

INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER

KEN SHIGEMATSU

GOD IN MY EVERYTHING

HOW AN ANCIENT RHYTHM
HELPS BUSY PEOPLE ENJOY GOD



A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

ZONDERVAN

God in My Everything

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— CHAPTER 1 —

MONKS, SAMURAI, AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. When did you first awaken to the belief that a life with God mattered?
2. What are some of the surprising contributions of the monastics, and could you see yourself learning from their example and wisdom?
3. Dostoevsky contends that there is a monk or contemplative in each of us. Do you find this true of your experience? If so, how?

— CHAPTER 2 —

CREATING A SPIRITUAL ECOSYSTEM

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. What connotations, positive or negative, does the word *rule* have for you?
2. How can a rule of life serve as a trellis to help you flourish in your life with God?
3. What role has deliberate spiritual practice played in growing your faith?
4. In what sense are spiritual practices “a means of grace”?
5. How can a rule of life make us feel lighter? Have you ever personally experienced this?

A RULE THAT BENDS

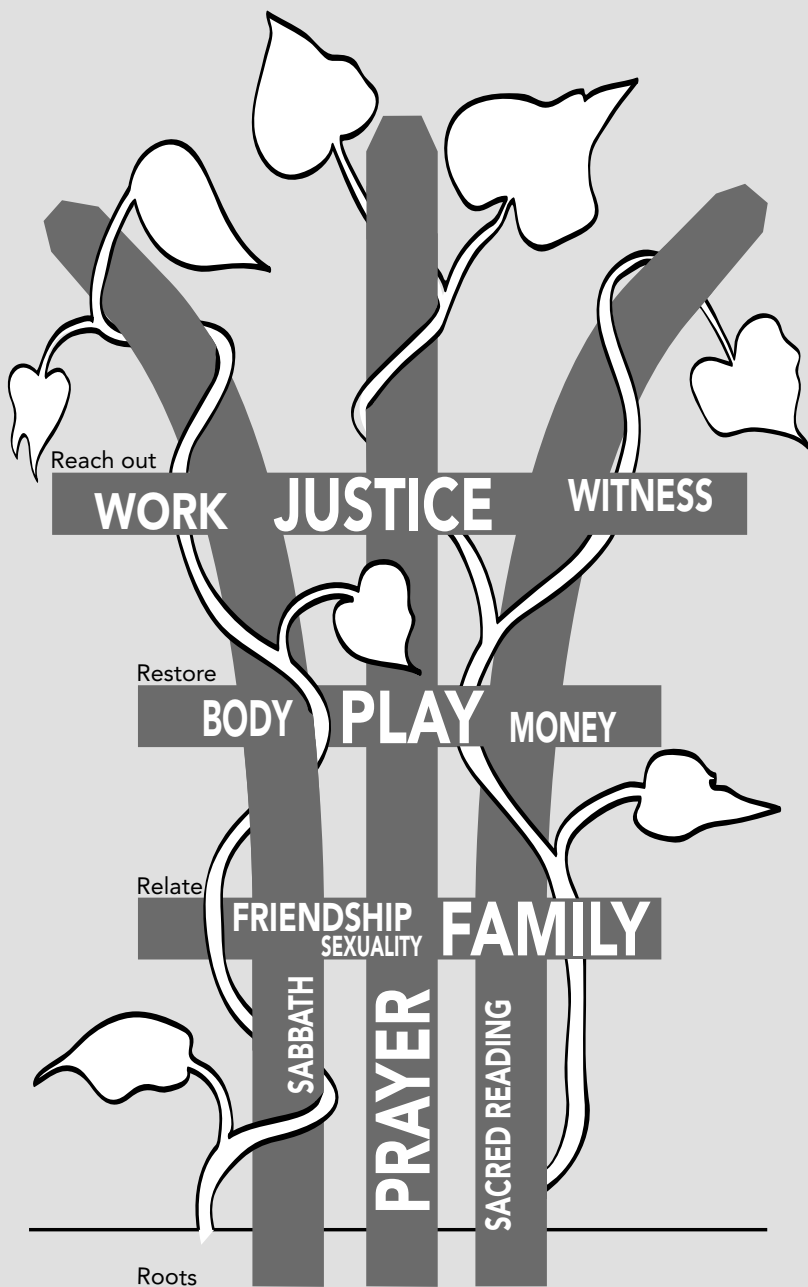


Figure 1

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. If every person lives by a conscious or unconscious rule, how would you describe your current rule?
2. What impresses you about Daniel's rule of life? Is there someone whose rule you admire?
3. What is the value of actually crafting a rule of life?
4. Considering the trellis illustration, is there a part of the rule that would be especially fruitful for you to focus on now?
5. As you build your rule, which of the eight guidelines will be especially pertinent for you to remember?
6. Do you sense it would be helpful for you to live out your rule with another person or in a small group? If you resist that idea, why do you think that is so?

— CHAPTER 4 —

SABBATH: OASIS FOR BODY AND SOUL

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Why is it difficult for many of us to take a weekly Sabbath?
2. How is the Sabbath commandment an expression of God's love for us? How is keeping the Sabbath a subversive, countercultural act?
3. What "necessary" things will you relinquish on your day of rest? How might some planning help you more fully enter into Sabbath rest?
4. What would choosing life look like for you on the Sabbath?
5. How does honoring the Sabbath help us grow in our trust of God?
6. Why is worship essential to experiencing true REM spiritual rest?



WRITING YOUR RULE

As you begin drafting your rule of life, write down what day would best serve as your Sabbath and how you might spend it. Is there also a retreat or vacation rhythm that you could pencil in as part of your rule? (Sample rules of life can be found in the appendix.)



— CHAPTER 5 —

