



### TAKE Home: Spiritual Disciplines

One of the ways that a lot of people like to describe the Christian life is as a “relationship with God.” And they’re right. Having a relationship with God is a big part of what it means to be a Christian.

But here’s the thing about relationships—you can’t really have one if you never spend any time with the person you’re trying to have a relationship with. If you never talk to the other person, hang out with her, listen to him, etc., then your relationship isn’t going to be very strong.

Same thing with God. If we never spend any time with him, if we never talk to him, if we never take the time to listen to what he says, if we don’t pay regular attention to him, how good is our relationship with him really going to be? Probably not great.

That’s where *spiritual disciplines* come in. Put simply, spiritual disciplines are practices that help us spend time with God. Some of the classic disciplines include things like: reading scripture, prayer, fasting (whether from food, media, or something else), silence, solitude, community, and worship. Over the years, though, people have added other ones too: activity (exercising), secrecy (holding information in confidence), celebration (rejoicing over the good things God has done), etc. The idea is that the disciplines are practices and actions that draw us closer to God and *discipline* us spiritually so that we spend time with him.

For nearly two thousand years, people have used these disciplines to put together a “Rhythm” or “Rule” of Life. Basically, a Rhythm of Life is a specific, practical list of the disciplines someone wants to practice during his or her life in order to grow closer to God.

What’s your Rhythm of Life? What disciplines do you currently practice? Which ones would you like to try? What disciplines do you think will probably challenge you the most (Hint: Those might be the ones you need to try...)? As an exercise before our next class, write a Rhythm of Life for yourself.