

DAILY RENEWAL

A Study in Eight Devotionals

Scripture's Call to Daily Renewal:
The Need, The Process, and The Life That Flows From It

*"Though outwardly we are wasting away,
yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day."*

— 2 Corinthians 4:16

Revival 2026

Series Overview

These eight devotionals do not address daily renewal as a peripheral spiritual habit. They address it as the central architecture of the Christian life — the ongoing, Spirit-sustained process by which God accomplishes in and through His people what He promised from the beginning.

The series moves through a deliberate arc: from the ground of renewal (God's inexhaustible mercy), through the instruments of renewal (the renewed mind, poverty of spirit, the created heart, beholding Christ), through the structure of renewal (the partnership of divine and human working, the exchange of old self for new), to the destination of renewal (the life hidden in God that cannot be depleted and will one day be fully disclosed).

The Eight Devotionals

- 1 The Mercy That Resets at Dawn | Lamentations 3:22–23
- 2 The Mind That Must Be Renewed | Romans 12:2
- 3 The Bankruptcy That Qualifies You | Matthew 5:3
- 4 The Heart That Must Be Created | Ezekiel 36:26–27
- 5 Being Transformed by Beholding | 2 Corinthians 3:18
- 6 The Partnership That Cannot Be Separated | Philippians 2:12–13
- 7 The Garments of the New Self | Colossians 3:9–10
- 8 The Life That Cannot Be Exhausted | Colossians 3:3–4

Devotional 1

The Mercy That Resets at Dawn

Daily Renewal Begins Not with You — But with God

The Awakening

We tend to think of spiritual renewal as something we have to generate — a discipline to sustain, a habit to establish, a practice to protect. The failure mode is familiar: we miss a day, lose the rhythm, feel the guilt, and quietly conclude that the spiritual life is for more disciplined people. What we have missed is the most astonishing verse in the book of Lamentations.

Lamentations is a funeral dirge over the ruins of Jerusalem. The city is ash. The temple is gone. The people are in exile. And yet — embedded in the middle of the darkest book in the Bible — is one of the most luminous promises in all of Scripture. The writer looks at the evidence of total ruin and says: God's mercies have not been exhausted. They are new this morning.

This is not optimism. It is theology. The mercy that meets you tomorrow morning was not depleted by what you did yesterday. It was never dependent on your performance to begin with. Daily renewal is not a discipline you achieve. It is a gift you receive — and it has already been prepared.

LAMENTATIONS 3:22–23 — FOUNDATIONAL TEXT

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.

What the Text Reveals

The Ground of Survival: Not Our Faithfulness But His

The Hebrew word for 'compassions' (rachamim) is drawn from the root rechem — womb. This is the most intimate, most unconditional form of love in the Hebrew vocabulary: the love of a mother for the child she carried. The writer is not appealing to a distant deity's legal benevolence. He is claiming the nearness of love that is constitutionally incapable of abandoning its object.

'We are not consumed' — this is survival language. The writer is not reporting spiritual flourishing. He is reporting that they are still alive. And the reason is not their resilience. It is God's mercy. The first movement of daily renewal is not effort but recognition: I am here because God's love held me through the night.

New Every Morning: The Renewal Cycle Built into Creation

The Hebrew chadashim — 'new' — carries the force of replenishment. Like manna that could not be hoarded overnight (Exodus 16), God's mercies do not accumulate. They do not carry over. Each morning brings a fresh supply, sufficient for the day. This is deliberate divine design. God built the rhythm of daily renewal into the created order itself. The sunrise is a theological announcement: the mercy you need today has been provided.

Great is your faithfulness — the writer anchors the morning renewal not in God's mood but in God's character. Faithfulness (emunah) is covenantal constancy. God is not generous because circumstances warrant it. He is generous because He cannot be otherwise. Daily renewal is grounded in who God is, not in how well we have behaved.

The Posture That Receives: Waiting and Hoping

Verse 24 supplies the corollary: 'The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.' The Hebrew word qavah — 'hope' or 'wait' — carries the image of a cord being stretched taut toward its anchor point. Daily renewal requires orientation. The one who wakes already turned toward God is positioned to receive what God has already prepared.

The Biblical Architecture

The manna pattern of Exodus 16 is the structural prototype of daily renewal throughout Scripture. Israel received exactly enough for the day, six days a week. Hoarding produced rot. The lesson God was teaching was not mere dependence — it was the rhythm of daily return to the Source. Every morning they had to go out and gather. Every morning God had already provided.

Psalm 90:14 echoes the same morning-renewal theology: 'Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.' The morning is the hinge point. What is received in the morning — love, orientation, filling — determines the texture of the day.

Isaiah 40:31 adds the progressive dimension: 'Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.' The renewal is not instantaneous and then static. It is ongoing, sustained by continued orientation toward God. Daily renewal is not a one-time transaction — it is a continual posture of hope.

In the New Testament, Paul reframes the same pattern in 2 Corinthians 4:16: 'Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.' The outer world deteriorates. The inner world is renewed — not by self-effort but by the God whose mercies do not fail. The mechanism is the same as Lamentations: God's faithfulness meeting human orientation, day by day.

CORE THESIS

Daily renewal does not begin with your discipline — it begins with God's mercy, which was already new before you woke. Your role is not to generate what God has already provided, but to orient yourself toward the Source who has prepared a fresh supply for every morning you will ever face.

THE QUESTION THAT MATTERS MOST

What would change about your mornings if you began not by asking 'What do I need to do today?' but 'What has God already provided for today?' Where have you been trying to generate what God has been trying to give?

A PRAYER FROM THE AWAKENING

Father, we confess that we have treated Your mercies as something we earn by our consistency and forfeit by our failures. We have woken to guilt before we have woken to grace.

Your Word announces what we did not know to expect: that Your compassions cannot be exhausted, that Your faithfulness is not contingent on ours, and that the mercy we need today was already prepared before we opened our eyes.

****Teach us to receive before we perform — to orient ourselves toward You before we reach for our agendas — to let the announcement of new mercy be the first word of every morning.****

Great is Your faithfulness. We are not consumed. That is enough to begin. Amen.

Connections to Revival 2026

CONNECTIONS TO REVIVAL 2026

How this devotional's thesis fuels each week of Revival 2026

Week 1 — Urgency and Dependence

The urgency that fuels Revival Week 1 is not manufactured by emotional pressure — it is the natural product of a soul that has encountered the truth of Lamentations 3. The person who genuinely wakes each morning knowing they are not consumed by grace they did not produce carries an urgent dependence that no sermon series could fabricate. Daily renewal on God's terms — received, not earned — is the only sustainable fuel for the urgent posture Revival Week 1 requires.

Week 2 — Repentance

Genuine repentance requires the confidence that mercy will be there on the other side of it. The person who is not sure God's compassions will survive their confession will never confess deeply. Lamentations 3:22–23 provides the theological ground that makes repentance safe: the mercy is inexhaustible, the faithfulness is covenantal, and the morning will always bring a fresh supply. Daily renewal anchors the repentance Revival Week 2 calls for.

Week 3 — Supernatural Prayer

The manna pattern of Exodus 16 — go out each morning, gather what God has provided — is the structural prototype of supernatural prayer. Prayer that is truly supernatural begins not with our requests but with our reception: of mercy, of grace, of the orientation that morning renewal provides. The person who wakes to gathered mercy prays from abundance; the person who skips the morning gathering prays from deficit.

Week 4 — Brokenhearted Boldness

Brokenhearted boldness in witness requires a settled identity that does not depend on the world's reception. The messenger who knows each morning that they are not consumed — that their standing before God is not in question — speaks with the freedom that only security produces. Daily renewal in God's inexhaustible mercy is the antidote to the fear that silences witness.

