

# Cov Grace March Digital Fast

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## Week 1 – What and Why a Digital Fast?

### Theme Scripture: Romans 12:2

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

- What is a digital fast and what it is not
- Why attention is a spiritual issue, not just a productivity issue
- How distraction slowly reshapes our desires
- Taking inventory of where our time and attention go
- Naming what distraction is costing us spiritually and relationally

Discover why renewing the mind begins with reclaiming attention.

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## Week 2 – The Battle for Your Attention

### Theme Scripture: Ephesians 5:15–16

“Be very careful, then, how you live... making the most of every opportunity.”

#### 1. What Is the Attention Economy?

- How companies monetize your focus
- Why you are not the customer but the product
- The shift from information economy to attention economy
- Why “technology is neutral” is a dangerous myth

#### 2. Technology Traps

- Dopamine loops and the anticipation of reward
- Cortisol cycles and notification stress
- Infinite scroll and endless consumption
- Like buttons and validation seeking
- Algorithms and personalized echo chambers
- Fragmented attention and the 47-second focus problem

#### 3. Cultural and Spiritual Consequences

- Addiction and compulsive checking

- Anger, outrage, and comparison culture
- Settling for a distracted, mediocre faith

Discover how subtle design strategies shape habits, emotions, and even spiritual formation.

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### **Week 3 – The Disciplines of a Focused Faith**

#### **Theme Scripture: Psalm 46:10**

“Be still, and know that I am God.”

#### **Solitude – Alone, Not Lonely**

- Solitude deprivation in a constantly connected world
- Why silence now feels uncomfortable
- Biblical examples of withdrawal and renewal
- Creating rhythms of intentional quiet

#### **Prayer – Training the Mind to Stay**

- The link between attention and intimacy with God
- Focused attention, rote attention, and boredom
- Why boredom can retrain the brain
- Learning to listen instead of constantly consume

#### **Deep Reading – Recovering Depth**

- How screens reshape how we read
- Decreased empathy and rising loneliness
- Shallow scanning versus meditative reading
- Rebuilding reading stamina for Scripture

Discover how rebuilding attention restores solitude, prayer, and depth.

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### **Week 4 – The Community of a Focused Faith**

#### **Theme Scripture: Hebrews 10:24–25**

“Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together...”

# **Week 1 Resources**

# Application Resources Week 1

## Understanding Your Relationship With Your Phone

Take the Smart Phone Addiction Scale Below.

Write Your Here: \_\_\_\_\_

Did the results surprise you? Is there a goal you would like to set?

Create a reminder to take the test again on easter.

Write Your Score Here: \_\_\_\_\_

### Survey

Please rate each statement according to how true it is for you. For questions 1–11, circle one number per statement using the scale below.

1 = Strongly disagree   2 = Disagree   3 = Weakly disagree   4 = Weakly agree   5 = Agree   6 = Strongly agree

1. I miss work that I planned, due to smartphone use:   1 2 3 4 5 6
2. I have a hard time concentrating in class, while doing assignments, or while working, due to smartphone use:   1 2 3 4 5 6
3. I feel pain in my wrists or at the back of my neck while using a smartphone:   1 2 3 4 5 6
4. I wouldn't be able to stand not having a smartphone:   1 2 3 4 5 6
5. I feel impatient and fretful when I am not holding my smartphone:   1 2 3 4 5 6
6. I have my smartphone on my mind even when I am not using it:   1 2 3 4 5 6
7. I would never give up using my smartphone even if my daily life were greatly affected by it:   1 2 3 4 5 6

**8. I constantly check my smartphone so as not to miss conversations between other people on Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, or other social media: 1 2 3 4 5 6**

**9. I use my smartphone longer than I intend: 1 2 3 4 5 6**

**10. People around me tell me that I use my smartphone too much: 1 2 3 4 5 6**

**11. I am addicted to my smartphone: 1 2 3 4 5 6**

## Survey Recap

### Smartphone Addiction Scale (SAS-SV) — Results by Age Group

Use the table below to compare your total score (sum of Questions 1–10) with averages and risk thresholds for your age group. This helps you understand how your smartphone use compares to others.

| Age Group              | Typical Score Range | Average Score | High-Risk Cutoff                       | What It Means   |
|------------------------|---------------------|---------------|--|---|
| 12–17 (Teens)          | 30–36               | ~33           | No formal cutoff                       | Scores above 36 may indicate problematic use. Use trends in younger teens may vary.       |
| 18–25 (Young Adults)   | 31–35               | ~33           | Males: $\geq 31$<br>Females: $\geq 33$ | This group tends to have the highest scores. Scores at or above the cutoff indicate risk. |
| 26–40 (Adults)         | 28–33               | ~30           | Same ( $\geq 31/\geq 33$ )             | Slightly lower usage than 18–25 group. High scores still signal concern.                  |
| 41–60 (Midlife Adults) | 25–31               | ~28           | Same ( $\geq 31/\geq 33$ )             | Average scores tend to drop with age. Scores over cutoff may reflect different habits.    |
| 61+ (Older Adults)     | 22–28               | ~25           | Same ( $\geq 31/\geq 33$ )             | Low average scores. High scores may suggest an  |

|  |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|--|---|
|  |  |  |  | unusual<br>pattern or<br>other factors. |
|--|--|--|--|---|

✔ How to Use This Table:

1. Add up your scores for Questions 1–10 (each rated 1–6). Total possible score: 10 to 60.
2. Find your age group in the table above.
3. Compare your score to the average and high-risk cutoff.
4. If your score is at or above the cutoff, consider this a signal that you may benefit from reviewing your smartphone habits.

**Consider Supplies Needed for the Digital Fast**

- Physical copy of Scripture
- Alarm clock
- Analog watch
- Favorite board game(s) to play with friends and family
- Supplies for a hobby you have been missing
- A novel that has been on your list for a long time

**Additional Helpful Items**

- Journal or notebook for reflection
- Pen and highlighter
- Printed prayer guide or devotional
- Printed contact list for essential numbers
- Printed maps or directions if traveling
- Calendar planner (paper version)
- Puzzle book or creative activity book
- Walking shoes for intentional time outside
- List of goals or intentions for the fast
- Accountability partner contact plan
- Charging station placed out of reach or in another room
- Box or drawer designated for storing devices during the fast

# 1. What, in your life, do you need to 'put off'?

Circle the apps or websites that demand a lot of your attention.



