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# CBC WEEKLY RESOURCES

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COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH  
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# 1. SERMON RECAP

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Pastor Gary continued the Lamplight series by unpacking Psalm 119:37, “Turn my eyes away from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word.” His pastoral burden was clear: what we allow through the “gateways” of our eyes and ears is shaping our hearts, our maturity, and the quality of our life with God. In a culture built on nonstop consumption and entertainment, he called us to become wise gatekeepers. Encouraging us to turn away from “empty calories” and worthless things and turn toward the living Word of God.

At the same time, the message was not just about avoiding the world; it was about being revived, “quickenened,” and preserved by Scripture. Pastor Gary described a journey of maturity using four metaphors: standing in our own righteousness, sitting in the “highchair” of spiritual infancy, moving to the lower “kingdom chair” of humble service, and finally coming to the place of no chair at all, the feet of Jesus. His pastoral heart was to see people not merely “associated” with church or Christ, but truly consumed by Christ, deeply sensitive to sin, and joyfully available to be used by God in a dark and confused world.

Underneath it all was a strong encouragement: you can’t avoid being formed by something. Either the world will stupefy you with endless, worthless noise, or the Word will preserve, awaken, and mature you. Jesus is inviting you out of a mediocre, half-asleep faith and into a vibrant, reverent, intimate walk where His Word is your daily bread, His presence is your greatest treasure, and your life becomes a flashlight of hope to others walking in darkness.

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## 2. STUDY GUIDE

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### Key Points

- **Be a wise gatekeeper of your eyes and ears.**  
What you repeatedly see and hear: news, social media, and entertainment shape your attitudes, desires, and spiritual sensitivity. Turn your eyes away from “worthless things” and toward what truly nourishes your soul.
  - **Move from consumer to consumed.**  
Our culture disciplines us to consume more; Jesus calls us to be consumed by Him, allowing our lives to be poured out for His kingdom rather than spent on self.
  - **Embrace a worship-first posture.**  
A mature walk with Christ moves from self-centered spirituality to God-centered worship. This flows from sitting at His feet, not just asking Him to meet our needs.
  - **Pursue true maturity and identity in Christ.**  
Don't stay in the “highchair” of spiritual infancy, easily pulled back into the world. Let the Word grow you into a kingdom-first person, and ultimately into one who lives at Jesus' feet.
  - **Seek stillness and quickening, not noise and numbness.**  
Many believers feel spiritually “blah” or half asleep. God uses His Word to revive and preserve our lives. Stillness before God is where His Word can truly quicken and awaken your heart.
  - **Guard your mind in an age of manufactured ignorance.**  
Pastor Gary highlighted how our culture often manufactures ignorance and confusion through repetition of untruths. As God's people, we must be discerning, refuse to be parrots, and anchor our thinking and speaking in Scripture and truth.
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## Key Scripture (Full Text)

### Primary Sermon Text

#### Psalm 119:37 (NIV)

Turn my eyes away from worthless things preserve my life according to your word

### Other Verses Quoted or Clearly Referenced

#### Psalm 119 (overall theme, NIV)

Your word is a lamp for my feet a light on my path

#### Hebrews 4:12 (NIV)

For the word of God is alive and active Sharper than any double-edged sword it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit joints and marrow it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart

#### Luke 9:23 (NIV)

Then he said to them all Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me

#### Philippians 1:21 (NIV)

For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain

#### Philippians 3:10 (NIV)

I want to know Christ yes to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings becoming like him in his death

#### John 17:15 (NIV)

My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one

#### Ephesians 5:15–17 (ESV)

Look carefully then how you walk not as unwise but as wise making the best use of the time because the days are evil Therefore do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is

#### Psalm 119:105 (NIV)

Your word is a lamp for my feet a light on my path

#### John 3:7 (NIV)

You should not be surprised at my saying You must be born again

*(Numerous other passages were alluded to conceptually—e.g., Mary at Jesus' feet, Elijah and the still small voice—but not quoted directly.)*

