



1. Habits are a **powerful** thing.
2. We are being **spiritually formed** (whether we are **aware** of it or not).
3. Spiritual formation is a **constant process**.
 - a. Its goal is **transformation** by the **Holy Spirit** to become more and more like **Jesus**.
 - b. It is a **process**, not a **program**.
 - c. It is a **journey**, not a **destination**.
 - d. It is about **training**, not **trying**.

Fill-ins: powerful, spiritually formed, aware, constant process, transformation, Holy Spirit, Jesus, process, program, journey, destination, training, trying

» NEXTSTEP

As we get ready to start on a journey to create new habits let me invite you to do this spiritual exercise that can begin to free you from the grip of distractions. It comes in a three-part rhythm:

Day 1: For 30 minutes, turn off **all** technology (not muted, not silenced, not on do-not-disturb). Make yourself a strong cup of coffee or tea. Find a good place to sit. Begin by praying these words from the Psalms aloud: "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! See if there be in wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting!" Then... be still. No writing. No talking. Nothing. For 30 minutes.

Day 2: Again, turn off your technology for 30 minutes... Today, take a 30-minute walk, allowing your footsteps to fall into the rhythm of your whispering the Jesus Prayer: "Lord, Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

Day 3: Once again, turn off your technology for 30 minutes. A good cup of coffee or tea and a comfortable chair are in order. Begin with this simple prayer Richard Foster composed for coffee time: "O Spirit of God, blow across my little life and let me drink in your great Love. Amen." Next, ever so slowly, pray the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:9-13). With each phrase of the prayer add your own thoughts or concerns a little like you are decorating a Christmas tree with your own ornaments. See if your extended prayerful meditation will bring you to the end of the Lord's Prayer at about the 30-minute mark.

Days 4, 5, and 6: Repeat the rhythm of the first 3 days.

Day 7: Use your technology to your heart's content.