

THE BEREAN

FAITH • FAMILY • WISDOM • EVERYDAY LIFE



COVER FEATURE

Rooted for Every *Season* of Life

The Family Table — winning back the most powerful hour of your day

Whole & Well — a biblical rhythm for body, mind and spirit

The Faithful Pound — stewardship for real households

Youth Corner, Prayer Room, Kitchen Grace & the July Scripture Planner

"But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season." — Psalm 1:2–3

(NKJV)



From the Editor's Desk

Some magazines exist to fill time. This one exists to fill a table. When we began The Berean online, the vision was simple: to raise a generation that searches the Scriptures daily, the way the believers in Berea did when Paul preached to them — receiving the word with all readiness of mind, and then checking it for themselves (Acts 17:11). This monthly magazine carries that same spirit into every room of your life.

You will notice that the pages ahead are not only about Sunday. They are about Monday morning budgets, Tuesday evening dinners, teenagers finding their feet, bodies that need rest, marriages that need tending, and kitchens that need grace. That is deliberate. The lordship of Jesus is not a corner of life; it is the whole house.

Each issue will follow the same rhythm: a cover feature to anchor the month, a devotional to

steady your mornings, and practical sections on family, health, money, work and relationships — each one soaked in Scripture, because we do not offer advice we cannot anchor.

INSIGHT: *Information tells you what to do. Scripture tells you who you are becoming while you do it.*

Read it slowly. Print it if you like. Share it freely — it is, and will always be, a free download. And if something in these pages stirs you, write to us. The Berean has always been a fellowship, not merely a publication.

Grow deep this July.

Matthew (Tolu) Olowoyeye

LEAD PASTOR & EDITOR · THE BEREAN

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

ACTS 17:11 · NKJV

Contents

04 Cover Feature — Rooted for Every Season

Why depth, not speed, is the mark of a flourishing life.

05 Devotional of the Month

Planted, Not Potted — Psalm 92 and the secret of staying fresh.

06 The Family Table

Reclaiming dinner as discipleship — with a 5-question conversation menu.

07 Youth Corner — Anchored

Comparison, confidence, and the mirror that lies.

08 Whole & Well

A biblical rhythm for body, mind and spirit — plus a July walking plan.

09 The Faithful Pound

Stewardship for real households: the four-jar framework.

10 Work as Worship

Excellence, integrity and rest in the workplace.

11 Better Together

Marriage & friendship — the ministry of showing up.

12 Kitchen Grace

One-pot Jollof-style chicken & rice — hospitality on a weeknight.

13 The Prayer Room

Seven guided prayers for July — home, nation, church and self.

14 Word on the Marble + Berean Quiz

Memory verses, and ten questions from the book of Joshua.

15 July Scripture Planner

Thirty-one days, thirty-one verses — one month of anchored mornings.

16 From the Publishing House

New and featured titles from Berean Publishing House.

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

PSALM 119:105 • NKJV

Rooted for Every Season

BY MATTHEW (TOLU) OLOWOYEYE

There is a tree near our home that I have watched through four winters. In summer it is unremarkable — one green canopy among many. But in January, when the storms come off the hills and other trees lose branches, this one barely sways. The difference is not visible. The difference is underground.

We live in a culture obsessed with what is visible: platforms, milestones, highlight reels. But Scripture measures a life by a different standard — not how tall you have grown, but how deep you have gone. The blessed man of Psalm 1 is not described by his achievements. He is described by his roots: "like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season" (Psalm 1:3, NKJV).

Notice three quiet words in that verse. **Planted** — not scattered. A planted life has chosen its ground: a church, a family, a set of convictions it will not renegotiate every time the weather changes. **Rivers** — not rainfall. Rainfall is occasional; rivers are constant. The rooted believer does not survive on conference downpours; he drinks daily from the Word. **Season** — not schedule. Fruit comes in its season, not on demand. Rootedness makes peace with God's calendar.

INSIGHT: Storms do not decide whether a tree falls. Roots decided that years earlier.

Jeremiah presses the picture further. The one who trusts in the LORD "will not fear when heat comes... and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit" (Jeremiah 17:7–8, NKJV). Read that slowly: the heat still comes. The drought still arrives. Rootedness is not exemption from hard seasons; it is fruitfulness in the middle of them.

