



Everyday Devotions

Welcome to Everyday Devotions. These daily Bible readings and Prayer Pathways are designed to help you go deeper with God each day in response to what you are hearing at the Everyday Church services and Life Group gatherings.

5 Habits - Overflow #1

Monday 3rd February

Welcome to this fifth week of Everyday Devotions. Over the past four weeks, we have looked at four healthy habits that promote spiritual growth in us – *Bible Meditation* and *Prayer Pathways* and *Sung Worship* and being filled with the *Holy Spirit*. This week, we are going to look at a fifth and final healthy habit – allowing what God is doing in our hearts to *Overflow* to the world around us.

We will take a few weeks' break at the end of this fifth week of *Everyday Devotions* in order to look at your feedback and to decide whether or not it would be helpful for us to go on providing these daily devotional guides for you each day. So do let us know what you think – if we get enough positive feedback then we'll be back very soon!

Bible Meditation

John 7:37-39

³⁷ On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." ³⁹ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

1) John tells us that the Holy Spirit could not be given until Jesus was glorified. How does that build on what we read together last week in Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost, where he said in Acts 2:32-33 that we can only be baptised with the Holy Spirit through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus?

2) Jesus says that God's purpose in filling Christians with the Holy Spirit is so that "*rivers of living water will flow out from within them.*" How much do you think we emphasise this in the Western Church? Do you think that we have fallen for our consumer culture and perhaps emphasise the 'inflow' of the Holy Spirit a lot more than we do the 'outflow'?

3) A tap can only receive fresh water if it is open and allows water to flow through it. How much do you think this is a factor in our own lack of experience of the Holy Spirit today? How much of our 'inflow' problem do you think is really an 'outflow' problem? If we were willing to let the Spirit flow out of us more, do you think he would flow into us more?

4) What is the only qualification that Jesus gives in the first four words of verse 38 for people to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Do you believe that Jesus wants to fill you with his Spirit so that the Spirit can overflow to others through you?

Jesus doesn't tell us which Old Testament Scriptures he has in mind when he says that "*Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.*" There are actually a number of Old Testament Scriptures that he might have in mind, so we are going to look at several of them in our *Everyday Devotions* across the course of this week. Here is the first one:

Exodus 17:1-6

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ² So they quarrelled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses replied, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the Lord to the test?" ³ But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?" ⁴ Then Moses cried out to the Lord, "What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me." ⁵ The Lord answered Moses, "Go out in front of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶ I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink." So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel.

5) Take a moment to reflect on your workplace, on your school, on your friendship groups and on your neighbourhood. In what ways are they spiritually a lot like the very aptly-named “*Desert of Sin*”?

6) What would it mean for God to turn you into a living, breathing, walking, talking Rock in the midst of that desert, changing your environment for good? What would it mean, very practically, for you to be a Rock that gushes out the presence of the Holy Spirit in the midst of such a spiritual desert?

7) Do you feel excited about this promise that the Lord is making to you today? Jesus promises you that if you feel thirsty for this, then he is more than willing to answer your prayer. Why not stop and ask him right now?

Prayer Pathway

Spend some time praying **The Trinity Prayer**, using 2 Corinthians 13:14 to order your prayers for God to fill you with the Holy Spirit and to make you a Rock in the midst of the Desert of Sin – “*May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*”

THE LOVE OF GOD: Thank God that he is a loving Father who longs to give good gifts to his children. Thank him that the idea of humans being filled with the Spirit of God was not your idea or the idea of one of the preachers at Everyday Church. It was God’s own idea, prophesied many centuries ago in the Old Testament and now fulfilled in Jesus. Praise him that this is true.

THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST: Thank Jesus that, although he is the Son of God, he humbled himself to become a man so that we might participate in the Holy Spirit with him (2 Peter 1:4). Thank him that he has now been glorified and that we are living in the era when God’s Spirit is poured out on his people. Thank him that everything which belongs to him now belongs to you, including the Spirit of God. Thank him for God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: Thank the Holy Spirit that he wants to fellowship with you by coming and turning you into a Rock in the midst of the spiritual desert all around you. Invite the Holy Spirit to come and do as he has promised.

