

Heritage Christian Community Baptist Church - EH Healthy Spirituality
Go the Next Step to Develop a “Rule of Life”
Session 8
July 2 & 9, 2024

Introduction (1 minute)

If we are to nurture a heart that treats every person, ourselves included, as a “Thou” instead of “It,” we need to be intentional about our lives. By ordering our lives to contemplate the love of Christ and to receive the love of Christ, we will be able to give the love of Christ away to others. In this way, he transforms our lives into a gift to our families, friends, coworkers, and communities.

The problem again, however, is our busyness and lack of intentionality. Often, we find ourselves unfocused, distracted, and spiritually adrift. Few of us have a conscious plan for intentionally developing our spiritual lives.

Nurturing a growing spirituality in our present-day culture calls for a thoughtful, conscious, purposeful plan. To do this well requires us to uncover another ancient buried treasure—a “Rule of Life.”

Growing Connected (12 minutes)

1. *Day by day Debrief:* The goal of stopping for the Daily Office is to increase our awareness of God’s presence throughout the entire day – in the midst of our activities. In what new ways, small or large, are you beginning to experience this greater awareness of God during the day as you practice the Daily Office?
2. What has impacted you most from this Course? (e.g., themes from one of the sessions, your small group, silence, the Daily Office, etc.) Briefly explain.
 - The Problem of Emotionally unhealthy Spirituality (Saul—living out of a false self and not cultivating his relationship with God)
 - Know Yourself That You May Know God (David—courageously living out of his true self)
 - Going Back in Order to Go Forward (Joseph—transformed by a very difficult past)
 - Journey through the Wall (Abraham—trusting God in a “dark night of the soul”)
 - Enlarge Your Soul through Grief and Loss (Jesus in Gethsemane—embracing God’s will)
 - Discover the Rhythms of the Daily Office and Sabbath (Daniel—anchoring himself in God)

- Grow into an Emotionally Mature Adult
(The Good Samaritan—modeling an “I-Thou” heart to others)

VIDEO: Go the Next Step to Develop a “Rule of Life” (11 minutes)

Watch the video teaching segment for Session 8. Use the space provided to note anything that stands out to you. NOTES

Group Discussion (25 minutes)

Starters (10 minutes)

A Rule of Life finds its roots from the early centuries of the church as men and women formed communities and organized their daily life around an intentional and purposeful plan to grow and mature spiritually. They called this plan a Rule of Life.

The word *rule* comes from the Greek word for “trellis.” A trellis is a tool that enables a grapevine to get off the ground and grow upward, becoming more fruitful and productive. In the same way, a Rule of Life is a trellis that helps us abide in Christ and become more fruitful spiritually.

A simple, clear definition of a Rule of Life is that it is an intentional, conscious plan to keep God at the center of everything we do.

How intentional are you about engaging in spiritual practices and rhythms that enable you to pay attention to God in everything you do? Use a scale of 1-10, with 1 being “not at all intentional” and 10 being “completely intentional.” What number best describes where you are now? What numbers describe where you would like to be?

Bible Study: Acts 2:42-47 (15 minutes)

The book of Acts describes for us the Rule of Life of the first Christian community. Read Acts 2:42, and then discuss the questions that follow.

Acts 2:42–47 (NKJV)

