

the winter
rhythms
challenge



formational rhythms:

***self discipline for the sake
of God & others***

Introduction

Christmas Break can provide a great reprieve from the daily grind of classes, projects, and papers. It offers a chance to stop and rest in the midst of a busy year. But it doesn't always work out that way, does it? Often, we come back from Christmas break physically rested (sort of), but emotionally and spiritually drained. That's because we tend to confuse "vegging out" with real rest. Don't get us wrong, it's good to slow down sometimes. But there's really no such thing as doing nothing. Even when we're not working, we're doing something (watching movies, reading, hanging with friends, scrolling through your phone, watching YouTube, etc). The question is whether the something we're doing **leads us to real rest in Jesus**—the kind that renews and sustains so we can serve him and others—or whether it leads us into old, destructive habits and patterns that ultimately drain us and lead us away from our Good Shepherd.

One of the reasons Christmas Break can sometimes cause us to struggle is because when we stop our normal school routines, we also tend to stop many of the healthy rhythms that carried us through the semester. Things like reading our Bible, gathering with Christian community, waking up at a normal time, etc. So it's important to engage in some formational rhythms that will help us stay on track in pursuing Jesus. With that in mind, we want to invite you to join us in our Winter Rhythms Challenge over the Christmas Break. It consists of practicing five regular rhythms throughout the break.

Overview

This challenge is meant to be done with others. It can be done by itself, but probably will not be nearly as effective. So ask 1-2 friends (or your Table group) to join you in this challenge! You and your friends will check on one other each day and encourage each other to keep going!

Write the names of the friends who will be joining you in this challenge below and what days of the week you'll be checking in on them. Consider setting a reminder in your phone to text or call them!

In this booklet, you will find the objectives for each day and week of the 4-week challenge. You will also find:

- An Advent Scripture reading plan taking you up to the end of the year (which then switches to the Sunnybrook Bible in a Year Reading Plan)
- The SOAP Method for reading Scripture
- Prayers you can choose from
- A checklist for each week to keep you on track.

Remember, the goal isn't perfection but consistently pursuing rhythms that help you know and love Jesus more this Christmas Break. If you miss a day or two, that's ok! Pick it back up and keep going!

Objectives

Scripture Reading (1x/day)

Make it your practice to hear from God through his Word, once each day (preferably before you open up your phone). If you already have a reading plan, great! If not, you can follow reading plan (pg. 3). If you need help reading the Bible, try the SOAP method (see pg. 4).

Kneeling Prayer (2x/day)

Make this the first thing you do when you wake up in the morning. Go to your knees and offer the day to God. Ask him to help you with difficult family relationships, with temptation, etc. This doesn't have to be long. Just 30-60 seconds. Do the same thing right before you go to bed at night. Check out pg.5 for some suggested morning and night prayers.

10 Minute Walk with God (1x/day)

Once a day, go for a short, 10 minute walk with God. Tell him about your day. Confess your struggles or sins. Sing to him. Quiet yourself before him. Yes it will be cold sometimes, but that's okay! Bundle up and make it happen!

24-Hour Screen Fast (1x/week)

The break offers plenty of time to watch movies, play video games, and scroll TikTok. But if we're not careful, the entirety of our break can be spent staring at a screen. So at the beginning of your week, choose one day in which you'll set aside all screens (including social media apps and games on your phone), and spend that day doing something different.

Serve Someone (1x/week)

Don't let the break just be about you! Find a way each week to intentionally serve someone. It might be cleaning the house or doing the dishes for your family. It might be sending an encouraging note to a friend. It might be serving at your church in some capacity. But find a way to love people like Jesus each week!

