



## Rhythms to Create A Spiritually Vibrant Home

Week 1: Habits

Week 2: Technology & Culture

Week 3: Scripture & Prayer

Week 4: Pause: What is a Household?

Week 5: Life-giving Household

Week 6: Hospitality & Community

Week 7: Fasting & Loss

Week 8: Work & Ministry

Week 9: Sabbath & Rest

Name:

### Booklist:

*The Common Rule*, Justin Whitmel Earley

*Habits of the Household*, Justin Whitmel Earley

*The Tech-Wise Family*, Andy Crouch

*Mission of Motherhood*, Sally Clarkson

*Life-giving Home*, Sally Clarkson

*Atomic Habits*, James Clear

*Parenting with Love and Logic*, Foster W. Cline

*Creating a Spiritually Vibrant Home*, Don Everts

*Teaching from Rest*, Sarah Mackenzie

*Reclaiming Conversation*, Sherry Turkle

*The Gospel Comes with a House Key*, Rosaria Butterfield

*Find Your People*, Jennie Allen

*Every Good Endeavor*, Timothy Keller

*Sacred Rest*, Sandra Dalton-Smith

*Memory Making Mom*, Jessica Smartt

### Key Passage

“Unless the Lord builds the house,  
those who build it labor in vain.  
Unless the Lord watches over the city,  
the watchman stays awake in vain.  
It is in vain that you rise up early  
and go late to rest,  
eating the bread of anxious toil;  
for he gives to his beloved sleep.

Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord,  
the fruit of the womb a reward.  
Like arrows in the hand of a warrior  
Are the children of one's youth.  
Blessed is the man  
Who fills his quiver with them!  
He shall not be put to shame  
When he speaks with his enemies in the gate.  
~ **Psalm 127**

## Habits Survey

1. I have goals for myself and my family. True False
2. I feel like the choices I make are informed by those goals. True False
3. My habits are consciously aligned to the goals that I have. True False
4. I spend the following amount of time on technology:  

<b>Daily: Less than 30 minutes</b>	<b>1 hour</b>	<b>2 Hours</b>	<b>3+ hours</b>
<b>Weekly: 0-2 hours</b>	<b>3-5 hours</b>		<b>6+ hours</b>
5. I feel like I am in control of my technology habits, not like my technology is in control of me. True False
6. How often do I check my phone?  

<b>Every 15 minutes</b>	<b>Every hour</b>	<b>Every 2-3 hours</b>
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7. How often do I do the following:  

<b>Individual Bible Reading:</b>	<b>Every Day</b>	<b>Every 3-5 days</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Communal Bible Reading:</b>	<b>Every Day</b>	<b>Every 3-5 days</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Individual Prayer:</b>	<b>Every Day</b>	<b>Every 3-5 days</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Communal Prayer:</b>	<b>Every Day</b>	<b>Every 3-5 days</b>	<b>Never</b>
8. Who do I consider my household?  

<b>Family</b>	<b>Extended Family</b>	<b>Friends</b>	<b>Church Members</b>	<b>Colleagues</b>
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9. How many people are in my household? \_\_\_\_\_
10. How do I interact with my household daily? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Weekly? \_\_\_\_\_
11. How often do I eat with the people in my home at a table (no screens)?  

<b>Every Day</b>	<b>Every 3-5 days</b>	<b>Never</b>
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12. How often do I invite people into my home?  

<b>Every Day</b>	<b>Every 3-5 days</b>	<b>Never</b>
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13. I fast: **Weekly**      **Every 3-5 weeks**      **Never**
14. I fast from: \_\_\_\_\_
15. I view my work as a calling. True False
16. I view my work as a passion.. True False
17. I view my work as a way to spread the gospel. True False
18. A view rest as a:  

<b>(A) time to recuperate after giving my all at work,</b>
<b>(B) a time to celebrate the time I've given in work;</b>
<b>(C) A way to work out the energy and passion I've cultivated during rest.</b>

### Thoughts

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# Week 1: Habits

"Your outcomes are a lagging measure of your habits [...] If you want to predict where you'll end up in life, all you have to do is follow the curve of tiny gains or tiny losses, and see how your daily choices will compound ten or twenty years down the line." ~ *Atomic Habits*, p. 18

Pause and consider: If every day was like today, what would your life look like at the end of this year?

Then, think: if every year were like this year, what would be the sum of your life? Would you like the eventual outcome?

You must live purposefully. No action is action - just in a direction you are not choosing to go.

## First you need to determine your goals...

"The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down." ~ Prov. 14:1

At the end of your life, what would you want the following to look like? Describe a goal for each - Could be something you would be sad if you never did OR a description of what you want to cultivate in that area.. Be specific!

Partner/Spouse	
Family	
Friends and Community	
Job and Work	
Finances	
Personal Hobbies	
Health	

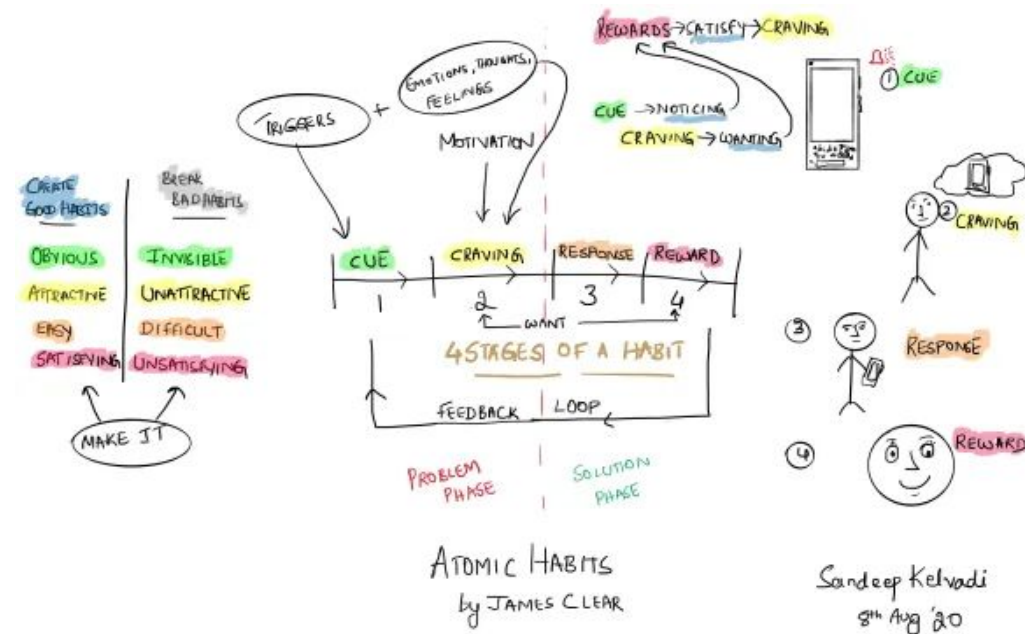
"Goals are about the results you want to achieve. Systems are about the processes that lead to those results.

