

Prepare for an

AWAKENING

Based on the book by Stovall Weems

WEEK 5 :: APRIL 6, 2011

Restored—and More

Repent . . . and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

—ACTS 3:19, NIV

When I preach the message of awakening to a life of everyday passion in a relationship with God, I find that very few Christians don't wish they had such a relationship. The problem is that some don't think they're worthy of it. "That's wonderful for you, Pastor," they may say, "but you don't know what I've done." Some sin or failure is weighing down their conscience. They can't see beyond the guilt and the shame to the restoration that the Lord is holding out to them.

How sad, even if it is common.

When Peter denied Jesus, after swearing he wouldn't, he wept with grief. Peter had failed the Lord just when the Lord was going through His worst experience. It seemed as if three years of relationship building had come to nothing.

But it was not the end. Three times Peter denied Jesus. And three times Jesus provoked Peter into reaffirming his love for Him. In this way, tenderly, graciously, yet firmly, Jesus restored Peter to his position as Jesus' close friend.

Are you avoiding an intimate relationship with God because you think you've let Christ down? I have news for you: of course you've let Christ down. So did Peter. So do all of us. We're sinners. But that doesn't mean that God is unable or unwilling to reestablish a close, loving relationship with us. Not at all!

Repent, if you haven't already. And if you have repented, then set the guilt aside. After all, Christ has.

At the seashore that morning, Jesus did more than just restore Peter to a relationship. He gave him a personal mission—to "feed" Jesus' "lambs." And I believe that if you pursue a close relationship with God, He will have a thrilling personal mission for you, too.

What if thou hadst committed the sins of a thousand? What if thou hadst committed the sins of a million worlds? Christ's righteousness will cover, Christ's blood will cleanse thee from the guilt of all. —GEORGE WHITEFIELD

To be able to look into God's face, and know with the knowledge of faith that there is nothing between the soul and Him, is to experience the fullest peace the soul can know. Whatever else pardon may be, it is above all things admission into full fellowship with God.

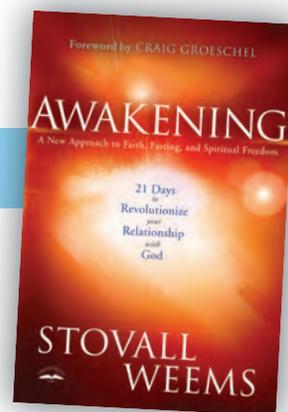
—CHARLES H. BRENT

Bible Reading Plan: John 13:36-38; 18:15-18, 25-27; 21:15-19

Prayer Focus:

What obstacles are standing in the way of your passionate relationship with God? Do you need to ask God's forgiveness—or accept forgiveness that's already been given? Fall into Christ's welcoming arms.

Based on the book, *AWAKENING: A New Approach to Faith, Fasting, and Spiritual Freedom* by Stovall Weems



About the Author

Stovall Weems is the founder and lead pastor of Celebration Church in Jacksonville, Florida, a thriving, multi-site church with locations both regionally and internationally. In addition to being a pastor, teacher, and conference speaker, Stovall leads Awakening, a 21-day spiritual campaign of prayer, fasting, and personal devotion that takes place each January. Stovall and his wife, Kerri, have three children. Learn more at www.awake21.org.