Scripture

reading plan

Week 1

12/14-12/20

- ☐ Sunday: Luke 2:1-20
- ☐ Monday: Luke 2:21-38
- ☐ Tuesday: John 14:18-31
- ☐ Wed: Ephesians 2:11-22
- ☐ Thursday: Colossians 1:15-23
- ☐ Friday: Philippians 4:2-9
- ☐ Saturday: Isaiah 9:1-7

Week 2

12/21-12/27

- ☐ Sunday: Romans 15:7-13
- ☐ Monday: Psalm 33:18-22
- ☐ Tuesday: Psalm 130:5-7
- ☐ Wed: Isaiah 40:28-31
- ☐ Thursday: Lamentations 3:21-24
- ☐ Friday: Hebrews 10:19-25
- ☐ Saturday: 1 Peter 1:3-5

Week 3

12/28-1/3

- ☐ Sunday: Romans 15:7-13
- ☐ Monday: Psalm 33:18-22
- ☐ Tuesday: Psalm 130:5-7
- ☐ Wed: Isaiah 40:28-31
- ☐ Thursday: Gen 1-4, John 1
- ☐ Friday: Gen 5-9, John 2
- ☐ Saturday: Gen 10-13, John 3

Week 4

1/4-1/10

- ☐ Sunday: Gen. 14-15, John 4
- ☐ Monday: Gen 16-18, John 5
- ☐ Tuesday: Gen 19-22
- ☐ Wed: Gen 23-24, John 6
- ☐ Thursday: Gen 25-26, John 7
- ☐ Friday: Gen 27-28, John 8
- ☐ Saturday: Gen 29-31

SOAP

method

for Scripture reading

The S.O.A.P. Method is a really easy way to help engage with Scripture beyond simply reading the text and moving on.

It works like this: Grab a pen and a notepad, and after reading the text, write out a very brief (1-2 sentences) response under each of these four headings.

S(cripture) - Choose one verse that sticks out to you, and write it out by hand.

O(bservation) - Write out 1-2 interesting things you noticed in the text, or write a question you have about the text.

A(pplication) - Write down one way that you can obey or apply this text in your life today.

P(rayer) - Write a brief prayer based on the text you just read.

Prayers

for morning & night

Morning Prayers

“Lord, you are my Shepherd. Guide me and guard me. Help me trust you for the things I need today. Amen.”

“Lord, you are sovereign and in control. Whatever this day brings, help me to remain in your love and obey your commands. Amen.”

“Lord, you have saved me through your Son, Jesus. Help me to live each moment of today in light of my identity as your child. Amen.”

Evening Prayers

“Lord, give me rest tonight as I sleep. May your goodness and mercy renew my soul & prepare me for what tomorrow brings. Amen.”

“Lord, thank you for bringing me safely to the end of this day. Help me to experience the rest of trusting Jesus and awake with joy to serve you tomorrow. Amen.”

“Lord, you have seen each moment of my day, and you know my struggles and temptations. Help me to rest knowing your mercies are new each day. Amen.”

Week 1: December 14-20

Sunday (12/14)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Monday (12/15)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Tuesday (12/16)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Wednesday (12/17)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Thursday (12/18)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Friday (12/19)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Saturday (12/20)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

- ☐ **24 hr. Screen Fast (1x/wk)** ☐ **Serve someone (1x/wk)**

Week 2: December 21-27

Sunday (12/21)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Monday (12/22)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Tuesday (12/23)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Wednesday (12/24)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Thursday (12/25)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Friday (12/26)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Saturday (12/27)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

- ☐ **24 hr. Screen Fast (1x/wk)** ☐ **Serve someone (1x/wk)**

Week 3: December 28-Jan. 3

Sunday (12/28)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Monday (12/29)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Tuesday (12/30)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Wednesday (12/31)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Thursday (1/1)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Friday (1/2)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Saturday (1/3)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

- ☐ **24 hr. Screen Fast (1x/wk)** ☐ **Serve someone (1x/wk)**

Week 4: January 4-10

Sunday (1/4)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Monday (1/5)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Tuesday (1/6)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Wednesday (1/7)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Thursday (1/8)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Friday (1/9)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

Saturday (1/10)

- ☐ Scripture reading (1x) ☐ Kneeling prayer (2x)
- ☐ 10 Minute Walk with God (1x)

- ☐ **24 hr. Screen Fast (1x/wk)** ☐ **Serve someone (1x/wk)**