

PRAYER | FASTING | SCRIPTURE | A RENEWED YOU

# POSITIONED FOR BREAKTHROUGH

A 7-DAY SOUL FAST THROUGH COLOSSIANS

SEPTEMBER 27 - OCTOBER 3

ROOTED IN CHRIST.  
RENEWED IN MIND.  
REPOSITIONED FOR  
WHAT'S NEXT.

*As you therefore  
have received Christ Jesus  
the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted  
and built up in Him, and established  
in the faith...*

COLOSSIANS 2:6-7

LESS NOISE | MORE OF HIM

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# THE JOURNEY

*Seven days, one letter. Paul wrote Colossians to a church that was being pulled away from the sufficiency of Christ by everything that promised to complete them. Each day of this fast walks through one movement of that letter.*

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**1 See Christ    Colossians 1:1–23**

Jesus is enough.

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**2 Be Rooted    Colossians 1:24–2:15**

I do not need a new foundation. I need deeper roots.

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**3 Set Your Mind    Colossians 2:16–3:4**

Where my mind goes matters.

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**4 Put It to Death    Colossians 3:5–11**

Some things do not need managing. They need to die.

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**5 Put On Christ    Colossians 3:12–17**

He is producing something, not just removing something.

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**6 Walk It Out    Colossians 3:18–4:1**

Transformation is supposed to be visible.

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**7 Watch & Pray    Colossians 4:2–18**

Stay in position.

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Read everything before Day 1 and answer the five questions. A fast that was never planned is a fast that will not be finished.



# WHAT IS THE SOUL?

Paul prays that God would make His people holy in every way, and he names three parts: spirit, soul, and body (1 Thessalonians 5:23, NLT). Most of us only pay attention to two of them.

The **spirit** is the part made alive in Christ. For anyone who is born again, that part is settled. It is not the problem, and it does not need repair.

The **body** is the part that gets fed, trained, medicated, and photographed. Most people are painfully aware of that one.

The **soul** is the part in between. It is the mind, the will, the imagination, and the emotions. It is where thinking happens, where choices get made, where the future gets pictured before it arrives, and where everything is felt. It is the seat of desire, appetite, and attention.

The imagination deserves particular attention, because it is the part almost nobody thinks to guard. It is where the future gets rehearsed. A great deal of what we call anxiety is simply imagination running unsupervised — picturing a future with God left out of it. Paul was addressing exactly this when he wrote about capturing rebellious thoughts and teaching them to obey Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5, NLT).

The soul is also the part of a person that Scripture addresses most often. David did not only pray to God about his soul; he spoke to it directly. He asked it why it was so discouraged (Psalm 42:5, NLT). He commanded it to praise the Lord (Psalm 103:1, NLT). He instructed it to wait quietly before God alone (Psalm 62:1, NLT). He said that he had calmed and quieted himself like a weaned child with its mother (Psalm 131:2, NLT). Which means the soul can get loud, and it means quiet is not something that happens to a person. It is something a person does.

**A SOUL FAST IS MAINTENANCE ON THE PART OF US THAT NOBODY ELSE CAN SEE AND EVERYBODY ELSE CAN FEEL.**

# WHY A SOUL FAST?

The usual assumption behind fasting is that we are running on empty and need to be filled. For most of us the opposite is true. We are not empty. We are overfilled.

The average day begins with a phone before it begins with God, and continues through notifications, headlines written to provoke, clips, opinions, messages, music, arguments, and other people's lives. Somewhere in the middle of all of it, we attempt to pray. Then we wonder why prayer feels distracted, why Scripture is hard to concentrate on, why the mind wanders during worship, and why sitting still before the Lord for ten minutes has become difficult. **THAT IS NOT A GOD PROBLEM. IT IS A NOISE PROBLEM.**

Jesus said the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things crowd out the word and keep it from producing a harvest (Mark 4:19, NLT). The seed was good. The seed was planted. Something else grew up around it and choked it. Nothing in that parable suggests God stopped speaking. It suggests that too much started speaking at once.

Hebrews separates two things that have to go: strip off every weight that slows us down, and especially the sin that so easily trips us up (Hebrews 12:1, NLT). Two categories, deliberately distinguished. Some things in life are not evil; they are heavy. Some are not sinful; they are loud. Some are entirely permissible and simply no longer helpful. Paul said he was allowed to do anything, but not everything was good for him, and he refused to become a slave to any of it (1 Corinthians 6:12, NLT).

Romans 12 is where a fast like this finds its target, and Paul begins by asking for the person rather than the problem: give your bodies to God because of all He has done for you (Romans 12:1, NLT). Not the prayer list. Not the one area of life that needs fixing. The body, meaning all of you: spirit, soul, and body. That includes your time, attention, desires, habits, plans, relationships, and future. **THE FIRST POSTURE OF A FAST IS NOT STRATEGY. IT IS SURRENDER.**

He then names what has to be refused. Do not copy the behavior and customs of this world (Romans 12:2, NLT). The world rarely shapes anyone through something obviously evil; it does the work through the constant. Constant information, constant entertainment, constant opinions, constant notifications, constant outrage, constant comparison. A person can grow so accustomed to stimulation that silence begins to feel like punishment, and so saturated with everyone else's convictions that they can no longer locate their own. It is entirely possible to know precisely what the internet is saying and have no idea what God is saying.

