

# CAN I TRUST GOD?

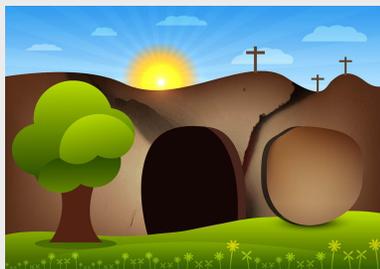
## A 50 Day Spiritual Encounter & Renewal

### Welcome

Under stress, we may ask big questions like if God cares or whether God can be trusted. But, what if all along, God is patiently giving us ample supply of evidence to trust and we just aren't looking for it? Along with your Bible, the blessings of other people, also look at nature itself for signs.

### Death will Die

The Marvel Studios story of the infinity stones of Thanos ("Death" personified) is a creative retelling of the ancient story. Death is an ominous enemy that will finally be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:26, 55). This gives us courage to trust God because resurrection has already begun with Jesus as the "first fruit."



### Looking Back ...

Easter awakens a 50 day spiritual journey on the road to Pentecost — **April 19th marks day 8.** Starting on Easter, we count each day with watchful eyes filled with wonder to observe the mighty works of God's growing power — resurrection. If you have not started yet, YES, you can start counting today. It is a season of daily counting to observe the mighty works of God like the old song, "Count your many blessings ... and it will surprise you what the Lord has done " (is doing). Our God deserves the credit for growth and the vibrant colors of spring surrounding us. This leads us to wonder: could God create the same growth in my heart, my soul, my daily life?

### Weekly Reflection: Can God Grow the Seed?

Every day is Easter: Each day is another witness to the resurrection power of God. The biblical idea of Easter to Pentecost is not just a special event, it is a new life beginning that should be forever etched in our hearts, minds and daily actions —

## This Week ...

- **Write brief entries in your journal.** Preserve your experiences of fear & faith.
- **Share comments or posts** on Facebook at #AwakenMDCOC
- **Dig Deeper in Your Bible.** Mark 4:1-20; Heb. 2:14-15.

## Answer These Questions ...

- What soil am I for God?
- Where do you see God growing something this week?
- What needs to die in my life so God can raise something new (attitudes, practices etc).
- What soul "seeds" are you holding, afraid to let go and plant? Can God grow seeds you refuse to plant?
- What needs to get "water" in my life to invite growing my relationships, actions, worship, Bible reading ...).
- What seeds can I plant with others and water so God's good blessing can grow in their life?
- Do you see changes in someone "planted" in Christ? Share with them the transformation you see.
- Discuss "dying" with kids. Nature is reviving. Death is natural even if an unwanted process. What does God teach about our resurrection?

Jesus' resurrection changes everything when we truly believe. We now joyfully admit anything is possible with God! Easter reveals that God can indeed grow life from dead seeds — Jesus is the "first fruit" of that resurrection promise. The Apostle Paul was a grateful recipient of resurrection power and declares: "But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20 — "first fruits" has direct connection with Pentecost). It is our great opportunity then to partner with God in planting, watering & harvesting. The seeds planted (buried) in the ground will receive water, sunshine, and finally emerge bringing new life. God is so good at growing, we usually feel we can predict it, "count on it." So again, we read in the Bible "What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body" (1 Cor. 15:36-38). This season is a period of time that helps us grow more fully and intentionally in a real resurrection faith. Our hope in God is not misplaced. So, death is not as scary even though it happens all around us because Jesus has defeated death. God will faithfully cultivate us. The question is, will we "count" on God by placing full trust and welcoming God's soul seed in our heart soil for his resurrection power?

## A Prayer ...

God, I admit that I often see little evidence of your growing presence in the lifeless soil of the world. I believe, please help my unbelief. I invite your Spirit to help me face my fears in being transformed from death to life not only this week but always.

