

A 40-DAY EXPERIENCE TO  
IGNITE GOD'S VISION FOR YOUR LIFE



# GREATER DEVOTIONAL

NEW YORK TIMES BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

STEVEN FURTICK

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**STEVEN FURTICK**  
with **ERIC STANFORD**



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## PREFACE

# Meant for More

Lately it seems like I'm meeting more and more believers who are unsatisfied with the kind of Christians they're becoming and the version of the Christian life they're experiencing. These aren't bad people. They aren't gangbangers and ungodly pagans. If they were, their discontent would make more sense.

The thing is, most believers aren't in imminent danger of ruining their lives. They're facing a danger that's far greater: *wasting them*. I worry about that risk for myself, and maybe you're the same way.

We've had some big dreams about what God might want for our lives. But so many of us are stuck in the starting blocks. Or are dragging along at the back of the pack.

We know we were meant for more. Yet we end up settling for less.

We're frustrated about where we are. But we're confused about how to move forward.

If this is where you are, the *Greater Devotional* is for you.

For the next forty days, we'll learn to spend time with God and His Word to find out how He wants to expand our world. The

devotionals are based on some key ideas I talk about in my book *Greater*. Much of the material is brand-new to print, and here the focus is on the spiritual journey necessary to get from “good enough” to “greater.” We’ll be looking at a lot of events in the life of the prophet Elisha, but we’ll also be mining other rich texts from all over the Bible.

These devotionals are not primarily meant to give you a cozy feeling or make you satisfied because you’ve met a spiritual requirement. They are meant to yank you from the mediocrity you may have grown accustomed to and set you on the course to a greater destiny.

The call to be greater is the call to walk with God Himself. And, in fact, I believe any lasting transformation flows from divine revelation. More can be accomplished in a half hour of prayer, worship, and listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit than in a month of strategizing on our own.

I can trace my most frustrating seasons to a deficiency of time I allocated to my most important task: seeking the wisdom of the Lord. And, conversely, I can trace the genesis of many of the most important changes in my life, my family, and my church to specific moments I spent in the presence of God. That’s why I believe you have every reason to expect amazing things to happen as you spend time with God for the next forty days.

Dream big.

Start small.

Ignite God’s vision for your life, starting today.

## DAY 1

# The Muck of Mediocrity

*Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.*

—JOHN 14:12

### Today's Bible reading: John 14:1–14

For most of us, the experience of our daily lives is a far cry from the greater works Jesus talked about in John 14:12. We know instinctively, even if we can't articulate it exactly, that something isn't squaring up. There's a huge gap between what God said in His Word and the results we see in our lives.

It's like we've been lulled into comfortable complacency. Then we wake up one day to find ourselves stuck in miserable mediocrity. So we tuck away any dreams and notions of the great things we'd like to do for God.

After all, we're doing good. Good enough. It kind of sucks. But it's all we know.

If that's where you are today, I need to share a strong word of warning with you.

You can't keep living like this. It's not fine for you to settle for going every day to a job you'd prefer to quit, doing decent work, being a pretty good person compared to your neighbor, paying your bills on time, and sporadically reading the Bible as though it's your guide to the great things God did in other people's lives in the past.



RT We can be so much better than we've become, because God is so much greater than we're allowing Him to be through us. #GreaterBook


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Baseline living is not okay. Not for a believer in Jesus. There's a price to pay for Christian complacency. If you keep living on this level, your heart is going to shrivel. It might already be shriveling. Your dreams are going to die. They may already be on life support. Will you look up one day and be overwhelmed by the stack of regrets staring back at you? The frustration that's simmering on the back burner right now might boil over one day, and you'll be bitter about the opportunities you missed. Opportunities to be used by God, to touch lives, to get outside yourself and be a part of something greater. I know it's not easy. But don't tell me it's not possible. Jesus Himself said it was.

The fact is, we can be so much better than we've become, because God is so much greater than we're allowing Him to be through us. That's why, for forty days, we're asking God to show us His picture of the greater life and help us go after it. Start today



by telling yourself you don't have to stay stuck in the muck of mediocrity. Open your spirit up to the possibility of something greater. Open it up to Jesus Himself.

 **PRAYER FOCUS:** Ask God to ignite in you a vision of the different life He wants you to live. Commit to a lifestyle of listening for His voice.

## DAY 2

# Behind the Scenes

*The LORD said to [Elijah],...“Anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet.”*

—1 KINGS 19:15–16

### Today's Bible reading: 1 Kings 19:15–21

In many of these devotionals, we're going to be using the biblical character Elisha as a model of what a greater life can be like. For Elisha, it all started on an ordinary day—just like today probably is for you. The predictable beat of his ordinary life was interrupted and everything changed.

