



**SPRINGCREEK
CHURCH**

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THE SACRED RHYTHM OF JESUS
Desert, Community, Project | Part 1

Senior Pastor Keith Stewart

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What if the key to a transformed life isn't trying harder—but living differently? Jesus lived according to a sacred rhythm: time alone with God, life-giving community, and meaningful service to others. Yet many of us live that rhythm backwards, leaving us exhausted, distracted, and spiritually depleted. This Sunday, Pastor Keith Stewart begins a brand-new series, The Sacred Rhythm of Jesus. Discover how God transforms ordinary people into world-changing followers of Christ through a pattern as old as the Gospel itself: Desert. Community. Project. Join us this Sunday at Springcreek Church—online or in person—and learn how arranging your life around the way of Jesus can change everything.

“Imagine a ragtag collection of surrendered and transformed people who love God and others. They are mesmerized by the idea that this is not about them, but all about Jesus. They are transfixed by His story and His heart for their city.

They are seed-throwers and fire-starters, hope-peddlers and grace-givers, risk-takers and dreamers, young and old. They link arms with anyone who tells the story of Jesus. They empower the poor, strengthen the weak, embrace the outcast, seek the lost. They serve together, play together, worship together, live life together.

Their city will change because God sent them. They are us. We believe that small things done with great love will change the world." —Vineyard Community Church of Cincinnati, Ohio

1. WHAT IS SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION?

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.
Romans 12.2a (NLT)

SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION: "God lovingly changing our thoughts, feelings, and actions to resemble Jesus, in community, for the good of the world."

☐ A fundamental shift affecting the total person

- MIND: Feed the mind

...don't assume that you can lean back in the arms of your religion and take it easy...I have a special word of caution for you



who are sure that you have it all together yourselves and because you know God's revealed Word inside and out...While you are guiding others, who is going to guide you?

Romans 2.17-19 (Message)

You have your heads in your Bibles constantly because you think you'll find eternal life there. But you miss the forest for the trees. These Scriptures are all about me! And here I am, standing right before you, and you aren't willing to receive from me the life you say you want. John 5.39 (Message)

You need redemption beneath your eyebrows.

- HEART: Feel the experience

...(They) take up with every new religious fad that calls itself "truth." They get exploited every time and never really learn... 2 Timothy 3.7 (Message)

- WILL: Do the right thing

Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!"

Matthew 7.22-23

- Conformity to Christ is its central objective



God knew what he was doing from the very beginning. He decided from the outset to shape the lives of those who love him along the same lines as the life of his Son. The Son stands first in the line of humanity he restored. We see the original and intended shape of our lives there in him. After God made that decision of what his children should be like, he followed it up by calling people by name. After he called them by name, he set them on a solid basis with himself. And then, after getting them established, he stayed with them to the end, gloriously completing what he had begun. Romans 8.29-30 (Message)

2. THE THREE ESSENTIAL CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

What you currently do is producing the person sitting in your seat.

One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coast of Tyre and Sidon, who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by evil spirits were cured, and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all. Luke 6.12-19

From solitude (time alone with God)
to community (vital relationships that sustain me)
to ministry (our service in God's work for the sake of others).

SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION: "God lovingly changing our thoughts, feelings, and actions to resemble Jesus, in community, for the good of the world."

grow, connect, serve
communion, community, and co-working
our desert, our group and our project
loving God, loving one another, and loving our neighbors

"This is the way." —The Mandalorian

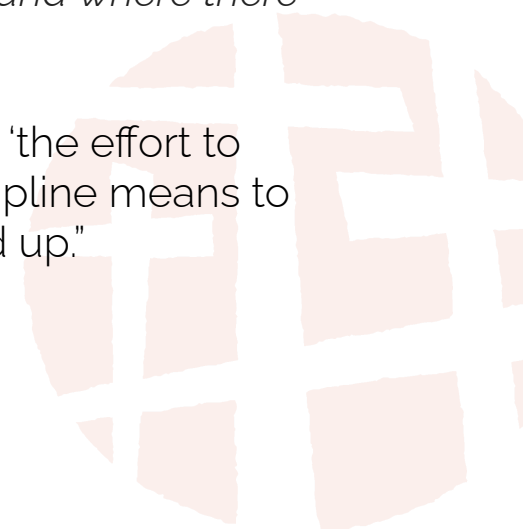
☐ OUR DESERT (Love God)

[Jesus] answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind." Luke 10.27a

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. Psalm 42.1

O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. Psalm 63.1

"In the spiritual life, the word 'discipline' means 'the effort to create some space in which God can act'. Discipline means to prevent everything in your life from being filled up."
—Henri Nouwen



Inward: meditation, fasting, study, and prayer

Outward: simplicity, solitude, submission, and service

Corporate: confession, worship, guidance, and celebration

“Americans check their phones nearly 200 times a day—or about once every five minutes while they're awake.”