You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems" ~ *Atomic Habits*, p. 23, 27

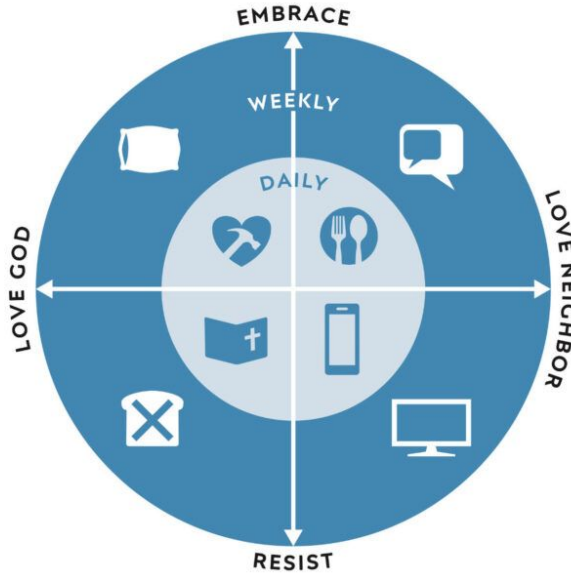
***Are your current daily habits cultivating a life that will amount to these goals?***



"A 'rule of life' is a term for a pattern of communicable habits for formation [as seen in monasteries]. Habits are the gears by which to direct life toward the purpose of love. In fact, the word rule is used because it comes from the Latin word regula, a word associated with a bar or trellis. The idea is that we (like plants) are always growing and changing. The rule of life is intended to pattern communal life in the direction of purpose and love instead of chaos and decay." ~ *The Common Rule*, p. 14

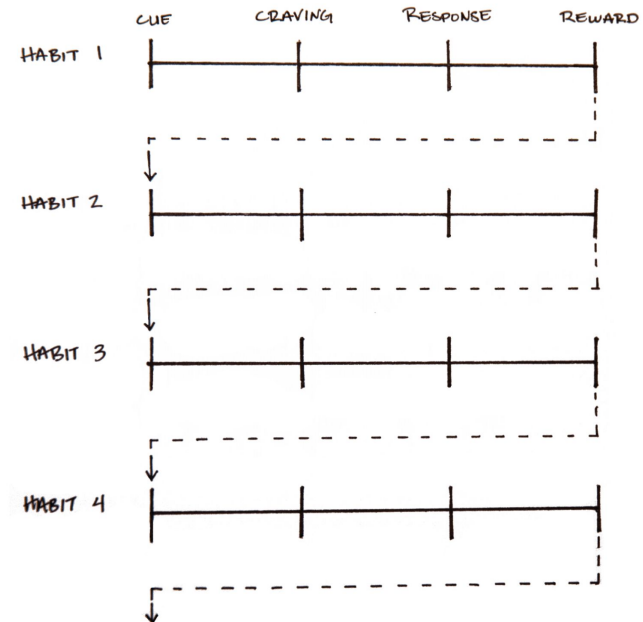


## HABITS AT A GLANCE



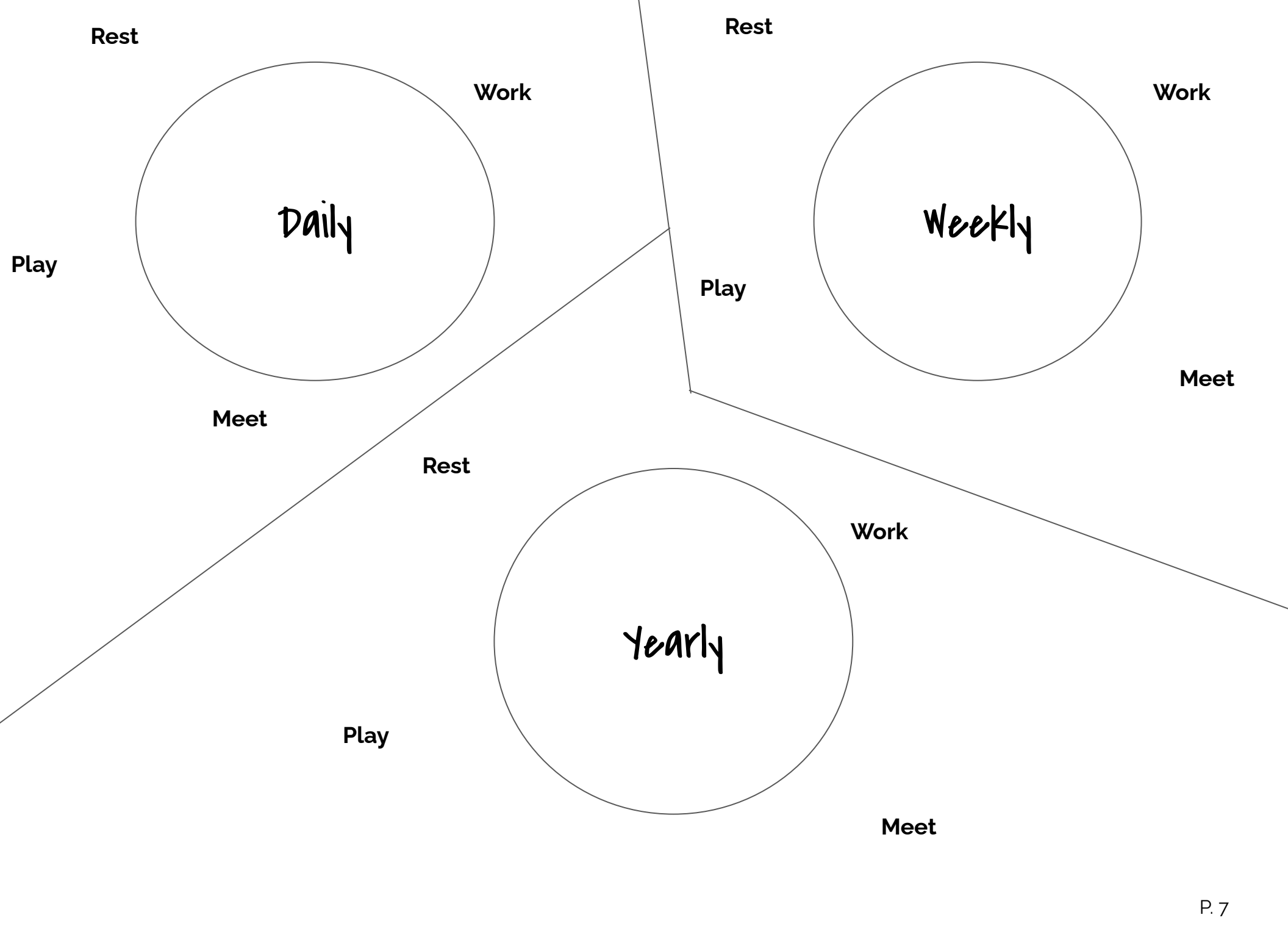
DAILY HABITS	WEEKLY HABITS
Kneeling prayer three times a day	One hour of conversation with a friend
One meal with others	Curate media to four hours
One hour with phone off	Fast from something for twenty-four hours
Scripture before phone	Sabbath