Then comes the promise. Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think (Romans 12:2, NLT). Not stop doing worldly things — be transformed, and be transformed at the level of thought. God is not after behavior that lasts until the fast is over. He is after a renewed mind, and a mind does not get renewed in a crowd of voices. Seven days of interrupting the streams that pour in all day is simply a way of making room for the Word to pour in instead.

In fact, Paul says: then you will learn to know God's will for you (Romans 12:2, NLT). Discernment comes after renewal, not before it. Many of us are asking what God wants us to do, which is a good question, but there may be a better one first... What has been clouding our ability to hear Him? God is certainly able to speak through noise. Yet again and again Scripture calls His people to stillness, attentiveness, watchfulness, and sober minds. Be still and know that He is God (Psalm 46:10, NLT). In quietness and confidence is your strength (Isaiah 30:15, NLT). Sometimes the most spiritual thing a person can do is turn something off.

Throughout Scripture, fasting most often means abstaining from food for a spiritual purpose. These seven days focus on a soul fast — deliberately laying down media, entertainment, distraction, and noise in order to give God undivided attention. Some will feel led to add a food fast as well, and that is a decision to be made prayerfully before the Lord. One caution belongs here: anyone with a medical condition, anyone who is pregnant or nursing, or anyone on medication should speak with a doctor first and allow the Holy Spirit to lead them into a different form of consecration.

Whatever gets laid down, the power is not in the deprivation, the discomfort, or the proof of sincerity. **THE GOAL IS CONSECRATION.** Fasting clears the room so that prayer, repentance, and surrender can have full attention. This is why God calls His people to turn to Him with all their hearts, with fasting and weeping and mourning (Joel 2:12, NLT), and then immediately clarifies that He wants torn hearts rather than torn clothing (Joel 2:13, NLT). Isaiah 58 is worth reading before the first day. God there rejects a fast that leaves people arguing, quarreling, and mistreating one another, and describes the fast He chooses as one that breaks chains, feeds the hungry, and shelters the homeless.

Which leads to the last thing that has to be settled before Day 1. We are not fasting because God is reluctant, because His attention has to be earned, or because He needs to be persuaded to love us. Jesus already purchased that access. We come boldly to the throne of grace because of Him, not because of our discipline (Hebrews 4:16, NLT). We fast because we want Him more than we want the things that have been consuming us. Tender hearts. Renewed minds. Attentive ears. Reordered priorities. Submitted appetites. Surrendered lives. And because sometimes the breakthrough being prayed for requires us to become different people first. God may well change our circumstances, and we will ask Him boldly to do it. **BUT EVEN IF NOTHING AROUND US CHANGES IN THESE SEVEN DAYS, SOMETHING IN US WILL.**



# WHAT SHOULD I FAST?

This will not look identical for everyone, and it should not. Ask the Holy Spirit what needs to go quiet for seven days, then get specific enough that you will know at 9:40 on a Tuesday night whether you are keeping it.

## Screens and feeds

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- Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, X, Threads, Snapchat
- Reels, Shorts, and mindless scrolling
- YouTube
- Specific apps — you already know which
- Group chats that consume attention

## Voices and information

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- News and political media
- Podcasts
- Celebrity and culture commentary
- Online debates and comment sections
- Anything followed that leaves you agitated

## Words

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- Gossip
- Complaining
- Sarcasm that cuts
- Negative conversations you keep volunteering for
- Arguing to win

## Entertainment

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- Television and streaming services
- Movies
- Video games
- Sports and sports talk
- Nonessential books and audiobooks

## Appetites and habits

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- Online shopping and browsing
- Constant background music or noise
- Unnecessary phone use
- A specific food, sugar, or caffeine
- Meals, if the Lord leads you to add a food fast

This is not a list of forbidden things, and nothing on it is being called sin. The question is not what is allowed. The question is what is competing for God's attention.

For one person that is television. For another it is social media, or the news, or something else. **DO NOT CHOOSE WHAT SOUNDS SPIRITUAL. CHOOSE WHAT ACTUALLY COSTS SOMETHING.** A fast that costs nothing will change nothing. When David was offered a sacrifice for free, he refused it... he would not offer the Lord something that cost him nothing (2 Samuel 24:24, NLT).



# DON'T JUST REMOVE. REPLACE.

Removal by itself is not a fast; it is an absence. Something has to take the vacated space.

Jesus told a story about an evil spirit that leaves a man, wanders, and returns to find the house swept clean, put in order, and empty. It moves back in, brings others with it, and the man ends up worse off than he began (Matthew 12:43–45, NLT). Swept and empty was never the goal. Occupied by something better is the goal.

## LAY DOWN

Thirty minutes of scrolling

Television at night

A podcast in the car

Reaching for the phone first

Filling every silence

Venting to a friend

## PICK UP

**Thirty minutes in the Word**

**Prayer at night**

**Worship, prayer, or silence in the car**

**Reaching for the Bible first**

**Letting some silence stand**

**Pouring it out to God first**

Paul's language is worth noticing. He does not ask that the message about Christ visit us, or supplement us, or fit into the margins of the week. He asks that it fill our lives (Colossians 3:16, NLT).

