

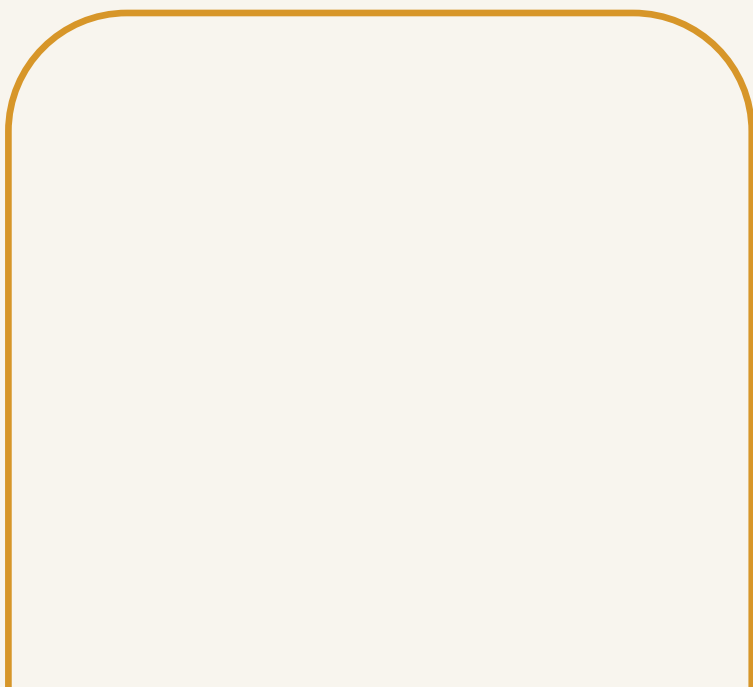
RESET AND RECENTER

A Guide to Living the
Connected Life



What's in This Book?

Living in a Technological World	1
How Do I Start to Reset and Recenter?	6
How Do I Unplug?	18
How Do I Connect?	32
How Do I Live a Full Life?	44
Resources for Thriving in a Technological World	55



Living in a Technological World

Technology is pretty amazing, isn't it?

If you have a cell phone in your hand, you can make purchases, access information, and instantly connect with friends nearby and around the world. Technology has revolutionized transportation, medicine, entertainment, and so many other aspects of our lives.

As followers of Jesus, what does it look like for us to use technology well? Can His way of living help us use technology in ways that bless our lives and the lives of the people around us, while avoiding the depression, anxiety, and stress that can accompany its use?

Yes! Even though technology looked different in the first century, Jesus' way of life can still guide us today as we approach the modern tools at our fingertips.

Jesus used spiritual habits during His time on earth—repeated actions like prayer, silence, and worship made space for Him to better connect with His Father and friends. He knew that how He spent His time was important.

As disciples of Jesus, we're called to pursue His way of living. This means choosing to spend more time getting closer to God and others, rather than isolating ourselves. And figuring out how to do that with our technology habits, well ... that's what this book is all about.

So, let's discover how we can reset our relationship with technology and recenter our lives on living out our God-given purpose with peace, strength, and real connection.

Ready? Let's go. Over the next few weeks, we'll discover answers to these questions:

- ▶ How do I start to reset and recenter?
- ▶ How do I unplug?
- ▶ How do I connect?
- ▶ How do I live a full life?

Each week will include three stages:

- ▶ Biblical encouragement with personal reflection
- ▶ Weekly self-inventory of your technology use
- ▶ Discussion questions for your friends, family, or LifeGroup

Most change results from small steps taken consistently over time. This resource isn't a magic wand, but it will give you helpful truths and practical steps rooted in Scripture that will help you identify your current technology habits and change them over time.

What happens if this works? If you read through this book, assess your use of technology, listen to the Holy Spirit's lead, identify new boundaries and habits, and partner with others to engage with technology well, there's no limit to what God can do.

If lots of people take it to heart, it could lead to healthier communities:

- ▶ Families and friends spending more time together.
- ▶ A decline in depression, anxiety, self-harm, and suicide.
- ▶ Children playing, reading, riding bikes, and making neighborhood friends before reaching for a screen.
- ▶ Jesus followers having more time to do the things Jesus does, go where He goes, and love how He loves.

What Do You Hope God Will Do for You?

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. Ephesians 3:20-21 NIV



Use your phone as a helpful tool to grow your faith as you see QR codes throughout the book. To scan the code, take out your phone and open your camera. Point your camera at the code, and your phone will display a link. Tap the link to access the content.

Take Inventory

Throughout this book, you'll have the opportunity to pause and reflect on your screen habits. This will help you notice patterns in the ways you use technology and track how your habits are changing.

Spend time filling out this page to establish a baseline to help you see your habits change over the next four weeks.

