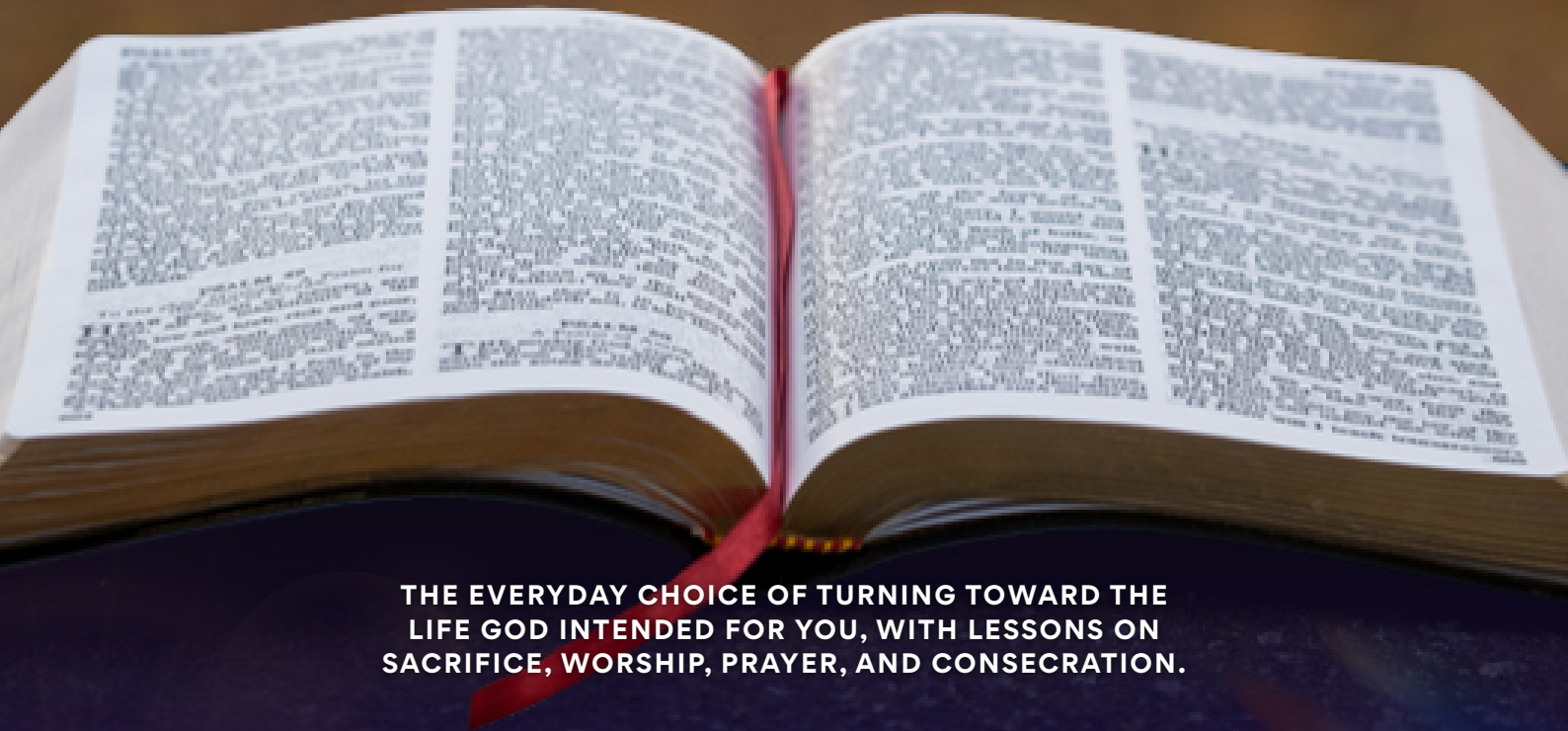


SEPTEMBER EDITION

THE WORD MADE FLESH

DAILY DEVOTIONAL



THE EVERYDAY CHOICE OF TURNING TOWARD THE
LIFE GOD INTENDED FOR YOU, WITH LESSONS ON
SACRIFICE, WORSHIP, PRAYER, AND CONSECRATION.

O BENACHI RENNER JUMBO

SEPTEMBER 2026 EDITION

A 30-Day Devotional

NEWNESS

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation
has come: the old has gone, the new is here!”*

2 Corinthians 5:17

WEEK 1

THE PROMISE

God Declares and Initiates Newness



SEPTEMBER 1 • THE PROMISE

I AM DOING A NEW THING

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 43:19 (NIV)

“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Isaiah speaks to a people with no future left to plan for. They are in Babylon. The temple lies in rubble, the royal line is broken, and every structure that once gave their life meaning has collapsed. Yet when God addresses them through the prophet, He skips right past any talk of repair. He announces something the exiles never could have asked for, because they never could have pictured it. And He speaks in the present tense: not 'I will do a new thing' but 'I am doing' it, right now, already springing up. The only real question left for them is whether they can perceive what has already begun.

REFLECTION

September opens with a word the worn and weary need most: God does not simply restore, He creates, and what He creates is always new. Repair and renewal are not the same thing. Patching something up is not the same as transforming it. Getting back to where you were is not the same as arriving somewhere you have never been. The exiles wanted their old life in Egypt reversed. God had something better in mind, something that would make Egypt beside the point entirely. He was not mending an old story but writing a fresh one, through the very same people, in the very same wilderness, using nothing but human failure and divine faithfulness as His raw material. Isaiah 43 does not ask you to remember better days. It asks you to notice what is springing up right now, and to look for the way through the wilderness instead of grieving the path that closed behind you.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

God is doing a new thing in my life, and it is already springing up. I will not be so focused on what I have lost that I miss what He is creating. I open my eyes today to the streams He is placing in the wasteland, the way He is making where no way existed before.

PRAYER

Lord, I confess I have been staring at the ruins while You were already building something new. Forgive the nostalgia that has kept me from seeing what is springing up around me. Open my eyes, give me the perception to recognise the new thing when it appears, and give me the faith to walk toward it even before it has fully taken shape. In Jesus' name, Amen.



SEPTEMBER 2 • THE PROMISE

THE NEW COVENANT

SCRIPTURE

Jeremiah 31:31 (NIV)

“The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Jeremiah delivers the promise of a new covenant during one of the darkest chapters in Israel's history. The old covenant, sealed at Sinai with blood and thunder, has been broken so many times that the nation is now on its way into exile as the direct consequence. God would have been justified simply ending the relationship there. Instead He announces something staggering: a new covenant, and not merely an old one reinforced with stricter rules. This covenant has a different architecture altogether, written not on stone but on the heart. The law would move from something imposed from outside to something planted within, and obedience would grow out of a changed nature rather than an external demand.

REFLECTION

The new covenant is the theological bedrock beneath everything September explores. Every kind of newness this month traces, new birth, new mind, new creation, new community, flows out of this one promise: God would write His own character into the interior of His people instead of merely prescribing it from a distance. That is why the Christian life differs so fundamentally from self-improvement. Self-improvement takes the material you already have and rearranges it more neatly. The new covenant replaces the whole operating system. God does not demand better behaviour from an unchanged heart; He gives a new heart, and new behaviour grows out of it naturally. Everything that follows this month rests on the promise Jeremiah recorded.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I live under a new covenant, not the old one. God has written His law on my heart, not merely handed it to me on stone. The newness I am walking into this month is not the product of my effort. It is the fruit of a promise God made and a work He has already done.

