

The Berean

FAITH · FAMILY · WISDOM · EVERYDAY LIFE

SEPTEMBER SPECIAL EDITION

COVER FEATURE

First the Blade, how to begin faithfully when the field is bare.

Fear Is Not Always Telling You to Stop

Two fears, told apart

Abundant Grace

Pastor Abolade on the economy of Grace

Guard Your Ears. Guard Your Destiny.

What not to listen to

The One Small Beginning Challenge

A September-long reader campaign

SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH

*"For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade,
then the head, after that the full grain in the head."*

MARK 4:28 · NKJV

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BEREAN PUBLISHING HOUSE

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

September is not January.



Matthew (Tolu) Olowoyeye

Lead Pastor & Editor · The Berean · An arm of Jesus Brand Ministry

IN THIS LETTER

- Why September needs no perfect restart.
- One small beginning is enough.

August was about roots. September is about the first green shoot that finally breaks the surface, and the strange fact that a shoot does not look much like a harvest. The temptation this month is to pretend otherwise, to demand that a new term, a new job, a new plan or a new habit arrive fully-grown by the end of the first week. Scripture will not let us. "First the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head" (Mark 4:28). Order, not shortcut.

This edition is written for readers who have been quietly refusing to begin, because the beginning would not look like anyone else's finished result. It is written for the parent walking a child to a new school, the graduate emailing another CV, the couple restarting a rhythm they let slip in August. It is also written for the reader who did January's version of this and quit by the fifth. September is your permission to start again without ceremony.

You will find, inside, a working framework for beginnings (page 4), a family meeting agenda you can actually use (page 7), a four-week plan for the financial recovery after last month's spending (page 10), a First 90 Days playbook (page 11), and a Prayer Room built entirely for new beginnings (page 14). We have also opened **The One Small Beginning Challenge** (page 20), a September-long invitation to choose one small step and take it, together with the whole Berean family.

INSIGHT

You do not have to see the harvest to be allowed to sow. You only have to stop refusing the blade.

A word on tone. The letters we have received since July tell the same story in a hundred voices: *I am tired of restarts that collapse by Friday.* Nothing in this edition asks you to overhaul your life. It asks you, at most, to begin one small thing, and to let God do what only He does with seeds.

Read it slowly. Print it freely. And if you are ready to begin, turn the page.

Begin quietly this September,

Tolu Olowoyeye

"These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so."

ACTS 17:11 · NKJV

THE TABLE OF

Contents

THIS MONTH'S PROMISE

By the last page of this issue, every reader will have chosen one beginning, and taken one measurable step toward it. That is the whole point of September.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>04 Cover Feature — First the Blade
God's pattern for beginnings, stages and growth, plus the B.L.A.D.E. method.</p> <p>5a Fear Is Not Always Telling You to Stop
Two fears in Scripture, and three questions that tell you which one is speaking.</p> <p>06 Devotional of the Month
Do Not Despise This Beginning, Zechariah 4:10.</p> <p>07 The Family Table
The First-Month Family Meeting, a 20-minute agenda.</p> <p>08 Youth Corner
You do not have to fit in to belong.</p> <p>09 Whole & Well
The 20-minute September reset.</p> <p>10 The Faithful Pound
The four-week financial recovery plan.</p> <p>11 Work & Career
Your First 90 Days, starting a role, a course or a project well.</p> <p>12 Better Together
When busy schedules make love feel distant.</p> <p>13 Kitchen Grace
One-pot back-to-school dinner.</p> | <p>14 The Prayer Room
Seven prayers for new beginnings.</p> <p>15 Scripture Planner
Thirty days of courageous beginnings, verse by verse.</p> <p>16 Real Life
I started before I felt ready, a reader testimony.</p> <p>17 Practical Faith
Five things to stop postponing.</p> <p>18 Ministry & Leadership
Do not build the platform before the person.</p> <p>18a Feature Essay — Guard Your Ears
Ten timeless lessons on focus, discernment and destiny, with a Key Points page to keep.</p> <p>18g Abundant Grace
Pastor Abolade on the economy of Grace, its advantages and how to draw on it.</p> <p>19 Berean Academy
The September Growth Lab, a free mini-challenge.</p> <p>20 Community Voices
What are you beginning this September?</p> <p>21 Celebrations
Birthdays, anniversaries, answered prayers.</p> <p>22 Picture Board
Faces and places from the fellowship.</p> <p>23 The Berean News
Truth before noise, bereannews.org.</p> <p>24 Publishing House
Your next faithful step, three titles for September.</p> |
|--|--|

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Reader replies to Ask The Berean, and the September Squad wall.
thebereanblog.com/contact

SCAN · FEATURED

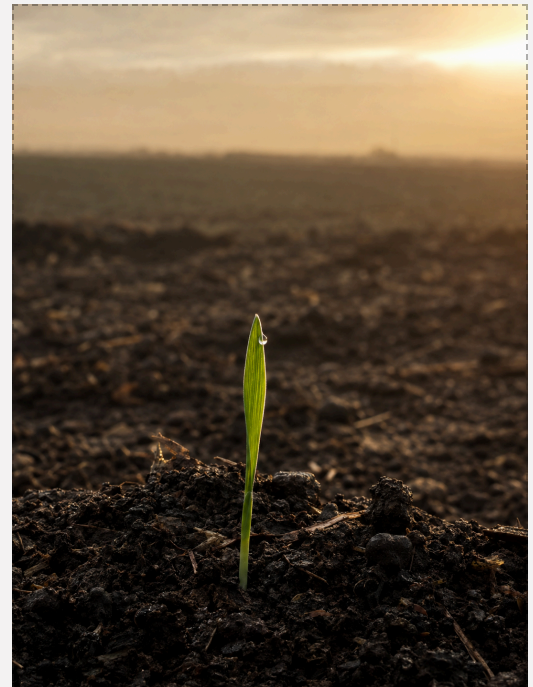


The One Small Beginning Worksheet, free download at [the Academy](http://theAcademy).

BY MATTHEW (TOLU) OLOWOYEYE

First the Blade.

How to begin faithfully when you cannot yet see the whole future.



Nothing in creation announces itself. The most consequential events of a farmer's year, and of God's kingdom, begin as a green thread the size of a matchstick. "First the blade," Jesus said, "then the head, after that the full grain in the head" (Mark 4:28). Notice the order, and notice what it forbids. You cannot have the head without the blade, and you cannot demand the grain in week one. God's kingdom is grown, not launched.

Most people I meet are not lazy. They are stuck at the blade, refusing to accept how small a beginning looks. The graduate whose CV keeps not being answered. The mother restarting a walking habit for the fourth time. The pastor planting again after a fold. The teenager applying to college with a stomach full of new-room dread. Every one of them is doing what God asked, they are simply appalled at how ordinary the first shoot appears next to somebody else's Instagram harvest.

Scripture is patient with this. Nehemiah did not lay a stone for three days after arriving in Jerusalem; he inspected the rubble by moonlight (Nehemiah 2:11–15). David was king before he was king, and God's training programme for him was a flock of his father's sheep. Ruth's route to the royal line ran through gleaning, which is to say picking up what everyone else had dropped. The mustard seed, Jesus insisted, is "the least of all the seeds" (Matthew 13:32), and it becomes a tree. The disciples fed a hungry hillside with five loaves. The Church began in a room upstairs.

The point is not that small things stay small. The point is that God is not embarrassed by beginnings, and neither should you be. Zechariah, watching Zerubbabel rebuild a temple that would never rival Solomon's, heard the LORD ask: "For who has despised the day of small things?" (Zechariah 4:10). Read it as an accusation the first time. Read it as a promise the second.

"God is not embarrassed by the blade. He put it in the parable on purpose."

So how does a believer begin faithfully in September? Not by manufacturing enthusiasm, and not by waiting for perfect conditions that will never arrive. You begin by taking what is already in your hand, and doing the one next honest thing with it. The framework on the facing page respects the order of the parable, blade before head before grain, and refuses to skip a stage God has not skipped.

The turn of the page is a small thing. So is the next email you send, the next verse you read, the next apology you make, the next £5 you save. Every one is a blade.