How do you feel about your current relationship with your phone, tablet, computer, social media, television, or streaming entertainment?



Open your phone's settings and find your screen time averages.

My daily average screen time is:

What are your top three apps and the screen time associated with them?



Where else do you find yourself spending time with technology?
What feels surprising, encouraging, or discouraging about your answers?



What are some ways technology has helped you grow closer to God and others lately?

- ☐ Using the Bible App to engage with God's Word
- ☐ Staying connected to long-distance friends and family
- ☐ Sharing pictures or updates with people I care about
- ☐ Engaging with spiritual growth content to deepen my faith
- ☐ Enjoying movies and shows with people I care about
- ☐ Connecting with my LifeGroup or close groups of friends
- ☐ Listening to a helpful podcast

Other:

What are some ways technology has separated you from God and others, or negatively impacted you personally?

- ☐ Getting distracted by digital notifications
- ☐ Being overwhelmed with too much information
- ☐ Feeling negative impacts on health
- ☐ Getting caught in comparison traps on social media
- ☐ Disconnecting from relationships
- ☐ Taking time from hobbies I enjoy
- ☐ Spending too much time gaming or watching shows and movies

Other:





Week 1 / How Do I Start to Reset and Recenter?



Day 1: Who Do You Want to Become?

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Ephesians 2:10 NIV

All of us are in the process of becoming someone. Which is pretty cool, if you think about it. The things we do and the ways we spend our time influence who we are and who we will one day be.

Take a moment and look back at the answers you provided on pages 3-4. These answers are just one glimpse of the ways you spend your time each day. But the music apps you use and the amount of time you spend on news websites still influence you. They have an impact on who you're becoming.

With the answers you gave in mind, ask yourself:
Who am I becoming?

If you're like most of us, you might have some mixed feelings about who you're becoming. As you look at your life and the direction you're headed, there may be things you like and things you wish you could change.

If so, you're in the right place. Today we get to start taking steps toward real, lasting change.

But where do we start? How do we begin to reset and recenter? In Pastor Craig Groeschel's book and sermon series *The Power to Change*, he talks about how knowing our identity is the key to long-term success. As he says, "When we know who we want to become, we know what we need to do."

Over the rest of this week, we're going to talk about identifying what we need to do. But for today, let's focus on identity and who we're becoming.

First, reread today's verse from Ephesians. What is your identity? Who does God say you are?



Second, who do you want to become? What good works did God create you to do?



As you continue through the rest of Week 1, remember not just who you are, but *whose* you are. God loves you, and He's proud of the way you're showing up to reset your relationship with technology.



Day 2: What Habits Do You Want to Keep?

... for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. Philippians 2:13 NIV

It can be easy to fixate on the things in our lives that we want to change. Our problems and struggles often stand out to us, and we get so focused on what we want to be different that we miss out on opportunities to notice and celebrate what we're already doing well. Sometimes, we even put in so much effort starting new habits that our old, good habits end up falling by the wayside.

But we don't want to lose sight of the things we're doing well, and this includes our technology habits. Using the Bible App to learn more about God, or calling a grandparent to stay in touch—these are good things! When we take the time to identify and lean into the ways in which we're using technology to strengthen our relationships, we solidify those habits. They become a foundation on which we can build more healthy habits.

This pre-existing foundation of good habits acts as a reminder that, when it comes to our relationship with technology, none of us is starting from ground zero. While we all have room to grow, we've already made some progress in the right direction. Let this reality act as an encouragement as you continue through this book.

This foundation of habits to keep is a reminder that God is already at work in your life. He formed you to do good things—to invest in strong relationships with Him and other people—and He doesn't expect you to do that work on your own. He is constantly with you, working within your heart and your mind to make you more like His Son, Jesus. When you choose to partner with Him in that work by embracing good habits and letting go of unhelpful habits, you'll accelerate the work He's doing.

Take another look at pages 3-4. How are you already using technology well? Have any other examples of good technology habits come to mind since then?



How could you help these good habits continue to flourish in the coming days and weeks?





Day 3: What Habits Do You Want to Change?

"I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but I will not be mastered by anything.
1 Corinthians 6:12 NIV

As Christians, can we do anything? The Apostle Paul seemed to say so, right in this verse from 1 Corinthians. But there are a couple of important caveats in there. We can do anything ... but not everything is beneficial. We can do anything ... but we don't want to be mastered by anything. And "anything" extends to our use of technology.

Do you ever find yourself doomscrolling? You know, swiping through social media or news headlines, trying to find something to make you feel better or give you another dopamine rush? Or maybe you've noticed yourself stuck binge-watching TV—when in the back of your mind, you know you'd be better off using the time to connect with others.

