How to Use This Study

Lazarus Awakening—The Book

While you'll learn a great deal from watching the video sessions and completing the study guide homework, please be sure to read your assigned chapters in *Lazarus Awakening* prior to each week's discussion. The book provides the framework of this study and is necessary to your getting the most out of our time together.

Important note: the paperback edition of *Lazarus Awakening* includes a bonus chapter, which is intended to be read following chapter 8. If you are using the hardcover edition, you can access the bonus chapter at LazarusAwakening.com.

As early in the study week as possible, you'll want to complete your assigned reading in the book with a pen or highlighter in hand. I encourage you to mark or underline things that really speak to you—verses, quotes, stories, or analogies. Make notes in the margins of any thoughts, questions, or revelations you'd like to discuss or share in class. In order to finish the book in eight weeks, at times you'll be asked to read two chapters instead of one. Be sure to plan enough time so that you get the most out of your reading.

The Study Guide

After you've read the assigned portion in the book, begin to work through the questions and exercises in this guide. They are designed to help you reflect on God's Word and apply it. (Please note that I quote primarily from the 1984 edition of the New International Version, and most questions are shaped around that translation.)

Each week's lesson also includes:

- *an "Israel Moment" sidebar.* Designed to complement my video discussions with Amy Turnage, Director of Operations at the Center for Holy Lands Studies, these sidebars offer insights into the land that

shaped Jesus and His ministry. The first three weeks also feature a "Word Time" sidebar outlining ways to go deeper in your walk with God. Corresponding videos will be shown in class if there is time. (Videos can be accessed at LazarusAwakening.com.)

- *a "Make a Plan" assignment.* Each week, you'll be encouraged to come up with action steps to apply the truths you've learned as you follow through on that plan during the upcoming week.
- *a "Who I Am in Christ" journal prompt.* Part of stepping out of our tombs involves allowing God to redefine us and replace lies with truth. Each week, you'll be asked to respond prayerfully to that process.
- *a memory verse.* Over the course of the study, you'll be asked to memorize seven verses. If that seems too overwhelming, choose one or two verses to focus on. Don't worry; I'll share some memorizing techniques that have helped me!
- *a video guide.* With fill-in-the-blank prompts, these pages help capture key points from the DVD session so that you can refer to them later.
- *a "Closing Time" reflection.* At the end of each lesson you'll have a chance to respond to what the Lord has impressed on your heart throughout the week and in the teaching session.

Week Two

Tale of the Third Follower

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

JOHN 11:5

READ: Chapters 1 and 2 in *Lazarus Awakening*

Lazarus. It's amazing the things we can learn from a man who never says a word in Scripture, never does any mighty acts of faith.

When it comes right down to it, the only thing of any significance that Lazarus did was die. And yet, John 11:5 tells us, "Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus." Which means there is hope for you and me! No matter the condition or situation we may find ourselves in at the moment, no matter how small the amount of faith we bring to the relationship, you and I are loved by Jesus.

You are not a constant disappointment to God, nor a nagging obligation He can't escape, as my friend Kim Trihey described the distance she used to feel.[4] Instead, you are His beloved child. And that, dear brother or sister, is very good news!

For the same Love that came to Lazarus's rescue that long ago day in Bethany wants to rescue us as well. Whether we're entombed by past failures, bound up by fear or debilitating doubt, Jesus has come to set us free! And the one whom the Son sets free, Jesus reminds us in John 8:36, "will be free indeed."

No more doubt. No more distance. Instead, we're invited to rest as well as live in the loving embrace of God.

Memory Verse

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, NKJV

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 Christian walk 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 down those thoughts 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.

"Who I Am in Christ" Journal Prompts

The enemy of our souls would like nothing more than to make us forget who we are as children of God. If he can keep us from realizing our identity in Christ, he can keep us captive to fear and self-doubt. Entombed in past failures, we'll remain bound by strongholds and unhealthy behaviors.

At the end of each week's lesson, you'll be asked to choose one of the truths listed in the "Who I Am in Christ" sidebar, found on pages 22–23 of this week's study. With the Holy Spirit's help, work through the listed questions, writing out your honest responses in the form of a prayer.

Israel Moment: *Jesus, the Man*

We all are shaped by the places we were raised and by the people who surrounded us. Though Jesus was fully God, He was also fully man. In this *Israel Moment,* Amy Turnage and I talk about the Galilean region and culture that shaped our Savior.

Region: Galilee includes a significant part of northern Israel. Nazareth, Jesus's hometown, was very small. Jesus may have spent time in Sepphoris, a large city an hour-and-a-half walk away.

Religion: First-century Galilee was a thoroughly pious Jewish region, as proved by the many ritual immersion baths, and other Jewish artifacts discovered there. It was the second largest center of religious learning after Jerusalem.

Education: In the light of first-century Judaism, the Gospels point to Jesus having had an outstanding Jewish education. Josephus mentions this in his *Testimonium Flavianum:* "At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct (lit: way of life) was good and his learning outstanding."[5]

Language: Israel was trilingual in the first century. The primary language was Hebrew, but Aramaic and Greek were also spoken. Jesus alluded to the Greek fables of Aesop (the reed and John the Baptist in Matthew 11:7; the parable of the miser in Matthew 25:14–30).[6]

Father: Joseph, who appears to have died prior to Jesus's public ministry, was a carpenter (Matthew 13:55) as was Jesus (Mark 6:3). In Jewish culture, people turned to them for advice, saying, "Is there a carpenter among us, or the son of a carpenter, who can solve the problem for us?"[7]

Family: Jesus was born into a very pious Jewish family. After Jesus's birth, Joseph and Mary observed customs commanded in the Law of Moses (purification rites in Leviticus 12:1–8; first-born son payment in Numbers 18:14–16). Another sign of devotion was their yearly trip "to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover" (Luke 2:41), a trip most Jews made only once every few years.

