

# DIGITAL FAST

28 DAY CHALLENGE  
MARCH 6 - GOOD FRIDAY

This **DIGITAL FAST PACKET** is a guide and toolbox to free your family from screens to focus on Christ, face-time & healthy rhythms.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

- 1 It starts with you assessing time-sucking APPS + Screen use. *Detach and Discover* are the first two weeks.
  - 2 Dwell Daily in a HOPE devotional – as you track time saved *Tracking sheets* are a forward-looking and grace-filled!
  - 3 Replace chunks with what matters more - *Bible engagement, face-time, outdoors, calls, treating a family, prayer, etc.*
- "Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word." Psalm 119:37*

## DIGITAL FAST AT A GLANCE

4 Weeks to **Redesign our Relationship** with Technology

	<b>Detach</b>		<b>Discover</b>		<b>Delight</b>		<b>Determine</b>
Week 1	The first week focuses on detaching from distractions, resentment, and discouragement to connect with the Father, find real rest, and experience gratitude, peace, and hope.	Week 2	During the second week, you'll discover how to remove and replace idols of the heart, how connecting to the Spirit frees and guides you, and the wonders of worship through praise and thanksgiving.	Week 3	Your third week of The Digital Fast will focus on delighting in the God that formed you, in the Gift of life through beauty, play and laughter, and finally in remembering God's faithfulness and hope for the future.	Week 4	To wrap up, week four will help you determine how to bear good fruit, abide in and with Jesus, and live for wholeness through loving God and your neighbors. Finally, determining your ongoing relationship with technology.

THIS PACKET GUIDES YOUR FAST, OFFERS REFLECTION, & GIVES FAMILY TOOLS. USE IT TWICE PER WEEK TO TRANSFORM & TRACK PROGRESS

Also pick a daily devotion to hear from God thru His Word:



DIGITAL FAST  
DAILY DEVO  
OPTIONS

ONLY \$5  
IN THE HUB

LESS DISTRACTION | MORE DEVOTION  
MARCH 6 - GOOD FRIDAY



PREPARE:

## INTRO

### SEEK GOD TO BE YOUR CENTER AND PREP TO CLEAR HURRY & NOISE

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'REDEEM THE SCREEN' VIDEO:

(optional teaching by digital detox leaders)

### DARREN WHITEHEAD: NEED A DIGITAL DETOX?



*We are locking arms with other churches for our 28 Day Digital*

*Fast. At Battle Creek Church in Tulsa, OK...*

*...Digital Fast founder Darren Whitehead unpacks how our phones have quietly taken over our attention, our time, and even our spiritual lives. In this challenge to step away from screens you'll learn: • Why constant digital connection leads to spiritual disconnection • How to hear the voice of Jesus more clearly • Why attention is your most valuable resource • How to begin a digital fast that transforms your life • How Jesus in John 10 teaches about spiritual clarity and identity*

### FROM THE HEART - PASTOR PETE

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matt 11:28-30*

A "gentle and light" welcome to this unique way to seek God and remove distractions. A screen-fast is not a total drop but reducing to essentials. This digital detox is a community commitment to limit phones & screens to essentials for four weeks. This section seeks to help you DECIDE if God is drawing you to detox now through Good Friday.

In *The Life You've Always Wanted*, John Ortbert shares how his mentor Richard Foster saved him from going mad. "You're up against the two great enemies of spiritual life – hurry and noise." Our Digital Fast is a season to seek God so that screens become servants again, not masters of hurry & noise.

The point of any fast is not to try to become spiritual by going without. It is replacing sorry substitutes with God and others who truly satisfy! *Begin to wonder what that can mean for your joy: Bible engagement, one-on-one time, creating or writing, an outing with friends, neglected calls, treating a church family to DQ, workouts + body stewardship, prayer walk with a friend, etc.*

In your Digital Fast you will choose what to REDUCE. And then REPLACE with life-giving rhythms. Open the Word before opening the world! Likes are cheap, love is rich! Less watching, more living... LESS DISTRACTION | MORE DEVOTION

### SEEKING JESUS WITH YOU AND FOR YOU,

- Pastor Pete & Lori

## FIRST STEP "HONEST LOOKS" BELOW MAY SURPRISE HOW MUCH SCREENS PROMPT YOU

WEEK ONE:

# DETACH

Begin to assess where you spend screen-time, how easily our focus gets divided, and the value of reducing to essentials

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'REDEEM THE SCREEN' VIDEO:

*(optional teaching by digital detox leaders)*

## ANDY CROUCH: MANAGING TECHNOLOGY



Author of The Tech-Wise Family Andy Crouch shares how their family battled disintegration & learned how to reclaim space for relationships. He speaks widely but this video is only available when you create a login at his nonprofit THINK.