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### Other Relevant Verses

- **Romans 12:1-2 (NIV)** – Deepens the call to be “consumed” rather than a consumer by presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice and refusing conformity to the world.
  - **Colossians 3:1-3 (NIV)** – Expounds on turning our eyes away from worthless things by setting our hearts and minds on things above.
  - **Psalms 46:10 (NIV)** – Speaks to stillness before God: “Be still, and know that I am God” – a thematic tie to resisting constant noise and being quickened by His presence.
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## 3. DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL (DAYS 1-5)

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### Day 1 – Guarding the Gateways

#### Reflection Question

What are the “worthless things” my eyes and ears are quietly feeding on, and how are they shaping my heart?

#### Reading

- Psalm 119:37 (NIV)
- Ephesians 5:15–17 (ESV)

#### Devotional Content

Psalm 119 was written in a time without screens, social media, or 24-hour news cycles, yet the psalmist understood a reality we still face: what we behold, we become. Ancient Israel was surrounded by nations full of idols, images, and stories that tempted God’s people to compromise. To “turn my eyes away from worthless things” was to resist the pull of idols, false security, and empty promises that claimed to offer life but could never deliver.

In Ephesians 5, Paul writes to believers living in the bustling, spiritually dark city of Ephesus. The church there navigated constant pressure from pagan temples, sexualized worship, and the economic pull of idol-making industries. Paul doesn’t tell them to hide from the world, but to “look carefully” at how they walk, to be wise, and to steward their time because “the days are evil.” In other words: pay attention. Be intentional. Your environment will disciple you... either toward Christ or away from Him.

Our “worthless things” often come in more subtle packages: endless scrolling, compulsive news-checking, shows that normalize sin, or voices that constantly stir anxiety or anger. On their own, one show or one article may seem harmless. But like the psalmist’s world, repeated exposure slowly reprograms our values, dulls our sensitivity to God, and robs us of spiritual clarity. The call is not to legalism, but to wisdom: will this nourish my walk with Christ, or will it numb me?

**Challenge:** Today, intentionally “turn your eyes” at least once. When you would normally reach for your phone, instead, read Psalm 119:33–40 slowly and let it shape your desires.

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## Day 2 – From Consumer to Consumed

### Reflection Question

Am I primarily approaching God to consume spiritual benefits, or am I offering myself to be consumed by His purposes?

### Reading

- Luke 9:23 (NIV)
- Romans 12:1–2 (NIV)

### Devotional Content

In the first-century world, following a rabbi was not a hobby or an add-on to a busy life, was a total reorientation. When Jesus says, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me,” His listeners knew He was calling them to a path of costly loyalty. The cross was a brutal, public symbol of death and shame. To “take up your cross” meant dying to self-rule and embracing obedience, even when it hurts.

Romans 12 picks up this theme in the language of sacrifice. In the Old Testament, sacrifices were tangible: animals laid on an altar, entirely given over to God. Paul uses that image to describe our everyday discipleship. Instead of bringing something we own, we bring ourselves as “living sacrifices.” This is the opposite of consumer Christianity, where God is a vendor, and we’re the customers choosing spiritual goods and services we like.

The culture of Rome, and ours today, says, “Be fulfilled by consuming more.” Jesus and Paul say, “You will be most alive when you are most surrendered.” Being “consumed” by God doesn’t erase your uniqueness; it frees it. As we refuse to be conformed to the world’s patterns of self-centeredness, God renews our minds and reveals His will. Our lives become altars where His glory, not our comfort, is the main story.

## Application & Closing

Ask yourself: In what areas of my life am I still functioning primarily as a consumer, relationships, church involvement, time, and money? Where am I saying, “What do I get?” rather than, “Lord, how can my life be poured out for You here?”

**Challenge:** Choose one practical act of self-denial today that no one else has to know about and consciously offer it to God as part of being a “living sacrifice.”