PRAYER

Father, thank You that You did not walk away when the relationship broke down. Your answer to human unfaithfulness was not to end things but to go deeper, giving us a covenant no external rule could ever reach. Write Your character into my heart today. Let my obedience grow from the inside, the way only Your Spirit can produce it. In Jesus' name, Amen.



SEPTEMBER 3 • THE PROMISE



NEW EVERY MORNING

SCRIPTURE

Lamentations 3:22-23 (NIV)

“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”

BIBLICAL STORY

These words come out of the rubble of Jerusalem. Lamentations is one of the rawest expressions of grief anywhere in Scripture: broken walls, starving children, a temple burned to ash. Whoever wrote these lines was not reflecting on God's goodness from a place of comfort. He was sitting in the wreckage of the worst thing he could imagine happening to his people, and from inside that devastation he wrote about the freshness of God's compassion, new every morning. The Hebrew word behind 'new' here shares its root with the word for a crescent moon and for grain just beginning to sprout. It describes something that renews itself by its own nature, that never runs dry, that arrives each dawn with the same vitality it had the first time.

REFLECTION

One of the quietest, most damaging lies we believe about ourselves is that our past defines our future, that yesterday's failures set a ceiling on tomorrow's possibilities. Lamentations 3 pushes back against that lie with real force. Every morning brings a fresh compassion, a mercy that did not exist yesterday because it was not needed yet, one that carries none of the wear from all the compassion already spent. God's supply does not run low. It does not thin out with use. It shows up tomorrow with the same fullness it had the very first time, because it never came from a limited reservoir to begin with. It flows out of the character of a faithful God who cannot be worn down by His own generosity. This is where September's newness begins: every single morning is a fresh start, simply because that is what God's compassion makes it.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

God's compassions are new every morning. Yesterday's failures do not exhaust tomorrow's mercies. I wake today into a fresh start that was not available yesterday, because a faithful God has renewed His compassion overnight. I receive today as a new gift.

PRAYER

Lord, I come into this morning still carrying what did not get resolved yesterday. Thank You that Your compassions do not carry yesterday's weight along with them. They arrive fresh. They arrive full. They arrive for today, for exactly what today needs. Great is Your faithfulness. I receive Your new mercies now, and I will



THE NEW CREATION DECLARATION

SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!"

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul's line in 2 Corinthians 5:17 is one of the most consequential sentences in the New Testament. It describes something that has already happened, not something hoped for or still in progress: the old has gone, the new is here. The Greek phrase for 'new creation' echoes the language used in Genesis for the original act of creation itself. Paul is not talking about a renovated version of the old self. He is describing an act as radical and as complete as the world being spoken into existence out of nothing. The person in Christ has not been improved. They have been made new in the same category of event as the first morning of creation.

REFLECTION

We tend to read 2 Corinthians 5:17 as a description of where things will eventually land, the finished product of a long process of Christian growth. But Paul's grammar will not let us read it that way. The new creation has come. It is present tense, not future hope. This does not mean the change is instantly visible in behaviour, or that the slow work of sanctification becomes unnecessary. It means that at the level of identity, something irreversible has already taken place. You are not an old creature being gradually upgraded. You are a new creature still learning to live from what you already are. September invites you to inhabit what is already true, to think like the new creation you are, to act from the nature you have been given, and to let this declaration of Scripture become the operating reality of your daily life rather than a doctrine you simply believe.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

The old has gone and the new is here. I do not relate to myself as a person being gradually improved. I am a new creation in Christ: made new at the level of identity, called to live from what I already am. I step into this month as someone who carries new life, not someone hoping to acquire it.

PRAYER

Lord, teach me to live as the new creation I already am. I confess I often act as though I am still the old version of myself, dragging yesterday's identity into today's choices. Let Your word become the operating reality of my life. I am new. Help me live from that truth rather than merely believing it as some distant fact. In Jesus' name, Amen.



SEPTEMBER 5 • THE PROMISE

BEHOLD, ALL THINGS NEW

SCRIPTURE

Revelation 21:5 (NIV)

"He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!' Then he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.'"

BIBLICAL STORY

The vision in Revelation 21 is the fullest statement of newness anywhere in Scripture. John does not see a repaired earth but a new heaven and a new earth, not a renovated city but a new Jerusalem coming down like a bride dressed for her husband. And the One seated on the throne speaks with the authority that belongs only to the Creator: I am making everything new. Not some things. Not the obviously salvageable things. Everything. Then God adds something striking: write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true. Total renewal is not a metaphor or a passing mood. It is a guarantee backed by the character of the One who cannot lie.

REFLECTION

The promise of Revelation 21 is the horizon that gives every smaller act of newness this month its meaning. New mercies each morning, new birth, a renewed mind, a new community: all of it is real and precious, but each is a preview of something far larger, a patch of the new creation breaking into the present before the final curtain falls. When God says He is making everything new, He is describing the direction the whole of history is moving in. Nothing that has been made new in Christ is a temporary improvement that will one day be undone. It is a deposit, a firstfruit, the beginning of a total renovation the throne has already declared. The newness you receive this September is real, and it points toward a newness so complete that the word 'new' will eventually need a bigger definition.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

God is making everything new, and what He declares is trustworthy and true. The newness I am walking into this month is not a small isolated renovation. It is connected to the total renewal of all things that the throne has already guaranteed. I am part of something larger than I can currently see.

PRAYER

Lord, let Revelation 21 stretch my imagination for what You are doing. I so easily think of newness in small terms, a better mood, a fresh start on one habit, one healed relationship. You are making everything new. All things. Let that vast horizon give shape and weight to every small act of renewal I experience this month. In Jesus' name, Amen.



SEPTEMBER 6 • THE PROMISE

GOD WHO MAKES WAYS

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 43:16 (NIV)

"This is what the Lord says, he who made a way through the sea, a path through the mighty waters."

BIBLICAL STORY

Before Isaiah announces the new thing God is about to do, he grounds it in something God has already done. The one who made a way through the sea is not repeating a story he heard secondhand. He is reminding God's people that the same God speaking to them in exile once stood at the edge of the Red Sea and carved out a road where no road should have existed. The logic is simple and devastating: if He made a way then, He can make a way now. What God is about to do is not new because it exceeds His power. It is new only in the sense of being a fresh expression of a character that has always been in the business of making ways through impossible places.

REFLECTION

The newness God promises never stays abstract. It shows up as a way forward through a situation that had no visible exit. The Israelites at the Red Sea had water in front of them, an army behind them, and mountains closing in on either side. By any natural calculation, there was no path. God made one anyway. When Isaiah 43 announces that God is doing a new thing, making a way in the wilderness, it is not describing some supernatural detour around difficulty. It is describing His characteristic way of working, creating passage straight through the very thing that appears to block it. The newness September speaks of is not a life free of obstacles. It is the newness of a God who specialises in paths through impossible terrain.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

The God I follow is the One who makes ways where there are none. The obstacles in front of me are not evidence that He has no plan. They are the terrain through which He characteristically works. I trust the God of the Red Sea to make a way through whatever is blocking my path today.