The interruption didn't happen the way most of us would think it should. God's interruptions rarely do. Elisha didn't go to a career fair or meet with a life coach to talk about some new possibilities. He wasn't looking for a different kind of life at all. And get this—Elisha wasn't praying. Instead, he was doing the best he could with the life he assumed he'd been handed. He was plowing a field behind a bunch of oxen's rears.

But hundreds of miles away, God had been talking about Elisha behind his back. The gist of the conversation was that He had

something greater for him. A divine calling beyond his imagination. He was to become the successor to the most famous prophet in Israel's history: Elijah.

Elisha didn't know it yet, but Elijah was already in his neighborhood, with plans to toss his mantle over the plowman's shoulders. After that encounter, nothing would be the same. The presence of Elijah, in what seemed to be an ordinary situation, would thrust Elisha's life in an extraordinary new direction.



RT Just because you haven't heard God call your name doesn't mean He's not orchestrating great things for you. #GreaterBook

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I've experienced such sudden opportunities in my life, unexpected invitations from God to do something greater. I believe you will too.

God is often working behind the scenes of your life, orchestrating His destiny for you even though you don't have a clue about what He's up to. He wants to pull you out of the muck of mediocrity. Just because you haven't heard God call your name or tell you specifically what to do with your life, that doesn't mean He's not orchestrating great things for you.

I guess you could say God likes to sneak up on you.

You're marching along to the beat of the ordinary, and then one day the ordinary is interrupted by a calling. That calling can change everything if you know how to discern it.


So that makes me ask...

Do you have enough faith to believe God is preparing something greater for you right now?

While you are doing your best in your life as it exists, are you looking for invitations to do the new things God has in store for you?

Most important...

Elisha “ran after Elijah,” the story tells us (verse 20). Are you ready to run after God’s greater calling for you?

 **PRAYER FOCUS:** Ask for faith to believe that God is preparing you for greater things—and for the ability to recognize His plans when He reveals them to you.

## DAY 3

# I Give Up

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

—ROMANS 12:1–2

### Today's Bible reading: Romans 11:33–12:2

I love the final verses in Romans 11. “Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!... To him be the glory forever!” What believer wouldn't agree with that and say amen along with Paul?

But what's interesting to me is what happens when we get into Romans 12. Here's where we discover our proper response to the greatness of God: surrender. We're to climb up on the altar as a sacrifice. We're to let God remold us completely.

The first thing Elisha did when God called him to become Elijah's successor was to burn his plows and use the resulting fire to

cook his animals (1 Kings 19:21). Continuing his old trade would have been conforming to the pattern of this world. Not because there's anything intrinsically wrong with plowing with oxen, but because God was specifically calling him into something different. So Elisha made a sharp break with the past. He was transformed to follow God's good, pleasing, and perfect will for him in the greater life of a prophet.

The first thing God is calling you to, in order to fulfill a greater purpose in your life, is surrender. We must acknowledge how great God is, how He surpasses everything else in the world that we could aim for or aspire to, and how we'll never be great on our own.

When Jesus called us to do greater things in John 14:12, He wasn't calling us to be greater *than* Him. He was calling us to be greater *through* Him by using His power living inside us so we can do greater things for His glory. So before you go on to do greater things, you have to deal with the question, is my heart surrendered to God?



RT The first thing God is calling you to, in order to fulfill a greater purpose in your life, is surrender.

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Is there an area in your life today where you feel like you need to burn your plow, that connection to a part of your life you haven't given completely over to God? Before God can begin to make something greater out of your life, before you can step into the life

you're wanting, you've got to give Him all of the life you have, because He gave it to you to begin with.

That's why Ephesians 3:20 says that God "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us." He is great, and He wants greater things for us than we can imagine for ourselves. So when you take a posture of surrender, you say, "God, here it is. You're the producer. Tell me what part to play. You're my leader. Tell me where to go. You're the creator and commander of my life. I'm completely submitted to You."

God will call different people to do different things. But it's always something greater than our human minds alone could ever conceive. And it always starts with surrender.

 **PRAYER FOCUS:** Will you burn your plow? Will you offer yourself as a living sacrifice? Express your surrender to God. Be as specific about the "plow" as you possibly can.



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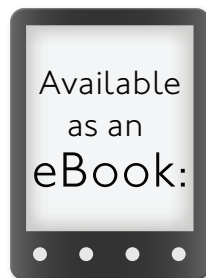
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