

REMOVING BRAIN ROT



SERIES STUDY GUIDE



Week 1 – Identify & Evaluate

Key Scripture: Romans 12:2 (CSB)

“Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.”

Recognizing the Rot

In 2024 the Oxford Dictionary chose a new Word of the Year — “*Brain Rot*.”

A secular study defined it as the state of mental fog, exhaustion, and numbness that comes from endless low-quality digital content. It found that constant notifications, dopamine-driven loops from TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram leave people hooked but empty. Focus declines. Anxiety rises. Joy fades.

But none of this is new to Scripture. God has already told us: *what we feed our minds forms who we become*.

Paul said, “*Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*” (Rom 12:2)

Distraction has been normalized, but God still calls His people to renewal and purpose. That’s why this series began with a challenge — to expose the cultural brain rot that numbs us and to rediscover the daily practices that renew us: **Scripture, prayer, worship, and biblical community**.

We once called it “*vegging out*” — zoning out in front of a TV.

Now it’s constant — hundreds of small “vegged-out” moments each day on our phones. “Vegging out” used to be occasional; *brain rot* is continual. Both pull us away from God’s best.

It’s Not New

Every generation has had its version of brain rot:

Era	Cultural “Rot”	Effect
1920s–30s	Radio Mania	Conversation replaced by noise.
1940s–50s	Comic Books	Thrills replaced truth.
1960s–70s	TV & Rock	Screens shaped values.
1980s	Video Games	Shorter attention spans.
1990s	Internet	Virtual over real.
2000s	Social Media	Identity tied to image.
2010s	Streaming & Algorithms	Endless content, less patience.
2020s	Doom-scrolling	Constant consumption, inner numbness.

The methods change, but the issue remains: *filling our minds with cultural noise instead of spiritual truth.*

God's Word has always warned us to guard our minds and pursue holiness:

1 Peter 1:13-15 – *“Therefore, with your minds ready for action, be serious and set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires of your former ignorance. But as the One who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct.”*

Our *conduct* now includes what we consume. What we watch, click, and scroll either strengthens the Spirit or feeds the flesh.

So ask yourself:

**Does what I consume renew and protect my mind—or numb and tempt it?
Is my mind influenced more by digital consumption or by spiritual devotion?**

Digital Doesn't Have to Mean Destructive

Devices aren't evil. It's what we choose to do with them.

This isn't a purge-your-phones message. It's a call to **mindfulness** — to evaluate what, how long, and why we consume.

Digital content can be beneficial when balanced by spiritual content. The problem comes when digital consumption dominates and devotion becomes an afterthought.

Paul described the two operating systems of life:

Romans 8:5-7 – *“For those who live according to the flesh think about the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, about the things of the Spirit. For the mind-set of the flesh is death, but the mind-set of the Spirit is life and peace.”*

If we live according to the flesh — constantly chasing cultural trends — our minds drift from God.

So as culture fights for our focus, we must pursue God even more fiercely.

Every believer will feel this *tension between living culturally and living spiritually.*

If you don't feel that tension, you may have already given in to conformity.

Evaluating What Shapes You

Many of us would like to believe we spend more time in spiritual devotion than digital consumption.

But the evidence often says otherwise.

Paul described the inner conflict perfectly:

Romans 7:21-23 – *“When I want to do what is good, evil is with me. For in my inner self I joyfully agree with God’s law, but I see a different law in the parts of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and taking me prisoner to the law of sin.”*

That’s the same war happening today — only now the “law of sin” is broadcast through glowing screens.

On average, a single scroll session on short-form video apps equals nearly 100 clips in under an hour. Each thirty-second hit trains our brains for novelty, not depth. That’s how spiritual focus decays.

Not all online content is sinful. The question is **control** — does it serve you, or does it own you?

A Personal Example

I’m not a reels guy. I don’t TikTok. My weakness was video games — and for a long time they controlled my attention.

There was a season when the game was more important than my wife, my kids, even my calling.

I had to face the truth: *the less time I spent with my family, the more disconnected we became; the less time I spent with God, the weaker my faith grew.*

Through years of discipline, time limits, and accountability, I learned to set boundaries. And as I did, both my marriage and my relationship with God flourished.

Brothers, your wife and kids need your attention more than your console does.

God wants your presence more than another round or mission.

The less time you give to meaningless consumption, the more you’ll gain in meaningful connection.

Questions to Consider with Your “Brain Rot”

- Does what I consume bring peace and renewal—or just noise and distraction?
- Is it helping me flourish—or harming my life and relationships?
- Is it sharpening my mind—or dulling it?
- Does it build real relationships—or isolate me further?
- Is it addictive—feeding dopamine more than devotion?

Not everything is harmful, but not everything is helpful.

That’s why Scripture calls us to evaluate and set limits.

Countering Cultural Consumption

God's answer to brain rot has always been the same — **meditate on His Word.**

Jeremiah 15:16 – *“Your words were found, and I ate them. Your words became a delight to me and the joy of my heart.”*

Psalms 1:2-3 – *“Instead, his delight is in the Lord's instruction, and he meditates on it day and night.”*

To *meditate* means to chew, digest, and return to again and again — like a cow bringing food back to chew it thoroughly.

We spend hours re-chewing digital content; God invites us to re-chew His Word.

Paul wrote,

Colossians 3:2-5 – *“Set your minds on what is above, not on what is on the earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with the Messiah in God... Therefore, put to death what belongs to your worldly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desire, and greed, which is idolatry.”*

Our feeds are full of those very things. The enemy uses them to desensitize and distract. But Christ calls us to holiness and renewal.

Two Practical Challenges

1. Track and Evaluate Your Digital Consumption

- Check your phone's *Screen Time* or *Digital Well-Being* report.
- Note your total time, notifications, and unlocks.
- Include TV, streaming, and gaming consoles—Xbox, PlayStation, Nintendo all provide play-time trackers if you enable them.
- You must *opt in* to see the truth—evaluation requires intentionality.

2. Compare Digital Consumption with Spiritual Consumption

- Track your time spent in:
 - Bible reading (app or physical)
 - Prayer and worship
 - Listening to sermons or devotions
- Ask: *Which total is higher this week?*
- The social apps are designed to keep you craving more; the Spirit invites you to desire better.

Paul gives us a new filter:

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is any praise—dwell on these things.”