End with Worship

In order to help you to respond to God in sung worship, we have created two playlists for you on Spotify:

The [Everyday Devotions](#) playlist contains a handful of songs which are particularly relevant to our Everyday Devotions this week. This song list changes each week along with our devotions.

The [Everyday Church Song List](#) playlist contains most of the songs that we are singing right now across the venues of Everyday Church. This is a wider song list for you to play throughout the day to help you worship as you wash up, as you drive, as you shower, as you sit on the bus and as you go about your day.

If you are somewhere where you can sing loudly, why not use these two playlists to end by singing some songs of worship to the Lord? If you are on the bus or train, why not put on your headphones and sing in your heart to God instead?

This week the songs are largely prayers for God to fill us with his Holy Spirit and to overflow into the world through us.

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Everyday Devotions

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5 Habits - Overflow #2

Tuesday 4th February

Welcome to this fifth week of Everyday Devotions. Over the past four weeks, we have looked at four healthy habits that promote spiritual growth in us – *Bible Meditation* and *Prayer Pathways* and *Sung Worship* and being filled with the *Holy Spirit*. This week, we are looking at a fifth and final healthy habit – allowing what God is doing in our hearts to *Overflow* to the world around us.

Bible Meditation

John 7:37-39

³⁷ On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” ³⁹ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

1) Where does Jesus place the emphasis in these verses? How much is it our job to transform the spiritual deserts in which we live and how much is it the Holy Spirit’s job? What is our role in the partnership and what is his role?

2) Note the sheer inclusivity of God's grace towards us in these verses. How do you think the words "anyone" and "whoever" are supposed to encourage us, whenever we doubt that the scope of this promise includes us?

Jesus doesn't tell us which Old Testament Scriptures he has in mind when he says that "*Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.*" There are actually a number of Old Testament Scriptures that he might have in mind, so we are going to look at several of them in our *Everyday Devotions* across the course of this week. Here is the second one:

Numbers 20:1-13

¹ In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried. ² Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron. ³ They quarrelled with Moses and said, "If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the Lord! ⁴ Why did you bring the Lord's community into this wilderness, that we and our livestock should die here? ⁵ Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible place? It has no grain or figs, grapevines or pomegranates. And there is no water to drink!" ⁶ Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance to the tent of meeting and fell facedown, and the glory of the Lord appeared to them. ⁷ The Lord said to Moses, ⁸ "Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink." ⁹ So Moses took the staff from the Lord's presence, just as he commanded him. ¹⁰ He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, "Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?" ¹¹ Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank. ¹² But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me enough to honour me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them." ¹³ These were the waters of Meribah, where the Israelites quarrelled with the Lord and where he was proved holy among them.

3) Almost forty years have passed since the first time Moses brought water out of a rock in the desert, back in Exodus 17, but what strikes us here is how little things have changed. It's the Desert of Zin rather than the Desert of Sin, but one little letter makes little difference. The Israelites are still in the desert. They are still grumbling and they still need the grace of God to save them. In what ways do you find it encouraging that God evidently hasn't given up on them?

4) What clue are we given in verse 10 that Moses has become so angry with the Israelites that he has forgotten that God's plan to bring forth water in the desert is far more about the Holy Spirit than it is about him?

5) After fuming, “*Must we bring you water out of this rock?*”, Moses disobeys the Lord. Instead of speaking to the rock, as he is commanded, as a sign of his faith that it is God who sends his Holy Spirit, he whacks the rock with his staff, as if it were all about his own strength. Can you think of any occasions when you’ve acted as if your spiritual fruitfulness were more about your own actions than the gracious actions of the Lord?

6) How does God punish Moses for getting the roles the wrong way around when it comes to partnering with God’s Spirit? Take a big gulp and confess to God that the Holy Spirit is your Senior Partner, not the other way around.

Prayer Pathway

God was gracious to Moses and he didn’t bar him from his presence. He still allowed him to enter the Holy of Holies in the Tabernacle to enjoy his presence. It’s amazing to think that the same Holy Spirit that Moses visited now offers to dwell inside us and to overflow from us each day! Let’s therefore use **The Moses Prayer** as our prayer pathway for today, taking each of the items that Moses passed on his way into the Holy of Holies as a reason to thank God for his Spirit today:

COURTYARD WALLS: Begin by confessing God’s greatness and total otherness. Worship him in his holiness, then rejoice that he still invites you to come near. The Israelites had God’s Spirit dwelling near them, but we have God’s Spirit dwelling in us.

