CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH

Kansas City, Missouri

A SIX-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Benefits Without Commitment?

Kingdom Living and an Exclusive Relationship with God's Word

> *"Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts."*
>
> **COLOSSIANS 3:16 (NIV)**

A devotional companion to the sermon by

Pastor Brian Goines

Colossians 3:1–17

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WEEK OF OCTOBER 11, 2026

DAY ONE — ALL BENEFITS, NO COMMITMENT: THE RELATIONSHIP GOD WILL NOT SHARE

SCRIPTURE READING

DEUTERONOMY 6:4–6 (NIV)

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Pastor Goines opened Sunday with a story most of us have seen play out on a screen in one form or another: two friends who both struggle with commitment strike what seems like a clever bargain. They will enjoy the benefits of a relationship without the obligations of one. No exclusivity. Other options stay open. And if something better comes along, they will sit down and renegotiate. Then he turned the story toward us and asked a question that settled over the room: Is that how we have come to God? We want His blessing, His protection, His provision, His presence in the hard seasons—but we would rather not be exclusive.

It is an uncomfortable picture because it is an accurate one. Many of us do not reject God; we simply add Him. We build a decision, a relationship, or a plan entirely outside of what He would have us do, and then we carry it to Him and ask Him to bless it. We want His name on things He was never consulted about. Pastor Goines gave us the thesis that frames this entire week: kingdom living requires an exclusive commitment to the Word of God as fact—final authority, achievable and true. Exclusive means what it says. Nobody else.

> ***"You can't be with God and everybody else, because He ain't a sharer. He says love Me with all your heart, all your soul, and all your might—and all is all."***
>
> **— PASTOR BRIAN GOINES**

Moses said it to Israel long before Paul wrote to Colossae: "The LORD our God, the LORD is one." Because God is one, our love for Him cannot be divided into shares. He asks for all the heart, all the soul, all the strength. As Pastor Goines put it, all is all—in Greek, in Hebrew, in English. There is no translation in which "all" means "most," or "when it is convenient," or "until a better offer comes along."

This is not God being possessive in the small, insecure way people can be. He is jealous the way a faithful spouse is jealous for a covenant—because the relationship itself is the blessing. The benefits we chase were never meant to be detached from Him; they flow out of intimacy with Him. A believer who wants the gifts without the Giver is trying to keep the fruit while cutting the root. So the question this week is not whether we believe. Most of us settled that long ago. The question is whether we are exclusive. Before you bring your next plan to God for His blessing, ask whether He was the first one you consulted or the last.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *Where in my life am I asking God for the benefits of a relationship I have not been willing to make exclusive—His blessing on a decision, a relationship, or a plan I built without Him?*

2. *What "other options" am I quietly keeping open—sources of comfort, counsel, or security I reach for before God—and what does holding onto them protect me from having to surrender?*

3. *If I treated God's Word as final authority—fact, not suggestion—in one specific area this week, which area would it be, and what would I do differently by Tuesday?*

4. *What have I been asking God to bless that I now need to bring to Him for permission instead? Will I lay it before Him this week and accept His answer?*

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DAY TWO — SET YOUR MIND ABOVE: COMMITTING TO A BIBLICAL MENTALITY

SCRIPTURE READING

COLOSSIANS 3:1–4 (NIV)

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Sunday Pastor Goines gave us the setting of Colossians before he gave us the text. Paul had never visited Colossae. He knew the congregation through Epaphras, who brought word of a young church in confusion. New believers who had come to faith because of Christ were being told by those overseeing them that Christ was not quite enough—they also needed the right festivals, the right food, the right clothes, the right rituals. Paul's answer runs through the whole letter: Christ is all, and in all. If you belong to Him, here is how you live. And the first move in that life is not behavioral. It is mental. "Set your minds on things above."

Pastor Goines offered a simple test for a heavenly mind: as it is in heaven. Would this joke be fitting in heaven? Would the way I am carrying myself right now? Then he named mentalities that slip past us because they sound so reasonable. Family over everything—most of us nod along, yet the Bible says God over everything, and it even redefines family so that all who believe become our kin. Or the independent spirit: I can do it all myself. Yet Scripture tells us not to forsake the assembly, to confess our faults to one another, to let iron sharpen iron. None of that sounds like going it alone.