PRAYER

Lord, I am looking right now at something in my life that seems to have no way through. Remind me of the Red Sea. You have done this before, and not just once. Across the whole of redemptive history You have been making ways in impossible places. Do it again, in my situation, in Your time and in Your way. I trust the God who parts waters. In Jesus' name, Amen.



SEPTEMBER 7 • THE PROMISE



THE FAITHFUL PROMISER

SCRIPTURE

Numbers 23:19 (NIV)

“God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfil?”

BIBLICAL STORY

Balaam, a pagan diviner hired to curse Israel, discovers that every time he opens his mouth, blessing comes out instead. His explanation is one of the clearest statements about God's nature anywhere in the Old Testament: God is not a man, that He should lie. People make promises and break them because human promises depend on human memory, human capacity, and human willingness, all of which are limited. God's promises work differently. They are not commitments that might buckle under pressure. They are simply declarations of what is already settled in the mind and purpose of the One who governs everything and lacks nothing needed to fulfil what He has said.

REFLECTION

Everything September explores about newness rests on this foundation: the newness God promises is not a possibility contingent on favourable conditions. It is a certainty that depends only on His character. That matters most in the moments when newness feels far away, when the new birth you were promised has not yet produced new behaviour, when your new identity in Christ collides with old patterns, when the new covenant life still feels like the same old struggle. In those moments, Balaam's theology is the anchor. God is not a man. He does not speak and then fail to act. He does not promise and then discover His resources were not enough. The newness He has declared over your life is as certain as His character, and His character does not waver.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

God is not a man that He should lie. Every promise He has made concerning my newness in Christ will be fulfilled, because His faithfulness does not depend on my circumstances or my feelings. I rest my September on the character of a God who always does what He says.

PRAYER

Father, I am grateful that my newness does not depend on my own consistency. It depends on Yours. You are not a man. You do not change Your mind. You do not speak and fail to follow through. Every declaration of newness You have made over my life is certain, and today I choose to build on that certainty rather than the shaky ground of my own performance. In Jesus' name, Amen.



WEEK 2

THE BIRTH

Born Again into New Life



SEPTEMBER 8 • THE BIRTH

YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN

SCRIPTURE

John 3:7 (NIV)

“You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’”

BIBLICAL STORY

Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night, a cautious Pharisee looking for a theological conversation without the risk of being seen. He opens with a compliment: no one could perform the signs You do unless God were with him. Jesus does not take the bait. He redirects the whole conversation with a statement that upends Nicodemus's entire framework: you must be born again. Nicodemus is a teacher of Israel, a man who has spent his life studying and keeping the law. He does not need more information or a better technique. He needs a beginning so radical that only one image will do. Not reform. Not improvement. Not another attempt at the same kind of life. Birth.

REFLECTION

Jesus's insistence that you must be born again is one of the most confrontational statements in the Gospels, because it refuses to negotiate with the self you already have. Religion is very good at that kind of negotiation, taking what already exists and trying to improve it, redirect it, discipline it into something better. The new birth skips that process entirely. The Spirit gives birth to spirit. What comes from flesh stays flesh; what comes from the Spirit is spirit. The new life does not grow out of the old life reformed. It comes from an act of the Spirit, which means it is as genuinely new as any birth: it enters the world for the first time, it has never existed before, and it belongs to an entirely different category than whatever came before it. September begins here, with a birth, not a resolution.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I have been born again, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. My new life did not originate in my own effort or my own decision to be better. It was given to me by the Spirit of God. I am genuinely, permanently, irreversibly new at the level of origin.

PRAYER

Lord, I do not want religion. I want the new birth. I want the life that only Your Spirit can give, not an improved version of my old self dressed up in better habits. Where I have settled for reformation when You were offering regeneration, forgive me. Let the new birth be the actual ground I stand on, not a theological idea I file away for later. In Jesus' name, Amen.



SEPTEMBER 9 • THE BIRTH

BORN OF WATER AND SPIRIT

SCRIPTURE

John 3:5 (NIV)

“Jesus answered, ‘Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and Spirit.’”

BIBLICAL STORY

Jesus describes the new birth in language that would have echoed Ezekiel's great promise in chapter 36: I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean, I will cleanse you from all your impurities. Water and Spirit are not two separate requirements here. Together they describe one comprehensive act of new creation, the washing away of what was and the filling with what is new. The prophet had made this promise centuries earlier, and now the One who came to fulfil all righteousness stands before a Pharisee in the dark and announces that the hour has arrived. The kingdom of God cannot be entered by an old self improving itself into worthiness. It requires a beginning that only God can initiate and only the Spirit can accomplish.

REFLECTION

The image of water in the new birth carries more than ceremonial weight. Throughout Scripture, water marks transition: through the flood, through the Red Sea, through the Jordan. Every major turning point in redemptive history involves a passage through water that separates the old from the new. Baptism carries this same theology in physical form: going under as the old self and coming up as the new, not because the water itself holds any power, but because it acts out the death and resurrection that sit at the heart of new birth. Being born of water and Spirit means the new life you carry is not an add-on to your old one. It is the life you stepped into the moment you crossed from one side to the other. That crossing was real, and the newness on this side of it is just as real.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I have been born of water and Spirit. I have crossed from one side to the other, and what I am now is not a revision of what I was. I have entered the kingdom of God by the act of God, and I live today from the life I received on the other side of that crossing.

PRAYER

Lord, keep the reality of my new birth in front of me today, not as a memory I look back on but as a present reality I am living in. I am on the other side of the crossing. The old has been washed away. Your Spirit has breathed new life into what used to be only flesh. Let me live today from this side of the water. In Jesus' name, Amen.



DEAD AND RAISED

SCRIPTURE

Romans 6:4 (NIV)

"We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul builds his entire theology of new birth on union with Christ. He does not describe the believer's transformation as a change of direction or a shift in disposition. He describes it as death and resurrection. The very event that killed Jesus and raised Him involved the believer too. We were buried with Him. We were raised with Him. The verbs are historical past tense: this already happened. The result is present tense: we now live a new life. Paul is not describing a spiritual high that some especially devoted Christians manage to reach. He is describing what actually occurred, for every person in Christ, at the moment of new birth. You died. You were raised. You live a new life. That is not aspiration. That is identity.

REFLECTION

The practical weight of Romans 6 is one of the most freeing truths in all of Scripture: sin no longer has any authority over someone who has already died to it. You cannot govern a dead person. The old self that sin used to control is dead, which means sin has no legitimate claim left on the new life that has been raised in its place. When Paul later writes, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus, he is not asking you to pretend something false. He is asking you to reckon with what is already true, that the person sin used to own has been buried and someone new has been raised in their place. The fight against sin is not the fight of a living person trying to die. It is the fight of a raised person refusing to climb back into a grave that no longer belongs to them.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I have been buried with Christ and raised with Him to new life. Sin no longer has dominion over me because the person sin used to own has died. I live today from resurrection, not from the effort of a still-living old self trying to improve itself. I count myself dead to sin and alive to God.

PRAYER

Father, let the reality of my death and resurrection in Christ shape how I face temptation today. I am not a struggling sinner trying hard to become better. I am a raised person being invited back into a grave that is no longer mine. Help me stand in the resurrection and refuse whatever still belongs to the burial. In Jesus' name, Amen.



