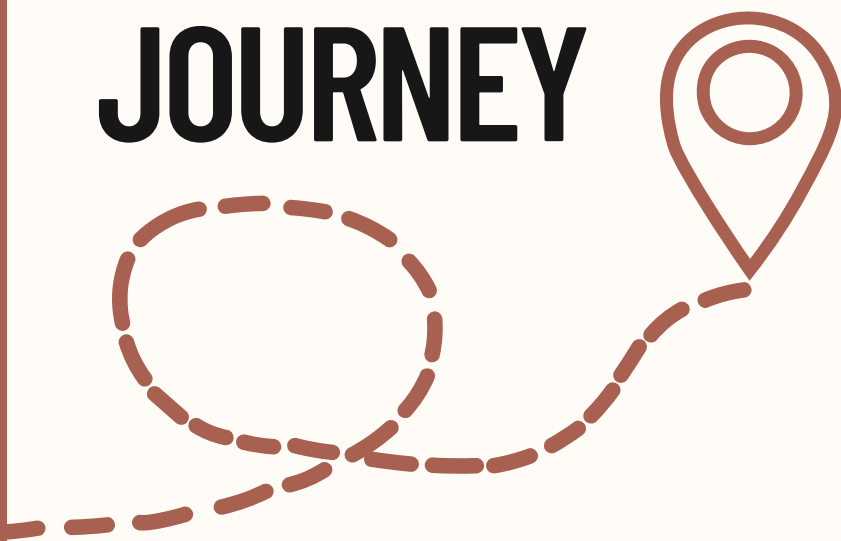


TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY



THE BRIDGE CHURCH

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 01** INTRODUCTION
- 03** THE RULE OF LIFE
- 06** CHAPTER 1: BIBLE READING
- 12** CHAPTER 2: PRAYER
- 17** CHAPTER 3: WORSHIP
- 21** CHAPTER 4: SPIRITUAL
CONVERSATIONS
- 24** CHAPTER 5: FASTING
- 28** CHAPTER 6: SABBATH
- 30** CHAPTER 7: ENGAGEMENT
- 32** NOW WHAT?

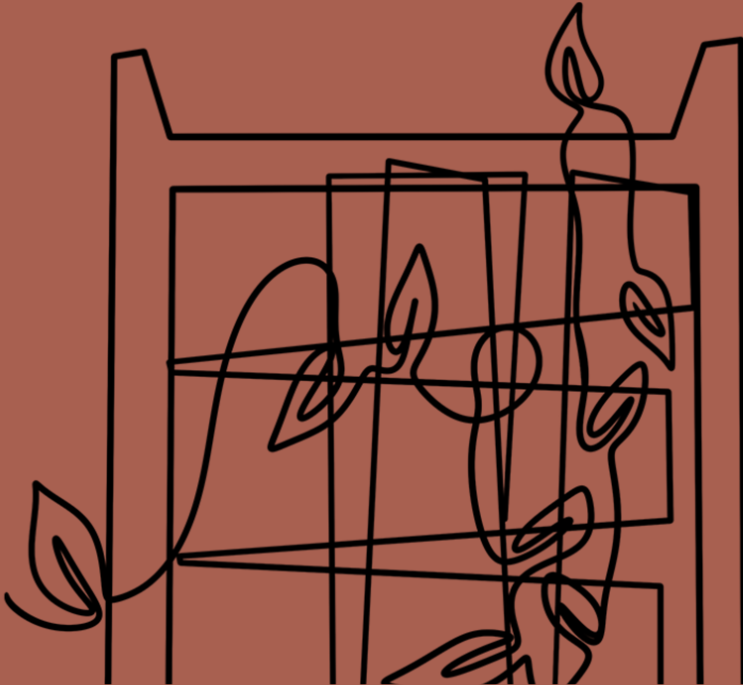
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Tools for the Journey*! We have prayerfully assembled this booklet as a resource to help guide you in your daily walk with Jesus. Whether you're just beginning, restarting, or refreshing your rhythms, there is something here for you.

In this booklet, you will find an overview of the Rule of Life and seven basic practices of Christian living. Each section also includes specific tools and a QR code you can scan to find even more resources on our website (thebridgersm.com/tools).

As you engage in this process, we encourage you to partner with a mature Christian or find a mentor to help guide you as you work through each spiritual practice in your own life.