> ***"Family over everything—most people agree. The Bible says God over everything. We have said we believe, we accept, and we confess, but we still think in an earthly posture."***
>
> **— PASTOR BRIAN GOINES**

This is why Paul grounds the command in identity: "You died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God." A mind set on things above is not escapism; it is realism about who we now are. The earthly posture keeps asking how much money, how I look, what they think, what they say. The heavenly posture asks one question first: What does the Word say? If God has said it, what "they" say no longer settles anything.

Pastor Goines admitted that once you run every area of life through a biblical mentality, it changes your expectations. You stop being surprised when people who are not living for Christ do not act like it, and you stop measuring yourself by them. Instead you begin asking of your own choices: Where is the biblical principle in this? This week, catch one assumption you have never questioned—a saying you repeat, a rule you live by—and ask whether it came from above or from below.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *Which of my everyday "rules for living"—the sayings I repeat, the conclusions I act on without thinking—have I never actually traced back to Scripture?*

2. *When I face a decision, what question really runs first in my mind: what will it cost, how will it look, what will people say—or what does the Word say? What does that order reveal about where my mind is set?*

3. *Where has an independent, "I can do it myself" spirit kept me out of the accountability, prayer, and fellowship Scripture calls me into? What would it look like to let someone sharpen me this month?*

4. *In what one area of my life will I deliberately ask this week, "Would this be fitting as it is in heaven?"—and what am I prepared to change if the answer is no?*

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DAY THREE — TAKE IT OFF: BODY, BIAS, AND BEHAVIOR

SCRIPTURE READING

COLOSSIANS 3:5, 8–11 (NIV)

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. … But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Pastor Goines summarized Paul's call to Christian virtue in three words we can carry all week: our body, our bias, and our behavior. Paul's instruction comes in the language of a wardrobe—take it off—and Pastor Goines was honest about the lists. You might not have all of them, he said, but you've got some of them.

Behavior is where most of us would rather not look, because it is so ordinary. How you drive matters. How you talk to people at work matters. How you speak to the person who got your order wrong matters. He asked whether he could put us on speakerphone during the morning commute, and the room laughed because the room knew. God still hears. The anger and filthy language Paul names are not reserved for the notorious; they show up in traffic.

> ***"How you road rage matters. How you talk to people at work matters. How you deal with them when your order is wrong matters. Take it off. You know God still hears you, right?"***
>
> **— PASTOR BRIAN GOINES**

The body is where we grade ourselves on a curve, keeping the big sins at a distance while excusing the thought life. Scripture will not allow it. A heavenly mind knows that what we feed the eyes in private corrupts the spirit, damages intimacy, and grieves the God who is present even when a screen is the only light in the room.

Then, in the middle of the take-it-off passage, Paul names our biases: "Here there is no Gentile or Jew … but Christ is all, and is in all." Pastor Goines admitted he has them; so do we. They may run along lines of gender, background, politics, or simply how a stranger is dressed. Some were earned honestly—someone in a uniform once mishandled you, and now every uniform makes you bristle. Understandable, he said, but still a bias. His diagnostic is simple: whoever you have decided you will not listen to is who you are biased against. Clothing comes off one piece at a time. This week, choose the one garment the Spirit has already been pointing at.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *Of Paul's two lists—the sins of desire and the sins of the mouth and temper—which items do I tend to excuse in myself because they seem smaller or more private than the others?*

2. *If someone could listen in on my commute, my workplace conversations, or my reaction when things go wrong, what would they learn about the old self I have not yet taken off?*

3. *Whom have I decided I will not listen to—a group, a type of person, someone who once hurt me? What would it take to see them as people Christ created and in whom He is at work?*

4. *What is the one garment of the old self the Holy Spirit has been pointing at, and what concrete step will I take this week to put it off?*

DAY FOUR — PUT ON LOVE: FORGIVE AS THE LORD FORGAVE YOU

SCRIPTURE READING

COLOSSIANS 3:12–14 (NIV)

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Having told us what to take off, Paul hands us a new wardrobe—and Sunday Pastor Goines pointed out something we read past too easily. Before Paul names a single garment, he names us: "God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved." The instructions come from love. And notice, he said, that everything on the list has to do with how we deal with other people: compassion that genuinely cares, kindness that is simply nice, humility that does not place itself above anyone, gentleness that handles people well, patience that waits on them.