Email



Facebook



LinkedIn



TikTok



Instagram



X



Netflix



Amazon Prime



Text



Phone



Coinbase



Robinhood



Pinterest



Spotify



YouTube



Candy Crush



Snapchat



CNN



Fox News



The New York Times



Bible App



Reddit



ChatGPT



Zoom

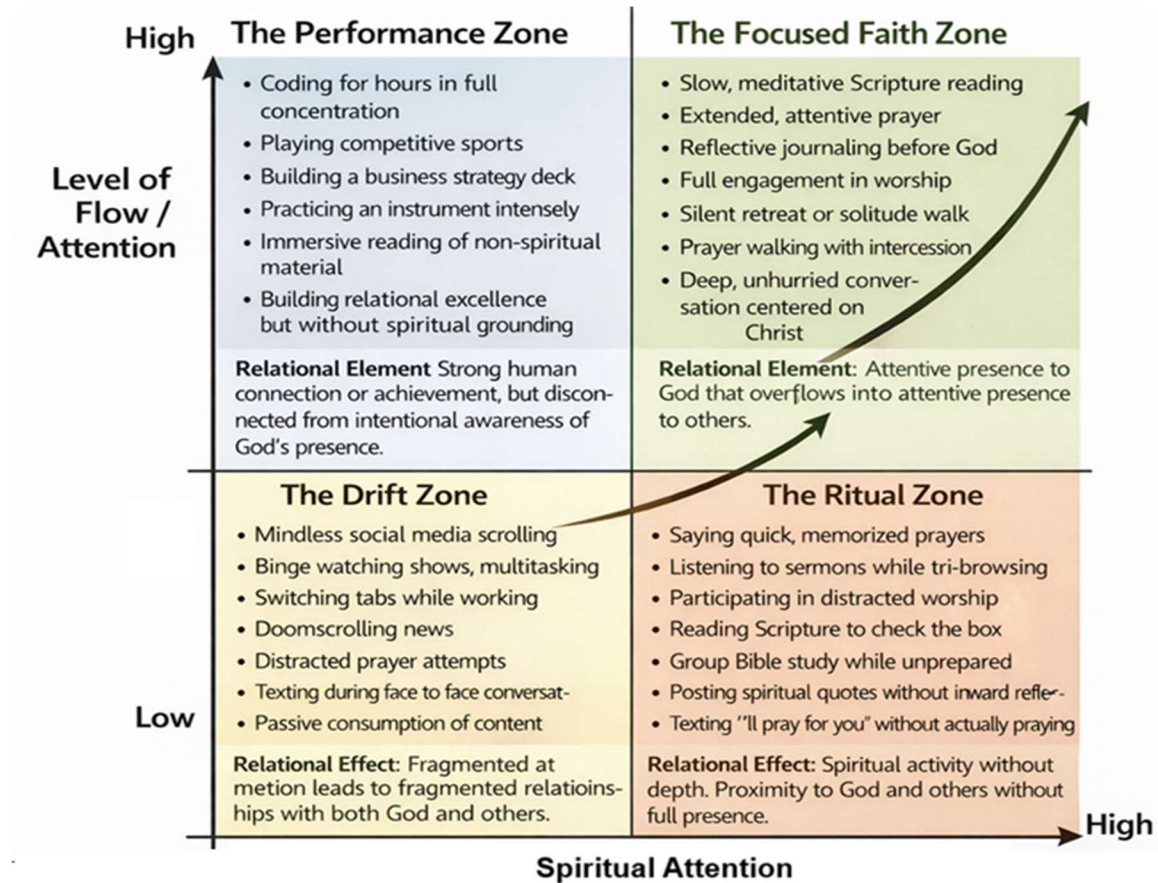


SHEIN

**Look at the items below and mark the ones that have been stolen or hurt through excessive screentime.**

- Sleep**
- Family time**
- Creativity**
- Contentment**
- Joy**
- Peace of mind**
- Health**
- Ability to be present**
  
- Focus**
- Productivity**
- Energy**
- Social activities**
- Hobbies**
- Curiosity**
- Money**
- Time with God**

## 2. How can you ‘be new in the attitude of your mind’?



### 1. Awareness: Where Am I Living?

- As you look at the four zones, which one feels most familiar this week?
  - Which zone do you default to when you are tired?
  - Which zone shows up most in your digital life?
  - Which zone shows up most in your spiritual life?
  - Is your phone pulling you downward or upward on this grid?
  - When during the day are you most likely to drift?
  - When are you most likely to engage spiritually but without depth?
  - Where do you experience high focus but low spiritual awareness?
-

## 2. Exposure: What Is Driving It?

- What usually triggers your movement into the drift zone?
- Is boredom uncomfortable for you?
- What emotion most often drives your scrolling?
- Does distraction function as escape for you?
- What are you avoiding when you multitask during spiritual activities?

For the ritual zone:

- When have you participated in worship without really being present?
- Have you ever checked the box spiritually but not engaged your heart?
- What does spiritual autopilot feel like?

For the performance zone:

- Where are you highly focused but spiritually disconnected?
- Have you ever succeeded outwardly but felt empty inwardly?
- Does productivity sometimes replace intimacy with God?

## 3. Vision: What Does Redeemed Attention Look Like?

- When have you experienced something close to the focused faith zone?
- What did that feel like?
- Did time feel different?
- What was happening in your heart?
- Have you ever been so absorbed in prayer, reading, or worship that time passed quickly?
- What conditions made that possible?
- What distractions were absent?
- If flow is complete absorption, what would spiritual flow look like?
- What practices help you become fully present before God?

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#### 4. Movement: How Do We Train Attention?

- Is focus something we wait for or something we cultivate?
- What habits train your brain toward distraction?
- What habits could train it toward depth?
- What would 10 minutes of uninterrupted Scripture do over time?
- What would leaving your phone in another room during prayer change?
- What would it look like to practice boredom without escaping?
- How can silence become less threatening?