To *dwell* means to spend time, to linger, to live there.

Do you dwell more on the digital or on the divine?

The Freedom of Renewal

Jesus came to free us from the slavery of shallow, fruitless consumption.

Through His Spirit and His Word, He offers daily renewal for the mind and peace for the heart.

Without Him, our minds stay anxious, restless, and hungry for more of what never satisfies. But in Him, we find a lasting joy that the algorithm can't imitate.

There is freedom in Jesus, through His Spirit, His Word, and His Church.

There is bondage in over-dependence on our devices.

The choice is ours:

Conform to the world's patterns — or be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

Reflection & Application

- What patterns of “brain rot” do you recognize in your own routines?
- Where do you sense God prompting you to create boundaries?
- What spiritual practices can replace wasted time this week?
- How will you measure progress in the coming days?



Week 2 – The Temptation of Notification

Key Scripture:

2 Corinthians 11:3 – “But I fear that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your minds may be seduced from a complete and pure devotion to Christ.”

When Every Ping Pulls Your Heart

Last week we confronted the problem of *consumption*—how what we continually take in begins to shape who we become.

This week we turn to the *trigger* that feeds that consumption: **notifications**.

Each ping, buzz, or banner is designed to pull our attention toward digital content—often unnecessary, unfruitful, distracting, or even sinful.

Our phones are engineered to capture us. Every sound delivers a tiny hit of dopamine, rewarding our brains for checking, swiping, and scrolling.

What begins as convenience quickly becomes *compulsion*.

And just like every other form of brain rot, unchecked notifications dull our focus, drain our joy, and distance us from God and people.

Notifications interrupt our quiet time with the Lord.

They disrupt conversations with loved ones.

They break our concentration at work.

They steal hours from our day—and intimacy from our souls.

Counting the Cost

If you tracked your digital habits last week, you may have noticed just how many alerts you receive daily:

- Adults average **150 notifications** per day.
- Teens average **240–360 notifications** per day.

Each one interrupts your attention, forcing your brain to refocus. Studies say it can take anywhere from **60 seconds to 23 minutes** to fully regain focus after an interruption.

Even if it only takes 90 seconds, multiply that by 150 notifications—you lose **over three hours a day** just recovering focus.

That’s nearly a part-time job worth of distraction.

Not all notifications are equal, but all can erode peace if unmanaged.

Type	Example	Purpose
Functional (Utility)	Life360, banking alerts, security cameras	Keeps you informed or safe.
FOMO-Driven (Engagement)	Social-media likes, news flashes, sales alerts	Keeps you hooked.
Relational (Connection)	Texts, calls, group chats	Keeps you connected.

Even the “good” ones still fragment our attention.

It’s not that every alert is evil—it’s that every alert demands a decision.

Left unfiltered, they train our minds for noise instead of stillness.

The First Notification

Receiving alerts isn’t new. Long before smartphones, humanity received a *notification* that changed everything.

Genesis 3:1-6 – *“Now the serpent was the most cunning of all the wild animals that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God really say, “You can’t eat from any tree in the garden”?’ ... ‘No! You will not die,’ the serpent said to the woman. ‘In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’”*

Eve wasn’t looking for trouble. She was simply near the tree.

Then came the *notification*—a message from an external source sowing doubt about God’s goodness.

Satan’s alert promised something desirable: wisdom, power, status.

And, like every deceptive ping since, it worked by **distraction and distortion**.

That was humanity’s first notification—and the original temptation.

How the Enemy Still Notifies

Today, the same tactic continues through our devices.

A pop-up promises happiness. A targeted ad whispers that one more purchase will bring peace. A message tempts compromise.

Our thoughts are infiltrated, our focus fractured, our hearts distracted.

Paul warned,

2 Corinthians 11:3 – *“I fear that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your minds may be seduced from a complete and pure devotion to Christ.”*

Every alert that entices your flesh and weakens your devotion is a digital echo of that ancient lie.

Each one asks, *“Did God really say?”*

Cultural vs. Spiritual Notifications

Every day we choose which notifications to prioritize:

- **Cultural notifications** pull us toward worldliness, envy, or comparison.
- **Spiritual notifications** draw us toward holiness, conviction, and peace.

James wrote, **James 4:7-8** – *“Submit to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.”*

Submitting to God means silencing voices that compete with His.

If your device sends 100 cultural alerts a day, you may need to intentionally create 100 spiritual ones—moments to hear from God.

How? By subscribing, consuming, and engaging with the *Good News*.

Three Steps to Staying Spiritually Notified

1. Subscribe to the Good News

Believe and receive what Jesus has done.

This is **justification**—believing that He died and rose again to save you.

Your first subscription is faith.

2. Consume the Good News

Keep learning about Jesus through Scripture and the Spirit.

This is **sanctification**—daily renewal that makes you more like Him.

3. Engage in the Good News

Share your faith through words and actions.

This is **participation**—living out the Gospel in community.

When we stay subscribed, consumed, and engaged in the Good News, our lives begin to fill with *spiritual notifications*:

- Hearing and sharing Scripture
- Seeing life change in ourselves and others
- Giving and receiving prayer

- Praising God even in hardship

This is the rhythm of Gospel community—learning, growing, serving, and celebrating together.

The Effort That Transforms

The spiritual life requires more effort than the digital one.

Cultural engagement is easy—instant gratification with minimal cost.

Spiritual renewal takes *intentional pursuit*.

Philippians 3:12 – *“Not that I have already reached the goal or am already fully mature, but I make every effort to take hold of it because I also have been taken hold of by Christ Jesus.”*

Galatians 6:9-10 – *“So we must not get tired of doing good, for we will reap at the proper time if we don’t give up.”*

Matthew 16:24 – *“If anyone wants to come with Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.”*

Holiness requires perseverance. Effort doesn’t earn salvation—it sustains devotion.

The more you draw near to God, the more He speaks.

The closer you stay to the Light, the easier it is to recognize deception.

John 16:33 – *“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

Jesus’ victory guarantees that the Good News will always outshine the bad.

Good News in a World of Bad News

This week reminded us how the world bombards us with tragedy.

From violence and fear to division and despair—every alert feels heavier.

But our hope remains stronger.

The greatest tragedy, death itself, becomes victory through Jesus.

His resurrection ensures that no amount of bad news can ever eclipse the Good News.

