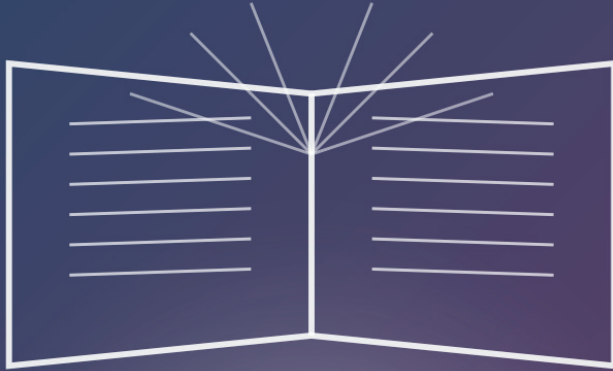


EVERYDAY BIBLE

AI-ASSISTED DEVOTIONAL SERIES



COLOSSIANS

A Simple, Spirit-Shaped Journey Through God's
Word
Sample Preview Edition

Raj Chandra

For Busy, Everyday People



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Everyday Bible: AI-Assisted Devotional Series – Colossians

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Introduction

I have had the pleasure of doing ministry work for almost twenty-five years — sometimes as a volunteer, other times as a full-time minister, and even leading congregations for a duration of time. Across those years, two major observations have stood out:

1. The Bible is an ancient document that can truly be life-changing. However, if not handled carefully, it can also be misused to mislead and harm.
2. Many well-meaning Christians simply don't have the time, money, or energy required to study God's Word deeply and accurately.

This devotional series, *Everyday Bible: AI-Assisted Devotional Series*, was created to address that gap. It provides a daily, accessible resource for drinking deeply from God's Word without needing theological training or access to expensive tools. Each entry aims to combine biblical faithfulness with practical reflection using this simple four-part framework:

- **Text**
- **Purpose**
- **Belief**
- **Behavior**

Each devotional will also include the 3Rs:

- **Retention:** Key points to remember for the day
- **Reflection:** Questions to meditate on
- **Response:** Simple but meaningful actions to take

Why This Framework?

One of the most helpful models for reading the Bible is rooted in speech-act theory, a field of study in linguistic philosophy that explores how words do things. While the theory itself is complex, its core can be made simple:

- **Locution:** What is said (the content or wording)
- **Illocution:** What the author is doing by saying it (the intent or purpose)
- **Perlocution:** What effect the author intends to have on the audience (change in belief or behavior)¹

For example:

Child: "I'm hungry."

- **Locution:** The statement itself.
- **Illocution:** A request for food.
- **Perlocution:** The hope that the parent will make something to eat.

While we rarely think in these terms in everyday life, when reading the Bible, remembering this intentional dynamic of communication is crucial. Scripture is not simply to be observed — it is a living Word, inviting a response.

A Practical Example from Daniel 3

Let's take Daniel 3:5, which lists a group of musical instruments. Scholars have noted that some of the words appear to be Greek,

1 William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard Jr., Introduction to Biblical Interpretation, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), Kindle edition, chap. 6.

which has led to debates about the dating of the book of Daniel. Was it written during the Babylonian era or later, in the time of Greek influence? If later, do the prophecies lose their predictive power? For a busy believer, these questions can quickly spiral into confusion or even doubt. But applying the speech-act model cuts through this complexity.

- **Text (Locution):** A list of musical instruments.
- **Purpose (Illocution):** To show the elaborate pomp behind the king's demand for worship.
- **Belief and Behavior (Perlocution):** To inspire faithful resistance in the face of idolatry, as exemplified by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

By focusing on what the author is doing through the text, readers avoid rabbit holes and can instead ask, What response is this text calling us to? *Sample Preview - Not for Distribution*

Why Not Just Teach Hermeneutics?

In my experience teaching the Bible to people from different cultures, backgrounds, and levels of education, I've found that asking someone to perform deep hermeneutics is a significant challenge. Of course, **context matters** — historical, literary, and theological insights are essential. But the realistic truth is that most people don't have the access or bandwidth to study background material, original languages, or multiple scholarly sources.

Take Colossians, the focus of this devotional. A proper hermeneutical method (as outlined in the Hermeneutical Triad by Kostenberger and Patterson) would require:

- Studying first-century Roman and Jewish context
- Understanding Greco-Roman household codes
- Analyzing Pauline theology and letter structure²

All of which are extremely helpful — but not always feasible for the average Christian.