BRONZE ALTAR: Confess your specific sins to God, thanking him that you are declared totally righteous by grace through the once-for-all blood sacrifice of Jesus.

BRONZE LAVER: Ask God to wash you and change you, filling you with the water of his Holy Spirit and yielding the fruit of the Spirit in your heart – the character described in Galatians 5:22-24.

TABLE AND LAMPSTAND: Thank God for his Word and for his Spirit. Pledge that you will live by both of them today, obeying God’s Word even when you disagree with it and following the Spirit’s promptings even when you are scared by them.

ALTAR OF INCENSE: Spend time worshipping God and bringing specific prayer requests to him for your friends, for your family, for your church and for your nation. Make big requests that are worthy of such a great God.

THE ARK OF GOD’S PRESENCE: End by enjoying the presence of God. Don’t rush away. Ask God

to fill you with his Holy Spirit and spend time resting in his presence before you carry on with the rest of your day.

End with Worship

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If you are somewhere where you can sing loudly, why not use these two playlists to end by singing some songs of worship to the Lord? If you are on the bus or train, why not put on your headphones and sing in your heart to God instead?

This week the songs are largely prayers for God to fill us with his Holy Spirit and to overflow into the world through us.

Family Devotions

A number of parents use these *Everyday Devotions* to lead their children through daily devotions. Normally the parents simply adapt the devotions to ensure that they connect well with their children, but today we are introducing a new element to *Everyday Devotions*. If you are a parent using these devotions with your children, then how about telling them the following story to illustrate today's learnings?

"I'm scared," Brett told his dad one bedtime. "What is it, son?" his dad replied. "Tell me what it is and we can pray about it together." "Well," Brett began, "I'm worried I might stop wanting to follow Jesus. I'm scared that I might slip away from God's love." Brett's dad sat down on his bed and stretched out his big, strong hand. He told Brett to put his small hand inside his dad's big hand and then he told him to "Try to pull away from me." Try as he might, the young boy could not release himself from his father's grip. "My grip is stronger than yours, Brett," his dad reminded him. "It's too strong for you to slip out of. And God's hold of you is even stronger. It's not about how hard you can hold onto God, but

about how hard God can hold onto you.”

That’s what Moses needed to learn in today’s Bible reading. He acted as though partnering with God was more about what he could do for God than what God could do for him. Praise God, he is always strong enough for the both of you. We must never forget that.

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5 Habits - Overflow #3

Wednesday 5th February

Over the past four weeks, we have looked at four healthy habits that promote spiritual growth in us – *Bible Meditation* and *Prayer Pathways* and *Sung Worship* and being filled with the *Holy Spirit*. This week, we are looking at a fifth and final healthy habit – allowing what God is doing in our hearts to *Overflow* to the world around us.

Bible Meditation

John 7:37-39

37 On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

1) Why do you think Jesus emphasises that we will only be filled with the Holy Spirit if we are “thirsty”? What is he trying to tell us here?

2) How does this tie in with what Jesus also teaches us in Matthew 5:6 – *“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled”*?

Jesus doesn't tell us which Old Testament Scriptures he has in mind when he says that *“Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”* There are actually a number of Old Testament Scriptures that he might have in mind, so we are looking at several of them in our *Everyday Devotions* across the course of this week. Here is the third one:

Psalm 46:1-5 & 10-11

¹ *God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.*

² *Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,*

³ *though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.*

⁴ *There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells.*

⁵ *God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day ...*

¹⁰ *He says, “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”*

¹¹ *The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.*

3) General Knowledge question: What was unique about Jerusalem in the entire ancient world?
Answer: It was the only major city in the ancient world that was not built on a river. Thebes was built on the River Nile, Damascus on the River Abana and Babylon on the River Euphrates, but Jerusalem had no river at all. What, then, does the psalmist mean in verse 4 when he says, *“There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God”*?