That’s why we must remain subscribed, keep consuming, and boldly engage.

The world needs more disciples who share hope instead of hysteria.

When evil tries to silence truth, God’s people must rise and proclaim it louder.

“If you thought my husband’s mission was powerful before, you have no idea what you just unleashed.” — Erika Kirk

The message of the Gospel has always spread most powerfully in the face of opposition. Jesus died to *become* the Good News. And through Him, death will never have the final word again.

Reflection & Application

Evaluate:

- What notifications most easily capture your attention or trigger temptation?
- How often do alerts interrupt your time with God, family, or focus?
- Which types of notifications (functional, FOMO, relational) dominate your day?

Respond:

- What digital notifications do you need to silence or remove this week?
- Where can you create spiritual notifications—times to pray, read, or worship instead?
- Are you *subscribed but not consuming*? Consuming but not *engaging*? What steps can you take to make sure you are subscribed, consuming and engaging?

Act:

- Turn off one major category of unnecessary alerts for seven days.
- Replace each freed-up moment with one act of spiritual attention—Scripture reading, prayer, gratitude, or encouragement to another person.



Week 3 – Rest & Solitude

Key Scripture:

Luke 5:16 – “Yet He often withdrew to deserted places and prayed.”

When Jesus Went Viral

At the beginning of His ministry, Jesus’ influence spread like wildfire.
To put it in modern terms — *Jesus went viral*.

Luke 4:14 – “Then Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread throughout the entire vicinity.”

Luke 4:37 – “And news about Him began to go out to every place in the vicinity.”

Luke 5:15 – “But the news about Jesus spread even more, and large crowds would come together to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses.”

Imagine that scene today. Videos of miracles trending on social media: lepers cleansed, demons cast out, fishermen reeling in miraculous hauls. His “followers” climbing from hundreds to thousands overnight. The comments, critics, and constant demands would’ve been relentless. Even then, the pressure was immense. The more the news spread, the greater the crowds grew. Yet with all this attention — *Jesus repeatedly withdrew*.

Luke 4:42 – “When it was day, He went out and made His way to a deserted place.”

Luke 5:16 – “Yet He often withdrew to deserted places and prayed.”

Jesus stepped away from the crowd, away from noise, away from constant demands — not to escape responsibility, but to connect with the Father. He withdrew to be renewed, restored, and re-centered. The call of this message — and this week — is to learn to do the same. To *withdraw like Jesus did*, not to hide, but to **find rest and renewal** in the presence of God.

The Heart of the Sabbath

What Jesus modeled through solitude carries the same essence as the ancient Sabbath — *a rhythm of ceasing, resting, and delighting in God*.

Hebrew Etymology – שַׁבָּת (Shabbat)

Root: *šāḇaṭ* – “to cease, desist, rest, stop working.”

It first appears in **Genesis 2:2–3**, when God Himself rested on the seventh day.

The Sabbath wasn’t just a pause from labor — it was a *turning toward God*, delighting in His presence and provision.

Exodus 20:8–10 – “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy: You are to labor six days and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.”

While many believers debate how the Sabbath applies today, the principle remains timeless.

God rested. His people practiced it. Jesus lived it.

Paul helps us understand the deeper meaning:

Colossians 2:16–17 – “Therefore, don’t let anyone judge you in regard to a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of what was to come; the substance is the Messiah.”

The *substance* of the Sabbath — the true rest and renewal — is found in **Jesus**.

That means solitude and rest aren’t outdated religious practices.

They are holy habits — vital to our spiritual, emotional, and mental health.

Matthew 11:28 – “Come to Me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

To dwell in Jesus is to find rest.

The purpose of solitude and Sabbath is simple: **to dwell in God’s presence** — disconnecting to pursue Him, reflecting to thank Him, stopping to hear Him.

Solitude and Rest Defined

Solitude is not isolation.

Isolation hides from people and responsibility — solitude seeks God to be renewed.

Jesus didn’t withdraw to avoid others; He withdrew to better love others.

He spent time alone with the Father so He could pour into those around Him.

And He didn’t stay gone long — the text says He *often* withdrew, not *always*.

He returned with purpose and power.

Rest is more than sleep or time off work.

It’s the renewal of the body, the mind, and the spirit.

It's choosing to pause, breathe, and be still in the presence of the One who restores us.

Stillness in a Noisy World

Psalm 46:10 – *“Be still, and know that I am God.”*

Stillness is the antidote to spiritual exhaustion.

But in a culture addicted to noise, stillness feels uncomfortable.

We fill silence with podcasts, playlists, and scrolling — anything to avoid quiet.

A study once asked participants to sit in silence for 15 minutes with no devices.

The majority found it so unbearable that they preferred to give themselves **electric shocks** rather than endure solitude.

That's the world we live in — conditioned for constant input and allergic to stillness.

So how do we find rest for our weariness — physically, emotionally, spiritually?

By **creating rhythms of solitude and renewal**, customized to our life and calling.

Your Sabbath may not look like mine — and that's okay.

The goal isn't uniformity; it's intentionality.

It's not about a specific day or format — it's about consistent pursuit of God in your rhythm of life.

The question isn't *when* you rest, but *whether* you do.

The Battle Against Pollution

To find true rest, we must fight against what pollutes our peace.

Pollution is everywhere — not just in the air or oceans, but in our minds.

Content Pollution:

- Political division and outrage
- Fake news and false narratives
- Clickbait ads and consumerism
- Woke ideologies and false doctrines
- New-age spirituality and syncretism
- Sexualized and violent entertainment

Just like environmental pollution clouds the sky, cultural pollution clouds the soul.

If you want to gaze at the heavens clearly, you have to leave the city lights behind.

In the same way, if you want to hear God clearly, you must distance yourself from the digital noise.

The further you move from your device, the clearer your spiritual vision becomes.

Filtering and Silencing

To experience renewal, we must:

1. **Filter & Limit External Pollution** — the distractions and temptations that invade from outside.
2. **Silence & Control Internal Pollution** — the wandering thoughts and desires that pull us away from peace.
3. **Be Still & Listen for God's Voice** — allowing His Spirit to restore and renew us.

The art of listening has been lost.

With Wi-Fi everywhere, our brains have been rewired for constant entertainment and zero attention span.

We crave input but resist intimacy.