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#### 5. Transparency: What Is It Costing Us?

- What has the drift zone cost you?
- What has ritual without depth cost you?
- What has high productivity without spiritual grounding cost you?
- What area of your life feels most fragmented right now?
- Where have you lost joy?
- Where have you lost depth?
- Where have you lost presence?

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#### 6. Hope: What Could Change?

- What would your life look like if you consistently lived in the focused faith zone?
- What relationships would improve?
- What would your prayer life look like?
- What would your inner peace look like?
- If you reclaimed 30 minutes a day from distraction, where would you invest it?
- What practice could move you one quadrant upward this week?

- What small step would shift you from drift to intention?
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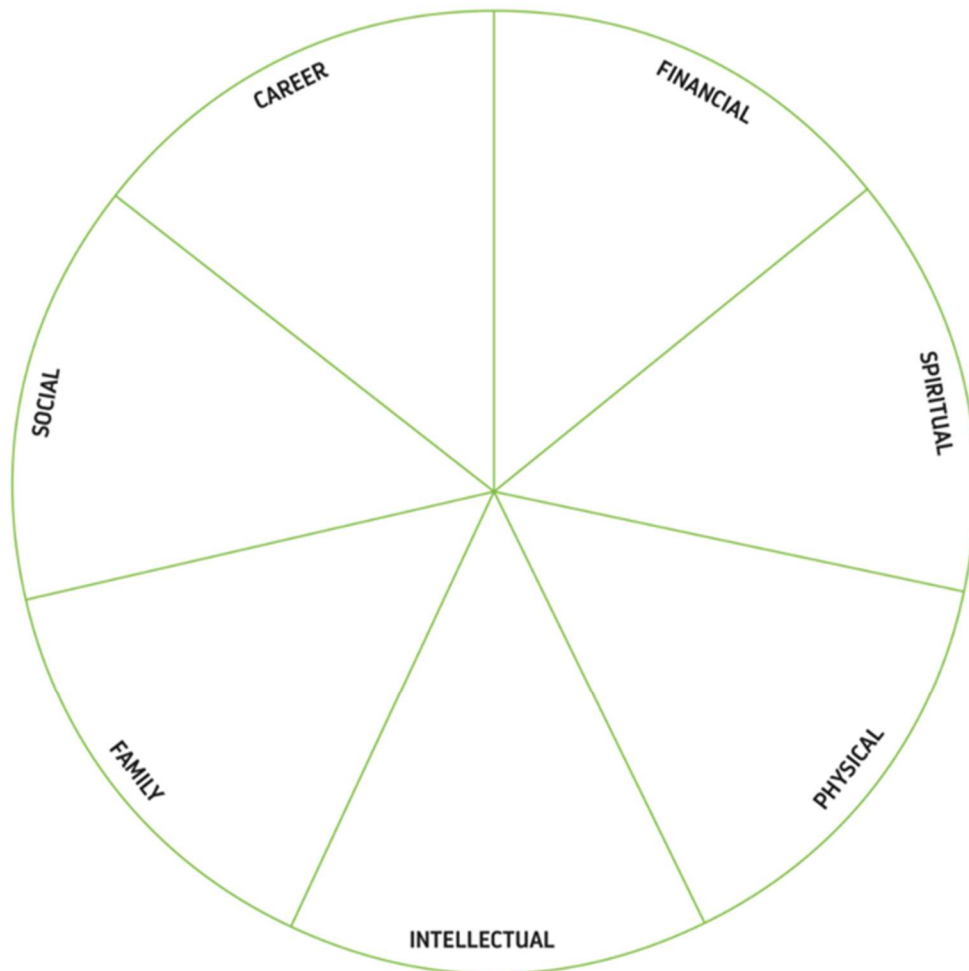
### **7. Closing Reflection Questions**

- Which zone do you want to live in?
- What is one concrete change you will make this week?
- What will decreasing distraction make room for?
- How might redeemed attention lead to redeemed joy?

### 3. What, in your life, do you want to 'put on' in this fast?

Consider every area of your life.

Using the Wheel of Life below, fill in one or two statements that describe how you'd like your life to flourish in each area:



Over the next 28 days these are the things I want to...

**LEARN**

**EXPERIENCE**

## Write Out Your Commitment

During my \_\_\_\_ day/hour fast, I will

- Stop \_\_\_\_\_ on any digital device.
- Instead of \_\_\_\_\_, I will reallocate the time to \_\_\_\_\_.

Notice how this written plan helps you identify the timeframe, activities you want to target for the fast, and how you plan to reallocate the time freed from not using your device. Following this list, write the flow activities that you created in the previous step.

Here is how I developed my plan:

*During my thirty day fast I will*

- *Stop reading the news on any digital device.*
- *Instead of reading news after my morning devotion, I will reallocate twenty additional minutes to prayer. [I don't use social media. Checking the news is my biggest source of distraction].*
- *Instead of checking my phone to read the news during the day, when I feel the urge to check news on my cell phone, I will instead pray silently.*
- *Instead of reading the news at night, I will reallocate the time to reading God's Word or a book that nourishes my soul.*
- *I will dedicate three-to-five times per week, for at least two hours per session, for writing a total of 3000 words per week.*
- *I will dedicate time in my schedule to ensure I run for at least four times per week.*
- *I will dedicate three mornings per week in my schedule to go fishing or spend solitude time in God's creation.*

**Consider a Goal for this Fast to Write a 'Rule of Life' similar to one below.**

## COMMITMENTS TO ORDERED DIGITAL LIFE

*In my desire to be fully human as God has created me, I will endeavor to keep the following commitments as I live in this digital age:*

- 1. Meditate daily on the teachings and life of Jesus.*
- 2. Remember that embodied presence is a powerful gift I can offer and receive.*
- 3. Walk, talk, text, and post in the manner of love as Jesus would.*
- 4. Pray daily for wisdom and understanding of how God wants me to use my technologies.*
- 5. Live a life with my eyes up and heart open to performing regular service for others and for the world.*
- 6. Set aside my device when I am physically present with other people and strive to be mentally and emotionally present to them as well, even if they are not to me.*
- 7. Fix my eyes only on whatever is true, lovely, pure, and right.*
- 8. When I am sad, bored, angry, lonely, or anxious, reach for another person, nature, or God before turning to a screen.*
- 9. Set aside my devices in order to enjoy the sacred times of eating meals with someone, spending time with my loved ones, or going to bed.*
- 10. Strive for times of solitude and silence in order to rest and to not hide from myself or God.*