This devotional does not discard those insights. Instead, it keeps them in the background and uses the speech-act framework to ensure we are faithful to:

- What the **text** says
- What the author (human and divine) is doing through the text (**purpose**)
- What response it invites (**belief & behaviour**)

Avoiding the Extremes: A Middle-Ground Approach

Ultimately, when we approach the Bible merely as a spiritual fortune cookie, asking only ‘What does this say to me today?’ we risk missing the richness of God’s Word.”. It would be like walking into a Michelin-star restaurant, inhaling the aroma of a gourmet meal prepared by a master chef, but then leaving without ever tasting the food.

On the one hand, we face the challenge of access: many sincere believers simply can’t dedicate the time or gather the resources to do in-depth hermeneutics. On the other hand, we risk swinging to the other extreme — a shallow, surface-level reading that glosses over the text’s depth and divine intention. This devotional proposes a middle ground.

² Köstenberger, Andreas J., and Richard D. Patterson. *Invitation to Biblical Interpretation: Exploring the Hermeneutical Triad of History, Literature, and Theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2021. Kindle edition.

By using the speech-act framework, we honour the integrity of the text and its theological message — without overwhelming readers with technical jargon. We aim to hear what God is doing through His Word, discern His purpose, and respond with faith and practice — all in a format accessible for busy, everyday people.

Intended Benefits

Without a target, we are aimless. So, here are few of the intended benefits of this devotional. This is what we are aiming for:

1. Engage Scripture with Clarity

This devotional helps readers go beyond surface-level reading to understand what the Bible is saying (Text) and what God is doing through it (Purpose).

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2. Grow in Faith and Spiritual Maturity

By focusing on Belief, each devotional nurtures trust, loyalty, and a reshaped worldview rooted in the gospel — not just intellectual insight, but life-altering faith.

3. Live with Intentionality

Every entry ends with a call to Behavior, helping readers act on what they've read — working out their faith with purpose in everyday life.

4. Accessible, Yet Theologically Grounded

You don't need a seminary degree to use this devotional. It honors the depth of God's Word while staying simple and practical for busy lives.

5. Designed for Daily Life

Each entry is brief but rich — perfect for early mornings, lunch breaks, or late evenings. It's structured to fit into real life without sacrificing depth.

A Note on AI Assistance

This devotional was created with the help of ChatGPT, an AI language model developed by OpenAI. Here's how I used it:

- I drafted my thoughts and outlines, then asked ChatGPT to help refine and polish them.
- I input sections of Scripture and asked for help identifying possible purpose, belief, and behavior patterns.
Sample Preview - Not for Distribution
- I evaluated and edited the responses to align with a biblically faithful and pastorally helpful voice.
- I also asked ChatGPT to generate the 3R questions to close each devotional. Then I evaluate and edit the responses as needed.

This tool allowed me to accelerate the writing process while staying grounded in a biblical worldview. My hope is that this approach provides you with a trustworthy and transformative guide to reading Colossians — and, eventually, the whole Bible — with clarity, faith, and devotion.

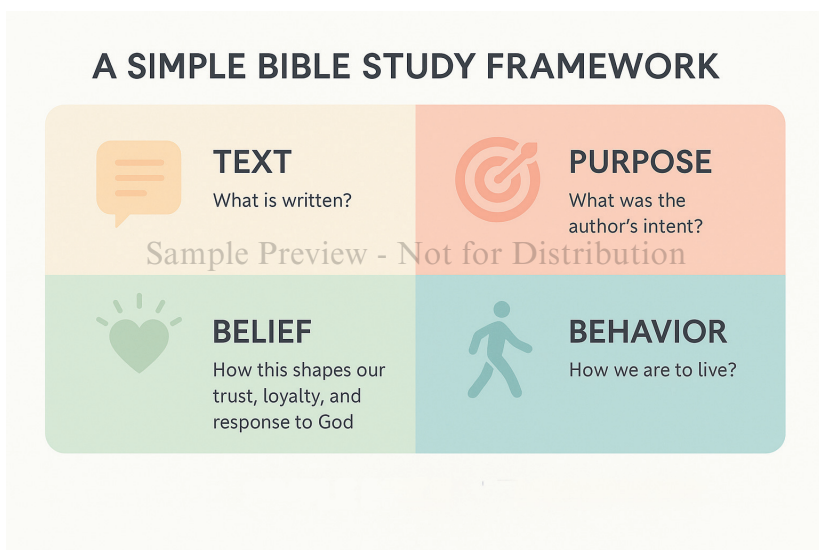
Final Word

My hope is that this devotional will help you engage Scripture with depth and clarity, even in the midst of a busy life.