We want God to speak — but we won't slow down to listen.

Jesus modeled the better way: withdrawal, prayer, and presence.

He disconnected from the world to stay connected to His Father.

Mark 1:35–37 — *“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, He got up, went out, and made His way to a deserted place. And He was praying there. Simon and his companions went searching for Him and said, ‘Everyone’s looking for You!’”*

Even in His busiest season, Jesus prioritized solitude.

He didn't let the noise of the crowd override the voice of the Father.

Mark 6:30–31 — *“The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to Him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, ‘Come away by yourselves to a remote place and rest for a while.’”*

If Jesus — whose purpose was eternal — needed to rest and pray, how much more do we?

The Rhythm of Renewal

Jesus' example reveals a rhythm we all need:

- **Daily solitude** prepares us for what the day will bring.
- **Daily rest** helps us decompress from what the day has brought.
- **Weekly Sabbath** refreshes us for the week ahead.

Rest and solitude are not excuses for apathy or laziness.

They are disciplines that help us recover clarity and focus so we can reengage in the mission of the Gospel with renewed strength.

***Isaiah 58:13–14** – “If you call the Sabbath a delight, and the holy day of the Lord honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, seeking your own pleasure, or talking too much; then you will delight yourself in the Lord.”*

To delight in the Lord requires margin — space to breathe, listen, and worship.

Challenge: 24-Hour Digital Detox

This week’s challenge is simple but powerful: **Spend 24 hours disconnected from your devices.**

During your digital detox:

- Spend time in **God’s Word** — read, listen, and reflect.
- Use an actual Bible and a journal.
- Choose a quiet place and let the silence speak.

Reading Suggestions:

- **Romans 12** – Renewing of the mind
- **1 Kings 18–19** – Elijah hearing God’s voice in the whisper
- **Luke 4–5** – Jesus beginning His ministry and “often withdrawing” to pray

Andy Crouch, in *The Tech-Wise Family*, suggests this simple rhythm:

“One hour a day, one day a week, one week a year.”

Start there. Give your mind a Sabbath from the constant stream of notifications and noise. And in that quiet space, rediscover what it means to hear God’s still, small voice.

Reflection & Application

Evaluate:

- What keeps you from rest — busyness, distraction, or fear of stillness?
- What forms of “pollution” most cloud your peace and focus?
- When do you feel most spiritually restored — and how often does it happen?

Respond:

- What would it take to create your own rhythm of rest and solitude?
- What digital or cultural noise do you need to filter this week?
- Where will you make space for God to speak?

Act:

- Set aside one uninterrupted hour daily for quiet with God.
- Practice a 24-hour digital detox this week.
- Replace digital consumption with time in Scripture, prayer, or worship.

“The substance of the Sabbath is found in the Savior.”

In Him, you will find the renewal your weary mind and soul are longing for.



Week 4 – Removal Brings Renewal

Key Scriptures:

Colossians 3:5–10 – *“Put to death what belongs to your worldly nature... You have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self. You are being renewed in knowledge according to the image of your Creator.”*

Old Habits, New Temptations

The past few weeks we’ve talked about the problem of consumption, the pull of notifications, and the need for rest and solitude.

But today’s focus takes us a step deeper — to **the idols** that quietly take God’s place in our hearts.

When we give anything — even good things — more time, focus, or devotion than we give God, it becomes an idol.

And though our devices are modern, this temptation is ancient.

From the earliest days of Israel’s history, God’s people struggled with this same pattern: He would rescue them, redeem them, and reveal His power — yet soon after, they would turn back to the comfort of their old lives.

Exodus 16:1–3 – *“The Israelites said to them, ‘If only we had died by the Lord’s hand in Egypt, when we sat by pots of meat and ate all the bread we wanted. Instead, you brought us into this wilderness to make this whole assembly die of hunger!’”*

Exodus 17:1–3 – *“The people complained to Moses, ‘Give us water to drink.’ ... ‘Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?’”*

Only **45 days** after being freed from slavery, the Israelites longed for the “comfort” of captivity.

They wanted freedom — but they missed the familiarity of their bondage.

And that’s the human condition, isn’t it?

Even when God delivers us, our flesh still drifts toward the very things He rescued us from. We’ve been talking about digital distractions — and though phones and apps didn’t exist in Exodus — the principle is the same.

The Israelites had Egypt; we have endless entertainment.

Both promise comfort, but both lead back to bondage.

Modern Slavery: Devices and Distractions

Through Jesus, we are freed from slavery to sin — and yet, just like Israel, we often drift back to what feels easy.

The glow of a screen, the dopamine hit of a notification, the false comfort of scrolling — it's all a modern echo of ancient idolatry.

The issue isn't that we use our devices — it's that **we've given them authority.**

They dictate our attention, our emotions, even our identity.

Paul confronts this same problem in his letter to the Colossians:

Colossians 3:1–3, 5–10 — *“So if you have been raised with the Messiah, seek what is above, where the Messiah is... Set your minds on what is above, not on what is on the earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with the Messiah in God... Therefore, put to death what belongs to your worldly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desire, and greed, which is idolatry... You have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self. You are being renewed in knowledge according to the image of your Creator.”*

Paul's language is strong — *put to death, put away, put off.*

The call isn't to manage sin; it's to remove it.

Why? Because **renewal requires removal.**

We can't be renewed while holding on to what once enslaved us.

Paul reminds us that renewal is a process:

*“You are **being renewed** in knowledge and in the image of your Creator.”*

It's not a one-time change — it's a daily choice to live in freedom.

From Slaves to Righteousness

The same truth is echoed in Paul's letter to the Romans:

Romans 6:4, 6, 11–13, 16–18 — *“We were buried with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead... we too may walk in a new way of life. ...Our old self was crucified with Him so that sin's dominion might be abolished... So you too consider yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus... Don't you know that if you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of that one you obey — either of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? ...Having been liberated from sin, you became enslaved to righteousness.”*

We are no longer slaves to sin — we are now servants of righteousness.

But that doesn't mean the pull of sin disappears.

Even Paul himself wrestled with this reality.

He spoke of a “thorn in his flesh” (2 Corinthians 12), a constant reminder of weakness that kept him dependent on God’s grace.

That’s the call:

To remain enslaved to righteousness — *continually pursuing Christ* — even when temptation calls us back.