4) God doesn't make mistakes. His decision to have his Temple built in the only riverless major city in the ancient world was deliberate. Rivers defended cities, so he wanted his people to know that he alone was their refuge and strength. Rivers stopped cities from falling to siege, so he wanted his people to know that *“God is within her, she will not fail.”* Rivers were worshipped as gods in the ancient world, so he wanted his people to *“Be still, and know that I am God.”* Translating this into our own culture, then, what things are we likely to rely on instead of on the River of God's Holy Spirit?

Revelation 22:1-5

¹ *Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb* ² *down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river*

stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

5) The book of Revelation picks up on the imagery of Psalm 46 and John 7 to inform us that the Holy Spirit is the true River of God. The Holy Spirit flows towards us from the Father and the Son in order to make us fruitful as he overflows out of our lives to the world that needs God. The river is for *“the healing of the nations”*. The river is for Gospel breakthrough and salvation, *“yielding its fruit every month.”* So, here’s the question: Do you want this in your own life? If you do, then tell God right now that you are willing to be a Rock in the desert. Tell him that you aren’t just interested in being filled with the Holy Spirit so that your own life will become a bit more exciting. Tell him that you are interested in being filled with the Holy Spirit so that he can flow through you to the people in your world who do not yet know the Lord.

Prayer Pathway

This is what the Bible means by ‘the fellowship of the Holy Spirit’. Therefore spend some time praying **The Trinity Prayer** today, using 2 Corinthians 13:14 to marshal your prayers before God – *“May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”*

THE LOVE OF GOD: Thank God that he is a loving Father who longs to give good gifts to his children. Thank him that the River of the Holy Spirit flows from his throne in Revelation 22. Tell him that you trust his love and that you want to die to your own agenda so that you can get swept away by the River of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:14-15).

THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST: Thank Jesus that the River of the Holy Spirit flows from the Lamb too in Revelation 22. Thank him that he has done all that is required for you to receive the River of the Holy Spirit. You need only be *“thirsty”*. Jesus does the rest. Thank him that he has now been glorified and that we are living in the era when God’s Spirit is poured out on his people. Thank him that everything which belongs to him now belongs to you, including the Spirit of God. Thank him for God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: Thank the Holy Spirit that he wants to fellowship with you by coming and turning you into a Rock in the midst of the spiritual desert all around you and by

catching you up in the River of the Holy Spirit. Invite the Holy Spirit to come and do through you as he has promised, making you his vessel to overflow into the waiting world.

End with Worship

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5 Habits - Overflow #4

Thursday 6th February

Over the past four weeks, we have looked at four healthy habits that promote spiritual growth in us – *Bible Meditation* and *Prayer Pathways* and *Sung Worship* and being filled with the *Holy Spirit*. This week, we are looking at a fifth and final healthy habit – allowing what God is doing in our hearts to *Overflow* to the world around us.

Bible Meditation

John 7:37-39

37 On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

1) Most of us would have been content for Jesus to have promised us that the Holy Spirit would ‘trickle’ out of us. Why therefore is it significant that Jesus promises that “*rivers of living water*” will flow out from within us?

2) How do you feel about the sheer lavishness of this promise from God? How do you feel about its sister promise in John 3:34 – “*God gives the Spirit without limit*”?

3) Being completely honest, would you say that you live with such a lavish God in view? Do you live each day as one who has access to rivers of the Holy Spirit? Do you instinctively say to people, like Peter in Acts 3:6, “*What I have I give you*”?

Jesus doesn’t tell us which Old Testament Scriptures he has in mind when he says that “*Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.*” There are actually a number of Old Testament Scriptures that he might have in mind, so we are looking at several of them in our *Everyday Devotions* across the course of this week. Here is the fourth one:

Ezekiel 47:1-12

¹ *The man brought me back to the entrance to the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar. ² He then brought me out through the north gate and led me around the outside to the outer gate facing east, and the water was trickling from the south side. ³ As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep. ⁴ He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist. ⁵ He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross. ⁶ He asked me, “Son of man, do you see this?” Then he led me back to the bank of the river. ⁷ When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river. ⁸ He said to me, “This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the Dead Sea. When it empties into the sea, the salty water there becomes fresh. ⁹ Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. ¹⁰ Fishermen will stand along the shore; from En Gedi to En Eglaim there will be places for spreading nets. The fish will be of many kinds—like the fish of the Mediterranean Sea. ¹¹ But the swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt. ¹² Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.”*

4) How does this ancient prophecy from the Old Testament book of Ezekiel remind you of what we read yesterday in Revelation 22? Do you think that God is trying to get a message through to you, loud and clear?