Not less social media, but more Word. Not less entertainment, but more prayer. Not less noise, but more awareness of God. Not less talking, but more listening. **REMOVE EVERYTHING AND REPLACE IT WITH NOTHING, AND THIS WILL NOT BE A FAST... IT WILL JUST BE BOREDOM.**

# 5 QUESTIONS TO ANSWER FIRST

## 1 What am I fasting?

*Be specific. Do not write “distractions.” Name them.*

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## 2 Why am I fasting these things?

*What have they been doing to my attention, my emotions, my time, my walk?*

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## 3 What am I replacing them with, and when?

*Prayer? Scripture? Worship? Silence? Journaling? Walking and praying? Put a time on it.*

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## 4 Where am I asking God for breakthrough?

*Say it plainly. Write the thing that has been avoided.*

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## 5 Where might God be trying to reposition me?

*Sit with that one before answering it.*

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*You do not position yourself for breakthrough by chasing breakthrough.*

**You position yourself by becoming rooted in Christ.**

# THE DECLARATION

*Read this aloud before Day 1 and read it again any day the fast gets hard. Out loud matters. Faith comes from hearing, and that includes hearing yourself agree with God (Romans 10:17, NLT).*

**I declare that everything competing for God's place in my life must come into order.**

My soul will not be ruled by chaos.  
My mind will not be ruled by anxiety.  
My future will not be ruled by fear.

**Every distraction, weight, appetite, offense, fear, unhealthy attachment, and competing voice is coming under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.**

I will not be conformed to this world.  
I am being transformed by the renewing of my mind.  
I present myself to God as a living sacrifice.

ROMANS 12:1-2

**I position myself to hear His voice.**

I quiet the noise and turn my attention toward God.  
I make room for His Word, His presence, and His direction.  
My mind is coming into alignment with the truth of God's Word.  
My heart is coming into alignment with the heart of God.  
My desires are coming into alignment with His will.  
My priorities are coming into alignment with His Kingdom.

**I will have ears to hear what the Spirit is saying.**

I set my mind on things above by choosing truth over fear, eternity over temporary pressure, and the Kingdom of God over the noise of this world.  
I fix my eyes on Jesus by returning my attention to His Word, His character, His ways, and His example.  
I lay aside every weight, every distraction, habit, mindset, appetite, or unhealthy attachment that slows my obedience and pulls my attention away from God.  
I refuse to be spiritually dull, distracted, or out of position.

COLOSSIANS 3:1-2 · HEBREWS 12:1-2 · REVELATION 2:7

## **I declare that I am rooted and built up in Christ.**

I will not be moved by fear.  
I will not be governed by offense.  
I will not be controlled by my flesh.  
I will not be distracted by noise.

**The voice of God will have my attention...** I declare that old cycles are breaking, strongholds are coming down, wrong mindsets are being uprooted, and unhealthy patterns are losing their grip.

**What needs to die, I will put to death:** sexual immorality, impurity, lust, greed, anger, wrath, malice, corrupt speech, lying, pride, jealousy, and every fleshly desire that wars against the life of Christ in me.

**What needs to be released, I will release:** offense, bitterness, resentment, comparison, the need for approval, the need to control, fear of the future, regret from the past, and anything I have been carrying that God never asked me to carry.

**Who needs to be forgiven, I will forgive:** those who hurt me, betrayed me, disappointed me, rejected me, misunderstood me, dishonored me, or failed me. I refuse to allow yesterday's wound to determine tomorrow's position.

**What God tells me to obey, I will obey:** whether He tells me to go, stay, speak, be silent, forgive, apologize, give, serve, wait, release, confront, or move. My answer to God will be **yes**.

COLOSSIANS 3:5-10 · EPHESIANS 4:31-32 · HEBREWS 12:1 · JAMES 1:22

## **I declare breakthrough over every place that has been stuck.**

**Breakthrough in my prayer life:** renewed hunger for God, consistency in His presence, greater sensitivity to His voice, deeper intercession, and confidence when I pray.

**Breakthrough in my mind:** renewed thinking, freedom from tormenting thoughts, victory over fear and anxiety, strongholds demolished, and the peace of God guarding my thoughts.

**Breakthrough in my family:** salvation, unity, healing, forgiveness, restored relationships, healthy communication, and the breaking of destructive generational cycles.

**Breakthrough in my health:** healing, strength, wisdom, discipline, endurance, and grace to steward my body well.

**Breakthrough in provision:** every need supplied, wisdom to steward what God places in my hands, freedom from fear concerning money, unexpected provision, and resources for every assignment God gives me.

**Breakthrough in relationships:** reconciliation where God desires restoration, courage to establish healthy boundaries where necessary, freedom from unhealthy attachments, and relationships that sharpen, strengthen, and draw me closer to Christ.

**Breakthrough in my calling:** clarity concerning my assignment, courage to obey, grace for what God has called me to carry, freedom from comparison and fear of people, and doors that no man can shut.

**Breakthrough in vision:** clear spiritual sight, discernment for this season, wisdom for what is next, focus to recognize what matters, and strategy to move when God says move.

**Breakthrough in the Church:** renewed hunger for God, fresh fire on the altar, unity in the Body, bold preaching of the Word, powerful prayer, genuine repentance, healing and deliverance, souls saved, disciples made, prodigals returning, leaders strengthened, and the presence of God taking priority again.