Start by assessing time-suckers and focus-stealers in your daily digital habits. List before the Lord or with a housemate any APPS + Screens you use:

- Social Media
- Messaging & Texting
- Streaming Video
- Online News/Blogs/Podcasts
- Gaming
- Online Shopping
- Work Emails & Productivity that spills over
- TV & SPORTS
- Goofy cat videos and entertaining shorts :)

Begin to ask how these habits affect your soul, relationships and ability to be present. As Jesus said, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Screen-independence will challenge you at first, but God is working in you!

We suggest letting the people in your daily life know you're planning to engage in a digital media fast for 28 days. Also...

1. Consider purchasing an alarm clock so your phone is not charging in your room or beside your bed
2. Have a conversation with your work teams on how you hope to grow in this fast during non-working hours.
3. Dialogue with your family the Digital Fast – and ways to support and encourage one another.
4. Find a couple buddies who are also detoxing and pick a regular check-in rhythm and Qs to check in on each other
5. Pick a time and place to meet God in your HOPE devotional. Update playlists, list activities, or plan other screen replacers

## INTRO

### ~ Welcome to The **Digital Fast!**

We have a problem. We carry it around in our pockets all day. We interact with it first thing in the morning and in the last few moments before drifting off to fitful sleep.

Yes, I'm talking about our smartphones. And I'll be the first to admit that I love technology. I was an early adopter of the iPhone. We've been inseparable since June 29, 2007—the very first day it was released.

With my smartphone, I can manage everything from the temperature in my home to my banking, from playing music to even opening our garage door. I can do all this and more with a swipe or touch of a button. My iPhone is a camera, flashlight, GPS navigator, calendar, calculator, light switch, car key, you name it—I can control it from my phone!

But recent data (and common sense) tell us that the benefits of our devices come at a cost. Think about it: How is your relationship with digital technology and your devices? Do you feel busier than ever but somehow less productive? Do you end each day feeling mentally exhausted? Do you have trouble focusing on just one task at a time? Do you feel like your attention span is weaker than it used to be? Social scientists and anthropologists have observed that our fixation with digital devices

has numbed us, sedated us, and exhausted us, leaving us feeling lonelier and more disconnected. It has lulled us to sleep and left us not fully awake to life.

As I wrestled with this problem in my own life and observed it in the life of my congregants, God eventually led us to do a church-wide digital fast. Together, we committed to abstaining from our devices so we could examine ourselves, our relationships, and our connection to God. In my years as a pastor at Church of the City, I can say the digital fast was one of the most impactful things we have ever done.

*The Digital Fast* is an invitation to you and your church to experience the life-changing benefits of doing a digital fast as we did. I want to share with you what we learned and give you a guide for taking your church community on a journey toward freedom and taking back your life. Over the next twenty-eight days, you will intentionally reduce digital distraction and deliberately increase spiritual devotion. By turning down the noise, you will experience the time, space, and mental clarity to listen to the voice of God.



*Turn my eyes from  
looking at worthless  
things; and give me  
life in your ways.*

Psalm 119:37 (ESV)





# Investigating Attention

Psalm 119:37

## Detach

Read

*“Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways.”*

Psalm 119:37 (ESV)

The design of digital technology, and particularly smartphones, is intended to be addictive and feed our propensity for distraction. It's all the more urgent, then, that we investigate the impact this technology is having on our souls. *The Digital Fast* is designed to reorient us and help us be vigilant regarding anything designed to distract us.

As you detach from your phone, you will experience physical, mental, and even emotional impacts almost immediately. Fasting of any kind is a stark contrast to most of the ways we live on a day-to-day basis. As people practicing the way of Jesus, we want to be unencumbered by the things designed to distract us from life with Jesus. So much about the way of Jesus is countercultural. We were wired by our Creator as worshippers. An opportunity always exists for the enemy of our souls to provide counterfeit gods in hopes of capturing our attention. The truth for us is that who or what we pay attention to will ultimately determine who or what we worship. So, as we begin this twenty-eight-day journey, I'm encouraging you to pay attention to what you pay attention to.