You're welcome to work through this booklet at your own pace, but we recommend that you give yourself one to two weeks to process each spiritual practice and learn how to incorporate them into your Rule of Life.



I AM THE VINE; YOU ARE THE BRANCHES.
WHOEVER ABIDES IN ME AND I IN HIM, HE IT
IS THAT BEARS MUCH FRUIT, FOR APART
FROM ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING.

JOHN 15:5



THE RULE OF LIFE

You can think of “rule” as a trellis, a structural element used to help you become more fruitful in your spiritual life. This trellis is built with spiritual practices and disciplines, many of which are outlined in this booklet.

Overall, a Rule of Life is an intentional, conscious plan, one that is both personal and customizable. As you work through these Tools for the Journey, you will develop your own Rule of Life. At the very heart of a Rule of Life is a desire to be with God and love Him. From there, you will need time and practice to help you figure out how you connect best with God. Then you can adjust and further develop your own Rule of Life.

Keep in mind that there is no "perfect" way to develop and live out your Rule of Life. If you miss a day, start again tomorrow. The key is consistency over a long period of time so you can experience God more fully, resulting in more spiritual fruit and a transformed life.

At the very heart of a Rule of Life is a desire to be with God and love Him.

THE RULE OF LIFE

Rule of Life Resources

Here is a Rule of Life example which incorporates the seven practices covered in this booklet.

Bible Reading	Reading plan each morning	Weekly memory verse	Journal 3x each week	
Prayer	Nature walks M/W/F to appreciate the beauty of creation with God	Intercessory Prayer List for friends and family	Invite the Holy Spirit's leadership each morning	Monthly Prayer gathering with church friends
Worship	Weekly church worship service	Personal worship playlist each morning on my drive to work		
Spiritual Conversation	Small Group	Questions around the dinner table		
Fasting	No meat Mondays	Lunch fast Thursdays	Pick a non-food thing to fast the first two weeks of every other month	
Sabbath	No work emails on Sunday	Set aside part of my Sunday for reading a book for leisure		
Engagement	Volunteer 2x each month at community center	Serve 2x each month at church		

Bible Reading				
Prayer				
Worship				
Spiritual Conversation				
Fasting				
Sabbath				
Engagement				

Here is template for you to create your own Rule of Life using the practices you discover as you read this book.



For more Rule of Life resources, scan this QR Code.

CHAPTER ONE

BIBLE READING

What is it?

While the Bible was written many years ago, it's still relevant today! Have you ever tried to have a close relationship with

All Scripture is
inspired by God and
is useful to teach us...
- 2 Timothy 3:16

someone you never talk to? It's very hard. It's the same way with God. One of the ways God speaks to us is through the Bible.

Why is it important?

We can learn from the examples of Jesus and Paul in the New Testament, as well as many others in the Old Testament, such as David, Moses and Abraham. God uses the teachings, parables and stories we find in the Bible to speak to us about our everyday lives.

There are many different ways to read, study and apply the principles found within the Bible. We encourage you to start by taking a moment to pray and ask the Lord to highlight a method that will work best for you. To learn more about any of these methods, follow the QR code at the end of this section.

Bible Reading Methods

Memorization

Knowing the Bible helps you know your Father and who you are. It is also a spiritual weapon (the Sword of the Spirit) to help you protect yourself and fight against the lies of the Enemy (Ephesians 6:17b). Memorizing it ensures that you have His words ready to remind you of who God is, who you are, and discern truth in moments of doubt, conflict, and trial. Here are ten powerful verses we recommend you memorize to help you on your journey.

- *Proverbs 3:5-6*
- *John 3:16*
- *2 Chronicles 7:14*
- *Isaiah 40:31*
- *Joshua 1:9*
- *Matthew 22:37-39*
- *Philippians 4:13*
- *Matthew 6:33*
- *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*
- *John 14:6*

If you are a words person, try writing them on flash cards and use them to study and test yourself. If you are more of a verbal person, try recording yourself saying them and then listen to them and repeat them over and over until you learn them.

Music is also an effective way to memorize, so look online for songs that sing these verses.

BIBLE READING

Bible Reading Plans

There are many types of Bible reading plans including topical, chronological, by book or character. The following Seven-Day Plan will take about 10 minutes each day to complete. Each day includes a reading from Proverbs, Psalms, the Old Testament and New Testament. Most contain either a thematic correlation between the selected passages or outright reference.