*Having seriously considered how my digital habits shape the essence of who I am becoming each and every day and with the determination to do my very best to live well, I resolve to keep these commitments because I want to become a person who can be genuinely present to God and others, and who has the capacity to respond in obedience to God's call in my life.*

*As such, I believe it is wholly appropriate that the work of the church involve helping our society find its way through our contemporary web weariness. We are people who ourselves feel the burdens and discontents of the digital life but also know the hopeful promise found in the kingdom of God.*

Song, F. W. (2021). *Restless Devices: Recovering Personhood, Presence, and Place in the Digital Age*

## 10 TECH-WISE COMMITMENTS

1. Develop wisdom and character together as a family
2. Create more than you consume
3. Live according to the rhythm of work and rest

### *Further Nudges and Disciplines*

4. Devices “go to bed” before we do and they “get up” after we do
5. No screens before double digits (age)
6. Use screens together for a purpose, not aimlessly and alone
7. Car time is conversation time
8. Spouses have one another’s passwords and parents have full access to children’s devices
9. Sing together (create music) rather than consume the music of others
10. Show up (physically) for the big events of life

Crouch, A. (2017). *The tech-wise family: Everyday steps for putting technology in its proper place*. Baker Books.

## **Week 2 Resources**

Following is the materials used in the week 2 study followed by a seven day devotional on the topics discussed in week 2.

# Week 2

## What is a Focused Faith?

**SCREEN TIME STATS!**  
**FILL IN THE BLANKS**

Average time using all screens: \_\_\_\_\_ hours a day!

**TEENS:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ hours a day on phones, \_\_\_\_\_ pickups, \_\_\_\_\_ notifications.
- TikTok avg: \_\_\_\_\_ hours a day.
- Check phones \_\_\_\_\_ times a day.

**ADULTS:**

- Check phones \_\_\_\_\_ times a day.

Attention: Average of \_\_\_\_\_ minutes to refocus on a task after interruption.

The infographic includes icons for TikTok, Snapchat, a yellow bell, an envelope, and a clock, along with a background image of a desk with a laptop, a coffee cup, and a notebook.

### The Purpose of Technology

Read Genesis 1:27-28

Technology is the human activity of using tools to transform \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_.

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|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

A Focused Faith is \_\_\_\_\_.

## The Peril of Technology

Read Jeremiah 17:5-8

Digital Formation can \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ our ability to \_\_\_\_\_.

### What is the Attention Economy?

Big

tech system designed to capture and sustain our attention on their platforms so they can sell it as a commodity to advertisers.

*"If you aren't paying for the product, you are the product." Tristan Harris*

**Methods of Attention Economy: Notifications, Algorithms, Like Button, Infinite Scroll**

### Effects of Attention Economy:

Excessive screentime, Fragmented Attention, Depression, Loneliness, Physical Addiction

*"What if the greatest threat to Christian faith isn't secularism but distraction?" John Mark Comer*

## The Promise of Technology

Read Ephesians 5:6-17

Since technology \_\_\_\_\_ how we live, we should \_\_\_\_\_ and help others \_\_\_\_\_.



## Putting it all together

How can you use technology for good?

How are you being shaped by digital formation?

What are you doing to guard against this?

### Weekly Resources

<https://www.thefocusedfaith.com/news>



### Devotional Daily Themes

| Day   | Daily theme                    | Core Scripture (ESV)                | Key reflection question                                | Prayer focus                  |
|-------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Day 1 | Created to create              | Genesis 1:27–28                     | What is technology for in my life under God?           | Gratitude and consecration    |
| Day 2 | Who or what do I trust?        | Jeremiah 17:5–8                     | Where have my “roots” been drawing life?               | Trust and stability           |
| Day 3 | Resisting what chokes the Word | Matthew 13:22–23                    | What “thorns” most often compete with Scripture in me? | Freedom and clarity           |
| Day 4 | Awake and expose               | Ephesians 5:6–17                    | What has been hidden, justified, or minimized?         | Repentance and light          |
| Day 5 | Redeeming time with love       | Ephesians 5:15–16; Luke 10:25–37    | How does my phone reshape my neighbor-love?            | Presence and mercy            |
| Day 6 | Quiet to hear God              | Mark 1:35; 1 Kings 19:11–13         | What do I avoid when life gets quiet?                  | Listening and surrender       |
| Day 7 | Returning with wisdom          | Ephesians 5:15–17; Matthew 28:18–20 | What rule of life will keep my attention ordered?      | Commissioning and discernment |

## Creation and Craft

**Day label:** Day 1

**Theme:** Created to create, tools as vocation

**Scripture (ESV):** Genesis 1:27–28 (core); Psalm 24:1; Colossians 3:23–24 (supporting)

### Devotional (approx. 400 words)

Genesis begins with identity and calling: we are made in the image of God, and we are blessed and commissioned to be fruitful, to fill the earth, and to exercise stewardship. Your notes rightly begin here because it reframes technology. Technology is not only “screens.” It is human craft, the use of tools to shape creation for practical purposes. That means our relationship with technology is not merely about temptation. It is also about vocation, responsibility, and worship. [filecite?turn0file0?](#)

A digital fast, then, is not a rejection of God’s world or God-given creativity. It is a clarification. It is a week-long pause to ask: Have my tools stayed in their rightful place? Or have they quietly become a rival source of comfort, stimulation, identity, or control?

This matters because Scripture’s creation mandate is never permission to dominate God’s world for self-worship. We bear God’s image, so our making should reflect God’s character: wisdom, generosity, truth, patience, and love. Your notes press this further by warning against the dangerous assumption that technology is neutral. Even when a tool is used for “good,” it still forms the user. [filecite?turn0file0?](#) That is why a fast is so revealing. When you remove a tool, you begin to see what it has been doing to you.

