

Spiritual Practices

Why do I need Spiritual Practices right now?

As Ezra draws to a close, we all are in transition between Ezra and where we will go next. During transitional times like these, meaningful rhythms of our faith can ground us and present opportunities for us to continue to grow as followers of Jesus.

Finding a helpful rhythm for life helps us be intentional about things that are important. Generations of Jesus-followers have used intentional practices and relational rhythms like this to create space for abiding with God and allow us to bring our lives into alignment with our hopes, desires, and values.

What Spiritual Practices can I try?

Below is a list of things you can try. Don't try and do all of them. Rather, pick one or two to focus on. As you engage with them, do them imperfectly. If you miss a day or struggle that's expected and OK. It's about imperfect progress wrapped in grace.

1. Pause for Prayer & Scripture.

Take moments to pause, breathe, and remember who God is. Many people find it helpful to start the day in quiet prayer and scripture reading *before* anything digital, like Instagram, or the news, or television. Ground your day by connecting with God. Pause along the way to remember him.

2. Create a gratitude ritual.

Draw your attention to the things for which you are grateful. Perhaps you write them down each morning, or share with those close to you around the dinner table in the evening. Be intentional about noticing what is good and hopeful.

3. Exercise or go for a walk.

If at all possible, exercise or go for a walk through your neighborhood. Take care of your body and engage with God's bigger world.

4. One "focal practice".

Find an activity in which you are able to give your complete focus without getting distracted or finding yourself concerned about other thoughts or happenings. This can be woodworking, cooking, reading, art, chess, etc.

5. Relational touch point.

Establish a relational touch point with a close friend, family member, or people you connected with from Ezra. This is a time to draw closer in relationships, not grow more distant.

6. Overflow.

We live with open hands. How can the blessing of God that flows to you also flow through you? Who can you serve or bless today? Bless your community.

7. Sabbath & Worship.

Keep your routine to worship God. Practice Sabbath (pausing from work to rest and connect). Join a church service in the general area to learn from the Scriptures, and create space to connect with God.

8. Praise & worship through music.

Find songs about Jesus you connect to and create a playlist. Take time to listen to the music during your day.

9. Silence.

Find a comfortable spot, imagine yourself sitting with Jesus/in God's presence then simply sit in silence. It can help to set a timer. Begin with 2 minutes and work your way up over time.

10. Journal.

Journaling is a form of contemplation and reflection from the heart. Keep it simple, be modest in your plans for frequency and length of entries. Incorporate writing down scripture and writing prayers, consider incorporating drawing, or collage.