So this month, before you add anything to your life, ask what is beneath it. Is your family fed from the river or from the rain? Is your confidence planted in Christ or potted in circumstances? Everything in this issue — the family table, the budget jars, the walking plan, the prayer room — is root work. Do it quietly. Do it daily. And when the January winds come, you will barely sway.

PRAYER

Father, plant me. Sink my roots beneath the surface of my busy life and into the river of Your Word. Teach me to trust Your seasons, to bear fruit in due time, and to stand when the storms come. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Planted, Not Potted

"Those who are planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing."

PSALM 92:13-14 · NKJV

A potted plant and a planted tree can look identical for a while. Both are green. Both stand upright. Both photograph well. But a potted plant lives on borrowed soil. Its roots circle a small container, and the day the pot is neglected — one missed watering, one hot week — it withers. The planted tree has no such fragility, because it draws from ground far deeper than anyone can see.

Psalm 92 says the flourishing ones are *planted in the house of the LORD*. Not visiting the house. Not photographing the house. Planted in it. There is a kind of Christianity that is potted — carried from experience to experience, church to church, opinion to opinion, always green on the surface but never rooted anywhere long enough to draw deep water.

And here is the promise for those who choose planting over potting: *"They shall still bear fruit in old age."* The world expects your best years to be behind you by fifty. Scripture expects your

sweetest fruit after that. Freshness, in God's economy, is not a function of age but of attachment.

INSIGHT: A potted faith survives on being carried. A planted faith survives on being connected.

This month, practise planting: choose one congregation and serve in it; choose one book of the Bible (we suggest Joshua — see page 14) and stay in it; choose one prayer time and keep it. Depth is simply repetition in one place.

PRAYER

Lord, I refuse a potted life. Plant me in Your house, root me in Your Word, and let me be fresh and flourishing in every season — even the late ones. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The Family Table

RECLAIMING DINNER AS DISCIPLESHIP

Moses did not tell Israel to build a children's programme. He told them to talk. "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up" (Deuteronomy 6:7, NKJV). The primary classroom of faith is not a hall with a projector. It is a table with food on it.

Yet the family table is the most contested hour in the modern home. Phones buzz. Schedules collide. Some families have not eaten together, screens down, in weeks. The good news: you do not need

to fix everything. You need to win one hour, a few evenings a week, and let it compound.

INSIGHT: *Children rarely remember lectures. They almost always remember tables.*

The Berean Table Method — three simple rules: (1) No screens at the table, including yours. (2) Everyone answers, youngest first. (3) End with one sentence of thanksgiving each. That is all. Consistency will do the rest.

The July Conversation Menu

Starter

"What was the best and hardest part of your day?" — the classic high-low never fails.

Main Course

"Where did you see kindness today — given or received?" Train eyes to notice grace.

Side Dish

"If you could ask God one question tonight, what would it be?" Do not rush to answer it; honour it.

Dessert

"What is one thing we can pray about for you this week?" Write it down. Follow up on Friday.

"As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

JOSHUA 24:15 • NKJV

The Mirror That Lies

FOR TEENS & YOUNG ADULTS

Every time you open your phone, you are handed a mirror. But it is a strange mirror — it never shows you yourself. It shows you everyone else: their holidays, their bodies, their grades, their followers. And then it whispers the oldest lie in the world: *you are not enough*.

Here is what the mirror never tells you: you are comparing your behind-the-scenes with everybody else's highlight reel. Nobody posts their loneliness. Nobody films their 2am doubts. The feed is real footage of unreal lives.

King Saul fell for this exact trap. When the women sang, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands" (1 Samuel 18:7, NKJV), Saul heard a comparison and let it poison him. Scripture says from that day forward, Saul eyed David. Comparison did not just steal Saul's joy — it rewrote his whole story into bitterness. The scoreboard he accepted became the prison he lived in.

INSIGHT: *Comparison is not a measurement. It is a surrender — you hand someone else the pen and let them define your worth.*

David, interestingly, had a different mirror. "I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14, NKJV). He looked at himself and saw workmanship, not a ranking. Same era, same pressures, two mirrors — two totally different lives.

