

Awaken 2020

Awaken hearts to the love of Jesus, lives to spiritual family, and destinies to their Kingdom call!

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. — Isaiah 60:1

A seven-day prayer guide on Isaiah 60:1-3.

By Jeremy M. Gwaltney

Greetings Harvest,

Welcome to 2020! We often think of 2020 as a numeral related to vision. Do you have 20/20 vision? Do you see clearly?, etc. I have often found in my walk with Jesus that clarity is not as important as seeing the right thing. Once we see what God sees, things become very clear.

That is part of the reason we picked the theme *Awaken* for this year. Throughout our 49-year history, Harvest has seen a lot of great things, and has been called to a great many more. But this year, unlike any other since I have been here, I feel a desperation for the Holy Spirit to awaken those dreams, destinies, and callings.

Here is where you come in. As a part of the Harvest family, God has placed dreams and callings in your heart and life that are part of the Harvest calling. When God awakens you to His ways and purposes, God awakens us to His call.

That is why this week is so important. We want to take a week to seek God and ask Him to awaken us in 2020. Awaken our hearts and the hearts of others to know and experience His love like never before. Awaken our lives to experience the unity and vision of spiritual family — our local church — like never before. Awaken us to our Kingdom call in a way that we fulfill our destiny in Him like never before. This is a year of awakening.

To get us started, I have written this one-week devotional and prayer guide. It is designed for you to begin today and finish the Sunday of our three-night Awaken 2020 worship and inspiration event. I want to encourage you to prepare yourself this week with prayer and then come on January 12, 13, and 14 hungry to encounter God. Let's engage our life-change and destiny in Him.

This devotional walks you through our Awaken theme verse:
Isaiah 60:1-3, which says...

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. — Isaiah 60:1-3 (ESV)

It is a picture of the people of God coming into their purposes.

To help us out with this study let me give you just a few details about Isaiah's life. He lived about 2,700 years ago. In Isaiah's lifetime, the Jews had lived almost 300 years divided into two kingdoms. The Northern Kingdom was known as Israel and the Southern Kingdom was known as Judah. Both claimed the same relationship with God and lived in the Promised Land of Abraham, but neither kingdom could get along. For whatever reason, the people of the Northern Kingdom had forsaken God long ago and ignored the voice of the prophets to return and worship Him. But God had not yet removed His blessing of protection from them in spite of their lack of faithfulness.

Meanwhile, the kingdom of Judah remained more faithful. Some believed this was because Judah was the tribe of the great King David and where the city of David, Jerusalem, was located. Whatever the reason, they believed their worship of God had secured lasting blessing. But in reality, they were just as rebellious to the will and ways of God as their northern relatives.

What neither kingdom knew was that hundreds of miles away the Kingdom of Assyria was gaining power and a desire for conquest. A desire that would bring its armies to the borders of the Promised Land. When those armies arrived, God would lift His protection on the Northern Kingdom of Israel and their lands would be conquered. Isaiah would see this happen with his own eyes. God wanted a prophet to warn the Northern Kingdom of what was coming, to tell the Southern Kingdom to learn from Israel's mistakes. Unfortunately, neither kingdom would heed Isaiah's prophetic warnings.

During the latter part of his ministry, Isaiah's prophecies shifted from focusing primarily on warning the kingdoms to being more about promise. Instead of telling Israel and Judah that they were under judgment, he began to tell them how they would become a chosen people of God that would be the envy of the nations.

What Isaiah didn't know was that he was actually seeing us! A group of people who would see the promised Messiah, be filled with His Spirit and glory, and go to bring the nations to know Jesus. The final fulfillment of these words would be the nations worshiping Jesus in heaven for eternity.

Our passage is one of these prophecies. Isaiah is seeing the church (God's people) filled with glory and being awakened to allow Jesus' light shine to the nations. This calling is our central focus and outcry to God.

I hope this week will be one you remember for the rest of your life. One where you encounter Jesus in a powerful way, are changed by the power of His Holy Spirit, and fully live out your Kingdom destiny in God.

Let's ask God to awaken us!

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeremy M. Gwaltney', with a long, sweeping underline.

Jeremy M. Gwaltney
Lead Pastor
Harvest Community Church

Day 1

Arise Because of Glory

**Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
— Isaiah 60:1**

There are two very powerful focal points of this short passage in Isaiah's prophecy. The first focal point is us; me the person.