Then comes the garment we fight hardest to leave on the hanger: "Bear with each other and forgive one another." Pastor Goines read our objections back to us with uncomfortable accuracy. I forgive, but I'll never forget. I forgive you as long as you stay away from me. I forgive you—but no. That kind of forgiveness, he said, is ours. Paul asks for a different kind: "Forgive as the Lord forgave you."

> ***"I don't want you to forgive like you forgive. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. You know how many times He had to forgive me to get me up here to this podium today? So who am I to hold this against you?"***
>
> **— PASTOR BRIAN GOINES**

That standard changes the whole conversation. We did not earn the forgiveness we received. We were still struggling in sin, unworthy of pardon, when God sent His Son to live for us, die for us, and rise again—all of it for our forgiveness. A person who has received that cannot coherently withhold a smaller mercy from someone else. Pastor Goines also moved us past the clichés. Unforgiveness is not merely like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die. Unforgiveness is disobedience to God; disobedience separates us from God; and separation from God is death.

Over all of it, Paul says, put on love, which binds every other virtue together in perfect unity. Love is the belt that keeps the rest of the clothing from slipping. It is one thing to say you love someone; it is another to show it by forgiving them. In a culture that advertises how little it cares, the church is meant to be the place where people still do. Someone this week will need the mercy you were given. Perhaps the phone call you have been avoiding is where the new clothes get worn first.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *Which of the five garments—compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience—is hardest for me to wear with the people closest to me, and why?*

2. *Is there someone I have "forgiven" on my own terms—as long as they stay away, as long as I never have to deal with them? What would forgiving them as the Lord forgave me actually require?*

3. *When I honestly remember how much I have been forgiven, which grievance I am holding begins to look different?*

4. *What specific act of love—a call, a conversation, a release—is God asking me to make this week toward someone I have been keeping at a distance?*

DAY FIVE — AT HOME, NOT A VISITOR: LET THE WORD DWELL RICHLY

SCRIPTURE READING

COLOSSIANS 3:16 (NIV)

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Pastor Goines lingered Sunday over one word: dwell. To dwell is to live with. The Amplified Bible, which he placed in our hands, renders the verse this way: let the spoken word of Christ have its home within you, dwelling in your heart and mind, permeating every aspect of your being. Then he asked the question that sums up this whole week: Is the Word at home with you, or is it a visitor? Does it live only in the car on the way to service, or in the sanctuary on Sunday—or does it live with you?

A Word that dwells does not share the house with rival authorities. Pastor Goines made two statements we should not hurry past: God's Word is not to be mixed with anything else, and God's Word is not to be measured by anything else. Then he described a pattern most of us recognize. Something frustrates us, and our first move is not prayer and Scripture. It is to vent. Then to poll—"If this happened to you, what would you do?" Then to try a plan in our own strength. Only when all of that fails do we turn to God.

> ***"God's Word is not to be mixed with anything else, and it is not to be measured by anything else. Is the Word at home with you—or is it a visitor?"***
>
> **— PASTOR BRIAN GOINES**

The Creator of the earth is not one opinion among several to be weighed against the street corner and the group chat. When we finally bring Him a question we have already submitted to everyone else, we are not seeking His counsel; we are looking for a tiebreaker. God will not be a party to that confusion. When we decide He is who He says He is, we come to Him first for clarity.

A Word that permeates also reaches the rooms we have kept for ourselves—our entertainment, our social media, our daily conversations and relationships. Pastor Goines was honest that this can cost us. Some long friendships, full of laughter and loyalty, may not survive a life wholly given to Christ, and that hurts. But no one can be committed to two. And when the Word is truly at home, Paul says, it overflows—into teaching, into wise counsel for one another, into songs sung with gratitude. This week, notice where you go first when trouble comes, and make the Word your first call.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *When something goes wrong, what is honestly my first move—venting, polling people, fixing it myself, or going to God and His Word? What does that order say about who my real guide is?*

2. *What voices am I mixing with God's Word or measuring it against—friends, media, culture, my own feelings—and which one tends to win when they disagree?*

3. *Which room in my life does the Word only visit: my entertainment, my social media, my conversations, my relationships? What would it look like for the Word to live there?*

4. *What relationship or habit may need to change if the Word is going to dwell in me richly, and am I willing to accept that cost this week?*