DAY 1

Proverbs 1:1-7; Psalm 1; Genesis 1-2:3; John 1:1-18

DAY 2

*Proverbs 2:1-15; Psalm 19; Deuteronomy 6:1-9;
Matthew 5:1-12*

DAY 3

Proverbs 9; Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 16:1-13; John 10:1-21

DAY 4

Proverbs 10; Psalm 86; Exodus 34:1-9; Ephesians 2

DAY 5

*Proverbs 25:1-10; Psalm 115; Daniel 7:13-28;
Mark 14:53-65*

DAY 6

*Proverbs 29; Psalm 22:1-2, 16-24; Zechariah 12-13:1;
Matthew 27:32-56*

DAY 7

Proverbs 31:1-9; Psalm 150; Isaiah 55; 1 John 3:11-24

SOAP Life Journaling

This method is intended as a writing exercise in a physical journal, but it can definitely be done orally with a sound recording device for those who would prefer an oratory approach. SOAP stands for Scripture, Observation, Application and Prayer, the four basic steps in this Bible reading method. While there are many plans out there to accompany SOAP journaling,

Scripture - verse(s) the Lord highlights as you read

Observation - context, tone, purpose, audience of verse(s)

Application - response to reading and observations

Prayer - thankfulness and help to live out the application

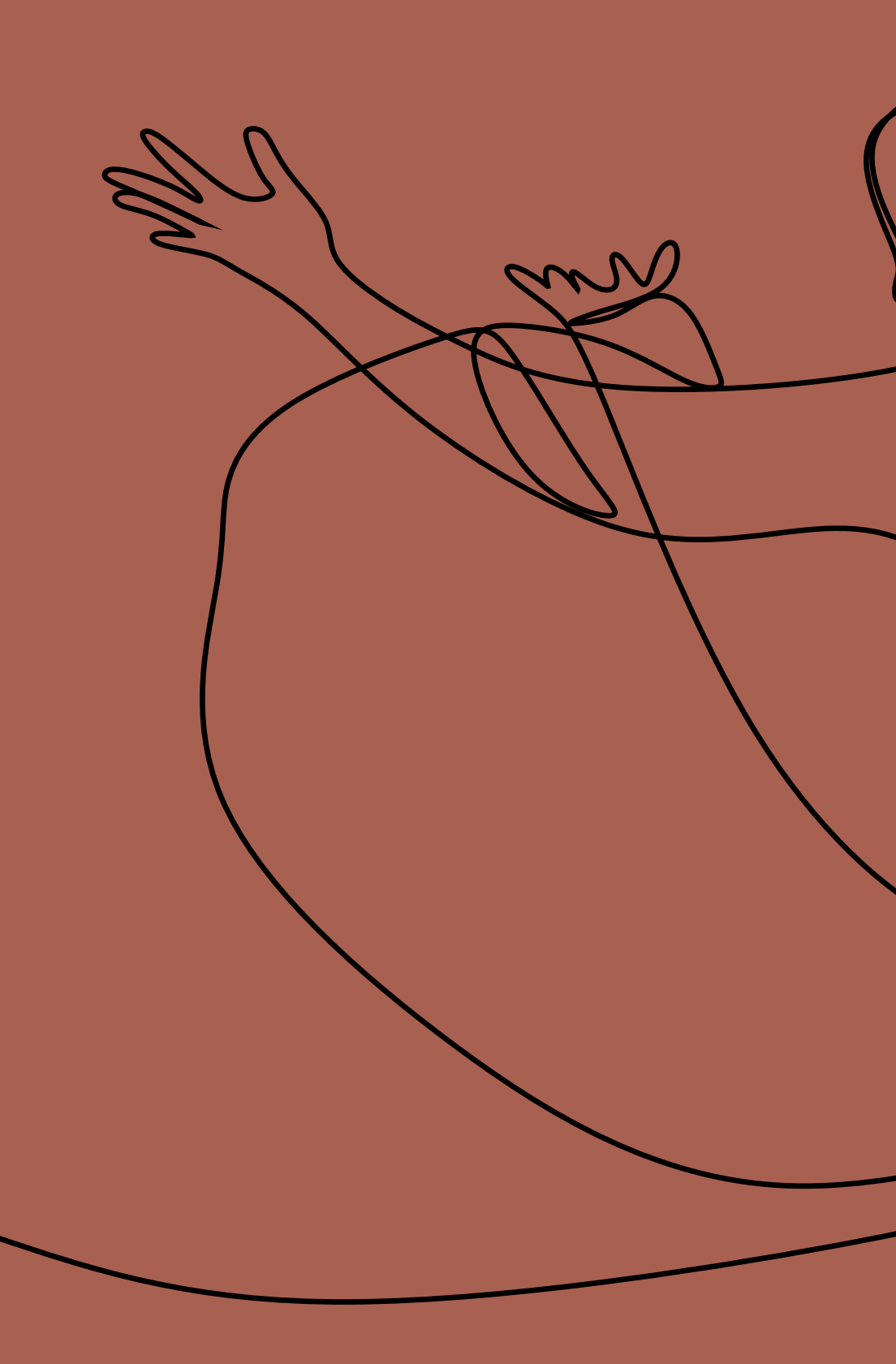
you can use this method with any Bible reading plan or section of reading from the Bible. To learn more about this method, use the QR code in this section.