To rely on the Holy Spirit, who empowers us to overcome the desires of our flesh.

Renewal Through the Spirit

You’ve heard this truth throughout this series:

Our strength to overcome distraction, temptation, and idolatry doesn’t come from willpower — it comes from **the Spirit’s power**.

“Continued pursuit of Jesus leads to reliance on the Holy Spirit, resulting in righteous living.”

When we are saved and surrendered to Christ, sin can no longer claim ownership over us. It can tempt, but it cannot rule.

The Spirit within us continually renews and refines us.

And when we stumble — because we will — God’s grace stands ready to forgive.

Falling into sin does not cancel salvation.

But *refusing* to fight sin may reveal that true surrender never took place.

“If you continue to be a slave to sin, you cannot be a slave to righteousness.”

The Israelites accepted rescue but resisted surrender.

They loved the comfort of slavery more than the freedom of God.

We must not make the same mistake.

The Call to Surrender

Jesus put it plainly:

Matthew 6:24 — *“No one can be a slave of two masters. Either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other.”*

We cannot serve both sin and righteousness.

We cannot worship God and cling to our idols — whether they’re sins of the flesh or addictions of the digital kind.

So the call is clear:

Don’t continue dragging around what Jesus already set you free from.

Don’t stay tethered to the things He died to cut loose.

Every one of us knows what that “thing” is — that area of temptation or distraction that dulls your devotion and divides your heart.

Maybe it’s a screen, a habit, a relationship, or a secret sin.

Whatever it is, **removal must come before renewal.**

Sin & Idol Removal

Throughout this series, we’ve been challenged to reflect, to disconnect, to rest, and to renew.

Now it’s time to respond.

Ask yourself:

- What idol do I need to surrender?
- What sin do I need to repent of?
- What am I still enslaved to that keeps me from walking in freedom?

The Israelites longed for Egypt, but God was leading them to promise.

In the same way, God wants to lead you out of old patterns and into new life.

You can stay tethered to temptation — or you can surrender it to the Savior.

Action Step: Altar of Renewal

During your quiet time this week (or during your response time in service), take this physical step of faith:

Write down the idol or sin that has been controlling you.

Then place it before God — symbolically, at the altar or in prayer — as a declaration that you’re letting it go.

This is not a one-time moment; it’s a continual practice of surrender.

When you remove what enslaves you, space opens for God’s Spirit to renew you.

Removal brings renewal.

Reflection & Application

Evaluate:

- What comforts of “Egypt” (old habits or sins) are you still drawn to?
- What do you find yourself going back to when life gets uncomfortable?

- What areas of your life are you holding back from God's full control?

Respond:

- What would it look like to "put to death" the distractions or idols that keep you from obedience?
- How does your daily time, attention, or screen usage reflect what you worship most?

Act:

- Commit to one tangible act of removal this week (delete, distance, or detox).
- Ask the Holy Spirit to fill the space that distraction once occupied.
- Practice daily renewal through prayer, Scripture, and stillness.

*"You have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self. You are being renewed in knowledge according to the image of your Creator." — **Colossians 3:9–10***



Week 5 – Counterfeit Connection

Key Scripture:

Hebrews 10:24–25 – *“Let us be concerned about one another in order to promote love and good works, not staying away from our worship meetings, as some habitually do, but encouraging each other.”*

The Illusion of Connection

We live in the most “connected” era in human history — and yet we’ve never been more alone.

Social media gives us the illusion of belonging without the cost of commitment.

We scroll through endless feeds, share posts, and comment on stories, but these digital interactions rarely reach the depth of real, soul-level relationship.

Our devices promise connection, but deliver isolation.

The result? **Relationship rot.**

“Continual and consistent brain rot leads to relationship rot.”

What started as “brain rot” — the overstimulation of the mind — has now corroded how we connect with one another.

We’ve become accustomed to digital convenience and have lost the discipline of authentic community.

The Loneliness Epidemic

Recent studies reveal the painful truth:

- Only **13% of U.S. adults** report having ten or more close friends — down from 33% in 1990.
- The number of people with **zero close friends** has quadrupled since then.
- The U.S. Surgeon General warns that loneliness now poses as great a health risk as smoking fifteen cigarettes a day.
- **40% of young adults** report feeling lonely. Nearly half of high schoolers say they feel persistently sad or hopeless.
- Heavy social media users are **twice as likely** to feel lonely as light users.

Despite being more digitally “connected” than ever, we are **spiritually and relationally starved**. And it’s not just the young. Studies show that a 60-year-old who uses social media heavily experiences the same level of loneliness as an 18-year-old.

Digital connectivity isn't fulfilling the relational needs of *any* generation.

Disconnected Generations

Older generations remember a different kind of connection — church potlucks, neighborhood block parties, bowling leagues, and long dinners around a table.

Millennials remember LAN parties and late-night conversations that didn't need Wi-Fi. But Gen Z was born into a world of constant connectivity — yet *relational deprivation*. As one Gen Z writer confessed: “Most of us never knew friendship before it became keeping up a Snapstreak or using each other like props to look popular on Instagram.”

This digital generation is drowning in followers but starving for friends.

They crave belonging — but lack the relational tools to create it.

Barna Research discovered:

“57% of churchgoing Gen Z and Millennials say building strong relationships with other Christians is more important than simply hearing a good sermon.”

They **want** community. But cultural convenience — and often church complacency — makes it hard to find.

The Church's Counter-Cultural Call

The local church was designed to fill that void.

To be a place of belonging, not just attendance.

A place where the isolated can find family.

But as digital overconsumption grows, participation in small groups, Bible studies, and church gatherings outside of Sunday morning declines.

Parents are busier, schedules are tighter, and “time with people” feels harder to prioritize.

We've replaced presence with pixels, and community with comfort.

Yet the call of Scripture hasn't changed:

Hebrews 3:13 - *“Encourage each other daily... so that none of you is hardened by sin's deception.”*

Hebrews 10:24–25 - *“Do not give up meeting together... but encourage one another.”*

God's solution to disconnection has always been **community**.

The Rise of Artificial Companionship

A new and more deceptive threat is now emerging — **artificial connection**.

Millions are turning to AI “friends” and chatbots for comfort, companionship, and even romance.

Users of apps like Character.ai average **93 minutes per day** in conversation with digital companions.