**I will not chase breakthrough and neglect the God of breakthrough.**

I seek first His Kingdom.  
I trust His timing.  
I surrender my plans.  
I make room for His will.  
My mind is being renewed.  
My heart is being purified.  
My priorities are being reordered.  
My roots are going deeper.  
My spiritual ears are becoming more attentive.  
My life is coming into alignment with the will of God.

**I AM ROOTED.**

**I AM READY.**

**I AM POSITIONED FOR BREAKTHROUGH.**

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*



# DAY 1

# SEE CHRIST

*Repositioning Our Attention*

**READ TODAY | Colossians 1:1–23**

## ANCHOR VERSE

*“He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together.”*

COLOSSIANS 1:17 (NLT)

## TODAY'S REPOSITION

The first thing touched tomorrow morning is not a screen. Move the phone tonight.

## WRITE IT OUT

*Copy the anchor verse by hand. You cannot skim what you are writing.*

Paul is writing to a church with a problem, and he does not begin by naming the problem. He begins with a portrait of Jesus. Before Colossians asks anyone to change a single habit, it spends twenty verses describing a Person. That order is deliberate. Correction that does not begin with revelation produces behavior modification, and behavior modification never outlasts the pressure that produced it.

Read what he says. Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. Everything in heaven and on earth was created through Him and for Him. He existed before anything else, and He holds all creation together. He is first in everything (*Colossians 1:15–18, NLT*). This is not devotional poetry. It is a claim about the structure of reality that nothing in life is holding itself together, and nothing holds together apart from Him.

Hold that against the way most of us actually live. Jesus becomes a category. An important one, but a category. A commitment on the calendar. A part of the week managed alongside work, family, and the endless scroll. Paul's argument is that He is not a part of anything. **He is the One holding all the parts together**, and a life arranged around Him as a section rather than a center is a life quietly out of position.

The church at Colossae was not fighting atheism. It was fighting addition. Nobody there was denying Christ; they were supplementing Him — Jesus plus philosophy, Jesus plus religious rules, Jesus plus mystical experience, Jesus plus whatever the surrounding culture insisted was necessary in order to be complete. Addition is more dangerous than denial, because it never feels like unbelief. It feels like thoroughness. The modern version is not difficult to name: Jesus plus the algorithm, Jesus plus the news cycle, Jesus plus whichever voice has been allowed to narrate the week. Additions like these never announce themselves; they accumulate, and attention is how they get in.



Consider how easy it is to drive the same road five hundred times and never once see the mountain on the horizon, because at every red light the eyes go down to a screen. The mountain has not moved. It has never moved. What moved was attention — and attention, surrendered in small increments over a long enough stretch of time, will eventually make the largest thing in the landscape invisible.

That is what this first day is for. Not learning something new about Jesus. **Looking at Him again, on purpose, until He is the largest thing in view.** Scripture promises that we become like what we behold (2 Corinthians 3:18, NLT), which means the direction of life is decided by the direction of gaze.

#### SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

|                           |                                                               |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Colossians 1:15–20</b> | <i>The full portrait. Read it slowly, out loud.</i>           |
| <b>Hebrews 12:2</b>       | <i>Keep your eyes on Jesus. Attention is a discipline.</i>    |
| <b>Psalms 27:4</b>        | <i>One thing David asked for, and it was not deliverance.</i> |
| <b>2 Corinthians 3:18</b> | <i>We become like what we behold.</i>                         |
| <b>John 1:1–5</b>         | <i>Nothing was made without Him.</i>                          |
| <b>Revelation 1:12–18</b> | <i>What happens to a man who actually sees Him.</i>           |
| <b>Psalms 34:5</b>        | <i>Those who look to Him are radiant with joy.</i>            |

#### PRAY

*Jesus, I have been managing my life with You in one of the categories. Today I am putting You back in the center. Show me who You really are — not who I reduced You to, and not who I assumed You were when I was younger. Open my eyes. Make me hungry for You again. And let me see Your supremacy over the very thing I have been worried about all week.*

#### WRITE

**1 Write down where your attention actually went yesterday. Be honest — not where it was meant to go.**

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**2 What are you adding to Jesus? What do you quietly believe you need in addition to Him in order to be all right?**

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**3 Read Colossians 1:15–20 and write the one phrase you cannot get past. Then write why.**

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## DAY 2

# BE ROOTED

*Repositioning Our Foundation*

**READ TODAY | Colossians 1:24–2:15**

### ANCHOR VERSE

*“Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him.”*

COLOSSIANS 2:7 (NLT)

### TODAY'S REPOSITION

Sit in silence for ten minutes today. No music, no podcast, no background noise.

### WRITE IT OUT

*Copy the anchor verse by hand. You cannot skim what you are writing.*

Roots grow underground, in the dark, in silence, where nobody applauds. Today is the second day of the fast, and you might feel like nothing is happening. The noise is gone and nothing spectacular has happened. That is not failure. **That is root work, and root work is invisible by design.**

There is a reason the tree that goes down in a storm is rarely the small one. It is usually the large tree with shallow roots in soft ground... the one that looked healthiest right up until the wind arrived. Size is not stability. Depth is.

It is worth drawing a line between being rooted and being potted. A potted plant is genuinely alive. It is green, it is growing, it is doing fine, and it is only as deep as its container. Move it and it goes into shock. Some believers are potted. They look healthy inside the environment of a Sunday service, with the right music and the right people nearby. Put them in a new city, a hard season, a hospital waiting room, a church conflict, or a long stretch of silence from God, and they discover that their roots never made it past the pot.

