

NEW TO AWAKEN?

You are invited to attend our next

MEET & GREET



RSVP



WOMEN'S REFRESH



SPRING 2023

abide

Colossians 2:6 "Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him."

Featuring Janie Alfred

MAY 5-6 | FRI 6:30PM-9PM | SAT 9AM-3PM

\$30



ENCOUNTER JESUS

Week 34 | THOMAS RESCUED FROM UNBELIEF | John 20:19-31

WHILE A CRISIS CAN LEAD TO A SHAKING AND WEAKENING OF YOUR FAITH, A CRISIS CAN ALSO LEAD TO A STIRRING AND STRENGTHENING OF YOUR FAITH.

“Shaken, not stirred.” Now most of you are familiar with the timeless character in Ian Fleming’s novels that popularized that saying. If you are thinking of James Bond, you are right! And while James Bond wanted his martinis shaken, not stirred, that is not how we want our faith. In spiritual terminology, a faith that has been shaken is one that has been weakened. A faith that has taken a step backward instead of a step forward. On the other hand, when our faith is stirred, it’s strengthened. The hard reality is that crisis brings the shaking or stirring of our faith. When a crisis hits, many people’s faith takes a hit. It might be a child who has gone prodigal, an unanswered prayer for an ailing loved one, a struggling marriage that worsened, or a job promotion that doesn’t come through. Our faith is never shaken because God has blessed us too much! It’s the adversity—the shock of disappointment and the painful experience that ensues. But remember, while a crisis can lead to a shaking and weakening of your faith, a crisis can also lead to a stirring and a strengthening of your faith. It is all about how you respond to God in the process and what you choose to hold on to. Drawing near to God in difficulty and anchoring yourself to the resurrection will always lead to a stirring and strengthening of your faith. To a faith-enriched moment where you declare to Jesus, “My Lord and my God!”

Leaders: Take your group through each section: **Pray, Reflect, and Reach.** Keep in mind the time allowances. In the **Reflect** section, feel free to focus on several of these questions instead of all as time allows.



PRAY (10 min)

As a Life Group, reflect and pray over this weekend’s message. Spend time prayerfully reflecting on how you respond to a crisis. Ask God to search your hearts and reveal His truth.



REFLECT (25 min)

As you’ve had the opportunity to reflect on what God has spoken to you through the lesson this week, consider these questions as a group and discuss them.

1. As you have had the opportunity to pray, write down how you respond to a crisis when it hits your life. **What is the process that you go through? Where does that process take you? Are you in a crisis right now?**

SOMETIMES ONLY CRISIS CAN REVEAL THE TRUE CONDITION OF OUR FAITH.

2. The Christian life is a spiritual battle. And the adversary that we face is always seeking to leverage difficulty and crisis to weaken our faith in Jesus. Signs include bitterness and anger towards God, defiance towards his calling and will for our life, resistance to spiritual disciplines, and giving up on living by faith and trusting God. **Are any of these signs prevalent in your life today? Are there other signs you would include? What’s the best thing to do when your heart begins to lean in this direction?**

ENCOUNTER JESUS

3. Thomas had made demands of God—conditions he had set to determine whether or not he would believe. An immature faith holds demands over God's head., extorting His actions for our faith. In this scenario, your faith in God is only as good as the last thing He has done for you. **Do you have this type of relationship dynamic with God? If you knew someone who did, how would you Biblically guide them out of that scenario?**

4. God did all He needed to do for you and me when He raised Jesus from the dead. The resurrection is home-base for the Christian. It is the crucial thing we anchor ourselves to and what we always aim to return to. In the highs and lows of life, we have to keep the resurrection front and center. **Why is this? How does focusing on the resurrection of Jesus help you? Give examples.**

THE RESURRECTION CHANGES US. NOT JUST ONE TIME BUT EVERY SINGLE DAY.



WEEKLY MEMORIZATION VERSE

JOHN 20:29 Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."



REACH (5 min)

As you lean into the power of Christ's resurrection and the strengthening of your faith, be intentional about helping someone else struggling in their faith.