Most of the time, we do everything in our power to avoid discomfort. However, it's an essential part of fasting, and therefore, of growth. Just as our bodies feel hunger and fatigue when doing a physical fast, so our minds experience discomfort during a digital fast. What uncomfortable symptoms are you experiencing right now?

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

# IS YOUR DEVICE YOUR VICE?

It may be time for a digital detox. Here are a few simple steps to get you started.

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#1  
**TURN OFF YOUR NOTIFICATIONS.** The first thing you can do that will help you immediately is turning off all of your notifications. If you need to keep your phone ringer on and your text messages engaged, then make that choice. However, maybe you can even shut those off for the week and simply check your phone in the next room when you need to make yourself available. This may seem radical, even ridiculous, but it's how we used to function back when our phones were plugged into the wall in the room down the hall.

#2  
**ELIMINATE OR HIDE THE APPS ON YOUR PHONE THAT YOU ARE FASTING FROM.** Keeping your social media accounts on your computer but off of your phone is one sure way to limit your screen time. This can be applied to Amazon, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, Candy Crush, or FOX News.

#3  
**DAILY OPEN THE WORD BEFORE YOU OPEN YOURSELF UP TO THE WORLD.** If you were to eliminate sugar or bread from your diet, you would need to be intentional about deciding what you were going to eat instead of those old favorites. Likewise, if you are going to stop ingesting digital snacks all day long, you'll need to make a plan to consume more of the things that are healthy for you. Just like you can crowd out sugar by eating more fruits and veggies, we can crowd out turning to those we "like" online by turning to the One who loves us. Pick up your Bible before you pick up your phone. The Word before the world!

#4  
**LIMIT YOUR TIME ONLINE.** If you can't go cold turkey, then choose which hours you won't be on your phone or laptop. Better yet, choose only a short time slot or two when you will allow yourself to connect online each day. It's a small change, but it will make a big difference. Some people choose to fast for 23 hours a day, with one hour set aside to engage online.

#5  
**RECOGNIZE YOUR TRIGGERS.** During this screen sabbatical, be aware of the times you mindlessly pick up your phone. Take note of which websites you turn to habitually. Is it Amazon Prime when you're discontent? Games because you're bored? Facebook when you're lonely? News sources because you're frightened? Instagram because you're stressed or unsatisfied? Podcasts because you're feeling the need to be productive?

#6  
**WHAT ELSE DO YOU TURN TO?** As you limit social media this week, you may notice yourself snacking more, drinking more, or binge watching entire seasons of your favorite show. Perhaps there are other things you need to lay down for a short season.

#7  
**MAKE AN INTENTIONAL PLAN TO CONNECT WITH YOUR FAMILY AND REAL-LIFE FRIENDS.** Often we find ourselves too busy to connect with those we love the most. During this time when you're saying no to everyone else in the whole world (wide web), notice how much time is freed up and let that free you up to get intentional with your most intimate family and friends.

WEEK TWO:

## DISCOVER

How to Remove and Replace by creating  
practical & workable boundaries

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'REDEEM THE SCREEN' VIDEO:

*(optional teaching by digital detox leaders)*

**ANNIE DOWNS: RULES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA**



*Influential podcaster Annie Downs packs a punch in these 8 minutes of her Whats and Whys of social media use. This video is only available when you create a login at his nonprofit THINK.*



# Discover

## It Is Written

Matthew 4:1-11

### Read

When it comes to fasting, we're in good company. Today, we're going to take a look at a fast Jesus did. Before the earthly ministry of Jesus began, Scripture says he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He was also fasting from food in preparation for what God had sent him to earth to do. At the end of this time, Jesus was understandably hungry, and this is when the devil approached him, offering three chances to satisfy his various appetites.

The first and most obvious appetite was his physical desire for food. Satan, knowing full well the power and authority of Jesus, offered him a quick way out of the hunger he was feeling by encouraging him to turn stones into bread. This would have been easily done for the Son of God, but he wasn't there to quickly satisfy his hunger. Secondly, Satan tempted Jesus to test God's love for him by throwing himself down from a great height. By appealing to his emotional need to feel connection with his Father during the season of fasting, Satan wanted Jesus to test God rather than trust what he knew to be true about God. The enemy's last tactic was to tempt Jesus to seize power and control. All it would require was for him to shift his allegiance away from God and worship a much lesser and inferior god.

