



Awakening: A New Approach to Faith, Fasting, and Spiritual Freedom

Stovall Weems, Craig Groeschel (Foreword)

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Stop hitting the spiritual snooze button.

Would you describe your walk with God as fresh and exciting? Would you describe your spiritual life as vibrant and passionate? If not, would you like these attributes to be the norm in your everyday relationship with God?

Are you ready to experience an awakening?

Awakening helps you stir up your slumbering soul. You'll discover how to break out of your season of dryness or get off to a great start either in the New Year or the next season in life. Take your faith-walk from a "going through the motions" or "have to" mindset to the stimulating, fresh "want to" experience of enjoying God's presence—24/7.

Weems encourages you to surrender fully, to discover the right kind of fuel for the journey, and to learn a new way to pray and fast. This lifestyle is not based on rules or religion, but on a deep, satisfying, motivating relationship with God.

Included in *Awakening* is a 21-Day Plan that will guide you through the principles that ensure a lasting, fresh relationship with God—even in a world where everything quickly becomes stale.

"It's time to wake up and put an end to spiritual sluggishness! I promise this year will be the best of your life if it is your best year spiritually." – Stovall Weems

Awakening: A New Approach to Faith, Fasting, and Spiritual Freedom Details

Date : Published December 14th 2010 by WaterBrook (first published July 23rd 2010)

ISBN : 9780307459534

Author : Stovall Weems , Craig Groeschel (Foreword)

Format : Paperback 224 pages

Genre : Christian, Nonfiction, Religion, Faith, Christianity



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Freedom Stovall Weems , Craig Groeschel (Foreword)

From Reader Review Awakening: A New Approach to Faith, Fasting, and Spiritual Freedom for online ebook

Bobby says

This book was talked up pretty big for me, so I was little disappointed in that to me it didn't seem to live up to the hype. It was good, but I didn't completely agree with his take on emotions or some of his interpretations. That being said, it was practical in many ways and would be an OK book to read on fasting - just with discretion.

De Anna says

I only read the title. Not the subtitle. When I picked out this book to read, I thought the title was interesting and felt that it was in keeping with a theme that God has had me on recently...Awakening. Renewal. Personal Revival. Restoration. How like God to remind me that FASTING goes along with renewal and revival when it comes to a Christ Follower seeking to stay intimate and fresh in their walk.

Stovall Weems is not a name I have been familiar with. However, I like this pastor, friend, mentor. He writes in a real, relevant and modern voice drawing the reader into his view of the 21st Century Christ Follower's need to seek God in an age old manner yet with out the staleness of days gone by.

In chapter 3, Stovall describes how fans at a sporting event do not need to be instructed on how to cheer for their team. No one says to clap because we are excited to see our team score. No one encourages the crowd to stand to their feet to shout loudly as the unexpected play is made leading to victory. The fans know what to do. And others know who you are a fan of by your exuberant expressions of excitement and passion. The life and lifestyle of the Christ Follower should be as exuberant and passionate if not more so.

"Likewise, real followers of Christ will express genuine, authentic passion toward HIM..."

"Genuine spiritual passion comes from our hearts, but it manifests itself in our emotions and lifestyles..."

"Whatever you are passionate about, you will also be emotional about."

Stovall Weems suggests that staleness in our relationship with The One whose name we claim is an opportunity for us to grow cold in our love for the things of God... He teaches that FASTING will bring us into Agreement with God, Alignment with His Will and Word, in order to fulfill the Assignment we have been given.

Pastor Weems leads the reader to seek a 21 Day Fast in order to overcome the power of the will and to find fresh faith filled days. He gives clear instruction on how to prepare, fast, then proceed. He also has a web-site that offers more devotional material, encouragement and other resources to revolutionize your relationship with God.

Honestly, I had planned to read the book, then sell it on eBay or Amazon or something. I can not do that now as I have marked almost every page, highlighted many quotes that I want to remember. I will tell everyone I know who seeks the Way to read and take to heart the message of Pastor Weems.

*I received this book for free from WaterBrook Multnomah Publishing Group for this review. The review posted reflects my personal opinions.

Suz says

It was really inspiring and encouraged me to spend more time with Jesus. There were some points where I felt like the author was over-selling it though. It isn't too well written, but he has some great points and gets them across well.

Tiffany Gallant says

I'm still reading this book. This is my preacher from Celebration church. I love this church. It has helped me through so much. Stovall is a great preacher, he is teaching his church how to live the God First life.

Annas says

Read this book if you're interested in learning more about fasting. It's a great support guide to prepare and walk you through a spiritual fast. I loved it!

Jake Fraser says

REALLY great. Going through the 21 days right now...time will tell. :o) But it was a great book...definitely got me hyped up!

Chioma Chukwura says

This book was worth every page.

Jim Mader says

Excellent book on Fasting and so much more!

Joel Arrington says

I bought the book in preparation for a yearly fast. The instructions and stories within the book were fantastic. It helped my fast have more focus and intentionality. Certainly a great tool for anyone needing a renewal or

awakening spiritually and physically.

Bianca says

The book in itself wasn't nearly as impactful as reading the daily devotionals (in the back of the book) in conjunction with Bible reading and the chapter reading. Doing it all at once was awesome AND it gave me a whole new outlook on fasting. I finally understood that fasting and prayer are intertwined where fasting is de-connecting from the World and praying is re-connecting with God. Amazing, timely book.

Patricia says

Do you feel like you are sleepwalking through life? Maybe you need an awakening, an awakening of your spiritual life.

Pastor Stovall Weems believes a way to that awakening is in four steps:

1. experiencing surrender
2. experiencing passion for God
3. experiencing God's goodness
4. creating space for God

In his book, *Awakening*, Pastor Weems gives encouragement and practical advise to help the reader understand the four steps. Surrender anew and totally, be passionate and fall in love with God, know God's goodness and what grace really is, and open a place within for God to fill.

