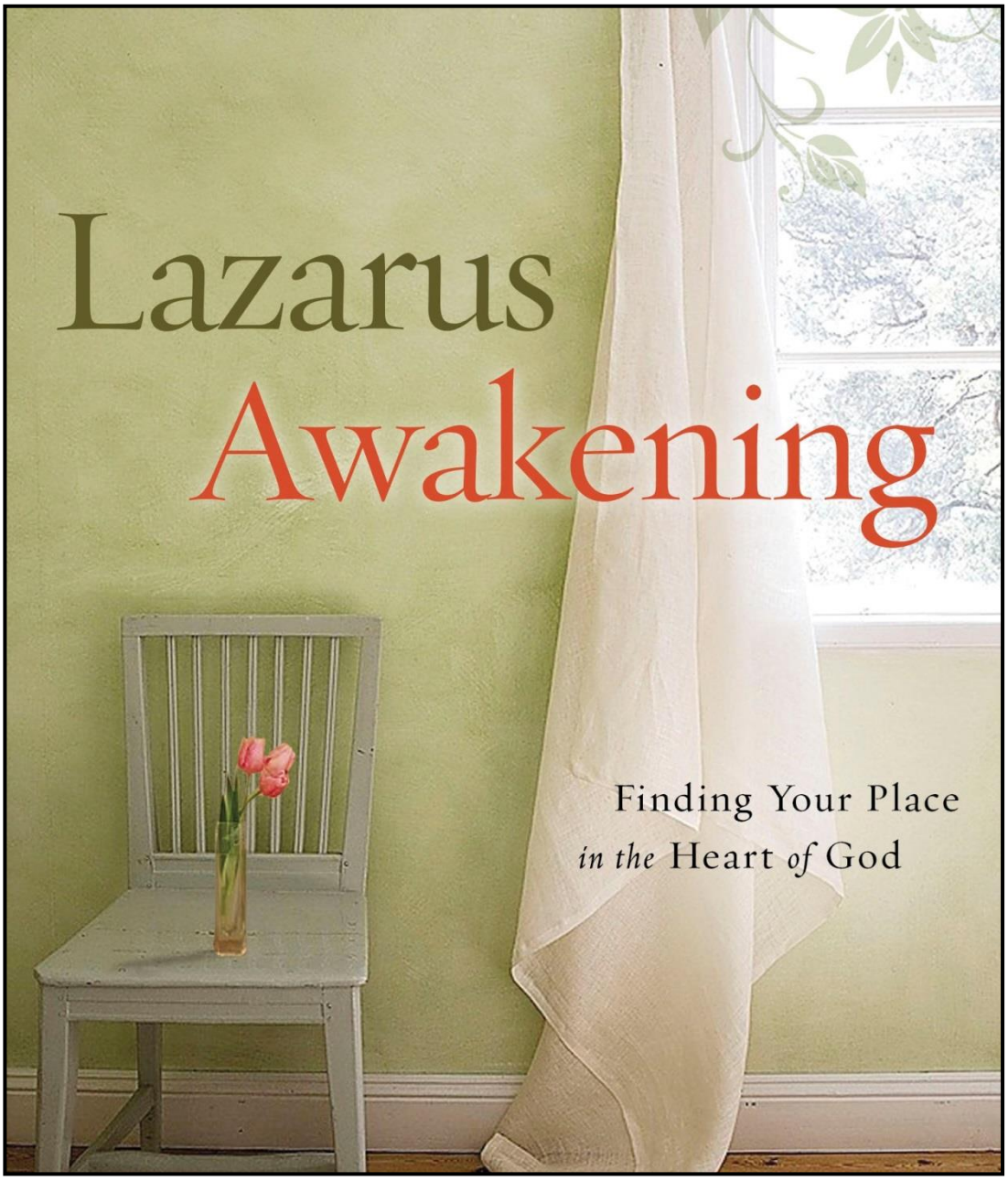

Retreat

Journal

Word Time: Scripture Memorization

When we memorize scripture, it becomes a tool in our arsenal to fight off discouragement, replace lies with truth, and wage war against the enemy.

