

Practice.



LOVE

Engaging with Scripture regularly is an active way to engage in our spiritual formation.

WONDER

Be patient with yourself and trust the slow work of God in your life.

ABUNDANCE

Rooting ourselves in community can help us grow in ways that we could never do alone.



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Welcome to the Intentional Life

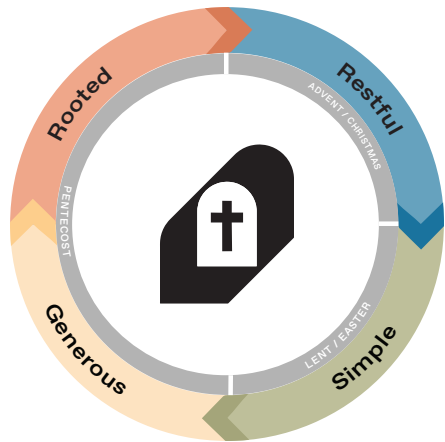
THE WORD “INTENTION” is defined as an aim, target or purpose. Something that you shoot for, regardless of whether you hit it or not, it’s a direction.

At Open Door, we have a desire to be a community of people radically committed to spiritual formation (the ongoing, lifelong process of becoming more like Jesus), for the sake of others. This sort of commitment allows our very selves (mind, heart, soul and body) to be transformed by the Spirit into the likeness of Christ.

This incredible and mysterious formation process requires both our attention and our intention, an aim and a bit of a rhythm to help us practice, together.

That said, we have identified four seasonal rhythms that help us practice living more intentionally.

Our seasonal rhythms include: The Rooted Life, The Restful Life, The Simple Life, and The Generous Life.



These rhythms are informed by the ancient church calendar, and are a part of the larger desire we have to live an intentional life.

They invite us into and equip us to practice the Presence and Way of Jesus in an authentic way where we can grow in our faith while actively living in community and loving others.

The Rooted Life



The roots of a tree grow deep. They are an anchor, a life source, and allow the tree to grow and interact with the world around it. A healthy root system stores up important nutrients during winter and drought, keeping it alive in even the leanest and coldest seasons. Psalm 1 describes the person who meditates and delights in scripture like a “tree planted by streams of water”.

The Rooted Life refers to a deepening life with God, alive and growing.

In this seasonal rhythm, we practice returning to a few of the major foundations of practicing the way of Jesus and we are invited to turn our attention, intentionally, towards:

- Prayer (see John 15)
- Scripture (see Psalm 1)
- Community (see 1 Corinthians 12:27)

As a community of people radically committed to spiritual formation (the process of becoming more like Jesus, together) for the sake of others, we see this life with God more like a garden than a machine, more like a field than a factory, and more like a challenging invitation than a heavy-handed demand. Life with Jesus is something to be nurtured, rather than controlled.

Orienting our hearts and activities towards Prayer, Scripture and Community are vital to our life with Jesus and integral to the forming and deepening of our roots, grounded and strong.

In this season, our primary practice is daily Bible engagement. Together, we will practice the discipline and the joy of interacting with God's living and active word (Hebrews 4:12). More than quantity, we are inviting God's Presence and His Word to form our hearts.



The Other Side of the Bookshelf



One of my core memories growing up was waking up early on weekday mornings to watch cartoons. I grew up in the 80s—long before Netflix, YouTube, or streaming services—so the options were pretty limited. Most mornings it was *G.I. Joe* or reruns of *Popeye*. To make things even more interesting, the cartoons were all in Spanish because my family lived in South America, where my parents served as missionaries.

I don't remember much about the cartoons. The entertainment value wasn't that great. However, what I do remember is what happened on the *other* side of the room.

Our living room was divided by a pair of bookshelves. Every morning, while my brother and I sat in front of the television, my dad would be on the other side of those shelves spending 45 minutes to an hour reading God's Word and praying. Sometimes I'd lose interest in whatever cartoon was on and wander over to where he was. I'd see him read Scripture and hear him

pray—for our family, for the ministry God had entrusted to my parents, and for people who didn't yet know Christ.

Looking back, I couldn't tell you the plot of a single cartoon episode. However, I can still picture countless mornings seeing my dad on his knees with an open Bible, talking with God. That image shaped me far more than any television show ever could. The daily investment my dad made to engage with God's Word has left an imprint on my life and on my family's life that continues to this day.

Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing", John 15:5 (NIV).

