

Summer Survivor Guide

How to Thrive This Summer and Not Just Survive





Let’s face it: Summers can pose a major challenge to your faith and obedience to Christ.

Why? You’re away from the environment and friends that have helped you grow spiritually this past school year.

But summer can also be a great opportunity to see your faith increased. You can make some decisions now that will put you in a position of advantage and strength as you go into the summer.

Here are three essentials to help you thrive and not just survive the summer:

Essential No. 1: Daily Time With God in His Word

The no. 1 priority in your summer, as in all of your life, must be fellowship with God. Seek to know Him, love Him and serve Him. We can’t know God intimately without knowing the Word of God. His Word is the food that nourishes our souls.

How to Do This

[Set aside time daily.](#) Start with 15-30 minutes and try to build up to 45 minutes to an hour — to spend alone with God in praise, prayer, and reading and listening to His Word. You will find several helpful resources at www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow.

Essential No. 2: The Right Fellowship

Fellowship is sharing life with those who are followers of Jesus. It’s not a coincidence that *the major periods of spiritual growth in our lives are often also times of rich Christian fellowship.* In Acts 2:42 we read, “They devoted themselves to the apostles’

teaching and to fellowship,” and in verse 46, “Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.” Like the early Christians, you need to make fellowship a priority in your life.

How to Do This

1. *Get involved with a good church.* Look for a church that teaches God’s Word faithfully and is committed to its authority in all areas of life. Also, look for a community that demonstrates love for one another and for those who don’t yet know Jesus. Talk to a pastor and ask how you can get involved. Get fed spiritually, but also give of yourself.
2. *Keep in touch with friends from your campus ministry or church.* Get together with others who live near you for times of prayer, Bible study or just having fun together. You may know some other committed Christian friends where you will be. Make it a priority to spend time together.
3. If you don’t have any committed Christian friends around you, *you can fellowship with Christians through reading their books or listening to podcasts.* Make it a priority to spend regular time reading. It could have a tremendous impact on your life and faith.

Essential No. 3: Self-Discipline

Discipline has a direct impact on steady spiritual growth — growth that isn’t dependent on events or circumstances. Discipline is the ability to order one’s life according to what one has determined to accomplish or achieve. It means that we make choices about what is important and how we invest our time. If you have placed your faith and trust in Christ for the forgiveness of your sin, God has already given you His Holy Spirit, a Spirit of self-control and discipline (2 Timothy 1:7), so ask Him to develop within you the fruit of self-discipline.

What would you like to see God do in your life this summer?

How to Do This

Practically, what this means is that you make choices now as to what you are going to commit yourself to this summer. It means saying yes to habits and activities that will help you grow spiritually and saying no to the habits and activities that could potentially drag you down.