These are just a couple of the ways we can sometimes feel mastered by the technology in our lives. Most of us can relate to this feeling in one way or another. But it's not a reason for shame—instead, think of it as an opportunity. It's a chance to acknowledge the challenges we're facing, figure out what we want to change, and choose a better way forward.

In the coming weeks, we'll spend more time reflecting on what it looks like to unplug from the unhelpful technology habits in our lives and connect with the relationships we need. For now, though, let's take an inventory of the technology habits we want to change.

Revisit pages 3-4. How has technology negatively impacted you or your relationships? Have any other examples of unhelpful technology habits come to mind since then?



What's one habit you're already thinking you'd like to stop or pause?



When we replace an unhelpful habit with a good habit, we're more likely to follow through on our goals. What are some activities, spiritual practices, or hobbies you could try or return to in place of the habit you want to change?



Take Inventory

Use the space below to reflect on your technology use in the last week. Then answer the reflection questions that follow.

My Daily Average Screen Time:

About how many hours did you spend gaming or watching shows and movies?

3 Ways Technology Helped Me This Week:



3 Ways Technology Was Unhelpful for Me This Week:



As you look over your answers on the previous page, what's surprising? How do you hope your answers will change in the coming weeks and months?



How are you working toward healthier habits with technology?



Talk With Others

Information consumed in isolation rarely leads to transformation. So use the questions and resources below to talk about what you're learning with your friends, family, or LifeGroup. Be sure to save time at the end of your conversation to identify next steps and pray together as you start a new week.

3 Things to Talk About

- ▶ Share openly about your daily technology use. How is it integrated into your life? Identify the areas in which technology use is important and the areas in which it's less important.
- ▶ What are you most excited about as you begin implementing healthier technology habits? What are some challenges you might face?
- ▶ Picture yourself or your group a year from now. What do you hope will be different about the way you use technology? How will it keep you connected, and how will you navigate the challenges it presents?

Commit to an Action

Choose one next step to improve your relationship with technology. Write it in the blank on the next page and then talk with others about your progress this week.

Ideas for Action

- ▶ Make a list of personal, group, or family values. Identify how technology could support these values.
- ▶ Identify three daily habits you'd like to practice. Write them down somewhere you'll see them every day.
- ▶ Find a Bible Plan to read with others in the Bible App. Once you find a Plan you're interested in, choose the "With Friends" option and send the link to everyone in your group.

- ▶ Meet with someone in person or talk to them over the phone instead of sending them a text or email.
- ▶ Set limits and create positive goals for your social media use. Consider daily time limits, predetermined times of day, reduced notifications, and/or removal from your home screen. But most importantly, have a plan to use your social media for good.

This week, I will ...



Pray Together

Heavenly Father, we believe You can work all things for good. We also know that, when we're not paying attention, our screens and technology can distract us from You and others. Please show us how You're calling us to use technology. Give us wisdom to know what boundaries to set and the discipline we need to follow through. Grow us closer to You as we take control of our technology. In Jesus' name, amen.





Week 2 / How Do I Unplug?



Day 1: Learning From Jesus

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls." Matthew 11:29 NIV

Welcome to Week 2 of *Reset and Recenter*, friend! Last week, we talked about who we're becoming, who God is calling us to become, and how our technology habits are helping us (or preventing us) from becoming that person.

This week, we're going to take a look at how we can reset. We'll talk about why it's important to unplug from unhelpful technology habits and how the life of Jesus can show us practical ways to unplug.

One of the reasons the gospel is good news is that Jesus' life shows us a better way to live. When we read the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we find wisdom for living that we can apply to every aspect of our lives.

Jesus didn't have a smartphone, but He did live a busy life. He and His disciples were constantly on the move, traveling from town to town, teaching people and healing diseases. No one would have blamed Jesus if He had felt distracted or overwhelmed by it all.

But Jesus had specific habits in place that allowed Him to keep His head above water, even as He navigated stressful seasons of life. He knew He needed to unplug now and then to continue His work on earth. And there are ways we can apply His habits to our use of technology and our pursuit of a better way of living.

On Day 2 and Day 3 of this week, we'll take a look at two of those habits. But for now, reflect on the following questions:

What makes it difficult for you to unplug from technology?



When was the last time you had a break from technology? What was that experience like?





Day 2: Spending Time With Our Father

Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. Luke 5:15-16 NIV

Reflect for a moment on what Jesus does in the verses above.

More and more people are flocking to Him. They're hanging on His every word. They're eager to hear His teaching. They want to catch a glimpse of one of His miracles.

In the middle of all this momentum, Jesus ... drops everything. He leaves the crowds. And He goes to "lonely" places. Not because He's in search of a scenic getaway, but because He wants to spend time with His Father.

Why? Because He knows that unplugging from everything else to make space for this relationship is crucial. Without this relationship, everything else falls apart.

