

Chosen by God

A SUMMER
RECHARGE SERIES

Cultivating Joy

SESSION 3
AUGUST 8, 2023

Welcome & Opening

STACY BOYER

Let the trees of the forest sing, let them sing for joy before the Lord...
Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.

You make known to me the path of life;
you fill me with joy in your presence...

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust more and more,
so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace;
**the mountains and hills will burst into song before you,
and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.**

Amen

I Chronicles 16:33-34, Psalm 16:11, Romans 15:13, Isaiah 55:12

Cultivating Joy

KRISTIN ROCKWELL

Holistic spiritual disciplines are acts of loving obedience we offer to God steadily and consistently, to be used for whatever work God purposes to do in and through our lives.

Only the motive of loving obedience will enable us to persist in the disciplines when the going gets rough, when nothing seems to be happening, when the old habits and attitudes of our brokenness seem unaffected by the disciplines that aim at their healing and transformation.
(121)

A genuine spiritual discipline is a discipline of loving obedience offered to God with no strings attached. (152)

Quotes from Invitation to a Journey by M. Robert Mulholland Jr expanded by Ruth Haley Barton intervarsity Press: 2016.

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Notes

Blessing of Joy

May you be blessed with the joy of being chosen, the full knowledge that God chose you first.
May you respond to your chosen-ness with a joyful yes.

May you step into the yoke of cultivation alongside Jesus and find rest, peace, and joy.
May the obstacles of cultivation you encounter be made smooth, and easy going through the work of the Holy Spirit.

May you embrace the spiritual practices you've been drawn to with joyful obedience.
May you cast your gaze on that which has been cultivated within you and find joy...
beautiful, awesome, never-ending joy.
Amen.

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REFLECTION

A gentle reminder before you begin... we will return to session at 7:50

Take a moment to be present to Spirit... to yourself... to this moment.
Breathe in... breathe out... breathe in... breathe out...

Imagine standing beside Jesus and gazing upon the field of your heart. Listen as Jesus whispers, "I chose you. Before this field existed, I made a plan for us to be here in this moment. You are chosen, you are wanted, you are loved."

Take a moment to sketch the field of your heart.



How is Jesus inviting you to cultivate your chosen-ness? What emotions arise?

Draw an obstacle or two of cultivation in your field. What obstacles have you noticed? How is Spirit moving you to remove the obstacles?

Sketch a representation of growth in the field... a flower, tree, or plant. What spiritual practices are inviting you into Presence?

Spend some time looking at your field. Add things as you feel led. Notice the stirring inside of you. Hear the Creator's exclamation over creation, "It is good."

Continuing the Cultivation

Below is a list of spiritual practices. As you consider the list, what inspires you? catches your attention? How is Spirit drawing you to move to increased obedience in your life?

I pray at a regular time each day.

I pray spontaneously throughout the day.

I use written prayers and devotions to guide my spiritual time.

I read theological books to guide my spiritual time.

I read the Bible daily for my own spiritual growth.

I regularly meet with another person for prayer, study, or spiritual support.

I regularly meet in a community (for which I am not the leader) for spiritual prayer, worship, study or support.

I use meditation as a tool during my spiritual time.

I use rosary or prayer beads as a tool during my spiritual time.

I walk the labyrinth as a regular part of my spiritual life.

I use dance, yoga, walking or other physical activity as a part of my spiritual practice.

I make a regular retreat to care for my spiritual health.

I have a spiritual director.

I have a friend or mentor with whom I speak about spirituality.

I use journaling as a tool for spiritual growth.

I use icons or other objects that help me to connect with God (examples include a candle, a fountain or a rock) during my prayer or meditation time.

I have icons or other objects that help me to connect with God in a special place to remind me of God's presence in my life.

I use recorded music as a part of my spiritual practice.

I use fasting as a part of my spiritual practice.

I have a Website that I connect to for guidance in my daily spiritual time.

I participate in an online community for spiritual support.

I use the Internet as a tool for finding new resources for my spiritual journey.

I go regularly to a place that is sacred to me.

I have a sacred space within my home or office.

I participate in a regular activity that I consider to be a spiritual practice (examples include, fishing, baking bread, gardening, and golf).

I participate in a volunteer activity that I consider to be a spiritual practice (examples include teaching literacy, building homes, rocking newborns, cooking for the homeless).

Other statements that either define my current spiritual practices or reflect what I long for:

Below are two sets of questions. Take your time answering each question. Remember these are practices you engage in personally and not as the leader, not as part of your regular ministry assignment unless otherwise indicated.

1. Before you became a spiritual leader, what were your expectations in regard to how you would experience and practice your spirituality?
2. What were your expectations of spiritual leaders?
3. How has your relationship with God changed in the time you have been a spiritual leader?
4. In what ways has being a spiritual leader affected your personal spiritual practice? What has surprised you? What has challenged you?

1. In what ways does God nurture you through your regular ministry tasks?
2. What personal spiritual practices are helpful to you?
3. How does attending to your own spiritual needs affect your ministry as a spiritual leader?
4. Are you caring for yourself as a spiritual leader?

After answering, spend some time reflecting in prayer. Then answer the questions below.

1. Where do you hear God affirming you?
2. Where do you hear God challenging you? How?
3. What specific changes do you need to make? Remember to be specific.