INSIGHT

The people who finish well in November are rarely the ones with the most impressive September. They accepted the smallness of the first step and took it anyway.

THE FRAMEWORK

The B.L.A.D.E. Method.

Five moves, in order, for any beginning God has put in your hand this month, a habit, a course, a job, a ministry, a return, a repair. Do them small. Do them in sequence. Do them in September.

B Begin with what is in your hand.

Moses had a stick. David had a sling. The widow had a jar of oil. God almost never starts with resources you do not yet have. Write down the one thing already in your hand this week, the free evening, the small savings, the willing child, the half-open door, and start there. "What is that in your hand?" (Exodus 4:2) is not a question about your limits. It is the beginning of the story.

L Limit the first step.

The most common reason people abandon a beginning by the second week is that they made week one too heroic. Halve it. Then halve it again. Ten minutes of prayer, not an hour. One page, not a chapter. One phone call, not a campaign. A limit is not a lack of faith; it is a fence around your consistency.

A Act before confidence arrives.

Confidence is a result, not a prerequisite. Peter did not feel like walking on water; he simply stepped out of the boat (Matthew 14:29). The disciples were still hungry when they distributed five loaves. Do the action while your knees are still knocking. Your knees calm down halfway through the sentence.

Free download: *The One Small Beginning Worksheet*, a printable page that walks you through the B.L.A.D.E. for your own start this September. Choose the beginning, define the first step, plan seven days, and go.

THEBEREANBLOG.COM/ACADEMY

A WORD BEFORE YOU START

The B.L.A.D.E. is not a productivity ritual. It is a discipleship pattern with an acronym on top, and it works because the God of Mark 4 designed it. Do not shame yourself for what you have not done. Simply pick up the seed in your hand and let the parable teach your hands.

"Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men." — Colossians 3:23

D Develop through repetition.

The blade becomes a head by doing the same small thing again tomorrow. Almost every mature Christian I know is the sum of five or six unglamorous disciplines they refused to abandon. Habits are seeds compounding underground. Do not photograph them; water them.

E Entrust the outcome to God.

Sow, water, sleep. Your job is faithfulness; the increase is His (1 Corinthians 3:6–7). God is not asking for your harvest by Friday. He is asking for the sowing, again, today.

TRY THIS TODAY

Name the one beginning you have been refusing. Now write the smallest possible version of it, small enough to feel silly, and do that today. Text a friend when it is done. Screenshot this page and send it with your reply.



Scan to download the worksheet.



BY MATTHEW (TOLU) OLOWOYEYE

Fear Is Not Always Telling You to *Stop*.

There are two fears in Scripture. One protects you. The other buries you. Most of us cannot yet tell them apart.

Twelve men went into Canaan and came back with the same report. Ten of them said the cities were fortified and the people were giants. Two of them said the cities were fortified and the people were giants. The facts were not in dispute. What differed was the sentence each group put at the end of the facts. Ten said therefore we cannot. Two said therefore let us go up at once (Numbers 13:30–31).

Both groups were afraid. Only one group let the fear finish the sentence.

We usually get this wrong because we treat fear as a verdict rather than a signal. When the stomach turns and the hands go cold, we assume God is closing a door, when very often fear is simply reporting that we have arrived at the edge of what we can do without Him. That edge is not a stop sign. It is frequently the address of the assignment.

THE FIRST FEAR · THE ONE THAT WARNS

Scripture does not abolish fear. It disciplines it. There is a fear that God Himself gives, and it keeps people alive and honest. Noah, warned about a flood no one had seen, was “moved with godly fear” and built the ark (Hebrews 11:7). The fear of the LORD is called the beginning of wisdom, not the enemy of it. A parent who fears the road teaches a child to look both ways. A leader who fears sin sets up accountability before he needs it.

That fear has a signature: it makes you more careful, and it moves you *towards* obedience. It sharpens your preparation. It sends you to counsel. It slows you down at the right moment, and then it lets you go.

If your fear is producing diligence, prayer, wise counsel and honest preparation, do not rebuke it. Thank God for it. That fear is a friend with bad manners.

THE SECOND FEAR · THE ONE THAT BURIES

The other fear does something different. It does not make you careful; it makes you passive. It does not send you to God; it sends you into hiding. Its clearest portrait in Scripture is one sentence long, spoken by a servant with one talent: “I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground” (Matthew 25:25).

Notice he was not accused of theft. He was accused of burial. He did not lose the master's money; he simply refused to risk it. And the fear that felt like caution was named, by the master, as wickedness and slothfulness. That is a sobering reading for anyone who has spent a year calling their paralysis prudence.

Paul gives this fear a name and a source: “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7). A spirit of fear does not come from God. So when a fear tells you to bury what God gave you to invest, you are no longer listening to wisdom. You are listening to something else, and it has borrowed a reasonable voice.

“The ten spies were not lying. They were simply letting fear write the last line of a true report.”

GOD SENDS FRIGHTENED PEOPLE

If God only used the fearless, the Bible would be a much shorter book. Gideon is threshing wheat in a winepress, hiding from the Midianites, when the angel of the LORD greets him as “mighty man of valour” (Judges 6:12). It reads almost like sarcasm. It is not. God addressed the man he was sending, not the man cowering in the press, and then He sent him while he was still asking for signs.

Look at what God said to him: “Surely I will be with you” (Judges 6:16). Not *you are braver than you think*. The answer to Gideon's fear was not better information about Gideon; it was better information about God. It is the same answer given to Joshua at the border, “Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go” (Joshua 1:9), and to Israel in Isaiah, “Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God” (Isaiah 41:10).

Courage in Scripture is almost never the absence of fear. It is the presence of God, acted upon.

SAME GIANT, DIFFERENT SENTENCE

An army of trained soldiers stood in the valley of Elah for forty days, and every one of them had accurate information about Goliath's height, reach and armour. A teenager arrived with lunch for his brothers and asked one question nobody else was asking: “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?” (1 Samuel 17:26).

David was not braver by temperament. He was better informed about God. He had already fought a lion and a bear in private, where nobody clapped, and he had noticed who kept delivering him (1 Samuel 17:37). His courage in public was the interest on obedience nobody had witnessed.

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?” (Psalm 27:1). The psalmist does not deny that there is something to fear. He asks a better question about who is standing next to him.

01 DILIGENCE OR DELAY?

What is this fear asking me to do?

A warning fear gives you a task: prepare, ask, check, pray, wait for a stated reason. A burying fear gives you no task at all, only a vague instruction to stop. If you cannot name the next action your fear is requesting, it is not counselling you.

02 TOWARDS OR AWAY?

Which direction does it move me?

Godly fear drove Noah to build and Nehemiah to inspect. Ungodly fear drove Adam into the trees and the servant into the soil. Ask honestly whether this fear is walking you towards God and towards the work, or away from both.

03 OBEDIENCE OR COMFORT?

If I obey it, what does God lose?

Some fears cost you nothing to heed. Others quietly cost you the assignment, the conversation, the giving, the apology, the start. If obeying your fear means burying something God handed you, you have your answer.

A PRAYER TO PRAY THIS WEEK

Father, You have not given me a spirit of fear. Teach me to tell Your warnings apart from the enemy's threats. Where fear is making me careful, make me wise. Where fear is making me passive, make me obedient. I will not bury what You have handed me. Go with me to the edge of what I can do, and meet me there. In Jesus' name, amen.

DO THIS TODAY

Name the fear out loud, then write the smallest action it has been stopping. Not the whole thing. The first minute of it. Do that minute before you close this magazine.



READ THE COMPANION POST

A longer study of the two fears, with the full passages side by side.

[THEBEREANBLOG.COM/BLOG](https://www.thebereanblog.com/blog)

KEY POINT · 2 TIM. 1:7

A spirit of fear is not from God, so not every fear deserves obedience.

KEY POINT · MATT. 25:25

The servant was judged for burying, not for losing. Refusing to risk is a decision too.

KEY POINT · JUDGES 6:16

God's answer to fear is rarely more confidence in you. It is His presence with you.

A WORD ON ZECHARIAH 4:10

Do not despise this beginning.

"For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel."