Lectio Divina

The Lectio Divina is an ancient method of prayer and scripture reading, one that St. Benedict had made a regular practice in most monasteries by the 6th century. The goal is not to master the scriptures but to slowly and repeatedly read small sections of scripture and, through prayer, silent listening, and reflection, come to understand its ultimate value. In this method, the goal is listening with the Holy Spirit to what the scripture is saying and how it applies to your life. There are four steps of the Lectio Divina: Read. Reflect. Respond. Rest. To learn more about this method, use the QR code in this section.



For more Bible Reading resources, scan this QR Code.





YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE,
ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.
MATTHEW 6:10

CHAPTER TWO

PRAYER

What is it?

Prayer is simply being with and communicating with God. Jesus gave us a model often referred to as “The Lord’s Prayer” (Luke 11:2-4; Matthew 6:9-13), which invites us to sit with and posture our hearts toward our loving, holy Father. It informs the types of things to ask for, such as God’s Kingdom, His will, and our daily needs. It directs us to maintain right relationships by asking for His forgiveness and giving it to others. Lastly, Jesus’ prayer shows that we can ask for help to stay away from temptation and find rescue when encountering evil.

Why is it important?

Prayer is a direct communication line to God. It involves sharing about what’s happening in your life, asking Him to meet needs and wants (petitioning and intercession), “hearing” what He has to say in response (listening), and even sitting in His Presence to enjoy Him (contemplation).

Petitioning & Intercession

Petitioning simply means asking or making a request. When you have a need or want that only God can fulfill, you petition Him. Intercession is a type of petitioning prayer that involves asking God to meet the needs of another person; you are spiritually stepping into a situation on their behalf. When you petition or

"...but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

- Phillipians 4:6

intercede, you not only invite God into a situation, but you are also acknowledge His power while appealing to His heart and character. Doing so will provide opportunities for you to see

God's heart on display as He moves to answer your requests according to His perfect will. You will also grow in faith as you continue to ask and wait for Him to answer, allowing space in your own heart for Him to speak and change you.

Listening

God uses many methods to communicate. His manner of "speaking" is perhaps different from what we experience when talking with another person. He often speaks in a still, small voice, but also through impressions in our thoughts, bodies and emotions. You can "hear" Him when you experience His peace, read His Word (the Bible), or feel His gentle, but strong, "magnetic" pull towards a repeating verse, idea, word or something new to you. Two methods that require greater discernment, prayer, and the counsel of others, are visions and

PRAYER

dreams that God gives as a way to lead us. Visions are like little snapshots in our hearts while we are awake. Dreams, on the other hand, come to us while we sleep. God can use both methods in various ways though, again, we may need to hold them up to the Bible and seek wise counsel for confirmation or to better understand what God is communicating.

It will take time and practice to develop listening and hearing. If you are newer to “listening,” we encourage you to partner with a coach or another mature believer to help you discern what you’re experiencing. It’s not uncommon to have a “good idea,” but before taking action, it would be more fruitful if you knew it was a “God idea.” In any circumstance, you can ask God: What do you want me to know? And what do you want me to do?

Contemplation or Contemplative Prayer

Contemplation is the simplest method of the three in this booklet, but it is perhaps the hardest to start and practice. This type of prayer invites you to sit in the Presence of God and

Sit in the Presence of God and simply enjoy Him!

simply enjoy Him. In doing so, you are trusting God with all the worries and concerns of your day and life. Yet while you sit with the Lord, you will

undoubtedly experience His peace and come away from your time refreshed with a different perspective on the Lord, your life, and its circumstances. Through regular practice, you will also grow in your love for Him.