Here's a method that's really helped me:[1]

~ Start by saying the reference and the first phrase together three times

John 10:10: "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy…"

~ Now add another phrase to the verse and repeat it three times

John 10:10: "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life…"

~ If needed, repeat the second phrase alone three times:

"I have come that they may have life…"

~ Add the next phrase and repeat the last sentence three times:

"I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly."

~ Now put it all together, adding the reference at the end. It will sound like this:

John 10:10: "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly." John 10:10

Here some additional tips:

1. Review the verse regularly using this pattern: REFERENCE—VERSE—REFERENCE.
2. Carry a copy of your verses on index cards or on your phone.
3. Meditate on the verse. Really think about what it means. Allow it to become part of your life.

For easy reference, you'll find all of the assigned memory verses on page XX. You can also download and print them on business card stock at www.LazarusAwakening.com.

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Joshua 1:8

Discussion Time

From the story in JOHN 11:1-12:11, which character(s) do you relate to most, and why?

Personal Survey

During this retreat, we will consider the love-doubt that plagues many of us, even as Christians. Please give an honest evaluation of where you feel you are in your relationship with God. As you consider the following statements, rate each with: O (for Often); S (for Sometimes); N (for Never).

____ I regularly sense/experience God's love for me.

____ I feel distant from God.

____ I feel secure in God's love.

____ I think God's loves me, but I don't feel it in my heart.

____ I believe God loves other people, but I'm not entirely convinced He loves me.

____ I'm learning to rely on God's love rather than my own worthiness.

____ I feel God loves me less because of past failures and mistakes.

____ I believe I am chosen and dearly loved by God.

Retreat Prayer

> *I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.*
>
> Ephesians 1:17-19

Retreat Session One Video

Stuck Christianity

For great is your love toward me; you have delivered me from the depths of the grave.

Psalm 86:13

The Story, Luke 10:38–42 and John 11:5

We can understand why Jesus loved…

~ Mary; look how she worshiped.

~ Martha; look how she _____.

The only thing of significance Lazarus did was _____, yet "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus" (John 11:5).

From Death to Life, John 11:1–44

In many ways, the story of Lazarus parallels our salvation experience:

1. Jesus calls our _____.

2. We must respond.

3. We must _____ into new life.

4. We must begin to _____ our graveclothes.

The Invitation, John 11:25–28

"I am the resurrection and the life…" (John 11:25)

"Do you _____ this?" (verse 26)

"Place of Lazarus" or *Eleazar*, which means "God has _____."

Closing Time

I sense the Lord saying….

Word Time: Bible Reading Highlights

The Bible tells us that Jesus often withdrew to solitary places to spend time alone with His Father. I'd like to challenge you to do the same thing.

Though I've never heard the audible voice of God, the following Bible reading method has really helped me quiet my soul so I can discern God's voice as I spend time with Him each day.

- ~ First, I ask the Holy Spirit to guide me, to give me an open mind and an open heart to see what He wants to show me in His Word.
- ~ Rather than reading multiple chapters, I read only one. Taking my time, I read slowly, meditating on each word and thought.
- ~ When a verse(s) catches my attention, I write it down word for word in my journal, including the reference.
- ~ I ask God to give me wisdom and insight into the scripture and show me how to apply it to my life.
- ~ My thoughts often come out as a prayer. I converse with God about what I've read, thanking Him for what He has revealed.

The words in the Bible, written so very long ago, have the power to radically change your life and mine. When we take the time to study scripture, we'll find ourselves transformed into the new creation God wants us to be (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Because that's the power of God's holy Word.

I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.
Psalm 119:32

Word Time Exercise: Romans 8

Using the tips offered in "Bible Reading Highlights" sidebar, read the following passage slowly and prayerfully, marking what speaks to you. Then use the lined form to record what God spoke to you. (More forms are available at www.JoannaWeaverBooks.com)

Romans 8

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, [2] because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. [3] For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, [4] in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

[5] Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. [6] The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; [7] the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. [8] Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

[9] You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. [10] But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. [11] And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

[12] Therefore, brothers, we have an obligation — but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. [13] For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, [14] because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. [15] For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." [16] The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. [17] Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

[18] I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. [19] The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. [20] For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope [21] that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

[22] We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. [23] Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. [24] For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? [25] But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

[26] In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. [27] And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

[28] And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. [29] For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. [30] And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

[31] What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? [32] He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all — how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? [33] Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. [34] Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died — more than that, who was raised to life — is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. [35] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? [36] As it is written:

"For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

[37] No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. [38] For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, [39] neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Bible Reading Highlights

Date: _____ Portion I read today: _____

Best thing I marked today: Reference: _____

Verse: _____

_____

_____

How it impressed me: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Retreat Session Two Video

Talitha Koum!

Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.
Ephesians 5:14

A Family in Need, John 11:1–11

The family in Bethany sent word to Jesus…

~ The Problem: "Lord, the one you love is _____" (verse 3).
~ The Declaration: "This sickness will not end in death…." (verse 4).
~ The Miracle: "I am going there to _____ him up" (verse 11).

Our Touchable Jesus

Two different people from opposite ends of society, both of whom needed Jesus's touch:

~ Jairus
~ Unnamed woman

Pathway to a Miracle, Mark 5:22–43

1. Reach out and _____ Jesus.
   Principle #1: You matter to God.
   Principle #2: You are never a bother to God.

2. Don't be afraid; just _____.

3. It's time to _____ _____!

Mark 5:41: He took her by the hand and said to her, "*Talitha koum!*" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!")

Closing Time

I sense the Lord saying….

Word Time: Journaling Resurrection

David's psalms are, in a sense, his journal where he poured out his heart to God. I've found that putting a pen to paper has brought a deeper dimension to my walk with God as well. I hope you'll consider incorporating journaling into your quiet time.

Here are a few tips on dialoguing with God that have helped me:

1. ***Be honest.*** David didn't edit himself; he simply poured out his heart. A journal is a place where we can be real with God so that He becomes more real to us.

2. ***Allow God to speak to you.*** When you sense the Holy Spirit speaking truth to your situation, write those thoughts down in your journal.

3. ***Remember what God has done.*** Journaling helps us remember God's faithfulness in the past. Record answers to prayers so that you can return to them when new challenges arise.

There is so much power in having a living, breathing conversation with the Lord. A lot of our confusion and emotional turmoil is internal. Spilling it out on paper before the Lord never fails to bring a release for me.

I pray you'll find this type of journaling beneficial as well.

Journal Response:

Right now, I'm feeling…

Identifying Strongholds

A stronghold is a hurt, a habit, or a hang-up that keeps us entombed, unable to live freely and fully. Strongholds may involve false beliefs, established attitudes, and compulsive behavior patterns, including addictions. Some are inherently harmful (like smoking), while others may only be a problem if they become entrenched in your life and hold you back from freedom. The following questions may help you recognize tombs that are hemming you in, shutting you down, or closing you off:

Do you struggle with "repeated, unwanted behavior"?[1] You may find yourself doing things you don't want to do or struggling with negative or destructive thought patterns. This behavior is so engrained it is nearly second nature, though you know it isn't right. It can be anything from anger to chronic laziness, violent reactions to habitual lying—to name just a few.

Do you tend to turn to this behavior or thought pattern when things are difficult or you feel depressed? It may offer a strong (but false) sense of comfort and initially make you feel better, even though you know it's not good for you. Whether it's compulsive shopping; mental escapism through television, reading, or the Internet; overeating; pornography; alcohol; or something else—your first impulse when troubled is to turn to it rather than to God.

Do you have difficulty understanding why you react to certain things the way you do? Certain experiences may trigger overreactions that don't fit the situation. The strength of the emotion surprises even you, but you can't seem to help yourself. Watch out for tendencies toward verbal retaliation, extreme anger and defensiveness, paranoia, or self-hatred.

Do you have a secret no one knows? Shame from your past or "family business" that you've been warned not to talk about can haunt your present life and keep you from connecting with people in meaningful ways. Secrets and shame can lead to emotional paralysis, shyness, isolation, cynicism, or a chameleon tendency to role-play rather than be real.

Do you find yourself stuck somewhere in your past or stalled in the grief process? You may find yourself longing to go back to a certain point in your life or continually reliving a painful event. You may simmer with anger over a long-ago injustice or feel paralyzed by grief over a significant loss. There's nothing wrong with a bit of nostalgia, and needing time to heal after trauma or loss is normal and necessary. But ongoing and unresolved feelings about the past can eventually harden into strongholds.