ZECHARIAH 4:10 · NKJV

Zerubbabel's temple was, by every reasonable measure, an embarrassment. The elders who had seen Solomon's original stood at the foundation of the second and wept out loud (Ezra 3:12). Their tears were not sentiment; they were reviews. This new house was smaller, poorer, drabber. And in the middle of that public grief the LORD sent Zechariah with a question so quiet it is easy to miss: "Who has despised the day of small things?"

Notice who is despising, and who is not. Heaven's response to Zerubbabel's modest plumb line is joy, "these seven rejoice", the seven eyes of the LORD, angelic delight, the Spirit's presence. The rebuke is not for the size of the work. It is for the sizing of it, the reviewers on the ground who cannot see what God is measuring by.

Your September has plumb-line moments in it. The first sober conversation. The first honest budget. The re-opened Bible. The apology sent. The prayer you finally prayed out loud in front of your children. If you evaluate them by the Solomon standard, they look pitiful. If you look at Heaven, seven eyes are rejoicing.

The mercy in this verse is that despising a small thing is often our first sin against a new beginning. We reject the blade for not being the grain. God does not. He works small deliberately, because small is what escapes our pride. "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit" (Zechariah 4:6). Might would show. Spirit rarely does. And Spirit is what grows what you have started.

So today, pick up your plumb line. Hang the first stone. Send the first sentence. Do not compare it to somebody else's second temple. Heaven is already rejoicing over the smallest right thing you did this morning.

INSIGHT

Do not measure the blade by the harvest it is not yet. Measure it by the Sower who planted it.

TRY THIS TODAY

Name one "small thing" you did this week that you were tempted to despise, a five-minute prayer, an ordinary meal cooked, a hard email finally sent. Say out loud: *"Heaven is rejoicing over this."* Then do another one tomorrow.

WRITE IT DOWN

One sentence in your journal tonight: "The small thing I refuse to despise this week is ____."

A PRAYER

Father, forgive me for despising what You are gently beginning. Give me eyes that rejoice over plumb lines, and a hand that keeps building. In Jesus' name, Amen.

THE FAMILY TABLE · SEPTEMBER

The First-Month Family Meeting.

The best time to fix a term is not November, when the wheels are visibly falling off. It is the first Sunday in September, before the term has learned your family's weak points. Twenty minutes at the table, one page, one prayer, and a habit that will still be running at half-term.

AROUND THE TABLE

Who at this table needs the most encouragement this week, and what would that encouragement actually look like on Tuesday?

Scripture asks households to be quietly deliberate. "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up" (Deuteronomy 6:7). The verse does not require a curriculum. It requires a table, and a rhythm the table protects.

THE 20-MINUTE AGENDA

- 01** **What is going well?** Start with gratitude; it disarms the whole table.
- 02** **What feels difficult?** Named difficulties shrink. Let everyone answer, youngest first.
- 03** **Where do we need help?** From each other, from God, from the church family. Say it out loud.
- 04** **What needs to change in our weekly rhythm?** One thing only. Fix it before the second week.
- 05** **Who needs encouragement?** In the family, at school, in the church. Name three people.
- 06** **What will we pray about together?** Two petitions and one thanksgiving is plenty.

KEEP THIS PAGE

House rules for the meeting:

- 20 minutes, phones down (yours too).
- Youngest speaks first, so they still can.
- One decision per meeting, not seven.
- End with the Aaronic blessing (Numbers 6:24).
- Same day each week, or it will not survive week three.

TRY THIS SUNDAY

Print or photograph this page and hold your first meeting before the first Monday of term. It is not fancy. That is the point.

For single parents: the meeting still works with one child. For blended households: let the newest member choose the closing prayer once a month. For grown-up children: WhatsApp voice notes count.

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."

PROVERBS 22:6 · NKJV

FOR TEENS & YOUNG ADULTS

You do not have to fit in to belong.

Every September a quiet reshuffle happens, and the fastest to lose themselves are the ones who wanted to be liked most. New form group, new corridor, new group chat. Within a fortnight the room has a shape, and everybody has an unwritten permission slip explaining who they are allowed to be. If you did not sign one, you feel invisible. If you did, you feel small.

The Bible has an answer for this that is neither "be yourself" (too vague) nor "just say no" (too small). It is Daniel 1:8, "Daniel *purposed in his heart* that he would not defile himself." Purposed. Past tense. In the heart, before the pressure. Daniel did not decide who he was in the moment; he decided in advance, quietly, and every subsequent moment simply obeyed the decision.

Look also at what fitting in cost the four young men, and what belonging kept for them. The empire changed their food, their language and even their names. Belonging to God kept their convictions, their friendships, and eventually, their futures ("God gave them knowledge and skill", Daniel 1:17). They did not need to be loud to hold their ground. They needed to be decided.

FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

Choose one person you suspect is quietly lonely in your class, and eat lunch with them once this week. Do not make it a project. Just show up. That is belonging in practice.

New rooms make one great demand of you every September: *be like us, and quickly*. Belonging, real belonging, is different. It does not require you to disappear before it will keep you.

INSIGHT

Fitting in is a costume. Belonging is a home. Do not swap one for the other.

How to recognise safe friendships this term. Safe friends do not require you to make fun of someone else in order to sit with them. Safe friends can hear a "no" without punishing you for it. Safe friends do not need every part of your life screenshotted before they trust you. Safe friends laugh with you, not at somebody else.

Group chats and online exclusion. Being in the chat is not the same as being in the friendship. Some of the loneliest people in your year are in every chat and no conversation. If the chat is a place you have to perform to stay in, you were never really in. Mute, leave, or step back. Real friends will find you offline.

Academic comparison. Somebody in your year will be better at the thing you were proud of. Somebody else is quietly envying you. The comparison game has no winner. Do your best work, ask honest questions, and refuse to make somebody else's mark your identity. You are not your grade.

When loneliness begins. It does not mean something is wrong with you. It means you are between friendships, which is a normal, biblical season (Genesis 2:18). Tell one adult you trust, keep showing up to the same three places, and do not decide who you are during the ache. Loneliness is a bad interviewer of your identity.

Write your Daniel sentence. One line, decided in advance, kept in your phone: *who you are, and what you will not do*. Show it to no one, and let it govern everything.

TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT

If a friendship, a chat, or something at school is making you feel unsafe, or telling you to hide something from adults you trust, tell an adult today. Parent, youth leader, teacher, GP. You do not need to have the words right. You just need to speak. In an emergency, always call 999.

WHOLE & WELL · SEPTEMBER

The 20-Minute September Reset.

You do not need a new self by Michaelmas. You need twenty rescued minutes a day, arranged well. Bodies made in God's image respond to rhythm, not to spasm, and September is a rhythm-repair month.

INSIGHT

A rhythm you rebuild in twenty minutes a day will still be standing in November. A regime you impose in a weekend rarely survives its second Tuesday.

Elijah, running on empty from Jezebel's threat, did not begin his reset with a prayer meeting. He begins with a nap, and then a meal, and then another nap, and another meal (1 Kings 19:5–8). Only after that does the angel wake him for the journey. Heaven does not despise your body. It fed it before it commissioned it.

The four blocks below add up to twenty minutes, not twenty hours. They are meant to be repeatable on a Tuesday. Skip a day; do not skip the week. Rhythm forgives; regimes do not.

Keep August's habits underneath these, too, the water first, the screen sunset, the true Sabbath. Rhythms are deepened month by month, not replaced. If it helps, print this page and stick it inside the kitchen cupboard where the biscuits used to live.

TWENTY MINUTES. EVERY WEEKDAY. THAT IS THE WHOLE ASK.

05 MINUTES

Wake up with water & the Word.

A tall glass of water and one verse from page 15 before the phone. The order matters. The phone can wait five more minutes; your soul cannot.

07 MINUTES

Move, gently.

A short walk to the corner, or seven minutes of stretching by the bed. Not a workout. A body waking up. "Bodily exercise profits a little" (1 Tim 4:8), and a little is a lot when a little is what you do.

05 MINUTES

Eat something honest.

A breakfast that is not from a wrapper: fruit and yoghurt, an egg on toast, porridge. You will make better decisions until lunch than you did last week.

03 MINUTES

Name the day.

One sentence out loud: *"Today, Lord, I will..."* A named day resists a scrolled day. Screen sunset at 9:30pm to lock the loop.