With each temptation, Jesus utilized the same method of withstanding the devil's tactics. He brought to mind the truths of Scripture and spoke them out loud to the accuser. "It is written . . ." became the vehicle for how Jesus combated the enemy's schemes. By tempting him to satisfy his appetites, Satan was using the same ploy he used in the garden of Eden and so often uses on you and me today. *Give in now rather than waiting for something better later. Question God's love. Lean on your own understanding and take control.* The devil even turns up the dial on how great the temporal solutions would be, but those roads lead only to destruction.

### Reflect

During seasons of fasting, we often become aware of hidden appetites we have. By not quickly satisfying or distracting ourselves, we see attachments we didn't know were so strong. Maybe during this digital fast you're realizing how intertwined your devices have been in your emotional well-being or your desire for control. Perhaps you feel tempted to shortcut these days and satisfy those desires. But even as Satan's tactics remain the same, so does Jesus's method of combating them.

What physical appetites are you more aware of during this fast? Circle all that apply.

- |              |           |                     |          |
|--------------|-----------|---------------------|----------|
| FOOD         | ALCOHOL   | SMOKING             | SUGAR    |
| SEX          | SLEEP     | COMFORT             | ACTIVITY |
| FRIENDSHIP   | PURPOSE   | CONNECTION WITH GOD |          |
| SAFETY       | CONTROL   | FUN & SPONTANEITY   |          |
| HEALING      | CLARITY   | INDEPENDENCE        |          |
| CELEBRATION  | INTIMACY  | ATTENTION           |          |
| SIGNIFICANCE | BELONGING | CONFIDENCE          |          |
| APPRECIATION |           |                     |          |

What emotional appetites are you more aware of during this fast? Circle all that apply.

Notice that our appetites alone are not problematic. In fact, they reveal how God made us. It wasn't wrong for Jesus to feel hungry after fasting forty days, but it would have been wrong to put God to the test in the way the devil suggested.

Pick a few of the appetites you selected above and reflect below. What are good and bad ways to go about getting what you want?

APPETITE	SINFUL WAYS TO SATISFY IT	GODLY WAYS TO SATISFY IT

### Respond

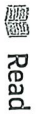
Scriptural truth must be in us before we can effectively use it in times of temptation. As you consider what you're most tempted by during this digital fast, ask God to reveal how the words of Scripture can be used to combat the enemy's schemes. Make a written list that you can go back to and utilize as you resolve not to satisfy your temporal appetites now because you're waiting for something better later.



# Idol Inventory

2 Kings 22:1-23:25; Isaiah 1:16-17

## Discover



### Read

Charles Spurgeon once said, "False gods patiently endure the existence of other false gods. Dagon can stand with Bel, and Bel with Ashtaroth; how should stone, and wood, and silver, be moved to indignation, but because God is the only living and true God, Dagon must fall before His ark; Bel must be broken, and Ashtaroth must be consumed with fire." This rather severe language serves to make a very important point. God does not tolerate false gods in our lives, and neither should we. Every idol competes for our attention and affection, drawing our hearts away from the only one worthy of our worship.

The Israelites went through a lot of trouble to melt down their jewelry and construct a golden calf to worship. However, the idols in our lives are often more subtle and even defensible. We don't think of TV shows, hobbies, sports, or our jobs as being idols. After all, there's nothing wrong with any of those things on their own. But when our hearts are being drawn to desire or even crave something other than the presence and pleasure of God, we've crossed into idol territory. Hidden idols can also be the approval of others, recognition or affirmation on social media, or achieving some measure of social status. It requires our vigilance and the Lord's kindness to reveal areas that need to be cleansed of all other gods.

An idol inventory can help us discover those hidden idols of the heart. It may sound odd, but you should almost be excited to find an idol or have the Spirit reveal one to you. Why? Because if you can identify an idol, you can remove it and replace it with true worship. This is worthy work.

## Idol Inventory

Ask the Spirit to move in your heart and draw your attention to the idols you've been worshipping. Circle the items below that receive your affection and attention more than God does:

- |                    |                 |  |
|--------------------|-----------------|--|
| TV shows           | Family          | My car                                     |
| Hobbies            | Power & control | Laziness                                   |
| Sports             | Food            | My friend group                            |
| Work               | Pleasure        | My pets                                    |
| Sex                | Comfort         | Exercise                                   |
| Approval of others | Video games     | Sleep                                      |
| Recognition        | Autonomy        | My spouse/boy-friend/girlfriend            |
| Affirmation        | News            | The hope for a spouse/boyfriend/girlfriend |
| Social followers   | Smoking         |  |
| Status             | Alcohol         |  |
| Money              | Shopping        |  |
| My kids            | My home         |  |
| OTHER: _____       | OTHER: _____    | OTHER: _____                               |

You might feel overwhelmed or discouraged, but the point of this exercise isn't to condemn. It's to refine. Instead of trying to make changes in every area, focus on the idols that have the strongest hold over your heart.

