



# Rhythms Together

**Crafting a Rhythm for Life  
in Community**



## Contents

<i>Introduction</i> .....	05
<i>Week 1</i> Identity .....	06
<i>Week 2</i> Gifts, Talents, and Personality .....	10
<i>Week 3</i> Virtuous Values .....	14
<i>Week 4</i> Roles .....	18
<i>Week 5</i> Vocation .....	22
<i>Week 6</i> Upward .....	26
<i>Week 7</i> Inward .....	30
<i>Week 8</i> Withward .....	34
<i>Week 9</i> Outward .....	38
<i>Week 10</i> Godspeed .....	42
<i>Gratitudes</i> .....	46
<i>Appendix</i> Instructions for Communal Practices .....	47



## Rhythms Together

This workbook is a slow and in-depth journey through the book *Rhythms for Life*. It is designed as a 10 week guide. It is also written with both leaders and participants in mind (or for a group setting with no designated leader). *Notes* are embedded throughout the book to help you plan and prepare.

Each week in this 10 week journey has three steps: *prepare for the conversation*, *at your group*, and *continue the practice*.

The first step—*prepare for the conversation*—guides each person through their personal engagement with the materials, and prepares them for gathering with others. The second step—*at your group*—is a simple format for gathering together as a group. The third step—*continue the practice*—is an invitation for participants to embody what they're learning week after week.

## Supporting Videos

All of the supporting video content is available at

[STPETERESFIRESIDE.ORG/RHYTHMS/TOGETHER](http://STPETERESFIRESIDE.ORG/RHYTHMS/TOGETHER)

[ALASTAIRSTERNE.COM/RHYTHMS/TOGETHER](http://ALASTAIRSTERNE.COM/RHYTHMS/TOGETHER)



Week 1

# Identity

*Why does God tend to whisper instead of declaring his love Say Anything–style with a boom box? As I once heard the pastor Craig Groeschel say in a sermon, “God whispers because of how close he is to us.” If you want the dramatics, look to the death and resurrection of Jesus. There you will see God’s love profoundly on display. If you want to hear it for yourself, wait for the whisper.*

**RHYTHMS FOR LIFE — P. 22**



**Step 1****Prepare for the Conversation**

**NOTE** Before your group meets, here's what you'll need to do to prepare for the conversation. This preparation will take an average of **90 minutes**. Set aside some time before your group, maybe on 2 different days, to work through it. Don't wait until the day of your group! Pace yourself, as it will take some reflection and emotional energy to complete. Some of it will be difficult and vulnerable work, which is what makes it deeply worthwhile.

**WATCH**

Watch the Chapter 1 summary video and story video.

*5 minutes*

**READ**

Read the Introduction and Chapter 1 (p. 1-27). Underline thoughts that interest or challenge you, and note any areas of disagreement. Then, jot down 3-5 concepts or ideas that impacted you.

*30 minutes*

**WRITE**

Complete the Chapter 1 worksheets (p. 23-27).

*45 minutes*

**SHARE**

Prepare a short reflection that summarizes your misguided stories (p. 25) and shares your meaningful word, how you discerned it, and why it matters to you (p. 27). You could write out the complete story, jot down the main points, or practice how you might share it mentally or aloud. Prepare to share your reflection when you meet with your group.

*10 minutes*

## Step 2

**At Your Group**

**NOTE** When you gather, you will need 2 hours to work through this content (or 1½ hours if you omit the **DISCUSS** step).

**SUMMARIZE**

One person shares their key points from reading Chapter 1.

*5 minutes*

**STORIES**

Break into pairs or triads and have each person share their prepared reflection.

*30 minutes*

**DISCUSS**

How have others' stories, and the video story you watched, furthered your understanding of identity?

*25 minutes*

**DEBRIEF**

Review the worksheets and spend time following up on them as needed. Here are some questions: *Where did you find clarity? Where are you struggling? Where might you need to dwell longer? Were there any "aha moments"?*

*30 minutes*

**PRACTICE**

*Abiding in silence.* As a group, take 10 minutes of silence to meditate upon your meaningful word and the Scripture passage it draws from. See the appendix for further guidance.

*15-20 minutes*

**PRAY**

Shift into pairs or triads and pray for one another. Pray each person's Scripture/meaningful word over them, and ask the Holy Spirit to deepen this identity in their hearts and lives.

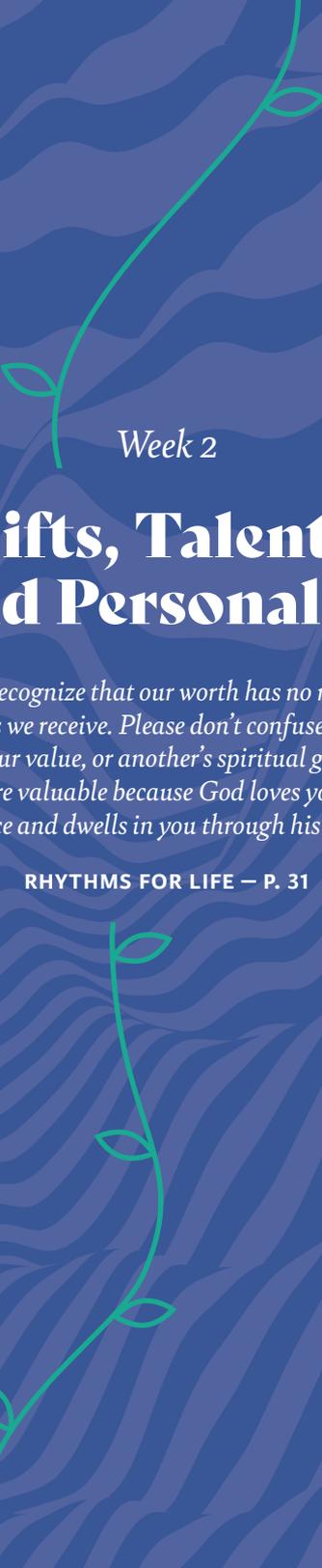
*15 minutes*

*Step 3*

## **Continue the Practice**



Try practicing solitude with Jesus at least one more time before the next gathering. This practice, like any, gains depth and strength as you practice it. It'll feel difficult and awkward at first, but in time can become a deep well of nourishment for your soul.