Week 5 — Generational Transmission

The family or community that practices daily renewal visibly — that models the morning orientation toward God's fresh mercy — is doing the most powerful form of generational transmission available. Deuteronomy 6's command to speak of God when you rise up is precisely this: the daily renewal rhythm made visible to the next generation, who learn not from lectures but from watching how the people they love begin each day.

Week 6 — Sustained Movement

Revival movements that depend on emotional peaks for their momentum will not survive the ordinary season. The infrastructure of sustained movement is exactly what Lamentations 3 provides: a mercy that is always new, a faithfulness that never varies, a morning that always brings fresh supply. Movements built on daily renewal do not require revival events to restart what daily faithfulness sustains.

Scripture Treasury

CATEGORY	REFERENCE	SCRIPTURE
The Ground of Mercy	Lamentations 3:22–23	<i>Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning.</i>
	Psalms 103:17	<i>But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children.</i>
The Daily Pattern	Exodus 16:4	<i>I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day.</i>
	Psalms 90:14	<i>Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.</i>
Inner Renewal	2 Corinthians 4:16	<i>Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.</i>
	Isaiah 40:31	<i>Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles.</i>
Orientation Toward God	Lamentations 3:24–25	<i>The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him. The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him.</i>
	Psalms 5:3	<i>In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.</i>

Devotional 2

The Mind That Must Be Renewed

Transformation Is Not Self-Improvement — It Is a Different Kind of Thinking

The Awakening

The world operates by a relentless process of formation. Before you opened your eyes this morning, the culture that surrounds you had already shaped what you consider normal, desirable, and possible. Advertising, social media, ambient cultural noise, the opinions of people you respect — all of it presses against the mind with constant, low-grade pressure. The result is not dramatic apostasy. It is quiet conformity. You do not fall away from God in a single catastrophic moment. You are squeezed, slowly, into a shape that was never designed for you.

Romans 12:2 does not pretend this is not happening. It assumes the pressure is real, constant, and effective — unless something interrupts it. That interruption is what Paul calls the renewal of the mind. And the stakes could not be higher: it is the renewal of the mind — not the accumulation of religious information — that produces transformation.

ROMANS 12:2 — FOUNDATIONAL TEXT

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.

What the Text Reveals

Two Directions, One Moment

The Greek *subscematizesthe* — 'do not be conformed' — is passive and continuous. You are not doing the conforming. The world is doing it to you, and it does not stop. Paul is not warning against a dramatic decision to abandon Christian values. He is warning against passive drift, the slow gravitational pull of the age that reshapes you without your explicit consent.

Metamorphousthe — 'be transformed' — is also passive. Transformation is not self-generated any more than conformity is. But notice the mechanism: the renewing of the mind. The passive form tells you that God does the transforming. The phrase 'renewing of the mind' tells you that your active engagement with God's Word, in God's presence, is the instrument He uses. You are not the agent of transformation. But you are not passive before it either.

What 'Renewing' Actually Means

The Greek *anakainosis* — renewal — carries the force of qualitative newness, not simply fresh repetition. This is not running the same mind through a cleaning cycle. It is the progressive replacement of the mind's foundational categories — what it treats as real, important, and true — with God's categories. The renewed mind thinks differently, not just about theological propositions, but about money, ambition, relationships, suffering, success, and time.

The Result: Discernment, Not Just Information

The purpose clause is decisive: 'Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is.' Docimadzein — to test and prove by experience — is the language of the assayer who tests metal to determine its true composition. The renewed mind does not simply receive information about God's will. It develops the capacity to recognize it in real time, in the midst of complex situations, without a direct divine word for every decision. This is the practical payoff of daily renewal: wisdom that functions below the level of explicit instruction.

The Biblical Architecture

The mind's need for ongoing renewal is not a New Testament innovation. Deuteronomy 6 makes the same claim in covenantal terms. God's commands are to be upon your heart, spoken to your children, talked about as you sit at home, walk along the road, lie down, and rise up. The formation of a God-shaped mind requires saturation — not occasional exposure. The world forms the mind through constant presence. God's truth renews it through deliberate, repeated, structured engagement.

Psalms 1 draws the same contrast with the image of two trees. The blessed person meditates on God's law day and night — not as an academic exercise but as a living orientation that determines where roots go and what fruit grows. Colossians 3:2 — 'Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things' — assumes that the mind goes where it is directed, and that direction requires daily, intentional choice.

The ultimate endpoint of mind-renewal is glimpsed in 1 Corinthians 2:16 — 'We have the mind of Christ.' This is not a claim to omniscience. It is the claim that the Spirit who indwells us has the capacity to enable us to think as Christ thinks about the things that matter most. Daily renewal of the mind is the progressive actualization of what is already true: you have been given access to the mind of Christ.

CORE THESIS

Transformation is not the product of trying harder with the same mind. It requires a different kind of thinking — one that is daily renewed through Scripture, prayer, and Spirit-directed attention. The renewed mind does not merely know more about God; it learns to see the world as God sees it, and to recognize His will in the middle of the ordinary.

THE QUESTION THAT MATTERS MOST

In what specific area of your life is the world's pattern of thinking most clearly winning? What would it mean to submit that exact area — not just in behavior, but at the level of what you believe about it — to the renewing work of God's Word?

A PRAYER FROM THE AWAKENING

Father, we confess that we have underestimated the pressure. The world has been forming us in ways we did not notice, and we have offered our minds to it without resistance.

We have assumed that information about Your will was sufficient. But You have called us to transformation — to minds so renewed that we can discern Your will in real time, in the midst of actual life.

****Renew our minds today — not with more data, but with a different way of seeing.*

*Replace the world's categories with Yours. Make us people whose thinking has been so saturated with Your Word that we cannot unsee what You have shown us.****

*Do not let us be conformed. Transform us — from the inside, at the level of how we think.
Amen.*

Connections to Revival 2026

CONNECTIONS TO REVIVAL 2026

How this devotional's thesis fuels each week of Revival 2026

Week 1 — Urgency and Dependence

The urgency that drives genuine revival is not emotional hype — it is the product of a mind that has learned to see reality as God sees it. The renewed mind recognizes the spiritual bankruptcy of the culture, the shortness of the window, and the immensity of what is at stake. That recognition is itself the product of daily mind-renewal through Scripture. Urgency built on a world-conformed mind produces anxiety; urgency built on a Spirit-renewed mind produces purposeful, sustainable dependence.

Week 2 — Repentance

The most persistent obstacle to genuine repentance is not stubbornness — it is a mind that has been so thoroughly conformed to the world's patterns of thinking that it can no longer recognize sin as sin. Romans 12:2 addresses this directly: the renewed mind gains the capacity to 'test and approve what God's will is.' Daily mind-renewal makes repentance possible by restoring the discernment that identifies what needs to be repented of. Without renewed minds, Revival Week 2's call to repentance will produce only the surface adjustments the world also endorses.

Week 3 — Supernatural Prayer

Supernatural prayer requires a mind that knows what to pray for — and that knowledge is itself the product of mind-renewal. Psalm 1's person, who meditates on God's law day and night, does not pray randomly. They pray with the grain of God's purposes because their mind has been shaped by God's Word. The supernatural quality of prayer is inseparable from the renewed mind that knows what God is doing and aligns with it.

Week 4 — Brokenhearted Boldness

Brokenhearted boldness in witness requires a mind that has genuinely understood the lostness of those without Christ — not the world's category of 'decent person who hasn't said a prayer,' but the biblical category of those under condemnation, separated from God, without hope. A world-conformed mind produces comfortable silence. A Spirit-renewed mind produces the broken heart that has no option but to speak.