5) All this talk of ‘measuring-sticks’ and ‘deep enough to swim in’ and ‘a river that no one could cross’ is all meant to communicate the same thing as John 3:34. There are no limits to how much God wants to fill you with his Spirit. So how are you going to respond to this amazing promise? Will you take some time out today to pray and say ‘yes’ to God?

6) “*The Dead Sea*” in verse 8 was the saltiest and deadest place in the entire land of Israel. Where would that be in the spiritual landscape of your own life? Which of your nonbelieving friends do you think are the most unsaveable? Which of your work colleagues has the illness that you regard as the most incurable? Which of the areas in which you spend your week do you find people to be the most ungodly and sinful? Those are the Dead Sea areas of your own life, so note what God promises will happen to them when the River of the Holy Spirit reaches them.

7) Think of all the nonbelievers that God has placed in your life. How does it encourage you to find that God promises you in verse 9 that “*Where the river flows everything will live*”? How does it encourage you to find God that promises you in verse 12 that “*Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them*”?

Prayer Pathway

Let God’s promises to you in John 7:37-39 and Ezekiel 47:1-12 stir you into fervent prayer. Using **The Lord’s Prayer** as today’s prayer pathway, pray some mighty prayers of “*Let your Kingdom come!*” Pray for the River of the Holy Spirit to flow into you and to overflow into the world around you. Use this prayer to order your thoughts before God and to ask him to pour out his Holy Spirit on all those with whom you come into contact today.

OUR FATHER: Joyful thanks to God that today you can run freely into his arms as your Dad and as the Source of the River of the Holy Spirit.

IN HEAVEN: Faith-filled proclamation of the truth of Psalm 115:3 – “*God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.*”

HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME: Speaking God’s Name back to him from the Scriptures, asking him to be true to his Name and to make all the world confess his Name is holy.

YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE: Pray specific prayers for the Holy Spirit to descend on your own life, on the lives of your family and friends, on the lives of your Life Group and your wider church family, on the lives of your nonbelieving friends, on your workplace or college, and on your nation.

GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD: Be specific with God in your answer to his question: “*What*

do you want me to do for you?" Bring focused, specific and faith-filled requests that he will provide for all your daily needs.

FORGIVE US, AS WE FORGIVE OTHERS: Confess your specific sins to God, including the sin of withholding forgiveness from others.

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION: Ask God to grant you strength to resist sin, the flesh and the Devil. Ask him to fill you with the Holy Spirit today and to help you grow in holiness, as he has promised you in Ezekiel 36:26-27.

FOR YOURS IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER: End with a time of praising God for his greatness and that he has heard your prayers.

AMEN: Before you stop praying, connect your prayers to the rest of what you have planned for today. Receive a commissioning from God to get up off your knees and to become the answer to many of your prayers.

End with Worship

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Everyday Devotions

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5 Habits - Overflow #5

Friday 7th February

Over the past four weeks, we have looked at four healthy habits that promote spiritual growth in us – *Bible Meditation* and *Prayer Pathways* and *Sung Worship* and being filled with the *Holy Spirit*. This week, we are looking at a fifth and final healthy habit – allowing what God is doing in our hearts to *Overflow* to the world around us.

Bible Meditation

John 7:37-39

37 On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

1) For those of us who have grown up in rainy London, it is hard to imagine what words like “*thirsty*” and “*rivers of living water*” meant to those who lived in dry, arid and riverless city of Jerusalem. Unlike ours, theirs was a world of water shortages, but if we look around us with spiritual eyes then we can see that our own city is spiritually dry, arid and riverless. Make a list of all of the

areas in your community that are spiritual wastelands. Ask the Lord to give you a deeper thirst to see them watered by the River of the Holy Spirit flowing out of you.

2) What do you think Jesus means when he calls people to “*come to me and drink*” of the Holy Spirit? What would it mean, very practically, for you to become a heavier drinker of the Holy Spirit?