## HABIT STACKING









# Week 2: Technology & Culture

## Proverbs 14:12

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

What do our current habits say about our relationship with technology? And what we are worshipping?

Day	Time Spent on Tech
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	

## 1 Corinthians 6:12

"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything.

## 1 Corinthians 10:31

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

## Matthew 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

## 1 John 2:15-17

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

## Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

What do our current habits say about our relationship with technology? And what we are worshipping?

"Sin has turned a people meant for presence into a people of absence. When we try to be present everywhere (omnipresent), we end up being present nowhere. When we try to free ourselves from the limitations of our presence, we always become enslaved to absence." ~ The Common Rule, p. 65-66



"The habit of curating media intaking strikes at the heart impulse of the Common Rule. The good life doesn't come from the ability to choose anything and everything; the good life comes from the ability to choose good things by setting limits.

Stories convince us that things are, after all, going somewhere.

That's why stories - more than any ethics lecture or Sunday School lesson - shape our idea of what the good life is, where the world is going, and what it means to be human. They tell us what is beautiful, what is just, and how we should live with each other.

This is why we don't just watch stories. We become them." ~ The Common Rule, p. 117, 114

"Who am I? And what am I becoming? These are the questions our morning routines are inevitably asking and answering for us. But no words except the words of scripture can bear the weight of a response to these questions." ~ The Common Rule, p. 81

## Who is forming who?

**Idea:** Weekly Family Movie night.

Allows you to watch the best movies, gives time for togetherness, creates a family culture, and provides an opportunity to discuss topics that arise.

"In the American story, limits are bad. They get in the way of our freedom, which means we need to get rid of all limits to be happy. But in the story of God, limits are the way to the good life, even the way to happiness." Where in life do you see the wisdom of setting specific limitations?

You may never have thought of "curation" as a paradigm for choosing what to watch or listen to. But how would you describe how you curate media for yourself? For your kids? Share with each other what you have found helpful. (Remember, again, the goal is not to have the same rhythms and criteria, but in part to suggest ideas that perhaps others have not considered.)

## 10 Tech-Wise Commitments

1. We develop wisdom and courage together as a family.
2. We want to create more than we consume. So we fill the center of our home with things that reward skill and active engagement.
3. We are designed for a rhythm of work and rest. So one hour a day, one day a week, and one week a year, we turn off our devices and worship, feast, play and rest together.
4. We wake up before our devices do, and they “go to bed” before we do.
5. We aim for “no screens before double digits” at school and at home.
6. We use screens for a purpose, and we use them together, rather than using them aimlessly and alone.
7. Car time is conversation time.
8. Spouses have one another’s passwords, and parents have total access to children’s devices.
9. We learn to sing together, rather than letting recorded and amplified music take over our lives and worship.
10. We show up in person for the big events of life. We learn how to be human by being fully present at our moments of greatest vulnerability. We hope to die in one another’s arms.

**From *The Tech-Wise Family*, by Andy Crouch**

### My Tech-Wise Commitments

Create some *daily* or *weekly* tech goals for yourself and your family. What do you want to add? What do you want to take away? How do you want to curate for the best and the beautiful?

TV, Streaming, Movies	
Social Media	
Work Related Tech	
Phone	
Video Games	
Sports	
Music	
Podcasts/Radio	
News	

# Week 3: Scripture & Prayer

*What do your current habits say about the importance that you place on your relationship with God?*

## **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

## **Ephesians 6:18**

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

## **1 John 5:15**

And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

### **More reading:**

- Deuteronomy 6
- Psalm 119

## **Joshua 1:8**

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

## **1 Timothy 3:16-17**

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

## **Hebrews 4:12**

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow.

### **Habit #1: Scripture before Phone**

### **Habit #2: Pray upon Waking, at Midday, and Bedtime**

1. What is the first thing you do upon waking? How does that shape your view of the day? Of yourself? Of God?
2. Now describe your family's morning routine? How do you think that shapes your children's view of the world and God?
3. If you were to try practicing scripture before phone for a week, how would you rearrange your morning?
4. What is one routine you could start with your spouse or children in the morning that could shape the day in a different direction? (This could be reading a Psalm together, or reciting the Lord's Prayer, or even a kneeling moment in silence holding hands.)