⁴²And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

⁴³Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

⁴⁴Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,

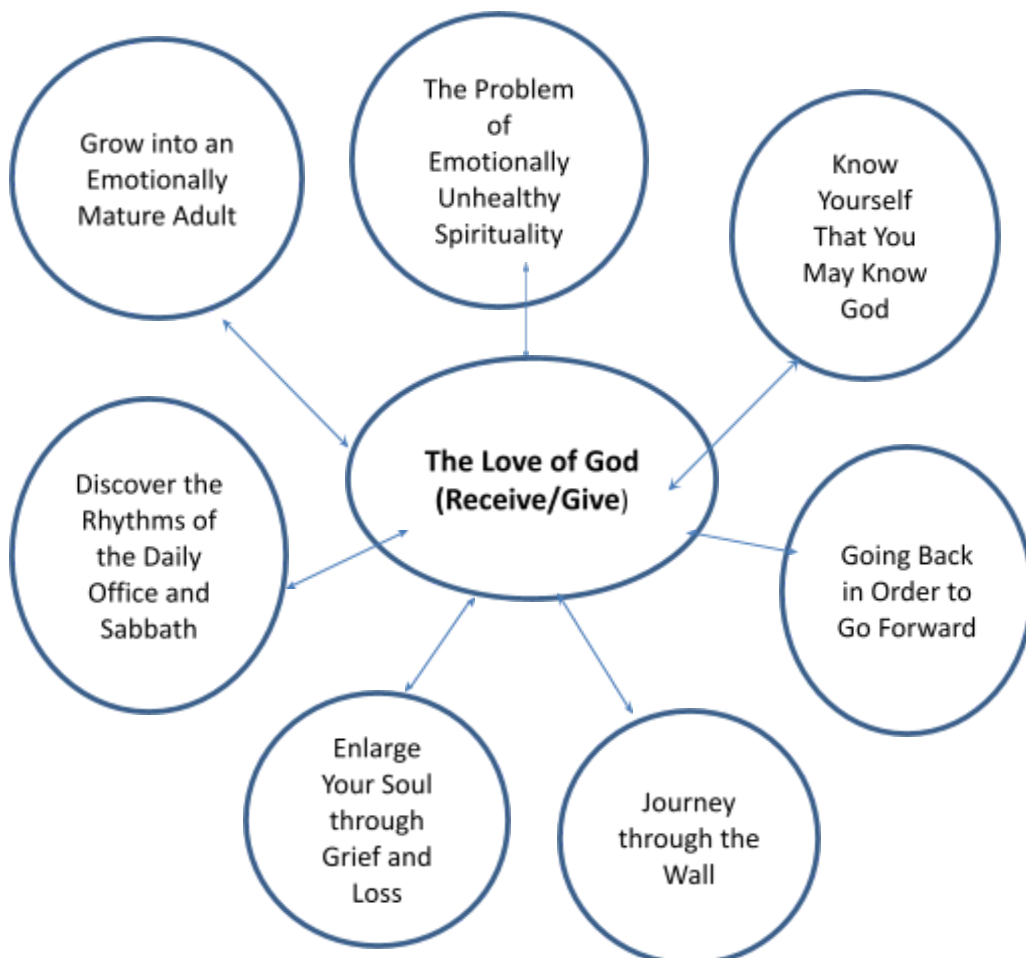
⁴⁵and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

⁴⁶So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,
⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

1. In the book of Acts, we are given a window into the life of the first community of believers soon after the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost when three thousand people came to faith in Christ. What speaks to you from this passage? (6 minutes)
2. Based on this one passage, how would you describe this community's Rule of Life? Describe the activities/disciplines they intentionally used to grow and mature in Christ. (6 minutes)

Application (48 minutes)

As you craft your Rule of Life, consider the diagram below. We were created to receive and give the love of God. Emotionally Healthy Spirituality (Part 1) was created to help us receive and give this love in our daily lives.



As you reflect on the seven session topics from this Course, journal your responses to questions 1-6 prayerfully. (15 minutes)

1. Which session(s) have you found most helpful?

2. What positive impact are you experiencing now in your life and/or relationships as a result of having taken this Course?

3. What might be 1-3 truths or applications that God is inviting you to intentionally focus on during the next three months? Write it/them down in the chart that follows. We recommend that you start with only one to three. When you begin to make progress in these, then you can move on to others.

Truth/Application	Your Next Step	Resources/Support You May Need

4. What obstacles come to mind when you think of implementing these new learnings from God into your life? What obstacles might you face if you don't?

5. What one or two steps could you take to overcome the obstacles you just identified?

6. After your time alone, get into groups of two, and share what you discovered. (10 minutes)

Final Group Time (25 minutes)

Share your answers to the following questions.

1. Finish the following sentence stem:

As a result of this course, I am beginning to realize...

2. What is one hope or dream you have as you go forward from this Course?

VIDEO: Closing Summary (7 minutes)

Watch the closing video summary for Session 8 and use the space provided to note anything that stands out to you.

NOTES