Week 2

# Gifts, Talents, and Personality

*We need to recognize that our worth has no relation to the spiritual gifts we receive. Please don't confuse your spiritual gifts with your value, or another's spiritual gifts with their value. You are valuable because God loves you. God saved you by grace and dwells in you through his Holy Spirit.*

**RHYTHMS FOR LIFE — P. 31**

**Step 1****Prepare for the Conversation**

**NOTE** Before your group meets, here's what you'll need to do to prepare for the conversation. This preparation will take an average of **90 minutes**. Set aside some time before your group, maybe on 2 different days, to work through it. Don't wait until the day of your group! Pace yourself, as it will take some reflection and emotional energy to complete. Some of it will be difficult and vulnerable work, which is what makes it deeply worthwhile.

**WATCH**

Watch the Chapter 2 summary video and story video.

*5 minutes*

**READ**

Read Chapter 2 (p. 28-41). Take a moment to jot down, in your words, the distinctions between gifts, talents, and personality.

*30 minutes*

**WRITE**

Complete the Chapter 2 worksheets (p. 42-49).

*45 minutes*

**OPTIONAL**

Reach out to a close friend or someone who knows you well and have a discussion about spiritual gifts. Ask them to identify one gift or talent they see in you.

*30 minutes*

**SHARE**

Choose one or two gifts or talents and consider how you are using them or how you may be able to use them in the church. If you are struggling to identify gifts and talents, come with one or two questions that you have about discerning these.

*10 minutes*

## Step 2

## At Your Group

**NOTE** When you gather, you will need 2 hours to work through this content (or 1½ hours if you omit the **DISCUSS** step) **PREPARE** Your group will also need posterboard and sticky notes to complete the practice below.

**SUMMARIZE**

Have one person share the distinctions between gifts, talents, and personality from reading Chapter 2.

*5 minutes*

**STORIES**

Break into pairs or triads. Each person shares one gift they discerned and how it could be used in the church. Discuss this question, “How might this gift be expressed in our community group during this season?”

*30 minutes*

**NOTE** The goal of the **Stories** task is to look at the gifts and talents of the groups as a whole, to consider how they can be expressed in community and to create a supportive and nurturing space to express and develop our gifts.

**DISCUSS**

How have others’ gifts and talents (and the video story you watched) furthered your understanding of gifts, talents, and personality?

*20 minutes*

**DEBRIEF**

Review the worksheets and spend time following up on them as needed. Here are some questions: *Where did you find clarity? Where are you struggling? Where might you need to dwell longer? What were your “aha moments”?*

*30 minutes*

**PRACTICE**

*Celebrating the Spirit’s gifts.* Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-25 out loud. Then, take time to name the Spirit’s gifts among you. Do this by creating a group map of your spiritual gifts. On sticky notes or index cards, have each person write: *their name; meaningful word or Scripture (from Chapter 1); one identified gift from the Holy Spirit; one way this gift can be expressed in the group.* Put these together on a poster board for all to see each week.

*15 minutes*

**PRAY**

Celebrate the ways the Holy Spirit has gifted each member of your group (1 Peter 4:7-11). If your group is large, break into smaller groups. Here's a three-step guide: *Give thanks* for each person by name, and for their identity in Christ as expressed in their meaningful word. *Celebrate* their giftedness as a means of grace for others. *Pray for empowerment*. Ask the Holy Spirit to enable this person to walk into their giftedness, to take courageous steps, and to have confidence in the Spirit's working through them.

15 minutes

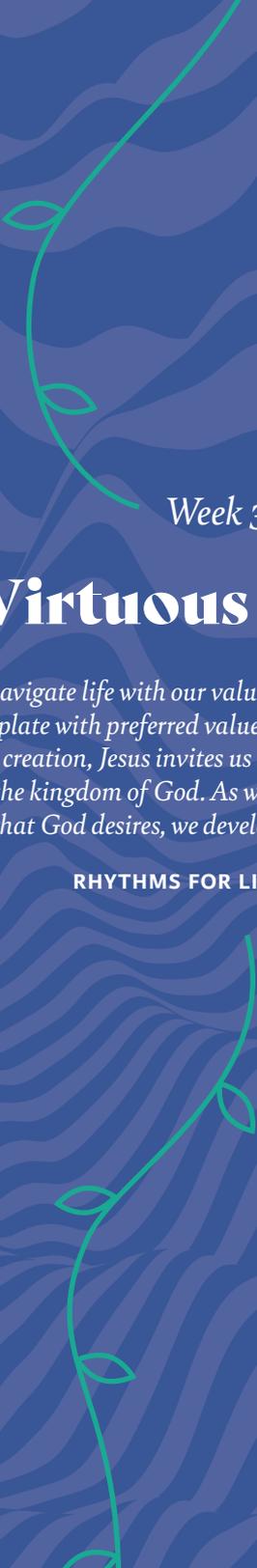
**NOTE** If you're able, lay hands on one another, as the early church did, as you pray. This is a physical way to express celebration and intercession.

Step 3

**Continue the Practice**

Ask God—and be watchful—for an opportunity to express your gift in the week to come. Remember, the way to grow in confidence and familiarity with your gifts is by practicing with them!