According to analysts, the top use of AI in 2025 isn’t automation — it’s **emotional companionship**.

“We are wired for connection—but in its absence, many are now bonding with machines.”
— *Brookings Institution*

At first glance, these tools seem harmless — even helpful — but over time, studies show they actually **reduce the desire for real human interaction**.

MIT researchers found that extended chatbot use made participants *less likely to socialize with people*.

AI can simulate empathy but cannot offer *love*. It can mirror our words but not *bear our burdens*. It’s a **spiritual counterfeit**.

What’s really happening is what Satan has done since the beginning:

He **counterfeits what God creates**.

- The **Holy Spirit** is being replaced with AI “companions.”
- **Community and accountability** are being replaced with isolation and affirmation.

These counterfeits feed our loneliness but starve our souls.

God’s Blueprint for Connection

The early church faced its own forms of disconnection and deception.

Whether by persecution, distance, or false teaching, believers were tempted to scatter and isolate.

That’s why the apostles repeatedly urged the church to gather — not just for worship, but for **encouragement and endurance**.

Hebrews 10:24–25 — “*Let us be concerned about one another in order to promote love and good works, not staying away from our worship meetings, as some habitually do, but encouraging each other.*”

John 13:34–35 – *“I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you must also love one another. By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

Love isn’t expressed through likes or comments — it’s lived out through **presence, prayer, and participation**.

To truly love one another as Jesus commanded, we must re-engage with real, embodied community.

Ask yourself honestly:

- How am I engaging in community outside Sunday morning?
- Do I serve, attend, or lead a Crew?
- Do I show up for church gatherings beyond convenience?
- Do I make time for people, or just scroll through them?

The Enemy’s Tactic: Isolation

Ignatius of Antioch, writing around 107 A.D., warned believers of this very danger:

“Take heed, then, to come together often to give thanks to God... for when you assemble frequently, the powers of Satan are destroyed.”

Satan’s oldest tactic hasn’t changed.

He doesn’t need to destroy a church if he can **divide** it — one believer at a time.

1 Peter 5:8 – *“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”*

Sheep that wander from the flock are easy prey.

Believers who isolate themselves become vulnerable to deception and discouragement.

And the danger doesn’t stop at isolation — it leads to distortion.

False teachers thrive in digital spaces, spreading ideas that tickle ears but corrupt truth.

Today, algorithms have replaced pulpits.

Social media has amplified false voices that affirm what culture approves rather than what Christ commands.

The Church’s Mission: Discipleship and Maturity

In every age, the remedy for deception and disconnection is the same — **discipleship**.

Romans 15:1–2, 4–5 – “We who are strong in faith should help the weak with their weaknesses... Let each of us please our neighbors for their good, to help them be stronger in faith... The Scriptures give us patience and encouragement so that we can have hope.”

Mature believers must help younger believers grow stronger in faith. And that cannot happen in isolation.

“Discipleship and maturity cannot just happen on Sunday.”

Sunday-only Christians will struggle to become spiritually mature.

Faith formation requires friction — the sharpening of community, the encouragement of fellowship, and the accountability of discipleship.

Growth will always require resistance and sacrifice.

Comfort never produces maturity.

Discipleship demands time, energy, vulnerability, and intentionality.

It’s opening your home, sharing a meal, praying with a friend, serving together, mentoring others, and walking with people through their mess.

Church isn’t just a service to attend — it’s a **family to belong to**.

Reclaiming True Connection

Community will always require something of you:

- Your time
- Your energy
- Your schedule
- Your comfort
- Your pride
- Your insecurity

But the reward far outweighs the cost.

It’s in the presence of the Holy Spirit and the company of believers that the enemy’s voice grows faint.

When we show up for each other — even when it’s hard — the Spirit strengthens, emboldens, and teaches us.

We become the church Jesus envisioned: a living, breathing community of grace and truth.

Reflection & Application

Evaluate:

- Where have you traded authentic relationships for digital convenience?
- How often are you truly present with other believers beyond Sunday mornings?
- Have you allowed isolation or comfort to become your default?

Respond:

- How is the Spirit prompting you to re-engage in community this week?
- Who can you encourage, disciple, or invite into your home or group?
- What steps will you take to make connection a priority over convenience?

Act:

- Commit to consistent participation in a Crew, class, or ministry team.
- Reach out to one person you've been distant from — reconnect in person.
- Limit your digital consumption and invest that time in real relationships.

“When you assemble frequently, the powers of Satan are destroyed.” — *Ignatius of Antioch*
Don't settle for a counterfeit connection.
Choose community. Choose discipleship. Choose renewal.



Week 6 – Reflecting the Light

Key Scriptures:

John 8:12 – *“Then Jesus spoke to them again: ‘I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’”*

Ephesians 5:8–9 – *“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light—for the fruit of the light results in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.”*

The Power of Light and Exposure

Throughout this series, we’ve talked about the effect our devices have on our attention, habits, and spiritual lives.

In this message, we focus on how the *light* of those devices shapes us — and how it compares to the divine light of Jesus Christ.

Our screens emit light that constantly penetrates our spaces — physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Every ping, glow, and scroll fills our minds with ideas, beliefs, and information — some good, but much of it harmful or hollow.

Over time, what we *consume* begins to shape who we *become*.

“Our lives reflect what we consume and what we are exposed to.”

The more time we spend illuminated by digital light, the more we reflect its image — not our Creator’s.

It subtly shifts our focus, dulls our spirit, and redefines our identity.

But Scripture offers a better light — one that exposes darkness and transforms everything it touches.

The Light Has Come

John’s Gospel overflows with the language of light and darkness — it’s one of his defining metaphors for Jesus’ ministry.

John 3:19–21 – *“This, then, is the judgment: The light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who practices wicked things hates the light and avoids it, so that his deeds may not be exposed.”*

John 8:12 – *“Then Jesus spoke to them again: ‘I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’”*

John 1:5 – *“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness will not overcome it.”*

Light has two purposes: **exposure** and **transformation**.
It exposes what is hidden and transforms whatever it touches.
Darkness cannot argue with light — it can only retreat in its presence.
When the light shines, shadows disappear. When Christ’s light fills a life, sin cannot hide.
So the question we must ask is:
“What do our lives reflect more — exposure to our devices or exposure to Jesus?”