Today’s aim is not to produce shame about screens. Today is to recover gratitude and holy intentionality. You can thank God for every good gift while still admitting that some gifts have become entangled with idolatry, distraction, or dependency. One pastor described his devices as gifts so precious that they moved him emotionally, yet he also acknowledged the real temptations they can carry, calling digital tools a “treasure chest” when used carefully for God’s glory. John Piper[\[17\]](#)[\[18\]](#)

The fast begins with a simple act: you are not powerless. You can choose friction. You can choose quiet. You can choose God first.

**Reflection questions** 1. When do I most instinctively reach for my phone, and what am I usually seeking? 2. Which digital tools most clearly help me fulfill my calling to love God and others? 3. Which tools tend to make me anxious, hurried, or fragmented? 4. What would it look like today to “subdue and steward” my attention rather than be ruled by it?

### Guided prayer

Father, you made me in your image and called me to reflect you in the world. Thank you for creativity, skill, and the ability to make and build. Forgive me where my tools have become my comfort, my escape, or my identity. Teach me to receive technology as a gift without being mastered by it. Today, consecrate my attention. Help me to love you first, love people well, and use my hands and habits in a way that honors you. Amen.

**Digital fast checkpoints** - Morning: keep your phone parked until after Scripture and prayer. - Midday: one 10-minute essential check-in only. - Evening: choose a device curfew and replace scrolling with a short walk or Psalm reading.

**Worship and quiet-time activities** - Read Psalm 24 aloud slowly, emphasizing “the earth is the Lord’s.” - Sing one worship song without accompaniment, or play one hymn and listen prayerfully. - Take a 15-minute “creation walk” with no earbuds.

**Journaling prompts** - “God, my default digital habit is \_\_. **I think it is trying to give me \_.**” - ***“If my tools reflected your character today, they would produce \_\_\_ in me.”***

## Rooted by Living Water

**Day label:** Day 2

**Theme:** Trust, dependence, and spiritual stability

**Scripture (ESV):** Jeremiah 17:5–8 (core); Psalm 1:1–3; John 15:4–5 (supporting)

### Devotional (approx. 410 words)

Jeremiah paints a stark contrast: one life is like a shrub in a dry desert, the other like a tree planted by water, unafraid in heat and fruitful in drought. The hinge is trust. The curse is not merely “doing human things,” but placing ultimate confidence in human strength so that the heart turns away from the Lord. Your notes apply this image to life in a digitally saturated world: it is possible to hear God’s Word yet remain inwardly focused on other things, and in that divided focus, fruitfulness withers. [filecite?turn0file0?](#)

A digital fast exposes trust patterns because many of our habits are about self-regulation. When we feel bored, we reach for stimulation. When we feel stressed, we reach for novelty. When we feel lonely, we reach for connection. None of these longings are wrong. But Jeremiah invites a deeper question: Where are my roots actually drawing life?

The modern attention economy does not merely offer tools. It offers a formation environment, built to keep attention engaged and returning. [\[5\]](#) Over time, that environment can train a subtle trust: trust that a device will soothe me, that information will secure me, that visibility will validate me, that constant connection will keep me from discomfort.

Yet Jeremiah’s tree is not frantic. It is not constantly scanning the horizon for a new stimulus. It draws from a steady source. This does not mean Christians reject information or communication. It means we practice a deeper stability: the Lord is our stream.

Today, ask God to show you “false roots.” These are not always scandalous sins. Often they are respectable dependencies: the news cycle as a way to feel in control, social feeds as a way to feel seen, constant messaging as a way to feel needed. The fast invites a relocation of trust. The goal is not merely less screen time; it is a heart replanted near living water.

If you feel restless today, do not panic. Restlessness is data. It may be the feeling of roots being tugged out of dry soil so they can find the stream again.

**Reflection questions** 1. What emotions most often trigger my habitual checking? 2. In what ways have I tried to use my phone as a quick solution to deeper needs? 3. How would my day look different if I genuinely trusted God to sustain me in “heat”? 4. What is one concrete way I can “plant” myself near God today?

### Guided prayer

Lord, show me where I have trusted in human strength and turned my heart from you. Replant my life near your living water. When discomfort rises, train me to come to you first,

not to a screen. Give me the calm strength of the tree that does not fear heat because its roots are deep in you. Amen.

**Digital fast checkpoints** - Morning: before any messages, read Jeremiah 17:7–8 and pray one sentence of trust. - Midday: when you feel the urge to check, pause for 60 seconds and name the feeling. - Evening: place your phone out of reach during dinner and the hour after.

**Worship and quiet-time activities** - Pray Psalm 1 slowly as a personal “rooting” prayer. - Practice a 5-minute silent sit: hands open, asking God to be your stream. - Write one gratitude list of “steady gifts” (food, breath, people, Scripture).

**Journaling prompts** - “My strongest craving today happened when \_\_\_. **Under it, I was wanting\_.**” - **“God’s promise of stability invites me to \_\_\_.”**

## Thorns, Cares, and the Choked Word

**Day label:** Day 3

**Theme:** Naming distractions that compete with fruitfulness

**Scripture (ESV):** Matthew 13:22–23 (core); Luke 10:38–42; 1 Peter 5:8–9 (supporting)

### Devotional (approx. 430 words)

Jesus describes a sobering scenario: the Word is received, but it becomes unfruitful because it is choked. The thorns are not always obvious evil; they are “the cares of the world” and competing desires. Your notes make a direct application: digital formation can choke the Word and dull our ability to hear God. [filecite?turn0file0?](#)

This matters because many modern platforms are engineered to keep you engaged, not to help you become peaceful, prayerful, or present. Persuasive design features like infinite scroll, algorithmic curation, and intermittent reinforcement are explicitly studied and described as mechanisms that keep attention on-platform. [\[19\]](#)

The fast is not mainly about proving willpower. It is about exposing thorns. What are your thorns? Consider a few categories: - The thorn of constant awareness: feeling like you must know everything now. - The thorn of constant availability: feeling guilty if you do not respond quickly. - The thorn of constant validation: craving affirmation that is never fully satisfying.