– Reviews.org (2026)

Nearly 46% of Americans consider themselves “addicted” to their phones in 2026. – Reviews.org (2026)

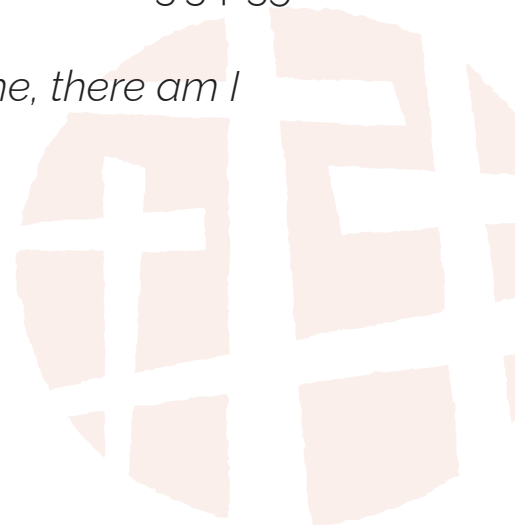
Developing digital discipline

1. Remove the triggers
2. Audit who you follow
3. Nuke the Notifications
4. Create Physical Separation

☐ OUR COMMUNITY—Love One Another

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John 13.34-35

For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them. Matthew 18.20



“Personalities united can contain more of God and sustain the force of his greater presence much better than scattered individuals. The fire of God kindles higher as the brands are heaped together and each is warmed by the other’s flame.”
—Dallas Willard

The church is not a coffee bar

“Both the coffee bar and Lord’s Table affirm community, but the kind of community they affirm differs significantly.”
—Paul Louis Metzger

❑ OUR PROJECT—Love Your Neighbor

Love your neighbor as yourself. Luke 10.27b

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3. HOW DO I KNOW IF IT'S WORKING?

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

"Lord, here I am. I want to be Your suit of clothes today. I want You to take me and use me. Lord, just walk around in me today." – Howard Hendricks

Desert. Community. Project. This is the way.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Icebreaker

What is one daily habit or rhythm in your life that has had a significant impact on who you are today?

Digging Into the Message

Pastor Keith defined spiritual transformation as: "God lovingly changing our thoughts, feelings, and actions to resemble Jesus, in community, for the good of the world." Which part of that definition stands out most to you and why?



The message emphasized that spiritual transformation affects the whole person—mind, heart, and will. Which of those areas do you think God is most actively working on in your life right now?

Have you ever known someone who was strong in biblical knowledge, spiritual experiences, or religious activity, but lacked balance in the other areas? What can we learn from that?

Romans 8 describes Jesus as the pattern for our lives. When you think about becoming more like Jesus, what characteristic of His life do you most want to see developed in yourself?

Desert (Love God)

Jesus regularly withdrew to spend time alone with the Father. What currently helps you connect with God? What tends to distract you?

The message challenged us to practice "digital discipline." What role does technology play in helping or hindering your relationship with God?

Which spiritual discipline (prayer, solitude, fasting, worship, Scripture reading, etc.) would most strengthen your walk with God if practiced more consistently?



Community (Love One Another)

Why do you think God designed spiritual growth to happen in community rather than isolation?

The message contrasted the Communion Table with the coffee bar. In what ways can we sometimes approach church more like consumers than participants?

How has someone in the church helped shape your spiritual growth?

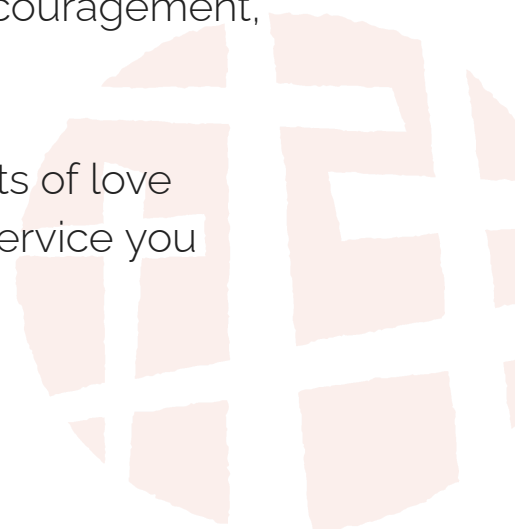
What would it look like for our group to become a more diverse, welcoming, and gospel-centered community?

Project (Love Your Neighbor)

Pastor Keith said, "Love is not love until it is given away." Where do you currently have opportunities to demonstrate Christ's love through service?

Who is someone in your life right now who may need to experience God's love through your words, encouragement, or practical help?

Tony Campolo's story reminds us that small acts of love matter. What is one simple act of kindness or service you could offer this week?



Application

Of the three rhythms—Desert, Community, or Project—which is strongest in your life right now? Which needs the most attention?

What is one specific step you will take this week to better align your life with the rhythm of Jesus?

Closing Prayer

Pray that God would make each member of the group more like Christ through time with God, authentic community, and loving service to others. Ask God to help you become "His suit of clothes" in the world this week.