THE LIVING HOPE

SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 1:3 (NIV)

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

BIBLICAL STORY

Peter writes to people who have every reason to feel their future closing in on them: scattered exiles, strangers wherever they live, feeling the friction of a life that does not fit the world around them. Into that situation, Peter opens his letter with an outburst of praise. The praise is not rooted in their circumstances. It is rooted in a new birth that has moved them from a dead hope into a living one. That distinction matters. A dead hope depends on earthly conditions, prosperity, safety, the approval of the people around you. A living hope is alive because its source is alive, the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. You cannot kill a hope that is rooted in resurrection.

REFLECTION

One of the steadiest enemies of newness is the quiet despair that creeps in when circumstances refuse to change. We start September full of fresh intentions, and by the third week we are back in old patterns. We are promised new birth and then find that new life does not always feel new. Peter's answer is not a technique or a discipline, though disciplines have their place. It is a reorientation of where hope is anchored. The hope of the new birth is not alive because life is going well. It is alive because Christ is alive, and the same resurrection power that raised Him is the power underwriting every promise of newness in your life. A living hope cannot be killed by bad circumstances, because bad circumstances are not what gave it life in the first place.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I have been given a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This hope is not conditional on my circumstances or my feelings. It is alive because He is alive, and nothing that happens to my circumstances can kill a hope rooted in resurrection.

PRAYER

Lord, re-anchor my hope this morning. I confess I have let my hope lean on things that can change: my health, my relationships, my finances, my sense of spiritual progress. None of those can hold up a living hope. You can. Your resurrection can. Root me there again today. In Jesus' name, Amen.



CHILDREN OF GOD

SCRIPTURE

John 1:12-13 (NIV)

“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.”

BIBLICAL STORY

John's prologue introduces the incarnation in language of cosmic scale, the Word through whom everything was made stepping into the very creation He had spoken into existence. Yet this towering statement about Christ ends with one of the most intimate promises in all of Scripture: the right to become children of God. Not servants. Not subjects. Not followers who earn their place through performance. Children. And John is precise about where this sonship comes from: not natural descent, not human decision, not the will of any human father. Born of God. The new birth into God's family is entirely His initiative, His act, His gift.

REFLECTION

Being a child of God is not one label among several that might describe a believer. It is the foundational identity, the one that shapes every other. A child of God approaches prayer differently than an employee approaches a manager. A child of God faces suffering differently than a subject facing a sovereign's decree. A child of God receives discipline differently than a citizen receiving punishment. At its most personal level, the new birth is a change of family. You have been adopted into the household of the Father, given His name, given access to His resources, given a seat at His table. September's newness is not only about behaviour or thinking or circumstance. It is about who you now belong to, and who that belonging makes you.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I am a child of God, born not of human decision but of God Himself. This is the most foundational thing that is true about me. Every other identity I carry is secondary to this one. I approach this day as a child of the Father, with access to everything that identity carries.

PRAYER

Father, let the truth of my adoption settle deeper into me today. I am Your child, not by natural descent, not by effort, not by meeting some standard. By Your will alone You have given me the right to be called Your own. Let me live today from that security, resting in what You have already given rather than striving to earn it. In Jesus' name, Amen.



WASHED, SANCTIFIED, JUSTIFIED

SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 6:11 (NIV)

“And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul has just named the kinds of people who will not inherit the kingdom of God: the sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, swindlers. Then he writes one of the most radical sentences in his letters: and that is what some of you were. Not what some of you are in danger of becoming. Were. Past tense. The Corinthian church was full of people with exactly those histories, and Paul does not soften them or pretend they never happened. He simply points to what happened next, three transformative acts done in the name of Jesus and by the Spirit. Washed: cleansed of what was. Sanctified: set apart for a new purpose. Justified: declared righteous before God. Three tenses of the same irreversible event.

REFLECTION

The newness of the new birth has a legal dimension as well as an experiential one. Justification does not mean God simply agreed to overlook the past. He declared the forgiven person righteous, not because they became behaviourally perfect but because the righteousness of Christ was credited to their account. That is not fiction. It is the most serious legal transaction in the universe, the just One standing in the place of the unjust so the unjust could stand in the place of the just. Washed, sanctified, justified: together these three words describe the full newness of status that belongs to every person in Christ. When the accuser reaches back into your past to try to define your present, the answer is not to argue the details of the past. The answer is to point to these three words and the name in which they were accomplished.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I was washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God. My past is real but it does not define me. What happened to me in Christ has more authority over my identity than anything that happened before it. I live from what I have been made, not from what I used to be.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for the past tense of the Gospel. I was that. I am not that anymore. I was washed, and the washing was complete. I was sanctified, and the setting apart was real. I was justified, and the declaration was final. Let those three words drown out every accusation the enemy tries to bring from my history. In Jesus' name, Amen.



A NEW NAME

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 62:2 (NIV)

“The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will bestow.”

BIBLICAL STORY

In the ancient world, a name was never just a label. It was a definition. A name declared what a person was, what they carried, what they were built for. When God renamed Abram to Abraham, Sarai to Sarah, Jacob to Israel, He was not updating a record somewhere. He was speaking a new identity over people whose old names no longer captured what they had become in relationship with Him. Isaiah 62 promises a new name for a nation that had worn the names of abandonment and desolation for far too long. This new name would come from the mouth of the Lord Himself, carrying the authority of the One who names things accurately, who called light good and it was good, who would call His people My Delight and Married and make it so.

REFLECTION

The new birth includes a renaming. The person once defined by their brokenness, their failure, their family history, their own choices, or the cruelty of others receives a new name from the mouth of God. This new name does not deny what happened. It declares what has been made true in Christ, something that outweighs what was true before. Shame has given you a name. Failure has given you a name. The people who wounded you have handed you names you may have carried for years. But Isaiah 62, read through the theology of new birth, insists that none of those are the final word. The mouth of the Lord bestows a name, and His name is the one that lasts, the one you will carry into the age to come.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

God has given me a new name, and His name for me supersedes every name I have been given by my past, my failure, or the wounds others have inflicted. I do not answer to shame or to the old definitions any longer. I answer to the name the mouth of the Lord has bestowed.

PRAYER

Lord, speak Your name over me today. Whatever names I have been carrying that do not belong to me, failure, shame, worthlessness, inadequacy, I lay them down. Speak the name You have for me. Let me hear it clearly, and let it drown out every other voice. In Jesus' name, Amen.



WEEK 3

THE MIND

The Renewed Mind and Its Fruit





THE RENEWED MIND

SCRIPTURE

ROMANS 12:2 (NIV)

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul's call to renew the mind sits right at the hinge of Romans, between the great theological argument of chapters 1 through 11 and the practical instructions that follow in chapters 12 through 16. That placement is no accident. Changed behaviour does not come before a changed mind; it follows from it. The world shapes us at the level of thought, quietly forming our assumptions about what is normal, what is valuable, what is possible, what we deserve. The Spirit works differently. Instead of rearranging our circumstances first, He renews the centre from which every choice originates. A renewed mind produces a transformed life. No amount of behaviour modification, on its own, can produce a renewed mind.