Jesus doesn’t tell us which Old Testament Scriptures he has in mind when he says that “*Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.*” There are actually a number of Old Testament Scriptures that he might have in mind, so we are looking at several of them in our *Everyday Devotions* across the course of this week. Here is the fifth one:

Isaiah 35:1-10

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, ² it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God. ³ Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; ⁴ say to those with fearful hearts, “Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you.” ⁵ Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. ⁶ Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. ⁷ The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow. ⁸ And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. ⁹ No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, ¹⁰ and those the Lord has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

3) Think of all those spiritually dry and parched areas that you just listed in your community. Face-to-face with those challenges, how are you tempted to let your hands become feeble, your knees become unsteady and your heart become fearful? How are you tempted to surrender those areas of your community to the Devil and to look for easier areas in which to minister instead?

4) How do the words of verse 4 therefore encourage you? By faith in the Word of God, can you picture what will happen to those areas when “*water gushes forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert?*”

5) Where have you been spiritually unfruitful up until now? Where are you most tempted to assume that you will never bear fruit? Do you believe God when he tells you that those are the very areas where that “*grass and reeds and papyrus will grow*” as the Holy Spirit flows out of you?

6) These verses end with the people of God singing worship songs to him. This takes us back to the third healthy habit that we learned together two weeks ago. Make sure that you create some space today to use one of our Spotify play lists to sing worship songs to the God who brings fruitfulness to desert places through his Holy Spirit.

Numbers 24:7

7 Water will flow from their buckets; their seed will have abundant water.

7) This is the final verse that Jesus might have been referring to in John 7:37-39. It may look to you as though there is no way that God would fill you with his Holy Spirit and cause you to overflow into massive fruitfulness – about as likely as the idea that a river can flow out of a bucket! But that’s precisely what God promises to do in and through you. What a Gospel. What a promise. How does such a word from God make you feel?

Prayer Pathway

Let’s keep on praying to God and let’s keep on laying hold of the promises that God makes to us in John 7:37-39 and in all of its associated Old Testament passages. Using **The Lord’s Prayer** as your prayer pathway again, pray some big prayers of *“Let your Kingdom come!”* Pray for the River of the Holy Spirit to flow into you and to overflow into the world around you.

OUR FATHER: Joyful thanks to God that today you can run freely into his arms as your Dad and as the Source of the River of the Holy Spirit.

IN HEAVEN: Faith-filled proclamation of the truth of Psalm 115:3 – *“God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.”*

HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME: Speaking God’s Name back to him from the Scriptures, asking him to be true to his Name and to make all the world confess his Name is holy.

YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE: Pray specific prayers for the Holy Spirit to descend on your own life, on the lives of your family and friends, on the lives of your Life Group and your wider church family, on the lives of your nonbelieving friends, on your workplace or college, and on your nation.

GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD: Be specific with God in your answer to his question: *“What*

do you want me to do for you?" Bring focused, specific and faith-filled requests that he will provide for all your daily needs.

FORGIVE US, AS WE FORGIVE OTHERS: Confess your specific sins to God, including the sin of withholding forgiveness from others.

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION: Ask God to grant you strength to resist sin, the flesh and the Devil. Ask him to fill you with the Holy Spirit today and to help you grow in holiness, as he has promised you in Ezekiel 36:26-27.

FOR YOURS IS THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER: End with a time of praising God for his greatness and that he has heard your prayers.

AMEN: Before you stop praying, connect your prayers to the rest of what you have planned for today. Receive a commissioning from God to get up off your knees and to become the answer to many of your prayers.

End with Worship

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5 Habits - Overflow #6

Saturday 8th February

We have almost reached the end of our five weeks of daily *Everyday Devotions*. We would like to go on providing these for you, but we are about to take a break after these first five weeks to listen to your feedback in order to decide if and how best to continue to provide these for you daily. If you haven't yet fed back your thoughts and comments, therefore, please do so today or tomorrow. In the meantime, these final two days will help you to consolidate the five healthy habits of a Christian that we have learned together: *Bible Meditation* and *Prayer Pathways* and *Sung Worship* and being filled with the *Holy Spirit* and allowing the Holy Spirit to *Overflow* into the spiritual wasteland all around us.