Try this for one week: every time you catch yourself comparing, say Psalm 139:14 — out loud if you can. You are not behind. You are not a lesser version of someone else. You are an original, made on purpose, for a purpose.

PRAYER

Father, break the false mirror. Help me see myself the way You see me — fearfully and wonderfully made — and free me to celebrate others without shrinking myself. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Whole & Well

A BIBLICAL RHYTHM FOR BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT

John's prayer for his friend Gaius is startlingly holistic: "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers" (3 John 2, NKJV). Body and soul, prospering together. Scripture never treats your body as a distraction from the spiritual life; it calls it a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19) — and temples are maintained.

Wellness culture will sell you extremes: punishing routines in January, abandoned by February. The biblical pattern is gentler and far more durable — rhythm, not spasm. Work and Sabbath. Feasting and fasting. Rising early to pray, and sleeping

because "He gives His beloved sleep" (Psalm 127:2, NKJV).

INSIGHT: *The goal is not a better body. The goal is a maintained temple — strength in service of your calling.*

Even Elijah, straight after his greatest victory, collapsed into exhaustion and despair — and God's first prescription was not a rebuke but a meal and a sleep (1 Kings 19:5–8). Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is eat properly and go to bed.

The July Rhythm — four small habits

Walk & Pray (20 min)

A daily prayer-walk, four days a week. Start with thanksgiving for the first five minutes; intercede for your family the rest.

Water First

A glass of water before your first coffee or tea. Small, unglamorous, and your body will thank you by mid-afternoon.

Screen Sunset

Phones down 45 minutes before bed. Replace the scroll with Scripture or silence — Psalm 4:8 makes an excellent last read.

True Sabbath

One day, or at least one half-day, weekly: no work emails, shared food, unhurried worship. Rest is a command, not a reward.

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

The Faithful Pound

STEWARDSHIP FOR REAL HOUSEHOLDS

Money is disciplined or it becomes a discipler. Jesus spoke about money more than almost any other everyday subject, not because heaven needs your pounds, but because "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21, NKJV). Your bank statement is a spiritual document: it tells the truth about what you worship, fear, and hope in.

Stewardship begins with a shift of ownership. "The earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness" (Psalm 24:1, NKJV). You are not an owner protecting a pile; you are a manager handling a trust. Managers plan.

Managers account. Managers ask the Owner what He wants done.

INSIGHT: *A budget is not a cage for your money. It is a testimony of your priorities, written in numbers.*

Proverbs offers unfashionable but liberating counsel: "The borrower is servant to the lender" (Proverbs 22:7, NKJV). Every pound of consumer debt you clear is a small emancipation. Go steadily — "he who gathers by labour will increase" (Proverbs 13:11, NKJV).

The Four-Jar Framework

Jar 1 • Honour

The first portion belongs to God — tithe and offerings, given first, not last (Proverbs 3:9). Firstfruits is a posture, not a leftover.

Jar 2 • Household

Needs before wants: housing, food, transport, utilities. Providing for your own is ministry (1 Timothy 5:8).

Jar 3 • Tomorrow

Savings and debt reduction. "The wise store up choice food and olive oil" — the ant needs no supervisor to prepare (Proverbs 6:6–8).

Jar 4 • Generosity

A jar whose whole purpose is other people — hospitality, the struggling family at church, the surprise blessing. Plan your spontaneity.

General principles, not regulated financial advice. For decisions about debt, investments or pensions, consult a qualified adviser.

Work as Worship

EXCELLENCE, INTEGRITY AND REST IN THE WORKPLACE

Before there was a fall, there was a job. God placed Adam in the garden "to tend and keep it" (Genesis 2:15, NKJV) — work is not the curse; it predates the curse. Which means your Monday morning is not an interruption of your spiritual life. Done rightly, it is an expression of it.

Paul writes to ordinary workers: "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men... for you serve the Lord Christ" (Colossians 3:23-24, NKJV). Read the audacity of that. The spreadsheet, the shift, the classroom, the building site — offered upward, they become liturgy. You do not need a pulpit to have a ministry. You need a task and the right Audience.