This page offers general encouragement, not medical advice. Please consult your GP before beginning any new exercise programme, and for any health concerns.

THE FAITHFUL POUND · RECOVERY

The Four-Week Recovery Plan.

August was for planning the squeeze. September is for recovering from it, calmly, before Christmas arrives with its own bill. Four small weeks, one honest sheet of paper, and a household that starts October with breath in its lungs.

INSIGHT

Debt fed in September is a monster by December. Starve it small, this week, before it learns the address.

The Bible's steady counsel on money is not shame; it is timing. "The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty, but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty" (Proverbs 21:5). Panic hurries. Plans do not. Take one hour this weekend with a notebook and this page.

WEEK 01

Stop the leak.

Screenshot last month's bank statement. Highlight every small "just this once" line, then draw a red line under the total. Naming it stops it. "Ponder the path of your feet" (Proverbs 4:26).

WEEK 02

Audit the subscriptions.

List every recurring payment: streaming, apps, gym, insurance, boxes. Ask three honest questions: *Do I use it? Did I choose it? Would I sign up today?* Cancel the three-no's before the next billing date.

WEEK 03

Build a £50–£100 buffer.

Move a small, automatic sum, £10 or £25 a week, to a separate pot the moment your salary lands. This is not for Christmas. It is for the tyre that goes flat on the wrong Wednesday.

WEEK 04

Christmas, without panic.

Set a Christmas number this week, divide by the weeks left, and set that aside first. "The borrower is servant to the lender" (Proverbs 22:7). Do not sell December's peace for November's convenience.

TRY THIS SUNDAY

One hour, one notebook, one honest number for each week. Do week one before you close this magazine. The other three follow if you do.

WORK AS WORSHIP

Your First 90 Days.

Starting a role, a course, a ministry post or a project well, the biblical way, without pretending to be somebody you are not yet.

Joseph's résumé before Egypt was two invisible administrations: Potiphar's house, and a prison. He arrived at Pharaoh's throne fluent in what nobody had seen him learn. Your first 90 days are the same school.

INSIGHT

The first ninety days do not reveal how brilliant you are. They reveal how teachable you are. Teachability is what promotion recognises.

DAYS 01–30

Learn before you try to impress.

Ask three questions for every opinion. Learn every colleague's name and one true thing about them. Read the last quarter's notes before you propose the next. "Do you see a man who excels in his work? He will stand before kings" (Proverbs 22:29). Excellence begins with attention.

DAYS 31–60

Clarify, record, deliver.

In writing, agree what "good" looks like with your manager or tutor. Ship one small early win before you attempt a big one. Keep a private log of what you did, in one line a day. Confusion breeds excuses; clarity breeds work.

DAYS 61–90

Review, refine, protect.

Ask for feedback before it is offered. Refine one habit that is starting to slip. Protect your integrity the moment it costs you a favour. "A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches" (Proverbs 22:1).

SIX RULES FOR THE FIRST QUARTER

- 1 • Ask useful questions.** Not clever ones. Useful ones. "Who is affected by this?", "What is the deadline behind the deadline?", "What did you try that did not work?"
- 2 • Build dependable relationships.** Turn up on time. Reply within a day. Do what you said you would. Reliability is a rarer gift than talent.
- 3 • Avoid workplace gossip.** The people gossiping to you are gossiping about you (Proverbs 26:20). Leave the room, kindly.
- 4 • Say the small "no" early.** A shortcut declined in week two is a scandal avoided in month twelve. "He who walks with integrity walks securely" (Proverbs 10:9).
- 5 • Serve a colleague who cannot repay you.** Cover a shift, share a template, teach a junior. Ministry does not begin at church; it begins at your desk.
- 6 • Do the last 10% of the job.** The tidy-up, the follow-up email, the file put back where it lives. Everyone can do the first 90%. The last 10% is your name.

FREE · FIRST 90 DAYS PLANNER

A one-page printable to run your own 30/60/90, with the six rules on the reverse and a weekly log. Download at the Academy.



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/ACADEMY

WRITE IT DOWN

The one habit I will protect at work this quarter is _____, because without it, everything else slips by December.

BETTER TOGETHER · SEPTEMBER

When busy schedules make love feel distant.

Nobody in the marriage means to drift; September simply moves faster than either of you. The days are polite about it, at first. She goes to bed earlier. He answers three more emails after dinner. Nobody has fought, and nobody has connected. By half-term the room feels colder and neither of you can quite say why.

The Song of Solomon has a small, unforgettable phrase for this exact season: "Catch us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes" (Song 2:15). Not the wolves. The foxes. Not the affair. The unread message, the missed hug at the door, the assumed slight, the seventh late-back-from-work in a row. Little things spoil vines fastest when the fruit is tender.

Two practical moves have saved every stretched marriage I have pastored through a demanding term. Neither of them is a date night; both of them are cheaper than one.

The Fifteen-Minute Handover. Every evening, sit in the same two chairs for fifteen minutes with no screens. One asks; one answers. *What did today take out of you? What is tomorrow going to ask? Where do you need me?* Then swap. Fifteen minutes daily is more marriage than one date monthly.

AROUND THE TABLE

What one small habit ended this summer that we want to bring back this week? Answer honestly, then do that habit tonight.

September is the enemy of tenderness. Two diaries fill, two commutes lengthen, two heads hit the pillow already elsewhere. This month's love is not a grand gesture. It is a small, planted rhythm.

The Sunday Two Questions. One time each Sunday evening, before the week begins: *What one thing can I take off your plate this week? What one thing would help you feel loved?* Answer honestly. Then do the one thing. This is 1 Peter 3:7 with a calendar.

For singles and friendships. The little-foxes verse belongs to every close relationship. The friend you have not called since July. The sibling whose message you have not answered. The mentor whose birthday you missed. Send one message today. Do not apologise for the gap; simply appear. "A friend loves at all times" (Proverbs 17:17), and September is one of the "all times".

"Catch the little foxes. Fifteen minutes a day, kindly, will save your marriage from a term that only wanted your leftovers."

None of this requires a spare hour you do not have. It requires the fifteen minutes you were already going to spend on your phone. Move them, together.

A PRAYER FOR TWO

Father, catch our little foxes before they cost us a harvest. Give us fifteen honest minutes a day, and the humility to actually take them. In Jesus' name, Amen.

"Be hospitable to one another without grumbling."

1 PETER 4:9 · NKJV

ONE-POT BACK-TO-SCHOOL DINNER

Harvest Chicken & Rice Pot.

SERVES 6 · 45 MINUTES · ONE PAN · FREEZER-FRIENDLY

**INGREDIENTS**

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 6 chicken thighs, boneless, skin-on
- 1 large onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 2 carrots, diced
- 1 small butternut squash (about 400g), cubed
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1½ tsp salt (adjust to taste)
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 350g basmati rice, rinsed
- 800ml chicken stock
- A handful of parsley, chopped

TABLE THOUGHT

Serve it in the middle of the table, one spoon per person, and let everyone build their own plate. September dinners should feel less like a service and more like a table.

METHOD

- 1** Season the chicken with half the paprika, half the cumin, salt and pepper.
- 2** Heat oil in a large heavy pot. Sear the chicken skin-side down for 4 minutes until golden. Turn and cook another 2. Remove and set aside.
- 3** Lower the heat. Soften the onion 3 minutes, then add garlic, pepper, carrots and squash. Cook 5 minutes, stirring, until the edges catch a little colour.
- 4** Add the remaining spices, thyme and rice. Stir for a minute to toast the grains.
- 5** Pour in the stock, stir once, and nestle the chicken back in, skin-side up.
- 6** Cover, bring to a simmer, then turn down and cook 20 minutes without lifting the lid.
- 7** Rest, covered, 5 minutes. Scatter parsley, and take to the table in the pot.

MAKE IT STRETCH

Double the vegetables and halve the chicken to feed eight. Add a tin of chickpeas at step 5 for a fuller pot. Leftovers freeze in portions for a Monday teacher-training day.

SAFETY

Check the chicken is 75°C at the thickest part before serving. Cool leftovers within two hours, refrigerate, and eat within three days.