Do you have an unsubstantiated and intense dislike of a certain type or group of people—men, women, liberals or conservatives, corporate types, Muslims, Jews, tattooed Norwegians? Any contact with the group—or simply thinking about them—may inspire deep discomfort, fear, anger, or even hatred. Making sweeping judgments and assumptions about individual members of the group without actually getting to know them is a telltale sign as well.

Do you accept your limitations as your definition? This could mean you've allowed demeaning words from the past to define you: "I'm not athletic… or talented…" "I probably won't amount to anything." You may frequently use the excuse "That's just the way I am" to deflect blame or responsibility for your behavior or your reactions: "I always lose my temper because I'm Italian/Greek/Irish" or "In our family we just don't do feelings."

Do you get offended when other people point out unhealthy behaviors that you don't (or do!) see in yourself? Defensiveness is usually a sign that we've come in contact with some kind of truth. If more than one person suggests you have a problem, it makes sense to listen, even if you're sure they're wrong. Don't underestimate the power of denial to keep you in bondage. Ask God to help you see what you need to see.

Worksheet: Identifying Strongholds

We all have lies that we've internalized as truth, unhealthy patterns that undermine the life God wants us to live. To help us discover what might be holding us back from freedom, ask the Holy Spirit to lead you as you go back over the "Identifying Strongholds" sidebar on the last page. As you read each point, answer the corresponding question below as honestly as you can.

Do you struggle with "repeated, unwanted behavior"?

Do you tend to turn to this behavior or thought pattern when things are difficult or you feel depressed?

Do you have difficulty understanding why you react to certain things the way you do?

Do you have a secret no one knows?

Do you find yourself stuck somewhere in your past or stalled in the grief process?

Do you have an unsubstantiated and intense dislike of a certain type or group of people?

Do you accept your limitations as your definition?

Do you get offended when other people point out unhealthy behaviors that you don't (or do!) see in yourself?

Retreat Session Three Video

Leaving Our Tombs

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

Ephesians 1:18–19

We Serve a Mighty God, Ephesians 1:17–20

We need to realize the mighty power of God working on our behalf. But while we serve a mighty God, we also have a formidable foe (1 Peter 5:8).

Satan seeks to:

~ Hem us in

~ Shut us down

~ Close us off

The Dark Plot

Satan desires to keep us from being effective in God's kingdom. He wants to:

1. Marginalize us

2. _____ us

3. _____ us

The Glorious Answer, Psalm 40:1–3, NLT

Jesus wants to set us free from our tombs so that He can open us up to be all He intends us to be…

A _____ case for His splendor!

"Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do…But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live" Romans 8:12 NLT

Closing Time

I sense the Lord saying….

Tripping Points

Graveclothes are often revealed by repeated reactions and cyclical responses. For instance, if you find yourself offended by someone, only to be offended by someone else the very next day, that's a sign that other people might not be the problem. Consider the following emotions and behaviors. (Note there is space for you to add others that come to mind.)

Are any of these responses overly familiar to you? Number the three that occur most often in you. Take them to the Lord in a prayer of repentance.

_____insecurity	_____need to control	_____urge to escape
_____negativity	_____depression	_____self-pity
_____touchiness	_____emotional "stuffing"	_____sharp tongue
_____self-hatred	_____fear	_____self-centeredness
_____quick temper	_____dishonesty	_____easily offended
_____procrastination	_____emotional bully	_____isolation
_____shame	_____defensiveness	_____judgmentalism
_____blame	_____self-medicating	_____envy
_____fantasizing	_____denial	_____people pleasing
_____self-justification	_____resentment	_____paranoia
_____other:	_____other:	_____other:

Search me, O God, and know my heart… See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.
Psalm 139:23–24

Retreat Session Four Video

Shedding Graveclothes

Let us strip off anything that slows us down or holds us back, and especially those sins that wrap themselves so tightly around our feet and trip us up.

Hebrews 12:1, TLB

Lazarus, Come Forth! John 11:17–44

When Jesus called Lazarus out of the tomb, the man was alive but still bound.

~ Salvation—instantaneous

~ Sanctification—a _____

Clothing Exchange, Ephesians 4:22–24

We have been made alive in Christ, but with the Holy Spirit's help we must do our part:

~ Put off our graveclothes by _____

~ Put on His righteousness by _____

Avoiding the Snare, 2 Timothy 2:26

Whatever trips us can also entrap us. Snares are:[25]

1. Artfully _____

2. Usually attractive

3. Sadly _____

"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy…" Jude 1:24–25

Closing Time

I sense the Lord saying….

