

5 Healthy Spiritual Habits

Starting the New Year with optimism and keeping up with resolutions, such as staying healthy and fit and being more present topping most people's list, the reality of life's busyness often sidelines us.

But we're excited that you're challenging yourself and making an intentional step to grow in your faith and walk with God instead! We'll discuss five new spiritual habits to develop, and offer some practical action steps you can take to develop each one.



Let's start with prayer!

"And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." - Ephesians 6:18

If you've ever felt stressed, anxious, fearful, lost, or uncertain, it's often a result of being disconnected from God. We were created to be in communication with our Creator, and not accessing that direct line causes brokenness in our lives.

Prayer is simply talking to God and listening to God. It's not a magical phrase or ritual we have to do. Nor is it just asking God for stuff. Prayer is spending time to express our thoughts and feelings - both good and bad - to God and spending time to sit quietly and to listen to Him.

When we pray, we feel more at peace because the burdens that we carry are no longer our own. We trust that God knows our situation and carries those burdens for us. And as we pray not only for ourselves, but for other people and for the world, it brings a more positive outlook on life because we realize that our problems are not as big as we thought they were in comparison to everything else. It also gives us hope knowing that God is in control of everything.

God tells us to pray on all occasions because it keeps us connected with Him. Just like any human relationship fades when we don't talk, our connection to God fades when we don't pray. It's really easy to stop praying when our lives get busy or difficult, and we end up giving up the thing that we need to do most in those times. Scheduling prayer into a normal routine helps us to pray even when we don't feel like it, until it's natural for us to go to God first, not as a last resort.

Now that we see that consistent prayer is essential to a healthy spiritual life, here are some practical action steps you can take to develop those habits. Pick one of these suggestions and try it out this week. Remember, it needs to be something that you can do on a regular basis.

Action Steps: Healthy Habits to Develop

1. Every morning when you wake up, immediately tell God what you're grateful for.
2. Each week, pick one person in your life and pray for them throughout the week.
3. [Join the Guidelines Prayer Team](#) - you'll get an email every couple of weeks of ways you can pray for God's work around the world.

Additional Reading:

[Pray About Everything](#)

[Reasons For Praying](#)



The second spiritual habit we're going to work on is diving into the Scriptures.

"Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." - Joshua 1:8

If you've ever struggled with making good decisions in your life, or you're living with the regret and consequences of your past actions, you're probably in search of more wisdom. God gave us the Bible to be the essential guide for our lives.

The Bible is a collection of stories and letters that reveal who God is throughout history. But it's also an instructional guide or map to help us navigate through life. It has values and principles that will help us deal with any situation that comes our way.

As we read the Bible, we learn about the ways that God shows us to think, to speak, and to act in life. These aren't meant to restrict our lives, but to empower us to live more fully and in relationship with God. When we follow the instructions that God has given, we live the way God had intended us to live, make better decisions, and experience the incredible life God has for us. He also includes warnings in the Bible that help us avoid things that might be appealing, but lead to destruction in our lives.

As humans, we take a while to learn something. That's why God tells us to meditate on it day and night. We often need to read something over and over again in order to remember it and be able to apply it to our lives. As we spend regular time in the Scriptures and remind ourselves of the truths that God teaches us, they start to be a normal part of thinking and we will make better decisions naturally.

Now that we see that time in the Scriptures is essential to a healthy spiritual life, here are some practical action steps you can take to develop those habits. Pick one of these suggestions and try it out this week. Remember, it needs to be something that you can do on a regular basis.

Action Steps: Healthy Habits to Develop

1. Choose one Bible verse or passage that resonates with you, and place it in a spot where you will see it every day (nightstand, bathroom mirror, refrigerator).
2. Pick a person or group of people that you can meet up with weekly, and read through passages of the Bible together and discuss.

Start a Bible reading plan from [this website](#) or download [the Bible app](#).

Additional Reading:

[Can You Believe in the Bible?](#)

[How Relevant is the Bible?](#)

The third one we're creating is the habit of community.

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” - Hebrews 10:24-25

If you've ever felt an emptiness or loneliness in your life, it's the result of a need that you were made to have - the need for other people. God did not create us to be alone, but to need and be needed by others.

Being in community means having other people who are part of your life and who know you. This is especially important for Christians, as the spiritual journey was not meant to be walked alone. Following Jesus isn't always easy - that's why we need other Christians to encourage each other, help each other, and hold each other accountable.

When we open up our lives to other believers, we experience God more. That's because God often reveals Himself and speaks to us through other people. We're able to get encouragement when we're struggling. We're able to get wisdom and advice from people who've been through the same things we're going through. And though it's tough, we're able to receive correction when we need it and avoid further pain when we make bad choices.

It's hard to know a person well, or for someone else to know you well, if you don't see them regularly. That's why God tells us to not stop meeting with each other. The importance of being part of a local church or home small group is that you can see the same people on a regular basis and really get to know them. The more you know about each other, the better you're able to help each other and know when something is wrong in each other's lives.

Now that we see that being in community is essential to a healthy spiritual life, here are some practical action steps you can take to develop those habits. Pick one of these suggestions and try it out this week. Remember, it needs to be something that you can do on a regular basis.