Looking back over my own life, the practice that has shaped me more than any other as a husband, dad, pastor, friend, and co-worker has been learning to abide with Christ through His Word. I'll be honest—I'm not as disciplined as my dad was, and I still miss mornings from time to time. Yet over the years, consistently opening my Bible and trusting the Holy Spirit to use God's Word to mold and shape me has produced fruit that I could never have manufactured on my own.

The cartoons are long forgotten, but the picture of my dad on his knees with an open Bible still lives vividly in my mind. It's a picture that reminds me over and over again of the greatest investment we can make, abiding with Christ through engaging with His Word.



BEN SOLLIE
Ministry Pastor

Scripture



We are all being formed by something. Choosing to engage with Scripture on a regular basis is an active way to engage in our formation into the image of Christ. The Spirit does the hard work of transforming our hearts and minds.

Scripture is foundational in this process, and in the Rooted Life we are invited as a community to practice engaging daily with God's word.

Let's ditch any pressure or guilt; we're not talking about perfection or performance here—let's simply practice being grounded in God's Word together.

A FEW WAYS TO START

- ❑ Choose a particular passage and meditate on it. Read it over and over and enjoy it!
- ❑ Memorize a passage (try Psalm 1).
- ❑ Choose one of the stories of Jesus' life (from the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John) and read one chapter per day.

PRACTICE

Pick one of the three options listed to engage daily with Scripture and start practicing!

WHICH BIBLE TRANSLATION IS BEST?

YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED that, as a church, we use the NIV as our primary teaching text. This isn't because we believe the NIV is the "best" translation. Every faithful translation makes certain decisions, and each has its own strengths and limitations. Rather than asking which translation is best, I find a more helpful question is, **"Which translation is best suited for this purpose?"**

As our teaching team prepares sermons each week, we don't rely on just one translation. My own study usually begins with the NASB because it stays very close to the original wording of the biblical languages. However this can make the English feel stilted and hard to understand at times. I'm also continually working with the original Hebrew and Greek texts, comparing how different translations communicate the nuances of the passage. To balance the strengths of a more literal translation, I also regularly read the NLT, which prioritizes communicating the *meaning* of the text in clear, accessible English. Throughout the

process, I'm continually referencing the NIV and, depending on the passage, I may consult several other translations as well. **Each one helps illuminate the text from slightly different angles.**

On Sundays, we teach from the NIV because it serves a congregation filled with both new and seasoned followers of Jesus. It is clear without being simplistic, accurate without becoming unnecessarily technical, and readily available in many formats, and trusted across a wide range of Christian traditions.

While the NIV serves us well as our shared *teaching* Bible, I would encourage everyone to have more than one translation available for their *personal* study. Reading across translations can bring fresh clarity and new attentiveness to familiar passages. Our goal isn't simply to choose a translation...it's to know the Scriptures more deeply so that we can know, love, and follow Jesus more faithfully.

—Dave Brickey, *Lead Pastor*

Dive Deeper

Whether you find it easy to engage with Scripture or not, pause and pay attention to where you're at *today*. Resist judgment. Life is full of ups and downs, ease and challenge, and seasons that ebb and flow. Our journey with the Bible is similar. Wherever you are at, just wonder—with God— about your engagement with Scripture. Here are a few questions to get you started...

What are ways you have enjoyed Scripture in the past?

How are you engaging with Scripture these days?

Would you like that to stay the same or change in some way?

What might change look like?

Holy Spirit, we desire to soak more deeply in Scripture every day. Please help us as we practice. In Jesus' name, amen.



Do not conform to the
patterns of this world,
but be transformed by the
renewing of your mind.

Then you will be able
to test and approve
what God's will is—
his good, pleasing,
and perfect will.

ROMANS 12:2 (NIV)

Prayerful Reading



In this season of the Rooted Life, we are entering in together to a reading practice called *Lectio Divina*, which is Latin for “Divine Reading.” A simple way to put it is that we are reading the Bible prayerfully.

Lectio Divina dates back to the early centuries of the Christian Church and was established as a practice/tool to pray the scriptures in a way that leads to deeper connection with God’s Presence and God’s Word. On the following pages you will find one of many adaptations of this ancient practice.

As we begin, let’s remember that the practice of Lectio Divina is not a “rule” and not the “goal.” The point is simply to develop an awareness of God’s Presence and voice in our everyday lives over time.