Prayer Station: Breakout Time

This segment is designed to help you get the most of out of your time alone with God. The prayer stations are meant to give shape and meaning to the things we've studied. The goal isn't to check all of the stations off your list. The goal of this time is to encounter God.

With that said, we encourage you to experience as many as possible without rushing through them. Each station gives you a chance to respond to the Lord in a tangible way. Use the space below the station descriptions to write out a prayer if you'd like.

Please respect the holiness of this time:

- As you go through the stations do it quietly and prayerfully, respecting other people's need for quiet and privacy.
- Engage fully at each station, but be sensitive to those behind you. You're welcome to move to the side for further prayer if you'd like
- Please don't engage in conversation with anyone but the Lord.

It isn't necessary to visit the stations in a specific order. In fact, ask the Holy Spirit to lead you during this time. He knows what you need and when you need it better than anyone!

Prayer Station: Send Word to Jesus

Like Mary and Martha, we need to send word to Jesus concerning our needs! He invites us to come to Him with our burdens, no matter how big or how small. Listen to the promise in this verse:

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition,
with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:6-7

Action Step: Write your need on a piece of paper and place it somewhere on the representation of Israel's Western Wall (also known as the Wailing Wall.) Near the location of the original temple, it is the place they feel closest to God.

Aren't you glad that because of Jesus, we don't have to physically visit a certain location? Instead, Hebrews 4:16 tells us we can "approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

Dear Jesus…

Prayer Station: Roll Away the Stone

What's blocking the relationship you long to have with God? What's keeping you from walking out into the abundant life Christ offers?

Pause a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal what boulder might be blocking your tomb:

- Unworthiness
- Unforgiveness
- Unbelief

Write down the name of the boulder that's holding you back: _____

Action Steps: As you roll aside the stone you've indicated, invite the Holy Spirit to invade that space and break any stronghold that may exist. Welcome Jesus into that area of your life.

Now whisper to your soul the statement written behind the boulder. Pick up a stone from the corresponding basket and replace your boulder with the rock-solid, life-changing truth of Christ!

Dear Jesus…

Prayer Station: Come Forth!

At this station, we are going to address the lies and strongholds that have entombed us. Keeping in mind what you discovered in the "Identifying Strongholds" exercise you did in session 3, read the "Dethroning Lies" sidebar on the next page.

Action Step: Using the plate of sand in front of you, walk through the following steps prayerfully and symbolically.

REVEAL – Thank God for revealing the stronghold.
Action: Using your finger, write a word that summarizes what God revealed.

REPENT – Take a moment and ask God to forgive and help you in this area.

RENOUNCE – Prayerfully renounce any power given to the enemy in this area
Action: After praying, smooth the sand with your hand, erasing the word.

PAUSE a moment to accept the incredible truth that God has forgiven you and broken the power of that stronghold. Ask the Lord to help you live in the freedom He has provided.

REPLACE – Ask the Holy Spirit to help you replace the lies of the enemy with the truth of God's Word. When you get home, look for verses to stand on.

(Use prayer response space at end of sidebar.)

Dethroning Lies

Many of us believe the lie that we are helpless when it comes to finding true freedom. Our bondage seems too strong and the lies too intense. Yet regularly employing these four powerful principles releases the Holy Spirit to release us:

Reveal. Ask God to show the area (or areas) in which you are bound. What stronghold is holding you back from freedom? What lie has exalted itself above the knowledge of God? Don't try to figure this out on your own. Ask for the Spirit's help.

Repent. Ask God to forgive the times you've sought refuge in your stronghold rather than in Him. Ask the Holy Spirit to take your sin and the accompanying lies and remove them from you "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalm 103:12).

Renounce. Prayerfully renounce any authority you may have given to Satan by embracing your stronghold rather than God. Naming each sin aloud, renounce your attachment to the lie or behavior, giving authority in that area back to Jesus Christ.

Replace. Look for scriptures that pertain to your stronghold or the lie you've believed. Write them down and place them where you can read them several times a day. Memorize and quote these verses whenever you feel the lie trying to reassert its power.