SEVEN PRAYERS FOR NEW BEGINNINGS

Pray your September in.

Pray one each day, Monday to Sunday, and repeat through the month. Pray them out loud where you can; "faith comes by hearing" (Romans 10:17), even when yours is doing the hearing.

01 · MONDAY · FOR A WILLING START

Father, quiet my resistance. Whatever You have put in my hand this week, teach me to lift it before I understand it. "Here am I, send me" (Isaiah 6:8). Send me into today.

02 · TUESDAY · FOR A SMALL FAITHFUL STEP

Lord, keep me from despising the day of small things (Zechariah 4:10). Give me the courage of a blade, and the patience of a root. Let today's step be small and real.

03 · WEDNESDAY · FOR STUDENTS & TEACHERS

Walk into every classroom with our children. Give teachers wisdom without weariness, and pupils courage without arrogance. "All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children" (Isaiah 54:13).

04 · THURSDAY · FOR THE ONE BEGINNING

Lord, You know the beginning I have been refusing. I bring it out into the light today. Bless the first email, the first mile, the first ten pounds, the first honest conversation. "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it" (Philippians 1:6).

05 · FRIDAY · FOR THE HOME

Father, keep our house a soft landing. Guard our doorways, feed our conversations, and let our table teach our children what a home in Christ looks like. "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15).

06 · SATURDAY · FOR REST BEFORE SUNDAY

Lord of the Sabbath, quiet me before I gather with Your people. Take the week off my shoulders, and put a Psalm in my mouth. "He gives His beloved sleep" (Psalm 127:2). Let me be beloved tonight.

07 · SUNDAY · FOR THE CHURCH & THE NATION

Revive Your church this term. Add to us those being saved (Acts 2:47). Give our leaders wisdom, our schools protection, and our nation mercy we do not deserve. "If My people... will humbly pray, and seek My face" (2 Chronicles 7:14). We are Your people. We are seeking Your face.

ONE LINE TO REPEAT DAILY

"Lord, begin something small in me today, and do not let me despise it."

SEPTEMBER SCRIPTURE PLANNER

Thirty days
of courageous
beginnings.

One verse a morning, before the phone.
Tick each day as you go. Thirty quiet
mornings and September is anchored to
Someone who cannot be rushed.

DAY	VERSE	THEME	DAY	VERSE	THEME
01	Mark 4:26–29	First the Blade	16	1 Samuel 3:1–10	Speak, Lord
02	Zechariah 4:6–10	Small Things	17	1 Samuel 7:12	Ebenezer
03	Philippians 1:6	He Who Began	18	1 Samuel 16:7	Man Looks; God Sees
04	Nehemiah 2:11–17	Inspect First	19	Galatians 6:9–10	Do Not Grow Weary
05	Exodus 4:1–5	In Your Hand	20	Psalms 37:5–7	Wait Patiently
06	Ruth 2:1–3	Glean Where You Are	21	Proverbs 3:5–6	Trust With All
07	Psalms 90:16–17	Establish the Work	22	John 12:24–25	A Grain Falls
08	1 Samuel 17:34–37	What You Learned Already	23	Isaiah 40:29–31	Renewal
09	Isaiah 43:18–19	A New Thing	24	2 Corinthians 4:16–18	Renewed Day by Day
10	Matthew 13:31–32	Mustard Seed	25	James 4:13–15	If the Lord Wills
11	Proverbs 16:3	Commit	26	Psalms 92:12–14	Still Bearing Fruit
12	Ecclesiastes 11:4–6	Sow Anyway	27	Hebrews 12:1–2	The Race Set
13	Luke 14:28–30	Count the Cost	28	1 Corinthians 15:58	Not in Vain
14	Joshua 1:7–9	Be Courageous	29	2 Timothy 1:6–7	Stir Up the Gift
15	Colossians 3:23–24	Heartily	30	Philippians 3:13–14	Press On

"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."

PHILIPPIANS 1:6 · NKJV

AS TOLD TO THE EDITOR · EDITED FOR LENGTH

"I started before I felt ready."

— Adeola, 34 · Manchester · Small business owner and mum of two

Every January I made a business plan. Every February I rewrote it. Every March I quietly put it back in the drawer. It was a beautiful plan; I have kept every version. The plan was the problem. It let me feel productive while I refused to begin.

Last September I read that little verse about not despising the day of small things, and I closed the notebook mid-sentence. I did not have the perfect logo, the perfect brand, or the perfect Instagram. What I had was an old laptop, three willing friends, and forty pounds. So I did the smallest thing the plan asked for: I posted one honest photograph, on one platform, describing what I actually sold, and I priced it. I did not tell my husband. I did not want to have to explain a failure.

The first sale was to a stranger. Twelve pounds. I remember exactly what I made her: two candles, badly wrapped, with a handwritten note. She sent a message back saying they made her flat smell like Christmas. I cried in the car park at Tesco. Twelve pounds cannot change your life. Twelve pounds can change your permission.

WRITE IT DOWN

The version of me that would feel "ready" does not exist. I will begin as the version I am today. My smallest first step is _____, and I will take it by _____.



By December I had made £480. By April, £2,100. In July I registered the business. The plan has still not been perfected. The business is called **Adeola & Rose**, after my late mother. It exists because last September I stopped waiting for the version of me who would be ready.

"Twelve pounds cannot change your life. Twelve pounds can change your permission."

Two things I learned. One, ready is a myth; started is a decision. The people I admired all began before they felt like it, without exception. Two, God does not need your polish; He honours your obedience. My candles are not better than anyone else's. I am simply the woman who lit one and posted the picture.

If you are the person quietly re-drafting a plan you have been re-drafting for years, please stop editing and start. The smallest possible version, today, before you close the magazine. God is not embarrassed by your beginning. He wrote a whole parable in its honour.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Send us 100–150 words: what you began, what it cost, what God did. Best replies appear in October's *Real Life*. Write to stories@theboreanblog.com.

A SEPTEMBER RECKONING

Five things to stop postponing.

Some things do not become easier by waiting. The verse for this page is one line long, and it costs the reader everything: "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Hebrews 3:15). *Today*. Not January.

INSIGHT

The most spiritual word in your vocabulary this month is not "tomorrow". It is "today".

1 The apology you owe.

"If your brother has something against you... first be reconciled" (Matthew 5:23–24). Not once you feel like it. First. Send the message today. Two sentences will do: *I was wrong. Will you forgive me?*

2 The medical appointment.

The lump, the mood, the pain, the check you have been quietly deciding to ignore. Faith does not mean pretending; it means acting. Book it before Sunday. Your body is a temple; give it a maintenance visit.

3 The will you have not written.

"Set your house in order, for you shall die" (Isaiah 38:1) is a hard verse, and a mercy. Write, or update, your will this month. Name the guardians. Say goodbye kindly, on paper. Love does not leave paperwork.

4 The habit you keep restarting.

The Bible in a year, the walk, the sabbath, the fast, the tithe. Reduce it until it is smaller than embarrassment and start again. "Restore to me the joy of Your salvation" (Psalm 51:12). Restoration is a doing word.

5 The confession you owe God.

The thing you have been managing rather than repenting of. Bring it into the light this week. Tell one trusted friend, and pray it out loud (James 5:16). Concealment is exhausting; confession is a resting place.

TRY THIS TODAY

Pick the number that stopped you first. That is the one. Do the smallest possible version today, an email, a phone call, a paragraph, a prayer. Text a friend when it is done.

A LETTER TO YOUNG MINISTERS

Do not build the platform before the person.

Somewhere today a young minister is refreshing analytics on a sermon clip while a Bible sits closed on the bedside table. I do not say that to shame; I have done it. But the pattern is worth naming, because the age we serve rewards the platform faster than it forms the person, and a call that is fed on numbers before it is fed on Scripture ends the same way every time. Publicly.

Jesus, we forget, spent thirty of thirty-three years off-camera. When Heaven finally spoke over Him it was before He had performed a single miracle: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). The Father did not wait to see the ministry to love the Son. The Son's identity was settled before the platform arrived, and this is exactly what carried Him through the wilderness that followed.