**NOTE** As you close, let the group know that if they need more clarity, to reach out to a pastor or spiritual mentor, and remind them that this takes time. Gifts often become clear as we live in community with one another, so they will likely arise in weeks to come.



*Week 3*

# **Virtuous Values**

*We navigate life with our values. But rather than fill our plate with preferred values from a buffet of our own creation, Jesus invites us into values that align with the kingdom of God. As we align our values with what God desires, we develop virtuous values.*

**RHYTHMS FOR LIFE — P. 51**

**Step 1****Prepare for the Conversation**

**NOTE** Before your group meets, here's what you'll need to do to prepare for the conversation. This preparation will take an average of **90 minutes**. Set aside some time before your group, maybe on 2 different days, to work through it. Don't wait until the day of your group! Pace yourself, as it will take some reflection and emotional energy to complete. Some of it will be difficult and vulnerable work, which is what makes it deeply worthwhile.

**WATCH**

Watch the Chapter 3 summary video and story video.

*5 minutes*

**READ**

Read Chapter 3 (p. 50-61). Underline thoughts that interest or challenge you, and note any areas of disagreement. Then, jot down 3-5 concepts or ideas that impacted you.

*30 minutes*

**WRITE**

Complete the Chapter 3 worksheets (p. 62-67).

*45 minutes*

**SHARE**

Pick 1-3 of your values from the worksheets. Does a person, situation, or experience from your life come to mind when you reflect on these values? Do any of them derive directly from a misguided story in your life? Prepare to share this reflection with your group.

*10 minutes*

## Step 2

**At Your Group**

**NOTE** When you gather, you will need 2 hours to work through this content (or 1½ hours if you omit the **DISCUSS** step).

**SUMMARIZE**

One person shares their key ideas from reading Chapter 3.

*5 minutes*

**STORIES**

Break into pairs or triads and have each person share their prepared reflection.

*30 minutes*

**DISCUSS**

Think about “actual vs. aspirational” values and the presence of “shadow sides” to values (p. 53-54 & 57-59). What have you learned about your values? Did you think some of your aspirational values were actual, or discover actual values you never knew you had? Have you discovered shadow sides that you were unaware of?

*25 minutes*

**DEBRIEF**

Review the worksheets and spend time following up on them as needed. Here are some questions: *Where did you find clarity? Where are you struggling? Where might you need to dwell longer? What were your “aha moments”?*

*20 minutes*

**PRACTICE**

*Confession.* Enter into a time of corporate confession together; see the appendix for instructions. As you walk through this practice, pay particular attention to your values and their shadow sides. How do they misalign you with God’s Kingdom? What actions, done or left undone, arise out of your misaligned values?

*20 minutes*

**PRAY**  
.....

Conclude your night in a prayer of thanksgiving for the different values God has granted in your group. Make space for each member to name one or two of their values during the prayer that they want to give thanks for, and ask God to further show each of you how to align this value—with your heart, mind, and feet—with God's Kingdom.

*20 minutes*

Step 3

**Continue the Practice**

Try practicing confession personally or with another at least one more time before the next gathering. This practice, like any, gains depth and strength as you practice it. It'll feel difficult and awkward at first, but in time can become a deep well of nourishment for your soul.



Week 4

# Roles

*Our roles can move beyond different hats we wear throughout the day or week or year. Each and every role is an opportunity to know God and uniquely express our identity in Christ. When we know how our roles reveal part of God's character, we can discover a new set of expectations, behaviors, and values. And as we do this, the way we relate to others in our roles begins to reflect the kingdom of God.*

**RHYTHMS FOR LIFE — P. 72**



**Step 1****Prepare for the Conversation**

**NOTE** Before your group meets, here's what you'll need to do to prepare for the conversation. This preparation will take an average of **90 minutes**. Set aside some time before your group, maybe on 2 different days, to work through it. Don't wait until the day of your group! Pace yourself, as it will take some reflection and emotional energy to complete. Some of it will be difficult and vulnerable work, which is what makes it deeply worthwhile.

**WATCH**

Watch the Chapter 4 summary video and story video.

*5 minutes*

**READ**

Read Chapter 4 (p. 68-79). Underline thoughts that interest or challenge you, and note any areas of disagreement. Then, jot down 3-5 concepts or ideas that impacted you.

*30 minutes*

**WRITE**

Complete the Chapter 4 worksheets (p. 80-86).

*45 minutes*

**SHARE**

Consider 1-3 of your primary roles. Who is someone that you think operates in this role well? What inspires you about how they navigate their role and hold it in tension with their other roles? Prepare to share this reflection with your group.

*10 minutes*

## Step 2

## At Your Group

**NOTE** When you gather, you will need 2 hours to work through this content (or 1½ hours if you omit the DISCUSS step).

**SUMMARIZE**

One person shares their key ideas from reading Chapter 4.

5 minutes

**STORIES**

Break into pairs or triads and have each person share their prepared reflection.

30 minutes

**DISCUSS**

Talk about your role prioritization and role tension from the worksheets. Do you have particular roles that need rebalancing? Did anything surprise you? Where do you experience the most role tension? Share any strategies you may have to navigate your role tension.

25 minutes

**DEBRIEF**

Review the worksheets and spend time following up on them as needed. Here are some questions: *Where did you find clarity? Where are you struggling? Where might you need to dwell longer? What were your “aha moments”?*

25 minutes

**PRACTICE**

*Lectio Divina* or “holy reading.” One role that Jesus calls each of us into is being a friend. Spend some time meditating on the role of friend in Scripture through the practice of lectio divina with John 15:13-15. See the appendix for instructions on lectio divina. However for this exercise, use these specific prompts for the readings:

FIRST READING Listen.

SECOND READING “What do I hear about God?”

THIRD READING “What do I hear about relating to others as a friend?”

