

# Building Your Family 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 for your family—more than you 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 lead your family toward healthy rhythms and rightly arranged priorities for the next year. Approach this process prayerfully, asking the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and guidance. Take your time, talk it over, and look forward to a God-honoring year.

### **\*Suggestions:**

- Work through the steps individually and then with your spouse and/or children.
- Consider printing and then cutting out the questions or prayers and asking other family members to read them, so everyone has a role in the conversations.

## **Step 01: Looking Back**

### **PRAY:**

God, you are wise, and your ways are best. Our family wants to follow you more nearly in the coming year. Help us to see last year with your eyes. As we reflect on the year, give us discernment to recognize the good and the bad in how we managed our calendar and priorities.

### **DO THIS FIRST:**

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

### **ASK YOURSELVES:**

Everyone in the family can answer these! (Get ready for the honesty!)

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

### **TAKE ACTION:**

Look at last years calendar and list everyone's activities (as many as possible!). Consider writing them on a big piece of paper using different columns or colors for each family member. Allow each person to rank their activities using symbols or emojis to represent what was good, best, bad, etc.

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

### **PRAY:**

Lord, you already know each of our coming days and have good works prepared for this family in the coming year. Keep our hearts in line with your heart as we dream about the future and set goals for different areas of our lives. In all of it, may our hope always 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 YOURSELVES:**

- Who do I want to become in next year?
- What are the most important values for our family?
- What new habits do we want to add next year? What old habits need breaking?
- What goals need to be set for next year? [Goals are within your ability to achieve. You have significant control over the outcomes. Help each other set realistic goals.]
- What are we hoping for next year? [Hope is waiting with anticipation. What are you eagerly waiting for? You may have some control over the outcome.]
- What dreams do we have for 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.

Accountability/ Celebrating Achievement (reward)

## **STEP 03: Priorities**

**PRAY:**

God, this year, we want to say YES to what is best, and you already know what those things are! Give us wisdom as we look ahead and prepare. Today and each day, draw our minds and hearts toward you as we learn to live for you.

**DO THIS FIRST:**

Try one of these activities as a good visual illustration:

Jar & Rocks

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?

### Balloons

Blow up a lot of balloons (at least 2 per person).

Try to get all the balloons in the air simultaneously and keep them there! Don't let any one of them drop!

Take some out and try again with less.

### **ASK YOURSELVES:**

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

### **TAKE ACTION:**

- Return to the Balloon or Jar & Rock activity. How many balloons were we able to keep afloat? Or how many rocks fit into the vase? How does that help us determine what things we will prioritize in the new year?
- Decide what we want to prioritize as a family in the new year. Discuss how those priorities align with family values and help us achieve goals.
- When everyone has determined some priorities, write them down. Pray about them. Take your time. Take a few days to think about them. When you're 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 jellybean video together: [The Time You Have](#)

### **ASK YOURSELVES:**

- Which habits and goals are our big priorities? (Write these in the top row of the worksheet.)
- How will we break our big priorities into small steps?
- Are there any spiritual rhythms that we 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 yourselves. Don't get discouraged; keep working at it, and lean into God daily. His Spirit will transform you day by day.
- Schedule family 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.)