

# Atomic Faith

## Part IV: Make It Easy

Date , 2025

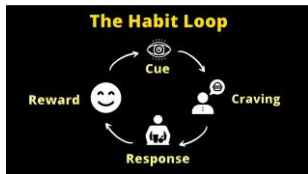


**Today we're learning to make our faith effortless.** Cuz *how* we *choose* what we *do*, isn't *just* about what we *want*, but *how hard* it is. And even our most *compelling* cravings *won't* come to *fruition* if they *feel* like a *challenging chore*. So, to *make a plan* to *streamline life* for *spiritual success* – we gotta start by *assessing* the current *convenience* of having *holy habits*. So, **is your faith easy?**



**Not by default! Living faithfully with consistency generally means enduring some sense of ongoing difficulty!** The way Paul admits:

*I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing.* – Romans 7:18-19 NIV



**True that!** And you know *why*? Cuz as we discussed *last* time we talked, **we mostly choose to do the things that are the most obvious and attractive** – and *down here* in a *broken world*, good *ain't* usually *obvious* or *attractive*! In fact, doing good often means *struggling* against *ourselves* and our *surroundings*, so when our habit loops reach the stage where we choose a *response* – faithful habits often *fall apart* cuz simply put, **evil is easier than good.**



*Keeping the wallet you found* is easier than tracking the owner *down*, *lying about why* you're late is easier than telling the *truth* and taking your *lumps*, and serving *yourself* is so much easier than *lending a hand*!



For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. – Matthew 7:13 NIV

**We resist righteousness cuz humans hesitate if something seems hard –** and our *earthly eyes* see a stairway to Heaven... and a *highway* to Hell!

But, once *again*, **we can shift our perspective with a simple strategy to make holy habits look as easy as any other option.** And *since easier* means *likelier* – if we take the effort out of the *good* we *want* to do, *faithful following* will naturally *transform* from a mere *desire* to our *daily default*!

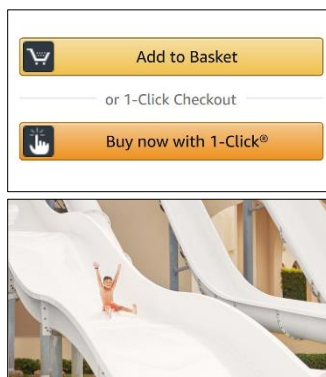
And that's the goal of this whole series: **finding a way to fuse faith with our existing routines.** And *removing* the roadblocks that make holy habits *feel* hard is a *critical* strategy for *spiritual* success cuz **our faith can grow more meaningful when we make it more manageable!** So, since we've *already* learned to make our faith more *obvious* and *attractive* by *saturating* our surroundings with the *attractive* elements – *today* we're going to explore more of James Clear's bestseller *Atomic Habits* to collect the 7 *keys* we need to make the *faithful habits* we *wish* we *had* – the *easy choice* we *want* to *make*. And the first key couldn't be any more *obvious*, *attractive*, or *easy*: **1. Keep it simple.**



Like we've said from the *start*, apart from our *spiritual* selves, **humans are simple creatures who prefer simple tasks**. And Clear outlines the *impact* of this instinct by telling the story of a *photography* professor who split his class into two groups: one graded on *quantity* of photos – and the other on *quality* of photos. And guess *who* produced the *best*? *Quantity*! While the “*quality group*” was paralyzed by *planning* for perfection the “*quantity group*” kept *carelessly snapping* and *naturally growing*. Cuz the becoming a *good* photographer *isn't* about *being good*, it's *simply* about *taking pictures*! And becoming a **faithful Christian isn't about being perfect, it's simply about following Christ!**

[Which is why Paul warned how overreaching can lead to underperforming ] I fear ... your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. – 2 Corinthians 11:3 NKJ

It's essential to keep our *faith* simple if we want our *hesitant humanity* to surrender to our *spiritual* pursuits; cuz **simple feels easy, easy feels sustainable, and sustainable becomes natural**. Don't aim for the perfect picture of holiness; aim for a hundred faithful snapshots. Two minutes of prayer today, a single Psalm tomorrow, one act of kindness at lunch – each is a shutter click that *gradually* sharpens the image of Christ in you. **Stop overthinking your actions so you can start taking more action** – cuz *simple* quantity *becomes* quality. And quantity *comes* from key **2. Make It Smooth**.