## 24 Family Ways

### Concerning AUTHORITIES in our family...

- 1 We love and obey our Lord, Jesus Christ, with wholehearted devotion.
- 2 We read the Bible and pray to God every day with an open heart.
- 3 We honor and obey our parents in the Lord with a respectful attitude.
- 4 We listen to correction and accept discipline with a submissive spirit.

### Concerning RELATIONSHIPS in our family...

- 5 We love one another, treating others with kindness, gentleness, and respect.
- 6 We serve one another, humbly thinking of the needs of others first.
- 7 We encourage one another, using only words that build up and bless others.
- 8 We forgive one another, covering an offense with love when wronged or hurt.

### Concerning POSSESSIONS in our family...

- 9 We are thankful to God for what we have, whether it is a little or a lot.
- 10 We are content with what we have, not coveting what others have.
- 11 We are generous with what we have, sharing freely with others.
- 12 We take care of what we have, using it wisely and responsibly..

### Concerning WORK in our family...

- 13 We are diligent to complete a task promptly and thoroughly when asked.
- 14 We take initiative to do all of our own work without needing to be told.
- 15 We work with a cooperative spirit, freely giving and receiving help.
- 16 We take personal responsibility to keep our home neat and clean at all times.

### Concerning ATTITUDES in our family...

- 17 We choose to be joyful, even when we feel like complaining.
- 18 We choose to be peacemakers, even when we feel like arguing.
- 19 We choose to be patient, even when we feel like getting our own way.
- 20 We choose to be gracious, even when we don't feel like it.

### Concerning CHOICES in our family...

- 21 We do what we know is right, regardless what others do or say.
- 22 We ask before we act when we do not know what is right to do.
- 23 We exercise self-control at all times and in every kind of situation.
- 24 We always tell the truth and do not practice deceitfulness of any kind.

From Sally Clarkson's *24 Family Ways*, [wholeheartministries.org](http://wholeheartministries.org)

Creating habits of meeting with God as a family doesn't just happen when you have kids or get older. It requires intentionality to daily choose that habit which will build a foundation for a spiritually vibrant home. Start small, and be consistent.

### Habit #3: Family Devotions

1. How do you currently connect with your household about faith? Do you have a regularly way of communally connecting with God in your family?

2. Brainstorm some ideas for how you can move from "nothing to something." What would be a good step for your family?

## 2 Rules of Love and Logic

1: Adults set limits without anger, lectures, threats or repeated warnings.

2: When children cause problems, adults hand these problems back in loving ways.

Love allows children to grow through their mistakes.

Logic allows them to learn from the consequences of their choices.

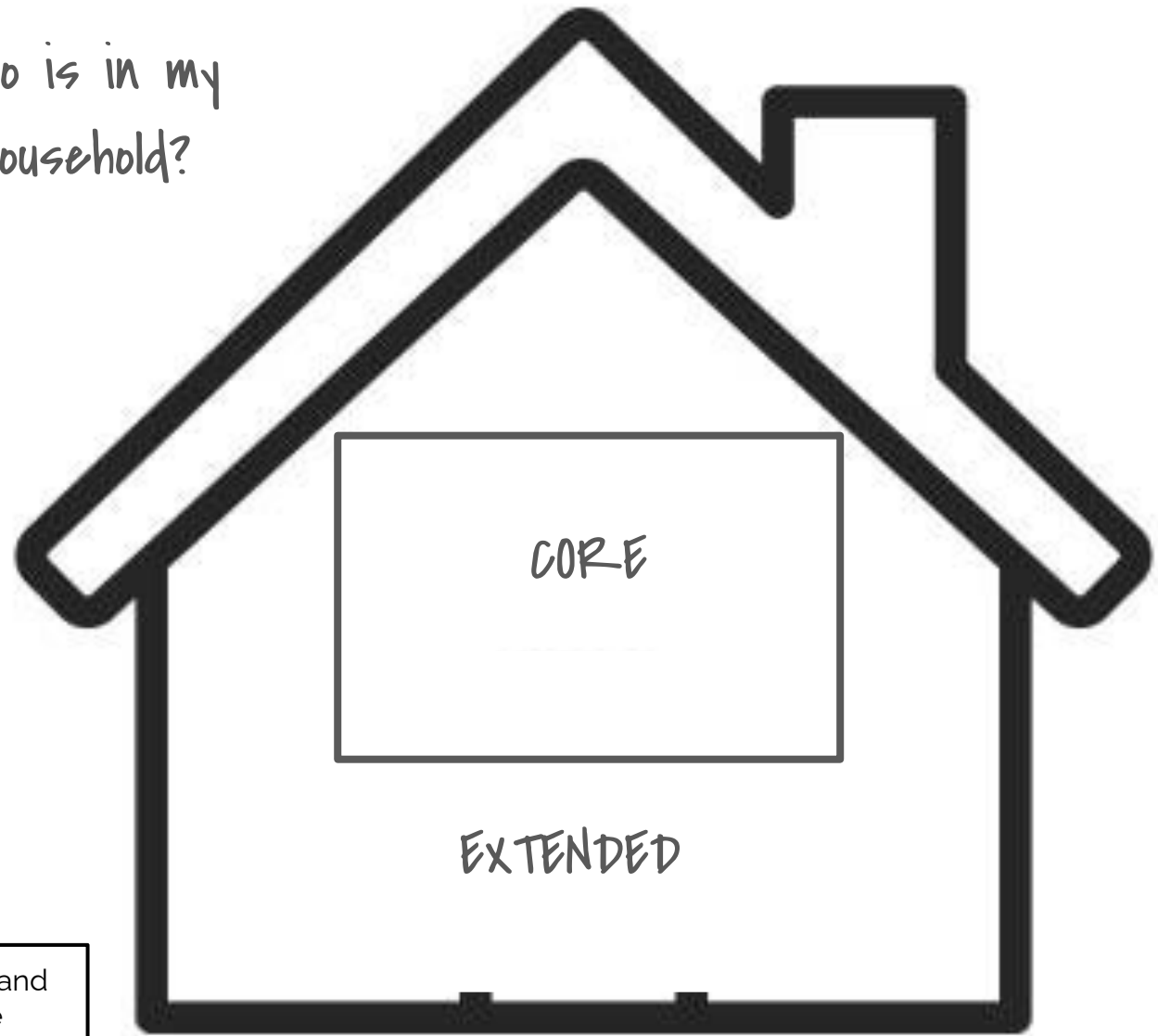
## Week 4: Pause

Who is in my household?

