

Make Every Effort & Follow Again

INTRODUCTION

Four Months. That was when you were on retreat and left with your intentional plan (rule of life) and the questions of Jesus (imagining him asking you each as if for the first time). Seems like only a few weeks ago.

The questions for this last study guide are:

- *What has happened over these four months?*
- *What will happen as you hit refresh and seek to make every effort and answer Jesus' invitation to follow me...again?*

This working study guide will help you pause, look, listen and observe your life and soul so that you can notice, name, discern and respond to both current reality and commit to intentional next steps.



REVIEW (*NOTICE AND NAME*)

What words, phrases, or pictures come to mind when you review your journey since we gathered on retreat?

Review your Rule of Life. What fruit and progress has been made these last few months? How have you grown?

What have been the biggest challenges or set back to living into your intentional plan (rule of life)?

Are you satisfied with yourself in your efforts and how you applied yourself to responding to your commitment(s) these last months?

Similarly to the Soul Map exercise, sit for a minute or two and listen to both God and what your soul is saying. What do you hear? What is your desire?

REFRESH (Discern and Respond)

**“Nurturing a growing spirituality with depth
in our present-day culture will require
a thoughtful, conscious, intentional
plan for our spiritual lives.”**

–Pete Scazzero

Now is your opportunity to hit reset and refresh your intentional plan and commitment going forward.

Read 2 Peter 1:3-11 to refresh your memory and hear Scripture implore your intentionality and effort you put into the spiritual journey. Then read it a second time.

- *What stands out to you, inspires you, or challenges you from this passage?*

Review your Soul Maps. (You may consider completing them again—you have a simplified version in the resource link.)

- *What words (circles (reality) and boxes (desires) have changed from when you completed the maps on retreat?*

Refresh your Rule of Life to make every effort to live into God’s (and your own) desires and intentions for your life.

Sit for a moment and take in your plan. Consider asking yourself some of the questions you discussed as a group on p.46 of your Guidebook.

FOLLOW...AGAIN (John 21:15-19)

So many of Jesus' questions and invitations "mess with us" in a good way—and sometimes challenging way. When Jesus invites Peter to follow (*again*) it reveals how Jesus keeps inviting his followers to receive and answer this invitation again and again and again. It is how the journey with Jesus works...it is not the exception. No matter how "good" we are doing or how much we feel like we have "failed" Jesus, He simply leads with love and grace, asks if we love him, and invites us to make our commitment to follow him...again.

As you did on retreat, write a
Prayer of Commitment to the Lord
expressing your desires to grow forward.

FINAL THOUGHTS

What a privilege to journey together.

Your Guidebook and the follow up study guides are tools for you going forward. Whether you use individual sessions for personal devotions or you design a personal retreat to work back through the material, we (Altar Team) pray you will continue to make every effort to:

- Hear the words and questions of Jesus
- Continue to pause, look, listen and observe your life so you can notice, name, discern and respond with intentionality
- Cultivate the desire to make every effort to follow Jesus courageously—challenging yourself with intentionality to grow forward with your practice for progress.
- In the goodness and storms life may bring, stay close to Jesus, following him again and again, and again.

Journey well my friend.