Isaiah commands me to arise, me to shine, and says my light has come. There is an expectation of action. It is as if I am a watchman on guard duty and I am being called to action. "Arise, shine... your light has come!"

The second focal point is the glory of God. God gets the praise, God gets the credit, God is the one who is at work.

The critical point is to catch the link between the two — God's glory and me. Why do I arise and shine? Why do I have light? Because God's glory is upon me. God has chosen to work in my life, I am called to arise and live my life in such a way that responds to His desire to shine in me.

This is why we can pray BOLD, HUGE, BIG prayers to God! Because when His glory rises upon us in the answers, He is shown to be great! God delights in answering our big prayers because He gets big glory!

As we enter this week of preparing our hearts and lives to be awakened by God in a new way in 2020, let me encourage you to be bold in how you pray to God. Ask God for BIG stuff — that healing you so desire, that prodigal to come home, that new job you've been thinking about pursuing, that calling you've kept hidden in secret! Bring those prayers to Him. Who knows? Maybe this is the year God's light lands on your requests and you will be called to rise and shine for His glory.

Guided Prayer:

List two or three BIG prayer requests you have for God below. PRAY BIG!

How would your life need to change if God answered these prayers? Are you ready? What is a simple step you can take to prepare for God's answers?

Spend some time praying for your requests and ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to prepare for God to shine in your life.

Day 2

Your Light Has Come

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
— Isaiah 60:1

Additional Bible Reading: Matthew 25:1-12

Take just a moment and read the passage in the New Testament book of Matthew listed above. Then continue below.

We talked yesterday about the connection Isaiah brings up between me and my actions, and God and His glory. God wants to shine His light into your life so that you can glorify Him.

In ancient times, before we had electrical lights, lamps were fueled by oil. Oil was placed in a small clay lantern to moisten the wick so that the fire could burn slowly and provide light for those around it. As you can imagine, keeping oil in the lamp was important.

In the parable in Matthew, Jesus tells a story of bridesmaids who did not have enough oil in their lamps. When the bridegroom returned, they were not prepared and missed the fun of the wedding festivities. The parable was a story to be ready for Jesus' return. Get this! When Jesus shows up... we are supposed to be prepared to shine! There should be oil in our lamps!

We are taking this week to ask Jesus to show up in big ways in our lives and the life of Harvest. My question is; is there oil in our lamps? If Jesus shows up to awaken us to new, powerful things, are we prepared to shine?

One thing I do every week is take a few moments in my study, sit down with my journal, and answer a very important question, "how am I doing?" In short, "is there oil in my lamp?" I then write out a short list of things that are going well in life — things I am grateful for, answers

to prayer, etc. Then, just below it, I write out a list of things I find challenging — prayer concerns, parenting concerns, family concerns, financial concerns, church concerns.

I find this simple exercise allows me to take stock on the "oil" in my lamp. I am reminded of God's goodness and I am reminded to bring my concerns to Him. Then when He shows up in my life in unique ways, I am ready to shine.

Guided Prayer:

At the top of the space below write, "How Am I Doing?" Then list things you are thankful for and things that are challenging to you.

Step back and look at your list. Is your lamp full of oil?

Spend time praying over your list. Thank God for what you are grateful for and ask God to intervene in your challenges. Write a prayer here.

What is one thing you can do this week to fill your life with oil?

Day 3

Thick Darkness, God's Light (Part #1)

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. — Isaiah 60:2

Isaiah now contrasts the light with the darkness. Notice that in verse 1, the light is you shining when God's glory comes upon you. In verse 2, the darkness covers the earth and the peoples. There is a message about calling in this verse, but we will look at this tomorrow.

Today, I want to talk about darkness. It is often true that life isn't what we hope it would be. Even in seasons when we feel the goodness and blessing of God in a very close way, there are still corners of our lives where difficulty — darkness — resides.

This is why I believe so much in coming to God in honesty, openness, and rawness amidst the darkness. He sees the "thick darkness" and He wants His glory to "rise upon you!"

In this week of preparation, let's be honest with the darkness that we see or feel in our lives. Tell, confess, cry out about these circumstances to God and ask Him to shine His glory into your difficult circumstances.

Guided Prayer:

What are the most difficult circumstances in your life right now? List them below to God.