Paul's remedy is not a new foundation. It is depth in the one already laid. *Continue to follow Christ. Let your roots grow down into Him. Let your life be built on Him. Let your faith grow strong in the truth you were taught, and overflow with thankfulness (Colossians 2:6–7, NLT).* Every verb in that sentence describes something ongoing. None of them describe a moment.

The warning arrives in the very next verse: *do not let anyone capture you with empty philosophy and high-sounding nonsense that comes from human thinking rather than from Christ (Colossians 2:8, NLT).* Captured. Taken. Carried off. That is the language of a prisoner of war, and it describes precisely what shallow roots make possible. A person without depth does not usually reject the truth outright. They simply get moved by whatever is most recent and most confident.

Jeremiah supplies the promise. *The one who trusts in the Lord is like a tree planted along a riverbank, roots reaching deep into the water — not bothered by the heat, green through the drought, still bearing fruit (Jeremiah 17:7–8, NLT).* He never claims the heat does not come. He says the tree is not bothered by it. The drought is assumed. The fruit is the surprise.

**Roots decide whether the next hard season becomes a funeral or a transplant.**

#### SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

|                          |                                                           |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Colossians 2:6–10</b> | <i>Rooted, built up, strengthened, overflowing.</i>       |
| <b>Jeremiah 17:7–8</b>   | <i>The tree by the water in a year of drought.</i>        |
| <b>Psalms 1:1–3</b>      | <i>What is meditated on decides what can be survived.</i> |
| <b>Ephesians 3:17–19</b> | <i>Roots grow down into the love of God.</i>              |
| <b>Matthew 7:24–27</b>   | <i>Same storm. Two houses. One difference.</i>            |
| <b>Luke 6:47–48</b>      | <i>He dug deep. That is the whole sermon.</i>             |
| <b>Psalms 92:12–14</b>   | <i>Still bearing fruit in old age.</i>                    |

#### PRAY

*Lord, I do not need a different foundation. I need deeper roots. Take me past the shallow places... past the version of faith that only works when the music is right and the room is full. Root me in Christ where nobody can see it. Give me a private life with You that could survive being moved. And expose any empty philosophy I have quietly allowed to shape the way I think.*

#### WRITE

**1** Where in your life are you potted rather than planted? Where would a change of environment expose you?

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**2** Name the last dry season you walked through. What held, and what did not?

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**3** What human thinking have you absorbed that you have never actually tested against Scripture?

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# DAY 3

# SET YOUR MIND

*Repositioning Our Thoughts and Affections*

**READ TODAY | Colossians 2:16–3:4**

## ANCHOR VERSE

*“Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.”*

COLOSSIANS 3:2 (NLT)

## TODAY'S REPOSITION

Each time you reach for the thing you are fasting, say one sentence to God instead. Count how often it happens.

## WRITE IT OUT

*Copy the anchor verse by hand. You cannot skim what you are writing.*

Set is a deliberate word. A thermostat is set. An alarm is set. A table is set. Nothing in that list sets itself, and none of it stays set by accident.

Most of us treat the mind like a thermometer rather than a thermostat. It reports the room. Bad news produces an anxious mind, a good week produces decent thoughts, and one difficult conversation sets the temperature for the rest of the day. **Paul's instruction assumes the opposite... that the mind is something a person sets, and that the dial is within reach.**

Consider how attention actually works now. Nobody chose their feed. They trained it. Every video paused on for three seconds taught the system something about appetite. Every profile lingered over, every argument read to the bottom, every product looked at twice... all of it was instruction. The feed was trained, and now it returns the favor. This is not paranoia. It is the business model, and it is extraordinarily good at its job.

Which means the honest question is not whether social media is sinful. The honest question is what a feed has been discipling someone into... because it has been discipling them into something. Comparison. Outrage. Appetite. Cynicism. Low-grade fear. Nobody absorbs an hour a day of anything for five years and comes out unchanged.

Paul is not only after thoughts, either. Older translations render the phrase “set your affection on things above,” and affection is a word about love rather than logic. What a person thinks about long enough, they eventually begin to want. Nobody drifts toward heaven; the direction has to be chosen.

And he anchors the command to a fact rather than a feeling. *You have been raised with Christ, so set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits at God's right hand. Your life is hidden*

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with Christ in God (Colossians 3:1–3, NLT). This is not positive thinking. It is accurate thinking about a new address.

Romans states it from the other direction: *those controlled by the Spirit think about the things that please the Spirit, and letting the Spirit control the mind leads to life and peace (Romans 8:5–6, NLT).* **Life and peace are not personality types. They are the fruit of a mind that has been set.**

#### SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

|                             |                                                             |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Colossians 3:1–4</b>     | <i>Your life is hidden with Christ in God.</i>              |
| <b>Romans 8:5–6</b>         | <i>A mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.</i>   |
| <b>Philippians 4:8</b>      | <i>Paul’s filter. Run a feed through it.</i>                |
| <b>Isaiah 26:3</b>          | <i>Perfect peace goes to a fixed mind, not a calm life.</i> |
| <b>2 Corinthians 10:3–5</b> | <i>Take captive what has been taking you captive.</i>       |
| <b>Psalms 119:37</b>        | <i>Turn my eyes from worthless things.</i>                  |
| <b>Proverbs 4:23</b>        | <i>Guard your heart. Everything flows from it.</i>          |

#### PRAY

*Father, I confess that I have allowed other things to set my mind. I have been formed by voices I never chose and appetites I never approved. Today I am setting the dial. Fix my thoughts on You. Turn my eyes from worthless things. Restore my ability to concentrate on Your Word. And where my affections have attached themselves to things that are passing away, break the attachment and give me a greater desire.*

#### WRITE

**1** What has your feed been disciplining you into? Name it in one word, then write the evidence.

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**2** Run yesterday’s thought life through Philippians 4:8. What survives the filter?

