



# gracefellowship

Follow The Leader  
August 23, 2020  
Life Rhythm

:: Mark 3:13-15

Over the past 6 months we have all experienced a change in life rhythms. Some of us have experienced dramatic changes in our rhythms, while others have been more subtle.

- Working from home...which may mean working more!
- Some of you lost jobs
- Vacations shifted
- Sports disappeared for the Spring and most of the Summer
- Business travel changed
- Seeing loved ones became more challenging
- In the past couple weeks we started virtual school- that's a big rhythm change people are figuring out.

Since April the things that kept our lives full and busy all of a sudden experienced a major change. And that's not all bad! For months I was praying that God would show His people some things about our lives that may be unhealthy and reveal some things we could learn to do without when they were stripped away.

Illustration: March Madness

I'm as big a sports fan as anyone and when the March Madness basketball tournament was cancelled last year I didn't know what to do with myself! That seemed unthinkable! But you know what? I was bummed it went away, but to be honest, I didn't really miss it like I thought I would. Instead, I found myself playing board games and watching movies with my family rather than watching basketball at Buffalo Wild Wings!

Over the past 6 months I've discovered a lot about life's rhythms.

**Rhythm in life can either bring balance or chaos.**

I can have a healthy life rhythm that keeps me focused and sane, moving with intentionality where my life has a good balance, or I can have an unhealthy life rhythm that invites stress and anxiety, resulting in absolute chaos.

Illustration: Journal Entry

About a month ago I noticed that my life seemed completely out of rhythm. That day I picked up my journal and here's what I wrote:

"I have a difficult time saying these things out loud because it feels like I'm not supposed to. I'm supposed to have my life altogether, right? But I don't. Inside I feel...

Angry // Frustrated // Scared // Hopeless // Bitter // Disappointed // Incapable // Unfocused // Distracted // Tense // Inadequate

Has anyone else felt some of those same emotions? How about in the spirit of being real with one another, just raise your hand if you have been through some difficult emotions over the past few months!

Now let me ask a question: When you read the accounts of Jesus' life in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John do you ever see Jesus struggling like that? Jesus had difficulties in His life, for sure and He experienced challenging things, but Jesus never seemed rushed or overwhelmed by his ministry. He never seemed anxious or distracted or fearful. Why not?

- It would be easy to write Jesus' life experiences off and say, "Well, He was God, so He didn't struggle like we do."
- Jesus was God in human flesh, but Jesus was also 100% man.

**:: Hebrews 5:7-8**

**7 During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.**

**8 Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered...**

When Jesus went through life's most difficult moments He walked in perfect step with God the Father. Jesus developed a soul rhythm that kept Him following God perfectly. Through what He suffered in life, Jesus learned to keep a spiritual rhythm with God the Father.

In this teaching series we want to talk about the things Jesus did and how following His lead brings lasting life change. We want to look at the rhythms of Jesus life and learn how He lived, then we need to see what changes need to be made in our lives in order to follow Jesus more closely. The disciples saw Jesus' rhythms first hand when Jesus called them to follow Him.

- They went where He went.
- They ate what He ate.
- They saw what He saw.
- They ultimately did what He did.

The disciples literally followed Jesus! If we are going to follow Jesus as disciples today, we need to look at the writings of the New Testament in order to learn what the original disciples learned first hand.

**:: Matthew 4:19 ESV**

**And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."**

This is a verse I hope you are familiar with if you've been at GFC for any length of time. This is where our definition of a disciple of Jesus comes from. A disciple is someone who follows Jesus, is being changed by Jesus and is on mission with Jesus.

**In order to follow our leader we have to be changed to accomplish His mission.**

When the disciples received that call from Jesus they changed their lives in order to follow Him. Peter and Andrew, James and John left their fishing boats to follow Jesus. Matthew left his tax collection booth in order to follow Jesus. Following Jesus required them to learn a new life rhythm. For the remainder of our time this morning I want us to explore what one of the rhythms Jesus kept consistently and then see how He taught His disciples to follow the same rhythm.

Here is one of the dominant life rhythms Jesus modeled:

**Jesus' Life Rhythm: Being with God then being sent by God.**

Being with God meant Jesus spent time in personal prayer and devotion. Being sent from God meant Jesus went into the world with power in the action of God.

Being with and being sent- that's Jesus' life rhythm. Jesus constantly follows this pattern throughout His life. Let's take a look at this rhythm of Jesus and then go deeper by seeing how He shares it with the disciples. We'll close by asking how this rhythm plays out in our lives.