These can feel normal because everyone around us lives this way. But Jesus says thorns choke. They reduce spiritual oxygen. They make the Word less weighty in our inner world.

There is also a practical reality: interruptions have a measurable “resumption cost.” Research on workplace interruptions has found that returning to an interrupted task can take significant time, often around the low-twenties of minutes. Gloria Mark [\[20\]](#) [\[8\]](#) When the day contains dozens of micro-interruptions, the soul rarely settles.

Today is a turning point day: you name the thorns without excusing them and without despairing. Naming is not condemnation. Naming is clarity. And clarity is the beginning of repentance and freedom.

If you find yourself bargaining, for example, “I need this one scroll,” treat it as a diagnostic moment. What is the care underneath? What is the desire underneath? Bring that to Jesus directly. “Lord, I am trying to use my phone to carry what you invited me to bring to you.”

**Reflection questions** 1. Which “care of the world” most often hooks me: fear, comparison, outrage, or boredom? 2. What is my most common justification for breaking healthy boundaries? 3. When I imagine a fruitful life, what kind of attention does it require? 4. What would it look like today for the Word to have “room” in me?

### Guided prayer

Jesus, you are not harsh with the weak, but you are honest about what chokes life. Show me my thorns. Give me courage to name them and wisdom to cut them back. Make your

Word alive in me, not crowded out by noise. Teach me to bring my cares to you and to walk in fruitfulness. Amen.

**Digital fast checkpoints** - Morning: write your top three “thorn triggers” on paper. - Midday: if tempted, do one embodied action instead (drink water, walk, text a friend “pray for me”). - Evening: replace screens with 20 minutes of reading Scripture aloud or reading a physical book.

**Worship and quiet-time activities** - Practice lectio-style reading on Matthew 13:22–23 (read, reflect, respond, rest). - Sit with Luke 10:38–42 and imagine yourself in the room with Jesus.

**Journaling prompts** - “My loudest thorn right now is \_\_. **It promises \_ *but produces* .” - “*Space I want to make for God’s Word tomorrow is \_\_\_\_.*”**

## Awake, Expose, Walk Wisely

**Day label:** Day 4

**Theme:** Living in light, exposing what numbs the soul

**Scripture (ESV):** Ephesians 5:6–17 (core); Psalm 139:23–24; John 3:19–21 (supporting)

### Devotional (approx. 450 words)

Ephesians 5 is not vague: do not be deceived, do not partner with darkness, walk as children of light, and “try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.” The passage also gives a strong command: expose the unfruitful works of darkness. Your notes apply this to digital life by calling believers to expose the tactics that distract and form the church.

[filecite?turn0file0?](#)

This exposure is not conspiracy thinking. It is discipleship realism. If you do not understand what a tool is doing to you, you will assume your habits are simply “personal choices,” when they may be heavily shaped by incentives and design. [21]

Ephesians then gives a wake-up call: “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.” That is a stunning image for a digital fast because many digital habits are sleep-like. They are not always willful rebellion. They are often autopilot. Hours disappear. Attention disappears. Prayer becomes thinner. Even worship can become something we consume rather than something we offer with alert hearts.

Today’s practice is examination. Not self-hatred. Not data obsession. Honest light.

Ask: - What do I do online that I would be embarrassed to explain plainly to a mature believer? - What do I do online that is not shameful in content but is wasteful in effect? - Where have I been foolish with time, not understanding the will of the Lord?

This also connects with an often-cited spiritual insight: distraction can become a dominant threat to spiritual depth, not because it is the worst sin in the world, but because it removes the stillness in which faith can grow. [22]

Today is a grace day. When Christ shines on you, he does not shine to humiliate you. He shines to heal you and to make visible what must change.

**Reflection questions** 1. Where do I most often “lose time” online, and what does it cost me spiritually? 2. What pattern in me avoids the light: secrecy, rationalization, or numbing? 3. What is one “work of darkness” I need to expose by telling someone I trust? 4. How can I “walk carefully” today in a concrete way?

### Guided prayer

Christ, shine on me. Search me and know me. Expose what needs to be exposed, not to crush me, but to free me. Teach me to use my time wisely and my attention worshipfully. Help me to discern what pleases you and to step away from what makes me dull. Amen.

**Digital fast checkpoints** - Morning: read Ephesians 5:15–16 and write one sentence: “Today I will redeem time by \_\_\_\_\_.” - Midday: do a 2-minute “wake-up prayer” before any

device use. - Evening: confession practice: name one thing you saw clearly today and thank God for the light.

**Worship and quiet-time activities** - Pray Psalm 139:23–24 slowly, leaving 30 seconds of silence after each line. - Light a candle during prayer as a physical reminder of “walk as children of light.”

**Journaling prompts** - “A habit Christ is shining on is \_\_.” - “**If I walked wisely tomorrow, it would look like \_\_\_\_.**”

## Redeeming Time Through Presence and Mercy

**Day label:** Day 5

**Theme:** Redeeming time by re-learning neighbor-love

**Scripture (ESV):** Ephesians 5:15–16 (core); Luke 10:25–37; Philippians 2:3–5 (supporting)

### Devotional (approx. 430 words)

“Look carefully then how you walk... making the best use of the time.” The phrase is practical. It implies measurement, attention, and intentionality. Your notes interpret this as a call to guard attention and use technology wisely. [\[filecite@turn0file0\]](#)

But notice something: redeeming time is not merely about productivity. In Ephesians 5, wisdom is moral and relational. It is about walking in light and understanding God’s will.

Luke 10 gives us a concrete picture. The priest and Levite likely had reasons for passing by. Reasons often feel urgent. But the Good Samaritan sees, stops, draws near, and gives time. A digital fast is not only about what you avoid; it is about what you become able to see again.

Modern smartphone life can pull attention into “virtual possibilities” while immediate responsibilities, relationships, and mercies sit in front of us. Christian teaching on this point urges believers to remember the two great loves: love God and love neighbor, and to resist any digital pattern that blinds us to embodied needs. [\[23\]](#)

Today’s question is: Who has my attention been training me to love? If my attention is constantly devoted to feeds, commentary, and outrage, my love may become abstract. I will feel like I am “informed” while becoming less patient, less kind, and less present.