FOURTH READING Rest, knowing you are a friend of God.

25 minutes

**PRAY**  
.....

Conclude your night with a short prayer of thanksgiving, thanking God for the roles he has given each one of you and asking for God's grace in submitting your roles to Him.

*10 minutes*

*Step 3*

**Continue the Practice**

Try practicing lectio divina, personally or with another, one more time before the next gathering. This practice, like any, gains depth and strength as you practice it. It'll feel difficult and awkward at first, but in time can become a deep well of nourishment for your soul.



*Week 5*

# Vocation

*Vocation is a singular call from God. But the call is multilayered. Each layer acts like a tuning dial on an old transistor radio that helps reduce static. As each layer is dialed in, the fuzzy noise is reduced so we can hear the call. The different layers of vocation help attune us to our vocation.*

**RHYTHMS FOR LIFE — P. 88**



**Step 1****Prepare for the Conversation**

**NOTE** Before your group meets, here's what you'll need to do to prepare for the conversation. This preparation will take an average of **90 minutes**. Set aside some time before your group, maybe on 2 different days, to work through it. Don't wait until the day of your group! Pace yourself, as it will take some reflection and emotional energy to complete. Some of it will be difficult and vulnerable work, which is what makes it deeply worthwhile.

**WATCH**

Watch the Chapter 5 summary video and story video.

*5 minutes*

**READ**

Read Chapter 5 (p. 87-99). Underline thoughts that interest or challenge you, and note any areas of disagreement. Then, jot down 3-5 concepts or ideas that impacted you.

*30 minutes*

**WRITE**

Complete the Chapter 5 worksheets (p. 100-108).

*45 minutes*

**SHARE**

Review p. 102-106. Prepare to share your personal summary from p. 102, and any other reflections you feel strongly about from p. 103-106. You will also share where you are at in the process of articulating your vocation statement on p. 108.

*10 minutes*

**NOTE** Don't worry too much about having the right words at this point. Sharing with others in your group may help you process your thoughts further. This Chapter is especially challenging and requires extra time and intentionality to work through it.

## Step 2

## At Your Group

**NOTE** When you gather, you will need 2 hours to work through this content (or 1½ hours if you omit the **DISCUSS** step).

**SUMMARIZE**

One person shares their key points from the reading.

*5 minutes*

**STORIES**

Have each person share their prepared reflection.

*45 minutes*

**DISCUSS**

How have others' stories, and the video story you may have watched, furthered your understanding of your own personal vocation?

*15 minutes*

**DEBRIEF**

Review the worksheets and spend time following up on them as needed. Here are some questions: *Where did you find clarity? Where are you struggling? Where might you need to dwell longer? What were your "aha moments"?*

*30 minutes*

**PRACTICE**

*Abiding in silence.* As a group, take 10 minutes of silence to meditate upon your personal vocation. We practiced silence in week one; here's another chance to grow in this discipline. See the appendix again for instructions. This time, focus your meditation on your God-given vocation. For example, you could ask the Holy Spirit to fill you and equip you to live into your vocation: "Fill me, Holy Spirit, and equip me for the work you have given me." Or maybe it is asking the Holy Spirit to reveal your unique vocation: "Come Holy Spirit, show me the good works you've prepared for me."

*20 minutes*

**PRAY**

As a group, ask God to help you live your vocation out in alignment with His Kingdom, and to know your unique calling within God's story. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with conviction as you walk within God's purposes.

*10 minutes*



*Step 3*

## **Continue the Practice**



As you close, invite your group to try practicing solitude with Jesus at least one more time before your next gathering. Remind them that this practice, like any, gains depth and strength as you practice it. It'll feel difficult and awkward at first, but in time can become a deep well of nourishment for your soul.



*Week 6*

# **Upward**

*When our identity is changed, our motivation is changed too. We are loved by Christ, and everything we do flows from there...rather than completing a checklist of spiritual tasks, we are spurred onward and upward by the delight of God's presence. This new motivation can become the heartbeat of all our spiritual practices.*

**RHYTHMS FOR LIFE — P. 123-24**



## Step 1

**Prepare for the Conversation**

**NOTE** Before your group meets, here's what you'll need to do to prepare for the conversation. This preparation will take an average of **90 minutes**. Set aside some time before your group, maybe on 2 different days, to work through it. Don't wait until the day of your group! Pace yourself, as it will take some reflection and emotional energy to complete. Some of it will be difficult and vulnerable work, which is what makes it deeply worthwhile.

**WATCH**

Watch the Chapter 7 summary video and story video.

*5 minutes*

**READ**

Read Chapters 6 and 7 (p. 111-135) and complete the *Brainstorm* sections throughout. Underline thoughts that interest or challenge you and note any areas of disagreement. Then, jot down 3-5 concepts or ideas that impacted you.

*40 minutes*

**WRITE**

Complete the Chapter 7 worksheet (p. 136).

*30 minutes*

**SHARE**

Chapter 7 opens by presenting the motivation for pursuing God, "We are spurred onward and upward by the delight of God's presence." Recall one of your misguided stories from Chapter 1. How might this misguided story be motivating the current Upward practices you may have, or how might it be keeping you from engaging in upward practices you desire? Prepare to share this reflection.

*15 minutes*

## Step 2

## At Your Group

**NOTE** When you gather, you will need 2 hours to work through this content (or 1½ hours if you omit the DISCUSS step).

**SUMMARIZE**

One person shares their key points from reading the chapter.

*5 minutes*

**STORIES**

Break into pairs or triads and have each person share their prepared reflection.

*30 minutes*

**DISCUSS**

Return to the “forget” and “focus” pattern for Upwards practices (p. 122-124). How does this pattern help guide Upwards practices?