REFLECTION

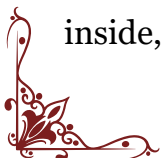
Renewing the mind is one of the central disciplines of the Christian life, and it is chronically underrated because it is slow and hard to see. We can change our surroundings quickly, change our relationships quickly, change our habits quickly, and watch the results almost immediately. The mind renews gradually, through steady exposure to truth, through prayer, through the discipline of holding our thoughts up against Scripture, through the willingness to let our assumptions be challenged instead of confirmed. But the fruit of a renewed mind, Paul says, is remarkable: the ability to test and approve what God's will actually is. A person whose mind has been renewed by the Spirit does not just know facts about God's will. They develop something closer to a spiritual palate, able to taste the difference between what is good, pleasing, and perfect, and what is merely permissible and familiar.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I am being transformed by the renewing of my mind. I will not conform to the world's patterns of thinking. I feed my mind on truth, submit my assumptions to God, and trust the Spirit to renew my thinking from the inside out. A new mind produces a new life.

PRAYER

Lord, renew my mind today. I am shaped by the world's thinking more than I usually admit, its assumptions about success, worth, security, and the good life have crept into me without my noticing. Bring them into the light. Replace them with what is true. Transform me from the inside, starting with how I think. In Jesus' name, Amen.



THINKING ON THESE THINGS

SCRIPTURE

Philippians 4:8 (NIV)

“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul writes this list from a prison cell, and that setting gives it a weight it would not have if he had written it from comfort. He is not laying out the conditions required for peace of mind. He is describing the practice that produces peace of mind in the absence of good conditions. This is not a rosy description of the world as it actually is, which contains plenty that is untrue, ignoble, impure, and unlovely. Paul is not asking anyone to pretend difficulty away. He is prescribing a deliberate direction for attention, toward what is good, because what we consistently pay attention to shapes the kind of mind we end up with.

REFLECTION

The principle behind Philippians 4:8 is one of the most practically important in the New Testament: over time, we become like what we habitually think about. A mind that keeps turning toward anxiety, negativity, and resentment will gradually take on the texture of those things. A mind deliberately directed toward what is true, noble, right, and lovely will gradually take on those qualities instead. This is not optimism as denial. It is the spiritual discipline of attention, the choice to look at what God has made, what God has done, and what God has promised, until those things begin to form the default landscape of your thinking. The renewed mind does not look away from reality. It has trained its gaze to keep returning to what is actually and lastingly real, the goodness, truth, and beauty that belong to God and that no circumstance can finally destroy.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I choose what I think about. I will direct my mind toward what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable. Not as a denial of difficulty but as a spiritual discipline: I will train my attention toward the goodness of God until it becomes the natural landscape of my thinking.

PRAYER

Lord, guard the gate of my mind today. Help me notice when my thinking has drifted into places that shrink and discourage me, and redirect it toward what is true, good, and beautiful. I want the quality of my thoughts to reflect the quality of the God I am thinking about. In Jesus' name, Amen.





THE MIND OF CHRIST

SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 2:16 (NIV)

“For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul quotes Isaiah 40 to make an extraordinary point: no creature can instruct the Creator, because no creature has access to the depth of divine wisdom. Who has known the mind of the Lord, he asks, and the implied answer is nobody. Then, without missing a beat, Paul adds what might be the boldest claim in the whole letter: but we have the mind of Christ. The very people who cannot instruct the Lord have been given, by the Spirit, access to the mind of the One who made everything. This is not a claim to know everything. It is a claim to a kind of spiritual perception the natural mind simply does not have, the ability to recognise what is of God, to see spiritual truth as truth, to view the world from inside divine wisdom rather than from mere human analysis.

REFLECTION

The mind of Christ is not an upgrade reserved for especially advanced believers. It is standard equipment that comes with the new birth. Every person born of the Spirit has received, as part of that new life, a capacity for spiritual discernment that is foreign to the natural mind. The natural mind looks at the cross and sees foolishness, the idea that divine power shows up in weakness, that life comes through death, that the greatest is the one who serves. The mind of Christ recognises this as the deepest wisdom there is. Renewing our minds means learning to actually use the mind we already have, trusting the spiritual perception the Spirit makes available instead of trying to evaluate the things of God using criteria that only belong to the wisdom of this age.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I have the mind of Christ. This is not something I am working toward. It is something I have been given by the Spirit. I will trust the spiritual perception available to me, evaluate the things of God by the wisdom that comes from above, and refuse to let the world's categories be the final measure of what is true.

PRAYER

Lord, teach me to think with the mind of Christ that I have already been given. I default so easily to the mind of the world, evaluating everything by what is practical, measurable, and impressive. The mind of Christ sees things differently. Let me see differently today. In Jesus' name, Amen.





CASTING DOWN ARGUMENTS

SCRIPTURE

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV)

"We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul reaches for military language to describe what is fundamentally an interior battle. He talks about demolishing strongholds, casting down arguments, capturing thoughts. This warfare is not mainly aimed at outside forces, though those are real too. It is fought inside the believer's own mind, over which framework will govern their thinking, which claims get treated as authoritative, which voices get obeyed. The strongholds Paul has in mind are not dramatic demonic fortresses. They are patterns of thought that have taken root over time and now resist the truth of God, the arguments claiming God cannot be trusted, the pretensions that place human logic above divine revelation, the assumptions so deeply embedded they feel like facts when they are really just interpretations shaped by experience rather than truth.

REFLECTION

Taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ is one of the most demanding daily disciplines in the New Testament. It requires a level of attention to your inner life that most of us rarely bother with. We notice our behaviour far more readily than we notice the thoughts behind it, but behaviour flows out of thought, and thought flows out of whatever frameworks and narratives have been allowed to settle in unchallenged. The renewed mind does not just try to think nicer thoughts. It actively hunts down the arguments and pretensions set against God's truth and refuses them a place to live. That is not intellectual dishonesty. It is simply recognising that not every thought deserves the authority it claims, and that the mind of Christ is the only real standard for telling what is true apart from what merely sounds convincing.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I take my thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ. I do not let every argument that presents itself claim authority over my mind. I identify what sets itself against the knowledge of God and I demolish it with truth. My mind is a territory I actively govern, not a passive receiver.

PRAYER

Lord, make me alert to the strongholds in my thinking, the patterns that have been there so long they feel like facts, the arguments against Your goodness I have rehearsed so many times they feel like reality. Show them to me for what they are. Help me pull them down and replace them with the truth of who You are and what You have said. In Jesus' name, Amen.





THE SPIRIT OF A SOUND MIND

SCRIPTURE

2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV)

“For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul writes to a young man who is clearly wrestling with fear. Timothy is in Ephesus, leading a church under pressure, and he seems tempted to pull back, soften his message, avoid confrontation faithfulness would otherwise require. Paul's response is not a pep talk. It is a theological statement about what the Spirit has actually given. The Spirit of God does not produce cowardice. Timidity is not from Him. What comes from God is power, love, and a sound mind, three qualities that are precisely the antidote to fear. Power to act when action costs something. Love that pushes out the fear of rejection and punishment. A sound mind that keeps perspective when circumstances press toward panic.