Week 5 — Generational Transmission

Deuteronomy 6's command to saturate the household with God's Word is a mind-renewal strategy for the next generation. The generation that transmits the faith is the generation whose minds have been so formed by Scripture that transmission is natural, not effortful. The generational transmission failure of recent decades is largely a mind-formation failure: believers whose own minds were never renewed cannot transmit what they do not possess.

Week 6 — Sustained Movement

Movements sustained by emotional experience require constant re-fueling. Movements sustained by renewed minds have internal resources that do not depend on external stimulation. The person whose mind has been genuinely transformed by Scripture can sustain the revival posture through the ordinary seasons when no event is scheduled and no momentum is visible — because the mind that has learned to see as God sees does not require external evidence to maintain its orientation.

Scripture Treasury

CATEGORY	REFERENCE	SCRIPTURE
The Pressure to Conform	Romans 12:2	<i>Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.</i>
	1 John 2:15–16	<i>Do not love the world or anything in the world... For everything in the world – the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life – comes not from the Father.</i>
The Renewed Mind	Colossians 3:2	<i>Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.</i>
	Philippians 4:8	<i>Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right... think about such things.</i>
Scripture as Instrument	Psalms 1:2–3	<i>His delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water.</i>
	Deuteronomy 6:6–7	<i>These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road.</i>
The Mind of Christ	1 Corinthians 2:16	<i>We have the mind of Christ.</i>
	Philippians 2:5	<i>In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.</i>

Devotional 3

The Bankruptcy That Qualifies You

Why Poverty of Spirit Is the Gateway, Not the Problem

The Awakening

Almost everything we have been taught about success runs directly counter to the first Beatitude. We are formed by a world that rewards competence, penalizes vulnerability, and treats need as weakness. We bring these instincts into the spiritual life and produce the same result: a Christianity of performance, a faith in which the strong survive and the broken feel excluded.

Jesus begins the Sermon on the Mount with a statement so counterintuitive that it arrests everything that follows: blessed are the poor in spirit. Not the theologically equipped. Not the morally consistent. Not the emotionally stable. The poor in spirit — those who have come to the absolute end of what they can produce, sustain, or offer. And to them, and only them, Jesus assigns present-tense possession of the kingdom: theirs is — not will be — the kingdom of heaven.

This is the daily renewal posture Jesus prescribes. Not as a feeling to manufacture but as a reality to acknowledge. You are poor in spirit. The question is whether you know it yet.

MATTHEW 5:3 — FOUNDATIONAL TEXT

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

What the Text Reveals

The Most Extreme Word Jesus Could Have Chosen

The Greek *ptochoi* does not describe the working poor scraping by. It describes the abject beggar with nothing — one who has been reduced to complete dependence on others for survival. The spectrum of Greek poverty words runs from *penes* (lacking but functional) to *ptochos* (completely destitute). Jesus selects the extreme end deliberately. He is not describing spiritual modesty. He is describing spiritual bankruptcy — the condition of having literally nothing to offer, produce, or sustain in the realm of the spirit.

Present Tense, Present Possession

'Theirs is the kingdom of heaven' — not 'will be' but 'is.' Every other beatitude has a future promise: they will be comforted, they will inherit, they will be filled. This one alone is present tense. The kingdom belongs now to those who are now poor in spirit. This is not a reward for achieving poverty of spirit. It is the description of a present reality: the empty vessel is already filled, because the bankrupt soul is the only soul that comes to God with open hands.

The Diagnostic It Creates

Isaiah 66:2 illuminates the principle: 'These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word.' God's gaze does not scan for the capable. It rests on the contrite. The daily renewal implication is concrete: the person who wakes each morning with a genuine recognition of their dependence on God is the person who wakes positioned to receive what God gives. The person who wakes confident in yesterday's spiritual achievement is the one who has subtly closed their hands.

The Biblical Architecture

The pattern runs without exception across both Testaments. God chose Abraham when he had no heir and no land — when every human resource for the fulfillment of the promise was absent. He delivered Israel from Egypt when they were enslaved and helpless, not when they had organized a liberation strategy. He raised David as the youngest, most unlikely son, passed over by everyone in the family including his father.

The New Testament intensifies it. The tax collector in Luke 18 cannot even lift his eyes: 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' The Pharisee's prayer is a résumé. The tax collector's prayer is a cry. Jesus declares the tax collector justified — the bankrupt prayer received, the competent prayer empty. 2 Chronicles 7:14 places humbling first in the divine sequence: humble, then pray, then seek, then turn. Poverty of spirit is not the last stage of spiritual collapse. It is the first stage of genuine renewal.

Isaiah 57:15 makes the geography of God's presence explicit: 'I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.' God descends to the poor in spirit. He does not wait for them to ascend to Him. Daily renewal begins precisely at the point of acknowledged bankruptcy, because that is the address God visits.

CORE THESIS

Poverty of spirit is not the spiritual life's worst condition — it is its only starting point. The daily renewal God offers is available exclusively to those who arrive empty-handed. Not because God rewards suffering, but because open hands are the only hands that can receive what He gives.

THE QUESTION THAT MATTERS MOST

Where in your life are you still arriving at God with a full résumé rather than empty hands? What area of spiritual competence has become the place where dependence has quietly closed?

A PRAYER FROM THE AWAKENING

Jesus, we have misunderstood the first Beatitude. We have treated poverty of spirit as a condition to overcome on the way to spiritual maturity, when You declared it the very address of the kingdom.

We confess the places we have come to You competent instead of bankrupt — the prayers rehearsed instead of cried, the disciplines sustained instead of received, the service performed instead of offered.

****Make us genuinely poor in spirit today — not as theater but as truth. Strip away every pretense of adequacy until we arrive where You are waiting: at the end of our own resources, with open hands.****

The kingdom is ours — not because we earned it, but because we finally stopped pretending we could. Amen.

Connections to Revival 2026

CONNECTIONS TO REVIVAL 2026

How this devotional's thesis fuels each week of Revival 2026

Week 1 — Urgency and Dependence

Matthew 5:3 is the precise anatomy of Week 1's posture. Urgency without poverty of spirit becomes frantic activity driven by human competence. Dependence without genuine poverty of spirit is performance of humility rather than the real thing. The person who arrives at Revival Week 1 having genuinely encountered their own spiritual bankruptcy before God is the person in whom urgency and dependence have been fused by actual encounter — not manufactured by curriculum.

Week 2 — Repentance

Repentance requires the capacity to see the truth about yourself — and that capacity is precisely what poverty of spirit provides. The person who has not yet been genuinely poor in spirit will repent only of the things that feel safe to confess. The bankrupt soul repents comprehensively, because it has nothing left to protect. Luke 18's tax collector — who 'would not even look up to heaven' — is the model: complete self-abandonment before God, which is the only posture that produces complete repentance.

Week 3 — Supernatural Prayer

2 Chronicles 7:14 places humbling first in the revival sequence for a reason. Supernatural prayer — prayer that moves heaven rather than performing for earth — flows out of the posture of poverty of spirit. The person who has arrived at prayer still trusting in their own spiritual résumé will pray from confidence that does not require God. The bankrupt person prays with the desperation that gets heaven's attention.

Week 4 — Brokenhearted Boldness

Brokenhearted boldness is the specific combination of qualities Week 4 requires — and it is impossible without poverty of spirit. Boldness without brokenness is arrogance. Brokenness without boldness is paralysis. The person who is genuinely poor in spirit has the brokenness, because they know what the lostness of others actually costs. And they have the boldness, because they are not defending their own competence — they are simply overflowing from what God has given.

Week 5 — Generational Transmission

What every generation most desperately needs from the one that precedes it is not technique — it is testimony. The testimony that carries the most weight is not 'here is what I accomplished for God' but 'here is what God did when I had nothing left.' The parent or mentor who has genuinely known poverty of spirit and the kingdom that followed it transmits something that no curriculum can replicate.