This habit of withdrawing to connect with God is one way we can unplug ourselves from unhelpful technology habits and pursue a better way of living. It can sometimes feel easier to go to our screens instead of relying on God—looking to Google, Reddit, ChatGPT, and TikTok as our main sources of hope and direction. But relying too much on our screens can isolate us from the connections we want and need.

When we make a habit of pressing pause on the demands of life to make room for our relationship with our heavenly Father, everything changes. We find the love, support, and wisdom we need to navigate life, connect with others, and make sense of the good we may have found online. This habit can look like getting

up early to spend time with God, going on a nature walk to worship God for the things He's made, spending quiet moments in prayer on a drive, or going on an extended retreat to practice silence and solitude.

What's your go-to way of connecting with your heavenly Father?



How could you make getting away and connecting with God more of a habit this week?





Day 3: Making Time for Rest

Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Mark 2:27-28 NIV

Jesus was legendary for showing people a new way to understand something. He'd often say, "You've heard it said ... but I say ..."

In today's reading, Jesus does something similar. He reminds us that Sabbath, a day of rest, is a gift for us to receive from God, not just a rule to be obeyed—as the religious leaders of the time seemed to believe.

Rest is a practice God modeled for us within the first two chapters of the Bible—He rested on the seventh day of creation. Sabbath rest was included in the Ten Commandments given to Moses, and it was still practiced by Jesus and His people many, many centuries later.

And guess what? If Jesus took time to unplug and rest, we can too.

But there's something else Jesus is saying in the verse above: He calls Himself "the Lord of the Sabbath." What is this supposed to mean?

Jesus is saying that connecting with Him is like an ultimate Sabbath that we can enter into. Living in Him and following His way will offer us the ultimate rest.

How this plays out practically will look a little different for everyone.



Watch this short video to learn more about how slowing down can help you unplug and connect with God.

Reflect on how you might replace some screen time with a rest from technology on a regular basis. You might even commit to a weekly Sabbath rhythm where you avoid social media or limit screen use for a day to spend time with friends, enjoy hobbies, and connect fully with God.

What's one way you could practice rest this week?



Write down when you'll practice Sabbath next week—even if you start with just a few hours.



As you consider a screen-free Sabbath, you'll want to plan activities or hobbies that you can use to fill the time you might normally spend scrolling your phone, watching movies, or playing video games.

Circle three to five ideas you'd like to try. (Or feel free to write in your own!)

- ▶ Spend time outside at a nature reserve, the zoo, or a park.
- ▶ Go to a busier place, like a mall or coffee shop, and notice the people around you.
- ▶ Practice a new hobby that requires you to work with your hands—maybe baking, gardening, or knitting.
- ▶ Play board games or card games with your family or friends.
- ▶ Make a meal to enjoy with others.
- ▶ Get active by playing outside—you might try volleyball, basketball, or soccer.
- ▶ Exercise your mind by trying brain teasers or puzzles.
- ▶ Visit a museum with someone and talk about what you learn, observe, or enjoy.
- ▶ Reflect on your day or week through journaling.
- ▶ Read a paper Bible and underline or circle meaningful things you read.
- ▶ Spend time getting to know someone new, like a neighbor.
- ▶ Go to a local library and check out a book to read.
- ▶ Practice using your phone only for the Bible App, calls or texts with family and friends, and utilities like maps.

Jesus didn't have
a smartphone,
but He did live a
busy life.

Take Inventory

Use the space below to reflect on your technology use in the last week. Then answer the reflection questions that follow.

My Daily Average Screen Time:

About how many hours did you spend gaming or watching shows and movies?

3 Ways Technology Helped Me This Week:



3 Ways Technology Was Unhelpful for Me This Week:



What patterns do you notice in your technology use, compared to last week? Is there anything you want to try differently next week?



Think of one time you intentionally unplugged from technology this week. How did you fill your time, and how did you feel afterward?



Talk With Others

Information consumed in isolation rarely leads to transformation. So use the questions and resources below to talk about what you're learning with your friends, family, or LifeGroup. Be sure to save time at the end of your conversation to identify next steps and pray together as you start a new week.

3 Things to Talk About

- ▶ On a scale from 1 (easy) to 10 (impossible), how would you rate your experience resetting your relationship with technology this week? What thoughts, feelings, or physical changes do you notice when you put your devices down for an extended period of time?
- ▶ Our technology habits directly impact our faith because of the unique ways they can bring us closer to God or distract us from His love and plans for us. How have you seen this play out in your life this week?
- ▶ Describe how you've intentionally disconnected from technology this week. What was your screen-free experience like, and how did you fill your time? If you didn't get to disconnect, what were some of the experiences that made it difficult to disconnect from technology?

