



R = 6 + 1 as A Way of Life (AWOL)

My friend Mindy leads an organization called Soul Care and speaks all over the country to some of the nation's leading churches, organizations, and companies about the importance of soul care and how to build healthy souls (both in people and healthy "souled" organizations and cultures). One point I have heard her make several times is that we need to go AWOL with soul care—that soul care needs to become **A WAY OF LIFE**.

At the end of every Altar retreat we encounter **Ezekiel 47:1-12**. Take a moment and read that passage of Scripture again in your Bible or guidebook.

There are two highlighted sentences in your text:

- **So where the river flows, everything will live.**
- **Do you see this?**

You have started a journey of **rhythm** these last few months, deepening your understanding and weekly practice of 6 + 1. The questions to consider:

- **How is it going for you?**
- Your study guides have included a version of the Examen (spiritual practice) by looking back each week to reflect on your **+1 days**. **How would you summarize (now 2-3 months after the retreat) your experience of living in rhythm?**
- **How is 6+1 helping you solve for your R's?**
(Review Saturday's session *Writing Your 6 + 1 Plan* to remember the benefits of rhythm and the R's you wrote down.)

SETTLING IN NEW LAND

Read Joshua 24:1-28

As we did with Ezekiel 47 in your guidebook, consider a few big ideas from Joshua 24.

- **Context:** Israel has conquered the new land and the people being released on the journey to settle and live into the new land before them. It is time to build a way of life in a new way.
- **Remember: The Lord brings victory (v. 1-13).**
 - Remembering is key to living in rhythm. It brings focus and awareness to God in the day-to-day and opens the door to restorative practices like **gratitude and delight**.
- **There is a difference between conquering new land and actually settling in the new land.**
 - The people of Israel had several incredible journeys—first through the wilderness for 40 years and now, in this passage, taking possession of the promised land through the power and presence of God going before them. Literally giving them victory as they followed him.
 - Now, they face their next journey—Living and settling into a rhythm of life in the new land.
 - **Do you feel as though you are entering a new journey of settling into a new rhythm of life?**
- Joshua has **Resolve** in how he (and his family) will live going forward, and leads the people to a point of commitment (v 14-24).
 - **Why do you think Joshua plays “devil’s advocate” with the people in this section—challenging their words?**
 - **Why does Joshua give the people a choice?**
- Joshua and the people made a covenant as a witness unto their lives (v25-27).
 - **Why is marking significant moments so important?**
 - **Are you ready to make a commitment to live a life a rhythm?**

RESOLVE TO GO AWOL

You have taken a significant journey these last few months, beginning with your Altar retreat and taking your first intentional steps in practicing **rhythm**. The question **now** is, **“What will the story of your life from here?”**

Adele Calhoun in her book *The Spiritual Disciplines Handbook* writes,

**“The journey of transformation begins with desire.
What you most want will shape your life.”**

So...What do you want? What do you deeply desire?

Take several minutes (or perhaps part a day) to *pause, look, listen and observe* your own spirit in light of these questions.

If you are ready to make a commitment to go **AWOL** (to live in rhythm as a way of life) then mark this moment. Perhaps you will write a statement of declaration and make a covenant before the Lord as a witness to your **resolve**. Perhaps you will tell a friend or bring this commitment to the group for encouragement and accountability.

Or, you may need to wrestle more with God and yourself before you are ready to find this kind of commitment and resolve. This is okay. Better to be clear and honest than to make false or divided commitments.

A FINAL WORD

“Then Joshua sent all the people away to their own homelands.”
—Joshua 24:28

Friends, as you live into your weeks and months to come, may God bless you and refresh you with his presence as you seek to live in rhythm with God, others, and yourself. **For where the river flows, everything will live—including your soul.**