Is there a sin pattern or habit that you are keeping secret? Tell it to God.

Do you need to confess your sin and seek forgiveness? If so, do that now to God.

Now, ask God to shine His glory into these circumstances. Give them to God and allow Him to take over!

Day 4

Thick Darkness, God's Light (Part #2)

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. — Isaiah 60:2

Additional Bible Reading: Genesis 12:1-3, Matthew 28:19-20

Take just a moment and read the passages in the Old Testament book of Genesis and the New Testament book of Matthew listed above. Then continue below.

Notice that Isaiah sees nations and peoples being in darkness. In the context, these are people outside of the people of God. In short, they do not have faith and have not experienced the love and life-changing power of the God of the Bible. Today, after Jesus' coming, we would say these are people who have not yet met and put their faith in Jesus.

Not knowing Jesus is the darkest experience of all. Walking through life, trying to do the right thing, but not having the One who created life there to guide you! Blind leading the blind.

There are three prayer emphases in our Awaken 2020 theme. The first is to ask God **to awaken hearts to the love of Jesus**. Last year we saw more than 50 hearts awakened to Him in this way at Harvest. This year, we are asking God to bring 75 people to come to know Him through the ministry of our church. Wow! That feels like a big number! Almost one and a half people per week — almost one per Sunday service!

Here is the important thing. We are not asking God to do this at Harvest because it is a cool number. We are asking God to awaken hearts to His love because each heart is a person who is loved by someone like you.

You have a person. A son, daughter, aunt, uncle, mom, dad, cousin, spouse, or good friend who needs Jesus. A person you pray for

regularly because they mean so much to you and you know the pain they are living in. I know I have a list of people that I am asking God to shine upon. People that I love and want to move from the darkness of sin and bondage into the light of the love and glory of Jesus!

What if this is your person's year to see the light of Jesus? Are you willing to pray for that? I know I will be praying with you.

Guided Prayer:

Write the names of the people you want to know Jesus below. Then spend some time asking God to awaken their hearts to the love of Jesus.

Ask God to give you opportunities to share Jesus' love with them in simple ways. What is an action step or two you can take? Write them down.

Spend some time praying that God would bring 75 hearts to know Him through the ministries of Harvest in 2020.

Day 5

The Nations Will Come (Part #1)

... and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. — Isaiah 60:2b-3

Additional Bible Reading: Genesis 12:1-3, Ephesians 2:19

Take just a moment and read the passages in the Old Testament book of Genesis and the New Testament book of Ephesians listed above. Then continue below.

Another important thing to notice in this passage of Isaiah's prophecy is the term "you." While it does have an application to the individual — you — Isaiah is actually talking about a group of people. He is referencing the people of the heavenly city of Jerusalem. Not to get too technical here, but in Isaiah's prophecy he is seeing the city of Jerusalem as the future people of God (the church) who carry Jesus' Gospel to the entire world; but I will talk about that more tomorrow.

The critical point is that God never asks us to do things alone. The glory was to fall upon a "people." In Genesis 12, God calls Abraham to start a family so that all families could be blessed. In Ephesians 2:19, Paul tells us that God places us in His family.

Therein lies the point. God takes you (an individual) and places you in a family (the people of God or church) to pour out His glory upon us so that the light of God's people reaches the nations and people who are in darkness. But it all begins with you being a part of God's family — His church.

Our second prayer point for Awaken 2020 is that God would ***awaken lives to spiritual family***. It is not enough to follow God on our own, or even follow God and choose a new church every few years. God wants us to dedicate our lives to Him and the spiritual family He leads you to join.

I know so many people believe they "choose" the church they attend. But I firmly believe the God places you in a church family. And if God placed you here, then He wants you to invest here, grow here, and advance His light to the nations here. He has called you to reach people and build lives here. And that only works when lives are awakened to spiritual family and that family lives in unity and love for each other.

Guided Prayer:

Are you living your life with Jesus alone or with others? Is there something hindering you from plugging into a spiritual family? Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal that to you.

Do you have any hurt or unforgiveness that you are holding against others in your church family or the leadership? Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal that to you.

Is there anything you need to make right with others at Harvest? If so, when will you do it?

Spend some time praying for Harvest. Pray for the leadership, missions partners, ministries.

Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you about how you can make your spiritual family better. Write down what He tells you.

