

Prepare for an

AWAKENING

Based on the book by Stovall Weems

WEEK 7 :: APRIL 20, 2011

Springtime of the Soul

*Wake up, O sleeper,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.*

—EPHESIANS 5:14, NIV

Don't you love Easter? I do. This springtime celebration of the resurrection of our Lord reaches a peak of joy as nothing else in the Christian calendar can.

But I'll tell you, I often feel at Easter that I need to correct a common theological misunderstanding—the idea that eternal life begins after death. Eternal life does not begin after death. It begins when we follow Jesus Christ in faith.

Now, after death, our spirits go to be with Christ. And because He was bodily resurrected, we can look forward to our own bodily resurrection. All this is most wonderful, and I eagerly preach it at Easter time. But the other reality is, we undergo a spiritual death and resurrection in *this* life, whenever we first believe in our Savior.

So, if we have the resurrection life, shouldn't we be living it to the full? Yes, oh, yes! In fact, that's all I'm really arguing for in my book *Awakening*. As the Son is present in the full light of the Father in heaven today, so today we can be gloriously present with God in our spirits, loving Him with everything we've got, enjoying His goodness and His greatness.

My friend, do your best memories of closeness with God all date back to years ago? Wake up!

Is your mind still engaged with truth but your heart cool toward God? Wake up!

Are you enamored with the things of this world, when the world's God wants you to know Him intimately? Wake up! Rise from the dead!

The world cannot bury Christ. The earth is not deep enough for His tomb, the clouds are not wide enough for His winding-sheet; He ascends into the heavens, but the heavens cannot contain Him. He still lives—in the church which burns unconsumed with His love; in the truth that reflects His image; in the hearts which burn as He talks with them by the way.

—EDWARD THOMSON

Our old history ends with the cross; our new history begins with the resurrection.

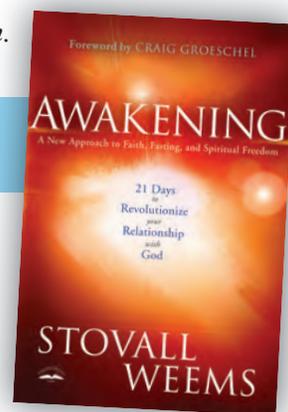
—WATCHMAN NEE

Bible Reading Plan: John 20

Prayer Focus:

Praise God for His power shown in the raising of Jesus from the dead. Commit before Him today that you will not stop seeking Him until you experience that resurrection power in your own life.

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.