



CRAFTING A PERSONAL RULE OF LIFE



What is a Rule of Life?


A Rule of Life is a schedule and set of practices and relational rhythms that help us create space in our busy world for us to be with Jesus, become like Jesus, and do what Jesus did—to live “to the full” (John 10:10) in his kingdom, and in alignment with our deepest passions and priorities.

While the word “rule” may strike you as a strict or binding constraint, the Latin word we translate “rule” was originally the word for a trellis in a vineyard. In the same way a vine needs a trellis to lift it off the ground so it can bear the maximum amount of fruit, and keep free of predators and diseases, we need a rule as a kind of support

structure to organize our life around “abiding in the vine,” (John 15:1–8) as Jesus imagined.

It’s been said that we achieve inner peace when our schedule is aligned with our values. A Rule of Life is simply a tool to that end. Rather than a rigid, legalistic to-do list, it’s a life-giving structure for freedom, growth, and joy.

Learn more about our Rule of Life at
mosaicmhk.com/ruleoflife

An aerial photograph of a dense forest of evergreen trees, likely spruce or fir, with a dark, moody color palette. The trees are packed closely together, creating a textured, green canopy. The lighting is soft, highlighting the individual tree shapes against the darker background.

“A good rule can set us free to be our true and best selves. It is a working document, a kind of spiritual budget, not carved in stone but subject to regular review and revision. It should support us, but never constrict us.”

Margaret Guenther
Wife, Mother, & Anglican Priest

How to Use This Workbook

This workbook was designed as a simple guide for you to develop a personal Rule of Life, not a one-size fits all list of “rules” to follow. Please adapt, change, and improvise as seems best to you and your community. Here are five easy steps.

Step 1: Look over the Rule of Life Chart and spend a little time contemplating it, considering how it relates to different areas of your life.

Step 2: On the following pages, prayerfully work through each Mark of Formation one at a time, giving yourself a little time to list out your current practices, and to imagine what a more intentional Rule of Life could look like for you in this season.

Step 3: Draft your Rule of Life. Come back to the chart and fill in each category as you see fit.

Step 4: Try it out. Spend a few weeks living into your rule, and see how it feels. If it feels burdensome or boring, pay attention to that without judgment, and consider what you need to change. What’s working and what’s not working? What’s bringing you life? What’s draining you? Talk about it with a partner, close friend, or community member.

Step 5: Revise and commit. Based on step 4, adjust your Rule to what seems best, and commit to it for an extended season of time (we recommend a minimum of three months, and maximum of a year). Over that time period, create space for reflection via journaling, talking to a friend, or just taking a walk and thinking about it, to see what effect a life organized around “Resting” is doing for your transformation into a person of love, joy, and peace in the kingdom of God.

Life Categories

Contrary to popular usage, in biblical theology, your “soul” (hebrew: *nephesh*) isn’t the invisible part of you that flies off to heaven when you die. Rather, “soul” is your whole person: The integrating center of your humanity, material and immaterial. Your will, mind, emotions, body, and relationships.

As you develop your rule of life, keep the following categories in mind. The Practices you select should aim to incorporate as many of these categories as you can so your rule applies

to your whole person, so that all of us can experience all of God.

1. Abiding with God
2. Mind & Emotions
3. Body
4. Relationships
5. Rest & Recreation
6. Work & Money
7. Gospel & Hospitality

The Five Marks of Formation at Mosaic Church

Every church tradition has developed its own Rule of Life—you'll find it if you look hard enough, even if they don't use that exact language. It's a church community's way of articulating how followers of Jesus grow into maturity according to the values they embrace.

At Mosaic Church, there are five spiritual Marks we think are essential to being

apprentice of Jesus in our particular city and time. We craft our church's Rule of Life around our five Marks and the baseline Practices. Here's what to consider: What Practices have you already incorporated into your life? What are 1-2 Practices you can work into your daily or weekly routine?

Visit mosaicmhk.com/ruleoflife for teachings and exercises.



Resting

Slowing ourselves to live within our purposeful limitations.



Praying

Cultivating a connection with God that provides joy and strength.



Learning

Posturing ourselves to receive and mature in depth and wisdom.



Gathering

Meeting with others for enjoyment, support, and encouragement.



Contributing

Being openhanded to generously share what God has given us.

Rule of Life Chart

	Resting	Praying	Learning	Gathering	Contributing
Daily					
Weekly					
Monthly					
Quarterly					
Annually					



RESTING

Through Practices (also known as spiritual disciplines) inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus, we create space in our life for the Spirit of God to transform us into people of love. Each Mark of Formation will be accompanied by four Practices which serve as a baseline rhythm for our church to walk out together.

Rest is an essential, but often overlooked, part of our spiritual formation. It's difficult to tempt well-rested, healthy, happy people. Even more, when we're rested, love comes easily out of our inner being, flowing out to those around us and back to God. From page two of the Bible (the sabbath story) onward, rest is an essential component to living well

in God's world. What practices and rhythms of rest are built into your life?

