

**RULE**

**OF**

**Ephesians 4:17–5:16**

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**LIFE**





# Crossroads Church

**Sunday, October 13:** Open house at Crossroads

**Saturday, October 19:** Open house & town hall at Crossroads

**Sunday, November 3:** Town hall at High Point

**Sunday, November 10:** Prayer meeting at Crossroads

**Sunday, November 17:** Congregational meeting & vote

For more information, visit: [highpointchurch.org/crossroads](http://highpointchurch.org/crossroads)

The Week 5 Chapter is read on the podcast.



# Ask Me Anything (AMA)

Text your questions to **(608) 836-3236** throughout the Rule of Life series.

Even if we don't have AMA time on a Sunday, we'll include them in the podcast.



Memory Verse

**Whoever claims to  
abide in Him must walk  
as Jesus walked.**

1 John 2:6

# Rule of Life

A pattern of life to focus and shape our practices around abiding in Christ by walking as Jesus walked. (John 15, Ephesians 4:20–21)

Or:

A practical plan to abide in Jesus by walking as He walked.



# Rule of Life: for and different for everyone

A "Rule of Life" like "church membership" is not prescribed in Scripture **by name**. However, like church membership, everything *in* a Rule of Life is part of walking as Jesus and being His disciple.

However, our individual specifics will be different.



Month 2:

# A Plan to FOCUS

abiding  
and  
shaping...

...require **focus on an epicenter of our attention** and the **removal** of anything that **diverts or distracts** us from it.

("Shape" is the focus of month 3)

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**Focus requires simplicity  
achieved through frugality.**



# Simplicity and Frugality



## Simplicity

The elimination of diversion by successfully narrowing how many things take our attention, energy, and time.

The uncluttered, unhurried state that makes focus possible.

## Frugality

A discipline of restraint, not bestowing our resources outside of the focus of simplicity.

The virtue that achieves and renews simplicity.