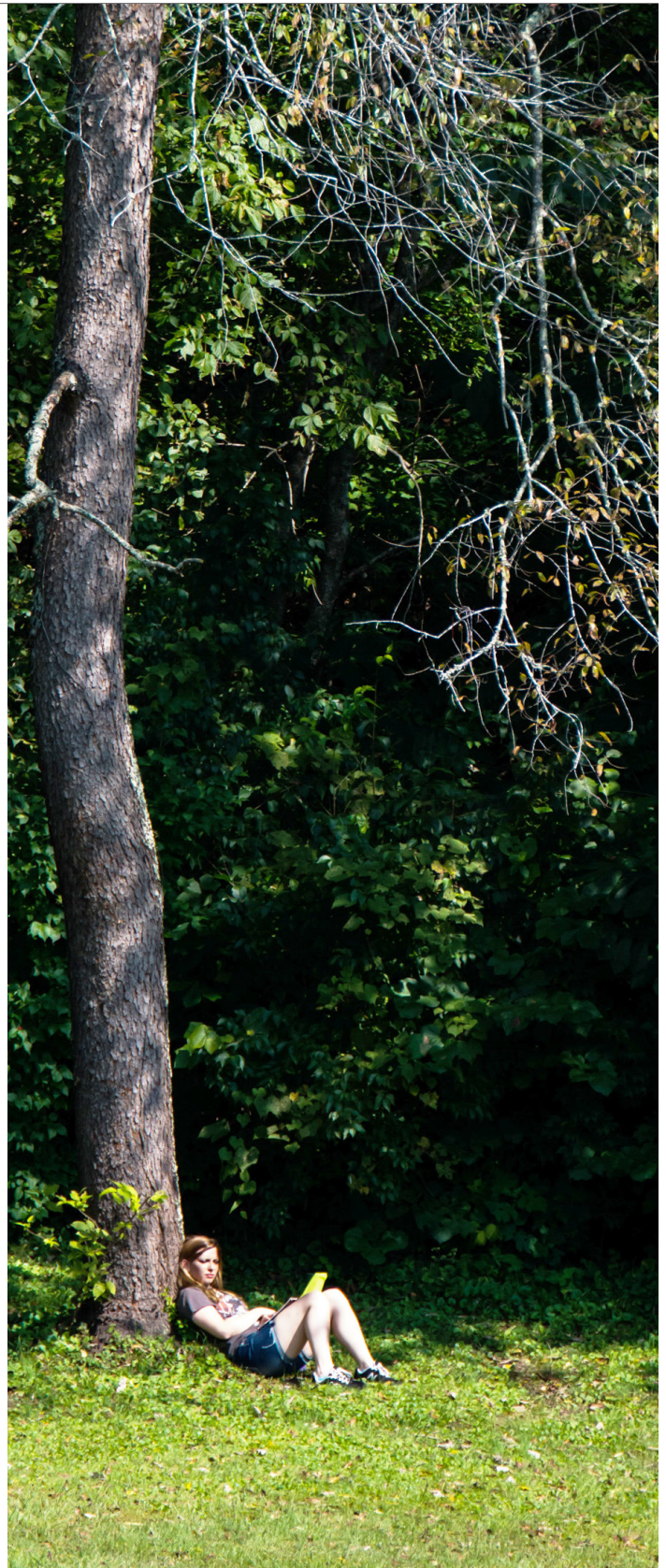
1. The first step to becoming disciplined is to determine your common pitfalls and obstacles that will keep you from reaching your desired end and goal (Hebrews 12:1). Are you involved in a good church back home or do you know of one? What temptations will you face in your environment? What is your current relationship like with your parents? Other obstacles could be

laziness or working long hours (not a bad thing, but something you need to plan for).

2. Make a list of priorities — things you want to accomplish on a daily and weekly basis. We prioritize what we value the most. How we use our resources (time, money, relationships, etc.) reveals where our priorities are. Self-discipline must draw upon your convictions about what has the most value in your life.
3. *Develop a schedule and stick to it.* Most of us don't plan to fail; we fail to plan. Make a weekly schedule — whether on your phone or using actual paper and pen. Do what works best for you.

Final Encouragement

God has given you both the resources and the responsibility to pursue and plan for your spiritual growth this summer and to effectively resist temptation. His grace is sufficient, and He gives you adequate resources to meet each day's challenge as you depend on Him and walk in the power of the Holy Spirit. You might want to review the booklet *Satisfied?*, which you can find at www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/spiritual-growth/satisfied.



More Practical Helps

Go to www.cru.org/train-and-grow to download additional materials and help you dig deeper spiritually.

Meeting With God

A great way to enjoy time with God is to write about what you're learning when you meet with Him. A journal is an excellent tool for recording these thoughts and emotions. Also, your journal is a useful place to write down your observations as you study God's Word.

When you record your observations from personal Bible study, use the following suggestions to help you get started.

