



Crafting A Rule Of Life

Group Discussion Guide on Lesson 2

Meeting: Zoom or in person (adjust as needed)

Goal: To help pastors process Lesson 2

Length: 60 mins discussion and ministry guide (please add extra time for meals, announcements, worship, fun activity, etc...)

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Announcements (5 mins): Discussion Leader shares a few reminders

- Set up an account for the Regional Learning Module (any questions can be directed to Tori McGraw-Rowe, tori.mcgraw-rowe@vineyardusa.org).
- Complete the pastoral health assessment in the introduction. A coach will be reaching out with the results and to go over the assessment.
- Reminder that the assessment is private and VUSA will only be able to see larger themes and patterns for regions for the purpose of greater training and resourcing in the future.
- Discussion Leaders share why this work is so important for the Vineyard but specifically for the ministry that they are overseeing.

Opening Reflection (10 mins)

Encourage a meditative posture. Tonight we will practice a breath prayer. These are easy and simple prayers that align with your breath. Breath prayers can often calm anxiety and be a quick way to stay centered on Jesus in the middle of the day. It is meant to be repetitive. Everyone will have a unique prayer that they pray. The one tonight will include a name for God and a short phrase.

1st Step: What is a name for God that describes how you are experiencing Him right now? Examples include: Father, Abba, Healer, Everlasting One, Yahweh, King Jesus, and so on.

Wait a moment for people to pick one

2nd Step: What is a desire or longing from your heart to God? Find a short phrase that captures this desire. Examples include: “I belong to You,” “Protect me,” “Fill me with your spirit,” “I love you,” and so on.

Wait a moment for people to pick one

3rd step: Practice this breath prayer for a minute or two with the rhythm of a breath. Quietly with eyes closed and hands outstretched. Slowly and patiently. Every time that your mind starts to wander, just pause and try again.

4th step: After a few minutes, draw everyone’s attention together. Ask if anyone would like to share about how that experience was.

Sharing (30 mins)

Let’s process a bit of the work we are starting to do together...

- 1.) Let’s revisit our work of trying Sabbath (or a practice leading up to a Sabbath, like setting aside an afternoon or putting away technology for half a day). Allow a few people to share what they are learning, for themselves and possibly their family, about themselves and this habit.
- 2.) Knowing everyone has different comfort levels with being still and engaging in silence and solitude, can we have a few people share what this discipline has actually looked like? I want an introvert to share about this and an extrovert to share. What is the most challenging thing you are identifying as you start to practice? Why is this practice of stillness even important for our spiritual lives?
- 3.) What are some commitments that God is encouraging you to take on during this process? Let’s share together so that we can pray for each other. Some might want to take a night away and

commit to that. Some might want to work on their dependency on technology and experience the idea of putting it down as scary. Some of you are in a stage of life that includes little children and want to commit to more honest conversations with a spouse about how silence and solitude work for both of you. What can we share with each other?

Ministry (15 mins)

A few ministry prompts...

- 1.) In the material, there was a brief paragraph about negative emotions that tend to come up when we sit still. These negative emotions (like sadness, depression, anger, frustration, etc...) can oftentimes be so overwhelming that we associate them with silence and solitude, which leads to avoiding these spaces. Has anyone here had that experience? Could we pray for you to have the courage to stay in these spaces of quiet and let God address what is going on?
- 2.) Pray for spouses to have meaningful conversations with each other about the different commitments to take on individually and as a family (like Sabbath) and that they would have grace with each other.