



WEEK 2 DEVOTIONAL
LIFELINES FOR THE DROWNING

RECEIVE

Read the passages on the following page: **Mark 12:28–31; Ephesians 4:14–16; 1 Corinthians 13:11–12 and Romans 12:1–2.** Read these passages slowly, thoughtfully, prayerfully. Read in such a way that you imagine the Holy Spirit is trying to speak to you. As you read the passage, journal words or phrases that stand out to you. Then go back and consider why those words and phrases caught your attention. What are your emotions as you read? Finally, read and consider what these verses might imply about any burden you may be carrying that you have been trying to ignore, or overcome, or deny.

REFLECT

1. The story of the “overwhelmed” can take many forms. Pastor Tara Beth mentioned the “young professional” or the “young mom” but our culture breeds these stories of performance and loneliness in many forms. How does Ephesians 4 address the issue? What are the waves or the deceitful schemes you are up against? Can you identify them? Talk with your group or journal about the biggest one or two sources of doubt or trouble that comes to mind.

2. The Ephesians passage describes a path of growth. What are the elements of the process? Write down the steps described and talk about each one. Have you experienced this? Is it realistic? Does it sound like it could be a lifeline for you? Why or why not?
3. Our lives can become bifurcated. "Body life" belongs in the gym or the doctor's office, "mind life" happens in school or a psychologist office and "spirit life" or matters of our soul we attach to church. How does that compare to the Mark passage? What does this passage say to us? What does it say about life this week? What about our relationship to God?
4. Below are six ways we may try to fix our troubles – false lifelines if you will:
 - Avoidance: Bury it.
 - Isolation: Deny it, keep it inside.
 - Self-Harm: If I hurt physically maybe my internal pain will go away.
 - Substances: Numb it.
 - Impulse Spending: New nice things will make it better.
 - Achieve More: More success will fill the hole inside.
5. Which of these false lifelines or "fixes" do you tend to turn to? Do you need help to turn away from them to a true lifeline?

RESPOND

6. With topics such as this it's good to pause and reflect on what is stirring in your heart and mind. Just as we guided at the end of the service take a few moments to reflect on the formational points from today's passages use the following prompt to reflect and respond:
God I feel _____[A]_____ about _____[B]_____ because _____[C]_____.

7. Pastor Tara Beth spoke about three specific streams of God’s grace available to us as lifelines. For each one share or journal through how each one sits with you by placing it in the “B” space of the above journal prompting.
- Get out in God’s creation and move.
 - Love yourself—show up for yourself, listen to your body.
 - Get connected—WE are here, find a way to connect. Don’t be afraid to find a therapist.
8. “Renewing of your mind” is not a quick fix. It’s a lifelong process in partnership with the Holy Spirit of healing, wholeness and harmony. How are you pursuing that? What are you doing to “lifeline” yourself this week? Gently encourage yourself to make a list of one activity for each day that heals you or makes you more whole—and then enjoy them thanking God for the gift they are!

RESOURCES

In addition to the [listed resources we have on the series webpage](#) we have given you a downloadable bookmark with a breath prayer on it. A breath prayer is meant to work with your breathing. Meaning as you inhale, you pray the first part invoking God’s presence through one of God’s names. Then as you exhale, you voice a deep desire of your heart. Use this breath prayer through this series to calm and center you when you need a lifeline. Try it now.

Breathe in praying....**God of Peace**

Breathe out praying...**Replace my weariness with hope**

SCRIPTURE

Mark 12:28–31 | New International Version

²⁸ One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”

²⁹ “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.’³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

Ephesians 4:14–16 | English Standard Version

¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

Romans 12:1–2 | English Standard Version

¹ I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.