Commit to an Action

Choose one next step to improve your relationship with technology. Write it in the blank below and then talk with others about your progress this week.

Ideas for Action

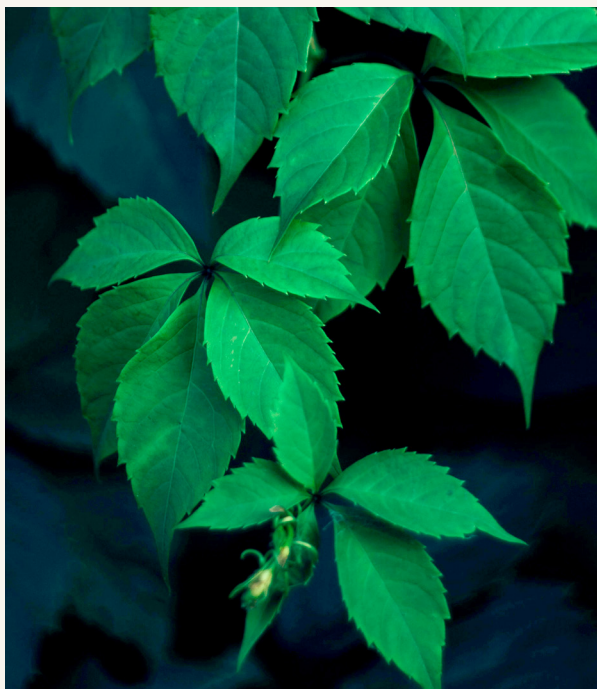
- ▶ Choose a day, or even a couple of hours, to completely disconnect from your phone and other screens. Review the list from page 25 for ideas on how you can fill the time. When you're done, spend time reflecting on your experience.
- ▶ Over the next week, spend five minutes every day in silence. Practice taking deep breaths and connecting with God.
- ▶ Choose a verse to memorize next week. You might start with Matthew 11:28-30.
- ▶ Give your phone a bedtime and let it charge overnight in a different room. Notice if your sleep changes and whether or not you engage with your phone differently throughout the day.
- ▶ Turn off all unnecessary notifications. Throughout the week, be mindful of how often you check your phone out of habit rather than necessity.

This week, I will ...



Pray Together

Patient Father, thank You for showing us, through Jesus, a better way to live—at a steady, consistent pace, free of hurry. We ask that You would help us unplug from technology more regularly so we can connect with You and the people around us. We want to use our devices as helpful tools, not distractions. Give us wisdom to know how we can find real rest in You. In Jesus' name, amen.





Week 3 / How Do I Connect?



Day 1: How Did Jesus Connect?

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. Genesis 1:26-27, 31 NIV

Welcome to Week 3 of *Reset and Recenter*, friend! We hope the last couple of weeks have felt refreshing for you as you've reflected on your habits and unplugged from some of the technology in your life. This week, we're going to look at recentering our lives in relationships.

From the beginning, God created us for relationship. He didn't design us to live life alone, but to thrive in connection with others. We need people for encouragement, accountability, and care, and others need us, too.

We are designed to be in community with others because God is relational. He created us to be *with* us. That's one reason why Jesus came to earth, shared meals, had deep conversations, and walked alongside people in their everyday lives. He valued relationships, and we thrive when we follow His lead.

How does this relate to our technology habits? Technology isn't the enemy of relationships. Rather, it gives us easy access to tools that can either help or hurt our connection with others. This week we'll discover ways we can prioritize relationships and leverage technology for deeper connections. For now, take some time to think about the following questions.

How do you see technology influencing the ways you relate to and engage with others?



When you think about your most important relationships, how does connecting face to face feel different than connecting through technology?





Day 2: Giving Up Self-Sufficiency

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another ... Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV

Technology allows us to be more self-sufficient than ever. Why bother a family member, friend, neighbor, or pastor when we could ask one of our devices? It's faster, it doesn't inconvenience anyone, and it takes away the risk of judgment.

Prioritizing relationships with other people has always been a challenge. Sure, modern inventions like TikTok and Netflix don't make connection any easier. But according to the author of Hebrews, people struggled with encouraging one another and meeting up regularly 2,000 years ago, too.

But as we established yesterday by looking at how Jesus interacted, we were designed to be together. We need to be in each other's lives, supporting, encouraging, and caring for one another. And as amazing as technology is—we couldn't have written and published this devotional without it!—it provides us with endless opportunities to replace relationships with technology.

When we make a habit of choosing comfortable, easy solutions, it comes with a cost. We find ourselves increasingly alone, even when we're around other people.

So what's the solution? Well, relationships are built on trust, and we can't develop trust unless we rely on other people. We'll talk more about that tomorrow. For now, spend some time reflecting on what we've talked about today.