Week 6 — Sustained Movement

Sustained revival is not sustained by competence — it is sustained by ongoing poverty of spirit before God. The movements that have persisted through decades and generations are those whose leaders and people never graduated beyond Matthew 5:3. The East African Revival lasted decades precisely because its core posture was 'walking in the light' — ongoing confession, ongoing acknowledgment of inadequacy, ongoing return to the One who fills the empty.

Scripture Treasury

CATEGORY	REFERENCE	SCRIPTURE
Poverty of Spirit	Matthew 5:3	<i>Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</i>
	Isaiah 66:2	<i>These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word.</i>
God's Gaze on the Contrite	Isaiah 57:15	<i>I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly.</i>
	Psalms 34:18	<i>The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.</i>
The Prayer of the Bankrupt	Luke 18:13–14	<i>God, have mercy on me, a sinner. I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God.</i>
	Psalms 51:17	<i>My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.</i>
The Divine Sequence	2 Chronicles 7:14	<i>If my people... will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven.</i>
	James 4:6	<i>God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.</i>

Devotional 4

The Heart That Must Be Created

You Cannot Renew What Only God Can Replace

The Awakening

The most common misunderstanding of the Christian life is that it is a self-improvement project with divine assistance. God begins it; we maintain it. God forgives the past; we manage the future. It sounds reasonable. It is catastrophically wrong — and the consequences are visible everywhere: exhausted Christians who have been trying to sustain what only God can produce, managing a heart that was never theirs to manage in the first place.

Ezekiel 36 will not allow this misunderstanding to stand. God does not offer heart renovation. He offers heart replacement. The stone is not softened — it is removed. The flesh is not improved — it is given. This is not a contract in which God provides resources and humans supply effort. It is a sovereign act in which God does what only God can do: create a heart capable of knowing and loving Him.

Daily renewal, rightly understood, begins with this recognition: the heart you bring to God each morning is not the product of your maintenance. It is the product of His creative act. And it requires daily return to the Creator to remain what He made it to be.

EZEKIEL 36:26–27 — FOUNDATIONAL TEXT

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

What the Text Reveals

The Grammar of Divine Initiative

Count the first-person verbs: I will give. I will remove. I will give. I will put. I will move you. Five divine actions. Zero human actions. This is not a cooperative project in which God provides the materials and Israel supplies the labor. It is a unilateral act of sovereign grace. The structural point of Ezekiel 36 is that Israel's history of failure has conclusively demonstrated that they cannot produce the obedience God requires. So God stops waiting for them to produce it and acts to create it.

Stone and Flesh: The Nature of the Problem and the Solution

'Heart of stone' is not merely a metaphor for stubbornness. In the Hebrew anthropology of the text, the heart (*lev*) is the seat of will, desire, thought, and moral orientation. A stone heart is one whose fundamental allegiance is fixed against God — not through isolated acts of rebellion but through a constitutive orientation that cannot turn toward Him. It is not that the stone heart makes wrong choices. It is that it cannot make the right one.

The heart of flesh (lev basar) is not a heart of weakness — it is a heart of responsiveness. Flesh, in this context, is the living tissue that receives impressions, that moves, that responds. The new heart is one that can be marked by God's Word, moved by His Spirit, and oriented toward His purposes. This is what daily renewal is renewing: not a good intention but a God-given responsiveness.

The Spirit Who Moves, Not Just Empowers

Verse 27 adds what is perhaps the most staggering promise in the passage: 'I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees.' The Hebrew wehithalaktem — 'move you to walk' — is almost physical. The Spirit does not merely empower obedience from the outside. He motivates it from the inside. Daily renewal includes the renewal of desire, not just the renewal of capacity. You want to follow God because God has moved you to want it.

The Biblical Architecture

Psalms 51:10 supplies the prayer that corresponds to Ezekiel 36:26 as its human complement: 'Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.' The Hebrew bara — 'create' — is used exclusively of divine action in the Old Testament. David does not ask God to improve his heart. He asks God to create one. The recognition that heart-renewal requires divine creation, not human effort, is the theological foundation of every genuine renewal throughout the biblical narrative.

Jeremiah 31:33 foreshadows the same reality from a different angle: 'I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.' The external law written on stone tablets has failed to produce obedience because the problem was never the content of the law — it was the heart of the recipient. The new covenant solution is to move the law from outside to inside, from stone to flesh, from command to desire.

John 3:3–8 confirms that this heart-creation is not a progressive achievement but a new birth — sudden, sovereign, from above. 'The wind blows wherever it pleases... So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.' Daily renewal does not create the new heart. It maintains the orientation of the new heart toward the One who gave it. And that orientation, left to itself, naturally drifts — not because the new heart was poorly made, but because the old patterns of the flesh remain until glorification.

CORE THESIS

The heart God renews daily is not the product of human maintenance — it is the product of divine creation. Daily renewal is not the sustaining of a spiritual discipline you began. It is the daily return of a created heart to the Creator who made it and whose Spirit alone can keep it responsive, alive, and moving toward God.

THE QUESTION THAT MATTERS MOST

Are you approaching your spiritual life as a maintenance project — trying to sustain what you once received — or as a daily creation event, returning to the One who alone can give you a heart capable of knowing and following Him? What evidence distinguishes the two in your actual practice?

A PRAYER FROM THE AWAKENING

*Father, we confess that we have been trying to maintain what only You can create. We have approached the spiritual life as management when You intended it as miracle. We have worked to sustain the desire for You when You are the only one who can produce it. We have tried to keep our own hearts soft when only Your Spirit can remove the stone. ***Create in us a pure heart today — not improved, but new. Put Your Spirit in us and move us to follow Your ways, not because we have decided to try harder, but because You have moved us from within.*** We return this morning to the One who alone can do what needs to be done. Bara. Create. Begin again. Amen.*

Connections to Revival 2026

CONNECTIONS TO REVIVAL 2026

How this devotional's thesis fuels each week of Revival 2026

Week 1 — Urgency and Dependence

Ezekiel 36 is the doctrinal ground for the dependence that Week 1 requires. If the heart itself must be given — not improved, not disciplined into compliance, but created — then dependence on God is not a spiritual posture to adopt but an accurate description of the actual situation. The urgency that accompanies this recognition is not panic; it is the clarity that sees what only God can do and refuses to waste another day pretending we can do it ourselves.

Week 2 — Repentance

Genuine repentance requires a created heart, not a managed one. Psalm 51's prayer — 'Create in me a pure heart' — follows the confession because David understands that what he needs is beyond self-repair. Revival Week 2's call to repentance will produce the depth it requires only when people understand that they are not being asked to try harder to be different. They are being invited to bring the brokenness to the One who can create what they cannot produce.

Week 3 — Supernatural Prayer

The prayers that characterize supernatural intercession are prayers that know they need what only God can give. Jeremiah 31:33's new covenant promise — God writing His law on hearts — is a prayer target that can only be prayed by someone who understands that the heart is the problem and God is the only solution. Prayer that understands Ezekiel 36 does not ask God to help people do better. It asks God to create in them what only He can create.

Week 4 — Brokenhearted Boldness

The most compelling evangelistic testimony is not 'look what I have achieved' — it is 'look what God created when I brought Him what I couldn't fix.' The witness whose gospel has been proven in the experience of heart-creation speaks with a credibility that no argument can produce. Acts 2's Pentecost crowd was not persuaded by Peter's rhetoric. They were cut to the heart by the Holy Spirit's application of the message to the condition Ezekiel 36 describes.