Day 6

The Nations Will Come (Part #2)

And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. — Isaiah 60:3

Additional Bible Reading: Revelation 21:22-26, Isaiah 6:1-7

Take just a moment and read the passages in the New Testament book of Revelation and the Old Testament book of Isaiah listed above. Then continue below.

“The nations shall come...”

That is always the goal of God. Always bringing more people from darkness to know His glory and light. Shining His glory through you is His motivating factor to answer your prayers and fulfill your Kingdom destiny. When He brings us into His glory, He gets the glory, and glory is experienced when more and more people declare, “Jesus Christ is Lord and is so satisfying nothing else compares to Him!”

The passage in Revelation 21 is a vision the Apostle John saw of heaven. He is seeing the final fulfillment of what Isaiah prophesied almost 3,000 years ago. The people of God (city of Jerusalem) basking in the glory, presence, and light of God and ALL the nations are there. When we stand with Jesus in heaven, we will see the nations who have come out of darkness standing in Jesus’ light. The remaining question is; how do the nations come to Jesus? They come to Jesus because we go to them!

Think about it. That is how Jesus brought us to Himself. He left the light and fullness of glory of heaven to come to earth to interact with us and show us His glory and invite us to know Him.

In Isaiah 6, God shows Isaiah His glory in the Temple, filled with light and power, then says, “Who will I send?” Who will “go?” All that is

required is for us to have the same response as Isaiah, “here am I, send me.”

The last prayer emphasis of Awaken 2020 is that God will ***awaken destinies to their Kingdom call***. You have a destiny. You have a Kingdom call. But, do you have a heart like Isaiah that says, “here am I, send me?” Then, if it is across the hall of your workplace to a coworker you barely talk to, across the lobby to a stranger at church, or across the world to a people you have never heard of; will you go?

Guided Prayer:

Can you honestly answer before God, “here am I, send me” if He asked you to step into something new for your calling? Why or why not?

Is there something God is asking you to surrender to Him in order to be prepared to hear from Him on your calling? What is it?

Do you already know something that God is calling you to do? How do you feel about it?

Spend some time praying to God and asking His Holy Spirit to move in your heart and prepare you for whatever He has for you in 2020.

Day 7

Ask Big, Prepare to Encounter, Go!

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. — Isaiah 60:1-3

Tonight we begin our three-night Awaken 2020 worship and inspiration event. The point of this event is to set aside some time at the beginning of the year to encounter God and ask Him to equip us to shine. Shine in such a way that it awakens hearts to the love of Jesus, lives to spiritual family, and destinies to their Kingdom calling.

I want to encourage you to do three things:

First, ASK BIG.

Pray to a God of immense glory that loves to glorify Himself in your place of weakness, pain, and need. Ask God to glorify His greatness in your life. Then ASK BIG of God.

Second, PREPARE TO ENCOUNTER!

Come hungry — no, desperate! — to meet God. Then allow His Holy Spirit to work in your heart and lives through the prayer, worship, and preaching of our Awaken event. Tell God you will be completely unsatisfied if you exit each night the same as you were when you came. We want to be transformed by our encounter with Him.

Finally, PREPARE TO GO!

If we encounter God there is no going back to business as usual. God will speak to you. God will give you action steps for your life. God will show you how to help people transfer from darkness to light. When He does, He wants you to “go.” Be prepared to step up to the Kingdom destiny God has for you.

Guided Prayer:

Look again at the prayer requests you made on Day 1. Are they BIG enough? Ask God to answer those prayers.

Tell God that you are ready to encounter Him at Awaken. Ask Him to make you desperate for His presence.

Tell God you are ready to go if He asks you. Revisit some of your prayers and conversations with God from yesterday's entry. Have some of those conversations again. Be ready to surrender to God's best for your life.

Awaken 2020

Awaken hearts to the love of Jesus, lives to spiritual family, and destinies to their Kingdom call!

January 12-14, 6:30-8pm

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. — Isaiah 60:1-3

Awaken is a three-night event when we gather as a church for prayer, worship and inspiration as we look forward to all that God has for us in the new year. Each evening includes powerful messages from great speakers and a time of worship. This year we will be joined by Ben Goodman and Ryan King. Our heart is to see every family experience breakthrough like never before, so join us for this exciting event! Childcare is provided for children birth - 5th grade.



Ben Goodman



Ryan King