

Q: Why do people feel fatigued by all the decisions they have to make?

A: It has to do with consequences and a fear of failure. If we believe that the decisions we make are going to make or break our future, then there is enormous pressure to get it right. As young adults, it's the first time in your lives where the experience of Mom and Dad making all the big decisions has been removed and we become exposed to the full consequences of our decisions. How then should we proceed?

Define Success: Total Obedience to Jesus Christ.

Ex. John The Baptist

Question: Do you believe that God has better plans for you than you do?

Sin, at its core, is acting on the belief that we know better than God. To follow Christ is to first acknowledge that we have sinned, that we have rejected God's ways and embraced our own. Having admitted our wrongdoing, we are free to receive the gift of salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone. Then we are to trust him and follow His lead for our lives, to become followers of His Way.

So, what is The Way of Jesus?

General Will vs. Specific Will

The Shema: Deuteronomy 6:4-5: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you**. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Love God, Love Others (Matthew 22:37-39)

Repent and Believe (Mark 1:15)

Follow me (Matthew 4:19)

Serve Humbly (Matthew 23:11)

Forgive Others (Matthew 6:14-15)

Be Reconciled (Matthew 5:23-24)

Look at Galatians 5

Biblical Freedom: It is for freedom that you have been set free... v.1

But....

All of this presupposes a right relationship with God.

Look at Matthew 19:16-22 (The Rich Young Ruler)

“...come, follow me.” v.22

What does it look like to be **with** Jesus and follow Him? (Read “*With*” by Skye Jethani)

| <i>Posture</i> | <i>What it Seeks</i> | <i>What it fears</i> | <i>How it relates to God</i> | <i>Core Illusion</i> | <i>Result</i> |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Life Under God | Safety | Divine Punishment | Appease God through obedience | If I obey, God must bless me. | Anxiety, Legalism |
| Life Over God | Predictability | Uncertainty | Use God’s principles to control life | If I master the rules, I don’t need God. | Deism, technique-driven faith. |
| Life From God | Provision | Scarcity | Use God to meet desires | God exists to meet my needs | Consumer Spirituality |
| Life For God | Purpose | Insignificance | Serve God through mission | My worth is my usefulness | Burnout, identity loss |
| Life With God | Communion | Separation from God | Walk with God in Intimacy | God Himself is my treasure | Peace, Fruitfulness, Freedom |

Doing Life *with* God requires us to grow in faith, hope, and love. How can I do that?

1. Practices That Cultivate FAITH

Faith = trusting God's presence and character.

These practices train your heart to rely on God rather than control, fear, or self-sufficiency.

A. Practicing the Presence of God

- Short pauses throughout the day to acknowledge God's nearness
- Breath prayers ("Lord, You are here with me")
- Awareness exercises (noticing God in ordinary moments)

Why it cultivates faith:

It shifts your functional trust from yourself to God's companionship.

B. Surrender and Release Prayers

- Naming what you're trying to control
- Consciously releasing outcomes to God
- Praying, "I entrust this to You."

Why it cultivates faith:

It breaks the illusion of control that fuels *Life Under* and *Life Over* God.

C. Relational Scripture Reading (Lectio Divina)

- Slow, reflective reading
- Listening for God's voice rather than extracting principles
- Asking, "What are You saying to me?"

Why it cultivates faith:

It trains you to trust God's character, not just His commands.

D. Silence and Stillness

- Sitting quietly before God
- Letting go of mental noise
- Becoming receptive rather than productive

Why it cultivates faith:

It forms a posture of dependence rather than striving.

E. Confession of Trust

- Declaring God's attributes (faithful, wise, present)
- Rehearsing God's past faithfulness
- Naming fears and choosing trust

Why it cultivates faith:

It anchors your identity in God's reliability.

2. Practices That Cultivate HOPE

Hope = confidence in God's future and His ultimate restoration.

These practices orient your imagination toward God's kingdom rather than your anxieties or ambitions.

A. Meditating on God's Promises

- Reflecting on Scriptures about God's future
- Memorizing passages of hope (e.g., Revelation 21, Romans 8)
- Praying promises back to God

Why it cultivates hope:

It reorients your expectations toward God's story.

B. Sabbath Rest

- Setting aside a day for rest, delight, and worship
- Ceasing productivity
- Enjoying God's gifts

Why it cultivates hope:

Sabbath is a weekly rehearsal of the coming kingdom — a protest against anxiety and striving.

C. Gratitude Practices

- Daily gratitude lists
- Thanking God for small and large gifts
- Reframing challenges through God's goodness

Why it cultivates hope:

Gratitude trains your heart to see God's ongoing provision.

D. Lament

- Bringing sorrow, injustice, and disappointment to God
- Naming what is broken
- Asking God to act

Why it cultivates hope:

Lament refuses despair by insisting that God *will* make things right.

E. Eschatological Imagination

- Reflecting on the new creation
- Reading passages about renewal
- Visualizing God's future restoration

Why it cultivates hope:

It lifts your eyes from temporary circumstances to eternal realities.

3. Practices That Cultivate LOVE

Love = receiving God's love and expressing it toward Him and others.

These practices deepen intimacy with God and shape your heart to love as He loves.

A. Abiding Prayer

- Unhurried time with God
- Conversational prayer
- Simply being with Him, not asking for things

Why it cultivates love:

Love grows through presence, not productivity.

B. Worship and Adoration

- Singing
- Praying prayers of praise
- Contemplating God's beauty and goodness

Why it cultivates love:

Worship aligns your affections with God's worth.

C. Receiving God's Love (Identity Practices)

- Meditating on Scriptures about being God's beloved
- Rejecting shame-based narratives
- Practicing self-compassion rooted in God's compassion

Why it cultivates love:

You cannot give what you have not received.

D. Acts of Compassion and Service

- Serving others without needing recognition
- Practicing generosity
- Engaging in hospitality

Why it cultivates love:

Love grows through embodied action, not sentiment.

E. Confession and Reconciliation

- Owning your failures
- Seeking forgiveness
- Restoring relationships

Why it cultivates love:

Love thrives in humility and honesty.

Putting It All Together

Here's a quick visual summary:

| Virtue | What It Forms | Core Practices |
|--------------|------------------------------|--|
| Faith | Trust in God's presence | Presence, surrender, silence, relational Scripture, trust declarations |
| Hope | Confidence in God's future | Sabbath, gratitude, lament, promises, eschatological imagination |
| Love | Intimacy with God and others | Abiding prayer, worship, receiving love, compassion, reconciliation |

These practices aren't tasks to perform — they are **relational rhythms** that open you to God's presence, God's future, and God's heart.