### Thoughts about Households

- Households in the Bible include core family, extended family, close friends, and servants.
- God views us as households.
- Households rise together and fall together.
- God works through households.
- Church works through interconnected households that become the fabric of community.

(For more on this, see *The Spiritually Vibrant Home* by Don Everts.)



"More than a quarter of adults in the US live alone, and it is not uncommon for people to live where no one regularly comes into their home. What psychiatrists call 'chronic loneliness' is very common in modern American life, and although most patients suffering from it prefer the diagnosis of depression to that of chronic loneliness, the phenomenon is significant and dangerous." ~ Spiritually Vibrant Home, p. 42

- Core consists of your nuclear family. Who lives under your roof?
- Extended would be extended family as well as friends who feel like family.

# Week 5: Life-giving Homemaking

*How do you meet and interact  
with your household and  
community?*

Eating as a way to cultivate presence

- The need to eat reveals our dependence on God.
- The need to eat reveals our dependence on each other.
- The need to eat reveals our dependence on creation.
- The table is the center of gravity.

"The daily habit of eating at least one meal with others is important precisely because it asks us to rearrange our priorities around the communal table and to acknowledge that we are made for food and for each other." ~ The Common Rule, p. 50-51

"Numerous studies have linked family meals to all sorts of positive family outcomes, from better academics to better behavior and reduced drug and alcohol abuse. I have also heard that the thing that most Rhodes Scholars have in common was that their families ate together... Don Everts found in his study of Christian households that the families who were 'spiritually vibrant' shared one amazing thing in common - they had loud tables." ~ Habits of the Household, p. 54-55

## Habit #4: A Daily Common Meal

1. The author claims that "the difference between people who happen to live together and families who befriend each other are rhythms of conversation at mealtimes." Have you experienced this? What does this suggest about the importance of the table?

2. Share what a typical meal looks like in your house. Is it as chaotic as the author's family dinner?

3. Do you have any games or questions you use at the dinner table, or that you grew up with? If so, share with the group some of your favorites.

4. "The liturgical lens is the idea of having the eyes to see the spiritual worship bound up in a habit we didn't think was spiritual at all." Did you understand the author's use of this idea? How might the "liturgical lens" help you to see the spirituality of your normal household life.

5. How often do you have a friend or guest over for dinner? Has it become a burden because the house has to be spotless? Could you imagine getting comfortable with inviting people into your mess? What would it take to start some rhythm of hospitality?

## A Year of Ideas to Create a Family Culture

*January:*

- Set aside a day to vision cast what you want your life and home to look like.

*February:*

- Set up reminders around your house to point you back to cultivating love for your family and God.

*March:*

- Make a bucket list of places you want to go around your home that makes you love where you are at.
- Plant a garden at your house and watch it grow. Use it as a reminder of who God is.

*April:*

- Learn about your family and church heritage. Use these stories as encouragement for your own walk with Christ.
- Create an Easter Weekend Tradition. Observe Good Friday and celebrate Easter Sunday.

*May:*

- Create ways to commemorate each person's special triumphs.

*June:*

- Set aside one day a week to go and do an activity for each person in your family. Have fun with each other!

*July:*

- Research heroes of the faith and learn about them together.

*August:*

- Create a Family Day where you celebrate the "Story of Us"

*September:*

- Create a back to school traditions. Follow up with other traditions of learning.

*October:*

- Make a seasonal bucket-list for the upcoming holidays.

*November:*

- Focus on thankfulness and service in your traditions.

*December:*

- Celebrate the Advent season.

**From *The Life-Giving Home*, by Sally Clarkson & *Memory Making Mom* by Jessica Smartt**

"What is this vision and sense of purpose that has shaped my efforts at homemaking over the years? I want my home to be a laboratory of life, a place where my children and husband may flourish and feel loved, encouraged, spiritually refreshed, and emotionally prepared to face the work God has for them in life. I want it to be a place where they can learn in safety and yet be challenged to grow. ~ The Mission of Motherhood, p. 163

"God holds us accountable for our stewardship of his blessings. And that means I am responsible for the ways in which I choose to care for the children he has given me. At the Judgment, I know I will give an account to him for the precious lives he entrusted into my hands" ~ The Mission of Motherhood, p. 49

How would you describe your current family culture?

What are small steps you want to do to shape your family culture?



## Habit #5: A Weekly Date Night

1. "It is a terrible fiction to imagine we can be good mothers and fathers without being good husbands and wives." Do you agree? How have you seen this to be true or not?

2. The author writes that "covenant love is completely the opposite of love as a feeling. Covenant love says, "I love you despite what it costs me." This, of course, is the biblical story of love. God loves his bride, the church, despite all our foolishness and adultery." Have you ever considered how your marriage to your spouse is supposed to be a reflection of God's love for his church?

3. What are some habits in your marriage that are going well? What are some you want to work on?

4. Do you have any rhythms of date nights or nights that are set aside for each other? The author suggests naming one night a week as a rhythm. Discuss how can you adapt this idea to best fit your schedule.

5. Do you have any rhythms of talking about parenting and the future together? Is this intimidating? Or something that sounds appealing to you?