REFLECTION

One of the most important fruits of the renewed mind is what Paul calls self-discipline, or sound mind depending on the translation. The underlying Greek word describes a controlled, well-ordered, healthy way of thinking, the opposite of a runaway thought life governed by anxiety, worst-case scenarios, and imagined disasters that have not happened and may never happen. The Spirit gives this quality of mind as a gift, not something you earn. It has nothing to do with personality type or a naturally calm temperament. It is the fruit of the Spirit living in someone who has chosen to walk in step with Him. A mind renewed by the Spirit becomes, over time, genuinely and securely sound, not the forced calm of someone suppressing their anxiety, but the settled clarity of someone who knows exactly who holds the future.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

The Spirit God gave me produces power, love, and a sound mind. I do not operate from fear or timidity. I have been given what is needed: the power to act, the love to engage, and the clarity of mind to think without panic. I step forward today from that foundation.

PRAYER

Lord, I receive today what Your Spirit gives: power for what is in front of me, love for the people around me, and a sound mind to navigate whatever I face without being driven by fear. Where I have been timid when You were calling me to be courageous, forgive me. Let the Spirit's resources be the ground I stand on today. In Jesus' name, Amen.





SET YOUR MIND ON THINGS ABOVE

SCRIPTURE

Colossians 3:2 (NIV)

“Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul's instruction to set the mind on things above follows directly from his statement that believers have died and their life is now hidden with Christ in God. Orienting the mind is not some separate spiritual project sitting alongside the reality of new life in Christ. It is simply the appropriate response to what is already true. If your life is genuinely hidden with Christ in God, then thinking mainly in terms of what is earthly, temporary, and visible is a plain category error. You are someone whose real life is located elsewhere, and your mind should be oriented accordingly. Setting your mind on things above is not escapism. It is accuracy. It is learning to think from the place where you actually live.

REFLECTION

The practical question is how to set your mind on things above without becoming useless in the present world. Colossians 3 answers this itself, since the very next verses tell the same person to put to death earthly appetites, put away anger and malice, put on compassion and kindness, and work at everything as unto the Lord. Setting the mind on things above does not lead to withdrawal from earthly life. It produces a quality of engagement with earthly life that is impossible without it, the ability to serve without needing credit, to forgive without keeping score, to work without anxiety about outcomes, to love without calculating what you get back. A mind oriented above brings a different quality of presence into everything below.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I set my mind on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. I do not think primarily in terms of the temporary and the visible. My real life is hidden with Christ in God, and I let that reality orient how I think about everything else today.

PRAYER

Lord, pull my thinking upward today, not away from the world I live in, but above the framework the world uses to evaluate everything. I want to think from where You are, not only from where I am. Let the perspective of eternity shape how I engage with the temporary. In Jesus' name, Amen.





THE FRUIT OF NEW THINKING

SCRIPTURE

Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul draws a precise distinction between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit, a distinction that is often missed. Works can be produced mechanically, by sheer effort and willpower, without any change happening on the inside. Fruit cannot. Fruit is simply the natural outgrowth of a living thing's nature. An apple tree does not produce apples by resolving to try harder. It produces apples because it is an apple tree growing under the right conditions. When Paul calls love, joy, peace, and the rest the fruit of the Spirit, he is saying these qualities grow naturally out of a Spirit-renewed life lived in step with the Spirit who produces them. They cannot be manufactured. They can only be cultivated, by staying connected to the Vine who is their source.

REFLECTION

The fruits of the Spirit are the clearest evidence that a mind is genuinely being renewed. Someone growing more loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled is someone whose mind has actually changed, thinking from a different place, attending to a different reality, drawing on a different source. These qualities rarely arrive all at once or in finished form. They grow. But they grow as evidence of something deeper, not as the goal itself. Religion focused purely on behaviour is always tempted to chase the fruit directly, trying hard through sheer willpower to be more loving, more patient, more kind. Paul's theology says this gets it backwards. Stay close to the Vine, keep your mind renewed and oriented above, and the fruit will follow, as naturally as a season brings its harvest.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

The fruit of the Spirit is the natural outgrowth of a life in step with the Spirit. I do not produce it by trying harder. I cultivate it by staying close to the Vine. The renewed mind, connected to its source, will bear the fruit of love, joy, peace, and every quality that marks a genuinely new life.

PRAYER

Lord, I want the fruit of Your Spirit to become increasingly visible in my life. But I know I cannot manufacture it myself. Teach me to stay close to the Vine, to keep my mind renewed and my heart connected to Yours, so the fruit grows out of who I am becoming rather than out of what I am straining to produce. In Jesus' name, Amen.



WEEK 4

THE COMMUNITY

How God Reveals His Purposes



A NEW COMMAND

SCRIPTURE

John 13:34 (NIV)

*"A new command I give you: love one another.
As I have loved you, so you must love one another."*

BIBLICAL STORY

Jesus gives this command on the night of His betrayal, in the upper room, just hours before the cross. The timing matters. This is His last word to His disciples before the Passion, the thing He most wants them to hold onto. He calls it a new command, which raises an obvious question: wasn't love already commanded? Leviticus 19:18 had already said to love your neighbour as yourself. So what is new here? The newness is in the standard. The old command measured love against the self: love others the way you love yourself. The new command measures love against Christ: as I have loved you. The cross sets the bar now. A love that gave everything, that pursued the other person's good at the cost of the self, that kept loving through betrayal and abandonment and death, that is now the measure.

REFLECTION

The community created by new birth is defined by this command more than by anything else. It is not defined by shared doctrine alone, though doctrine matters. Not by shared practice alone, though practice shapes people. Not by shared background, culture, or language. It is defined by a quality of love the world does not naturally produce, love that measures itself by the cross, that keeps giving even when nothing comes back, that pursues the restoration of a broken relationship rather than the vindication of whoever got hurt. This is the love that makes the world stop and notice. Jesus adds right after this: by this all people will know you are my disciples, if you love one another. The new community is the new creation made visible, and its unmistakable mark is a love only the new birth can produce.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I love others as Christ has loved me. Not as I love myself, which is the old measure, but as He loved me, which is the new one. His love is the standard I hold my love against, and when I fall short I return to the One whose love is the source of mine.

PRAYER

Jesus, teach me to love the people around me the way You loved me. I know the doctrine. I struggle with the practice. Give me a love that keeps going when it is not returned, that pursues restoration rather than vindication, that measures itself by the cross rather than by how I happen to feel. In Your name, Amen.





NO LONGER STRANGERS

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 2:19 (NIV)

“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul writes to the Ephesians across one of the deepest social divides in the ancient world, the gap between Jew and Gentile. These were not simply two ethnic groups with different customs. They were two worlds with entirely different ideas about who belonged to God, separated by centuries of mutual contempt and hard legal barriers. Paul declares that in Christ, the dividing wall of hostility has come down. The two have been made into one new humanity. Gentiles who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. The deepest kind of otherness in the ancient world has been overcome, not through political compromise or cultural accommodation, but through a new creation that makes everyone in Christ part of one household.