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**3** Which thought do you keep rehearsing that God never asked you to carry?

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# DAY 4

# PUT IT TO DEATH

*Repositioning Our Appetites*

**READ TODAY | Colossians 3:5–11**

## ANCHOR VERSE

*“So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you.”*

COLOSSIANS 3:5 (NLT)

## TODAY'S REPOSITION

Confess it out loud today, not silently. To God... and if it involves another person, to them.

## WRITE IT OUT

*Copy the anchor verse by hand. You cannot skim what you are writing.*

Paul's verb is not manage. It is not monitor, moderate, balance, or build healthy boundaries around. It is kill. *Put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you (Colossians 3:5, NLT)*. The language is deliberately violent, because the thing being described does not respond to negotiation.

Nobody keeps a rattlesnake on a leash. There is no arrangement to be reached with something whose nature is to strike. And yet an arrangement is exactly what many believers have made. Things Scripture told us to bury have been given softer names... a struggle, an area of growth, a weakness, a personality trait. **Renaming a thing does not change its nature. It only postpones the funeral.**

Paul's list refuses to let anyone off the hook. Sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires, and greed... and then, remarkably, he calls greed idolatry. A second list follows immediately: anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander, dirty language, and lying to one another (*Colossians 3:5–9, NLT*). The private sin and the public temper appear on the same page. The appetite nobody knows about and the mouth everybody knows about receive the same verdict. We rank these. Paul does not.

There is a reason this arrives on the fourth day. By now the fast has begun to expose something. When the thing a person always reaches for is taken away, the appetite underneath it starts making noise... boredom, irritability, restlessness, a hand going to a pocket forty times a day for a phone that is not there. That noise is not evidence that the fast is failing. It is the diagnosis, and it is the answer to the prayer prayed on the first day.

Nobody discovers what has a grip on them while they are feeding it. That information only becomes available after the feeding stops. Which is also why the fourth day is where most people quit: the discomfort arrives well before the results do.

But none of this can be accomplished by willpower, and Scripture never asks anyone to try. *It is by the Spirit that we put to death the deeds of the body (Romans 8:13, NLT). Those who belong to Christ have already nailed the passions of the flesh to His cross (Galatians 5:24, NLT).* The grave being dug today was purchased at Calvary. **This is not a verdict being achieved. It is a verdict being enforced.**

*A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls (Proverbs 25:28, NLT)* — not because the city is weak, but because nothing is keeping anything out. Today is for rebuilding the wall.

#### SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

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|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Colossians 3:5–9</b> | <i>Both lists. Do not skip the second one.</i>       |
| <b>Romans 8:13</b>      | <i>By the Spirit... not by gritted teeth.</i>        |
| <b>Galatians 5:24</b>   | <i>Already nailed to His cross.</i>                  |
| <b>Romans 6:11–14</b>   | <i>Dead to sin, alive to God. Now act like it.</i>   |
| <b>Matthew 5:29–30</b>  | <i>Jesus was not gentle about radical removal.</i>   |
| <b>James 1:14–15</b>    | <i>How desire becomes a habit becomes a death.</i>   |
| <b>Proverbs 25:28</b>   | <i>No self-control, no walls, no city.</i>           |
| <b>1 Peter 2:11</b>     | <i>These desires wage war against the very soul.</i> |

#### PRAY

*Holy Spirit, I am not asking You to help me manage this. I am asking You to kill it. Put to death in me what I have been keeping alive. I confess the thing I renamed so that I would not have to repent of it. Show me what surfaced this week when the noise was taken away, and give me the courage not to look away from it. I cannot do this by willpower. Do it in me by Your Spirit.*

#### WRITE

**1** What surfaced this week when the noise stopped? Write it plainly.

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**2** What have you renamed so that you would not have to repent of it?

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**3** Read both of Paul's lists. Which one do you excuse in yourself and judge in other people?

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# DAY 5

# PUT ON CHRIST

*Repositioning Our Character*

**READ TODAY | Colossians 3:12–17**

## ANCHOR VERSE

*“let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts.”*

COLOSSIANS 3:15 (NLT)

## TODAY'S REPOSITION

Forgive someone today, out loud and by name in prayer. Then ask God whether it needs to be said to them.

## WRITE IT OUT

Copy the anchor verse by hand. You cannot skim what you are writing.

Something was taken off yesterday. Today is about what goes on, because an empty life does not stay empty for long. Paul moves directly from the grave to the closet: *clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience; make allowance for each other's faults; forgive as the Lord forgave you; and above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony (Colossians 3:12–14, NLT).*

Getting dressed is deliberate and daily. Nobody wakes up already clothed, and nobody stays clothed on the strength of a decision made last year. Scripture speaks of character as a garment for exactly this reason... it has to be put on again every morning, and it can be left off.