INSIGHT: *Your work is a sermon your colleagues will hear long before they ever hear a preacher.*

Three marks of a believer at work. *Excellence:* Daniel was promoted in a pagan empire "because an excellent spirit was in him" (Daniel 6:3, NKJV) —

competence is a witness. *Integrity:* differing weights and measures are an abomination to the LORD (Proverbs 20:10); the believer's invoices, timesheets and taxes tell the truth. *Rest:* you work from acceptance, not for it, so you can put the laptop down. Hurry is not a fruit of the Spirit.

And if you lead others — a team, a business, a crew — remember Boaz, who greeted his harvesters with "The LORD be with you!" (Ruth 2:4, NKJV) and paid attention to the vulnerable in his field. Leadership is stewardship of people, not just output.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, receive my work this month as worship. Make me excellent without pride, honest without exception, and restful without guilt. Let someone meet You through the way I do my job. Amen.

Better Together

THE MINISTRY OF SHOWING UP

"Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, NKJV). Notice the assumption buried in that verse: *they will fall*. Scripture is not romantic about relationships; it is realistic. The question is never whether the people you love will stumble. The question is whether anyone will be close enough to lift them.

Modern life engineers distance. We are more contactable and less connected than any generation before us. A hundred people can view your day; almost no one is in it. Against that current, covenant relationships — marriage, deep friendship, spiritual family — are built by one unglamorous discipline: showing up. Again. In person. Especially when it is inconvenient.

INSIGHT: Love is spelt many ways in poetry, but in practice it is usually spelt T-I-M-E.

For the married: 1 Corinthians 13 is not a wedding decoration; it is a weekly audit. Read verses 4-7 and replace the word "love" with your own name. Where the sentence becomes untrue, you have found this week's assignment. Guard a regular unhurried evening together — not to discuss logistics, but to actually see each other. And pray together, even briefly; it is difficult to stay cold towards someone you are kneeling beside.

For every friendship: "A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity" (Proverbs 17:17, NKJV). This week, contact one person you have been meaning to check on. Do not wait for a reason. Faithfulness is the reason.

PRAYER

Father, make me easy to be loved and faithful in loving. Teach me to show up — for my spouse, my family, my friends — the way You have never failed to show up for me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

One-Pot Chicken Jollof Rice

HOSPITALITY ON A WEEKNIGHT · SERVES 6 · ABOUT 60 MINUTES

Ingredients

- 6 chicken thighs, seasoned
- 400g long-grain rice, rinsed
- 4 large tomatoes + 1 red pepper + 1 scotch bonnet (optional), blended
- 2 onions (1 blended, 1 sliced)
- 3 tbsp tomato purée
- 100ml vegetable oil
- 500ml chicken stock
- 2 tsp curry powder, 1 tsp dried thyme
- 2 bay leaves, salt to taste
- Handful of mixed vegetables (optional)

"Be hospitable to one another without grumbling."

1 PETER 4:9 · NKJV

Method

- 1 Brown the seasoned chicken in the oil; set aside.
- 2 Fry sliced onion until soft; add tomato purée and cook 3 minutes.
- 3 Add the blended tomato-pepper mix; simmer 15 minutes until deep red and reduced.
- 4 Stir in rice, stock, curry powder, thyme, bay leaves and salt. Return the chicken on top.
- 5 Cover tightly (foil under the lid helps) and cook on low for 25–30 minutes until the rice is tender. Add vegetables in the last 5 minutes.
- 6 Rest 5 minutes, fluff, and serve — ideally with more people around the table than you planned for.

TABLE THOUGHT: *In Scripture, tables are where strangers become family. Cook once this month specifically to invite someone who would otherwise eat alone.*

Seven Prayers for July

Pray one each day, Monday to Sunday, and repeat through the month. Pray them aloud where you can — faith comes by hearing (Romans 10:17).

1 • For Your Home

Father, let my home be planted by Your rivers. Fill it with peace, order and laughter, and let every person under this roof know Jesus personally. "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15).

2 • For Your Children & Young People

Lord, anchor the next generation. Guard their minds from the mirror that lies, and let them be taught of the LORD, with great peace (Isaiah 54:13).