6. What is one habit you would like to start to work on your marriage?

"But in regular rhythms of coming together, we don't just find these things out, we find each other." ~ Habits of the Household, p. 139

"Your identity is found and resting in other people because our calling is people-oriented. Those people are who we are called to love and serve." ~ Rachel Jankovic, Loving the Little Years

**STAY AT HOME**  
*date nights*

Natural  
BEACH LIVING

1. Cook a special dinner
2. Play 20 questions
3. YouTube a "Try not to laugh" challenge
4. Play board games
5. Have a picnic in the living room
6. Reorganize a space
7. Watch favorite childhood films
8. Sing karaoke
9. Dance
10. Try an escape room
11. Plan an imaginary vacation
12. Put together a puzzle
13. Try something you've never done before
14. Have a video game night
15. Watch Jeopardy
16. Make TikToks
17. Play a new card game
18. Make smoothies
19. Make a YouTube video
20. Bake a cake
21. Workout
22. Learn something new together
23. Read a short story
24. Take personality tests
25. Watch a concert on YouTube
26. Share weird childhood stories
27. Have a cookout
28. Play poker
29. Try blind soda tasting
30. Make playlists

## Week 6: Community and Hospitality

### Habit #6: One Hour Weekly of Conversation with a Friend

1. How are your friendships doing in this parenting phase of life? Do you have rhythms of pursuing deep conversation with friends?
2. Do your children see you engaging in adult relationships?
3. Could you imagine friendship with your parents? How does your answer to this question impact how you pursue relationship with your own children?
4. What are some good times or spaces that would work for pursuing your kids in conversation? What are some questions you could use to ask them to go deeper?
5. The author describes how conversation can help heal trauma. Whether on a big or small scale, how could you use conversation with your kids to walk them through difficult things they are experiencing?

### Hebrews 10:24-25

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

### Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. 11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? 12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

"We don't come to church, to be a church. We come to Christ, and then we are built up as a church. If we come to church just to be with one another, one another is all we'll get. And it isn't enough. Inevitably, our hearts will grow empty, and then angry. If we put community first, we will destroy community. But if we come to Christ first and submit ourselves to Him and draw life from Him, community gets traction." C.S. Lewis

"Here then is another habit of Madeleine L'Engle's "light so lovely." Friendships light up the darkness. For that reason, I think of friendships as little fires we tend. They light up the truth of the gospel, they invite people into the warmth, and they become the fires around which many gather.

To cultivate the practice of a weekly hour of conversation is to keep the fire burning. It is to look out into a cold and dark world and to offer some light, some warmth, and a place to sit and talk." ~ The Common Rule, p. 108

## Habit #7: Practice Hospitality Weekly

*How are you currently practicing hospitality?*

### Ideas to Practice Regular Hospitality:

#### (From Easiest to Hardest)

- Host a Dinner Party for Friends
- Offer to Host the next extended family gathering at your house.
- Drop in at a friend's or relative's home unannounced. Bring a treat as a surprise.
- Pray regularly for people on your relationship maps.
- Practice asking and receiving help from others.
- Start throwing a specific kind of party and make a tradition of it.
- Invite one or two new people when you have a dinner party.
- Pick a day of the week when you drop in to check on someone.
- Buy a bigger table, add more chairs, and fill them up weekly.
- Rearrange your house to make it more hospitable.
- Invite someone to move in with you.
- Become a state-approved foster family.
- Host an exchange student.
- Informally adopt a young family, college student, or older person and invite them over regularly.

*(From The Spiritually Vibrant Home, p. 169-173)*

### Isaiah 58:7

Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

### Titus 1:8

Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.

### 1 Peter 4:9

Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

### Romans 12:13

Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice Hospitality.

Matthew 25:34-46 - Where do you fit in this parable? Are you a sheep or goat? Why do you say this?

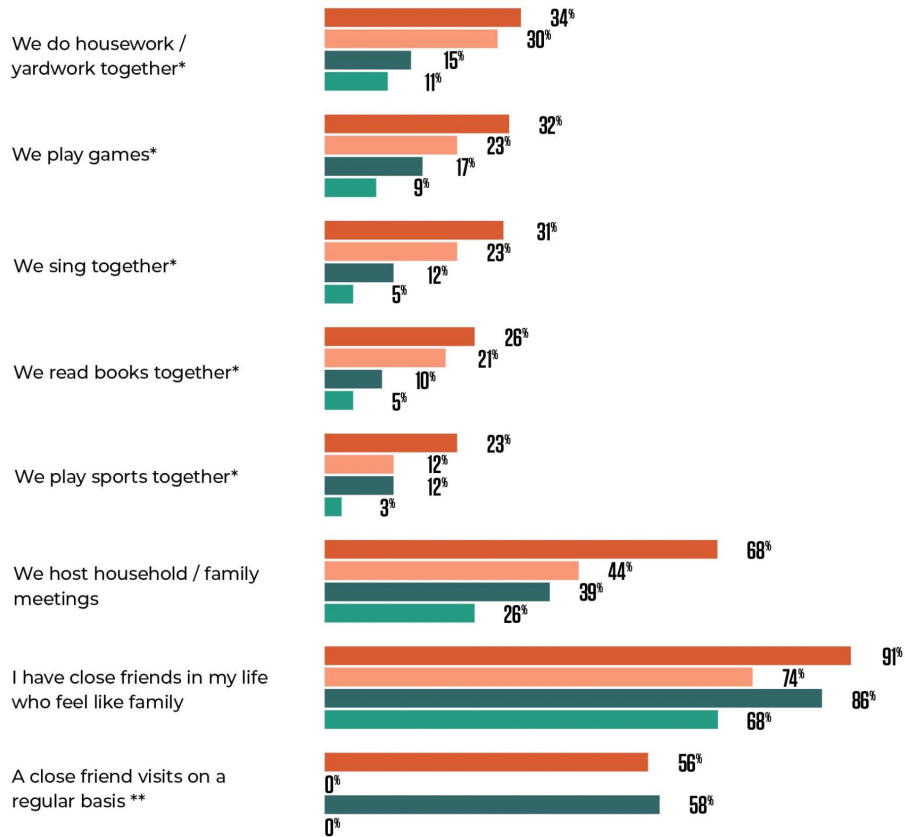
"And we believe that radically ordinary hospitality depends on the family of God knowing where to gather, knowing how to be organic and spontaneous with Scripture and open arms. And we do it because the purpose of radically ordinary hospitality is to take the hand of a stranger and put it in the hand of the Savior, to bridge hostile worlds, and to add to the family of God." ~ The Gospel Comes with a House Key, p. 34