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## Day 3 – The Journey of the Chairs

### Reflection Question

Where am I spiritually right now—standing on my own, in the high chair, the kingdom chair, or at Jesus’ feet, and where is He inviting me next?

### Reading

- Philippians 1:21 (NIV)
- Philippians 3:10 (NIV)

### Devotional Content

Paul wrote to the Philippians from prison, uncertain if he would live or die. Yet his words are shockingly hopeful: “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.” This is not spiritual rhetoric; it’s a window into the heart of someone who has moved far beyond spiritual infancy. For Paul, life itself equals Christ: knowing Him, serving Him, suffering for Him. Death is not loss but gain, because it means being with Christ fully.

In Philippians 3:10, Paul expresses his deepest desire: “I want to know Christ... the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings.” He is not chasing a comfortable version of Christianity. He wants the whole Christ, including the fellowship of His sufferings because intimacy with Jesus is more precious than ease. This is the language of someone who has left behind standing in his own righteousness (Philippians 3:4–9) and now bows low at Jesus’ feet.

Pastor Gary’s “chairs” picture this journey in our context. Many stand in self-reliance, critiquing faith from a distance. Others sit in the “highchair,” truly saved, but easily drawn back to the world, living off spiritual milk. Maturity comes as we move into the “kingdom chair” humble, teachable, focused on serving others. The deepest place

is no chair at all: at Jesus' feet, where our greatest concern is not avoiding consequences, but protecting intimacy with Him.

**Challenge:** Today, set aside 10–15 minutes to physically kneel or sit and read Philippians 3:7–14. Ask Jesus, in your own words, to move you from where you are to a deeper place at His feet.

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## Day 4 – Stillness in a Noisy World

### Reflection Question

When was the last time I was truly still before God, not multitasking, not distracted, simply present with Him and His Word?

### Reading

- Psalm 46:10 (NIV)
- Hebrews 4:12 (NIV)

### Devotional Content

In ancient Israel, Psalm 46 was likely sung in the context of national turmoil. Yet God speaks into the chaos with a simple command: “Be still, and know that I am God.” The Hebrew idea behind “be still” includes ceasing, relaxing, and letting go. It’s an intentional halt to frantic striving, so that God’s people can remember who truly rules the nations and their personal lives.

Hebrews 4:12 describes the Word of God as “alive and active,” sharper than any double-edged sword. The original recipients were Jewish believers tempted to drift back into old patterns under pressure. The writer reminds them that God’s Word is not a dead text to be skimmed, but a living reality that searches hearts, reveals motives, and brings true rest to those who obey it. Stillness before God is not empty mindfulness; it is an encounter with the living God through His living Word.

In our world, constant noise is normal. We fill every gap with noise. This relentless input slowly numbs us to God’s quiet voice. Many, like the woman Pastor Gary met, feel half asleep spiritually believing God is there, but not sensing His nearness or hearing His leading. Stillness is not a luxury; it is a spiritual necessity if we want to be “quickenened” rather than dulled.

## Application & Closing

Evaluate your current rhythms. Do you have any regular time where you are phone-free, distraction-free, simply sitting with God and His Word? Not rushing through a chapter, but slowly reading, listening, and letting Scripture read you?

**Challenge:** Choose one 15-minute window today to practice stillness. Turn off all devices, open to Psalm 46 or Hebrews 4, and read slowly. After reading, sit in silence for several minutes, asking the Lord to search your heart and speak as He wills.

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## Day 5 – Word-Fed, Life-Giving

### Reflection Question

Is my daily “diet” more like “Old Roy” or like living bread that truly sustains and equips me to bless others?

### Reading

- Psalm 119:105 (NIV)
- Colossians 3:1–3 (NIV)

### Devotional Content

In the ancient world, bread was not a side dish, it was daily sustenance. The psalmist’s confession, “Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path,” reflects someone who depended on God’s Word like daily bread and daily guidance. Lamps in that culture didn’t illuminate miles ahead; they lit the next step or two. The Word was meant to be a constant, close companion, shaping decisions in real time.