Then Paul uses a word that ought to change the way decisions get made. He says to let the peace of Christ rule in the heart. The term he chose is athletic; it describes what an umpire does. An umpire calls the play, settles the dispute, makes the ruling, and the game moves on. **In that verse, peace is not a mood. Peace is an official.**

Which means peace is not merely what a person feels after a decision has been made. It is meant to help make the decision. When someone is about to say yes to a commitment, a conversation, or a relationship that has consistently cost them their peace, the umpire's hand is already raised. The problem is rarely that God was silent. The problem is that the call was overruled.

There is a simple way to find out what is actually ruling a heart. What is the first thing checked in the morning, and what gets replayed at two o'clock in the morning? Whatever answers those two questions has been wearing the uniform.



Then comes verse 16, which is this entire fast in a single line: *let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives (Colossians 3:16, NLT)*. Fill. Not visit, not supplement, not fit into the margins. **Four days have been spent making room. Today is about what moves in.**

#### SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

|                           |                                                           |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Colossians 3:12–17</b> | <i>The whole wardrobe.</i>                                |
| <b>Galatians 5:22–23</b>  | <i>Fruit is grown, not manufactured.</i>                  |
| <b>Ephesians 4:22–24</b>  | <i>Throw off the old. Put on the new.</i>                 |
| <b>Romans 13:14</b>       | <i>Clothe yourself with the presence of Jesus.</i>        |
| <b>Philippians 4:6–7</b>  | <i>Peace that guards the heart and mind.</i>              |
| <b>Isaiah 61:3</b>        | <i>He trades ashes for beauty and despair for praise.</i> |
| <b>1 Peter 5:5–7</b>      | <i>Clothe yourself in humility, then cast your cares.</i> |

#### PRAY

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*Jesus, clothe me. I do not want an empty life; I want a full one. Let Your peace umpire my decisions, my schedule, my conversations, and my reactions. Let Your Word fill the space that was cleared this week. Produce in me what I cannot manufacture... mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and a love that holds it all together. Make me easier to live with because I have been with You.*

#### WRITE

**1** What is checked first in the morning, and what gets replayed at two a.m.? What does that reveal about what is ruling you?

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**2** Which garment in verse 12 is missing from your life right now, and who feels its absence most?

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**3** Where have you been overruling the umpire... saying yes to something that keeps costing you peace?

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## DAY 6

# WALK IT OUT

*Repositioning Our Everyday Lives*

**READ TODAY | Colossians 3:18–4:1**

### ANCHOR VERSE

*“Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord.”*

COLOSSIANS 3:23 (NLT)

### TODAY'S REPOSITION

Ask someone who lives with you whether anything has been different this week. Then listen without defending yourself.

### WRITE IT OUT

*Copy the anchor verse by hand. You cannot skim what you are writing.*

Watch the turn Paul makes. He has just finished describing the supremacy of Christ over all creation, and his very next paragraph is about husbands, wives, children, parents, employers, and workers. He moves from the cosmic to the kitchen in a single breath, and it is not a change of subject. **It is the proof.**

A fast is easy in the prayer closet and difficult in the kitchen at six fifteen on a Thursday, when everyone needs something and nobody says thank you. Solitude with God is not the test. The test is what happens in the ninety seconds after the solitude ends.

It is entirely possible to go six days without social media and still speak sharply to a spouse on the sixth day. When that happens, the conclusion is not that the fast failed. The conclusion is that the phone was never the whole problem. The noise was covering something, and now that the noise is gone, the thing underneath it is finally visible. That is not a failed fast. That is a successful one, and it is uncomfortable for exactly the right reason.

James states it plainly: *do not merely listen to the word... do what it says. Otherwise, a person is like someone who looks in a mirror, walks away, and immediately forgets what they look like (James 1:22–24, NLT)*. Six days of reading have functioned as a mirror. Today is the walking away, and the only question that matters is whether anything is remembered.

Paul's instruction covers everything left on the calendar: *whatever you do, work at it willingly, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people (Colossians 3:23, NLT)*. Nothing on the schedule has to change. The audience does.

## SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

|                            |                                                    |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Colossians 3:18–4:1</b> | <i>The gospel applied to the house.</i>            |
| <b>James 1:22–25</b>       | <i>The mirror test.</i>                            |
| <b>1 Timothy 3:4–5</b>     | <i>Home first. Then the church.</i>                |
| <b>Matthew 7:16–20</b>     | <i>People are identified by their fruit.</i>       |
| <b>1 John 3:18</b>         | <i>Love in actions, not only in words.</i>         |
| <b>Luke 16:10</b>          | <i>Faithful in little, faithful in much.</i>       |
| <b>Titus 2:9–10</b>        | <i>Ordinary work made attractive to outsiders.</i> |

## PRAY

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*Lord, do not let this stay theoretical. Change the way I speak to the people who live with me. Change what I am like when I am tired, when I am interrupted, and when I do not get my way. Let the person my family experiences this week be the same person You have been meeting with. If there is a gap between my private devotion and my daily behavior, close it. And let me do ordinary work today as though I am doing it for You, because I am.*

## WRITE

**1** Who feels the difference when you have been with God, and who feels it when you have not?

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**2** Where is the widest gap between your private devotion and your daily behavior?

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**3** Name one relationship this fast should change, and one concrete thing you will do about it this week.