Please note that I'm not outlining four easy steps for curing your hurts, hang-ups, and habits. Strongholds may have a physical or spiritual component, so the process of breaking free can be lengthy and complicated. Some (especially addictions) may require significant time to overcome as well as outside help such as professional counseling, support groups, intercessory prayer, and more.

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.
2 Corinthians 10:4

Come Forth! Response:

Dear Jesus…

Prayer Station: Accept God's Lavish Love

"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"
1 John 3:1

Action Step: You are loved, dear friend! Much more than you could ever know. Relax and receive God's love today. Allow His truth to wash every lie of insignificance or unworthiness. Let Jesus love you back to life and heal any soul wounds you might have.

Dear Jesus…

Prayer Station: Unwind Your Graveclothes

When you consider that Lazarus – though fully resurrected! – came out of the tomb still bound, it isn't a surprise that we all struggle with graveclothes at times. "Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles," Hebrews 12:1 instructs us. And that's what we're going to do!

Refer back to the "Tripping Point" test you filled out in Session 4. Write down the weak areas that give you the most trouble:

1.
2.
3.

Choose one to focus on, and with the Holy Spirit's help, work through the "Shedding Graveclothes" sidebar on the next page. Note some practical ways you could unwind graveclothes in this area:

-
-

Action Step: write your "Tripping Point" on the strip of cloth provided and prayerfully place it on the cross. Remember, you are not alone. The Holy Spirit wants to help you shed everything that keeps you from being all you are meant to be in Jesus.

Dear Jesus…

Shedding Graveclothes

When it comes to getting rid of the graveclothes that trip me up, I've always wanted God to deal with me quickly, the way a chef slices an onion. But God knows what I need, and in His wisdom and mercy, He takes me at a pace I can handle. Here's the shroud-shedding process I've found helpful as I have tried to cooperate with God's work in my life.

1. Ask God to reveal the graveclothes you need to remove (Psalm 139:23–24). They may include besetting sins, lies, or cyclical patterns you identified in the previous sidebar, "Tripping Points." Ask Him to show you the truth about the danger they pose and to help you let them go.
2. Choose new responses before you find yourself in trigger situations. In many cases, this involves determining to do the opposite of what comes naturally—for instance, being quiet rather than reacting with lots of words (Romans 12:2).
3. Don't get discouraged when the process takes time. Some graveclothes have more layers than others. The fact that a certain issue reappears doesn't negate or diminish what God has done in you. It may not be the same layer but a deeper one (2 Corinthians 3:18).
4. Multiple layers of graveclothes may indicate an area of vulnerability that you will always struggle with. Guard yourself and your responses accordingly (2 Corinthians 12:9).
5. Keep pressing on toward Jesus. Graveclothes are shed best as we pursue our friendship with Him. For as we fix our eyes on Jesus, we become less like us and more like Him (Psalm 34:5).

Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 3:13–14

Prayer Station: Who I Am in Christ

Do you ever wonder if God really loves you – especially when you find it hard to love yourself? At this station, we are going to discover what God thinks about us so that we can get the new point of view Paul talks about in 2 Corinthians 5:16-17:

> *So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*

Action Steps: Read through the "Who I Am in Christ" sidebar below. Then do the following:

- Choose one of the statements that speaks the most to you right now
- Take a mirror tile and write the statement ONLY on the bottom third.
- Look up the corresponding verse and write in on the back of the tile.
- Whisper the verse aloud to yourself, then turn to the reflective side and read the statement. Allow the words to sink deep in your soul.
- In prayer, thank God for this truth that transcends our inadequacies and embraces us in spite of our mistakes.

Dear Jesus…

Who I Am in Christ

Ever since Adam and Eve bit into the forbidden fruit, humanity has struggled with an identity crisis. We've forgotten who we really are—chosen and beloved children of God. Consider the following list of scriptures from the wonderful devotional *One Day at a Time*.[9]

I Am Accepted

John 1:12	I am God's child.
John 15:15	I am Christ's friend.
Romans 5:1	I have been justified.
1 Corinthians 6:17	I am united with the Lord, and I am one spirit with Him.
1 Corinthians 6:20	I have been bought with a price. I belong to God.
1 Corinthians 12:27	I am a member of Christ's body.
Ephesians 1:1	I am a saint.
Ephesians 1:5	I have been adopted as God's child.