Prayer Methods/Tools

Two Questions

Take time to quietly sit and give room for God to speak as you ask each question.

1. God, what do you want me to know?
2. God, what do you want me to do?

Silence, Stillness and Solitude

This contemplative practice allows you to pay attention to God through interior silence (even in noisy exterior places). The goal is to focus your mind on God and spend time in His presence. To learn more about this method, use the QR code in this section.

P.R.A.Y. Acronym

P

Pause - Pause to be still and know that God is in control. Praise Him for who He is, what He has done, and ask Him how He feels about you to today.

R

Reflect - Reflect on what you're feeling in your heart. Repent of any sins you may have committed or offenses you might be holding on to.

A

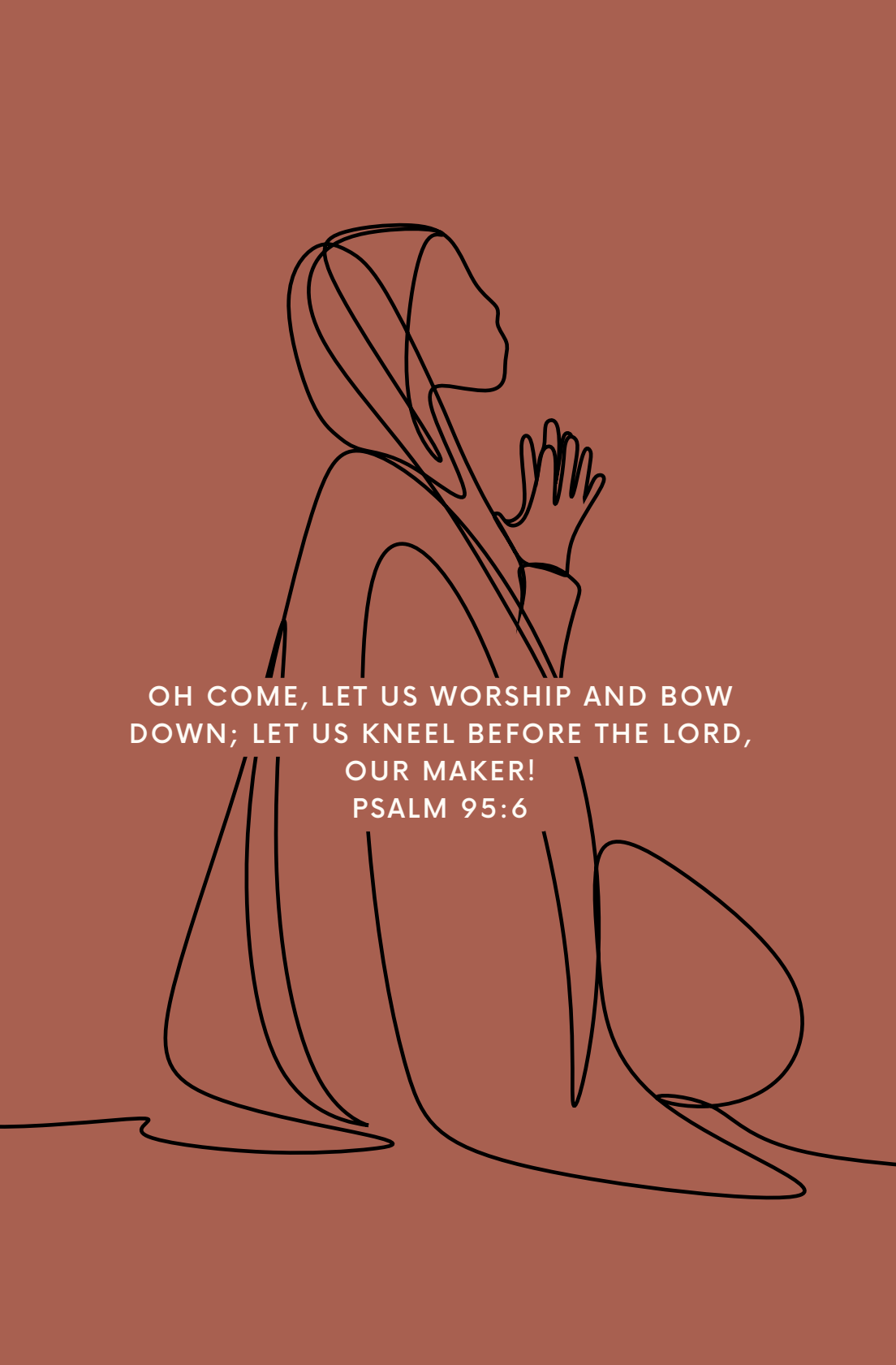
Ask - Share your heart and needs with Him. Be honest and vulnerable with your concerns and ask Him to guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus.