Two Competing Sources of Light

Every day, we are being illuminated by one of two sources: **Device Light** or **Divine Light**.
Both fill our space. Both shape our focus. But only one transforms our hearts.

Device Light – Artificial and Superficial

It brightens our faces but dims our faith.
It mimics what only God can give — connection, comfort, wisdom, identity — but without the depth or Spirit that brings life.

Digital Source	What It Promises	What It Counterfeits
Followers	Makes us feel seen and known through likes and comments.	Mimics relationship but lacks depth and permanence.
Notifications	Small bursts of affirmation and approval.	Mimics divine validation but depends on people’s opinions.
Trends & Influencers	Constant inspiration and identity shaping.	Mimics spiritual growth but only alters what’s visible, not the heart.
A.I. & Search Engines	Endless knowledge and instant answers.	Mimics divine wisdom but often confuses and distracts.
Entertainment	Temporary escape and pleasure.	Mimics spiritual rest but only numbs instead of restores.

Device light flatters and distracts — but never transforms. It’s a **counterfeit glow** that promises meaning but leaves us empty.

Divine Light – Supernatural and Transformative

Unlike digital light, Divine Light originates from God Himself.

It reveals truth, restores identity, and connects us to His presence and people.

1. God – The Creator of Light (Relationship)

Genesis 1:3 - *“God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.”*

God spoke light into existence to bring order out of chaos.

He still does the same in us — illuminating dark hearts with His truth and drawing us into relationship with Him.

2. Jesus – The Light of the World (Identity)

John 1:4–5 – *“Life was in Him, and that life was the light of men. That light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”*

John 8:12 – *“I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”*

Our identity isn’t found in the approval of others — it’s found in the One who overcame darkness itself.

Jesus gives us a new life and calls us to reflect His light in a dark world.

3. The Holy Spirit – The Indwelling Light (Conviction & Power)

John 14:26 – *“The Counselor, the Holy Spirit... will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.”*

Acts 1:8 – *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be My witnesses.”*

The Spirit reveals truth, convicts sin, and empowers us to shine brightly.

We don’t walk in light through effort — we walk in light through His presence.

4. The Word of God – The Revealing Light (Revelation)

2 Timothy 3:16–17 – *“All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”*

Scripture doesn't just inform — it transforms. It reshapes our worldview and trains our hearts to reflect the character of Christ.

5. The Church – The Reflecting Light (Community)

Ephesians 5:8–10 – “Walk as children of light — for the fruit of the light results in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.”

Matthew 5:16 – “Let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”

The church is not a collection of perfect people, but a community of light-bearers. Together we reflect the radiance of Christ to a dark and weary world.

Exposed and Transformed

Light doesn't just illuminate — it **exposes**.

When we draw near to the light of Jesus, He reveals what's hidden in us — not to shame us, but to heal us.

In **John 8:3–11**, when the woman caught in adultery was brought before Jesus, He exposed the hypocrisy of her accusers and the sin in her heart — but instead of condemning her, He forgave her. “The one without sin among you should be the first to throw a stone.” One by one, they left. Then Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and sin no more.” Jesus exposed sin in order to **free** her from it — not to leave her bound by it.

That's the purpose of divine light.

It reveals what's broken so it can be restored.

It exposes sin so we can walk in freedom.

John 3:20 - “Everyone who practices wicked things hates the light and avoids it, so that his deeds may not be exposed.”

When we hide from the light, sin grows. When we walk in the light, sin dies.

Reflecting the Source

Paul echoes this call:

Ephesians 5:8–11 – “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light... Don't participate in the fruitless works of darkness, but instead expose them.”

We are reflectors — every one of us.

The question is: *what source are we reflecting?*

- The **Device Light** is exhaustible, flickering, and ever-changing with culture.
- The **Divine Light** is eternal, unchanging, and inexhaustible.

Exposure determines reflection. Whatever light we dwell in most is the one we project to others.

Dimmed Reflections

Sin left unexposed — or exposed but ignored — will dim the light of Christ in us.

The more we immerse ourselves in counterfeit light, the duller our reflection becomes.

Ask yourself:

- What do your reflections reveal?
- In your speech and your actions?
- In your devotion and your relationships — with your spouse, kids, friends, coworkers, and strangers?

If most of what you reflect is kind, compassionate, and Christlike, your exposure is likely Divine. If your reflection is impatient, prideful, or cynical, it may be cultural light shaping you more than Christ's. The light we reflect affects every relationship we have. It influences how others see Jesus in us.

Invitation to Renewal

If your light has dimmed — if distraction, bitterness, or sin has clouded your reflection — it's not too late to draw near to the Source.

Jesus' light doesn't shame or condemn. It heals, forgives, and renews.

When we surrender our darkness to Him, His Spirit reignites our hearts with truth, goodness, and love.

"We cannot reflect the light of Jesus if we have not surrendered our life and sin to His love and forgiveness."

Step back into His light.

Let His Word expose.

Let His Spirit convict.

Let His presence transform.

Reflection & Application

Evaluate:

- What light are you most exposed to daily — device or divine?
- Where has sin or distraction dimmed your reflection of Jesus?
- What does your attitude, language, or presence reveal about your source of light?

Respond:

- What practical steps can you take to increase your exposure to Divine Light?
 - Time in Scripture?
 - Prayer and worship?
 - Fellowship with believers?
- What “artificial lights” do you need to distance yourself from this week?

Act:

- Begin each morning by exposing your mind to Scripture before your screen.
- Replace one hour of scrolling with one hour of reading or prayer.
- Ask God to use your life to reflect His light into someone’s darkness this week.

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” — *John 1:5*



Week 7 – Image Restored, Influence Reclaimed

Key Scriptures:

Genesis 1:26–27 – “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.’ ... So God created man in His own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female.”

2 Corinthians 3:17–18 – “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image.”

Colossians 3:10 – “You are being renewed in knowledge according to the image of your Creator.”

The Image We Were Created For

Every day, we project an image to the world.

Our words, habits, reactions, and even our devices become mirrors reflecting who we are and what we value.

Our digital lives — posts, comments, likes, searches, and shares — create a version of ourselves for others to see. But as followers of Jesus, we must pause and ask a deeper question:

Does my digital image reflect the divine image I was created for?

From the beginning, God made humanity to bear His image — to be living reflections of His glory and character on the earth.