PRAYER: DEEPENING YOUR FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. In what ways is growing your prayer life like deepening a friendship?
2. Is there a pattern of prayer that resonates with you? What are the gifts and potential pitfalls with using patterns for prayer?
3. Do you agree that praying with others can amplify our awareness of God? Have you ever had this experience?
4. How might silence play a role in your prayer life?



WRITING YOUR RULE

What times work best for you to pray? Based on this, draft a daily or weekly rhythm of prayer.



— CHAPTER 6 —

NOURISHING YOUR SOUL THROUGH SACRED READING

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. A. W. Tozer writes that the ultimate goal of Scripture is a personal encounter with the living God. Do you agree? Has this been your experience?
2. What practices might best help you meditate on Scripture; for example: *lectio divina*, imaging a scene in Scripture, memorizing the Word?
3. Is there a passage of Scripture that might be fruitful for you to memorize? Is there an optimal time when you might be able to commit this text to memory?
4. Is there a Scripture that you are currently being called to live into?



WRITING YOUR RULE

Write down a daily or weekly rhythm for you to feed on the Word (you may find this overlaps with your prayer times).



— CHAPTER 7 —

FRIENDSHIP: COMPANIONS FOR THE JOURNEY

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. How does the Internet help friendships? How does the Internet hinder friendships?
2. In what ways do friendships foster our overall well-being?
3. Do you agree that life-giving friendships are just as important as prayer or reading the Bible to our spiritual flourishing?
4. What characteristics of David and Jonathan's friendship struck you most deeply in this chapter? What other friendships—biblical or otherwise—have inspired or instructed you?
5. What are your greatest fears in friendship? What are your greatest hopes?



WRITING YOUR RULE

If you can think of a potential spiritual friend, jot down his or her name and how you might initiate an ongoing relationship. If you already have such a friend in your life, draft a rhythm of when you might meet and future topics you would enjoy discussing.



— CHAPTER 8 —

SEX AND SPIRITUALITY

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. How did you respond to the broader definition of sexuality presented in this chapter?
2. Why is the expression “casual sex” a contradiction in terms?
3. Think of someone you know who has healthy sexual boundaries. What do those boundaries consist of?
4. Why is good friendship such an important part of cultivating a healthy sexuality?
5. Whether we are single or married, what are some healthy nongenital ways to express our sexuality?
6. How can we say yes to God through our sexuality?
7. What hope can a person who feels sexually compromised find in God?