The steps are taken with prayer and fasting. Prayer here is threefold; righteous, effective, and fervent. Fasting is something to enjoy, once you find your "fasting zone". With prayer and fasting comes agreement with God, alignment with His will, and your assignment, the purpose of your life.

Part Two of the book is the *Awakening* 21-Day Plan. Included are different types of fasts, sample menus, and tips on preparing for the fast and ending it. There is also a 21 day guide; each day has a scripture, short devotion, bible reading plan, prayer focus, and a place for notes.

Overall I thought the book was interesting and has some good points and suggestions. I especially like the inclusion of the 21 day guide. But I do not know if it is something that will "revolutionize your relationship with God" as the book cover claims.

There are many personal stories of Pastor Weems and testimonies of others. These are interesting and have their place in the book. But, there is the feeling that if you follow this books suggestions you will not only have an awakening but a miracle.

I received this book for free from WaterBrook Multnomah Publishing Group for this review.

Amy Robinson says

I have read through some of the poor ratings about people who "do not buy Stovall's fasting theory." Well, that is okay, everyone is at a different stage of their walk with Christ. I have found that this is not just a theory, but it is a way of life. To give, to pray, to fast (the threefold cord). I have also been a receiver of the breakthroughs and blessing throughout the fasts. However, the main purpose of the fast, as Stovall mentions is to build a closer, more intimate relationship with God. This is a win, win gain because regardless of the fact that I am going to receive breakthroughs and blessings, I become closer to God. Who doesn't want that in their walk with God? Don't be closed-minded and just give this a try. You have nothing to lose, but everything to gain! Additionally, I like how he uses the new covenant way of life in the book, we are saved and forgiven through the Grace of God. We are no longer held bound by the legality of the old covenant, but are saved and forgiven because of the birth of the Messiah. It is so refreshing to read this at this point in my life and the different path that I am on today. It is a great preparer for a fast, give it a try!

Yvonne Stegall says

Wonderful piece of literature that can guide even the novice Christian on their path to God. The book takes you on a 21 day, step-by-step, plan to renew your relationship with God. It is detailed and inspirational. It is truly a must have for any and all Christians.

"I received this book for free from WaterBrook Multnomah Publishing Group for this review"

James says

Has the passion gone out of your relationship with God? Don't let the fire fizzle, but Awaken to all God has for you (cue the infomercial).

Stovall Weems, the Lead Pastor at Celebration Church in Jacksonville, Florida has written *Awakening* in hopes of igniting in you a passion for God. Along the way he offers helpful advice on starting your day by focusing on God's greatness, goodness and glory. He advocates the practice of giving to charity, prayer and fasting as means of 'making space for God' in your life. And then he uses the rest of the book to unpack this, particularly in regard to fasting. Along the way, each chapter is punctuated by 'awakening stories' of those who have a fresh experience of God, because of their fast. The last section of this book, is Weems's 21 day fast plan, daily devotionals and practical advice on fasting.

I admire and share Weems's enthusiasm for getting people excited about God. Certainly I want my pastor to be so passionately motivated. Having read his book, I likely will refer back to it the next time I fast. However I am not sure that I would recommend it. Below I would like to signal two notes of caution and two criticisms of Weems book:

The first area that gives me pause, is this book seems to be tainted by a prosperity gospel. Weems is generally focused on our relationship with God and stoking the flames there. However sometimes, Weems does act like the evidence of that is 'financial miracles' and healing. Certainly God does provide and care for his children, but miracles and prosperity are not the only way God draws near to his people. I am not sure that Weems ever says that it is, but the general feel of some passages, and the little testimonials kind of leave

this impression.

The second area of caution is related. I am kind of bothered by a relationship with God being reduced to a formula. The idea that intimacy with God is achieved by a three-week-fast is to apply a technique to gain relational intimacy. Techniques, disciplines and practices are important. Yet I think intimacy with God is not something you get in a few easy steps. It is much more dynamic and exciting than that. Now that is it for caution, let the firestorm of criticism begin.

While reading this book, I kept wondering where the footnotes were. The fact that there were none is problematic. I say this not because I love more academic books (okay, not just that), but there is almost no evidence of any dialogue with anyone else. At all. As part of his fasting guide, he does reference Wayne Corderio's devotional reading plan(SOAP: Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer). But he doesn't reference anyone else despite dispensing a lot of spiritual insights. Where this seems the most suspect for me, is when Weems describes the health benefits of fasting. He admits that he is not a doctor and shares anecdotally about how fasting cleanses his system and helps him lose weight. huh? Claims for health benefits of fasting are controversial at best and spurious at worst. I at least want to know that Weems talked to someone before spotting off medical advice (why is this chapter even here if fasting is about your relationship with God?).

Furthermore, the lack of dialogue with the Christian tradition of fasting, does mean that what is presented here is somewhat shallow. Christians have practiced and mis-practiced fasting for centuries, would like to know if Stovall is aware of any of it.

Which leads me to my last point of critique. What exactly is Weems theological understanding of fasting? Some fasting is dualistic, hating the body and exalting the spirit. This is not Christian fasting. Weems seems to hold some dualistic notions. He is also dismissive of the example of fasting in the Old Testament as pre-christian and unrelated to our current practice. For Weems, you fast to receive, rather than as a response. I find all this as theologically problematic and would direct people to Scot McKnight's accessible treatment on the theme.

This book was given to me by Waterbrook Multnomah's Blogging For Books Program in exchange for my honest review.

Book Blogging Beauties says

Check out our review here:
<http://bookbloggingbeauties.blogspot....>