Week 5 — Generational Transmission

The revival of any generation begins in the same place: God creating hearts in people who could not create them for themselves. Generational transmission, therefore, is not primarily the transmission of information or practice. It is the urgent, prayerful, faithful labor of those who understand that the next generation's hearts need to be created by God — and who pray, live, and speak accordingly. Psalm 78's transmission pattern is heart-aimed from start to finish.

Week 6 — Sustained Movement

Sustained revival is not sustained by people maintaining spiritual states they have achieved. It is sustained by people repeatedly returning to the One who creates what they cannot maintain. The Welsh Revival of 1904 eventually faded not because God's creating power was exhausted but because the ongoing return to poverty of spirit before the Creator was not sustained. The movements that last are those that never stop asking God to create what only He can give.

Scripture Treasury

CATEGORY	REFERENCE	SCRIPTURE
Divine Heart Creation	Ezekiel 36:26–27	<i>I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.</i>
	Psalms 51:10	<i>Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.</i>
The New Covenant Promise	Jeremiah 31:33	<i>I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.</i>
	Hebrews 8:10	<i>I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.</i>
Born of the Spirit	John 3:5–6	<i>No one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.</i>
	Titus 3:5	<i>He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.</i>
Spirit-Motivated Obedience	Philippians 2:13	<i>For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.</i>
	Romans 8:14	<i>For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.</i>

Devotional 5

Being Transformed by Beholding

The Object of Your Attention Determines the Direction of Your Change

The Awakening

There is a principle embedded in the human soul that neuroscience has confirmed but Scripture announced long before: you become what you behold. Extended, attentive contemplation of anything shapes the mind, the desires, and eventually the life around its object. This is why advertising works, why pornography destroys, why extended meditation on grievances produces bitterness, and why people who spend decades with the same person come to resemble one another.

Paul applies this principle to the spiritual life with a precision that should arrest every person who has ever wondered why they are not changing. The reason you are not being transformed is not primarily a failure of discipline. It is a failure of attention. You have not been beholding. Or you have been beholding the wrong things. And the direction of transformation follows the direction of your gaze.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:18 — FOUNDATIONAL TEXT

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory — which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

What the Text Reveals

Unveiled Faces: The Removal of the Veil

Paul has been building a contrast between Moses, whose face shone after encountering God but who wore a veil to conceal the fading of that glory, and the new covenant believer, whose face is unveiled. The veil Moses wore is not merely a historical detail — it is a theological category: the thing that stands between the human soul and unmediated encounter with God's glory. Paul says: in Christ, that veil is removed. Daily renewal happens face to face, not at a distance.

Katoptrizomenoi: Beholding as in a Mirror

The Greek *katoptrizomenoi* can mean either 'beholding as in a mirror' or 'reflecting.' Both senses are likely present. We behold the Lord's glory — and what we behold we begin to reflect. The mirror receives the image of what is placed before it. The Christian soul, consistently turned toward Christ in Scripture and prayer, begins to take on the shape of what it has been attending to. This is not automatic. It is the result of consistent, deliberate, unveiled attention.

Metamorphoumetha: The Passive Transformation

The transformation verb is passive: we are being transformed. We do not transform ourselves. But the passive is not passive in the sense of uninvolved. The unveiled face must be turned. The contemplation must be actual. The beholding must be real. Daily renewal requires the daily act of turning your face toward Christ — in the Word, in prayer, in worship, in the sacramental rhythms of the Christian life. The Spirit does the transforming. You do the beholding. These are not the same work. But neither can operate without the other.

The Biblical Architecture

The beholding-and-becoming principle appears at the foundation of Israel's covenant life. Deuteronomy 6:4–9 — 'The LORD our God, the LORD is one' — is not merely a monotheism declaration. It is a direction-of-attention command: love the LORD your God with all your heart, soul, and strength. Keep these words on your heart. Talk about them constantly. Bind them on your hands. Write them on your doorframes. The entire environment of the Israelite home was to be arranged to keep the divine object of attention continuously in view.

Psalms 27:4 captures the contemplative center of the Old Testament renewal pattern: 'One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.' Gazing — *chazah* — deliberate, focused, sustained attention to God's beauty — is David's one request. Not requests, but one. And that one thing is the source of everything else.

Hebrews 12:2 brings the New Testament to the same point with different vocabulary: 'fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.' The Greek *aphorontes* — 'looking away from everything else toward' — implies not merely a glance but a redirecting of the whole orientation of attention. The race of faith is run not by trying harder but by looking in the right direction. The transformation follows the gaze.

CORE THESIS

You will become what you consistently behold. Daily renewal is not primarily a matter of discipline applied to behavior — it is the daily, deliberate, unveiled turning of your face toward the glory of Christ. The Spirit does the transforming. But the transforming follows the beholding. Fix your gaze, and the change will come.

THE QUESTION THAT MATTERS MOST

What has received your most consistent, most attentive, most devoted contemplation in the past month? What has that beholding been producing in you? What would a genuine, deliberate redirection of that attention toward Christ look like in the concrete rhythms of your week?

A PRAYER FROM THE AWAKENING

Lord, we have been surprised by our lack of change. But the surprise is unwarranted — we have not been beholding. We have glanced and moved on. We have skimmed and scrolled past. We have given sustained attention to everything except the One who transforms. Remove the veil — every pretense, every distraction, every competing image that has claimed the place Your glory deserves. Turn our faces toward You.

****We want to be changed into Your image. So we turn now — unveiled, attentive, unhurried — to behold what the Spirit will use to transform us. Do in us what beholding You always does.****

From glory to glory. That is Your trajectory for us. Begin the movement in us today. Amen.

Connections to Revival 2026

CONNECTIONS TO REVIVAL 2026

How this devotional's thesis fuels each week of Revival 2026

Week 1 — Urgency and Dependence

Urgency and dependence are not generated by willpower — they are the natural result of consistently beholding who God actually is. Isaiah in the throne room did not manufacture a sense of urgency. He encountered the holiness of God and urgency was inevitable. The person who is daily beholding the glory of Christ in Scripture is the person whose dependence is not performed. They have seen enough to know they cannot exist without the One they are beholding.

Week 2 — Repentance

Isaiah 6 supplies the model: genuine repentance is the direct product of beholding God's holiness. 'Woe to me — I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips.' The unclean lips were not discovered by introspection. They were disclosed by contrast: holiness encountered. The repentance Revival Week 2 calls for is not the product of moral inventory alone. It flows most naturally from the beholding that makes God's holiness vividly real and self-assessment honest.

Week 3 — Supernatural Prayer

Supernatural prayer is prayer that prays in the direction of God's purposes — and you can only know God's purposes by beholding Him. David's prayer in Psalm 27 — 'one thing I ask: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD to gaze on the beauty of the LORD' — is simultaneously the posture of contemplation and the posture of intercession. The person who gazes on God long enough begins to pray with His concerns, not only their own.

Week 4 — Brokenhearted Boldness

The sequence of Isaiah 6 is the anatomy of brokenhearted boldness: encounter the glory → be undone → receive cleansing → hear the commission → answer 'Here am I.' Boldness that has not passed through the undoing lacks the brokenness. Brokenness that has not passed through the encounter lacks the coal-on-the-lips cleansing that makes speech authoritative. The witness who has been genuinely undone by the holiness of Christ and restored by His mercy speaks differently from those who have not.

Week 5 — Generational Transmission

Hebrews 12:2 commands us to run the race of faith with eyes fixed on Jesus — and the imagery is deliberately communal. The cloud of witnesses (12:1) includes every generation that has run before. What they are witnessing is not our performance. They are models of the beholding-posture that sustained them. Generational transmission of revival is the transmission of this posture: teach the next generation not merely what to believe but how to behold, and the transformation will follow.