Y

Yield - Yield to His voice and respond to what He is saying and/or asking of you. Commit your ways to the Lord.



For more Prayer resources, scan this QR Code.



OH COME, LET US WORSHIP AND BOW
DOWN; LET US KNEEL BEFORE THE LORD,
OUR MAKER!
PSALM 95:6

CHAPTER THREE

WORSHIP

What is it?

“I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me” (John 17:23). Jesus’ prayer in the presence of His disciples on the very night of His betrayal highlights one of the most beautiful opportunities corporate praise and worship affords: the gathering of His children in the same place at the same time, declaring and affirming the same biblical truths in the same song, in unified surrender to and acknowledgement of the lordship of Jesus Christ. It should come as no surprise that this is where the presence of God is welcomed and where He is committed to be present, “enthroned on the praises of Israel” (Psalm 22:3).

Practically, praise is the outward expression of an inward, holistic, Spirit-led transformation in our lives as His children.

“God comes to dwell where his people worship, and where that happens, all the weight of his glory, his rulership, and his dominion are present.”

- Jack Hayford

The Father sends the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying “Abba Father!” and, with it, the desire to connect to the Father physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. What does

WORSHIP

praise and worship look like? The Bible provides many examples such as singing praises, bowing, kneeling, clapping your hands, lifting your hands, being still, dancing before the Lord, speaking and praying in tongues, and presenting your whole self as a living sacrifice to Him. In 2 Chronicles 20 alone, you will find 11 different Hebrew verbs for active physical worship! It is important to reiterate that these expressions are not legalistically ritualistic, nor are they designed to serve our emotions for their own sake. They are the fruit of a life touched by Jesus that outwardly demonstrates His lordship in their life both corporately and privately.

Why is it important?

Many times throughout Scripture, we're invited and instructed to worship the Lord, and we'll continue to do so along with the angels for eternity. It's worth noting that the Lord fought battles for His people through their worship without any physical weapons (Josh. 6; 2 Chron. 20). We can still fight battles this way, placing our focus on Him than the problem. It's also important to know that you become more like what you worship; as you spend time in His presence, you will take on His characteristics and reflect Him and His heart more. As you give God access to your heart in worship, He will direct your steps, longings, and desires (Prov. 16:9); bless you with perspective; soften your heart; help you better hear the Holy Spirit's voice; realign your soul to be still and know that He is God; give you inspiration; and help you build a thriving relationship with Him.

Worship Tools

Corporate Worship

Worship is powerful and formative when we do it on our own, but there is a unique beauty in collective, unified praise. This method doesn't require a sound system and big room with a professional worship leader but can be done in a small group of friends with an instrument or even a cappella. Bridge Groups are a great place to put corporate worship into practice. We also gather as a larger church family to lift our praises on Sunday mornings. Additionally, we come together several times a year to devote an evening specifically to worshipping. These Worship Nights are an incredible opportunity for us to come before the throne, acknowledge our humanity before God, and proclaim His power and goodness over our lives.

Worship Where You Are

Praise and worship isn't limited to a Sunday morning service or when you are with others. You can praise and worship the Lord anytime, anywhere, alone or with others. Try using a worship playlist in the car or at work or praise and worship YouTube videos while at home. You might even try singing out your own unique song to Him. We also encourage you to access our “Worship Where You Are” series, a video showcase you can watch and listen to with any playback device. Use the QR code in this section to find our “Worship Where You Are” series as well as other resources for private worship.



For more Worship resources, scan this QR Code.



WHILE THEY WERE TALKING AND DISCUSSING
TOGETHER, JESUS HIMSELF DREW NEAR AND
WENT WITH THEM.

LUKE 24:15

CHAPTER FOUR

SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION

What is it?