Today’s resistance is embodied love. One practical habit recommended in a modern rule-of-life approach is turning off the phone for a set time daily as a way to recover presence: to look up, to notice people, and to resist being “two places at a time.” [\[24\]](#)

Let your digital fast become neighbor-shaped. Ask one person how they actually are. Sit without multitasking. Make one small act of service that costs time. In many lives, the greatest gift is not advice, but attention.

**Reflection questions** 1. Who benefits when my attention is captive: God and neighbor, or platforms and habits? 2. What face-to-face relationship has my phone subtly diminished? 3. What is one merciful action I can take today that would have been crowded out before? 4. How does redeeming time look different from maximizing productivity?

### Guided prayer

Father, teach me to redeem time the way Jesus redeemed time: with love, mercy, and attention to the person in front of me. Free me from hurry, from distraction, and from the illusion that virtual life is more urgent than real life. Give me eyes to see needs and courage to respond. Amen.

**Digital fast checkpoints** - Morning: schedule one “presence block” (30–60 minutes) with phone fully off. - Midday: eat one meal without screens, practicing listening. - Evening: send one encouraging note or make one phone call to bless someone.

**Worship and quiet-time activities** - Read Luke 10:25–37 aloud slowly and pause after each scene. - Pray for one neighbor by name, then do one tangible good for them if possible.

**Journaling prompts** - “A person I overlooked before is \_\_\_. **Today I will love them by \_.**” - ***“The difference between urgent and important in my life is \_\_\_.”***

## Silence, Solitude, and the God Who Speaks

**Day label:** Day 6

**Theme:** Quiet to hear and obey

**Scripture (ESV):** Mark 1:35 (core); 1 Kings 19:11–13; Psalm 46:10 (supporting)

### **Devotional (approx. 460 words)**

Mark 1:35 shows Jesus rising early, going to a desolate place, and praying. This is not incidental. It is a pattern: withdrawing to be with the Father, and then returning to people with clarity.

Your notes warn that digital formation can dull sensitivity to God’s “still small voice.” [filecite?turn0file0?](#) Day 6 is designed to directly counter that dulling by restoring silence. Silence is not empty time; it is a container where we notice what is inside us and invite God to lead.

For many people, quiet is uncomfortable. When the phone is gone, thoughts get loud. Regrets surface. Anxiety surfaces. Anger surfaces. This is not failure. It is exposure. In classic spiritual teaching on disciplines of abstinence, fasting and solitude reveal what controls us and provide space for God to reorder desire. [\[14\]](#)

This is one reason a digital fast can feel harder than expected. It is not merely removing entertainment. It is removing a coping mechanism.

Elijah’s story adds another layer: God is not always in the dramatic. God’s voice can be gentle. When life is saturated with constant noise, even good noise, the gentle voice becomes harder to recognize. Some modern reflection on distraction argues that the loss of stillness is spiritually damaging because stillness is a primary condition where deeper faith can endure and be renewed. [\[22\]](#)

Today’s discipline is simple and demanding: extended silence. Set a timer for 10 minutes, then 20 if able. Sit with an open Bible. Do not try to generate emotions. Do not chase insights. Just present yourself. When distractions come, acknowledge them and let them pass. Return to one short phrase: “Speak, Lord.”

If you feel nothing, that is not proof of God’s absence. Often it is proof that your nervous system is detoxing from constant stimulation. Keep showing up. God does not reward noise; he meets us in truth.

**Reflection questions** 1. What do I most want to avoid by staying digitally occupied? 2. What thoughts or feelings surfaced when I sat in silence? 3. How might Jesus’s prayer rhythms reshape my rhythms? 4. What is one small act of obedience God may be inviting today?

### **Guided prayer**

God, I confess that I often replace communion with you with constant stimulation. Teach me to be still and to know you. In the quiet, meet me with truth, comfort, correction, and

love. Help me to listen, not just to speak. Give me courage to obey what you show me.  
Amen.

**Digital fast checkpoints** - Morning: 10–20 minutes of silence before any digital window. -  
Midday: take a short “phone-free walk” and repeat one verse from memory. - Evening: no  
screens in the final hour before bed.

**Worship and quiet-time activities** - Practice a simple breath prayer: “Jesus, have mercy”  
(inhale), “and lead me” (exhale). - Read 1 Kings 19:11–13 and sit quietly after.

**Journaling prompts** - “In silence, I noticed \_\_.” - “**One gentle invitation from God I sense  
is \_\_\_\_.**”

## Returning With Wisdom and Mission

**Day label:** Day 7

**Theme:** A redeemed relationship to tools

**Scripture (ESV):** Ephesians 5:15–17 (core); Genesis 1:27–28; Colossians 4:5–6 (supporting)

### Devotional (approx. 480 words)

The goal of a digital fast is not permanent withdrawal. It is wise return. Day 7 brings the arc together: creation blessing, discernment, and a renewed choice to walk carefully.

Your notes use a powerful theological reminder: even tools associated with death in Scripture can be taken up into God’s redemptive story. [\[filecite\]turn0file0](#) That is crucial. It guards us from cynicism. The problem is not “tools exist,” but “tools save.” When tools become functional saviors, we shrink spiritually. When tools become servants, we gain freedom.

Ephesians 5 focuses on discernment: understand what the will of the Lord is. Discernment is not vague intuition. It is a practiced skill. Over the past week, you have been practicing three discernments: - What competes with God for my attention? - What does distraction do to my capacity to love? - What boundaries help me walk in light?

Now it is time to turn those discernments into a simple “rule of life” for digital use.

A helpful framing from a technology critic is that you can evaluate a tool the way you might evaluate companionship: choose based on who you become when you are around it. Jaron Lanier[\[25\]](#) [\[26\]](#) This is not fear-based. It is formation-based.

So ask: Who do I become around this app? More grateful or more angry? More patient or more reactive? More prayerful or more numb? More present or more absent?