# Elimination is for focus.

## Craftsmanship



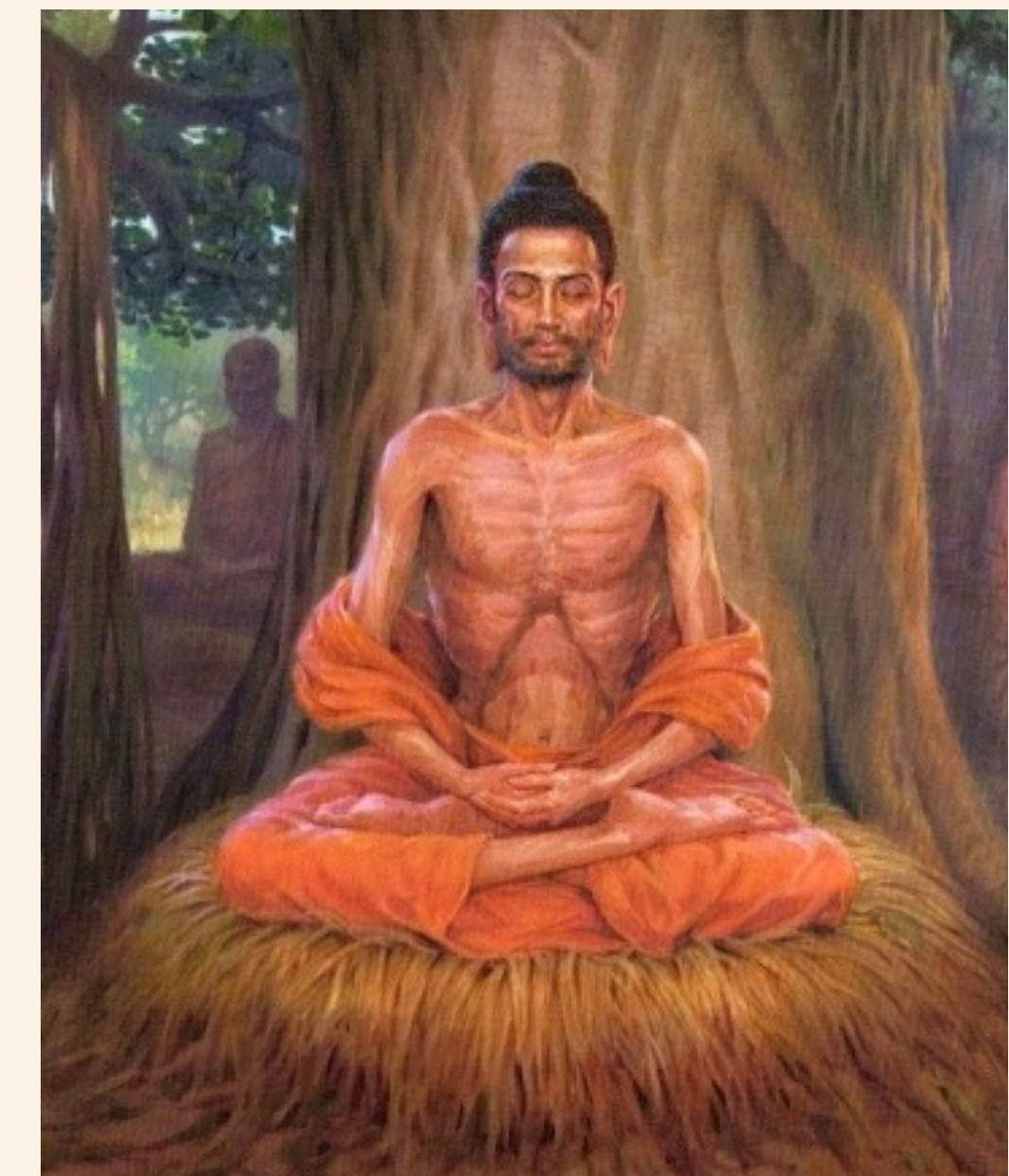
## Contrast



## Not:

Self-punishment  
Earning God's favor  
Because creation is bad  
Because life is an illusion

## Detachment/ detachment





1. Elimination is everywhere in Scripture.

**Elimination is a necessary part of the way of Jesus.**

Jesus and his apostles taught and showed us to **eliminate whatever** keeps us from focusing our lives on abiding in Jesus and to seek God's kingdom and righteousness as our **first thing**.

# Elimination as integral to freedom

The whole OT—slavery

Everywhere in NT:

Ephesians 4—off and on

Colossians 3—set above

Mark 4—weeds and stones

Matthew 6—2 masters

Matthew 11—2 yokes

Blindness and door keeping

Luke 2—Mary and manger

The Cross

Door keeping:

Esther 2



# Ephesians 4: A typical NT explanation

## Life ordered around W, F, D

Temptation/sin

Corruption

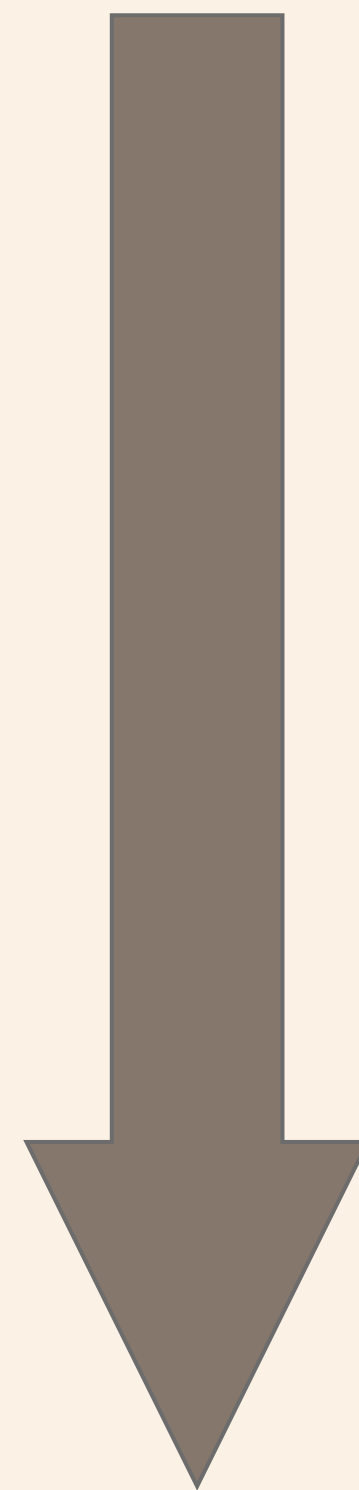
Hardening

Darkening/ignorance

Greed (quant)

&

Impurity (qual)