We were designed to represent His nature and reign, showing the world what He is like through how we love, live, and lead.

“Being an image bearer means we’re living mirrors — created to represent God’s nature to others.”

But sin cracked that mirror. It distorted and defaced the image of God in us.

Where there was once reflection, there is now rebellion.

Where there was once holiness, there is now hypocrisy.

Instead of bearing the image of God, we began bearing the image of our sin.

Image Distorted, Image Restored

Though sin distorted God's image in us, Jesus came to restore it.

Through His life, death, and resurrection, He cleanses the smear, heals the cracks, and renews our reflection.

Through His Spirit, we are continually being transformed back into His likeness.

2 Corinthians 3:17–18 – *“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. We all... are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory.”*

2 Corinthians 4:4 – *“The light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”*

Colossians 3:10 – *“You are being renewed in knowledge according to the image of your Creator.”*

Through Jesus, the image of God is not only restored — it's alive within us.

Every day, the Spirit is renewing our minds, our desires, and our image so that we reflect the glory of the One who saved us.

Devices as Mirrors of the Heart

Now tie that truth to our modern reality:

Our devices have become reflections of us — digital mirrors of our inner life.

Our feeds, search histories, photos, and private messages reveal more than our habits; they reveal our hearts.

They paint a portrait of what we worship, what we fear, and what we crave.

“If our devices reflect us, what image are they revealing? The image of our Creator — or the image of our culture?”

This question exposes something deeper than digital activity. It asks where our *allegiance* truly lies.

Are we allowing culture to reshape us into its likeness — through trends, politics, entertainment, and ideology — or are we allowing the Spirit to conform us to Christ?

The temptation to worship false images is as old as humanity itself.

Graven Images in a Digital Age

When God gave the Ten Commandments, He began with a warning about image worship:

Exodus 20:3–5 – “You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself a graven image... You shall not bow down to them or serve them.”

The Hebrew word for *graven image* — **pesel** — means a carved or sculpted form, a manmade imitation of divine reality.

It’s humanity’s attempt to reshape God into something controllable and convenient.

In ancient days, people carved idols of gold and stone. Today, our idols glow in 4K. Our screens have become portable temples filled with images we consume, admire, and often worship without realizing it.

From golden calves and Asherah poles to apps and algorithms, the pattern remains: We trade the **Creator’s image** for **created images** — and in doing so, we become like them.

Psalms 115:4–8 – “Their idols are silver and gold, made by human hands... Those who make them are just like them, as are all who trust in them.”

That’s the warning. Whatever we worship, we begin to resemble. Whatever we fix our gaze upon, we reflect.

When our hearts are tethered to graven images — whether ancient statues or digital screens — we mirror what cannot speak, feel, or love.

We lose sensitivity to the Spirit and become desensitized to sin.

The Modern Idol Factory

We don’t bow to carved statues anymore, but we do bow to screens.

We lift them up, consult them constantly, and let them shape our moods, priorities, and relationships.

“Our devices cause us to carry around graven images — man-made digital gods — everywhere we go.”

These glowing icons hold our attention, steal our affection, and subtly replace our dependence on God with dependence on *content*.

- The images we **consume** — memes, reels, movies, ads — form the image we **become**.
- The content we **share** becomes the message we **reflect**.
- The time we **spend** reveals the idols we **serve**.

So again we must ask:

“Does your digital image display devotion to God — or to the gods of this world?”

The Image God Sees

Imagine if someone could see a full snapshot of your digital life — every search, every message, every post.

What would it reveal about you?

Now remember: even if no one else can see it — **God does.**

“Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight.” — **Hebrews 4:13**

He sees past the filters and posts to the posture of the heart. He knows your desires, your motives, and your hidden thoughts. The image you display may fool people — but it can never fool God.

Jesus confronted this same duplicity in the Pharisees:

Matthew 23:25–28 — *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence... You are like whitewashed tombs, which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and every impurity.”*

They projected righteousness but practiced rebellion. They *performed* purity but resisted repentance.

And Jesus’ warning echoes to us:

Are we guilty of the same?

Do our *Sunday images* align with our *weekday realities*?

Does our online persona match our in-person faith?

Does your social feed line up with your spiritual fruit?

If our image bears more resemblance to culture than to Christ, it’s time to reclaim the reflection we were created for.

Influence and the Image You Reflect

Every voice in your life competes for influence — friends, family, culture, media, algorithms. Each one shapes the image you display.

But only **one** influence can restore the image you were created for: the Spirit of Christ. “The question isn’t whether you’re being influenced — it’s who’s winning the competition for your image.”

If the influences around you have left your reflection cynical, anxious, or unloving, it’s time to silence them and submit again to the Spirit’s shaping power.

Colossians 3:12–15 – *“Therefore, God’s chosen ones, holy and loved, put on heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, accepting one another and forgiving one another... Above all, put on love—the perfect bond of unity. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts.”*

When God’s Spirit influences us, we bear His image — not through perfection, but through transformation. Our hearts soften. Our minds renew. Our relationships reflect grace.

But when we allow the world to influence us, we project an image of pride, greed, fear, and comparison — the reflection of creation, not the Creator.

Christ Over All: Image Restored

Only one influence has the power to restore the image of God in us — Jesus Christ.

Through His Spirit, the fractured image becomes whole again.

Through His Word, our false reflections are replaced with truth.

Through His Church, our lives together display His beauty and power to a watching world.

“We need to seek His influence over all, so that we bear His image over all.”

The more we look to Him, the more we look like Him.

The more we look like Him, the more others see Him in us and are drawn to Him.

Reflection & Application

Evaluate:

- What image are you projecting — to the world, to your family, to your community, and online?
- Have you exchanged the Creator's image for created ones?
- Which influences are shaping your thoughts, desires, and habits?

Respond:

- Identify the “graven images” in your digital life — the habits, platforms, or voices that distort God's image in you.
- Ask the Spirit to reveal any areas where your reflection has been cracked or blurred.

Act:

- Replace digital noise with divine influence — Scripture, prayer, worship, community.
- Use your online presence to reflect the glory of Christ rather than the image of self.
- Daily remind yourself: *I am made in the image of God. I am being renewed in the image of Christ.*

Colossians 3:10 - “You are being renewed in knowledge according to the image of your Creator.”

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