

# Building Your Calendar

**Worship at Home**

JANUARY 1

## *Arranging your calendar can be the most spiritual thing you do.*

-Pastor Derek

The next twelve months hold so much potential and so many opportunities. More than any one person could ever fully realize or achieve. With only 24 hours in a day and much of those spent asleep (hopefully!), it is impossible to do it all. However, it is possible to live meaningfully and purposefully with the time that you have. It is possible to reach goals, be spontaneous, and find space to rest and recreate, all within the hours of your days and weeks. An example in the historic church is called a “Rule of Life.” This is simply a tool that helps you to align your schedule with your values and priorities.

Below you will find some simple steps to help you craft a “Rule of Life” and lead you toward healthy rhythms and rightly arranged priorities for 2023. Approach this process prayerfully, asking the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and guidance. Take your time, talk it over with someone you trust, and look forward to a God-honoring year.

## **Step 01: Looking Back**

### **PRAY:**

God, you are wise, and your ways are best. I want to follow you more nearly in the coming year. Help me to see last year with your eyes. As I reflect on the year, give me discernment to recognize the good and the bad in how I managed my calendar and priorities.

### **DO THIS FIRST:**

If you have it, pull out your planner/calendar from last year (home, work, school, etc.)

### **ASK YOURSELF:**

- What were the highlights of last year?
- When did I manage my calendar well last year?
- Did your relationship with God strengthen, weaken or remain the same last year?
- What was good last year? Bad? What was best?
- What changes would I like to see in how I prioritize my time?

### **TAKE ACTION:**

For the next seven days, log as much activity as possible on a calendar or in a notebook. Pay attention to where your time is spent. Your phone will help you track this too!

## **STEP 02: Habit, Goals, Hopes, Dreams**

### **PRAY:**

Lord, you already know each of my days and have good works prepared for me in the coming year. Keep my heart in line with your heart as I dream about the future and set goals for different areas of my life. In all of it, may my hope be firmly planted in you.

### **DO THIS FIRST:**

Grab a journal and pen. For each question, give yourself enough time to write down everything that comes to mind.

Think through all areas of life as you work through the questions (spiritual, physical, relational, mental, educational, recreational; personal, family, work/school)

**ASK YOURSELF:**

- Who do I want to become in the next year?
- What are the most important values in my life?
- What new habits do I want to add in the next year? What old habits need breaking?
- What goals do I want to set for the next year? [Goals are within your ability to achieve. You have significant control over the outcomes.]
- What am I hoping for in the next year? [Hope is waiting with anticipation. What are you eagerly waiting for? You may have some control over the outcome.]
- What dreams do I have for the next year? [A dream is something you desire which feels almost beyond hope, and you have very little control.]

**TAKE ACTION:**

Review your answers to these questions. You may have written quite a lot down! Use a highlighter to mark what jumps off the page as you read through a second, third, or fourth time. Add anything that's missing. Cross off anything that doesn't truly fit.

## **STEP 03: Priorities**

**PRAY:**

God, this year, I want to say YES to what is best, and you already know what those things are! Give me wisdom as I look ahead and prepare. Today and each day, draw my mind and heart toward you as I learn to live for you.

**DO THIS FIRST:**

Try this activity as a good visual illustration:

Find a large jar or vase and a variety of rocks/balls in different sizes (or any objects of varying sizes).

Put the smaller rocks in the jar first, then try to fit in the larger objects. How well did that work?

Next, put the largest rocks in first, followed by the next smallest, all the way to the smallest. Did that work better?

**ASK YOURSELF:**

- What did the Jar & Rock activity teach me about my priorities?
- What effort will it take to establish a new habit or break an old one?
- Can I realistically achieve all these goals this year? Do any of them need to be broken down into smaller goals?
- How will I take small steps toward each goal?
- As I'm waiting for hopes to be realized, what steps can I take to prepare myself?
- If my dreams were to be realized this year, is there anything I can do to be ready?

**TAKE ACTION:**

- Return to the Balloon or Jar & Rock activity. How many balloons was I able to keep afloat? Or how many rocks fit into the vase? How does that help me determine what things I will prioritize in the next year?
- Decide what I want to prioritize in the next year. Think through how priorities line up with my values.
- Write them down. Pray about them. Take a few days to think about them. When ready, move on to Step 4.

## STEP 04: Building a Calendar

**PRAY:**

Lord, here I am! I'm looking ahead to the next 365 days, and I'd love for every one of them to honor you. I need your help to do this well. Give me your Spirit of wisdom and discernment as I move forward with intentionality.

**DO THIS FIRST:**

Grab a calendar or notebook and the planning worksheet at [whoisgrace.com/worshipathome](http://whoisgrace.com/worshipathome). A planner with large monthly calendars will be helpful, or you can write each month in a notebook, leaving room to add ideas.

Watch this video: [The Time You Have](#)

**ASK YOURSELF:**

- Which habits and goals are my big priorities? (Write these in the top row of the worksheet.)
- How will I break my big priorities into small steps?
- Are there any spiritual rhythms that I need to add? (Find Your Chair. Sabbath. "Slow" days. Retreat. Church calendar observations like Lent or Advent.)

**TAKE ACTION:**

- Once you've completed the priorities worksheet, use your calendar to set deadlines for goals and block off time for small steps. Don't forget to add celebrations (birth days, holidays, etc.)!
- Now you're ready to get started! Remember, you will see successes and failures. You may discover that you overestimated or underestimated yourself. Don't get discouraged; keep working at it, and lean into God daily. His Spirit will transform you day by day.
- Schedule time to review priorities and make necessary calendar adjustments (Schedule a date for each week, month, or quarter. You may need to do it more often as you're getting used to new rhythms.)
- Don't do it all alone! Partner with a friend or family member and ask them to keep you accountable. Maybe they text you every morning or evening. Maybe you meet them for coffee weekly or monthly.