Review the list on the previous page and identify the top three idols you're prone to worship most often. Write them below:

IDOL #1	IDOL #2	IDOL #3

As your idols are revealed, confess them to God and receive His mercy and grace to

WEEK THREE:

## DELIGHT

Delighting in God – his Word, his gifts, and the ways He satisfies our souls with good things!

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'REDEEM THE SCREEN' VIDEO:

*(optional teaching by digital detox leaders)*

**JONATHAN HAIDT: ANXIOUS GENERATION - THE GREAT REWIRING OF CHILDHOOD**



*Sociologist and author/speaker Jonathan H has put research and faces to behind our Youth mental health crisis. How are screens rewiring our kids? What can we do about it?*

[www.anxiousgeneration.com/parent-teacher-talk/video](http://www.anxiousgeneration.com/parent-teacher-talk/video)



# Delight



## Read

Thankfulness is a secret weapon. We express gratitude in worship because God has given us so many reasons to be thankful. Praise and thanks go hand-in-hand in our worship as we reflect back to God the many ways he has demonstrated his goodness and faithfulness to us. We often thank him for what he's done and the good things that have happened, but have you ever thought of thanking him for what hasn't happened?

"For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor. No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly" (Psalm 84:11 ESV). I think most of us can thank God for being our sun. He lights our way. He shines the light of his love on us. He is the light of the world. But when was the last time you thanked God for being your shield? He shields you without even breaking a sweat. How much danger and risk has God shielded you from over the whole of your life? It's incalculable!

Every time your car hasn't broken down. Every illness not resulting in further harm or death. Every night of protection inside your home. Every time you've arrived at a destination by plane or car without incident or accident. Every storm. Every trial. Every difficulty. The Lord is always shielding us in a million ways we're unaware of. We're still here. We still know he's good. He's promised to go before and to hem us in. He's promised to be our rear guard and to light our way. He's promised us a future and hope, not harm. He does what is for our good and brings him the most glory.



## Reflect

How could you incorporate more time to thank God for who he is and what he has done in your life? How could that change your perspective on your circumstances and relationships?



## A Sun and a Shield

Reflect on the past few years of your life. How has God been your sun—your source of warmth, comfort, guidance, and life? How has he been your shield—your source of protection and safety?

Capture your memories on the corresponding side below.



## Respond

Consider establishing a daily gratitude practice where you ask God to remind you of both what he's provided for you and what he's preserved you from. Write down these points of gratitude as an exercise in thankfulness, starting today:

TODAY, I AM THANKFUL FOR

Four sets of horizontal dashed lines for writing.

### Reflect

When we experience negative emotions, we often turn to our devices to cope, comfort, or numb what we're feeling. We scroll when we're bored and when we're sad, when we feel anxious and when we feel angry. Pause and think through which apps you choose when you're feeling something unpleasant.

When I'm bored, the app I usually open is \_\_\_\_\_.

When I'm sad, the app I usually open is \_\_\_\_\_.

When I'm anxious, the app I usually open is \_\_\_\_\_.

When I'm angry, the app I usually open is \_\_\_\_\_.

After spending time on these apps, I feel [circle one] better / worse.

What if our habit instead was to turn to Scripture and believe it is sufficient for all we need?

*"The law of the Lord is perfect,  
refreshing the soul."*

*Psalms 19:7 (NIV)*

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

*Philippians 4:8 (NIV)*

As you detach from devices, it's time to fill your mind with other inputs. Next to each word from the verse above, list one thing you can think about instead of giving your attention to your devices.

TRUE ..... NOBLE .....

RIGHT ..... PURE .....

LOVELY ..... ADMIRABLE .....

EXCELLENT ..... PRAISEWORTHY .....

### Reflect

In this digital fast, we're invited into connection with God in a new way. Life can make us feel discouraged, distracted, and disconnected, but time alone with God connects us to his heart for us. We have the great privilege of a heavenly Father who is not hiding from us and who promises to reveal himself to those who seek him. How can you make it a priority today to get away and connect with the Father?