REFLECTION

The community created by new birth is likely the most diverse community in human history, because its unity does not rest on natural affinity. It does not gather people who already share background, temperament, wealth, or culture. It gathers people who share a new birth, a new Father, and a new identity in Christ, and then asks them to live out everything that shared identity implies. That makes it harder than almost any other form of community, since the usual sources of cohesion are missing. You cannot just enjoy each other's company; you have to love across distances company alone will never bridge. But it is also more powerful than any other kind of community, because the unity it displays is something the world simply cannot produce on its own. It is the new creation becoming visible in human relationships.

TODAY’S DECLARATION

I am no longer a stranger or a foreigner. I am a fellow citizen with God’s people and a member of His household. The community I belong to transcends every natural division. I will live in it as the new humanity it is called to be, crossing the distances that new birth has made crossable.

PRAYER

Lord, make me a builder of community rather than a consumer of it. Where I have pulled back from the difficulty of real relationships in the body of Christ, call me back. Where natural affinity has been deciding who I invest in, expand my reach. Make Your household my home, and let me treat the people in it with the honour that belongs to the family of God. In Jesus’ name, Amen.



THE NEW HUMANITY

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 2:15 (NIV)

"His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, so making peace."

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul's language about what the cross does to the Jew-Gentile divide is extraordinary: Christ has created one new humanity. Not a reformed version of either group. Not a compromise blending the best of both. A new humanity, created in Himself, that did not exist before. This is new creation language applied to social reality. The cross does more than make individuals new; it creates a new corporate entity, a new kind of human community whose defining mark is peace, the kind of shalom that reaches in every direction, upward toward God and outward toward one another.

REFLECTION

The implications of this new humanity for the community of new creation are radical and, honestly, rarely explored fully. The cross does not merely offer individual salvation. It builds a new society. Every barrier humanity has ever erected, racial, economic, cultural, educational, generational, has already been addressed at the root by the new creation. That does not mean these barriers have stopped existing in practice; they clearly have not. But in Christ they no longer have any real standing. They have been dismantled in principle by the One who made one new humanity, and the community of new birth is called to live out that dismantling in practice, becoming the place in the world where this new humanity is most clearly on display.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I am part of the new humanity Christ created at the cross. The barriers that divide the world have no final authority in the community of new birth. I will live in a way that makes the new humanity visible: crossing divides, building peace, treating every person in Christ as a member of the same new creation.

PRAYER

Lord, let Your church be what You made it to be, one new humanity making peace visible in a world soaked in division. Show me where I am reinforcing old divisions instead of living out the new. Give me the courage to cross the distances the cross has already abolished. In Jesus' name, Amen.



CLOTHED WITH THE NEW SELF

SCRIPTURE

Colossians 3:10 (NIV)

“and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul's image of putting on the new self follows his instruction to take off the old, the anger, malice, slander, and lying. The clothing metaphor is deliberate. Clothes are visible. They communicate something to everyone who sees them. They can be changed. And they are chosen: every morning you decide what you will wear, and by extension what you will present to the world. Paul is asking for that same intentionality about identity, to consciously set aside the practices of the old self and consciously put on the practices of the new. The new self is real, but it is not automatic in how it shows up. It has to be chosen, practised, and worn.

REFLECTION

The phrase Paul uses, that the new self 'is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator,' is striking. Part of the new birth is the restoration of what was lost in the fall: the image of God in the human person. Sin defaced that image. New creation restores it, not all at once but gradually, through an ongoing, directional renewal. That means the community of new creation is made up of people becoming, together, more fully what God intended when He first said let us make human beings in our image. The new self is not a solo achievement. It is a shared restoration, most visible in the way people treat one another, with the love, justice, mercy, and truth native to God's own character.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I have put on the new self, which is being renewed in the image of its Creator. Every morning I choose to wear it: to put off anger and malice and dishonesty and to put on the qualities that belong to the new humanity. The image of God in me is being restored, and I cooperate with that restoration daily.

PRAYER

Lord, let me be intentional today about what I put on, not clothes but character: patience, kindness, truthfulness, humility, everything that belongs to the new self. Remind me these are not performances. They are the honest expression of who I have become in Christ. Let me wear them as comfortably as my own skin. In Jesus' name, Amen.





BEARING WITH ONE ANOTHER

SCRIPTURE

Colossians 3:13 (NIV)

"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul's picture of the new community in Colossians 3 is unflinchingly honest about what life together actually requires. He does not describe a community that has risen above offence and grievance. He describes a community that will keep experiencing offence and grievance, and has already decided in advance what to do about it: bear with one another, forgive one another, as the Lord forgave you. The standard is the cross once again. As the Lord forgave you is not a small benchmark. It is the forgiveness of a debt too large to calculate, given freely, unearned, released with no conditions attached. Paul holds this up as the measure for how the new creation community handles the friction that close living always produces.

REFLECTION

One of the most powerful testimonies to new creation is a community that forgives. The world already knows exactly how to divide, along lines of offence, grievance, perceived slight, and accumulated resentment. What it does not naturally produce is a people who absorb the cost of being wronged and let the debt go instead of collecting on it. That is not natural. It takes new birth, a renewed mind, the identity of the new self, and a constant refreshing of memory, remembering how much has already been forgiven in Christ. Bearing with one another is not passivity. It is an active, daily decision to stay in relationship with imperfect people, to carry their weight along with your own, and to extend a grace that only the cross makes possible in that measure.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I bear with the people around me and I forgive as the Lord forgave me. The community of new creation is not a community of people who never wound each other. It is a community that has decided in advance to keep forgiving, because the standard of forgiveness is the cross and not the scale of the offence.

PRAYER

Lord, show me who I am holding a grievance against today. Show me where I have been carrying something You have already asked me to release. I forgive as You have forgiven me, not because the debt was small, but because the debt I was forgiven was immeasurably larger. Let the community around me be marked by a forgiveness only new creation can sustain. In Jesus' name, Amen.



SPEAKING LIFE

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul's instruction about speech in Ephesians 4 sits inside a larger passage about putting off the old self and putting on the new. The connection is intentional. The old self speaks in old ways, ways that tear down, diminish, mislead, and serve the speaker at the listener's expense. The new self speaks differently. Paul's standard is specific and demanding, not merely avoiding harm but actively speaking what helps build others up according to what they need. New creation speech is calibrated to the person receiving it, shaped by what they actually need rather than by whatever the speaker feels like saying.

REFLECTION

The community of new creation is shaped, in large part, by the quality of its speech. Words build or destroy, include or exclude, heal or wound, and they do it with a speed and permanence few other actions match. James, writing about the tongue, points out that a single spark can set a whole forest on fire. Renewed speech is one of the clearest visible markers of the new self at work, and also one of the most common places the old self quietly reasserts itself, the sharp comment, the exaggeration that makes a story better at someone else's expense, criticism dressed up as concern. Someone living out new creation fights this particular battle daily, bringing their words under the authority of the One who spoke light into darkness and called it good.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I choose to speak what builds up rather than what tears down. The words I say today will either contribute to the new creation community or diminish it. I accept responsibility for the quality of my speech and I ask the Spirit to guard my mouth and shape my words into something that benefits those who hear.

PRAYER

Lord, set a guard over my mouth today, not to keep me silent, but to make me careful in the best sense, full of care for the people my words will reach. Let what I say today genuinely help, genuinely build up, and genuinely fit what others need rather than what I feel like expressing. In Jesus' name, Amen.