Cuz any type *friction* means more *work* – and **humans follow the law of least effort**. And since Amazon unstood that, they started something brilliant; the “*Buy Now*” button. No more *cart*. No more *confirmation*. Just *one* option so *easy* it compels us to *take* action without having to *count* the *cost*. They didn't *influence* our choices by *adding* options, they *directed* our decisions by *removing* steps. And by *eliminating* that effort they reduced enough *friction* to tip the scales in *favor* of the *desired* behavior. But as manipulative as that *is*, **we can use the same strategy as another tool to entice ourselves toward the faithful habits** we want to faithfully *choose*. And it's biblical:

Let us throw off everything that hinders ... and run with perseverance. – Hebrews 12:1 NIV

Look at your life – **the most habitual choices are almost always aimed at reducing some form of friction from your routine**: *texting*, online *dating*, Door Dash, Uber, and every Apple *product* or *subscription* all promise to *remove* the roadblocks that held you *back* from what you *want*. So take a page from their playbook and **find the friction in your faith and reduce the resistance**.

Maybe you hesitate cuz you gotta go get your Bible out of the car, clear the laundry off your quiet spot, or find a pen for your gratitude journal – smooth out every step, no matter how small. Read Scripture from the phone in your pocket, add another hamper to keep your prayer chair clear, and treat yourself to one of those journals that has a holster for your pen! Every *tiny* tweak matters cuz **every**

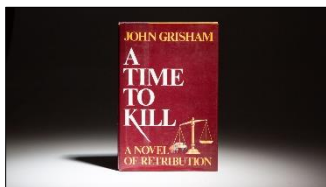
**ounce of friction you reduce removes a pound of hesitation.** And eventually you'll create your own spiritual "Buy Now" button that makes choosing holy habits feel as easy as 1-click shopping. You just need to commit to the process by consistently implementing key **3. Take It Slow.**



We gotta revisit *this* principle as *often* as possible cuz once we start seeing the *identity* we're adopting *come into focus*, as Clear says, **"Excitement inevitably takes over and you end up trying to do too much too soon."** Which is why we not only need to *start* slow, but accelerate slow. Remember our *two-minute new-habit rule* is all about getting your faith *started* and making it feel *sustainable* – so **don't start skipping steps or you'll start losing strength.** That's why Steve Martin said he only added *one* or *two* minutes to his routine *each year* – he needed the ongoing *encouragement* of what was already working to *anchor* the ongoing *improvement* of what *wasn't*!

[Which is a classic principle of wisdom from Proverbs:] Wealth gained *hastily* will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it. – Proverbs 13:11 ESV

And us Christians need to learn to pump the brakes cuz growing in faith can light a fire but **if we don't regulate the feel of zeal, it's all too easy to burn out.** So celebrate your spiritual growth – but don't forget that **consistency beats intensity in the end.** So stick with the two-minute version of your holy habit as the *easy start* that *anchors* your *daily identity* – and trust that it *will* naturally compound as you learn to do Key **4. Find Your Rhythm**



John Grisham wrote one page a day during lunch while practicing law. *One page. Every day. At lunch.* Then *boom* – his *first* novel. All because he discovered how a *starting routine* removes the need to *re-decide*. Cuz **once we master the art of starting, we can slip real work past our brain without it detecting the effort.** Why? Cuz humans see *choices* as an unwanted *demand* for our limited *brainpower* – but **rhythms reduce decision fatigue.** Ever ask your spouse to *pick dinner*? It's *never* easy. But y'know what *is*? Taco *Tuesday*! That's cuz *regulating* a time and place to *repeat* a choice *trains* your brain to treat it as a *stress-free reflex* instead of a *difficult decision*. So set it and forget it