How have you used technology to be more self-sufficient?



How has self-sufficiency impacted your relationships with other people?





Day 3: Leaning Into Dependence

All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:44-47 NIV

Yesterday we talked about how technology and self-sufficiency can be an obstacle to connecting with others. Today let's explore what it looks like to lean into connection.

How do you feel about dependence?

If you don't like the sound of it, that's understandable! It runs counter to so many cultures today. But when we look at descriptions of the early church in the Book of Acts, it was a community marked by dependence. The believers' lives were radically integrated. Whether they were giving up what they had to meet the needs of others, worshiping together, or eating together, they lived out their faith not independently, but interdependently.

And what was the result? The Lord added to their number daily.

These early believers knew they needed to depend on one another. And when we allow technology to eliminate any dependence on other people, it becomes harder for us to live out the calling God has given us—to be the Church, the body of Christ.

Today we're providing more space for reflection because this may be one of the most challenging habits for us to put into practice.

Read today's passage slowly two or three times.

What actions do you see the early believers taking together?



Which of these actions are already a regular part of your life? Which ones would feel most challenging to adopt?



How could technology help you pursue the type of connection with other people that's described in the early church?



Today's reading ends with, "And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." How does this challenge or encourage you as you think about your relationships with others?



Take Inventory

Use the space below to reflect on your technology use in the last week. Then answer the reflection questions that follow.

My Daily Average Screen Time:

About how many hours did you spend gaming or watching shows and movies?

3 Ways Technology Helped Me This Week:



3 Ways Technology Was Unhelpful for Me This Week:



What patterns do you notice in your technology use, compared to last week? Where are you experiencing resistance to resetting, and where are you finding momentum?



When are you tempted to replace deep connection with technology? How can you connect with someone face to face sometime in the next week?



Talk With Others

Information consumed in isolation rarely leads to transformation. So use the questions and resources below to talk about what you're learning with your friends, family, or LifeGroup. Be sure to save time at the end of your conversation to identify next steps and pray together as you start a new week.

3 Things to Talk About

- ▶ What are some of your favorite ways to use technology to grow your connection with others? How do you know when it's becoming more of a hindrance than a helpful tool?
- ▶ How satisfied are you with the way you or your family uses technology? What's one thing you wish you could change about the way you use it? What would look different in your relationships if you were able to make this change?
- ▶ Share about a moment this past week when you found connection with God or others. Talk about that experience and what you'll do to continue adding more moments like it to your coming week.

Commit to an Action

Choose one next step to improve your relationship with technology. Write it in the blank on the next page and then talk with others about your progress this week.

Ideas for Action

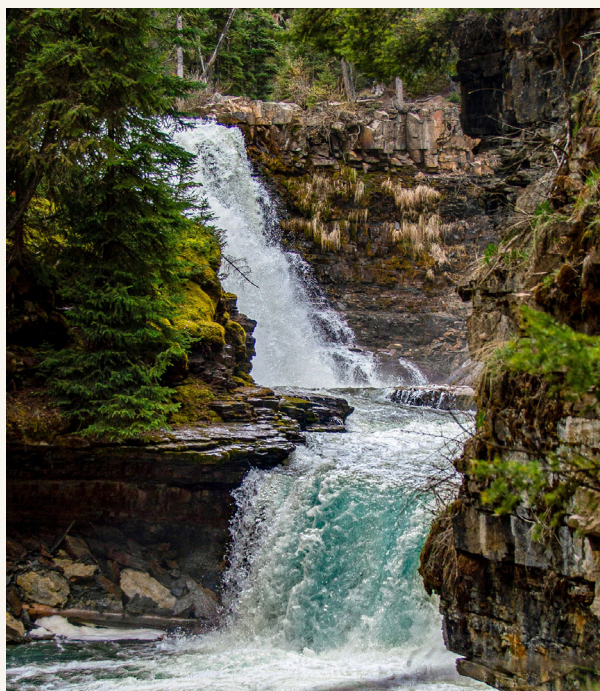
- ▶ Plan a movie night with your family or friends. At the end of the movie, talk about your favorite moments, what surprised you, or any lesson you learned from the story. Notice how technology can connect you to others.
- ▶ Serve together as a group, then enjoy a meal or treat afterward. For ideas on how to serve in your community, talk with your pastor.
- ▶ Plan a meal together, whether you visit a local restaurant or have a potluck at someone's home. Make the decision to stay screen free while you're together.
- ▶ Ask everyone to share their favorite song. Listen together, then talk about why those songs are meaningful.
- ▶ Go on a hike with your family or friends. Notice everything God's created and share what you're most thankful for.

This week, I will ...