Week 6 — Sustained Movement

2 Corinthians 3:18 uses the continuous present: 'are being transformed.' This is not a transformation that arrives and then remains static. It is ongoing, sustained by continued beholding. Movements that sustain themselves do not rely on periodic re-encounters with God's glory. They build the daily contemplative practices that keep the face turned, the attention fixed, and the transformation continuous. Sustained movement is sustained beholding, which produces sustained becoming.

Scripture Treasury

CATEGORY	REFERENCE	SCRIPTURE
Beholding and Becoming	2 Corinthians 3:18	<i>We all... contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory — which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.</i>
	Psalm 27:4	<i>One thing I ask: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD.</i>
Fixing the Gaze	Hebrews 12:2	<i>Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.</i>
	Colossians 3:1–2	<i>Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.</i>
The Direction of Attention	Deuteronomy 6:4–6	<i>The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments are to be on your hearts.</i>
	Psalm 119:15	<i>I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.</i>
The Image of God	Romans 8:29	<i>For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.</i>
	Ephesians 4:22–24	<i>Put off your old self... and put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.</i>

Devotional 6

The Partnership That Cannot Be Separated

Daily Renewal Is Neither All God Nor All You — It Is the Paradox of Both

The Awakening

The two most common errors in the Christian life pull in exactly opposite directions — and both are ways of escaping the same productive tension. The first error is moralism: you saved yourself by deciding, and now you must sustain yourself by performing. God is the distant validator of your spiritual résumé. The second error is passivity: God does everything, so your effort is either unnecessary or, worse, a kind of unbelief. Let go and let God.

Philippians 2:12–13 refuses both escapes. Paul holds two things together with a conjunction that should keep every Christian in constant theological discomfort: work out your salvation — real effort, genuine striving, active obedience. For it is God who works in you — not as an afterthought but as the causal ground of the effort itself. You are working. God is working. And the reason you are working is that God is working. These are not competing claims. They are the anatomy of genuine renewal.

PHILIPPIANS 2:12–13 — FOUNDATIONAL TEXT

Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

What the Text Reveals

Work Out, Not Work For

The Greek *katergazesthe* — 'work out' — is not 'work for.' Paul does not say work to earn your salvation or work to secure your salvation. He says work out what is already in you. The imagery is of a mine: the gold is already there. The work is the extraction and expression of what God has deposited. Daily renewal is the active, effortful process of drawing out into lived reality what the Spirit has already placed within.

Fear and Trembling: Holy Seriousness About the Stakes

'With fear and trembling' — not anxiety about losing salvation, but the holy seriousness of someone who understands the weight of what they are working with. The opposite of fear and trembling is not peace — it is carelessness. The person who approaches daily renewal casually has not understood what is at stake. The person who approaches it with holy gravity is the one in whom the work will most fully occur.

For It Is God Who Works: The Causal Ground

Energon — 'works' — is the root of our word 'energy.' God is not observing your effort and scoring it. He is the energy source that makes the effort possible. The *for* (*gar*) is causal: the reason you can and should work is that God is energizing the work from within. Your will to obey is itself the product of God's working in you. This is not determinism that eliminates responsibility. It is grace that grounds responsibility in something more reliable than your own resolve.

The Biblical Architecture

The paradox of divine initiative and human response runs through the entire biblical narrative as its structural backbone. Joseph's story — 'You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good' (Genesis 50:20) — holds human agency and divine sovereignty in the same sentence without collapsing either. The brothers acted. God governed. Neither cancels the other.

Galatians 2:20 is perhaps the most compressed expression of the paradox in the New Testament: 'I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God.' Three clauses, three paradoxes: I have died / I still live; I no longer live / Christ lives in me; it is my life / I live it by faith. The two sides of Philippians 2:12–13 are embedded in every sentence.

Ephesians 2:10 supplies the teleological grounding: 'We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.' The works are real. They are yours to do. And they were prepared in advance by God before you did them. The tension between divine preparation and human action is not a theological problem to resolve — it is the shape of the redeemed life, sustained by daily renewal.

CORE THESIS

Daily renewal is neither passive surrender nor independent striving — it is the productive tension of genuine human effort energized by divine working. You work because God is working. God's energy makes your effort possible. Separating the two collapses into either exhausted moralism or self-deceived passivity — and both miss the life Scripture describes.

THE QUESTION THAT MATTERS MOST

Which error is more natural to you: trying harder in your own strength, or waiting for God to do what He has called you to actively pursue? How would daily renewal look different if you held both sides of Philippians 2:12–13 simultaneously — working hard, because God is working powerfully within you?

A PRAYER FROM THE AWAKENING

Father, we confess that we have pulled apart what You held together. We have worked in our own strength until we were exhausted and then accused You of absence. Or we have waited for You to act on what You have called us to actively pursue.

The paradox is uncomfortable. We want it to be one thing or the other. But You have written both truths into the same verse — work out, because God is working in.

****Teach us the discipline of active dependence: real effort, fully supplied by Your energy; genuine striving, fully grounded in Your working. Let us neither strive alone nor rest lazily — but work out what You are working in.****

For Your good purpose. That is enough reason to begin. Amen.

Connections to Revival 2026

CONNECTIONS TO REVIVAL 2026

How this devotional's thesis fuels each week of Revival 2026

Week 1 — Urgency and Dependence

Philippians 2:13 is the theological anchor of revival urgency: 'It is God who works in you to will and to act.' The revival posture of urgent dependence is not the frantic energy of people who believe everything depends on them. It is the engaged, purposeful effort of people who know that God is energizing the work — and who therefore work with a boldness that their own adequacy could never produce. Week 1's urgency is sustainable precisely because it is grounded in God's working, not our striving.

Week 2 — Repentance

Genuine repentance requires both sides of Philippians 2:12–13. The human side: the effort of honest examination, the will to confess, the decision to turn. The divine side: the working of God that produces the will to repent in the first place. People who cannot find the desire to repent are experiencing the condition Philippians 2:13 addresses: not a deficit of human effort but an absence of the divine energizing. The prayer for revival repentance is: 'God, work in us to will repentance, then give us the obedience to enact it.'

Week 3 — Supernatural Prayer

Supernatural prayer is the most direct expression of the Philippians 2 paradox: real human effort (we pour out our hearts, we persist, we bring our concerns) sustained by divine working (the Spirit intercedes with groans we cannot express, Romans 8:26). Prayer that abandons human effort becomes passive waiting. Prayer that trusts only in human effort becomes religious performance. The prayer that Week 3 requires is both — strenuous in its engagement, humble in its dependence.

Week 4 — Brokenhearted Boldness

1 Corinthians 15:10 is the testimony of brokenhearted boldness: 'I worked harder than all of them — yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.' Paul's boldness was not timid, not halfhearted, not waiting for confirmation before acting. He worked harder. But the ground of that effort was not self-confidence. It was grace. The witness who understands Philippians 2 speaks with both the earnestness of genuine human effort and the freedom of one whose adequacy comes from somewhere else.

Week 5 — Generational Transmission

Generational transmission requires both sides of the paradox. The human side: parents, teachers, mentors who actively, deliberately, persistently invest in the next generation. The divine side: the recognition that what they most need — regenerate hearts, Spirit-indwelt lives — only God can give. The generation that both works hard at transmission and prays with genuine dependence for the divine working is the generation that passes the faith forward. Neither effort alone nor prayer alone is sufficient.

Week 6 — Sustained Movement

Sustained revival collapses into two failure modes: the exhaustion of moralism (trying to sustain in human strength what only God can maintain) and the drift of passivity (waiting for God to do what He has called us to actively pursue). Philippians 2:12–13 is the immune system against both. The revival that knows this text does not need a crisis to restart — it builds the daily rhythm of active dependence that sustains what God began, by the energy of the God who keeps working.