## Life in the way of Christ

Hear/faith

Disciple/taught

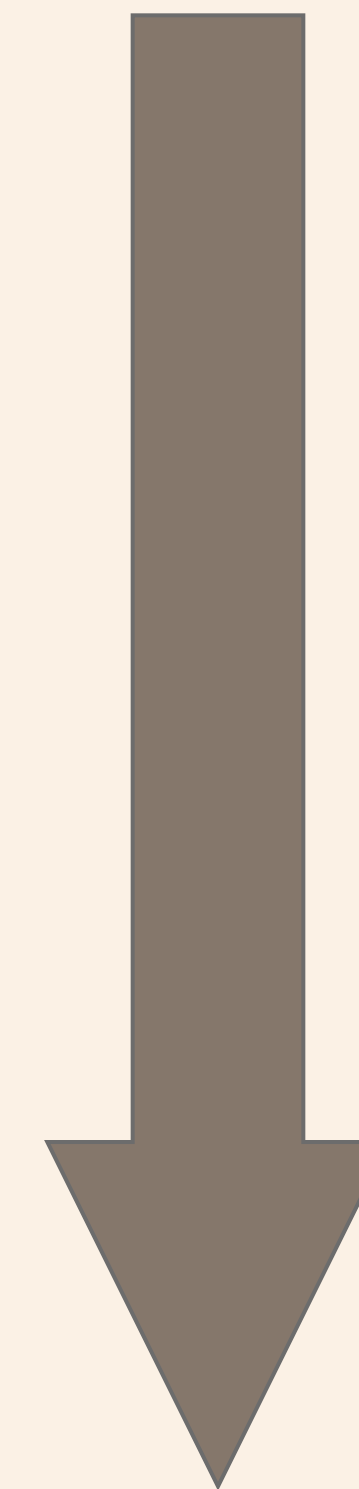
Put off old self

Renewed attitude

Put on new self

Put on the new life

(qual & quant)





1. Elimination is everywhere in Scripture.

**Elimination is a necessary part of the way of Jesus.**

Jesus and his apostles taught and showed us to **eliminate whatever** keeps us from focusing our lives on abiding in Jesus and to seek God's kingdom and righteousness as our **first thing**.



2. Elimination has to be done.

# Achieve and maintain simplicity with frugality

Lay aside not just the sin that entangles but also everything that hinders us in pursuing the course of Jesus.

Matt. 9:42, Luke 17:2, (millstone) Acts 28:20  
(chain), Heb. 5:2 (garment of weakness)

## Hebrews 12:1–2

Therefore, since we are **wrapped up** by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us **throw off every encumbrance** and the **sin that so easily entangles**, and **let us run with perseverance the race** marked out for us.

<sup>2</sup> Let us **fix our eyes on Jesus**, the **pioneer and perfecter** of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Starter and completer



# Entanglement vs. Encumbrance

## Entanglement

You can't move



## Encumbrance

You won't get far



# Frugality toward entangling sin and every encumbrance

Worries of this life, deceitfulness of wealth, desire for other things. (Mark 4:19)

## Sin that entangles 2 Peter 2:20

Eph 4: Put off

Lying and deceit

Loosing and keeping anger

Don't steal

Love means overcoming impurity and greed.

## Everything that encumbers

Heb. 12:1—encumbrances

1 Cor. 9—train like a boxer

2 Tim. 2:4—civilian affairs

Luke 10- Martha

Anything that:

1. Deceives us
2. Encumbers us
3. Inhibits us



2. Elimination has to be done.

# Achieve and maintain simplicity with frugality

Lay aside not just the sin that entangles but also everything that hinders us in pursuing the course of Jesus.



3. Therefore: Purge to perspective, not perfection.  
(which is much more at first)

**Eliminate to empty so that  
you can really redecorate.**

Our perspective on what focus is for us and what is distracting us is skewed and deluded in our present state.

No one else can make room in your life.

No one can be your doorkeeper.



We can make a collective action problem a collective action solution.

# Simplicity is not:

1. Perfect calm without any "crazy"
2. Having a quiet and clean home all the time
3. Severe austerity and complete minimalism
4. Just an issue of schedule

Simplicity is a state of life designed to make focus on God our first priority, so "all these things" can be given to us as well.

**It is haste** (to do good), **without hurry** (lost deliberateness):

Diligence with deliberateness.

# Challenge:

## One month of deliberate minimalism

Longer list on podcast  
episode #357

Remove what:

1. **Entangles**—sin
2. **Encumbers**—world
3. **Deceives**—flesh
4. **Inhibits**—devil

Need fill?

See Appendix II

Examples:

Radical tech elimination  
(shows, gaming, media,  
apps)

Get rid of snacks and sugar

Unnecessary activities

Shopping and consumption

“Paying attention”



## **1 John 5:3–4**

This is **love for God: to obey** his commands.  
And **his commands are not burdensome,**  
for everyone born of God **overcomes the**  
**world.**

This is **the victory that has overcome the**  
**world, even our faith.**



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