Bible Meditation

2 Peter 1:1-11

¹ Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: ² Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³ His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to

goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is near-sighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

1) In the Western Church we tend not to talk too much about the need to make an effort to grow up spiritually into full maturity in God. For us, it smacks of legalism, and we rightly don't want anything to do with that. How does Peter strike a better balance, however, in these verses? How does he manage to talk about “*grace*” (verse 2) which means God’s “*divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life*” (verse 3), whilst at the same time urging us to “*make every effort*” to grow up in our faith (verses 5 and 10)? How can these two things go hand in hand with one another?

2) What do you think Peter means when he warns that some Christians are “*ineffective and unproductive in their knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*”? In what ways do you feel that you can be a bit like this at times?

3) What are you going to do differently throughout the rest of this year as a result of learning about these five habits of a healthy Christian? What is your plan to keep pursuing **Bible Meditation**, to keep on using these **Prayer Pathways**, to keep on **Singing Worship Songs** and asking God to fill you with his **Holy Spirit** so that the River of God can continue to **Overflow** through you into the spiritual wasteland all around you?

4) Learn verse 3 as a memory verse and keep on praying it back to God as a clear promise to help you persevere in these five things: “*His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.*”

2 Thessalonians 1:3

³ We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing.

2 Timothy 2:20-22

²⁰ In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for special purposes and some for common use. ²¹ Those who cleanse themselves from the latter will be instruments for special purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work. ²² Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with

those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

5) How do these two statements from the apostle Paul echo what Peter taught us? How can your own faith “*grow more and more*” throughout the rest of this year? How can you persistently “*flee*” what is evil and “*pursue*” what is good?

Prayer Pathway

One way in which you can build these five habits of a healthy Christians into your life from now on is to make the three big moments of each day moments where we stop and spend a little time with God. When we wake up in the morning, when we take a break for lunch and when we go to bed in the evening, the Lord invites us to adopt the same habit as Daniel: “*He went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God.*”

So let’s use **The Examen Prayer** as our prayer pathway for today. Created by Ignatius of Loyola in the sixteenth century, it is one of the simplest pathways for you to adopt as a habit even as we take a short break from providing you with these *Everyday Devotions*. Let’s pray its **4Rs** together.

REJOICE: Look back on the past few hours since you spent time in focused prayer to God. What has happened that is good and that you need to say thank you to God for? Make sure you check in with grateful rejoicing for what he has done for you.

REPENT: Look back on the past few hours and say sorry to God for anything that you have done that you know was sinful or displeasing to him. God is eager to forgive you and to lead you forward from here.

RENOUNCE: Look back on the past few hours and reflect on the ways in which you have seen a clash between the way God wants you to live and the way that the world around you is living. These are the battlefields on which your daily fight for holiness is being fought right now. Renounce wrong ways of thinking, declaring that you are siding with God and with his Word in each of those areas, no matter what price is to pay.

REBOOT: Look forward to the next few hours before your next check-in of focused prayer to God. What challenges and opportunities lie ahead of you? What discouragements and failures are you likely to drag with you into those next few hours unless you leave them here with God? Deal with those things now and let God reboot your life for the next few hours. Go into them empty of baggage and full of expectation. Let God commission you to serve him joyfully for the next few hours until you return to check in through these **4Rs** again.

Be encouraged by Daniel 6:13 – *“Then they said to the king, ‘Daniel, who is one of the exiles from Judah, pays no attention to you, Your Majesty, or to the decree you put in writing. He still prays three times a day.’”* Come back later to pray these **4Rs** when you wake up in the morning, when you take a break for lunch and in the evening before you go to bed.

End with Worship

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This week the songs are largely prayers for God to fill us with his Holy Spirit and to overflow into the world through us.

Family Devotions

If you are a parent, then one of the simplest ways for you to allow what God has done in your own heart to overflow into the lives of others is to pass these *Everyday Devotions* onto your children. If you are not a parent, then you can still use these *Everyday Devotions* to disciple a friend, a flatmate or a work colleague. Although the daily devotions are time-stamped, they are fresh enough for you to go on using them with your friends. Try it out at least once, perhaps using the little illustration that we shared with you earlier in the week.

