

# Weekly Habit 1

## ONE HOUR OF CONVERSATION WITH A FRIEND



### The Habit at a Glance:

We were made for each other, and we can't become lovers of God and neighbor without intimate relationships where vulnerability is sustained across time. In habitual, face-to-face conversation with each other, we find a gospel practice; we are laid bare to each other and loved anyway.

### An Excerpt from *The Common Rule*:

*The question "Is there anything you aren't telling me?" gets at the heart of friendship, because friendship is being known by someone else and loved anyway. Friendships in which we're vulnerable make or break our lives. With them we thrive, and without them an essential part of us—if not all of us—dies.*

*One of the defining marks of the Christian faith is that God is three persons in one triune God. Among the thousands of radical implications of the Trinity, my favorite is that God is a fellowship. That means we are made in the image of fellowship.*

*This tells a very different story of who we are than what we hear and see. This means we didn't come from chaos, as if we are simply accidental life going from random darkness to darkness. We did not come forth from loneliness, as if some needy god needed lesser beings to sing its praises. We came from friendship.*

### Reading and Resources:

- *Spiritual Friendship*, Wesley Hill
- *Made for Friendship*, Drew Hunter

## Weekly Habit 2

# CURATE MEDIA TO FOUR HOURS



### The Habit at a Glance:

Stories matter so much that we must handle them with the utmost care. Resisting the constant stream of addictive media with an hour limit means we are forced to curate what we watch. Curating stories means that we seek stories that uphold beauty, that teach us to love justice, and that turn us to community.

### An Excerpt from *The Common Rule*:

*I was standing amid floor-to-ceiling shelves of books in wonder and awe when my view of stories suddenly and forever changed. There were enormous piles of books lying in corners. Books covered the walls. Books even lined the staircases as you went up from one floor to the next. It was as if this used bookstore was not just a place for selling used books; it was like the infrastructure itself was made up of books. There were books to hold more books, stories built out of stories.*

*I was standing in Daedalus Books in Charlottesville, Virginia, and I had recently read Mortimer J. Adler's *How to Read a Book*. I was alive with the desire to read. But at that particular moment, my glee turned to horror. For whatever reason, the truth of the numbers suddenly hit me. The year before, I had read about thirty books. For me, that was a new record. But then I started counting. I was in my early twenties, and with any luck I'd live at least fifty more years. At that rate, I'd have about 1,500 books in me, give or take.*

*There were more books than that on the single wall I was staring at.*

*That's when I had a realization of my mortality. My desire outpaced reality. I simply didn't have the life to read what I wanted to read.*

### Reading and Resources:

- *Movies are Prayers*, Josh Larsen
- *Telling the Truth: The Gospels as Tragedy, Comedy, and Fairytale*, Frederick Buechner

## Weekly Habit 3

# FAST FROM SOMETHING FOR TWENTY-FOUR HOURS



### The Habit at a Glance:

We constantly seek to fill our emptiness with food and other comforts. We ignore our soul and our neighbor's need by medicating with food and drink. Regular fasting exposes who we really are, reminds us how broken the world is, and draws our eyes to how Jesus is redeeming all things.

### An Excerpt from *The Common Rule*:

*In a world of suffering and death, one of our greatest temptations is to rehearse the fall again and again through food. We eat to try to fill our emptiness. This is why fasting is mentioned so often in the Bible. Fasting is a way to resist the original sin of trying to eat our way to happiness and to force ourselves to look to God for our fullness. In that sense, to fast is to lean into the truth of the world: we are empty without God. "Man does not live by bread alone" (Deuteronomy 8:3).*

*In fasting, what begins with experiencing the emptiness of our stomach ends in experiencing the emptiness of the world. In the Bible, fasting is not just to reveal and clarify our own need for God.*

*It is to lean into the suffering of the world itself and to long for God to redeem it. This is why the Israelites during the time of Esther fasted; they knew the brokenness and injustice of the throne they lived under, and they longed for God to redeem it.*

*This is partly why Jesus fasted before he began his ministry. He was sent to undo the fall, and his forty-day fast was an act of longing for the world to be restored by his ministry to come. He emptied himself in a bodily prayer for the world's fullness.*

### Reading and Resources:

- *Celebration of Discipline*, Richard Foster
- *A Hunger for God: Desiring God Through Fasting and Prayer*, John Piper

# Weekly Habit 4

## SABBATH



### The Habit at a Glance:

The weekly practice of sabbath teaches us that God sustains the world and that we don't. To make a countercultural embrace of our limitations, we stop our usual work for one day of rest. Sabbath is a gospel practice because it reminds us that the world doesn't hang on what we can accomplish, but rather on what God has accomplished for us.

### An Excerpt from *The Common Rule*:

*There is more going on than just our body's need for rest. Our souls need rest too. But the rest that our souls need is not simply a nap. It's the rest that comes with realizing we don't have anything to prove anymore. We don't have to prove we're important.*

*This is why we live in a culture that can't accept sabbath; we do not believe that work is from God and for our neighbor. Instead, we believe that work is from us and for us. It's something we pursue to become who we want to become. Our careers define us. This is the American dream. We can work our way to significance. This is what we're doing when we prove our busyness to ourselves and each other; we're trying to show that we matter, that the world wants us, that the world depends on us.*

*But the gospel wants to put that to rest. We don't have to work like that because Jesus has done that work for us. And he has finished it.*

*The book of Hebrews tells us that God has entered into his eternal rest, which is another way of saying that God has entered his full sabbath, because his work is done. This is because God has not only finished the work of creation, now in Jesus he has finished the work of redemption too.*

### Reading and Resources:

- *The Tech-Wise Family*, Andy Crouch
- *Sacred Rhythms*, Ruth Haley Barton