Paul goes further, in a sentence I have never got over. Writing to a young pastor he loved, he lists the shape of an elder's life: temperate, sober-minded, hospitable, able to teach, gentle, not greedy, ruling his own house well. Then he says, quietly, "not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil" (1 Timothy 3:6). Notice what puffs up: elevation without formation. Ministry gifts are easy to acquire; character is grown. And Paul is not being cautious for the church's sake alone. He is being kind to the young man, who would fall if he stood too soon.

Reach without depth is a scaffold with no floor. Congregations, followers and platforms are gifts of God; none of them replaces the quiet, unrewarded formation of the person who is going to stand there.

INSIGHT

The pulpit does not reveal what is on the platform. It reveals what has been happening in the room where nobody watched.

"Build the person the platform is going to require. When the platform arrives, it will not need to build the person in public."

Four quiet disciplines to practise this term, no matter what the platform looks like.

1 · A secret history with God. A prayer life nobody is invited to. Read Matthew 6:6 slowly. The reward is the Father, not the audience.

2 · Preach yourself before you preach anyone else. Every message this term should first pastor you for a week. If it did not preach to your Tuesday, do not preach it on Sunday.

3 · Have one honest friend who can tell you no. Not a fan. A friend who has permission to interrupt you. "Faithful are the wounds of a friend" (Proverbs 27:6).

4 · Say no to ninety percent of the platforms. Yes, ninety. The invitations, the podcasts, the guest slots. Not because they are wrong; because you are being formed. Read Mark 1:35 and Mark 1:38 together, then read them again.

The temptation of every young minister is the temptation of Luke 4: turn stones into bread, jump from the temple, take the kingdoms of the world without the cross. Every one of those temptations was a shortcut around formation. Jesus answered each with Scripture He had already been keeping in the quiet years. Keep yours now. The platform is coming. Do not let it find you empty.

BY MATTHEW (TOLU) OLOWOYEYE

Guard your ears.

Guard your destiny.

Not every voice deserves access to where God is taking you. Your future is shaped not only by what you hear, but by what you refuse to give access to.

Charles Spurgeon taught young ministers to develop what he called "one blind eye and one deaf ear": the maturity to refuse distractions that could pull them away from their holy assignment.

That wisdom is even more urgent in an age of outrage, endless notifications, viral arguments and permanent commentary. Every opinion does not require contemplation. Every criticism does not require a response. Every conversation does not require your presence.

Your attention is too expensive to give away cheaply. You cannot listen to everything and still become everything God called you to be.

Everyone is travelling somewhere.

But our races, assignments, speeds, seasons, resources and routes are different. Because the destination is different, the discipline required to reach it will also be different.

THE DISCIPLINE OF SELECTIVE HEARING

Some voices must be heard. Some must be tested. And some must never be given access to your spirit.

THE GOVERNING PRINCIPLE

Where you are going should determine what you are willing to ignore.

Stay teachable. Welcome correction. Honour wise counsel. But do not surrender your focus to every voice, every quarrel or every opinion that demands access.

10 TIMELESS LESSONS

What you must learn to tune out.

These are not excuses for arrogance or isolation. They are disciplines for protecting focus, peace, integrity and the assignment God has placed in your hands. The ten follow, overleaf.

01

PROVERBS 26:17

Never carry an offence that does not belong to you.

One of the fastest ways to lose your own journey is to become emotionally recruited into somebody else's battle. You can love people without joining every war they start.

Compassion does not require emotional conscription.

02

1 TIMOTHY 3:11

Never feed your mind with gossip.

Gossip rarely arrives wearing a name tag. It often sounds like concern: "I just thought you should know..." If the person is not present and the conversation is not part of a genuine solution, wisdom may require you to end it.

What you repeatedly listen to eventually influences how you see people.

03

GALATIANS 1:10

Never build your identity around secondhand opinions.

"Somebody said..." has imprisoned many otherwise strong people. Learn from criticism, welcome accountability, correct genuine weaknesses, but do not become addicted to discovering everyone's private opinion of you.

Feedback should improve your character, not become the foundation of your identity.

04

PSALM 37:5-6

Never chase every false accusation.

Some accusations require an answer because harm or serious accountability is involved. Others become larger because you continually feed them attention. Sometimes your integrity, consistency and fruit must become your answer.

Do not abandon your assignment to convince someone committed to misunderstanding you.

05

HEBREWS 12:1

Never allow comparison to determine your speed.

Social media can make you impatient with a journey you were grateful for ten minutes earlier. Their starting point, route, burden, opportunities and assignment may be completely different from yours.

Speed is meaningless when direction is wrong.

06

PROVERBS 3:5-6

Never let people who do not understand your destination choose your vehicle.

Different assignments require different methods. Learn from others without turning their route into your blueprint. What worked for someone else may teach you something without becoming God's instruction for you.

Your destination should determine your vehicle, not public pressure.

07

1 THESS. 5:21

Never confuse noise with truth.

Breaking news, outrage, prophecies, predictions, viral arguments and endless commentary all compete for attention. You do not have to develop an opinion about everything simply because an algorithm placed it in front of you.

Information without purpose becomes mental clutter.

08

NEHEMIAH 6:3

Never allow distraction to disguise itself as responsibility.

Distraction does not always look irresponsible. Sometimes it looks like another urgent meeting, another invitation, another problem somebody wants you to carry. The great work already in your hands deserves protection.

A distraction only has to be less important than your assignment.

09

MARK 1:35-38

Never let another person's urgency become your priority without discernment.

Compassion matters, but compassion without boundaries eventually becomes exhaustion. Jesus loved people deeply without allowing every expectation around Him to determine His next move.

A compassionate person without boundaries can become an exhausted person without focus.

10

ACTS 5:29

Never listen to a voice that repeatedly makes you disobey God.

Counsel matters. Wisdom matters. Accountability matters. Yet advice must still be tested by Scripture, character and where it ultimately leads you. After every opinion has spoken, obedience must remain central.

You must know which voice has final authority over your life.

THE GREAT DISCIPLINE

Selective deafness is not arrogance. It is stewardship.

You do not need to become rude, inaccessible or unteachable. You need to become clear about what deserves access to your attention, emotions and assignment.

"That conversation does not belong to me."

You do not have to enter every conflict.

"That offence is not mine to carry."

Love people without inheriting their bitterness.

"That criticism does not require my anxiety."

Receive useful correction without surrendering your peace.

"That comparison does not define my pace."

Your assignment has its own timing and process.

"That controversy does not deserve my attention."

Noise is not automatically relevance.

"That distraction will not make me come down."

Protect the great work already in your hands.

BEFORE YOU LISTEN

Ask these five questions.

Selective hearing becomes much easier when you have a filter. Use these questions before giving a voice significant access to your heart or decision-making.

Who is speaking?

Do they possess the wisdom, character, context or relationship necessary to speak into this area of my life?

Where will this voice take me?

Toward wisdom, obedience and maturity, or toward fear, bitterness, pride and distraction?

Does this concern my assignment?

Not every issue deserves your involvement. Relevance is a stewardship question.

Is there anything useful I should learn?

Even uncomfortable criticism can contain information that helps you grow.

What does God require of me now?

After every opinion has spoken, obedience must remain central.

7-DAY ATTENTION AUDIT

Audit what has access to you.

For the next seven days, notice what repeatedly enters your mind, drains your emotional energy or pulls you away from what matters.

- What voices dominate your thoughts?
- Whose opinions control your emotions?
- What arguments are draining you?
- What gossip are you entertaining?
- What comparison is making you impatient?
- What unnecessary information is overcrowding your mind?
- What distraction has repeatedly pulled you away from your assignment?

MAKE ONE COURAGEOUS DECISION

Mute the account. End the gossip. Leave the argument. Reduce the access. Say no to the invitation. Put the phone away. Return to the work.

Your destiny does not need more opinions. It needs more obedience.

KEY POINTS

Six lines to carry into October.

Screenshot this page, or tear it out and keep it in your Bible. Each point carries the verse it stands on, so you can check it for yourself, as the Bereans did.

01

PROV. 26:17

Not every offence is yours to carry.

You can love people deeply without being emotionally conscripted into every war they start.

02

1 TIM. 3:11

What you listen to shapes how you see people.

Gossip rarely announces itself. It often arrives dressed as concern.