*20 minutes*

**DEBRIEF**

Review your Upward worksheet (p. 136) in partners or triads. Here are some questions: *Are you adding any practices? If so, what do you hope will result from this new practice? What else in your life will need to change in order to adapt to any new practices? Does each practice orient you towards delighting in God’s presence? Is there anything that is still unclear about this Rhythm?*

*20 minutes*

**PRACTICE**

*Gratitude.* As a group, practice gratitude and thanksgiving together. See the appendix for further guidance.

*30 minutes*

**PRAY**

Shift into pairs or triads and pray for one another. Have each person share one practice they hope to encounter God’s delight in. Pray that they might “know Christ” (Phil 3:10) in this specific practice.

*10 minutes*

*Step 3*

## **Continue the Practice**



Take the one practice you prayed through and find a time to try it out during your week. Consider inviting a housemate, friend, or family member to try it with you.

Be attentive to your Upward rhythm this week, and consider if the “regular” practices you wrote down guide you in a purposeful, attainable direction. Be prepared to move some of these practices to the “growth” section if you are starting out with too much change.



Week 7

# Inward

*The inward rhythm is not a call to discover ourselves in ourselves. There is not some true version of yourself buried deep within you that you have yet to unearth. Rather, “your life is now hidden with Christ in God” (Col 3:3). The inward rhythm is about discovering ourselves in Christ by discovering him within ourselves.*

**RHYTHMS FOR LIFE — P. 139**



## Step 1

**Prepare for the Conversation**

**NOTE** Before your group meets, here's what you'll need to do to prepare for the conversation. This preparation will take an average of **90 minutes**. Set aside some time before your group, maybe on 2 different days, to work through it. Don't wait until the day of your group! Pace yourself, as it will take some reflection and emotional energy to complete. Some of it will be difficult and vulnerable work, which is what makes it deeply worthwhile.

**WATCH**

Watch the Chapter 8 summary video and story video.

*5 minutes*

**READ**

Read Chapter 8 (p. 137-153) and complete the *Brainstorm* sections throughout. Underline thoughts that interest or challenge you and note any areas of disagreement. Then, jot down 3-5 concepts or ideas that impacted you.

*45 minutes*

**WRITE**

Complete the Chapter 8 worksheet (p. 154).

*30 minutes*

**SHARE**

Choose one of your *Brainstorm* sections from the Inward. Which topic impacted you in a new way? What did you discover?

*10 minutes*

## Step 2

## At Your Group

**NOTE** When you gather, you will need 2 hours to work through this content (or 1½ hours if you omit the **DISCUSS** step).

**SUMMARIZE**

One person shares their 3-5 key points from reading.

*5 minutes*

**STORIES**

Break into pairs or triads and have each person share their prepared reflection.

*30 minutes*

**DISCUSS**

Return to the quote by David Benner on p. 141. How do you handle accepting your sin nature as distinct and personal?

*20 minutes*

**DEBRIEF**

Review your Inward worksheet (p. 154) in partners or triads, and share any related discoveries. Here are some questions: *Are you adding any practices? If so, what are you hoping for out of this new practice? What else in your life will need to change in order to adapt to any new practices? Do these practices deepen your understanding of yourself and God? Is there anything that is still unclear about this Rhythm?*

*30 minutes*

**NOTE** If you are more comfortable with keeping parts of your Inward rhythm private, that is completely okay. Feel free to focus on what you are comfortable sharing.

**PRACTICE**

*Examen.* As a group, start by taking ten minutes to practice the Ignatian Examen. Afterward take 25 minutes for each person to share their experience with your group. See the appendix for further guidance.

*35 minutes*

**PRAY**  
.....

Shift into pairs or triads and pray for one another. Pray each person's acceptance of their whole selves, good and bad, and ask the Holy Spirit to fill each person with enthusiasm and perseverance to keep their Inward rhythm alive.

*10 minutes*

*Step 3*

**Continue the Practice**

Take the one practice you prayed through and find a time to try it out during your week. Consider inviting a housemate, friend, or family member to try it with you.

Be attentive to your Inward rhythm this week, and consider if the “regular” practices you wrote down guide you in a purposeful, attainable direction. Be prepared to move some of these practices to the “growth” section if you are starting with too much change.



Week 8

# Withward

*The physical presence of other Christians is crucial to our formation and well-being. Whatever we do online or through other technologies should never be a replacement for gathering together in person (so long as meeting together is possible).*

**RHYTHMS FOR LIFE — P. 158**



## Step 1

**Prepare for the Conversation**

**NOTE** Before your group meets, here's what you'll need to do to prepare for the conversation. This preparation will take an average of **90 minutes**. Set aside some time before your group, maybe on 2 different days, to work through it. Don't wait until the day of your group! Pace yourself, as it will take some reflection and emotional energy to complete. Some of it will be difficult and vulnerable work, which is what makes it deeply worthwhile.

**WATCH**

Watch the Chapter 9 summary video and story video.

*5 minutes*

**READ**

Read Chapter 9 and complete the *Brainstorm* sections throughout (p. 155-171). Also, underline thoughts that interest or challenge you, and note any areas of disagreement. Then, jot down 3-5 concepts or ideas that impacted you.

*45 minutes*

**WRITE**

Complete the Chapter 9 worksheet (p. 172).

*30 minutes*

**SHARE**

Reflect on the changing ways we are able to be physically present with one another. Prepare to share your thoughts on the value of physical presence, and if this has changed recently for you.

*10 minutes*

## Step 2

## At Your Group

**NOTE** When you gather, you will need 2 hours to work through this content (or 1½ hours if you omit the **DISCUSS** step) **PREPARE** Your group will need to choose a game or two in advance to complete the practice below.

**SUMMARIZE**

One person shares their 3-5 points from reading.