WRITING YOUR RULE

As you reflect on your rule, what practical boundaries would help you foster sexual purity? Take a moment to write them here and discuss them with someone you trust.



— CHAPTER 9 —

FAMILY TIES

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. How is a family or household like a furnace?
2. What has been the most challenging part of family life for you? What has been the greatest gift you experienced in a family or a community?
3. What part of the rule (for example: Sabbath, play, time together, study, service, etc.) might be most beneficial for your household right now?
4. What would it look like to pursue that activity together?



WRITING YOUR RULE

Create a record of the blocks of time you currently spend with your family or household in a typical week and then note any adjustments you might want to make based on the information in this chapter. Share this with your family or household members.



— CHAPTER 10 —

EAT, SLEEP, SWIM

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. How do we know from the Scriptures that our physical bodies are honored by God?
2. What impressed you about God's response to Elijah when he crashed after his showdown with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 19:1–9)?
3. In what way is sleeping a spiritual act?
4. How can we honor our Maker and ourselves through our eating habits? How can we avoid extremes in our eating habits?
5. How can exercise become a joyful act of worship?
6. In what way is care for your body foundational for your entire rule of life?



WRITING YOUR RULE

Draft what a simple, sustainable exercise routine might look like for you. If you'd like, also address any changes you want to make in your eating and sleep habits.



— CHAPTER 11 —

PLAY LIKE A CHILD

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. As a child, what was your favorite way to play?
2. Why is play an important part of a healthy spirituality?
3. Where do you see evidence that God the Father plays in the Scripture? How do we see Jesus playing in the Gospels? How does the Holy Spirit play through us?
4. Ken described how he felt great delight when his young son played with a dog in the park. Have you ever sensed God's delight in you as you played?
5. What are some of the spiritual gifts that play might offer you?
6. In this chapter we defined play as "something we do for its own sake." What is something you enjoy doing for its own sake?



WRITING YOUR RULE

Is there a rhythm of weekly or monthly or seasonal play that you could include in your life? Write this down as part of your rule.



— CHAPTER 12 —

MONEY: MASTER OR SERVANT?

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. What was your first memory of money as a child?
2. Do you agree one of the most concrete indicators a person is genuinely experiencing the converting work of the Holy Spirit is that their relationship toward money is changing? Has this been true for you?
3. Recall the story of Sakiko's chipmunk Forte. How does "grace giving" enable us to express our trust and gratitude toward God?
4. Have you ever experienced a special material provision from God? What was your response?
5. Do you feel called to simplify your life in some way? In what way would this be difficult for you? What would be the gift in that?
6. Describe a time when you have experienced joy in giving something away. What might help you grow in generosity?



WRITING YOUR RULE

Describe what joyful "grace giving" might look like for you.



— CHAPTER 13 —

THANK GOD IT'S MONDAY



Figure 2. *The Angelus* by Jean-Francois Millet

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Ken's stockbroker friend yearned for early retirement. Why do many people view work as a kind of prison sentence from which they are seeking early escape?
2. In what ways do God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit ennoble work?
3. Do you see yourself co-creating with God in your work? If so, how?
4. How can your rhythm of prayer make you more conscious of God as you work at your company, school, or home?
5. How does offering our work to God shape the quality of our work?
6. Charlie and Don were guided by God in their work as they prayed. Have you ever had an experience where praying helped you discern God's will for your work?



WRITING YOUR RULE

Draft the basic boundaries of a work week you sense would honor God.



— CHAPTER 14 —

SENDING A RIPPLE THROUGH ETERNITY

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Ken described how his job interview helped him realize that he yearned to do something that would last forever. Have you ever had an experience in which you became powerfully aware of your desire to make a lasting difference?
2. Like most of our family histories, there are stories from church history that Christ followers should be ashamed of, but there are many more stories about which we can feel a healthy sense of pride. What are some of those inspiring stories for you?
3. Why is prayer so central to our work for God? In what sense is prayer *the* work? How does Jesus model dependence on God through prayer during his ministry?
4. Have you ever had a vision for a work of God rising in your heart? What was it? How did you respond?
5. Do you have a sense as to what “one thing” you might commit yourself to?