This Week's Study

1. Read the story of Lazarus found in John 11:1–37. Which one of the many characters mentioned in the passage (disciples, Mary, Martha, Lazarus, Jewish bystanders) do you relate to most? Why?

2. Look at the sidebar titled "What Kind of Father Do You Have?" on pages 4 and 5 of *Lazarus Awakening.* Which (if any) misrepresentation of God as Father have you struggled with?

   How has it affected you?

   In what ways, positive or negative, has your connection with your earthly father affected your relationship with God?

3. Take a moment and read the passage below aloud, slowly and thoughtfully. Circle or underline words and phrases that stand out to you.

   I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. (Ephesians 3:16–19, NLT)

   What in this passage speaks most to you, and why?

   How would your life be different if you could get the fact God loves you from your head to your heart?

4. If you were to send a message to Jesus concerning your current situation and need, how would you finish the following sentence? (With Philippians 4:6 in mind, take what you write down to God in prayer.)
   "Lord, the one you love is . . ."?

5. In chapter 2, I wrote about the worst sickness of all: sin-sickness. Match the downward spiral of sin and its effects listed below to the following scriptures by filling in the appropriate letter in the blank before the phrase: (a) Psalm 106:43; (b) Acts 8:23; (c) James 1:14–15.

   ____ Fills us with bitterness

   ____ Makes us waste away

   ____ Ends in death

   ____ Entices with our own evil desires

   ____ Holds us captive

   ____ Causes us to rebel against God

6. On the next page, read the sidebar "What God Does with Our Sins." Draw a ♡ around the three points that speak most powerfully to you. Choose one point to meditate on—really allow yourself to soak in its truth. Write out the words below. (Hey, you might even want to sketch or paint them, sing or declare them aloud!)

   Look up the scripture listed with that truth, then write it in your own words:

What God Does with Our Sins

Rosalind Goforth, a well-known missionary to China, struggled many years with an oppressive burden of guilt and sin that left her feeling like a spiritual failure. Finally, out of desperation, she sat down with her Bible and a concordance, determined to find out how God views the faults of His children. At the top of the paper, she wrote these words: "What God Does with Our Sins." Then she searched the Scriptures, compiling this list of seventeen truths:

1. He lays them on His Son—Jesus Christ (Isaiah 53:6).
2. Christ takes them away (John 1:29).
3. They are removed an immeasurable distance—as far as east is from west (Psalm 103:12).
4. When sought for [they] are not found (Jeremiah 50:20).
5. The Lord forgives them (1 John 1:9; Ephesians 1:7; Psalm 103:3).
6. He cleanses them all away by the blood of His Son (1 John 1:7).
7. He cleanses them as white as snow or wool (Isaiah 1:18; Psalm 51:7).
8. He abundantly pardons them (Isaiah 55:7).
9. He tramples them underfoot (Micah 7:19).
10. He remembers them no more (Hebrews 10:17; Ezekiel 33:16).
11. He casts them behind His back (Isaiah 38:17).
12. He casts them into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19).
13. He will not impute [or charge] us with sins (Romans 4:8).
14. He covers them (Romans 4:7).
15. He blots them out (Isaiah 43:25).
16. He blots them out [like] a thick cloud (Isaiah 44:22).
17. He blots out even the proof against us, nailing it to His Son's cross (Colossians 2:14).[8]

Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.

Psalm 32:1

7. Over and over in the Bible, we are told to "Wake up!" (Revelation 3:2). How do distractions, deceptions, doubts, disappointments, or dullness tend to lull you to sleep spiritually?

8. Consider the following verses. According to these scriptures, why is it so important that we wake up, and what should our awakening involve?

   Matthew 25:1–13

   Ephesians 5:8–15

9. "God is not mad at you!" Someone has said that's the best part of the gospel. Instead of holding a grudge against us, the Lord wants to forgive and make us His own. Look up the following scriptures and really meditate on them. Under each reference, write down key words or phrases that reveal God's attitude toward you.

   Isaiah 44:21–22

2 Corinthians 5:17–21

Colossians 2:13–15

10. As we begin this study, let's give God permission to do whatever He needs to do in order to give us the life we need. Write a prayer of consecration below, committing yourself to cooperate with the empowering grace the Holy Spirit provides.

Make a Plan

Revelation 12:11 tells us that one way Christians overcome the enemy is "by the word of their testimony." Take a moment and write out how you accepted Jesus as your Savior. It's okay if you can't remember the details; declaring your decision is the goal.

Note: If you haven't yet received the gift Jesus offers, why not do it today? Prayerfully go through the steps listed in "The Invitation" sidebar found on page 27 of *Lazarus Awakening*.

My Testimony:

Consider sharing your testimony with a friend this week. Something powerful happens when we voice what Jesus has done for us!

Who I Am in Christ . . .

Choose one of the statements from the "Who I Am in Christ" sidebar on pages 22–23 to meditate on. Write out the statement and the words of the accompanying verse. Work through the questions, then respond to God in prayer concerning the truth you've discovered.

Statement:

Verse:

What lie keeps you from accepting this as truth?

What does God's Word say about that?

Prayer:

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 coworker (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

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!").

Notes

(For additional note-taking pages, see page 123.)

Closing Time

I sense the Lord saying . . .

Prayer Requests

This Week's Assignment

- Follow through with your week 2 "Make a Plan" homework.
- Read chapter 3 in *Lazarus Awakening.*
- Answer week 3 study questions.
- Continue to review **John 10:10** (NKJV). Memorize **John 1:12:** "Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."

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