Think about the story of two of Jesus' followers who unknowingly walked with Him on the road to Emmaus after He had resurrected. Thinking He was a visitor in Israel, they talked with Him about Jesus' crucifixion, burial and apparent resurrection, and Jesus, in turn, "opened to [them] the Scriptures" (Luke 24:13-32). When they reached Emmaus, they urged Jesus to stay with them rather than continue on His own way, which He agreed to do. Finally, they recognized who Jesus was, and Luke recorded their reflection, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" (Luke 24:32).

Their whole encounter stirred up a spiritual hunger for more of God while also highlighting His goodness. This is the goal of spiritual conversations. It's important to note that spiritual conversations are meant to be a safe place for people to feel comfortable opening up and sharing their perspectives, knowledge and experiences about spiritual topics; they are never meant to be confrontational, argumentative or judgmental.

Why is it important?

Open, welcoming, non-judgmental atmospheres allow for conversations and processing to happen for people of all walks of life and religious (or non-religious) backgrounds that might not happen elsewhere. Additionally, engaging in spiritual conversations helps a believer discern and understand the voice of God and the directions He is leading. Through it, a mature Christian may be able to offer wise counsel, gently guide people to the truth, validate others through listening, serve as a soundboard, and find ways to encourage. In short, the Lord can use spiritual conversations to accomplish a lot in the life of any person at any stage of relationship with Himself, even drawing those far from Him to salvation.

Spiritual Conversations Tools

Gather Together

Be intentional about gathering with people, especially other Christians. Consider the following when meeting with a group: Be slow to speak and quick to listen. Create a place of freedom and openness. Cultivate kindness, compassion, and humility.

Here are some suggestions of how you can begin to engage in spiritual conversations:

- Join a Bridge Group.
- Plan regular meet-ups with friends, neighbors and/or co-workers over coffee or a meal.

Have Spiritual Conversations

Start a spiritual conversation using these types of questions:

- (In a conversation with someone who has never heard about God) What would you say about God from your experience?
- What are two or three major truths on which you have based your decision making?
- When you get to heaven, what will be the first three questions you will ask God?
- What are your feelings on love and forgiveness? How does your perspective of Jesus Christ affect those?
- Share about a recent experience where you encountered God.

Engaging in spiritual conversations helps a believer discern and understand the voice of God and the directions He is leading.



For more Spiritual Conversation resources, scan this QR Code.

CHAPTER FIVE

FASTING

What is it?

Fasting is an ancient practice that prepares you to focus your attention on God and His priorities. You intentionally replace one thing you enjoy to embrace the enjoyment of another. The true focus of fasting is always God Himself, His Presence and His purpose in you.

There are different reasons for fasting that include grieving, repenting, and worship, to name a few. There are also different types of fasts, meaning what a person fasts from; the most common type of fast is food. When fasting food, you may choose to refrain from eating

a certain type of food or skip a meal (or two) to pray instead. You may even choose to stop eating solid foods for an extended period

of time. Other types of fasting can include social media or entertainment, such as Instagram, television, music, books or games. The method doesn't matter as much as the focus of why you're fasting. Pick what you feel God is prompting you to fast.

How you come before the Lord while you fast is important. You may want to pick specific Scriptures to meditate on or identify a

Fasting confirms our utter dependence upon God by finding in Him a source of sustenance beyond food.

- Dallas Willard

specific issue to bring before Him during prayer. Regardless, expect the Lord to meet you in the solitude of your chosen fast and that He will draw you closer to Himself.

Why is it important?

“If we don’t feel strong desires for the manifestation of the glory of God, it is not because you have drunk deeply and are satisfied. It is because we have nibbled so long at the table of the world. Our soul is stuffed with small things, and there is no room for the great” (*A Hunger for God*, John Piper). Basically, physical hunger reminds us to create space for a spiritual hunger; this creates room for the “greater” things that God wants us to experience. The more we allow God this space, the more He will endeavor to fill it.

Fasting Tools

- **Prepare to Fast**

When choosing to fast, use these questions to prepare:

- What am I fasting from?

- When am I fasting?

- How long am I fasting?

- Is there a specific purpose for this fast? If so, what is it?

FASTING

- **Reflect**

Once you have completed your fast, take some time to reflect using the following questions:

- Is there anything specific that the Lord showed you or spoke to you during your fast? If so, what?