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DAY SIX — WHATEVER YOU DO: CHOOSING THE COMMITMENT

SCRIPTURE READING

COLOSSIANS 3:17; JOSHUA 24:15 (NIV)

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. … But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve … But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHT

Pastor Goines left us with an assignment: examine your daily mindset, examine your daily habits, and honestly assess your relationship with the Word of God. He would not let us excuse ourselves easily. It is simple to point at drinking or smoking and say, "I would never." So he pointed at the online shopping cart instead—because Paul names greed as idolatry. How long did we spend comparing sizes and colors and patiently waiting for the price to drop? Are we that patient with people? With God? Invite someone to Bible study and an hour and a half is too long—after two hours spent finding the right shade of fuchsia for next week's shirt.

He told on himself, too. Monday Night Football might turn Tuesday's Bible reading into a very quick one. But what will the game give him compared with what the Word gives? He noted people who follow an artist to three cities on the same tour and wait hours for a late start without complaint—and then wonder why Sunday service starts so early.

> ***"What is Monday Night Football going to give me versus studying His Word? I said I'm committed. I said I'm a citizen. I said I'm in this exclusive relationship. So something has to sacrifice."***
>
> **— PASTOR BRIAN GOINES**

The point is not that football, shopping, or concerts are sins. The point is that our calendars and receipts testify to our commitments more honestly than our words do. Joshua stood before Israel and made it plain that there is a choice to make—and making no choice is still a choice. Paul gives the shape of the chosen life: whatever you do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks.

Sunday's story ended where every honest version of it ends. The two friends discovered that benefits without commitment grow murky, and then hollow. Finally they chose each other—and with that choice came new sacrifices, a changed view, and changed behavior. God is looking for a church that has made the same decision: everything else is no longer an option. This week, put one specific sacrifice on your calendar that says, in a way your schedule can see, "As for me, I will serve the Lord."

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Space is given below each question for journaling or small-group notes.

1. *If someone reviewed my calendar, my screen time, and my purchases from the past month, what would they conclude I am most committed to?*

2. *Where am I showing more patience, sacrifice, and enthusiasm for entertainment or possessions than for God, His people, or His Word?*

3. *Of the three assignments—examining my mindset, my habits, and my relationship with the Word—which most needs my honest attention, and what will that examination look like this week?*

4. *What one specific sacrifice will I make this week so that "whatever I do" is done in the name of the Lord Jesus—and when, exactly, will I make it?*

CLOSING PRAYER

— for the week of October 11, 2026 —

Lord, we confess that we have wanted the benefits without the commitment. We have come to You for blessing, protection, and provision, and then kept our options open. We have built our plans outside of Your will and then asked You to put Your name on them. Forgive us. You are the LORD, You are one, and You have never asked for less than all of us. Today we stop negotiating. We choose You—exclusively.

Lift our minds, Father. We have been raised with Christ, and yet we still think in an earthly posture—anxious about money, appearance, and what people will say. Teach us to set our hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at Your right hand. Let "God over everything" be more than a phrase we agree with; let it be the way we think in the kitchen, at the office, and in traffic.

Holy Spirit, we stand before You still wearing garments we were told to take off long ago. You know our bodies, our biases, and our behavior better than we do. You heard us on the commute. You see us when the room is dark. You know whom we have decided not to listen to. Put to death what belongs to our earthly nature, and renew us in the image of our Creator, until there is no category we hold over anyone, because Christ is all, and in all.

Clothe us now, Lord, as Your chosen people, holy and dearly loved. Give us compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Where we have offered forgiveness on our own terms, teach us to forgive as You forgave us—fully, freely, at the cost of Your Son. Bind it all together with love, and let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts.

Let Your Word make its home in us—not as a visitor on Sunday, but as the first voice we hear and the final word we obey. Forgive us for mixing it, measuring it, and polling everyone before we come to You. Fill our entertainment, our conversations, our screens, and our relationships until Your message dwells in us richly and overflows in gratitude and song.

And now, Lord, as for us and our households, we will serve You. Show us the sacrifice this week requires and give us the courage to make it. Whatever we do, in word or in deed, let it be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, with thanks to You. Make us a church exclusively committed to Your Word, so that someone will come to know You through us. In the mighty name of Jesus, Amen.