

Life Overflowing

outward-focused living in a self-focused world

Group Discussion Material

Steve Sjogren and Dave Ping's book, *Outflow*, provides plenty of reflection questions at the end of each daily reading. Each week, you might ask group members if there are any particular questions they would like to discuss. Group discussion questions are also provided at the end of each week's worth of material.

Certainly you have plenty of material from which to draw in the *Outflow* book. However, the following questions reflect the thrust of each Sunday's message and should assist you in "processing" that message each week.

During your weekly discussions, encourage group members to share the Word of God with each other, applying it to their lives. God's Word should occupy a crucial place in the life of each member of the group (Col. 3:16). Generally it isn't more *information* we need, as rather more *application* we need of God's Word. Small groups are conducive settings for just that sort of conversation.

Week One – Thirsty?

Sermon emphasis: *Jesus turns emptiness into overflowing life, and self-focused lives outward.*

1. How has God challenged you through this week's readings and/or the Sunday message? How will you respond as a result?
2. Share a story from your process of coming to Jesus, perhaps a way in which you tried to fulfill your thirst for God in your own inadequate ways.
3. Read John 4:34 and reflect on the following statement: "Jesus craved opportunities to do the will of God. He was satisfied at the deepest level of who He was when He could pour the love of God into the parched life of another person." If that was true of Jesus during His earthly ministry, what are the implications for your own life?
4. What can you do to invest today in your inner self, the real you?

Week Two – A Life Overflowing

Sermon emphasis: *Abundant life flows naturally from a relationship with God.*

1. How has God challenged you through this week's readings and/or the Sunday message?
How will you respond as a result?
2. Reflect on the following statement: "As my passion for *God* grows, so will my passion for *people*." Do you think that's true?
3. Describe a time God's love just naturally flowed out of you and affected those around you.
4. How can you create greater margins of time in your life? What should you stop doing that currently is not adding value to your life or the lives of others?

Week Three – Eyes Wide Open

Sermon emphasis: *The small daily differences we make, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee.*

1. How has God challenged you through this week's readings and/or the Sunday message?
How will you respond as a result?
2. What are the reasons you often don't "see" and lovingly serve the people around you?
3. What does it mean to you when people really notice you? Describe a time when someone unexpectedly noticed you. How did that affect you? How could just noticing people change the way you live?
4. Simple acts of love and service can break down barriers. Describe a time in your own life when you saw this principle at work.

Week Four – Can You Hear Me Now?

Sermon emphasis: *Everyone needs what anyone can give—an understanding heart.*

1. How has God challenged you through this week's readings and/or the Sunday message?
How will you respond as a result?
2. Have you ever considered how easy it is to be lost spiritually? How does this impact the way in which you *redemptively* interact with others?
3. Describe a tough situation that you often face with a friend or family member due to a conflict of values. Then brainstorm ways you can listen, empathize and respond differently the next time you're in that situation.
4. Read Hebrews 13:3. Loving others in Jesus' name involves "*taking our place among the condemned*." How can you grow deeper in your ability to empathize with others?

Week Five – Intersections

Sermon emphasis: *God isn't calling the world to come to church; He's calling the church to go to the world.*

1. How has God challenged you through this week's readings and/or the Sunday message?
How will you respond as a result?
2. How could you transform a hobby or daily activity into an opportunity for God to open doors with other people?
3. How can you use your weaknesses, talents and skills, possessions, and life experiences to further God's eternal purposes?
4. What opportunities, which currently may be seen as problems, are in front of you today?

Week Six – Living a Life on Loan

Sermon emphasis: *Begin thinking of your life on loan rather than as a life you own.*

1. How has God challenged you through this week's readings and/or the Sunday message?
How will you respond as a result?
2. Find one item that you brought with you (i.e., a pen, your shoes, a bottle of water), and think of one way you can use that item to love and serve someone in Christ's name during the coming week. After everyone has chosen an item, go around the room and tell one another your ideas.
3. Have you ever had an experience in which your passions intersected with God's purpose and you felt fully alive? What was it like?
4. How has your life been affected most by the "Live Overflowing" series? The goal of this five-week emphasis is to affect life-change, and not merely to engage you in an interesting preaching series. How can you ensure that something substantial is different about your life, as a result of this series?