- What things have you noticed have changed in your life as a result of your fast? (e.g. relationships, perspectives, body, mind)

- **Reflection Scriptures**

Scriptures you can use for Reflection:

- 2 Corinthians 3:18
- 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Romans 12:2



For more Fasting resources, scan this QR Code.



MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE,
BUT BY EVERY WORD THAT COMES FROM THE
MOUTH OF GOD.
MATTHEW 4:4

CHAPTER SIX

SABBATH

What is it?

The Sabbath is God's plan for people to rest and take a day-off from work. In it, God invites us to stop from our regular work, rest in our whole being, delight in Him and His creation, and contemplate the wonders of who He is and what He has done. Unlike a regular day-off, taking a Sabbath day is intentional and requires planning to make the most out of the time. And, like the other tools discussed in this booklet, you will experience the most fruit if you are consistent.

What can a Sabbath day look like? Plan activities that bring you joy or delight and truly replenish you. Also plan how you will reflect, contemplate and worship the Lord as an integral part of resting and finding refreshment in the Lord. The day of the week you Sabbath is less important than consistency, so pick the day of the week that works best for you. You may need to take your family into consideration and even incorporate it into your family's weekly rhythms so you can participate together.

Why is it important?

Keeping a Sabbath rhythm is another way to intentionally connect with God and will bring relief and refreshment to those who observe it. After all, as one of the Ten Commandments

(Exodus 20:8), Jesus reminds us that the Father always intended the Sabbath to be a blessing to people (Mark 2:27).

Sabbath Tools

- **Plan**

Practice is important. So is planning. Use the tool below to help you plan out your Sabbath day:

- **Stop:** When will you take a Sabbath?

- **Rest:** In what ways will you rest (body, mind, spirit)?

- **Delight:** What things will you find/take joy or delight in?

- **Contemplate:** How will you intentionally connect with God?



For more Sabbath resources, scan this QR Code.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ENGAGEMENT

What is it?

Engagement in the body of Christ starts with who you are as a person. As you discover who God made you to be, including the gifts, talents and passions He has given you, you will experience a greater fulfillment as a person and then enter into a unique partnership with God. While you can certainly partner with God in every aspect of your life, the two overarching areas of partnership are missional and practical.

On a missional level, you will impact others by living out your calling and sharing the message God has given you. On a practical level, you will impact others as you volunteer, help meet the needs of others, involve yourself in events with other believers (e.g. Bible study or Bridge group), and serve others as Jesus Christ would.

Why is it important?

When a believer engages in a unique partnership with God, living the life that He prepared that person to live, the love of Jesus reaches further and draws in more people, the Body of Christ grows, other believers are strengthened and encouraged, and Kingdom culture is brought to earth. It is a beautiful picture not too unlike what the early church looked like in Acts.

Engagement Tools

Find a spiritual advisor or life coach.

Each person is unique, so a great way for you to develop, discover how you are made, and walk through your spiritual journey is to engage in one-on-one conversation. An advisor or coach can help you process and stay on track with your journey. Use the QR code in this section to learn more.

Take action.

Taking action is important when choosing to engage. It is a natural byproduct of a life devoted to God.

- What step will you take to learn more about how you are designed?

- What step will you take to engage and serve others?

The highest form of worship is the worship of unselfish Christian service. The greatest form of praise is the sound of consecrated feet seeking out the lost and helpless.
- Billy Graham

For more Engagement resources, scan this QR Code.



NOW WHAT?

YOUR RULE OF LIFE

Congratulations on working through the contents of this guide. We are so excited for the journey you are taking! We trust that God will meet you as you make Him a regular focus of each day, explore new ways of connecting with Him, and invite others into the journey with you. Remember that God is so pleased when you honor Him with your time, focus and energies - He just wants to be in relationship with you. (You are His child and precious treasure!) The blessing of relationship with God is a transformed life, one that loves like Jesus, blesses others, and brings His Kingdom to earth.

If you haven't done so already, we encourage you to fill out your own Rule of Life in the template provided on page 5. As you live out the different spiritual practices, you may discover that some are not as effective as before. At that point, you may need to readjust your Rule of Life and try a new method. You may also want to talk with a mature Christian or spiritual mentor who can provide suggestions and guidance. While you may make many changes to your Rule of Life throughout your lifetime, we are "certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns" (Philippians 1:6).



Tools for the Journey was created by The Bridge Church to help people deepen their relationship with God.

With special thanks to:
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www.thebridgersm.com