**:: Luke 4:1-15**

**1 Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,**

**2 where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.**

Verses 3-12 describe the devil tempting Jesus and how Jesus used Scripture to stand firm against the temptations put in front of Him. Then notice how the passage closes in verses 13-15:

**13 When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.**

**14 Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.**

**15 He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.**

Jesus spent time with God praying and fasting, drawing power from His Father and then emerged from that time of being with God to be sent from God in the power of the Spirit to preach and bring good news. Being with...being sent.

**:: Luke 5:15-17**

**15 Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses.**

**16 But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.**

**17 One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick.**

As the ministry of Jesus began to grow and more people sought an audience with Him, Jesus would withdraw to spend time with God before once again being sent out from God to carry on His ministry. Being with...being sent.

**:: Luke 6:12-16**

**12 One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.**

**13 When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles:**

**14 Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew,**

**15 Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot,**

**16 Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.**

Before Jesus chose the 12 disciples he went up on a mountainside and spend the night with God in prayer. Being with God resulted in Jesus knowing who to bring into His community that would support His mission to build His Church. Being with...being sent.

**:: Mark 1:35-39**

**35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.**

**36 Simon and his companions went to look for him,**

**37 and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!"**

**38 Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come."**

**39 So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.**

Jesus went off by himself to be with God and then responded to the plan of God to expand His ministry by going to new places. Being with God resulted in knowing the heart of God for Jesus' next phase of ministry. Being with...being sent.

This is the rhythm of Jesus that shaped His life and ministry. This is the rhythm He also gave to His followers.

**:: Luke 9:1-6, 10**

**1 When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases,**

**2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.**

**3 He told them: "Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt.**

**4 Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town.**

**5 If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them."**

**6 So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.**

**10 When the apostles returned, they reported to Jesus what they had done.**

The disciples had been with Jesus for a period of time seeing how He did things, watching His life, learning His ways and growing in their faith. Then Jesus sent them out to do what He had modeled for them.

They had been with Jesus and then they were sent out from Him. Then after a period of time, they returned to be with Jesus once again.

**:: Luke 10:1-3, 16-17**

**1 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.**

**2 He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.**

**3 Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.**

The next few verses sound very similar to what we read in Luke 9. Skip ahead to verse 16.

**16 "Whoever listens to you listens to me; whoever rejects you rejects me; but whoever rejects me rejects him who sent me."**

**17 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."**

Again, we see a group of Jesus' followers who have spent considerable time with him being sent in His power to do ministry in the world. Being with...being sent.

We are invited to be with Jesus to listen and learn and be empowered.  
Then we are being sent out from Jesus to minister and do in His Name.

As followers of Jesus we need to learn this simple life rhythm.  
Abide in Christ- be *with* Jesus.  
Have an external focus- be *sent out* from Jesus on mission.

This life rhythm is central to our spiritual life.

**Being with Jesus empowers us.**

**Being sent from Jesus engages the world in His power.**

God is still at work in the world to introduce His Kingdom and bring His light into the darkness all around us. Jesus' mission has been handed down to His followers. Go and make disciples of all nations.

It's possible you have never considered the rhythm Jesus modeled for us to follow Him. It's possible for a lot of us that Sunday is the only real time we make for Jesus during the week. I want to encourage you to see this as a rhythm that can make a difference in every aspect of your life.

- Be with Jesus before you go to work. Then see your work life as a place you are on mission being sent from Jesus to bring His Kingdom.
- Spend time with Jesus after your kids go to bed at night to be filled with His power to bring the Kingdom into your home the next day.
- Be with Jesus in prayer and devotional time so you can be sent out to your neighborhood and community on mission with Him.

The apostle John gives us the final reason this rhythm is important for us to keep when he quotes Jesus in John 15. It's one verse with two promises:

**:: John 15:5**

**5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.**

**Promise 1: Be with me and you will be fruitful as you are sent.**

**Promise 2: Apart from me you can do nothing.**

If we are going to follow Jesus we must adjust our lives to do what He has modeled for us. You have to fight for it. You have to make time in your schedule. You may have to get up earlier or go to bed later- or cut something out of your life in order to make the time to be with Jesus. Then as you learn to be with him, He will show you how your daily life is meant to be on mission with Him as He sends you into the world.

*Reflection:*

When do you spend time with God?

How could you make an adjustment in your schedule to follow the rhythm of Jesus?

- Prayer