[The LORD] wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen. – Isaiah 50:4 NIV

When "little by little" continues "*morning by morning*" it *stops* feeling like *work* and *starts* feeling like *life*. So, if you want to establish that kind of rapport with the Lord, once you find a small step that actually works, find a way to repeat it til it sticks. And consider key **5. Automate Endurance.**



Listen, no matter how *small* we get the *steps*, faithful following can start to *sap* your *strength* – but **there's simply nothing easier than autopilot**. So if your holy habit ever feels *hard*, look for ways to *invest* your energy in strategies that *outsource* your effort. Cuz **you only have to build the rails once to ride the train daily!** Which Clear illustrates with the invention of the *cash register*. Cuz *before* it existed, there was *always* a debate about the drawer; but a *locked till*, a *ringing bell*, and a *printed receipt* made theft *plummet* overnight – not because of spontaneous *morality* but because **the system made the right behavior the easy behavior**. And *honesty* got automated *across the country*!

[And the Bible is full of holy habit automation like *tithing*.] On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income – 1 Corinthians 16:2 NIV

So, do the same with your *discipleship*! Pre-decide how you want your holy habit to *happen* and **create systems to carry you where your willpower won't**. Scan the *code* during offering and set up *automatic giving* – even if it's a *dollar*; set a *reminder* to *pray* at a time you know you'll have 2 minutes; or *sign up* to serve and let *His Place* put *your serving* on a *schedule*! **Automation doesn't make you lazy; it makes you loyal in advance**. And after scheduling tomorrow's obedience today – help yourself hold on to the habit with Key **6. Complicate Quitting**.



You ever try to quit *Comcast*? I just got to live out that dream – and it was the *opposite* of Amazon's 1-click convenience! Multiple links. Confusing instructions. And waiting for a future email. *Why*? Cuz they know **if ease is appealing – effort is appalling**. And if they could just make cutting the cord hard enough, my humanity might see suffering through their service as the more appealing option. *Curse you Comcast!* But thanks for the idea! Cuz the same playbook that *reduces friction* to promote *good* habits can raise friction to *kill* bad ones. And **adding the smallest obstacles can change outcomes**; we drink less when beer's at the *back* of the fridge and *scroll less* if flip our phones to *grayscale*:

[So,] Make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. – Romans 13:14 ESV

Instead, **give it a hard time when it wants the easy way over the right way**. Clear tells how writer Victor Hugo had a deadline and *zero* motivation, so he locked up his *clothes* and gave the key to a friend. *Couldn't* go out, so he *had* to write. He *added* friction to the path of *failure*. You and I don't have to do *that*, but the *principle* is pure gold: **make failing your faith inconvenient**. Put the remote up on a shelf, your phone charger across your bedroom, and a *blocker* on your *browser*. Reduce the friction for obedience by raising it for sin to prepare for key **7. Let the Lord Lighten Your Load**.





*This is the **ultimate** key that every **secular** book of **strategy** can't seem to see even though it **finishes** the work **they** started. Cuz Clear praises people for **outsourcing** tasks when they discover their **best** results came from surrendering to **support** – but **neglects** to hear where **that** thought logically **ends**: **we all need something beyond everyone's reach!** And all of these **tips** and **tricks** are just meant to **mitigate** the frustrating failure that **proves** how deeply we need help – so **we'll** cry out and finally **hear**:*

Come to Me... I will give you rest... My yoke is easy, and My burden is light. – Matthew 11:28-30 NIV

Cuz God's grace isn't a **strategy** for success, it's the breath in our lungs that **empowers endurance!**

It is God who works in you to will and to act ... to fulfill His good purpose. – Philippians 2:13 NIV

So here's *this* week's challenge: **make it easy for God to use you!** Find the **friction** that's holding your faithful habit **back** and **smooth it out** by removing **one** roadblock to its **rhythm** and **adding one obstacle** to its **failure** – and then watch your **stairway of struggle** turn into a **highway to Heaven!**