Action Steps: Healthy Habits to Develop

1. If you don't attend a church, find a local one to try out for a few weeks. If you already attend a church, find ways to get more connected, such as serving in a ministry or joining a small group.
2. Find a group of Christian friends, whether from your church or from another area of your life, to meet with on a regular basis to talk, pray, and encourage each other.
3. At your work or school, find other Christians and set aside one day a week to eat lunch with each other.

Additional Reading:

[About Churches](#)

[Why Bother With Church?](#)

Fourth, we're going to develop the habit of service.

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." - Galatians 6:9

Whenever you feel like you don't know your purpose in life, or you feel restless, or like your life is lacking meaning, it's because you're not pouring out as much as you're receiving. Doing good, serving others, and sharing the love of God is why we were put on this earth.

Service means putting the needs of other people above your own. It's the example that Jesus gave us - He lived His life helping people, healing people, serving people, and sharing with them the love of God. Ultimately, He gave up His life for people. As Christians who follow Jesus, our lives are intended to be spent loving and serving others.

God created all of us with unique gifts and talents. They were not meant to just enrich our own lives, but to help other people. Like a mobile phone that stays in its box and never gets used, our lives are wasted if we don't use it to serve others. Similarly, if we have the gift of Jesus in our hearts, it was never meant to be kept to ourselves. The good news of God's love was given to you so you could share it with others. Loving people and sharing the love of God is how we experience fulfillment in our lives.

Our lives are like water - as receive from God and from others but do nothing with it, we grow stagnant. We have to continually pour that water out and keep the stream flowing to be healthy. It may be difficult at times, but God encourages us to not be weary in doing good. Serving other people and sharing with them the love of God on regular basis helps us to experience the gifts that we receive from God even more richly.

Now that we see that serving others is essential to a healthy spiritual life, here are some practical action steps you can take to develop those habits. Pick one of these suggestions and try it out this week. Remember, it needs to be something that you can do on a regular basis.

Action Steps: Healthy Habits to Develop

1. Each week, go introduce yourself to a new person in your neighborhood. Bring them a snack, and find ways that you can help them.
2. On a regular basis, find ways to spend time with non-Christians, such as through inviting them to parties at your home or being part of a local community group or club. Develop relationships with them and let your faith shine through.
3. Find a local organization that you can volunteer with on a regular basis, such as a charity, school, or community club.

Additional Reading:

[Helping Encourage Others](#)

[Keep Your Faith Quiet?](#)

Last, we're going to talk about the healthy spiritual habit of generosity.

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." - 2 Corinthians 9:7

If you're ever fearful of not having enough money and are worried about losing it, then the solution is counter-intuitive - you're not giving enough away. Generosity is a test of our faith in God and the solution to greed and fear.

Generosity is not only giving money, but also our possessions, our time, our energy, and our talents. However, for most of us, money is the hardest thing to give away. That's why God asks us to give money - it's not because He needs it, but because we need it. The Bible reminds us that all that we have is from God.

When we give our money away, we trust that the money is not ours, but God's. We trust that God will provide what we need in life. We hoard our money because of greed - and greed is fear that God will not provide for us. So when God asks us to be generous with our money, He is, in fact, giving us peace and joy because we're not afraid anymore of not having enough. Plus, we're helping meet the needs of other people when we give.

It's very easy for us to become attached to our money and be fearful of losing it. If we're not regularly giving our money away, we automatically hoard it and it robs us of our joy in life. God loves a cheerful giver not because he is forcing us to be happy when we give, but because he knows that generosity actually brings us joy in life.

Now that we see that giving is essential to a healthy spiritual life, here are some practical action steps you can take to develop those habits. Pick one of these suggestions and try it out this week. Remember, it needs to be something that you can do on a regular basis.

Action Steps: Healthy Habits to Develop

1. Make giving to your church a regular habit out of every paycheck, or increase your giving amount.
2. On a weekly or monthly basis, find someone in your community that has a financial need and give what you can to help meet that need.
3. Give to share hope around the world, with those who live difficult lives. Find a ministry that is doing good work, and commit to making a recurring monthly donation, even if it's just \$5. If you don't have a ministry in mind, consider giving to Guidelines, where your donation helps transform lives globally with the message of Jesus.

Additional Reading:

[Giving and Receiving](#)
[How Much Should You Give?](#)

Looking Forward

Our prayer is that you will be able to continue with these five healthy habits. But even if you miss one of them, that's ok! Don't be discouraged or give up. Habits take a while to form and become normal, so just keep at it. If you forget to practice one of them, then just pick it up again the next day.

We would love to hear from you! Was there a particular spiritual habit that you really enjoyed starting? Was there one that was more difficult for you? How has your life changed because of this experience? Just share with us by emailing info@guidelines.org.

This Bible Study was provided by Guidelines International Ministries. We are called to shine the light of the Gospel in places of spiritual darkness through audio messages that encourage, equip, and bring hope in Jesus to new believers, the unreached, and to those living under persecution.

If you found this Bible study series helpful and **want to go deeper**, there are a few different ways:

Subscribe to the Daily Devotional

Sign up to have a short devotional emailed to you every morning, which you can read or listen to:

guidelines.org/devotionals/

Share This With Your Friends

Do you have friends who may find this Bible study helpful? Email them this PDF or share this link with them: guidelines.org/healthyhabits/

Donate to Support This Ministry

If you found this Bible study helpful and want it to impact others, please consider supporting this ministry by donating: guidelines.org/donate/