WRITING YOUR RULE

As your "one thing" emerges, draft how you might serve this work of God, using a specific time frame (monthly, quarterly, yearly).



— CHAPTER 15 —

SHARING THE PRESENCE



Figure 3

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. As was true of Sabine in Antarctica and of my friend Nathan the artist, have you ever sensed God's prevenient grace at work (that is, where God was at work in a person's life before they *consciously* believed)?
2. How can this knowledge of God's prevenient grace free us from fear or insecurity as we bear witness to the reality of God?
3. Even Billy Graham describes feeling a twinge of fear whenever a conversation with a friend who is not a believer turns to spiritual matters. Have you ever felt awkwardness (or pushback) when sharing your faith with someone else? If so, how did you deal with the awkwardness?
4. What, according to Bryant Myers, are the four sides of the gospel pyramid? Which side is easiest for you to share? Which side is most difficult for you to share?



WRITING YOUR RULE

Describe a simple regular practice you could engage in that would help you faithfully bear witness to Christ.





APPENDIX: SAMPLE RULES OF LIFE

I have described parts of my rule of life throughout the book. Here, consolidated in one place, is my rule as well as the rules of several other people in various ages and stages of life.

KEN'S RULE

Take a 24-hour Sabbath once a week

Begin each day with Scripture and prayer

Pray the *Examen* before going to sleep at night

Run 2–3x a week, swim 2x a week

Aim to be home by 5:15 p.m. each day, and to be home at least 4 evenings a week

Fast on Thursdays

Go on a date with my wife once every 2–3 weeks

Meet with a spiritual director once a month

Host people from different backgrounds in our home about once a month

Take a yearly spiritual retreat with my mentoring group

Take a yearly summer vacation with my family and spend New Year's in Japan with my wife's family

Tithe to my local church and give to impoverished children and missions in the developing world to the point where we feel financially stretched

BRITTANY'S RULE

(graduate student in her 20s)

On a daily basis I will:

- Spend time with God through Bible study, meditation or memorization, prayer or worship
- Focus on eating as healthy as possible (no wheat or dairy and minimal sugar) and getting at least 7–8 hours of sleep each night

On a weekly basis I will:

- Sabbath each Sunday
- Participate in church at the Sunday evening service and at young adults group on Monday night
- Spend quality time with my boyfriend (both play and recreation, as well as time in prayer)
- Spend quality time with my best friend (play, exercise, and recreation)
- Exercise 3–4 times a week

On a biweekly or monthly basis I will:

- Spend quality time with my parents and brother
- Tithe
- Connect with my peer-mentor/spiritual friend
- Reflect on how I'm meeting my goals/living my rule and where I need to grow

JUNE'S RULE

(married with young son, works as a teacher)

Sabbath:

- Rest and Sunday worship, typically on a Saturday or Sunday (depending on what's going on)

Prayer:

- As I can, pray throughout the day—in the car, on a walk, before mealtimes
- More concentrated times of prayer (1) when I put our toddler to bed and (2) before going to bed

Scripture reading:

- At night before I go to bed; as I can, pray through these Scriptures the following day

Spiritual friendship:

- Small group with families with young children (currently working through a Bible study book on parenting)

Recreation/play:

- Watch movies, favorite shows, dine out/in or hang out with friends/family, go to events/shows
- Travel once a year in the summertime

Care for the body:

- As I can, go for an hour jog once a week (if I'm lucky); this is hard in the winter and much easier in spring/summer
- Eat mostly at home so as to eat healthy

Family:

- Try to take our son to visit his grandparents once a week

Financial life:

- Tithe every month
- Support missionaries and other charitable organizations every month

Mission:

- Volunteer as a family at the local seniors' home once every 2 months
- Volunteer at camp each summer

Witness:

- Through friendship and invite people to church and through our Easter and Christmas outreaches