“I’m scared,” Brett told his dad one bedtime. *“What is it, son?”* his dad replied. *“Tell me what it is and we can pray about it together.”* *“Well,”* Brett began, *“I’m worried I might stop wanting to follow Jesus. I’m scared that I might slip away from God’s love.”* Brett’s dad sat down on his bed and stretched out

his big, strong hand. He told Brett to put his small hand inside his dad's big hand and then he told him to *"Try to pull away from me."* Try as he might, the young boy could not release himself from his father's grip. *"My grip is stronger than yours, Brett,"* his dad reminded him. *"It's too strong for you to slip out of. And God's hold of you is even stronger. It's not about how hard you can hold onto God, but about how hard God can hold onto you."*

That's what Moses needed to learn in today's Bible reading. He acted as though partnering with God was more about what he could do for God than what God could do for him. Praise God, he is always strong enough for the both of you. We must never forget that.

Discipling others is as simple as that. It's about finding a story that will connect with people and open their eyes to what God says to them in the Scriptures. It's about embracing the powerful Word of God as spiritual seed to transform your own life and then passing that spiritual seed on to others.

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5 Habits - Overflow #7

Sunday 9th February

Today is the last day of our initial five weeks of *Everyday Devotions*. We are going to take a few weeks' break now in order to look at your feedback and to decide whether or not it would be helpful for us to go on providing these daily devotional guides for you each day. We would love to do so, but we want to provide the very best resources for you, so do let us know what you think – if we get enough positive feedback then we'll be back very soon!

Today is also the first day of our ***Week of Prayer and Fasting*** across Everyday Church. This is deliberate. We're not cutting off these devotions and leaving you stranded. We are inviting you to join with your friends at Everyday and to grow further together, so do make the most of this week of prayer and fasting. For more about what fasting is all about, take a look at the blogs that we have posted on www.everydayvoices.org.uk.

In this final Bible Meditation, we want to take you back over the passages with which we started two weeks ago. We want you to read them with the fresh perspective of what you have learned through these *Everyday Devotions*.

Bible Meditation

Psalm 1

¹ Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, ² but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. ³ That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither - whatever they do prospers. ⁴ Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. ⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. ⁶ For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

1) What have you learned over these past five weeks about **Bible Meditation**? (verse 2) How can you keep on putting this into practice as we take a few weeks' pause to look at your feedback and to improve the way that we give you these daily devotions ongoing? How can you use this hiatus to become a self-feeder, a meditator on the Word of God?

2) What have you learned over these past five weeks about **Prayer Pathways** and **Singing Worship Songs** to God? How can you ensure that this continues to accompany your Bible Meditations? For example, our Spotify play lists will remain live.

3) What have you learned over these past five weeks about the Holy Spirit as the River of God? (verse 3) How can you ensure that you go on being filled with the **Holy Spirit** and allowing him to **Overflow** into the spiritual need that is all around you?

Matthew 7:24-27

²⁴ "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

4) What have you learned across these past five weeks about the difference between hearing God's Word and putting God's Word into practice? What have you learned about digging deep foundations into the Scriptures?

5) They say that the difference between a dream and a vision is a plan. In other words, people never dig strong spiritual foundations by accident! So what is your plan to keep on pursuing these five healthy habits that play such a key role in helping Christians to develop in their walk with God?

Advert: If you have enjoyed these daily devotions then you will love the series of devotional

commentaries that Phil Moore has written on almost every book of the Bible. If you are unsure of what to do next, then why not buy one of Phil's commentaries as your stop-gap until normal service resumes with your *Everyday Devotions*? You can find all of Phil's "*Straight to the Heart*" series at all good booksellers, or go to www.philmoorebooks.com.

Prayer Pathway

Let's end these five weeks of *Everyday Devotions* and let's begin our *Week of Prayer and Fasting* by using **The Lord's Prayer** as our prayer pathway. Let's pray the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray as a way of ordering our thoughts before God:

OUR FATHER: Joyful thanks to God that today you can run freely into his arms as your Dad.

IN HEAVEN: Faith-filled proclamation of the truth of Psalm 115:3 – "*God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.*"

HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME: Speaking God's Name back to him from the Scriptures, asking him to be true to his Name and to make all the world confess his Name is holy.

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AMEN: Before you stop praying, connect your prayers to the rest of what you have planned for today.

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