3 • For Your Church

Revive Your church, O God. Give our shepherds wisdom, our members unity, and our witness boldness (Acts 4:29–31).

4 • For the Nation

We pray for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness (1 Timothy 2:1–2). Heal our land, Lord.

5 • For Your Work & Provision

Establish the work of my hands (Psalm 90:17). Give me excellence, integrity, favour — and open doors no man can shut (Revelation 3:8).

6 • For the Hurting

God of all comfort, draw near to the bereaved, the sick, the anxious and the lonely among us. Bind up the broken-hearted (Psalm 147:3), and make me part of Your answer.

7 • For Yourself

Search me, O God, and know my heart (Psalm 139:23–24). Root out what grieves You, deepen my love for Your Word, and keep me fresh and flourishing.

Word on the Marble

Two verses to memorise this month — write them on a card, and on your heart:

"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night... for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

JOSHUA 1:8 · NKJV

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."

PROVERBS 3:5-6 · NKJV

The Berean Quiz — Book of Joshua

This month's reading focus is Joshua. Search the Scriptures — answers are at the foot of page 15. No peeking until you have tried!

1. Who succeeded Moses as leader of Israel?
2. How many spies did Joshua send to Jericho?
3. Who hid the spies, and what was hung from her window?
4. What did the priests carry into the River Jordan?
5. How many memorial stones were taken from the Jordan?
6. For how many days did Israel march around Jericho?
7. Whose sin caused defeat at Ai?
8. Over which valley did the sun stand still?
9. Which faithful spy, at 85, asked for a mountain?
10. Complete: "As for me and my house..."

FAMILY IDEA: run the quiz at the table on the last Friday of July — winner chooses the dessert.

July Scripture Planner

One verse a morning, before the phone. Tick each day as you go — thirty-one anchored mornings build a rooted month.

DAY	VERSE	DAY	VERSE
1	Psalms 1:1-3	17	Plagues 12:1-2
2	Jeremiah 17:7-8	18	Unbelief 34:8-10
3	Joshua 1:8-9	19	Confidence Proverbs 17:17
4	Psalms 92:12-14	20	Forgiveness Galatians 6:9-10
5	Proverbs 3:5-6	21	Trust Corinthians 13:4-7
6	Deuteronomy 6:5-7	22	Family Psalm 46:1-3
7	Psalms 139:13-14	23	Identity 1:22-25
8	Matthew 6:19-21	24	Treasure Isaiah 3:10
9	Colossians 3:23-24	25	Work John 15:4-5
10	Ecclesiastes 4:9-12	26	Together Psalm 121:1-4
11	1 Peter 4:8-9	27	Hospitality Ephesians 6:10-13
12	Psalms 127:1-2	28	Rest Proverbs 31:25-28
13	3 John 2	29	Wholeness Hebrews 12:1-2
14	Proverbs 22:6-7	30	Stewardship Psalm 90:12,17
15	Philippians 4:6-7	31	Peace Joshua 24:14-15
16	Isaiah 40:29-31		Renewal

Quiz answers (page 14): 1. Joshua · 2. Two · 3. Rahab; a scarlet cord · 4. The Ark of the Covenant · 5. Twelve · 6. Seven days · 7. Achan · 8. The Valley of Aijalon (Joshua 10:12) · 9. Caleb · 10. "...we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15).

FROM THE PUBLISHING HOUSE

Go Deeper This Month

Becoming, Not Building

The gospel answer to habit culture — twelve chapters on how God forms what self-help can only assemble.

Rooted (July–December Devotional)

184 daily readings for the second half of 2026 — the perfect companion to this magazine's planner.

The Anchored Generation Series

Helping families raise children with unshakeable identity in a screen-saturated age. Books One and Two available now.

Commitment

A leadership journey through the lives of those who stayed — from Nehemiah to Wilberforce to Tubman.

Browse the full catalogue at bereanpublishinghouse.com

Next Month • August 2026

Cover feature: "*The Quiet Work — what God builds in hidden seasons.*" Plus back-to-school for families of faith, and a new Berean Quiz from the book of Ruth.

Read, share and subscribe free at thebereanblog.com · The Berean Monthly is published by Berean Publishing House. Scripture taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson. Used by permission. All rights reserved.