Pray Together

Heavenly Father, we want to be connected to You and others more than we're connected to the things of this world. Show us the ways in which we've replaced relationships with technology, and show us how to prioritize the people around us. Help us to be bold and brave as we choose connection over convenience. We trust that You have a good plan for us and our relationships. In Jesus' name, amen.





Week 4 / How Do I Live a Full Life?



Day 1: Time to Reflect

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.
Romans 12:2 NLT

Friend, welcome to the final week of *Reset and Recenter*. We are so proud of the progress you've made! For these last few days, we'll spend time considering ways you can take what you've learned and use it in pursuit of a full life, one in which you're following Jesus and using technology well.

As you reflect on the Apostle Paul's direction to the church in Rome, consider the ways your technology habits have changed over the last few weeks. Are you being transformed into a new person? Is God changing the way you think?

What do you notice that's different—about your relationships, your closeness with God, your perception of the world around you, or your mental or physical health?

Write a few of the ways God is renewing you, then spend a few moments thanking Him for this renewal.



As you've made some changes to your technology use, maybe you've started to feel different from others around you. That's to be expected! Today's verse reminds us that as God transforms us into a new person, we'll become less tied to the behavior and customs of this world.

There's not a one-size-fits-all set of rules for how Christians should engage with technology. However, there are a few foundational mindsets we can embrace.

- ▶ We can choose to be mindful of our time and use it to live like Jesus, whether we're on or off screens.
- ▶ We can use our phones to connect with others while prioritizing face-to-face interactions whenever possible.
- ▶ We can live out the love of God in the ways we respond (or don't respond) to comments and posts on social media.
- ▶ We can set grace-filled boundaries for when, where, and how long we'll use technology daily, so we have the freedom to live a full and abundant life.

What are some ways your new relationship with technology might make you different from the culture surrounding you?



Real change is possible, and the good news is that it's not fully dependent on our own skill or ability. Reread Romans 12:2 and notice how the Apostle Paul shows us that we play a part in change, but it's ultimately God who transforms us.



Day 2: Continue Paying Attention

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

Philippians 4:8 NIV

We've spent the past three weeks talking about our technology habits and ways we can adjust those habits to better connect with God and others.

But most habits aren't lifelong practices. We use them for a season, and we exchange them for new habits as our lives change. So how are we supposed to know when it's time to change a technology habit?

Well, we need to think about the things we think about.

The Apostle Paul knew this was true when he wrote to the believers in Philippi. Jesus shared a similar idea in Matthew 6:

"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light."

Matthew 6:22 NIV

What we focus our eyes, heart, or attention on has the power to change us. If we're filled with joy, peace, and patience, that's a reflection of the things that have our attention. Likewise, if we're frustrated, angry, and pessimistic, that's a reflection of what has our attention, too.

As you continue in the habits you've chosen in the coming weeks and months, pay attention to the things you're thinking about. If you're dwelling on good things and can see ways in which you're growing closer to God and others, then your habits are in a good place! But if you notice yourself beginning to dwell on negative things, or see growing distance in your relationships, take a moment to ask yourself—*where's that coming from?*

The change could be totally unrelated to your relationship with technology. But technology commands so much of our attention, it should always be part of the conversation. Social media, text messaging, TV, movies, music, podcasts—as we spend time on these things, they impact us. We just need to pay attention to *how* they're impacting us.

What are some positive and negative ways you've noticed technology influencing the way you think?





Day 3: Continue Following Jesus

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10 NIV

In the above verse, the ancient Greek word used for "to the full" is an adjective that means "abundant," "excessive," or "more than necessary." Jesus is saying that He didn't just come to help you survive. He came so that you'd say, "What do I do with all this life?!"

Jesus also contrasts Himself with a thief in this verse. The thief only has destruction in mind. But Jesus is a good shepherd who leads, protects, and invites His sheep into safe pasture.

This is what Jesus wants for you. He wants you to have an abundant life, guided by a Shepherd who will always love and protect you. Resetting and recentering your relationship with technology is just one part of that abundant life.

You've worked hard to unplug from unhelpful technology habits and lean into connection with God and others. As you continue forward, you'll encounter moments where you're not always sure what to do next. No matter the situation, John 10 shows you how to know whether you're being guided by the Good Shepherd.

Take some time to reflect on parts of your life that feel full of direction, protection, and purpose.

What areas or relationships in your life feel stronger?



How has your relationship with God grown deeper?



Where do you feel like you're experiencing a truly abundant life? How will you sustain this over time?



In a digital age, it can feel impossible to live a fully present life. As you continue working toward healthier habits and long-term change, remember that the goal isn't to be perfect. The goal is to be guided by the Good Shepherd and become fully alive to what and who matters most.

When you feel the pull of old, unhelpful habits, lean into Jesus. Take your concerns and your worries to Him. Remember, He is the good Guide who wants to show you how to live an abundant life.