Whether you're reading during a quiet morning, on your lunch break, or just before bed, may God's Word speak clearly to you — and may your trust in Him grow stronger, one day at a time. While tools and frameworks are helpful, ultimately it is the Spirit of God who opens our hearts to understand and obey His Word.”

Let’s begin our journey through Colossians together.

– Raj Chandra



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Colossians 1

Day 1: Called and Set Apart

Text: Colossians 1:1-2 NIV

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, [2] To God's holy people in Colossae, the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

Purpose:

To establish apostolic authority, validate ministry partnership with Timothy, and invite the audience to engage with reverence and trust. This flows into verse 2, which provides the identity of the audience. Being God's holy people means, set apart. This greeting does more than inform — it affirms who they are and to whom they belong.

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Belief:

God doesn't call us "holy" and "faithful" because we've earned it, but because we're His. Faith begins by trusting what He says about us, not what we feel about ourselves.

Behavior:

Start your day rooted in your God-given identity. Live not for approval, but from the assurance that you are set apart by grace.

The 3R's:

Retention – You are called holy and faithful by God.

Reflection – How would your day change if you truly believed this?

Response – Begin your day by thanking God for your identity in Him.

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Day 2: The Power of Encouragement

Text: Colossians 1:3-5 NIV

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, [4] because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all God's people— [5] the faith and love that spring from the hope stored up for you in heaven and about which you have already heard in the true message of the gospel

Purpose:

God's Word affirms the spiritual maturity of the Colossians — their visible faith, love, and gospel-rooted hope — as an act of encouragement and gratitude. Their lives bear fruit that is seen, remembered, and celebrated.

Belief:

There is real power in receiving encouragement. The gospel brings about visible transformation. True Christian hope is not abstract — it gives rise to genuine faith in Christ and love for others. When our hope is anchored in Christ, it shapes how we live our daily lives— deepening our trust, loyalty, and responsiveness to God.

Behavior:

Who can you encourage today? Take time to affirm someone in whom you've seen the gospel at work. A simple word of encouragement may strengthen their faith more than you realize.

The 3R's:

Retention – The gospel bears fruit.

Reflection – Who has encouraged you in your faith recently?

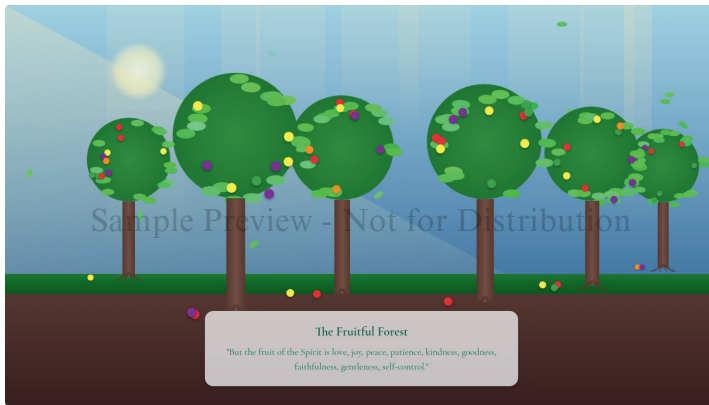
Response – Who can you encourage today?

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Day 3: Bearing Fruit

Text: Colossians 1:6-8 NIV

that has come to you. In the same way, the gospel is bearing fruit and growing throughout the whole world—just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and truly understood God’s grace. [7] You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, [8] and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.



Purpose:

The gospel is the declaration that Jesus is King. As people encounter and submit to the living Christ—His love, mercy, and grace—the light of His kingdom begins to break through the darkness. That light brings life. It transforms hearts, renews communities, and bears lasting fruit. Faithful servants like Epaphras embody this gospel through both their words and their lives, showing the world what it looks like to live under the lordship of King Jesus.

Belief:

The gospel is not a static message—it is alive and growing. Why? Because Jesus is alive and active, and our faith in Him is dynamic. We are part of a global movement of grace, united with believers everywhere who are being transformed by the same good news.

Behavior:

Let your love be Spirit-led and practical. Ask the Holy Spirit to deepen your love for others today, and look for a tangible way to show it.

The 3R's:

Retention – The gospel bears fruit wherever it is truly understood, received and obeyed.

Reflection – How has the gospel changed you and your church?

Response – Thank someone who has helped you grow in Christ.

To continue your journey...

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www.3Cin3DResources.com

Thank you for exploring this preview!