STEPHEN'S RULE

(in his 30s, married with young children, NGO worker Brazil)

Spiritual disciplines:

- Do morning devotional over breakfast after shower
- Finish evening with the *Examen*
- Invest in spiritual friendships in and outside Brazil

Mind and focus:

- Invest first fruits of my time and energy on spiritual life and creative work
- Email and Internet in afternoon and evening only

Work:

- Enjoy people daily, even brief connections
- Invest through my gifts: teach, lead, connect
- Immerse in Brazilian culture: reading, radio, TV, movies
- Review action list daily, set goals for next day

Finances:

- Steward funds well, especially giving and investing

Marriage and family:

- Serve my wife daily: evening conversation, date, English help, wash dishes
- Invest in kids daily: help at bedtime, assist daughter with school work, walk dog with son

Recreation:

- Keep up with US college and pro sports with friends or family
- Travel, sightsee, and explore occasionally
- Escape through fun movies, TV shows, books

Body:

- Wake up 6:30 a.m., bedtime routine 10:00 p.m.
- Exercise early every morning
- Go to bed slightly hungry in evenings—no food after 8:00 p.m.
- Stretch every morning

JONATHAN'S RULE

(in his 30s, married no kids, engineer)

Sleep 10:00 p.m. – 5:50 a.m. daily

Read Bible in mornings 4 – 5x a week

Pause 5 minutes to reflect with God 2x a day

Church weekly

Bike to work 4 – 5x a week

Soccer weekly

Small group weekly

Call Dad 5x a week

Date night weekly

Cook dinner 4x a week

Give 15 percent of income away monthly

Camping yearly (1 week)

Retreat 2x a year

Visit wife's family in Colombia yearly

ROB'S RULE

(*artist in his 50s*)

- *As I can*, I begin each morning by thanking God for all that will happen in the day ahead. Anticipate goodness and the Lord's love in all that will take place.
- *As I can*, I begin each day with 20 minutes of silent prayer.
- *As I can*, practice reading a short passage of Scripture as a *lectio divina* each day—a time of slow spiritual reading that has as its purpose the conversion of my heart more than the accumulation of knowledge.
- *As I can*, I will meet with a “soul friend” monthly to discuss with each other where I have struggled and where I have found encouragement from God in relation to these practices.
- *As I can*, I will meet regularly with a small group of people who know and share my deepest desires for relationship with God.
- *As I can*, I will live a simple and uncluttered life. I will enjoy time for hospitality with people I meet in my day, especially God. Invite others into my life, my home, my journey.
- *As I can*, I will find a regular outlet through which to offer my time, money, and labor for the sake of others.
- *As I can*, I plan dedicated times for spiritual retreat throughout the year—a day, a weekend, or a week away in silence with God.

MICHELLE'S RULE *(married with a young child, pastor)*

	Spiritual/Leisure	Mental/ Emotional	Relational	Physical	Domestic/ Financial	Vocational/Missional
Daily	-Morning prayer -Journal	-Read before bed (only one book at a time)	-Read with son	-Brush twice a day -Floss once a day -Water morning/ each meal -5 servings veggies -24 grams of fiber -Vitamins -7 – 8 hours sleep	-9:00-10:00 p.m. set aside for home management, reading, and day close	
Weekly	-Sabbath (pray and play)		-Couples meeting [Fri] -Date night [Fri] -Call parents	-Work out three to five times a week -Personal grooming time	-Plan meals [Mon] -Laundry [Mon] -Budget [Mon] -Go through mail/ scan [Mon]	-Work retreat [Thurs/Fri] -Plan for week ahead [Fri]
Monthly		-Visit friend	-Date with babysitting -Meaningful interactions with mentors, peers -Hang with colleague		-Tithe -Submit reimbursements	
Quarterly			-Go to hair salon			-Offsite work retreat
Biannually				-Dental cleaning		
Annually	-Monastery retreat -Revise rule of life		-Celebrate anniversary	-OB/GYN visit		-Do mission as a family -Continuing education