



Session 8: Creating a Sustainable Rule of Life

Core Theme: Rule of life – Following Jesus takes intentionality and practice (one reason why the words “disciple” and “discipline” are so close). That’s why we need an intentional pathway like a rule of life *and* a community with which to live it out.

Core Scripture: Matthew 11:28-30

Suggested Session 8 Schedule

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer (3 minutes)

2. Meal (30 minutes, including Check-in described under #3)

Enjoy a meal together, following earlier guidance around the meal. About 15 minutes in, welcome people to shift gears and gather round for the check-in. Continue to notice who builds relationships quickly and who might need a nudge to connect. Continue to notice if anyone seems disengaged, acutely quiet, or alone, and check in with them.

3. Check-in (15 minutes – if sharing meal, occurs during mealtime)

Following a brief review and reaffirmation of the covenant, offer **one** of the following questions for check-in:

- Since our last session, where have you seen Jesus in the context of community?
- How did the scripture from the last session show up in your life?
- What stayed with you about the Way of Love practice of Rest?
- How do you feel as you arrive here?
- What do you need to acknowledge before you can fully be present today?
- *Create your own check-in question.*

Heed earlier guidance around check-in, including using the talking piece, listening respectfully, and honoring each person’s time to speak. If you notice check-ins running long, offer a time limit and begin by modeling that time frame. You may also gently remind people to return to the covenant honoring time and others’ opportunities to speak.

4. Content Engagement (45 minutes)

Once everyone has checked in, it’s time to move into the next part of your small group meeting: content engagement. For the eighth session, we seek to know more about life with Jesus by creating a sustainable rule of life.

Show: Session 8: Part A Video

Note: To save time, this video can be watched by participants on their own before your gathering.

Discuss the following questions as a group, inspired by the Session 8: Part A Video. Remember: You need not cover all the questions in this relatively short time. If it would be helpful, break into pairs or trios for about 5 minutes to facilitate giving everyone a chance to speak. Then, come back to the larger group and share for the remaining 10 minutes. Use these questions or others, as appropriate:

Wondering Questions

- How can an intentional pathway like a rule of life and a community with which to live it out help?
- What would go into your own rule of life?
- Why does having a rule of life make a difference for your faith?
- What in this video resonated with or challenged you?

Show: Session 8: Part B Video

Watch the video as a group, then discuss the following questions together:

Wondering Questions

In the second video, we hear three leaders discuss creating a rule of life – a rule that helps us receive and give the love of Jesus, and intentionally center our lives on his life.

- As you listened to their conversation, what came up for you?
- How could a rule of life help you to become more intentional about your spiritual growth?

5. Check-out and Closing Prayer (7 min)

Follow earlier suggestions for check-out (confirm time and location for next session, share Make It Yours opportunities), especially inviting group members to share **one word** about the time they've spent together today.

If time permits, offer this question for check-out: *How has the group blessed you today?*

Close with prayer, welcoming prayer requests from each person, which the group leader or a volunteer gathers and offers up. Pray spontaneously, choose your favorite prayer, or try Hebrews 13:20-21 from *An Order for Compline*:

*May the God of peace,
who brought back the great shepherd of the sheep,
our Lord Jesus,*

*from the dead by the blood of the eternal covenant,
equip you with every good thing to do his will,
by developing in us what pleases him through Jesus Christ.
To him be the glory forever and always. Amen.*

6. Make It Yours: At-Home Engagement Opportunities

- For a deeper dive, encourage your group to review Session 8 in the Participant Guidebook before your next gathering.
- Invite participants to consider creating a draft of their own rule of life. In addition to reading the handout on [Rule of Life](#), participants may use [Living Intentionally: A Workbook for Creating a Personal Rule of Life](#) by Br. David Vryhof of the Society of St. John the Evangelist. This short, practical tool has helped many people draft such a rule.