## Halfway Point Check-In

You're halfway through The Digital Fast! Take a moment to assess how you're doing.

Using the scales below, rate how you're doing in each area:

<b>Mental Alertness</b>	Very Poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Exceptional
<b>Creativity</b>	Very Poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Exceptional
<b>Quality of Sleep</b>	Very Poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Exceptional
<b>Sense of Peace</b>	Very Poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Exceptional
<b>Quality Time with Friends and Family</b>	Very Poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Exceptional
<b>Connection with God</b>	Very Poor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Exceptional

On Day 2, "Paying the Price," you did a time audit of how many waking hours you spent on devices before this fast. Go back and observe what you put down.

Using the boxes below, do another audit showing how your habits have shifted. How do you spend your waking hours now? Label each box.

<b>HOUR01</b>	<b>HOUR02</b>	<b>HOUR03</b>	<b>HOUR04</b>
<b>HOUR05</b>	<b>HOUR06</b>	<b>HOUR07</b>	<b>HOUR08</b>
<b>HOUR09</b>	<b>HOUR10</b>	<b>HOUR11</b>	<b>HOUR12</b>
<b>HOUR13</b>	<b>HOUR14</b>	<b>HOUR15</b>	<b>HOUR16</b>



# Delight

## Refreshing the Soul

Psalm 19:7-11



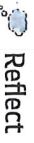
### Read

We're over the halfway mark of our fast, and today we read that the law of the Lord is perfect. The law of the Lord, as referenced in Psalm 19:7, is Scripture, God's revelation of himself to us on the pages of our Bibles. Scripture is perfect because its author is. Since God's Word embodies perfection, you and I don't have to expend any effort attempting it. However, the promise goes a step further than perfection. Not only is God's Word perfect, it's guaranteed to refresh the soul when we delight in it. Isn't that what this digital fast is all about? We are experiencing a soul refresh.

In studying the meaning of the word refreshing, we find a desirable list. Take some deep breaths and read the list of synonyms on the next page slowly. Perhaps you slow down long enough to utter "thank you" to Jesus between each one. Breathe in his promise, then breathe out your thankfulness to him.

— This is the promise God makes to you—refreshment for your soul.

Only God, through his Word, can both invigorate and quiet us. Only he can revive us and then turn around and give us rest. He knows everything we need, and he has promised to provide it in exactly the right season in exactly the right way. To lay hold of this refreshment for our souls, we must be taking in the words of Scripture. Hebrews 4:12 tells us the Word of God is alive and active, but it can't be active for us if it's not first active in us. Today, pray the promise of God back to him. Ask Him to refresh your soul as you read his Word.



### Reflect

When was the last time your soul felt refreshed?

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Look up this verse and fill in the blanks:

"The law of the Lord is \_\_\_\_\_,  
reviving the soul;  
the testimony of the Lord is \_\_\_\_\_,  
making wise the simple;  
the precepts of the Lord are \_\_\_\_\_,  
rejoicing the heart;  
the commandment of the Lord is \_\_\_\_\_,  
enlightening the eyes;  
the fear of the Lord is \_\_\_\_\_,  
enduring forever;  
the rules of the Lord are \_\_\_\_\_,  
and righteous altogether."

Psalm 19:7-9 (ESV)



# Jelight

## A Celebration of Solitude

Matthew 6:6; Luke 5:15-16; Luke 6:12

### Read

The practice of solitude involves scheduling alone time with just you and God. While a daily rhythm of solitude with God such as a devotional time is certainly beneficial, the practice of lengthier time alone with him provides a gift not found as often in a shorter daily practice. In rhythms of solitude, we abstain from other distractions or interruptions that could interfere with our experience of being alone with God.

Jesus regularly practiced solitude and prioritized time alone with God both before and after engaging in ministry. He guarded the time with His father zealously and organized His life around it. Jesus knew he needed that time to connect and be alone with the Father. In an age saturated by distraction, alone time can feel uncomfortable, and the silence may be deafening. Without phones or other devices to fill the void, being alone can be unsettling or even cause anxiety. But especially when we're already engaging in a practice of fasting, solitude provides us communion with God unhampered by the competition of social media, relational pressures, or other mental and emotional stimulation.