Scripture Treasury

CATEGORY	REFERENCE	SCRIPTURE
The Productive Tension	Philippians 2:12–13	<i>Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act.</i>
	Galatians 2:20	<i>I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God.</i>
God's Preparation, Our Action	Ephesians 2:10	<i>We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.</i>
	1 Corinthians 15:10	<i>By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them — yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.</i>
Active Pursuit	Hebrews 12:14	<i>Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.</i>
	2 Peter 1:5–7	<i>Make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control...</i>
Grounded in Grace	Romans 6:4	<i>We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that... we too may live a new life.</i>
	Titus 2:11–12	<i>The grace of God... teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives.</i>

Devotional 7

The Garments of the New Self

Daily Renewal Is Not Addition — It Is Exchange

The Awakening

The language most Christians use to describe spiritual growth is the language of addition. We add prayer to our schedule. We add Scripture to our habits. We add service to our week. We accumulate spiritual disciplines like tools in a kit, and we define growth by the size of the collection. The problem is that nothing has been removed. The old self — its assumptions, its default loyalties, its habitual responses — remains fully intact beneath the accumulated disciplines, quietly shaping everything the disciplines are supposed to change.

Colossians 3 uses a different metaphor entirely. Not addition. Exchange. Not accumulating — stripping off and putting on. The old self is clothing that must be removed before the new self can be worn. And the exchange is not a one-time event accomplished at conversion — it is the daily act that makes daily renewal concrete and embodied. Every morning is a new opportunity to take off what belonged to the old life and put on what Christ has provided for the new.

COLOSSIANS 3:9–10 — FOUNDATIONAL TEXT

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

What the Text Reveals

The Aorist Behind the Imperative

Paul's grammar is carefully constructed here. 'You have taken off' and 'put on' are aorist participles — they describe something that has already occurred at conversion. The imperative 'do not lie' is grounded in this accomplished reality: you are not being asked to do something you have never done. You are being asked to live in accordance with something that has already happened to you. The old self has been taken off. The new self has been put on. Daily renewal is the practical actualization of a completed transaction.

Anakainooumenon: Being Renewed in Knowledge

The new self 'is being renewed' — present passive participle — 'in knowledge in the image of its Creator.' The renewal is ongoing. It moves toward a destination: the image of the Creator. And the instrument of renewal is knowledge — epignosis, full and accurate knowledge. This is not information accumulation but transformative recognition: knowing God as He actually is, knowing yourself as He has actually made you, knowing the world as He has actually ordered it. This knowledge is the substance of daily renewal.

The List That Follows: Renewal Made Specific

Colossians 3:12–14 supplies the content of the 'putting on': compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience. And over all of these, love. These are not abstract virtues to aspire toward. They are garments — specific, concrete, wearable. The question daily renewal asks is not 'Am I generally growing?' but 'Did I put on kindness this morning? Humility? Patience?' The image makes renewal actionable in a way that vague spiritual aspiration never can.

The Biblical Architecture

The clothing metaphor for spiritual transformation appears throughout Paul's letters with remarkable consistency. Galatians 3:27 — 'All of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ' — uses the same imagery for the initial act of conversion. The clothing was Christ Himself. Ephesians 4:22–24 makes the daily exchange most explicit: 'put off your old self... be made new in the attitude of your minds; and put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.'

Romans 13:14 condenses it to its sharpest form: 'clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.' The daily act of putting on Christ is the practical alternative to giving the flesh what it demands. The choice is concrete: what will you put on today? The identity that belongs to the old age, or the identity that belongs to the new creation?

Isaiah 61:10 provides the Old Testament root of the imagery and its eschatological fullness: 'He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness.' The clothing God provides is not earned — it is given. Daily renewal does not earn the garments; it wears them. The person who spends the day in the garments of the new self is the person who began the day by consciously putting them on.

CORE THESIS

Daily renewal is not the accumulation of spiritual disciplines layered over an unchanged self. It is the daily exchange — taking off the old, putting on the new — in which the specific garments of the new self (compassion, kindness, humility, patience, love) are consciously, concretely worn into every encounter the day will bring.

THE QUESTION THAT MATTERS MOST

What specific garment of the old self do you most habitually fail to take off in the morning — the one that is still on when you arrive at the first difficult conversation or unexpected frustration of the day? And what specific garment of the new self, if you wore it today, would most change what the people around you experience?

A PRAYER FROM THE AWAKENING

Father, we confess that our approach to growth has been additive rather than transformative. We have layered disciplines over an unchanged self and called it renewal. We have accumulated without surrendering, added without removing.

The old self is clothing. Today we take it off: the self-protection, the impatience, the reflexive pride, the performance anxiety, the habit of speaking before listening. We put it down.

****Now we put on what You have provided: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and over all of these, love. Not as aspirations but as garments — worn today, in the specific encounters You have already prepared for us.****

Clothe us with Christ. Let what He is be what the people around us encounter today. Amen.

Connections to Revival 2026

CONNECTIONS TO REVIVAL 2026

How this devotional's thesis fuels each week of Revival 2026

Week 1 — Urgency and Dependence

The exchange metaphor makes urgency concrete and daily. It is one thing to feel urgently dependent on God in a general sense. It is another to arrive each morning at the specific act of taking off and putting on. The person who practices this exchange daily develops the muscle memory of dependence — the habitual recognition that I cannot wear yesterday's old-self patterns into today and expect revival conditions to hold. Urgency, practiced daily in the clothing exchange, is not a mood. It is a discipline.

Week 2 — Repentance

Colossians 3:8–9 makes repentance specific and actionable: 'rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language.' These are not abstract categories. They are the specific garments of the old self that must be named and removed. Revival Week 2's call to repentance gains its traction when people identify not just that they need to repent but what specifically they are still wearing. The garment metaphor converts repentance from a general posture into a specific, daily, named act.

Week 3 — Supernatural Prayer

Romans 13:14 — 'clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ' — is a prayer posture as much as a life posture. To pray 'clothe me with Christ today' is to submit the day's encounters, decisions, and responses to His character rather than your own defaults. Supernatural prayer that begins with this request is prayer that has already surrendered the day's agenda to the One whose character is being put on. That surrender is the atmosphere in which supernatural prayer breathes.

Week 4 — Brokenhearted Boldness

The garments of the new self that Colossians 3:12 names — compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience — are precisely the garments that make witness credible. Zechariah 8:23's vision of nations grabbing the robe of God's people is the vision of a garment so visibly different, so unmistakably not the world's clothing, that outsiders reach for it. The witness who has put on Christ's character that morning brings something to the conversation that no argument can generate.

Week 5 — Generational Transmission

What parents transmit to the next generation is not primarily doctrine — it is pattern. Children observe what their parents put on in the morning and take off at night. They watch how adults respond to frustration, disappointment, and conflict — and they learn whether the garments of the new self are real or ceremonial. Generational transmission is the sustained, daily wearing of what has been put on — so that the next generation grows up in a household where Christ's character is the normal clothing.

Week 6 — Sustained Movement

The reason revivals die is not that God's grace runs out. It is that people stop making the daily exchange. The old garments get retrieved from where they were laid down. The new self gets layered over rather than replacing the old. Sustained revival requires sustained exchange — daily, specific, named taking-off and putting-on, maintained not only in the intensity of a revival week but in the ordinary Tuesdays that constitute most of the Christian life.