*5 minutes*

**STORIES**

Break into pairs or triads and have each person share their prepared reflection.

*20 minutes*

**DISCUSS**

Revisit the spiritual gift map you created as a group in Week 2. In pairs or triads check-in: have you been able to try out your gifts in the context of this group? What might you do next?

*20 minutes*

**DEBRIEF**

Review your Withward worksheet (p. 172) in partners or triads, and share any related discoveries. Here are some questions: *Are you adding any practices? If so, what are you hoping for out of this new practice? What else in your life will need to change in order to adapt to any new practices? Is there anything that is still unclear about this Rhythm?*

*30 minutes*

**PRACTICE**

*Have fun together.* Play a game together as a group or in smaller groups. Depending on the games and time, you could play a few. This is about laughing together, getting to know one another in a casual way, and enjoying one another's presence.

*45 minutes*

**PRAY**

Shift into pairs or triads and pray for one another. Pray for discernment as you seek to use your spiritual gifts in community. Pray for your community group as a whole.

*10 minutes*

*Step 3*

## **Continue the Practice**



Take the one practice you prayed through and find a time to try it out during your week. Consider inviting a housemate, friend, or family member to try it with you.

Be attentive to your Withward rhythm this week, and consider if the “regular” practices you wrote down guide you in a purposeful, attainable direction. Be prepared to move some of these practices to the “growth” section if you are starting with too much change.



Week 9

# Outward

*We must be careful to trace any activity (such as evangelism, expressions of mercy, or pursuits of justice) back to its origin: love. That's the only way I know how to relieve the pressure and burden that can arise around mission. God has moved toward us and all creation with love. We get to extend this movement toward others. It's that simple.*

**RHYTHMS FOR LIFE — P. 175**



## Step 1

**Prepare for the Conversation**

**NOTE** Before your group meets, here's what you'll need to do to prepare for the conversation. This preparation will take an average of **90 minutes**. Set aside some time before your group, maybe on 2 different days, to work through it. Don't wait until the day of your group! Pace yourself, as it will take some reflection and emotional energy to complete. Some of it will be difficult and vulnerable work, which is what makes it deeply worthwhile.

**WATCH**

Watch the Chapter 10 summary video and story video.

*5 minutes*

**READ**

Read Chapter 10 (p. 173-188) and complete the *Brainstorm* sections throughout. Underline thoughts that interest or challenge you and note any areas of disagreement. Then, jot down 3-5 concepts or ideas that impacted you.

*45 minutes*

**WRITE**

Complete the Chapter 10 worksheet (p. 189).

*30 minutes*

**SHARE**

Take a minute to dream about your life, joined with God's movement of love to the world. What is one way you are drawn to offer God's love to others that sparks excitement in you? What first comes to mind? If you're struggling to think of an example, think of a moment in your life when you felt God's love. How might you want to share that love with others?

*15 minutes*

## Step 2

## At Your Group

**NOTE** When you gather, you will need 2 hours to work through this content (or 1½ hours if you omit the **DISCUSS** step).

**SUMMARIZE**

One person shares their 3-5 points from reading.

5 minutes

**STORIES**

Break into pairs or triads and have each person share their prepared reflection.

20 minutes

**DISCUSS**

How does considering your “people” and “place” change the Outward conversation for you?

20 minutes

**DEBRIEF**

Review your Outward worksheet (p. 189) in partners or triads. Here are some questions: *Are you adding any practices? If so, what are you hoping for out of this new practice? What else in your life will need to change in order to adapt to any new practices? Can you trace each practice back to its intended origin: God’s love on the move? Is there anything that is still unclear about this Rhythm?*

25 minutes

**PRACTICE**

*Prayer Walk.* Lace up your shoes and go for a walk. Break into smaller groups and walk your neighborhood. *Be Present.* Pay attention to the physical place and the actual people you see. *Pray.* Take turns praying as you go. Pray for the establishments, for the people, for systemic issues in your community, for corporate renewal. If your group has an ongoing service partnership in your community, pray for this partnership too. *Reflect & Share.* Find a bench or coffee shop and pause to reflect (or you can just keep walking). Has God sparked anything new from your walk? Consider your group’s service partnership (if you have one) and dream about what God could do with

this relationship. Consider it in light of your study this week, as well as your group’s spiritual giftedness map and vocation statements from Part 1. How might these fuel your outwards serving and open up new possibilities?

*45 minutes*

**PRAY**  
.....

Gather back and end your night by singing the Doxology together, in praise!

*5 minutes*

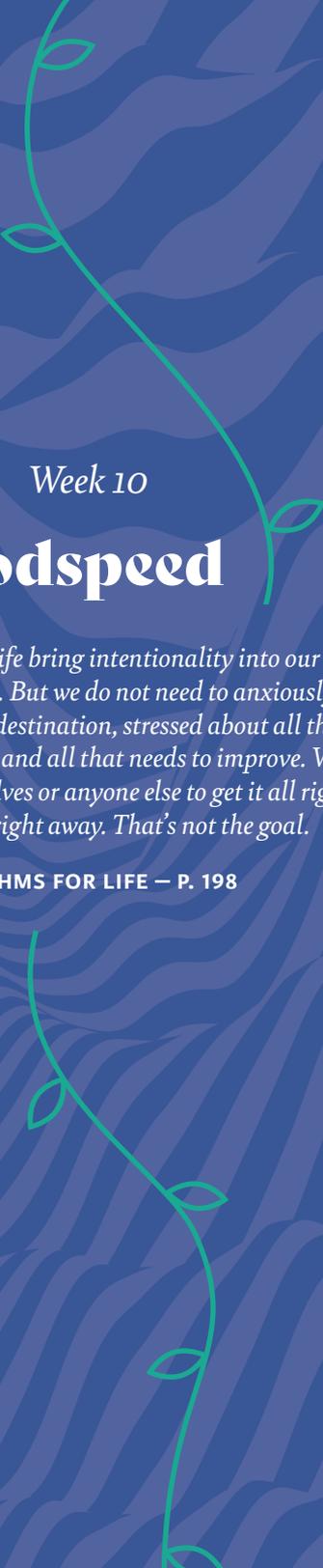
*Step 3*

**Continue the Practice**



Take the one practice you prayed through and find a time to try it out during your week. Consider inviting a housemate, friend, or family member to try it with you.