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## DAY 7

# WATCH & PRAY

*Repositioning for What Comes Next*

**READ TODAY | Colossians 4:2–18**

### ANCHOR VERSE

*“Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.”*

COLOSSIANS 4:2 (NLT)

### TODAY'S REPOSITION

Decide tonight, before the fast ends, what comes back and what does not.

### WRITE IT OUT

*Copy the anchor verse by hand. You cannot skim what you are writing.*

Paul closes with three words that summarize everything the week was for: *devoted, alert, thankful* (Colossians 4:2, NLT). Alert is a watchman's word. A watchman does not fall asleep because the night is quiet; quiet is precisely when he pays attention. **The danger at the end of a fast is not opposition. It is relaxation.**

Most people treat a fast the way they treat a diet... the moment it ends, the appetite that was denied gets satisfied all at once. Seven days of cleared ground can be handed back in a single evening. Jesus described what happens to a house that is swept clean and left empty, and it is not a story with a good ending (Matthew 12:43–45, NLT). Ground that has been taken has to be occupied.

Notice what Paul actually asks for. He is writing from a prison cell, and he does not ask the Colossians to pray him out of it. He asks them to pray for an open door for the message, so that he can proclaim the mystery of Christ... the very thing that put him in chains (Colossians 4:3, NLT). He wants a door for the Word, not a door out of the cell.

That is how a repositioned person prays. Before a fast, prayer tends to be dominated by relief: change this, remove that, fix them, get me out. After a fast, prayer begins to sound like assignment: open this, send me, use this. Same person. Same circumstances. Different position.

There is one more name at the end of the letter worth stopping on. Epaphras, Paul says, is always praying earnestly for them, asking God to make them strong and perfect, fully confident in the whole will of God (Colossians 4:12, NLT). That is not casual intercession. It is labor. Someone has to pray that way for a church, a family, and a city... and seven days of quiet may have been the preparation for it.

So the last day is not a finish line. **It is a watchtower.** Habakkuk climbed the tower to watch and see what the Lord would say to him (Habakkuk 2:1, NLT). He did not go up there to unload; he went

up there to hear. The ground has been cleared. **What remains is to take a position on the wall and stay there.**

#### SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

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|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Colossians 4:2–6</b>        | <i>Devoted, alert, thankful — and wise toward outsiders.</i> |
| <b>Colossians 4:12</b>         | <i>Epaphras praying earnestly. This is labor.</i>            |
| <b>Habakkuk 2:1</b>            | <i>Climb the watchtower and wait to see what He says.</i>    |
| <b>Luke 21:36</b>              | <i>Keep alert and pray.</i>                                  |
| <b>Ephesians 6:18</b>          | <i>Pray in the Spirit at all times, on every occasion.</i>   |
| <b>1 Thessalonians 5:16–18</b> | <i>Never stop praying. Be thankful in everything.</i>        |
| <b>Acts 4:29–31</b>            | <i>They prayed for boldness and the room shook.</i>          |
| <b>Matthew 26:41</b>           | <i>Keep watch and pray, so you will not give in.</i>         |

#### PRAY

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*Father, thank You. For every quiet moment this week, for everything You exposed and everything You healed. I am not treating today as a finish line. I am taking my place on the wall. Make me devoted, alert, and thankful. Open doors for Your Word through my life. Teach me to pray for assignment and not only for relief. And guard the ground You took in me... do not let me hand it back.*

#### WRITE

**1** What did God say to you this week? Write it down before it is forgotten.

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**2** What is not being let back in? Name it, and set the boundary now.

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**3** Write one prayer for an open door... not for relief, but for assignment. Then name the person you will pray for the way Epaphras prayed.

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# SCRIPTURE ARSENAL

*At some point in these seven days there will be a moment that requires a verse. Mark this page and come back to it...*

## When you are anxious

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Philippians 4:6–7  
1 Peter 5:6–7  
Isaiah 41:10  
Psalm 94:19  
Matthew 6:25–34  
Isaiah 26:3

## When the craving hits

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1 Corinthians 10:13  
Hebrews 4:15–16  
James 4:7–8  
Titus 2:11–12  
Psalm 119:9–11  
2 Timothy 2:22

## When God feels silent

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Psalm 13:1–6  
Habakkuk 2:1–3  
Isaiah 55:8–11  
Lamentations 3:21–26  
Psalm 27:13–14  
John 11:5–6

## When you are waiting

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Psalm 27:14  
Isaiah 40:31  
Habakkuk 2:3  
Galatians 6:9  
Romans 8:24–25  
James 5:7–8

## When you cannot focus

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Psalm 46:10  
Psalm 119:37  
Isaiah 30:15  
Psalm 131:1–2  
Luke 10:38–42  
Mark 1:35

## When you are weary

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Matthew 11:28–30  
Isaiah 40:28–31  
Galatians 6:9  
Psalm 23:1–3  
2 Corinthians 4:16–18  
Exodus 33:14

## When you have blown it

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1 John 1:9  
Psalm 51:1–12  
Lamentations 3:22–23  
Micah 7:8  
Romans 8:1  
Proverbs 24:16

## When you need to hear Him

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John 10:27  
1 Kings 19:11–13  
Psalm 25:14  
Jeremiah 33:3  
Proverbs 3:5–6  
1 Samuel 3:8–10