03

GAL. 1:10

Feedback should improve your character, not become your identity.

Welcome correction. Do not build a self out of other people's private opinions.

04

HEB. 12:1

Speed is meaningless when the direction is wrong.

Their starting point, burden and assignment are not yours. Run your own race.

05

NEH. 6:3

A distraction only has to be less important than your assignment.

It does not have to look irresponsible. Sometimes it looks like another urgent meeting.

06

ACTS 5:29

One voice has final authority over your life.

Counsel matters. But after every opinion has spoken, obedience must remain central.

THE ONE LINE

Your destiny does not need more opinions. It needs more obedience.

**SCAN · FREE**

The Attention Audit worksheet, at the Academy.

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MODULE 01

Foundations & ethics.

What these tools are, what they are not, and where a Christian leader should draw the line.

MODULE 02

Sermon & study workflow.

Research faster without outsourcing your soul. The preparation stays yours.

MODULE 03

Content & communication.

Newsletters, socials, graphics and admin, produced in a fraction of the time.

MODULE 04

Systems for small teams.

Automations that protect your evenings and your volunteers.

ENROL NOW

Steward the tools. Do not be stewarded by them.

Berean readers receive priority access to the September cohort.



SCAN TO ENROL
ministryaccelerator.co.uk

BY PASTOR ABOLADE · EQUIPPING CHRISTIAN CENTER

Abundant *Grace*

No believer is disadvantaged.

If only we understand the economy God has made available to us, called Grace.

I personally believe that no believer is disadvantaged, if only we understand the economy God has made available to us called GRACE. So, what is this Grace that is in abundance?

01 Grace is God's unmerited favour

This is what we call the saving grace of God.

We are saved by Grace. Meaning, Jesus did everything. All we need to do is accept what Jesus did on the Cross.

Time will not permit me to explain all that Jesus had to pass through because of us. But you see, when you watch The Passion of the Christ, you will notice that part of His body was covered on the cross. That was because it was a movie. But in reality, Jesus was totally naked. 100% naked. And that is the worst form of shame.

EPHESIANS 2:8

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”

Sometimes, people feel like salvation is too cheap. They ask, “You mean I just need to accept Jesus as my Lord and Saviour, and that's all?”

It looks cheap, but it was not cheap for the Person who did it on the Cross. It cost Jesus everything.

AND THAT IS

That is *Grace*.

02

Grace is unmerited divine assistance

Grace is not only God's unmerited favour; Grace is also unmerited divine assistance. We don't deserve this kind of Grace, but God makes it available to us. And this will be my major area of emphasis. When I talk about this kind of Grace, I cannot talk about it without talking about the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is involved.

AN ILLUSTRATION

Let me give you an example. Imagine you're like me, and you are not graced in the area of singing. Then you decide to use an earpod or headset to listen to a lovely song. As the song is playing, you begin to sing along. Because the music is playing in your ears, you can be deceived into thinking that your voice is actually sweet. But try to turn off the music and continue singing.

That is when you will realise that you are naked! The music was covering what you could not do by yourself.

In a similar way, Grace covers our nakedness and supplies what we lack.

THE POINT

Grace is divine assistance. To fully understand this Grace, I need to take us back to the Old Covenant called the Law.

ROMANS 8:3-4

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

A COMMENTARY

Let me run a commentary here. Notice that the Bible says: “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh...”

Take note: the problem was not the Law. The problem was the flesh.

The laws of God are derived from the nature of God. Leviticus 19:2 says: “Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy.” The problem was the Adamic nature in man. The flesh made it impossible for man to perfectly obey God's standard.

And that is why Romans 8:4 talks about walking after the Spirit. This means that one major difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant is the involvement of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to live according to God's standard.

IN SUMMARY

Hallelujah!!

The work is on the Holy Spirit, not on us.

Advantages of the *Grace of God*

Four things Grace does that no amount of human effort can produce, each anchored in scripture.

01

EPHESIANS 2:5-8

We are saved by Grace

We were dead in trespasses and sins, but God, through His Grace, made us alive in Christ. Salvation is not a product of our works. It is the gift of God.

02

ROMANS 5:20

Grace enables you to live above sin

“But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” Some people believe that Grace simply means God covers your sin. But Grace is more than that.

Grace does not give you an excuse to remain in sin; Grace gives you the ability to live above sin. So, we have no excuse.

03

HEBREWS 12:28

Grace enables you to live up to God's standard

“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

Notice that we have received a kingdom that cannot be moved. That means God's kingdom is constant. God will not change His standards of holiness, obedience, sacrifice, faith, and righteousness because of us. His kingdom will not bend for us.

And because God's standard remains constant, we need Grace to meet up with His standard. To serve God means to be under His government — in obedience, worship, reverence, and submission to Him.

04

TITUS 2:11-12

Grace teaches

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly...”

Grace teaches us. The Holy Ghost inside you, if you are born again, can teach you how to live.

Grace doesn't only save you; Grace trains you.

How to take advantage of the *Grace of God*

Three postures. Come. Humble yourself.
Honour others.

01

HEBREWS 4:16

Come

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace...” The Bible says COME BOLDLY. Why? Because God is the One who can enable us to do beyond our own capacity.

Come to God. Never allow anything to take you away from God. Even when you sin, don't run away from God. Remember the prodigal son. Run back to God.

Satan will want you to run away from God because of your mistakes, but wisdom says: RUN TO GOD. Because He is the One that can clean you up.

Don't allow your weakness to take you away from the One who supplies Grace for your weakness.

02

JAMES 4:6

Humility

“God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.” Do you know what that means? God Himself will resist you. If God is the One resisting a man, that man is finished.

So, HUMBLE YOURSELF. Never think you are better than others. Acknowledge God for the Grace you may be enjoying today. Whatever you have that another person doesn't have, remember that it is Grace.

Be small in your own eyes. Don't take the glory for what Grace has done.

03

1 PETER 2:17

Honour

“Honour all men...” Do you know that everyone of us is unique in a special way? The Grace I have, you may not have. And the Grace you have, I may not have. That is one of the reasons why we need to honour one another.

You cannot walk in a Grace that you dishonour. Never! Celebrate the uniqueness you see in that person. I know you may not like him or her, but God has decided to put that treasure in an earthen vessel. So, honour people. Celebrate Grace.

The fact that someone's Grace looks different from yours does not mean that their Grace is inferior. We are all beneficiaries of the same abundant Grace.

CONCLUSION

No believer is disadvantaged. The problem is not that Grace is unavailable. *Grace is in abundance.*

The question is: are you taking advantage of the Grace that God has made available to you? So, COME. HUMBLE YOURSELF. HONOUR OTHERS. And above all, learn to depend on the Holy Spirit. Because the Christian life was never designed to be lived by human strength. It is a life of Grace.

Grace saved you.
Grace assists you.
Grace enables you.
Grace teaches you.
And Grace empowers you to live according to God's standard.

Hallelujah!



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Seven days. One habit. One coach.

The Berean Academy is our new home for guided, faith-filled growth. To open its doors, we are running a free seven-day mini-challenge for September readers, delivered daily by email, ten minutes a session.

You choose one small beginning at the start of the week, prayer, budget, health, work, family, and each morning we send a short lesson (three minutes to read), a two-minute Scripture, and one small assignment you can complete before the school run. On day seven, you take stock, we celebrate, and you decide whether to keep going.

This is not a course. It is a coaching walk with the Berean team, at the pace of a normal Monday. No polish required, and definitely no camera. You show up on time, God shows up first.

WHAT YOU GET, FREE

- 7 daily lessons (email or WhatsApp)
- 1 downloadable Growth Lab workbook
- 1 weekly community check-in
- 1 written prayer per day, prayed for you
- A quiet, honest tracker

DAY 01

Name the beginning.

DAY 02

Shrink the step.

DAY 03

Do it once.

DAY 04

Tell one friend.

DAY 05

Do it again.

DAY 06

Refine the rhythm.

DAY 07

Take honest stock.

**ENROL FREE · STARTS THE FIRST MONDAY IN
SEPTEMBER**

The September Growth Lab

Free to every reader of The Berean Monthly. Bring one friend; October will be built with what you learn.