THE NEW CREATION WITNESS

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:16 (NIV)

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Jesus places the Sermon on the Mount's vision of the new community in full public view. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot stay hidden. The new creation is not a private spiritual experience shielded from the mess of public life. It is a visible reality, meant to be seen, meant to function as salt and light out in the world. The good deeds Jesus describes are not impressive religious performances. They are the ordinary, visible marks of a genuinely new life, the kindness that catches people off guard, the integrity that actually costs something, the generosity that makes no financial sense, the forgiveness that had every right to be withheld.

REFLECTION

The community of new creation is itself an argument for the Gospel, not mainly a spoken one, though words matter, but a visible one, a community whose life together cannot be explained except by pointing to a power and a love that did not originate with the people themselves. Every act of genuine love, every instance of cross-shaped forgiveness, every demonstration of unity across division, every choice for integrity when compromise would have been easier, these are lights the darkness cannot produce and therefore cannot ignore. The new creation witness is not a separate church programme. It is simply what new creation looks like when it is being what it was made to be. Light does not have to try to shine. It shines because that is its nature.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I am the light of the world. Not because of who I am in myself but because of who lives in me. My life, my community, my choices, and my love are visible arguments for a Gospel I believe. I will not hide the light or reduce its brightness. I let it shine, for the glory of the Father who lit it.

PRAYER

Lord, let my life be a visible testimony to what new creation looks like in practice, not a performance meant to impress, but the natural overflow of a genuinely new life. Let the people around me see something in me they cannot fully explain apart from You, and let what they see make them curious about the source. In Jesus' name, Amen.



WEEK 5

THE HORIZON

The Newness That Is Still Coming





FIRSTFRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

SCRIPTURE

Romans 8:23 (NIV)

“Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul reaches for agricultural language to locate believers precisely on the timeline of redemption. Firstfruits were the first portion of a harvest, brought to God before the rest had even been gathered. They were real grain, genuine proof that the harvest had arrived, but they were not the whole harvest. Paul describes the Spirit given at new birth in exactly these terms, genuine, real, present, already making the new creation actual in the believer's experience, and at the same time only the beginning of something much larger. The groaning Paul describes here is not despair. It is the groaning of a birth already underway, the longing for what has been promised and is surely coming, felt most sharply by people who already have enough of the Spirit to know what the fullness will be like.

REFLECTION

This is where the tension at the heart of this month's theme is felt most acutely: we are genuinely new, and we are not yet fully new. The new birth is real. The Spirit is genuinely present. The mind is being renewed and the community is being built. And yet the body still ages, sin still finds a foothold, creation still groans, and the full redemption the Gospel promises has not yet fully arrived. Paul does not ask us to deny either side of this. He asks us to groan honestly while we wait eagerly, to be truthful about what is not yet finished while staying anchored in the certainty that the harvest is real because the firstfruits have already arrived. September does not end with all newness completed, but with the honest, hopeful posture of people who have tasted enough to be sure the feast is coming.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

I hold the tension of already and not yet without collapsing it in either direction. I have the firstfruits of the Spirit and I groan for the fullness. Both are true and both are healthy. I wait eagerly for what is still coming, anchored by what has already come.

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for the firstfruits. Thank You that I am not waiting for something I have never tasted; I have already tasted it, and I know the quality of what You give. That knowledge makes the waiting both harder and more certain. I groan honestly and I wait eagerly. Come, Lord Jesus. Complete what You have begun. In Jesus' name, Amen.



HE WHO BEGAN WILL FINISH

SCRIPTURE

Philippians 1:6 (NIV)

“Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

BIBLICAL STORY

Paul opens his letter to the Philippians with this sentence, and it functions as the theological signature over everything that follows. The confidence he expresses is not confidence in the Philippians' consistency or commitment. It is confidence in the nature of the One who began the work. He who began. The initiative was God's from the very first moment. The continuation belongs to Him by the same logic. The completion will be His when the day of Christ Jesus arrives. The believer is not responsible for guaranteeing the outcome of their own transformation. They are responsible for cooperating, for not quenching the Spirit, for staying close to the Vine, for putting on the new self daily. But finishing what was started belongs to the One who started it.

REFLECTION

September ends the way every month of new creation must, with confidence that is not confidence in ourselves. The newness of this month, the promises received, the mercies tasted, the births explored, the minds renewed, the community built, the horizon glimpsed, all of it rests on the faithfulness of a God who does not abandon what He starts. Your transformation is not a project you are managing with a little divine help. It is a work of God you have been invited to take part in. The God who decided to begin it in you, before you had anything to offer Him, has not changed His mind about finishing it. He will carry it forward. He will bring it to completion on that day. The new creation this month has been exploring will one day be the only kind of creation there is, and every small, halting, stumbling act of newness you have offered this month will be seen as part of the greatest story ever finished.

TODAY'S DECLARATION

He who began a good work in me will carry it on to completion. My transformation is not my project to manage alone. It is God's work to complete, and His faithfulness guarantees the outcome. I close this month not with a resolution to do better but with confidence in the One who does not leave things unfinished.

PRAYER

Father, I close September with open hands. The newness this month has opened in me is real, and it is not finished. You began it, and You will complete it. I release my grip on the timeline and the outcome. I trust the process to the One who started it and who already knows exactly what the finished work is meant to look like. Carry me forward to the day of Christ Jesus. In His name, Amen.

SEPTEMBER EDITION

THE WORD MADE FLESH

DAILY DEVOTIONAL



Evangelist Dr. (Mrs.) Obenachi Renner Jumbo is a distinguished retired Nigerian public servant, seasoned finance professional, devoted wife and mother, and a passionate minister of the Gospel. Yet, beyond her accomplishments and responsibilities in public service, she is a woman deeply devoted to God and committed to advancing His Kingdom through the ministry of His Word.

As the Convener of Vessels of Virtue Ministry, an interdenominational fellowship based in Abuja, Nigeria, and the Coordinator of the Word Lovers Club, she has spent years teaching, mentoring, encouraging, and leading believers into a deeper understanding of God's Word. Her ministry has been driven by a simple but profound conviction: that lives are transformed when people encounter God daily through Scripture.

This conviction gave birth to *The Word Made Flesh Daily Devotional*. Having witnessed the power of God's Word to redirect destinies, restore hope, strengthen faith, and provide clarity in life's most challenging moments, she was inspired to create a devotional that would serve as a daily guide for believers seeking direction, spiritual growth, and a closer walk with God. Each page reflects her desire to see readers experience divine encounters that become genuine turning points in their spiritual journey.

Her passion for inspiring purposeful living is also reflected in her published works. She is the author of *The Urgency of Now*, a call to intentional living and decisive action; *Maranatha*, a stirring reminder of the believer's hope and readiness for Christ's return; and *The Architecture of Greatness*, a guide to building a life of purpose, excellence, and lasting impact. Together, these works reveal her commitment to raising believers who are spiritually grounded, purpose-driven, and prepared for God's assignment in their generation.

Through her writings, teachings, and ministry, Dr. Obenachi continues to challenge hearts, strengthen faith, and inspire lives. Her prayer is that every reader of *The Word Made Flesh Daily Devotional* will encounter God's presence, hear His voice, and experience the divine turning points that lead to a life of purpose, victory, and lasting significance.