That said, as you take part in this practice, we encourage you to hold loosely to a specific outcome (for example, getting a certain feeling/insight/word from God). There *may* be a tangible outcome, but if there's not, know that **simply practicing is enough** and will deepen your awareness of God's presence and voice over time.

Be patient with yourself and trust the slow work of God in your life, forming you into the likeness of your Rabbi Jesus.

Lastly, if you're not sure where to start in your Bible, try practicing with Psalm 23, a verse or short passage from the gospel of John, or anything from the current Open Door sermon series.

I don't speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me has commanded me what to say and how to say it.

JOHN 12:49 (NLT)

PRACTICE

Choose a passage from the Bible and practice reading it in this slow, prayerful way.



MEETING WITH GOD THROUGH LECTIO DIVINA:

1 READY

- Find a quiet place with your Bible (preferably a paper Bible).
- Choose a passage of Scripture.
- Ask God to be with you during this time.

2 READ

- Read the passage a couple of times slowly, letting your awareness rest on each word.
- Listen for “the still small voice” of God.
- Take note of any word or phrase that catches your attention.

3 REFLECT

- Meditate on the word or phrase that caught your attention.
- Mentally analyze the word/phrase.
- Notice any emotion or memories the word or phrase stirs up.



A MINDFUL APPROACH to an ANCIENT PRACTICE

4 RESPOND

- Ask God why this caught your attention.
- What might He be saying to you?
- Talk with God about what you're hearing or feeling.

5 REST

- Let go of productivity and simply rest in God's presence.
- Notice that this kind of stillness can be a stand-alone practice in and of itself.

6 RETURN

- In the hours that follow, keep returning to the passage and your reflection with the intention of integrating the Word into your daily life.
- Write down anything you may want to return to with God later.

Rooted in Community



“...Jesus’ call to community goes far beyond church attendance to relationships of depth, vulnerability, and a commitment to transformation.”

JOHN MARK COMER,
PRACTICING THE WAY

In *Practicing the Way*, John Mark Comer encourages, “Part of what we want to nurture in our life with Jesus is practicing community like He did. Jesus’ life was a beautiful example of this as we see how intentional He was in being in relationship with God the Father, and with those who followed Him. Jesus certainly preached to many, but much of His time He spent in smaller settings.”

As followers of Jesus, we are invited to be intentional too. Loneliness and isolation continue to be an enormous challenge in our society. However, in the kingdom of God, we are known and loved. There is a spot for us and we are never on the outside of God’s love, looking in.

Being in community with others can be both wonderful and messy—AND it is *necessary* for us to live out life with Jesus, together. Rooting ourselves in community can help us grow and stretch in ways that we never expected or could do alone. We need each other.

Since the beginning of creation, we can see that we were made to live in relationship with others (Genesis 2:18). Depending on whether you're an introvert or an extrovert, community has the potential to look really different and unique!

I wonder where God might be inviting you, and us, to take a step deeper into community with others and into a deeper life with Him, together.

“Now you are the body of Christ,
and each one of you is a part of it.”

I CORINTHIANS 12:27 (NIV)

PRACTICE

Regularly and intentionally share life with other followers of Jesus.

Consider inviting someone to church or over for a meal, serving, making yourself known at a newcomers gathering, joining a group, or lingering a little longer after church.

Dive Deeper

Share what your current rhythm of being in relationship with other followers of Jesus looks like, or maybe what you hope it could look like.

How might you move towards an authentic way of sharing your life with those you want to grow in relationship with?

What would one step towards a regular rhythm of intentional relationship with other followers of Jesus look like for you? Is there anything preventing that from happening?

Closing Prayer



EPHESIANS 3:14-21 (NIV)

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever!

Amen.

Resources



q.me-qr.com/lzjrjefg

HEARING GOD

Dallas Willard



q.me-qr.com/u77c7yh8

EAT THIS BOOK

Eugene Peterson



q.me-qr.com/5v5kcfag

THE SCRIPTURE PRACTICE

John Mark Comer



q.me-qr.com/rqjvfi5z

DEEP ROOTED IN CHRIST

Joshua Kang



q.me-qr.com/d2sr6jr3

BIBLE TRANSLATIONS FOR EVERYONE

Tim Wildsmith



q.me-qr.com/O3sbz15c

A GUIDE FOR PRAYER MINISTERS AND OTHER SERVANTS

Rueben P. Job and Norman Shawchuck

PRAYER ROOM

Everyone is welcome **Sundays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.** Take the elevator to the 2nd floor and enjoy!