



## WEEKLY STUDY

### WEEK 2

Do you ever feel like you've been sleepwalking through life? Or even just part of a day? Have you ever looked up and wondered what you've missed? We can get so used to our schedules and surroundings that we cease to remember what it's all about. In the second week of our Awakening series, Pastor Jacob referenced several cycles that we can get caught up in life. Many of them can become downward spirals. But our passage from Ephesians 5 offers us an upward cycle that invites us to wake up to life. May you wipe the sleepiness out of your eyes this week and take notice of what it means to live for God.

Peace of Christ,  
Dr. Mark Youngman  
Pastor of Discipleship

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit [prov.church/smallgroups](http://prov.church/smallgroups).

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt. Pray this or another prayer as you move into your day.

God,  
*As I examine my heart, I notice that there are some moments or seasons when I have been sleepwalking through this life you've given me. Help me to say Yes to what is most important.  
Wake me up God. For I am Your dearly loved Child.  
Amen.*

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### DAILY STUDY

#### MONDAY: EPHESIANS 5.14-20

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

<sup>15</sup> Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. <sup>18</sup> Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup> always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- When we experience an awakening, when we wake up and come alive in Christ, Christ (who is our light) will reveal the darkness around us. As we become carriers of the light, God may use us as lamps to expose that which has been living in the darkness of the world around us. It's a heavy and humbling reality that demands that we continually take notice of how we ourselves are living. When we are filled with the Spirit, we can leave behind the unwise living, and turn our energy to praise and thanksgiving. **Where do you see the contrast of light and darkness in your own life? Where do you see that contrast in the world around you?**
- *In the name of Jesus, I offer my praise and thanksgiving to You, O God. May I continue to awaken to an understanding of your will. Amen.*

## TUESDAY: PSALM 74.13-17

It was you who split open the sea by your power;  
you broke the heads of the monster in the waters.

<sup>14</sup> It was you who crushed the heads of Leviathan  
and gave it as food to the creatures of the desert.

<sup>15</sup> It was you who opened up springs and streams;  
you dried up the ever-flowing rivers.

<sup>16</sup> The day is yours, and yours also the night;  
you established the sun and moon.

<sup>17</sup> It was you who set all the boundaries of the earth;  
you made both summer and winter.

- The Psalmist seems to be reminding God about the work of creation. God probably remembers these things very well. Oftentimes when we tell God something, we are really telling ourselves. God made the pattern of the sun and moon. God made the seasons to flow from one into another. Creation might seem to be a stagnant cycle—but the Scripture tells us it is heading somewhere. In Christ, it is headed to a new creation. We get a sense of our place in it though when we consider the cycles built into creation. Rivers that are mighty in the Spring tend to become a trickle in the Fall and Winter. God created all of this with a sense of boundaries. **What can we learn about God from these boundary-defining cycles? What can we learn about ourselves?**
- *God, you are Ruler over all of creation. You are the Ruler over my sometimes chaotic life. Come and bring Your order and show me that my life is leading to its fulfillment in Your new creation. Amen.*

## WEDNESDAY: JAMES 3.6

*The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.*

- James is warning about the downward spiral of a life that can result from an untamed tongue. Our words have consequences and they can lead to actions that have consequences. Words often seem safer than works. "It's fine to say something as long as I don't actually do it." **Have you ever witnessed seemingly harmless words create a firestorm that burned out of control? How do you measure the words you speak on a daily basis?**

- *God, I pray for the convicting guidance of your Spirit in moments when I'm tempted to speak dangerous words today. Amen.*

#### **THURSDAY: 1 PETER 1.18-21**

*For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors,<sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.<sup>20</sup> He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.<sup>21</sup> Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.*

- Peter is writing to an audience that was accustomed to offering perishable items in exchange for redemption. That was the cycle of sin and redemption that had been handed down for generations. Jesus broke that cycle. No longer was silver or gold enough to save someone from their sin. Instead, Jesus made himself that offering. It wasn't a late decision on God's part. It was the plan since before the creation of the world. **What cycles of belief have been handed down through the generations in your family? (they may not all relate to the Christian faith) What cycles have been broken in your lifetime?**
- *God, thank you for being the God who does not leave me in my stuck places. You have freed me for life in Jesus! Amen.*

#### **FRIDAY: ECCLESIASTES 1.3-4, 9-10a**

*What do people gain from all their labors  
at which they toil under the sun?*

<sup>4</sup>*Generations come and generations go,  
but the earth remains forever.*

*What has been will be again,  
what has been done will be done again;  
there is nothing new under the sun.*

<sup>10</sup>*Is there anything of which one can say,  
"Look! This is something new"?*

- The author of Ecclesiastes was not in a good place. He was in a downward spiral watching the trends and patterns of the world around him and missing out on hope. He commented on the seemingly unending pattern of sameness. Each generation seemed to have the same experience. Surely there were some notable advancements during the generations leading up to his life. Certainly not at the pace we see technology changing now. (I sent my first email in college!) In spite of today's advancements, many have noted that we are really the same as we've always been. But as followers of Jesus, we can answer the question in verse 10 with a resounding yes! Yes, there is something new. There is a new hope for a new life. **Do you ever find your words or thoughts mirroring those in Ecclesiastes 1? Who or what reminds of the hope you have in Jesus?**
- *Jesus, in you I have my hope. Your invitation into new life gives me strength to persevere in a world that seems focused on maintaining the status quo. Thank you Lord! Amen.*

## SATURDAY: MATTHEW 8.1-4

When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. <sup>2</sup> A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

<sup>3</sup> Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. <sup>4</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "See that you don't tell anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

- With Jesus, a lifetime of restrictive cycles can be overcome in one word. The word used by Jesus translates as "Be clean!", and it meant both inside and out. The man's life had followed a routine of avoidance and shame, but Jesus gave him a new routine and opened up the possibility of a completely restored life. **Imagine yourself kneeling before Jesus, what are you asking him to do? What long term patterns or cycles do seek freedom from?**
- *Jesus, if you are willing, make me clean. Touch me and say the word, and my life will never be the same! Amen.*

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

The conclusion of the message included this cycle identified in part, in Ephesians 5.

*The Cycle of Spiritual Awakening*

- *I am God's dearly, loved child.*
    - *Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children (Ephesians 5.1)*
  - *I fear God.*
  - *I want to please God.*
    - *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) <sup>10</sup> and find out what pleases the Lord. (Ephesians 5.8-10)*
  - *I am careful how I live.*
    - *Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise (Ephesians 5.15)*
  - *I will gain wisdom*
    - *Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. (Ephesians 5.15-16)*
  - *I make the most of every opportunity.*
    - *Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. (Ephesians 5.15-16)*
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- If you were to imagine this as a circle—a pattern for awakening, where would you see yourself in it?
  - Are there parts of the cycle that can be hang-ups for you?
  - How does this cycle compare to other cycles mentioned in the message? (anxiety, addiction, shame)