In practicing solitude, we have the opportunity to hear from the Lord and address issues he brings to our attention without the distractions of our normal lives. Pushing through the discomfort of aloneness will help us tune out the noise and focus intently on the leadership of the Spirit. There can be great delight in a regular practice of solitude, and it can ensure a necessary respite from the influx of less important things that fight for our time.

## Solitude vs. Loneliness

A 2023 report by the surgeon general of the United States found that our country is fighting a new epidemic: a crisis of loneliness. Chronic loneliness has dangerous impacts on all aspects of health. In fact, loneliness is more dangerous than smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

So why, then, am I telling you to be alone on purpose?

- The answer lies in understanding that loneliness and solitude are two completely different experiences. For example:
- Solitude is the state of being alone. Loneliness is the emotional anguish that being alone can cause.
  - Solitude is a spiritual discipline that's been practiced by believers for centuries. Loneliness is a result of the fall.
  - Solitude is peaceful. Loneliness is painful.

WEEK FOUR:

## DETERMINE

Solidifying what God has shown you. The long view on how to bear fruit, abide in Jesus, and live for Love

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'REDEEM THE SCREEN' VIDEO:

*(optional teaching by digital detox leaders)*

**MOMMY DETOX**



*A contributor to the popular Coffee & Bible Time gets real about daily battles at home as a Mom of littles. Escape is a temptation but centering on God and modeling connection are possible!*

## Made for Flourishing

Matthew 5:13-16; Colossians 3:23-24; James 2:14-26

# Petermine

### Read

A lush garden is something to behold. When its flowers are in full bloom, or the fruits and vegetables are plump and ripe, it teems with life and vitality. We were made to be like that garden because God made us to flourish. Adam and Eve were put in a garden, and God called them to tend it. They were also called to be fruitful and multiply. Like them, we are called to tend the garden of our lives with good works that bear fruit that multiplies. Just like a garden needs regular attention and work, we need to pay regular attention to the opportunities before us to do something to bring flourishing into our lives and the lives of others.

What has God gifted and called you to do? Do you lead people or teams? Do you work with your hands? Are you bringing something good into the lives of others? Do you know how you can carry out good works in what God has made you for? Opportunities to do good in the lives of others aren't often just sitting in front of us in an obvious way. Part of being awake and alert to the world around us is remembering that we're ambassadors of God's goodness on earth and looking for ways to dispense it.

Even the healthiest garden, left unattended, will sprout and spread weeds that choke out the flourishing life. When we consider our own lives, weeds can certainly look like sin that needs to be dealt with before the Lord, but they can also be things like distraction. When we're distracted and not awake to the needs and opportunities around us, that can be a type of weed that chokes out invitations to spread God's goodness. You have good works designed especially for you and your specific gifts, which are your contribution to God's kingdom. As we finish this fast, consider how you can tend to the weeds in your garden to provide opportunities for flourishing in your God-given calling.

## Pulling Up the Weeds

In today's reading, you learned that distraction is a major weed that chokes out our ability to flourish and help those around us flourish. What other weeds of sin are keeping you from growth? Name them below.



Ex: Distraction



01

The Loop begins with our Proximity to our phones—they are with us 24 hours per day.

04

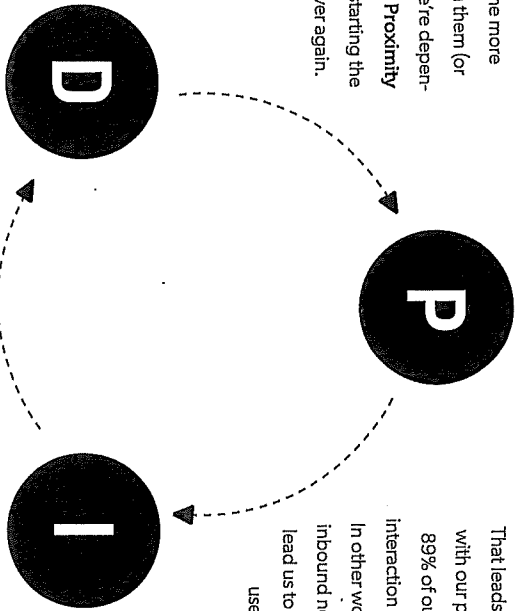
As we become more dependent on them (or perceive that we're dependent), we are in Proximity to them more, starting the PID Loop all over again.

02

That leads to Interaction with our phones. In fact, 89% of our smartphone interaction is self-initiated.<sup>2</sup> In other words, it's not the inbound notifications that lead us to greater phone use, it's us.