Scripture Treasury

CATEGORY	REFERENCE	SCRIPTURE
Taking Off and Putting On	Colossians 3:9–10	<i>You have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.</i>
	Ephesians 4:22–24	<i>Put off your old self... be made new in the attitude of your minds; and put on the new self, created to be like God.</i>
Clothing Yourself with Christ	Romans 13:14	<i>Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.</i>
	Galatians 3:27	<i>All of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.</i>
The Specific Garments	Colossians 3:12–14	<i>Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience... And over all these virtues put on love.</i>
	1 Peter 5:5	<i>Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.</i>
Righteousness as Clothing	Isaiah 61:10	<i>He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness.</i>
	Revelation 19:8	<i>Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.</i>

Devotional 8

The Life That Cannot Be Exhausted

Daily Renewal Is the Overflow of a Life Hidden in God

The Awakening

There is a vision of the Christian life in which renewal is a project with a finish line — a season of intensive spiritual growth that, once completed, yields a stable, sustainable state. The spiritually mature person, in this vision, no longer needs daily renewal the way the new believer does. They have built the foundation. They can coast.

Scripture offers no encouragement to this vision. Paul, at the end of his life, writes from a Roman prison: 'I want to know Christ — yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death' (Philippians 3:10). This is not a young convert's aspiration. This is the apostle who had been in the faith for three decades, who had written most of the New Testament, who had planted churches across the Mediterranean — and he writes as though he has not yet arrived. Because he has not. Neither have you. Neither has anyone this side of glorification.

Daily renewal is not a phase you pass through. It is the permanent posture of the life that is hidden with Christ in God.

COLOSSIANS 3:3-4 — FOUNDATIONAL TEXT

For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

What the Text Reveals

You Died: The Past That Grounds the Present

'You died' — the aorist tense again, the accomplished fact. The old self, the old life, the old loyalty structure — these have been crucified with Christ (Romans 6:6). This is not future aspiration. It is present reality. Every act of daily renewal is grounded in a death that has already occurred. You are not trying to kill the old self — it has been killed. You are living out of a death that has already been accomplished.

Hidden with Christ: The Security of Invisible Identity

'Your life is now hidden with Christ in God.' Kekruptai — perfect passive — 'has been and remains hidden.' The location of your true life is not visible to the world, not accessible to the enemy, not dependent on external circumstances. It is secure in the most secure location in the universe: hidden in God, through union with Christ. Daily renewal draws on a supply that cannot be depleted because the supply is the life of Christ Himself.

When Christ Appears: The Eschatological Horizon

Verse 4 supplies the horizon that gives the present its shape: 'When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.' Daily renewal is not merely a present-tense activity — it is preparation for an eschatological disclosure. The life being renewed day by day is the life that will be revealed in full when Christ returns. What is hidden now will be unveiled then. What is being formed in daily renewal will be the substance of that disclosure.

The Biblical Architecture

John 15:4–5 gives the most extended treatment of the sustained-renewal principle in the Gospels: 'Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.' The daily renewal imperative is the imperative of abiding — maintaining the relational connection to the Source of life. The vine is not renewed by effort. It is renewed by remaining attached to the vine.

Philippians 3:12–14 supplies the eschatological momentum that prevents the abiding life from becoming passive: 'Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on... forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.' The life hidden in God does not settle. It presses forward, pulled by the eschatological horizon.

Romans 8:18–21 places daily renewal within the largest possible frame: the entire creation is waiting for the renewal that will come at Christ's return — 'the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.' Your daily renewal is not a private spiritual project. It is a sign within creation of the cosmic renewal that is coming. Every renewed life is a foretaste of the new creation.

CORE THESIS

Daily renewal is not a phase, a discipline, or a season — it is the permanent posture of the life hidden in God. Because your life is secured in Christ, daily renewal draws on a supply that cannot be exhausted. And because Christ will appear, daily renewal is not maintenance of a static state but the progressive preparation of a life that will be fully disclosed at His return.

THE QUESTION THAT MATTERS MOST

What would it mean to live today as someone whose life is genuinely hidden in God — not anxious about its security, not dependent on external validation, not exhausted by the effort of sustaining a spiritual image? What would be different about your decisions, your relationships, your response to difficulty, if your identity were truly and restfully located in Christ?

A PRAYER FROM THE AWAKENING

Father, we confess that we have been sustaining a visible life while neglecting the hidden one. We have worked to maintain an external spiritual reputation while the interior life — the one hidden in You — has gone untended.

Your Word announces what we keep forgetting: our life is not visible. It is not vulnerable. It is not dependent on the world's assessment or our own performance. It is hidden — secured, sustained, and held — in You, through Christ.

****Let us live today out of that hiddenness. Not anxious about our standing. Not competing for visibility. Not exhausted by the effort of appearing renewed. Simply, restfully, daily renewed from the inexhaustible life that is ours in Christ.****

When He appears, we will appear with Him in glory. Until then, renew us — day by day, from the inside, from the hidden place where He keeps us. Amen.

Connections to Revival 2026

CONNECTIONS TO REVIVAL 2026

How this devotional's thesis fuels each week of Revival 2026

Week 1 — Urgency and Dependence

Colossians 3:3 is the theological foundation of Week 1's dependence: your life is hidden in God. That is not a passive comfort — it is a liberating truth. The person whose life is hidden in God is freed from the anxiety of self-preservation and available for the risk of genuine dependence. Urgency without this security becomes desperation. Dependence grounded in hiddenness becomes the calm, purposeful, undefended posture that Revival Week 1 describes when it is working as intended.

Week 2 — Repentance

1 John 3:2–3 makes the connection explicit: 'Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.' The eschatological certainty of Colossians 3:4 — 'you also will appear with him in glory' — is not a reason to delay repentance. It is the ground that makes repentance safe. The person who knows that their ultimate disclosure will be in glory can afford the intermediate disclosure of repentance. Hiddenness in God makes the un hiding of confession bearable.

Week 3 — Supernatural Prayer

John 15:7 — 'If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you' — makes the abiding the condition of the asking. Supernatural prayer is the overflow of the abiding life. The person hidden in Christ, remaining in His presence, praying out of that deep security, prays differently from the person praying at the edge of uncertainty. The supply they draw on is the inexhaustible life of the One in whom they are hidden.

Week 4 — Brokenhearted Boldness

Boldness in witness is the natural expression of settled identity. The messenger who knows that their life is hidden with Christ — that the world's reception of the message does not determine their standing — speaks with the freedom of one who has nothing to lose. The fear that silences witness is always, at root, identity anxiety: what will happen to me if this goes badly? Colossians 3:3's answer to that question produces the boldness Week 4 requires: nothing can happen to you. Your life is hidden.

Week 5 — Generational Transmission

Philippians 3:12–14 — pressing on toward the goal — is the model for every generation's transmission to the next. Not 'look at what I have attained' but 'watch me press on.' The most powerful transmission to the next generation is the testimony of a life still moving toward the eschatological horizon — still pressing, still seeking, still growing, still not having arrived. The person hidden in God has no need to present a completed spiritual portrait. They pass on the pursuit.

Week 6 — Sustained Movement

The infrastructure of sustained movement is the conviction that Colossians 3:3–4 provides: the life is hidden, the ending is certain, the glory is coming. Movements that depend on present visible evidence for their momentum will stall when evidence is scarce. Movements hidden in God, living toward the eschatological disclosure, do not require visible confirmation to sustain their direction. Romans 8:18 — 'present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed' — is the engine that does not require re-fueling by events.

Scripture Treasury

CATEGORY	REFERENCE	SCRIPTURE
Hidden in God	Colossians 3:3-4	<i>You died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.</i>
	Psalms 27:5	<i>In the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock.</i>
Abiding as Daily Renewal	John 15:4-5	<i>Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine.</i>
	John 15:9-10	<i>Remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love.</i>
Pressing Forward	Philippians 3:12-14	<i>I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.</i>
	Hebrews 6:1	<i>Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity.</i>
The Eschatological Horizon	Romans 8:18	<i>I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.</i>
	1 John 3:2-3	<i>When Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.</i>