SCAN TO ENROL

thebereanblog.com/academy

THE ONE SMALL BEGINNING CHALLENGE

What are you beginning this September?

You do not need to finish everything this month. You only need to stop refusing the beginning.

Pick one small thing. Tell us in a sentence, and follow along. In October, we publish the fellowship's beginnings.

CHOOSE ONE FROM THE LIST

- Fifteen minutes of prayer each morning.
- One family meal without phones each week.
- Saving a fixed amount each week.
- Applying for one role, or one course.
- Reading one Bible chapter a day.
- Reconnecting with one person you have drifted from.
- Beginning the first page of a book, a plan, or a business.

READER VOICES · A PREVIEW

"Fifteen minutes with God before I open my inbox. That is my one." — **Grace, 41**

"I am applying for one placement a week. The one I keep talking myself out of." — **Josh, 22**

"My husband and I will do the fifteen-minute handover (page 12) every night. Even Fridays." — **Kemi, 38**

"Reading Ruth to my mother, one chapter a night, until it is finished." — **Anon**

HOW TO JOIN

1 • Write your one sentence: *This September, I will begin _____.*

2 • Post it, or send it privately, to begin@thebereanblog.com — anonymous is fine.

3 • Follow along at **#SmallBeginnings2026**, or scan below.

4 • On 30 September, send us one photo, one line: what happened.



Scan to submit your one beginning.
thebereanblog.com/contact

SEPTEMBER, IN THE BEREAN FAMILY

Birthdays, anniversaries, answered prayers.

The Berean is a fellowship before it is a publication. This page belongs to the milestones our family has entrusted to us this month. Add yours by writing to celebrate@thebereanblog.com.

BIRTHDAY · SEPTEMBER

Happy Birthday, dear reader.

If your birthday falls in September, the whole Berean family stands to bless you.

"The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace." — Numbers 6:24–26.

Send your name and date to celebrate@thebereanblog.com to appear here next month.

ANNIVERSARY · SEPTEMBER

For every couple counting years this month.

Whether it is the first year or the fortieth, may your covenant deepen, and your love out-last the seasons.

"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour." — Ecclesiastes 4:9.

ANSWERED PRAYERS · FROM THE POSTBAG

· **D. and family, Croydon.** A job, after seventeen months of praying. "He restores my soul." (Ps 23:3)

· **The Fadipe family.** Twin boys, safe and well. Welcome, Ayodele and Ayomide.

· **Grace & Praise Youth.** Sixteen new baptisms in July. Glory.

· **M., 68, Belfast.** Clear scan, after August's biopsy. To God be the glory.

· **Anon.** A marriage reconciled after two years apart. Prayer works. Do not stop.

· **Berean Manchester.** Building keys handed over on 22 August.

SEND YOURS

A name, a date, one line, a photo if you have one. We rejoice with those who rejoice (Rom 12:15).

celebrate@thebereanblog.com

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

PSALM 133:1 · NKJV

LIFE AT THE BEREAN

Faces & places from the fellowship.

A ministry is people before it is pages. Every photograph here was sent by a member of the Berean family. Send yours to pictures@thebereanblog.com, one photo and one line, and it may appear next month.



01 · Matthew (Tolu) Olowoyeye. The editor, off duty.

02 · Round the table. All four, mid-meal.

03 · Sisters together. One of many photographs from the same afternoon.

04 · Brothers at the table. Conversation over the main course.

05 · Between courses. The buffet counter behind.

06 · All smiles. Sent in by the family.

07 · Later that evening. The day carried on elsewhere.

Send Us Your Pictures.
Baptisms, birthdays, tables, unexpected joys.
pictures@thebereanblog.com

VERIFIED. THEN PUBLISHED.

Truth before noise.

The Berean News, at bereannews.org, is our newsroom for readers who still believe the first casualty of speed is truth.

Rolling live coverage from the same publishing house that produces this magazine, across the UK, Africa, world affairs, business, technology and faith & society.

Every update is sourced from official channels, checked against the original release, and approved by an editor. Corrections are logged and cited. The reader is not the target market. The reader is the audience.

World

UK

Africa

Politics

Business

Technology

Health

Faith & Society

SOURCED

Every story checked against the original.

No rumour. No recycled outrage. If we cannot cite the release, we do not publish the story.

THE MORNING WIRE

Overnight briefings before 7am.

The whole world in one calm read, before the noise of the day begins. Free to your inbox.

CORRECTIONS

Logged, dated, cited.

When we get something wrong, we say so plainly, on the same page as the story, with a link to the original.

READ IT TODAY · FREE

News for people who still believe truth matters.

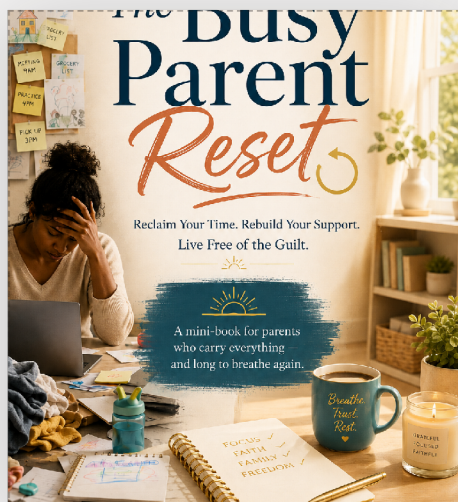
"Buy the truth, and do not sell it." — Proverbs 23:23 · NKJV

SCAN · READ
FREEbereannews.org

THREE TITLES FOR SEPTEMBER

Your next faithful step.

You do not need every resource we publish. Choose the one that serves the step in front of you.



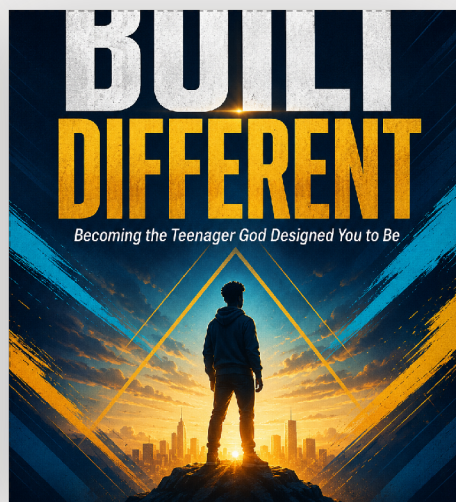
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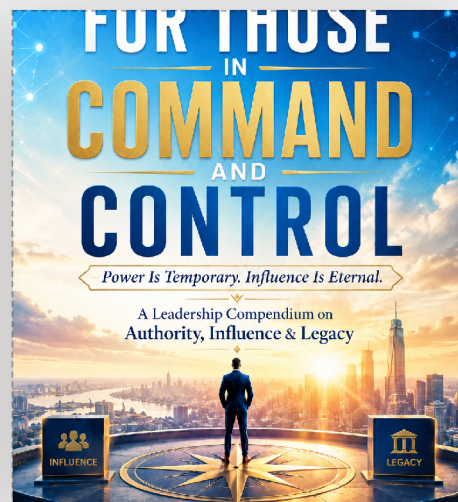
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NEXT MONTH · OCTOBER 2026

When the Leaves Fall.

What to release, what to retain, and how to recognise a season that has ended. Plus a harvest table for Kitchen Grace, and October's Community Voices: the beginnings that took.

You do not need to hold on to every leaf to be a faithful tree.

ONE LINE TO CARRY INTO OCTOBER

You do not have to see the harvest to be allowed to **SOW**.

“For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head.”

MARK 4:28 · NKJV

READ EVERY MONTH

The Berean is published monthly and free to download, print and pass on. New editions land on the first Saturday.

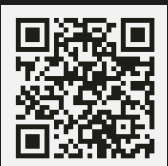
THEBEREANBLOG.COM**WRITE TO US**

Testimonies, questions for *Ask The Berean*, and the beginning you took this September.

[/CONTACT](#)**NEXT MONTH**

When the Leaves Fall. What to release, what to retain, and how to recognise a season that has ended.

OCTOBER 2026

**SUBSCRIBE**

Get each edition by email, free.

**JOIN THE CHALLENGE**

One small beginning, all September.

The Berean

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