Be attentive to your Outward rhythm this week, and consider if the “regular” practices you wrote down guide you in a purposeful, attainable direction. Be prepared to move some of these practices to the “growth” section if you are starting with too much change.



Week 10

# Godspeed

*Rhythms for life bring intentionality into our pursuit of Jesus. But we do not need to anxiously rush toward our destination, stressed about all that needs to be done and all that needs to improve. We can't expect ourselves or anyone else to get it all right, all the time, right away. That's not the goal.*

**RHYTHMS FOR LIFE — P. 198**

## Step 1

**Prepare for the Conversation**

**NOTE** Before your group meets, here's what you'll need to do to prepare for the conversation. This preparation will take an average of **90 minutes**. Set aside some time before your group, maybe on 2 different days, to work through it. Don't wait until the day of your group! Pace yourself, as it will take some reflection and emotional energy to complete. Some of it will be difficult and vulnerable work, which is what makes it deeply worthwhile.

**READ**

Read the *Epilogue: Godspeed* (p. 191-198). Underline thoughts that interest or challenge you and note any areas of disagreement. Then, jot down 3-5 concepts or ideas that impacted you.

*25 minutes*

**WRITE**

Review your completed Upward, Inward, Withward, and Outward worksheets (p. 136, 154, 172, 189) and then complete your first draft of the Rhythm for Life worksheet (p. 194-195).

*45 minutes*

**SHARE**

Review p. 196 and refine the draft of your personal Rhythm for Life. Focus on the essentials. What Rhythm(s) invite your attention for this sesason: Upward, Inward, Withward, or Outward? What practice(s) will you focus on for now? Prepare to share your Rhythm for Life, and your process of refining it, with your group.

*20 minutes*

## Step 2

**At Your Group**

**NOTE** When you gather, you will need 2 hours to work through this content (or 1½ hours if you omit the **DISCUSS** step).

**SUMMARIZE**

One person shares their 3-5 points from reading.

*5 minutes*

**STORIES**

Break into pairs or triads and have each person share their Rhythm for Life and their prepared reflection.

*25 minutes*

**DISCUSS**

How does the pace of Godspeed (p. 189) frame how you will live out of your Rhythm for Life?

*25 minutes*

**DEBRIEF**

Review your Rhythm for Life worksheet (p. 197-198) in pairs or triads. Consider refining it once more. Here are some questions: *Can you memorize your Rhythm for Life? If not, how can it be simplified further? If you had nothing to prove, what would you remove? What is necessary to keep the path toward Christlikeness in focus? What else in your life will need to change in order to embody your Rhythm for Life?*

*35 minutes*

**PRACTICE**

*Establish a Rhythm.* Discuss how your group can encourage one another to embody your Rhythms for Life. Decide how frequently you will check-in together as a group. Because a Rhythm for Life needs to be revised from "time to time" (p. 4-6). If your group will continue to meet weekly or not, will you dedicate time to meet, review, and revise your rhythms once a month, quarterly, or annually (or some other pattern)? Once you've decided, set a date and time for your first two check-ins.

*15 minutes*

**PRAY**

Take turns commissioning one another in prayer to walk at the pace of Godspeed into your Rhythms for Life.

*15 minutes*

Step 3

## Continue the Practice



Now that you have a rhythm for your current season, find creative ways to keep it at the forefront of your mind until it becomes second nature. You might want to create a version and place it where you see it regularly: beside your bed, inside your Bible, on your fridge, on your phone background, or at your workspace, for example.

You can download a free printable Rhythms for Life card at [ALASTAIRSTERNE.COM/RHYTHMS](https://ALASTAIRSTERNE.COM/RHYTHMS)

When your group checks in about vocation at a later date (at least one month later), everyone can share their real-life experience with their vocation thus far. Here are some questions to consider:

What actions have you taken to keep in touch with your personal vocation?

Has your personal vocation shifted at all as your understanding of it has deepened?

Is there anything you'd like to share with the group that you think would help them have a deeper understanding of their personal vocation?

# Gratitudes

This workbook and supporting videos was made possible through a generous grant from the Forum for Theological Exploration. The content of this workbook was developed by Preston Gordon, Michele Holding, Peter Ko, Mel Pennington, Parker Thompson, and Shannon Daly. We also thank Parker Thompson for crafting the summary and story videos, and Michele Holding, Marley Ferreira, Nicole and Mitch Classen, Preston Gordon, Bub Holding, Thea Anthony, Lloyd Lee, Julia Sterne, and Heidi Martin for their participation.

# Appendix: Instructions for Communal Practices

Here is a brief appendix for a handful of the communal practices that your group will engage together:

Abiding in Silence  
 Confession  
 Examen  
 Gratitude  
 Lectio Divina

Use this as a guide for your group nights together, and as a reference to practice these spiritual disciplines in the future.

