

SF770 Soul Care
Spring 2023
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Rule of Life Paper

During this course I got to learn how to develop a deeper relationship with God through the books I have read in this course, I have obtained some precious knowledge that I can adopt to practice in order for me to constantly stay in the river. First, I will be assessing my current personal spiritual development, and then discuss my spiritual growth plan in this paper.

CURRENT SPIRITUAL STATE AND PERSONAL SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

I am currently going through a phase where I felt the Lord is drawing me closer. When I was working on my family sin pattern assignment for this course, the Lord led me to think deep about my family's and my own sins and brokenness. In the past I have specifically worked on frustration and anger. Anger has been very prominent throughout my life, through all these years, I struggled so much with it but God has helped me overcome it. God has also made me realize when I would usually get frustrated which ultimately leads to anger- it is when I get stressed out from busyness. I want to know both myself and God deeply in order to be transformed, just as David Brenner mentioned in his book, "Christian spirituality involves a transformation of the self that occurs only when God and self are both deeply known."¹

Lately I am going through a season where I feel like I am walking down a valley. We found out that my 91-year-old father has a mass in his colon but the doctor do not recommend

¹Brenner, David G.. *The Gift of Being Yourself (The Spiritual Journey)*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015. 21.

any surgery or invasive treatment due to his poor health condition and old age. My dad is now on hospice care. He seems to be doing fine for now but we were advised that his health will go downhill from here. On top of this I am very busy at work lately, I also have a senior dog at home whose health is also deteriorating and requires a lot of my care while I work from home. I feel a tremendous amount of stress lately. I was processing the news about my dad and I wanted to be guided by the Holy Spirit to do so. I do not want to mourn or be saddened like I have no hope without God in my life. I asked the Holy Spirit to guide me to mourn over my dad's situation, I reminisced, I cried, I mourned, I stopped, completely surrendered all my thoughts, my emotions, and my whole being to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

Then I also remember how Peter Scazzero talked about sabbatical and daily office in his book "Emotionally Healthy Spirituality", that we should take breaks in the middle of the day and do things that draw us close to God.² One morning I felt that I was very sluggish and overwhelmed from all the work and my dad's situation, I told God that I didn't want to do anything, I was very tired. God has given me a word 'replenish', so I just sat there, closed my eyes, and did nothing. I just had that one thought in my mind - Holy Spirit please come and minister to my heart. It was just a few minutes, I felt like I could go back to do what I needed to do, I felt strengthened, and truly replenished. From then on, I would stop and take a break when I feel like something is up and ask God for guidance, totally surrender myself and listen to God and do what he tells me to do. I feel like Dr. Reimer's book "River Dwellers" has helped me tremendously in listening to God and how to always be in the river. Dr. Reimer taught us that God would give us words and images when we ask him³, I am getting words and images from

²Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2017. 139.

³Reimer, Rob. *River Dwellers: Living in the Fullness of the Spirit*. Franklin, Tennessee: Carpenter's Son Publishing 2015. 53.

the Lord as I remain in his river. Dr. Reimer also mentioned that “God calls us out of our busyness into divine inactivity.”⁴ How true it is that God uses “divine inactivity” to draw us close to him!

I am also led to ponder on the scripture as I was processing brokenness. For example, God led me to Matthew 10:34-39 one day and gave me insights of how I should handle the brokenness in my family. Each one of us, including my parents and my sisters, should take up their own cross to follow Jesus. At times I felt like it is my responsibility to help them get out of their darkness or brokenness. But I am reminded that I am not their savior - Jesus is. I could not bear their brokenness, Jesus has taken up the brokenness of each of us and bore it on the cross.

Like I said, even though I feel like I am walking down a valley, I feel like God puts me through this season for a reason, he wants to draw me closer and closer to him through the situations I am in, I might be hard pressed on every side but I am not crushed. God is my guide and he is closer to me than ever before. Even though I feel connected and close to God, I do not have a fixed time to get close to God every day. I am not the type of person who likes to stick to structure, I know I would get bored. With that said, I think I would benefit from a regular spiritual pattern with less structure.

REGULAR SPIRITUAL PLAN

Daily Plan

I have breakfast before I start my day every morning. I feel like breakfast time is the best time in the morning for me to talk to God, while drinking my coffee. This is when I feel stimulated, I am ready to listen and obey God. I would also read God’s word, I would focus on a

⁴Reimer, Rob. *River Dwellers*. 105.

short passage each morning, and not so much on how much content I cover. God would sometimes point me to a specific passage as he guides me through this time. Also, these days I am very busy at work, I get frustrated and angry easily when things don't go as I expected, I ask God to help me anticipate how my day will be like, and help me not to get stressed and angry. I get through the day much easier when I know what to expect, and I am able to stay calm and peaceful in the midst of all the busyness. And throughout the day, when I am prompted to pause or when a thought comes to me, I would just pause and let God minister to my heart and let him lead me to this short period of divine inactivity. Then at the end of the day, praying to God with my family every night has become my habit for a few years and I will continue to do so because it has strengthened the bond among us and that with God.

As Needed Basis

I also want to speak to my spiritual partner, my husband, about my emotional and spiritual conditions on a as needed basis. We like to talk every morning before he gets out of the house for work, our conversations sometimes get deep during that time, then we continue talking at night.

Weekly Plan

I am planning to take a half an hour walk in my neighborhood by myself at least once a week to just unwind and enjoy solitude with God. Sometimes I would listen to sermons or audio books as I walk when I feel like it. I also like to process my thoughts and feelings when I walk by myself, and I listen and talk to God some more.

Monthly Plan

I like to dedicate a whole morning to soak in God's presence through worship songs. I like music and I was a worship leader for many years, God uses music to draw me close to him. However, I do get tired of listening to the same songs over and over again, so I will do this as often as I want to, most likely on a monthly basis, but not to a point where I feel like it becomes a mundane routine.

Yearly Plan

Lastly, I need to get a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit every once in a while, I have had the experience of getting that of the Holy Spirit at special conferences similar to the Holy Spirit Weekend or the Soul Care conference held by Dr. Reimer. I am planning to attend one of these special conferences at least once a year to get the fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit so I can always remain in the river fully.