Example rhythms: Turn off your devices at 9 pm nightly, sleep eight hours most nights, set aside one day for a weekly sabbath, take an annual retreat.

If you're new to this practice, we recommend you start with a few hours on your day off to simply relax and connect with God.

Questions: What practices make up your current rule of life (official or unofficial)? What practices would you like to add in, cut out, or change?

Mosaic's Practices

- Keep the sabbath
- Eliminate hurry
- Cultivate self-care
- Receive our God-given limits as a gift



PRAYING

Expressing themselves and asking questions is one of the most natural things a young child does with her parents. Likewise, conversations with God who is our Father can also be as deep and as wide as the thoughts we are thinking and the emotions we are feeling.

In prayer we are formed by our friendship with God, who we often find nearer than expected. And as we cultivate an awareness of the Spirit's presence, we can even be aware of him throughout our day. What Practices do you utilize to "abide in the vine"? To turn your attention to God all through your day, and index your heart's affection toward receiving and giving his love?

Example rhythms: Begin each day with silence and solitude, forgo social media before noon, fast from food one day per week, journal regularly.

If you're new to this practice, we recommend starting by giving ten minutes a day to reading and reflecting on a Psalm and noticing God's witness.

Questions: What practices make up your current rule of life (official or unofficial)? What practices would you like to add in, cut out, or change?

Mosaic's Practices

- Be aware of God's presence
- Befriend silence and solitude
- Embrace contemplation
- Keep regular rhythms of fasting



LEARNING

What we give our attention to is the person we become. Paul calls this “the renewal of the mind” (Romans 12:2), and we have a say in the kind of thought life we wire into our brain, and as a result, the kind of people we are being formed into—whether it’s formation through the truth of God, or deformation through social media, news feeds, and entertainment queues.

This requires a vigilance to guard your mind’s time on and input from digital devices to keep it healthy, free of temptation and distraction, and set on God’s loving, joyful companionship. How are you curating your thought life to take on “the mind of Christ” and carefully guarding your mind’s time on and input from digital devices?

Example rhythms: Set a time limit on your use of entertainment and an established expectation of moral quality in what you take in. Commit to daily intake of truth and teaching through reading, podcasting, or Bible study, etc. and the daily habit of gratitude and hope.

If you’re new to this practice, we recommend you begin your day by reading portions of the New Testament, before turning on your phone, even if only for a few minutes.

Questions: What practices make up your current rule of life (official or unofficial)? What practices would you like to add in, cut out, or change?

Mosaic’s Practices

- Allow Holy Scripture to shape our lives
- Live from our true selves
- Demonstrate a humble and teachable heart
- Take responsibility for our development



GATHERING

Gathering with others in community is a natural expression of following Jesus as an apprentice. We aren't made to live life alone and we need the presence of others to encourage us, share ourselves with, and make life more enjoyable. This presents a challenge as we look at our busy lives. Instead of trying to cram more in, we may need to cut back on our activities to make room for others. What relationships form our community before God? Who do we walk the way of Jesus alongside? And what are we doing to create, nurture, and deepen relationships of vulnerability and accountability?

Example rhythms: Prioritizing a regular

coffee time with a friend, sitting down to dinner with your family three nights a week, meeting with your group each week, know your neighbors on a first-name basis, having conversations with those exploring faith, worship weekly with our church on Sunday.

If you're new to this practice, we recommend you start with a weekly get together with a close friend to connect on a soul level and gathering with our church on Sundays.

Questions: What practices make up your current rule of life (official or unofficial)? What practices would you like to add in, cut out, or change?

Mosaic's Practices

- Enjoy hospitality with friends, neighbors, and strangers
- Point others to Jesus
- Grow in emotional health to love well
- Live in intentional community



CONTRIBUTING

When God created humans, he set them in a Garden to “work it and take care of it” (Genesis 2). Built into our humanity is the call of God to make our world more like Eden. What we do with our resources—time, money, gifting, and capacity—matters to God (and to others).

At its best, work is an expression of love and justice. At its worst, of ambition and greed. Our work often generates money; how we steward those resources is key to our apprenticeship to Jesus. A life of simplicity and generosity is a core tenant in Jesus’ vision of life in the kingdom. What habits have you built into your life to make stewarding your work and money part of your life before God? And to make sure what you’ve been given benefits others as well?