Spend a few minutes reading all of Jesus' teaching in John 10. As you read, reflect on this question: How well do I hear and know Jesus' voice in my daily life? Has anything helped me to hear Him more clearly lately? How do I plan to continue those habits?



Take Inventory

Use the space below to reflect on your technology use in the last week. Then answer the reflection questions that follow.

My Daily Average Screen Time:

About how many hours did you spend gaming or watching shows and movies?

3 Ways Technology Helped Me This Week:



3 Ways Technology Was Unhelpful for Me This Week:



What patterns do you notice in your technology use, compared to the last few weeks? What are some things you'd like to continue practicing in the coming weeks and months?



How would you define a full and abundant life? What other technology decisions could you make to continue moving your life toward abundance?



Talk With Others

Information consumed in isolation rarely leads to transformation. So use the questions and resources below to talk about what you're learning with your friends, family, or LifeGroup. Be sure to save time at the end of your conversation to identify next steps and pray together as you start a new week.

3 Things to Talk About

- ▶ How has your relationship with technology changed over the last few weeks? What has led to the greatest change? How will you stay consistent with these practices as you move forward?
- ▶ In what ways are your family or friendships different as a result of building healthy technology habits? How are you more connected, present, or engaged?
- ▶ What's been the most challenging change you've made? How can you make it sustainable as you move forward?

Commit to an Action

Choose one next step to improve your relationship with technology. Write it in the blank on the next page and then talk with others about your progress this week.

Ideas for Action

- ▶ Reach out to someone you haven't connected with in a while. If possible, schedule some time to call or meet up.
- ▶ As a family, put together a playlist with everybody's favorite songs. Then have a dance party! No really, do it.
- ▶ Do a social media audit of the accounts you follow. Filter each account through questions like, *Do I know this person in real life? If I don't, what value do they add to my feed? If I generally feel frustrated after viewing their content, is it because they're*

offering a new perspective that will grow mine, or because they're being hurtful or unkind to others? Then decide if they're still worth the digital "Follow."

You might also choose to follow accounts that help you become more like Jesus—like Life.Church, Pastor Craig Groeschel, and other accounts that help you feel more connected to God, yourself, and others.

- ▶ If you enjoyed the Take Inventory reflections throughout this book, find ways to continue reflecting on your screen time each week. You might find ways to hold one another accountable to your goals or limits, or continue auditing your app usage on a weekly basis.
- ▶ Review the recommended resources in the next section. Explore a few of them as a group, then talk about what you're learning the next time you meet.

This week, I will ...



Pray Together

Heavenly Father, thank You for the full and abundant life You offer each of us. Help us to take hold of that life and embrace Your better ways of living, so we can have closer relationships with You and the people around us. Thank You for the ways You've transformed us over the last few weeks. Give us strength to sustain this change in the weeks and months ahead. In Jesus' name, amen.

Resources for Thriving in a Technological World

Take a few peace-filled breaths and imagine yourself one year from today.

You wake up in the morning, unrushed.

You pick up your phone on the way out the door and realize you somehow feel lighter. Today, your phone wasn't your alarm, or a morning reminder of headlines, or a distraction from the people around you. You made it through getting up, brushing your teeth, and getting dressed without it.

Maybe you used your phone for a morning devotion or as a reminder of what you're praying about. But you put your phone down again before breakfast. Whether by yourself or with others, you didn't feel empty, distracted, or like something was missing.

When you finally look at your notifications, they are streamlined to who and what God has placed in front of you.

You feel the breath in your lungs. You see your neighbors and say hello. You have the mental margin to hear yourself think, and it feels more like prayer and less like worry.

You have reset your relationship with technology, and you're free to live the full and overflowing life Jesus has for you.

Technology is pretty amazing. It closes the distance between far-off friends and family. It allows people around the world unlimited access to God's Word through the Bible App. It helps us experience new perspectives and worldviews that ultimately deepen our understanding of God.

At the same time, it can be a major distraction. It can cause anxiety and depression—and detract from our sense of purpose and joy in the people and life God has for us.

Our relationship with technology will influence how we follow Jesus, because it touches nearly every aspect of our lives. **But like our whole lives—and the whole world, by extension—any and every part of technology can be restored by God and used for His good.**

As you complete this book, how will you continue in the ways God has been renewing you? Think of how you've experienced more of God and others—and found more wholeness for yourself—through small, consistent changes over time. Your vision for one year from now might feel out of reach today, but with daily faithfulness, second chances, self-control, and surrender to God, it's possible.

May you be blessed by these words from Jesus:

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Matthew 5:14-16 NIV

Find More Resources

Scan this QR code for articles, podcasts, and more to help you build healthier tech habits.



Notes

