

THE GOSPELS

A Wake-Up Call Journal



WAKE-UP CALL

by  SEEDBED

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“The Prayer of Preparation to Open the Word” on the inside front cover, and the “Sower’s Creed” on page 188 are written by J. D. Walt.

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Introduction

This Is Your Wake-Up Call

The *Wake-Up Call* is an invitation to join a global fellowship of believers who are pursuing Jesus Christ on an awakening journey.

In short, it is a daily meeting with Jesus through a shared engagement with the Word of God and the Spirit of God. We are reading a common text from Scripture together, inviting Jesus to teach and train us as his disciples to become his agents of awakening in the world.

What began decades ago as a small group of students at Asbury Seminary now traverses the states and circles the globe as an extravagant sowing of the seed of the Word of God.

The *Wake-Up Call* consists of two parts. First is this journal, which contains the Scripture references and key verses for the present series and space for writing. The second part is the daily *Wake-Up Call* email and podcast.

This enables us to fully share the awakening journey in all its richness and to encourage you on a daily and weekly basis.

The email has a link to the daily podcast, which most consider to be the gold standard of the *Wake-Up Call* experience. It runs from fifteen to twenty minutes and consists of a time of consecration prayer, the reading of Scripture and the message of the day, the corporate singing of a hymn, and some closing encouragements and exhortations. The podcast recording brings the whole experience together into a robust meeting with Jesus. Subscribe to the email at seedbed.com/wakeupcall. The podcast can also be accessed through the Apple Podcast app.

Our Method

The beating heart of the *Wake-Up Call* is Scripture itself, the revealed written Word of God. To that end, we offer this journal, which contains the Scripture references and key verses for each day, along with space for writing or drawing as the Spirit moves.

The journal is meant to be an aid alongside the daily email/podcast. It is our way of emphasizing the Scripture itself as the central feature of the daily engagement.

1. Begin with the journal.
2. Pray the Prayer of Preparation to Open the Word (printed on the inside front cover).
3. Engage the first three prompts of the five Rs (printed on the inside back cover).

Read—Focus on hearing the Word coming from the voice of God through your voice.

Ruminate (Meditate)—As you read through a second time, underline or highlight the word(s) and phrase(s) that capture your attention. Invite the Spirit to turn them over in your heart and mind as you dwell on them.

Record any thoughts and insights.

Rememberize—Is there a particular verse or passage that seems to invite sustained attention over a period of time? Write out that text.

Now read or listen to the *Wake-Up Call* entry of the day, then engage the final two prompts of the five Rs.

Research—What are your responses to the journal prompts in today's *Wake-Up Call* entry? Are there questions or curiosities the text raises that you would like to return to later for further study? Make a note of them.

Rehearse—How might the Scripture text and today's *Wake-Up Call* entry be shaping an insight or intention, a direction, action, application, or even a reminder for your heart, home, church, and/or city? Write it down.

4. Recite the Sower's Creed (printed on page 188).
5. Head out to the fields of your life to sow for a great awakening.

An Invitation to Local Churches and Their Leaders

The *Wake-Up Call* is a fellowship. It is made up of many people from many places. Many pastors and leaders have adopted the *Wake-Up Call* as a daily resource for their churches. Over the years, we have worked to resource pastors to preach alongside the *Wake-Up Call*. Congregations find it deeply nourishing to share a journey of awakening through a common text, which is also being proclaimed weekly through their pastor's preaching.

To this end, the *Wake-Up Call* is coming alongside pastoral leaders and churches in a new way. Each week through this series, Rev. Brent Parker and J. D. Walt will meet with our fellowship of preachers to encourage, coach, and guide the process of sermon preparation and development. Brent is a seasoned pastoral leader, a gifted preacher of God's kingdom, and a skilled teacher of God's Word. He is a preacher's preacher. He will be preaching through the series with his community (The Church at Woodforest: A Campus of The Woodlands Methodist Church) alongside all who join into this fellowship of collaborators.

These weekly sessions will be approximately 60–75 minutes. The first part will include some guidance and coaching. Next, we will move into breakout conversations and collaborative work. Please register for the weekly sessions so we can properly share the Zoom link and other information and updates. Register at seedbed.com/preachingseries.