"The early church understood that they were called to live out the Christian mission right at their dinner table. As Jen Pollock Michel puts it, "Our redemption story is bound up with the housekeeping of a table. In our homes we keep the feast by offering God's welcome to others: not only family and friends, Jesus said, but the needy stranger." ~ The Spiritually Vibrant Household, p. 150

## TOGETHERNESS, PLAY AND SPIRITUAL VIBRANCY

Barna

● Vibrant ● Devotional ● Hospitable ● Dormant



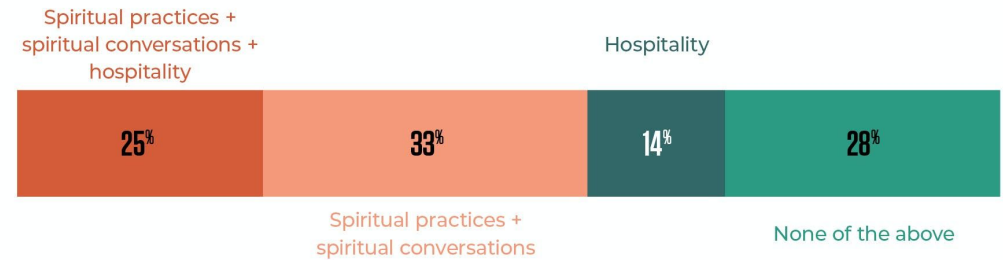
n=2,347 U.S. practicing Christian adults and teens, April 5-11, 2018. \*% participates in these activities "all together" every day or two. \*\* Devotional and Dormant households are partly defined by not receiving frequent non-family guests.

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## SPIRITUAL VIBRANCY AMONG PRACTICING CHRISTIANS' HOUSEHOLDS

Barna

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*Spiritually Vibrant Households are marked by three things: (1) Messy Prayers, (2) Loud Tables, and (3) Open Doors. Hospitality, including having non-family members as spiritual leaders, is a hallmark of a household that is creating a space for God to actively work.*

**What will you do to practice togetherness this week? This month? This year?**

## Week 7: Fasting & Loss

"We were made to feast. Not in order to become full, but because we *are* full. We are to celebrate that fullness by feasting. Feasting to fill the emptiness is not feasting; it is coping.

But the fall changed everything, of course, eating included. And the best way to understand the fall is to say that we take the good things and make them god instead. When Adam and Eve ate the fruit, they inverted God's gift. They ate to become God instead of to celebrate God." ~ The Common Rule, p. 128-129

Part of fasting is the prayers you are replacing meals with. This requires you to be aware of the needs of your community. How are you currently requesting for prayers AND learning about the prayer requests of your community?

What are prayer requests we could prayer for right now?

### Deuteronomy 8:3

Man does not live by bread alone.

### Joel 2:12

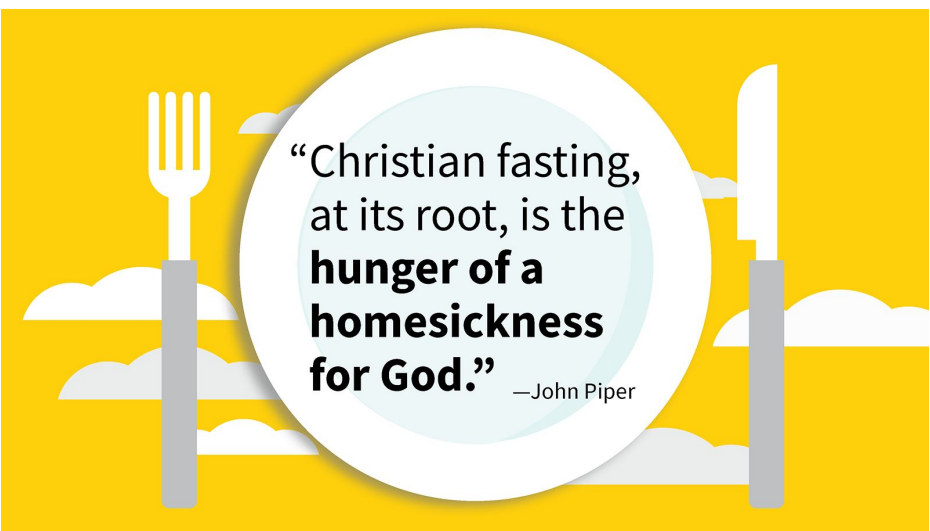
"Even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning."

Examples of fasting in the Bible:

- Daniel (Daniel 9:3, 10:3)
  - Esther (Esther 4:16)
  - The Early Church (Acts 13:3, 14:23)
  - Moses (Exodus 34:28)
  - Nehemiah (Nehemiah 1:4)
- Jesus (Luke 2:4)

### Habit #8: Fasting Once a Week From Something

"The pointing of the fasting is not the technicalities of it. The point is leaning into the lack, and this can be done in many, many ways, all of which are radical acts, especially in America. Here, fasting is bizarrely countercultural because it runs the opposite of the American Dream. In pursuit of the dream, we tell each other that we can move upward through the world through sheer individual effort and that we're going to be finally happy when we get there. In fasting, we deliberately move downward into emptiness - and even more, we admit we can't eat or work our way to happiness. We need God for that." ~ The Common Rule, p. 130



**“Christian fasting,  
at its root, is the  
hunger of a  
homesickness  
for God.”** —John Piper

*Regular fasting exposes who we really are, reminds us how broken the world is, and draws our eyes to how Jesus is redeeming all things.*

### **Ideas for fasting:**

- Pick something to fast from: food, sugar, meat, alcohol, caffeine, social media, TV, internet, etc. Maybe just start with a meal.
- Sundown to Sundown with a communal meal to break the fast.
- Communal fasting. Create a group message for encouragements and prayers.
- Whatever you do, make sure you replace meals with prayer.
- Multiple day fast - A once a year special practice

### **Matthew 6:16-18**

When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

### **Isaiah 58:3-7**

‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?’ “Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.

Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?

“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?

Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

What is one way you can put into practice the habit of fasting in the next week?

## Week 8: Work & Ministry

### Habit #9: Daily Working at Something

What is your current relationship with work?

