatly from some regular *Training for the Soul*. You need some specific spiritual disciplines you are doing daily to keep walking with God when you’re not around a church building.
- Thirdly, you need *Equipment for Life*. You will want to equip yourself with books and classes and other forms of content that point the way to living beyond the cultural or familial “systems” you’ve been raised on and into the far healthier way of the kingdom of God.
- And, finally, you need **Partners for the Journey**. You will travel so much further and faster, if you have some companions committed to helping you move ahead, especially when you reach the rivers of life.

Describe how you are already living into a STEP Plan in these areas.



As you think about creating a STEP plan or rule of life, what else would you add to begin crafting a well ordered plan?

SIGHT FOR THE PATHWAY: I will regularly reflect and gain more insight in my journey with God and others by:
TRAINING FOR THE SOUL: I will seek to deepen my connection with God by:
EQUIPPING FOR LIFE: I will seek to equip myself to live more healthy and whole by:
PARTNERS FOR THE JOURNEY: I will intentionally cultivate healthy relationships by: Spouse/kids/family: Small Group/Christian community: Work/neighborhood/other circles of life:
REST: I will honor healthy rhythms of rest (Sabbath) in my life in the following ways:

Next Steps

1. Sometime this week, write down a list of the health-producing practices you've already put in place in your life.
2. Then, sit quietly somewhere and ask God to guide you to one or two new practices that stir a desire in you. You'll find a rich list of *Ideas for Strengthening Your Rule of Life* on the supplemental resource we've given you.
3. Add them to your written Rule of Life and practice them regularly for awhile.
4. After giving them a good run, set aside whatever practices don't yield benefit.
5. Move on and experiment with another practice.
6. Review and revise your Rule of Life often.
7. Learn as you go and enjoy the adventure!