Then choose a small set of enduring commitments. For example: - Scripture before phone each morning. - One hour daily with phone off. - A weekly screen Sabbath window. These habits are widely recommended in contemporary Christian rule-of-life approaches because they apply friction where addiction thrives and restore embodied love. [\[24\]](#)

Finally, return with mission. Technology can serve the gospel, encourage friends, teach truth, create beauty, and coordinate mercy. Your notes explicitly affirm this possibility: tools are powerless to save, but they can be used for redemptive ends when stewarded under God. [\[filecite\]turn0file0](#)

End the week not with pride, but with a humble covenant: “I will not go back to sleep.”

**Reflection questions** 1. What change in my attention did I notice most clearly this week? 2. What boundary most helped me pray, read, or love well? 3. What is one tool I will remove, one I will restrict, and one I will redeem? 4. What is my next step if I relapse into old patterns?

**Guided prayer**

Lord, thank you for what you revealed this week. Thank you for the grace to begin again. Give me discernment, not rules without love. Help me to return to technology with wisdom, restraint, and purpose. Let my words be gracious, my attention be guarded, and my life be fruitful. Teach me to use tools for mercy and mission, and never to look to them for salvation. Amen.

**Digital fast checkpoints** - Morning: write your “3 commitments” for the next 30 days. -  
Midday: message your accountability partner your commitments (short and clear). -  
Evening: celebrate with worship, gratitude, and a plan for tomorrow.

**Worship and quiet-time activities** - Read Colossians 4:5–6 and pray specifically about speech and online presence. - Write a short thanksgiving psalm for what God did this week.

**Journaling prompts** - “The person God is forming me into is \_\_.” - “**My digital rule of life for the next month will be \_\_\_\_.**”

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## Digital Technology & Faith Annotated Resource Guide

**Alter, A. (2017). Irresistible: The rise of addictive technology and the business of keeping us hooked. Penguin Press.**

Explores how modern technologies are intentionally designed to exploit psychological vulnerabilities. Alter explains how notifications, streaks, and reward systems create compulsive behaviors. Helpful for understanding the mechanics behind digital addiction.

**\*Bovee, B. (2024). The focused faith: Detox your digital life, reclaim hijacked attention, build habits for focus and joy.**

Argues that digital distraction is a spiritual formation issue. Integrates research on attention and habit formation with Christian spiritual disciplines such as solitude, prayer, and deep reading.

**\*Carr, N. (2011). The shallows: What the Internet is doing to our brains. W. W. Norton & Company.**

Examines how internet habits reshape neural pathways and diminish deep reading. Foundational work for understanding cognitive impact of constant connectivity. This book is a must read and a good starting place for examining the science of how our brains are being rewired by digital distractions.

**\*Crouch, A. (2017). The tech-wise family: Everyday steps for putting technology in its proper place. Baker Books.**

Offers practical guidance for families seeking intentional technology habits rooted in Christian values of creativity and presence. One of the most practical books I have read for making changes in your family to mitigate the influence of digital distractions on your family.

**Czyzewski, M. (2014). Reconnect: Spiritual Restoration from Digital Distraction.**

Discusses spiritual formation in contrast to digital formation. Uses current research and contemplative tradition to encourage a way forward in a distracted world.

**\*Dyer, J. (2011). From the garden to the city: The place of technology in the story of God. Kregel Publications.**

Provides a biblical theology of technology, situating it within the larger redemptive story of Scripture. THE book for developing a biblical worldview of technology and the shaping influence of technology.

**\*Hari, J. (2022). Stolen focus: Why you can't pay attention—and how to think deeply again. Crown.**

Investigates systemic causes of declining attention and argues that attention loss is a societal issue, not just personal weakness. Entertaining and well written secular book on thinking deeply.

**James, S. (2023). Digital liturgies: Rediscovering Christian wisdom in an online age. Crossway.**

Shows how digital habits function as formative liturgies shaping belief and identity.

**Lee, A. (2023). Human being: Reclaim 12 vital skills we're losing to technology. HarperOne.**

Identifies human capacities being outsourced to devices and encourages reclaiming embodied skills.

**Mark, G. (2023). Attention span: A groundbreaking way to restore balance, happiness and productivity. Hanover Square Press.**

Presents research on attention fragmentation and provides strategies for managing digital interruptions.

**McCracken, B. (2021). The wisdom pyramid: Feeding your soul in a post-truth world. Crossway.**

Uses a food pyramid metaphor to guide healthy information consumption rooted in Scripture and community.

**McCracken, B., & Mesa, I. (Eds.). (2022). Scrolling ourselves to death: Reclaiming life in a digital age. Crossway.**

Collection of essays related to the anniversary of the book 'Amusing Ourselves to Death' examining spiritual and cultural costs of social media saturation.

**\*Newport, C. (2016). Deep work: Rules for focused success in a distracted world. Grand Central Publishing.**

Advocates structured practices for cultivating sustained concentration in a distracted world. One of my favorite books for developing focus in the workplace and general life.

**\*Newport, C. (2019). Digital minimalism: Choosing a focused life in a noisy world. Portfolio.**

Encourages intentional technology use aligned with personal values through a digital declutter process. Excellent resource for developing focus.

**Reinke, T. (2017). 12 ways your phone is changing you. Crossway.**

Identifies subtle ways smartphones reshape habits and spiritual life.

**Reinke, T. (2019). Competing spectacles: Treasuring Christ in the media age. Crossway.**

Examines how media functions as a competing spectacle shaping desire and worship.

**Reinke, T. (2021). God, technology, and the Christian life. Crossway.**

Comprehensive theological treatment of technology within God's sovereignty and providence.

**Song, F. W. (2021). Restless devices: Recovering personhood, presence, and place in the digital age. IVP Academic.**

Explores how digital technologies reshape identity and emphasizes embodied presence. Another favorite that is a deeper read than popular authors.

**Twenge, J. M. (2017). iGen: Why today's super-connected kids are growing up less rebellious, more tolerant, less happy—and completely unprepared for adulthood. Atria Books.**

Analyzes generational data linking smartphone saturation to mental health and developmental trends.

**Whitehead, D., & Cloud, H. (2021). The digital fast: 40 days to detox your mind and reclaim what matters most. Zondervan.**

Structured forty-day program for disengaging from unhealthy digital habits with spiritual reflection. Great resource to consider for journaling and thinking through a digital fast.

\* = Favorite