How can you serve God at your job?

How can you serve God in your home?

How can you serve God at church? In your community?

*To work is to bring order out of chaos. It was done first by God, and now repeatedly patterned by us as we image him.*

### Toil v. Work

"Think of toil as the excessive, endless, fruitless labor - the kind that leaves us exhausted, with nothing valuable to show for our efforts" ~ The Tech-wise Family, p. 85

*A function of the curse.*

### Colossians 3:23

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,

### Proverbs 16:3

Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.

### Ecclesiastes 3:12-13

I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil—this is God's gift to man.

### 1 Corinthians 10:31

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

### Proverbs 18:9

Whoever is slack in his work is a brother to him who destroys.

### Genesis 2:15

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

### Ephesians 4:28

Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

How do these verses inform your understanding of work?



## Habit #10: Bringing Our Household into our Work

1. How did you grow up thinking about work? Did you know what your parents did?

2. **"We are invited into the work of the God who loves us. We were meant for this. Which is why our work inevitably becomes one of our greatest blessings, or one of our greatest burdens. That's how spiritually important work is."** Do you think of work as a spiritual matter that God invites you to? Or just a way to make money?

3. Do your kids know why you go to work? Or why you stay home? Do they have questions? How do you talk to them about your work?

4. What are your habits of inviting your children into household work? This could be gardening, nightly dishes, laundry or something else.

5. What is one way you could invite your children into a deeper view of work? How would you start that this week?

"We are called to stand in for God here in the world, exercising stewardship over the rest of creation in his place as his vice-regents. We share in doing the things that God has done in creation - bringing order out of chaos - creatively building a civilization out of the material of physical and human nature, caring for all that God has made. This is a major part of what we were created to be." ~ Every Good Endeavor, p. 36

*The way we view work is ultimately  
the way our children view work.  
What would their view be?*

### **Our work as a passion.**

"Passion leads you to excel in whatever you do. But there are different kinds of passion." What are we passionate for?

"Without something bigger than yourself to work for then all of your work energy is actually fueled by one of the other six deadly sins." "But in the the Bible, the very *definition* of passion - think of Christ's Passion - is to sacrifice your freedom for someone else." ~ Every good Endeavor, p, 237-39

# Dave Ramsey's Baby Steps

## Quick Reference

1

Build a \$1,000  
emergency fund

2

Pay off all debt with  
a debt snowball  
*(except the house)*

3

Fully fund your  
emergency fund

4

Invest 15%  
for retirement

5

Save for your  
kids' college

6

Pay off  
the house

7

Build wealth  
and give

JackieBeck.com

### **Ecclesiastes 5:10**

Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless.

### **Matthew 6:21**

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

### **Romans 13:8**

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law.

### **Hebrews 13:5**

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."

## **Habit #12: Tithing Regularly & Stewarding Money Well**

### **6 Questions to Ask Yourself About Money:**

1. Who Is Really In Charge Of My Finances?
2. How Much Financial Peace Do I Have From 1-10?
3. Is The Way I'm Spending Money Making Me Happy?
4. Which Area Of My Finances Do I Have Trouble Surrendering To God?
5. How Is My Financial Life Different Than Non-Christians?
6. What Will God Say To Me About The Way I Stewarded His Money?

## Week 9: Sabbath & Rest

### Habit #13: Practice Sabbath Once a Week

1. The author suggest that real play is a way of imagining the kingdom of heaven to come. What do you think of this idea? Can you imagine how we were meant for a different world of unfettered joy, is that difficult for you?
2. Play looks very different for different ages of children. What are your rhythms of engaging in undistracted play with your children right now? How often do you engage in play without the tv on, without your phone in one hand, or without turning the page of the novel you're reading?
3. Do you work to help your kids learn to play alone? Is there a set time each day where they are encouraged and expected to entertain themselves?
4. The author writes that "It is entirely possible to unconsciously indoctrinate our children into our broken view of the world, that life is fundamentally about what we can accomplish and there isn't time for much else." Is this a struggle in your house? If so, how could rhythms of play help?
5. What are your rhythms of rest and sabbath? How could they intertwine with rhythms of work and play?

### Exodus 20:8-11

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

### Isaiah 58:13-14

"If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your

### Hebrews 4:9-11

So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

### Mark 2:27-28

And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."

### Matthew 12:12

So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.

## Toil v. Work

"If toil is fruitless labor, you could think of leisure as fruitless escape from labor. It's a kind of rest that doesn't really restore our souls, doesn't restore our relationships with others or God. And crucially, it is the kind of rest that doesn't give others the chance to rest. Leisure is purchased from other people who have to work to provide us our experiences of entertainment and rejuvenation." ~ The Tech-wise Family, p. 87

Pick up game of football in the backyard = Rest

Binge-watching Football games all Sunday = Leisure

Cooking and Eating Dinner together = Rest

Going to a Restaurant = Leisure

Playing Music together = Rest

Watching Netflix = Leisure

*"A man who works with his mind should sabbath with his hands. A man who works with his hands should sabbath with his mind. ~ Abraham Heschel*

**Ideas for Sabbath:** (Write down some particular to your situation!)

- Physical Rest
- Emotional Rest:
- Mental Rest
- Spiritual Rest
- Social Rest
- Sensory Rest
- Creative Rest

"Sleep is absolutely essential to human flourishing. Perhaps this is why behind the ancient Jewish and Near Eastern practice of considering sunset the start of the day, instead of sunrise. A Jewish day begins in the quietness of dusk, sharing the evening meal as the world settles in to rest, lying down to practice the quietness and confidence that Isaiah said was the source of true strength (Is. 30:15). And then in the morning we rise to our work. Rather than resting to recover from a hard day's work, this way of seeing time suggests that we work out of an abundance of a good night's rest." ~ Tech Wise Family, p. 113

"Practicing sabbath is supposed to make us feel like we can't get it all done because that is the way reality is. We can't do it all. Sabbath protects us from acting out the lie that we can." ~ The Common Rule, p. 153

*Ceasing and Feasting:  
A Communal way of  
sabbathing to  
celebrate*