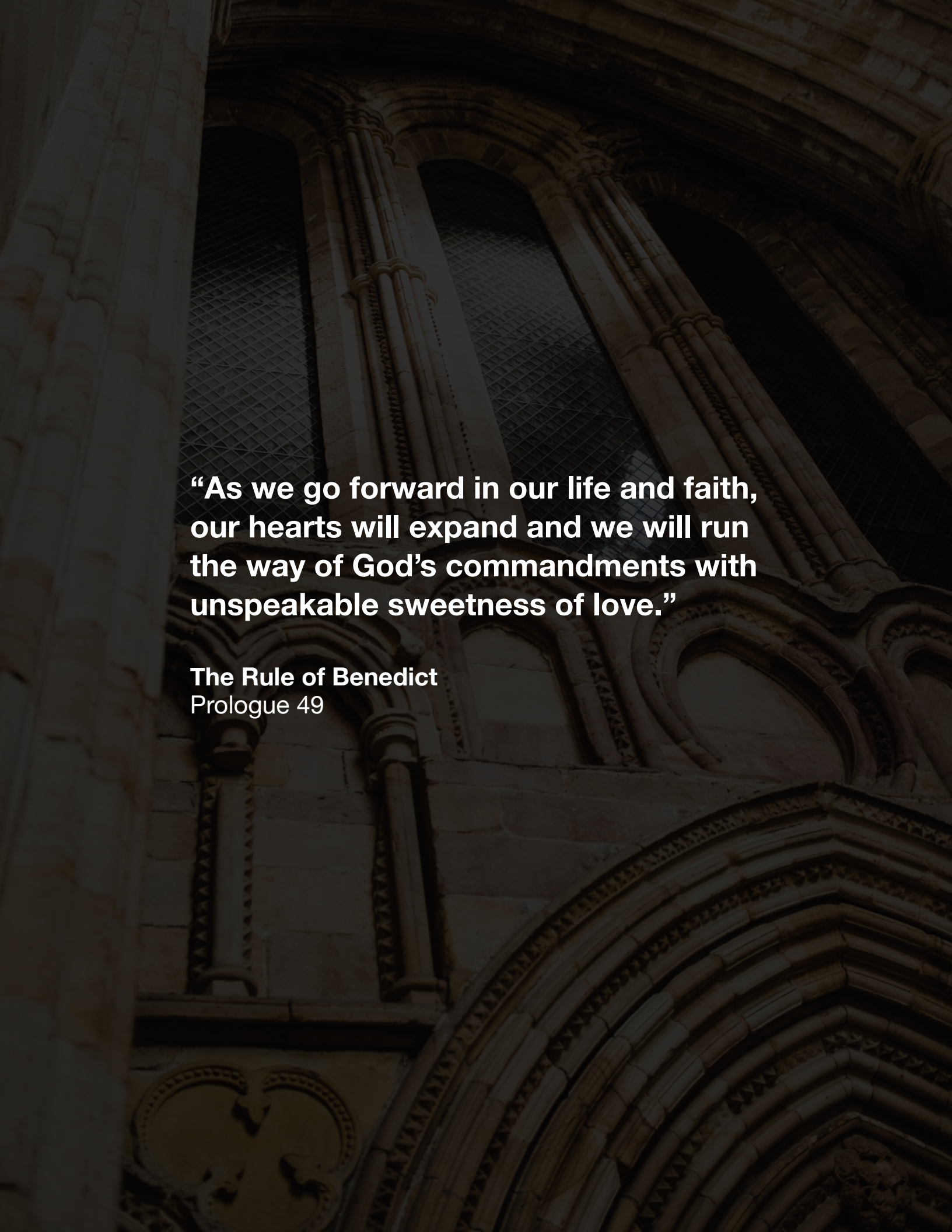
Example rhythms: Commit to spend several hours each day devoted to your most important work, give away a minimum of ten percent of your gross income (tithing) with special attention to the church and the poor, serve others on a ministry team regularly during Sunday worship gatherings.

If you’re new to this practice, we recommend you start with setting aside a percentage of your income to give away, even if it’s just 1–2%, and doing a weekly act of love through your work.

Questions: What practices make up your current rule of life (official or unofficial)? What practices would you like to add in, cut out, or change?

Mosaic’s Practices

- Share our gifts generously
- Demonstrate acts of justice and mercy
- Seek the welfare of the city
- Embrace all work as a holy vocation



**“As we go forward in our life and faith,
our hearts will expand and we will run
the way of God’s commandments with
unspeakable sweetness of love.”**

**The Rule of Benedict
Prologue 49**

Further Resources & Ideas

Practicing The Way

Learn from teachings, podcasts, and articles about spiritual disciplines that undergird a practical Rule of Life: practicingtheway.com

New Life Fellowship

New Life Fellowship in NYC has incorporated a Rule of Life into their church's vision. It's one of the most simple and adaptable ones out there (find it under "Our Marks"): newlife.nyc/vision

Praxis Labs

Praxis has developed a brief Rule of Life specifically designed for entrepreneurs and business people. Find it here: rule.praxislabs.org

***Crafting a Rule of Life* by Stephen Macchia**

This book uses journaling prompts to help the reader develop their own Rule from scratch.

***Sacred Rhythms* by Ruth Haley Barton:** Check out this book on creating space in your life and the necessary rhythms to follow and encounter God.

We are indebted to Practicing The Way, New Life Fellowship, and Emmaus Church for inspiring the format and content of this Rule.