03

And as we interact with our phones, we become more Dependent on them, often to the detriment of the people around us.



How often do you consume the truth by spending time in God's Word?

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What (if anything) would you like to change about that habit?

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 **Reflect**

What will be most challenging about implementing your Digital Rule of Life?

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How can others help you overcome that challenge?

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 **Respond**

Finish your Digital Rule of Life and share it with others. Compare yours and theirs to learn something you might want to integrate into your own Digital Rule of Life. Commit to following up as a community about how things are going (what's been great, what's been difficult) and encourage one another in the new way of living Jesus calls us into.

2. "Smartphone use and smartphone addiction: A Q&A with Mark Helmeier," The London School of Economics and Personal Finance, accessed September 28, 2024, <https://www.lse.ac.uk/Research/researcher-profiles/Mark-Helmeier>.

# Reflection

As you prepare for reentry, take a few minutes to reflect on the past twenty-eight days.

Write down your answers to the questions below.

**What did you learn about God, yourself, and others?**

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**How have you grown in the past twenty-eight days? Where do you want to continue to grow?**

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**What did you enjoy most about your fast that you want to continue?**

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**What did you start or stop doing that made you feel more alive?**

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**How are you different after going through The Digital Fast?**

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**In what ways did you engage with others that you want to carry over?**

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Above all else,  
let your heart,  
for everything you  
do flows from it.

Proverbs 4:23 (NIV)

# KIDS

## THE \_\_\_\_\_ FAMILY'S 28-DAY SCREEN FREE CHALLENGE



### The Digital Fast

Choose a square to complete each day, use the Aro app to measure your time away from phones & devices, and above all, have fun with The Digital Fast!



Decorate a box for your devices



Enjoy a special sweet treat



Snuggle up & read



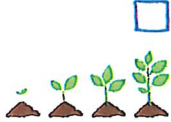
Share highs & lows at family dinner



Family movie night



24 hours screen-free



Plant a flower or tree



Cook something special together



Visit the library & pick out a book



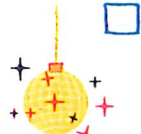
Family nature walk



Random act of kindness



Build a blanket fort



Family dance party!



Make a gratitude jar



Stargaze & talk about creation



Bake & deliver treats



Family picnic



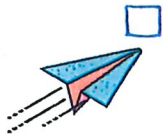
Treasure hunt!



Family game night



Serve your community



Make & race paper airplanes



Write a thank you note



Work on a family puzzle



Draw out your favorite Bible verse



Have a family candle-lit dinner



Family fun night!



Reflect as a family on the challenge



Celebrate with a special screen-free event!



Bonus! Kid's choice!



Bonus! Kid's choice!



# The Digital Dinner Conversation Starters



What was the most surprising thing that happened today?

If you could have any superpower for a day, what would it be and why?

What's your favorite memory from the past year?

If you could switch lives with a character from your favorite book or movie, who would it be?

What's one thing you learned today that you didn't know before?

If you could design a new holiday, what would it celebrate and how would people enjoy it?

Who is one person you admire and why?

What's one thing you're proud of accomplishing recently?

If you could invent a new app, what would it do?

If you could have dinner with any historical figure, who would it be and what would you ask them?

What's a random act of kindness you've done or seen recently?

What's one thing you've done that made you laugh really hard?

If you could live in any time period, past or future, when would it be?

What's the best thing about being your age?

What's your favorite way to spend a weekend?

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

What's your favorite family tradition, and why do you like it?

What's a goal you have for this year, and how do you plan to achieve it?

What's one thing you'd like to learn or try?

If you were a teacher for a day, what subject would you teach and how?

What's a dream you've had that you still remember?

What's one thing you're grateful for today?

What's your favorite memory with a friend?

If you had to eat one food for a month, what would it be?

If you were famous for something, what would it be?

What's your favorite outdoor activity?

What's the most interesting place you've ever visited?

Who is someone you'd like to thank and why?

If you could grow up to have any job, what would it be?

What's one thing you've learned about yourself recently?

What's a hobby or activity you'd like to get better at?

What's your favorite song or band right now?

What's your favorite movie or TV show and why?

What's something nice you can do for someone tomorrow?

What's your favorite thing to do with your family?

If you could create a theme park, what would it be like?

If you could invent a holiday, what would people celebrate?

If you could have any animal as a pet, what would it be?