Every preacher knows preaching and the necessary preparation can be a lonely and even isolating process. So many preachers have deeply appreciated opportunities like these, not only to grow in their craft but to enjoy and be encouraged by the fellowship of friends and colleagues in the process.

If you are a local church engaging the *Wake-Up Call* in this coordinated fashion, or if you simply want to encourage your community to avail themselves of the online resource, we encourage you to order a case or more of this *Wake-Up Call* journal and make them available in the narthex or lobby of your local church for those who are interested.

Matthew

The Gospel of Matthew has long been a favorite source for training Christian disciples, where readers discover a rich portrait of Jesus as the fulfillment of Old Testament patterns and prophecies. It was likely written for Jewish Christians who were familiar with the Old Testament, since many of the terms and concepts are directly taken from the Jewish Scriptures. Some details would prove to be more difficult for Gentiles to understand. The opening genealogy also attends to the Davidic kingly origin of the Messiah, introducing the idea early on that Jesus stands in continuity with the covenant that came before him. Though technically anonymous (unlike Paul's letters), tradition traces it back to the apostle Matthew—the tax collector—and its writing or editing occurred sometime between AD 70–90.

The literary structure includes five teaching discourses, or groups of core material around which the life, ministry, and miracles of Jesus are presented (chapters 5–7; 10; 13; 18; 24–25). Some scholars believe even this arrangement may allude to the five books of Moses, or the Pentateuch, furthering the claim that Jesus's roots are thoroughly Jewish. Matthew's Gospel takes the form of an ancient biography and compellingly presents Jesus as a wise man, God's wisdom incarnate, Torah-transfigured, and God-with-us.

Matthew 1

OPEN WITH PRAYER *(see inside front cover)*

READ ALOUD: Matthew 1:1

This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:

RUMINATE, REMEMBERIZE, RESEARCH, REHEARSE

(see inside back cover)

Matthew 2

OPEN WITH PRAYER *(see inside front cover)*

READ ALOUD: Matthew 2:1–3

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

RUMINATE, REMEMBERIZE, RESEARCH, REHEARSE

(see inside back cover)

Matthew 3

OPEN WITH PRAYER *(see inside front cover)*

READ ALOUD: Matthew 3:16–17

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

RUMINATE, REMEMBERIZE, RESEARCH, REHEARSE

(see inside back cover)

Matthew 4

OPEN WITH PRAYER *(see inside front cover)*

READ ALOUD: Matthew 4:1–4

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”

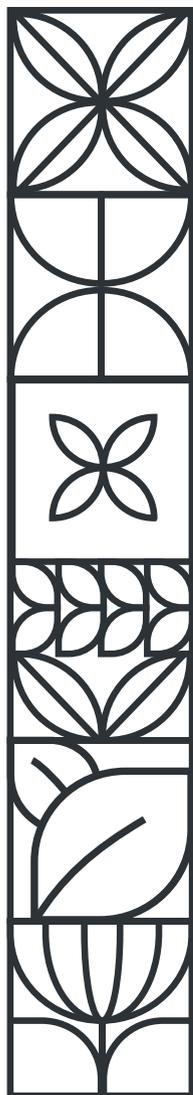
⁴Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

RUMINATE, REMEMBERIZE, RESEARCH, REHEARSE

(see inside back cover)



THE SOWER'S CREED



TODAY,

I sow for a great awakening.

TODAY,

I stake everything on the promise of the Word of God. I depend entirely on the power of the Holy Spirit. I have the same mind in me that was in Christ Jesus. Because Jesus is good news and Jesus is in me I am good news.

TODAY,

I will sow the extravagance of the gospel everywhere I go and into everyone I meet.

TODAY,

I will love others as Jesus has loved me.

TODAY,

I will remember that the tiniest seeds become the tallest trees; that the seeds of today become the shade of tomorrow; that the faith of right now becomes the future of the everlasting kingdom.

TODAY,

**I SOW FOR A
GREAT AWAKENING.**