



Rhythm of Life



Developing healthy spiritual habits in order to draw closer to God.

June/ July

Learning

Challenge: read through one book of the Bible this month

What is Learning for a follower of Jesus?

"I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ... may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe..." Ephesians 1:17-19

This passage from Paul's letter to the Christians in Ephesus captures how we might go deeper with the spiritual practice of learning.

Why learn?

Learning for the follower of Jesus has one main aim, to know God better.

What does this mean?

- **We learn more about God:** his character, how he has acted in the past and how he is likely to act in the present. How he thinks, what is important to him.
- **We experience more of God:** "the eyes of your heart might be enlightened" – it's hard to explain what Paul meant but it's the kind of learning that involves every part of you, that really makes a difference to you for ever.
- **We grow and change as the Spirit works in us:** we don't stay still, for nothing living stays still, and God is a God who makes all things new. Being a follower of Jesus doesn't mean you have made it, and can put your feet up. There is always more to learn about ourselves, about God's mercy and purposes, about living in community and how to share his love with the world. As the seasons of life change, we learn all over again.

How can I be open to learning more of God this month ?

There are many ways to learn, for we all come from different backgrounds and have different personalities and strengths. However, the best place to start is with the Bible, and you can enjoy a lifetime of discovery with this remarkable book of books. It's a love letter from God to the world.

There are different ways to engage with the Bible:

- Reading a small chunk slowly and reflecting on it repeatedly to allow God to speak through it ("lectio divina" – see the app Lectio 365 which many people find very helpful.)

- Read through a longer section or book of the Bible– some books work well when read as a novel rather than broken into short pieces.
- Use a commentary to help you understand the context of the time it was written, the original words used, and how it fits into the bigger picture of the Bible.
- Take notes, ask questions when you don't understand.

Study together – find a reading partner; join a life group; learn with others.

Learning Challenge

Commit to reading one book of the Bible this month. You can choose a book according to your experience, time available and learning style. Choose a book that will stretch you but not make you give up. Take some notes as you read so that you can see how God is speaking to you and record any questions and thoughts you have about how you want to live from now on. Remember you are not reading alone: pray before you read that the “Spirit of wisdom and revelation” will help you know God better. Look forward to being changed as you learn: maybe someone else will notice!

Keep it real

Set yourself a target of how often you will do this and for how long. You can always extend and increase once you get in the rhythm!

Keep it focused

These spiritual habits are not an end in themselves, they are a means to an end. The goal is to love God more. So try not to do them as a duty you have to endure, but as something you gladly undertake. There are no prizes– save for the joy of knowing God better!

Keep it up

You're going to forget, or get distracted, or interrupted. Don't worry! Try again later, or make a fresh start tomorrow.

Ready for a Challenge Boost in July? Choose another book of the Bible to read, perhaps from the Old Testament instead of the New, or a longer book.



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and Rhythm of Life**