## Abiding in Silence

---

The spiritual practice of silence has an external and internal dimension. We create external silence—removing the noise and distractions of the world—to foster internal silence—stillness, calm, and rest before God (Psalm 46.10). Silence can be intimidating if it is new to you. Here is a simple guide to help your group enter in:

1. To begin: create silence. Put away your phones. As you're in a group, quiet instrumental music may help limit distraction. Maybe light a candle to bring focus.
2. Ask the Holy Spirit to mark out this space as one of restful silence, to protect the group from a restless silence. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you and stir you during this time.
3. Slow your breathing. As you breathe in, breathe in the identity God has given you; as you exhale, release the misguided stories you live by (Substitute the breathing or prayer focuses with different words or Scriptures depending on the chapter you are using).
4. Find a simple prayer to repeat. Maybe it's your Scripture and your word. Maybe it is "Come, Holy Spirit" or "Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." When your mind wanders, that's okay – patiently bring your attention back to your meaningful word or prayer, and desire God's presence. Note what comes to your mind during this exercise, and lovingly release whatever it is over to God. Rest, knowing you are known by a God who is love.
5. Afterward, share impressions with one another from this practice.

## Confession

---

Confession is the Christian practice of bringing our sins before God and others in order to break their power and hold over us. In confession, we humbly expose our faults and failures so that we may receive the power of God's forgiveness in the vulnerable places of our hearts. It is this difficult act that allows us to know grace personally and intimately, before God and one another. The following liturgy is a guide for confessing and forgiving sins in the presence of others.

Take a minute of silence to reflect and examine your heart in light of God's nature and kingdom. It may help to slowly read the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:1-17) or the Summary of the Law (Matt 22:36-40).

Begin by saying this confession together: *Heavenly Father, we confess that we have sinned greatly against you in thought, word, and deed, and have done that which is wrong in your sight. We ask you to forgive us our sins, and to give us grace always to resist temptation and to do your holy will; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.*

Next, each member will take a turn to lead another through this liturgy of confession and forgiveness:

Leader      May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips, that you may truly confess your sins to Almighty God.

Confessor    I confess to God that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed, by my own fault. And especially ... [Allow time for silence and quiet self-examination. Do not rush. When you're ready, briefly name specific sins and areas of remorse or great need] ... I pray to God to forgive me all my sins for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Leader      Hear these words from Jesus Christ: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."  
John 20:22-23

Leader (with a hand placed on the confessor's shoulder or head)

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given power to his followers to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him: Of his great mercy forgive you your offences. And by his authority committed to me, I forgive you from all your sins, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Leader      Hear these words of comfort from Psalm 103:11-12, "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us."

Leader      Do you believe you are truly and fully forgiven by Jesus Christ?

## Examen

---

The goal of the examen prayer is to notice God's action in your every-day life and to grow in awareness of his constant presence. The majority of the prayer time is used reviewing your day. As you do this, try not to dwell too long on any one part or thought. Instead, become aware of it and move on.

Begin by creating a quiet environment -- turn off your phones; make yourself comfortable. Relax your body. Invite the Holy Spirit to mark off and protect the following space from distraction and temptation.

The prayer has five simple steps. Walk your group through the steps with the suggested time allotments for silence and reflection:

1. Become aware of God's presence (2 minutes)
2. Review the day with gratitude (5 minutes)
3. Pay attention to your emotions (3 minutes)
4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it (2 minutes)
5. Look forward to tomorrow (2 minutes)

End by taking some time for each person to share about their experience.

## Gratitude

---

Did you know that some of the most repeated commands in Scripture are to "praise the Lord," "rejoice," and "give thanks"? Gratitude isn't a suggestion. It is a key instrument in the melody of God's ways. Practices of gratitude help us move away from focusing on ourselves and focus on the Giver of every good gift. The following is a group practice for gratitude (for more practices of gratitude see p. 128-131 in *Rhythms for Life*):

1. Close your eyes and connect with your breath. Try to match the length of your inhalation and exhalation (perhaps counting in your mind to make the breaths even).
2. Dwell with a positive moment from your day. As you do, pay attention to your body. When you think of your positive moment, do you feel it anywhere in your body? Can you imagine it physically? For example, if your heart feels full, try to imagine it full of white light and let the light grow and expand. If your stomach feels warm, identify it with a color (like blue) and let the color spread and grow. Spend a minute or two with the memory.
3. Express your gratitude to God for this moment and experience.

As your group finishes this practice, take time for each person to share their experience with your group and collectively express your gratitude in thanksgiving to God.

## Lectio Divina

---

Lectio Divina, or “holy reading” is a way of meditating on Scripture by listening for the Holy Spirit’s voice. It is a slow, repetitive reading of Scripture with listening silence in between readings. The metaphor of “chewing on” Scripture is helpful for this practice—we inwardly digest the passage until it becomes a part of us! Lectio divina traditionally follows four steps; here’s how you can engage it as a group.

Start by choosing a short passage of Scripture (for example, Galatians 5:22-23). Take a minute of silence and turn off your phones. Choose one or two people to be readers, with the passage open. Not everyone needs a Bible, as the emphasis is on listening. Begin by inviting the Holy Spirit to speak to your group, and follow these four rounds of reading:

1. **Lectio (reading):** Read the passage slowly, deliberately, and prayerfully. Slow is the key word for each reading. Leave 1 minute of silence after the reading.
2. **Meditatio (meditate):** Read it again and keep “chewing on” the passage. Ask, “what word or phrase stands out?” If none does, simply pick one to focus on. Consider how this word or phrase fits not only in this passage, but in the larger story of Scripture. Leave another minute of silence after the reading.
3. **Oratio (prayer):** Read it again and engage God personally this time. Ask, “what does it mean for me?” Invite the Spirit to speak directly to your own life and where God may want to lead you from this time.
4. **Contemplatio (contemplate):** After this final reading, don’t ask anything. Don’t try to think harder. Simply rest in God’s presence, knowing Jesus is delighted to have spent this time with you.

After you conclude, invite one another to share thoughts and impressions from this practice.