- 10 minutes *Record* your thoughts, feelings and prayers from your time with the Lord.
- 20 minutes *Read:* [Study the passage for the day](#). Read a book passage by passage and focus on a topic to study, or use the suggested schedule below.
1. Write out the main thought of the passage.
 2. Write what you learned.
 3. Ask how this Scripture specifically applies to your life.
- 5 minutes *Deed:* Let Christ lead you to plan one unselfish and loving act of kindness for the day.
- 5 minutes *Need:* Decide what your greatest single need is for the day. Ask the Lord for a clear insight about your life. Trust Him for great things.
- Pray:* Spend time in prayer. The [ACTS strategy for prayer](#) is a good model to begin with.
- *Adoration:* Spend time praising the Lord by praying the Psalms back to Him (Psalm 28:7, 100:4). Sing hymns or listen to worship music.
 - *Confession:* Ask God to search your heart (Psalm 139:23-24). Confess any sins the Holy Spirit reveals to you (Psalm 66:18, 1 John 1:9). By faith, through prayer, yield your life to God. Ask His Holy Spirit to be in control of your life (Ephesians 5:15-20).
 - *Thanksgiving:* Thank God for all that He's done and is doing in your life and the lives of others. Write a list of what you're thankful for.
 - *Supplication:* Pray for specific things each day, such as personal concerns, family, upcoming events, friends, missionaries and so on. Write down your requests so you'll have a record of God's guidance and faithfulness.

More Ideas for Spending Time in God's Word

Option No. 1: Growing Closer to God in 31 Days

Isaiah 55:6-11	John 15:1-8	Colossians 1:9-14	Luke 11:5-10
Psalms 63:1-8	2 Corinthians 5:14-17	Philippians 2:1-11	Philippians 4:6-9
Matthew 7:21-27	Philippians 3:7-14	Romans 12:1-5	Matthew 13:53-58
Isaiah 40:28-31	Psalms 34:1-10	Ephesians 4:11-16	Luke 7:2-10
Psalms 1:1-6	James 1:2-8	1 John 4:7-13	2 Timothy 2:1-7
Joshua 1:6-9	2 Corinthians 5:14-17	1 Thessalonians 4:1-8	John 15:13-21
Mark 2:1-12	Romans 8:31-39	Psalms 119:1-11	1 Corinthians 9:19-27
Luke 7:36-50	2 Peter 1:4-8	Ephesians 6:13-20	

Option No. 2: New Testament Summer Reading Plan

Goal: Read through all of the New Testament during the summer.

Motivation: Gain an overall grasp of the New Testament.

May	June	July	August
John	Matthew	Mark	Acts
	Romans	Luke	Colossians
	1 Corinthians	2 Corinthians	2 Timothy
	Philippians	Galatians	Philemon
	1 Thessalonians	Ephesians	Hebrews
	1 Peter	2 Thessalonians	James
	1 John	1 Timothy	2 John
	Jude	Titus	3 John
		2 Peter	Revelation

Things to Pray for Your Campus

- That Christians would want to take a stand for Christ (Matthew 9:37-38). Pray that they would avoid personal involvement with any harmful elements of campus life (1 Corinthians 5-6, Revelation 21:8, John 17:15, 2 Corinthians 11:2-3).
- Pray for non-believers that God would prepare the soil of their hearts — that they would be hungry to hear the gospel and ready to respond in faith (Matthew 13).
- That we would consider our lives as Christ's, that we would present ourselves to Him and that we would seek His kingdom first (Romans 12:1-2, Matthew 6:33). Philippians 1:21 says, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."
- That we would let the Spirit of God control and empower us. Ephesians 3:16-17 says, "I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith."
- That we would be people who delight in God's Word. Psalm 1:2 talks about the righteous person "whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on His law day and night."
- That there would be a supernatural unity among followers of Christ so that the campus may believe. In John 17:20-21, Jesus prays, "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in Me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as You are in Me and I am in You. May they also be in Us so that the world may believe that You have sent Me."
- That we would grow spiritually this summer. That we would step out in faith (Hebrews 11:8, 12:1-3; Colossians 3:16; Romans 4:3).

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