Colossians 3 was written to believers surrounded by competing messages: Jewish legalism, pagan spirituality, and cultural pressures. Paul’s answer is to reorient their “diet”: set hearts and minds on things above, where Christ is. Their true life, identity, and future are “hidden with Christ in God.” Feeding on that reality daily would inevitably change how they lived in the gritty details of family, work, and community.

Pastor Gary’s “Old Roy” illustration makes this sharp for us. Much of what we consume gives the sensation of being “full” but leaves us undernourished, spiritually anemic, and easily swayed. By contrast, even a small portion of Scripture, chewed on slowly, can energize, clarify, and stabilize us. The goal is not speed-reading the Bible; it’s digestion. Less can be more when we meditate, memorize, and obey.

**Application & Closing**

Honestly, compare the time and mental energy you give to media versus Scripture. Are you expecting spiritual strength on a junk-food diet? What might change this week if you treated the Word as your non-negotiable daily bread?

**Challenge:** Pick one short passage (for example, Psalm 119:33–40 or Colossians 3:1–4). Read it aloud three times today. Write down one phrase that stands out and carry it with you. Let it “feed” you throughout the day.

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## 4. SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

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### Opening

Welcome everyone warmly. Acknowledge that we live in a loud, confusing world and that this week's message invited us to become wise gatekeepers of our hearts and to move closer to Jesus' feet.

Invite someone to open in prayer, using prompts like:

- Ask God to quiet our hearts and help us listen.
- Ask the Spirit to reveal where we've been consuming "worthless things."
- Ask Jesus to draw us into deeper maturity and intimacy with Him.

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### Thematic Recap

This week's message centered on Psalm 119:37 and the call to turn our eyes from worthless things and be preserved by God's Word. Pastor Gary contrasted a consumer-driven culture with the call to be consumed by Christ, and he used the "chairs" metaphor to describe our journey toward deeper surrender and maturity.

### Core Highlights:

- Our eyes and ears are gateways that either nourish or numb our souls.
  - The world often manufactures ignorance by repeating untruths; believers must be discerning and rooted in Scripture.
  - Spiritual maturity is a journey: from standing in our own righteousness, to the highchair of infancy, to the kingdom chair of service, to no chair at all, at Jesus' feet.
  - True life, revival, and clarity come "according to Your word," not according to culture.
  - God calls us to be in the world, but not of it.
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## Icebreaker (5–15 minutes)

- **Question:** If you had to pick one app, show, or source of content that “eats up” most of your attention in a week, what would it be and do you feel it leaves you more nourished or more drained? Why?

(Keep this non-shaming and light; the goal is honest reflection, not embarrassment.)

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## Scripture Exploration

Choose 1–3 of the following passages depending on time and group size.

### Passage 1: Psalm 119:37; Psalm 119:105 (NIV)

Turn my eyes away from worthless things preserve my life according to your word  
Your word is a lamp for my feet a light on my path

### Discussion Prompts:

1. How would you define “worthless things” in your own life right now?
  2. What do you notice about the connection between turning away from something and being preserved by the Word?
  3. In what ways have you experienced God’s Word as a “lamp” for your feet, showing you the next step rather than the whole road?
  4. How does this passage challenge your current media or information intake?
  5. What small, concrete change could you make this week to better “turn your eyes” and lean into God’s Word?
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**Passage 2: Ephesians 5:15–17 (ESV)**

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise  
making the best use of the time because the days are evil  
Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is

**Discussion Prompts:**

1. What does it look like to “look carefully” at how you walk in our culture?
  2. Where do you feel the tug of “unwise” use of time in your weekly routine?
  3. How do “evil days” show up in the spaces where you live, work, or spend time online?
  4. How might your understanding of “the will of the Lord” be shaped by the voices you listen to most?
  5. What habits could help you move from unintentional to intentional living in light of this passage?
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**Passage 3: Philippians 3:7–10 (NIV)**

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ  
What is more I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of  
knowing Christ Jesus my Lord