Ephesians 2:18	I have direct access to God through the Holy Spirit.
Colossians 1:14	I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins.
Colossians 2:10	I am complete in Christ.

I Am Secure

Romans 8:1–2	I am free from condemnation.
Romans 8:28	I am assured that all things work together for good.
Romans 8:31–34	I am free from any condemning charges against me.
Romans 8:35–39	I cannot be separated from the love of God.
2 Corinthians 1:21–22	I have been established, anointed, and sealed by God.
Colossians 3:3	I am hidden with Christ in God.
Philippians 1:6	I am confident that the good work God has begun in me will be perfected.
Philippians 3:20	I am a citizen of heaven.
2 Timothy 1:7	I have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love, and a sound mind.
Hebrews 4:16	I can find grace and mercy to help in the time of need.
1 John 5:18	I am born of God, and the evil one cannot touch me.

I Am Significant

Matthew 5:13–14	I am the salt and light of the earth.
John 15:1,5	I am a branch of the true vine, a channel of His life.
John 15:16	I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.
Acts 1:8	I am a personal witness of Christ.
1 Corinthians 3:16	I am God's temple.
2 Corinthians 5:17–21	I am a minister of reconciliation for God.
2 Corinthians 6:1	I am God's co-worker [see 1 Corinthians 3:9]
Ephesians 2:6	I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realm.
Ephesians 2:10	I am God's workmanship.
Ephesians 3:12	I may approach God with freedom and confidence.
Philippians 4:13	I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me.

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.

John 10:28

Prayer Station: Sit at Jesus's Feet

There are so many facets to the story of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. So many things we can learn from their lives. But perhaps none is as important as the example Mary gave us as she "sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said," in Luke 10:39. But Mary not only listened, in John 12:1-3, she worshipped, spilling her most treasured possession as she poured expensive perfume on Jesus in an act of extravagant love and surrender.

Find a place to sit around the cross and quiet your soul before the Lord. Listen to the worship music and allow your spirit to respond with praise of your own. Here's a few ways you might want to do it:

- Tell Jesus what He means to you…
- Pour out your love and gratitude…
- Surrender anything you've been holding on to rather than Him…
- Lay down your most precious possession, dream, or gift to be used (or not used) for His glory…

Action Step: Write a love letter to Jesus on the paper provided and lay it at the foot of the cross. Pen it here as well if you wish:

Dear Jesus…

Prayer Station: Pick Up Your Cross

There is no way to fully understand what Golgotha must have been like for Jesus. The physical pain must have been excruciating, but the emotional pain must have been ripped his heart in two. Betrayed and forsaken, He was crucified by the very ones He'd come to save. Consider the price Jesus paid, as you read the following passage slowly and meditatively:

> Mark 15:16-39
>
> 16 The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace… 17 They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. 18 And they began to call out to him, "Hail, king of the Jews!" 19 Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. 20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him….
>
> 22 They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means The Place of the Skull). 23 Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. 24 And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get….

27 They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left. 29 Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, 30 come down from the cross and save yourself!"…

31 In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! 32 Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe." Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

33 At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. 34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"-which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"….

37 With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

38 The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. 39 And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

RESPOND to this amazing gift:
Dear Jesus…

Such extravagant love surely deserves an extravagant response. Read Mark 15:31-32 again, then consider the verses below.

Then he said to them all:
"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.
For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.

LUKE 9:23-24

Action Step: If you are willing to be a fully devoted follower of Jesus, pick up one of the crosses provided as a symbol of your dedication to becoming completely His.

PRAYER STATION BREAKOUT RESPONSE:
Dear Jesus….

Retreat Session Five Video

Light of Eternity

Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.

1 Timothy 6:12

Brought Back to Life, John 12:1–11

In this family from Bethany, I see a template for transformation:

~ Lazarus _____.

~ Martha _____.

~ Mary _____.

A Threat to Hell, John 12:10–11

Don't you want your life to be a threat to hell like Lazarus's was? In order to live fully resurrected:

1. We must be willing to _____.

2. We must be willing to _____.

Eternity Starts Now! 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

We don't have to wait for an end-time resurrection. Because of Jesus, we can live resurrected today.

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" Galatians 2:20

Closing Time

I sense the Lord saying….