

CONVERGENCE

Discussion Guide

Let's Talk

Invite group members to choose one of the following ice-breakers to answer: Have you ever taken photos of clouds? Explain why you felt the clouds were photo-worthy. Does your mood get impacted by how cloudy it is? If yes, describe that experience.

Let's Study

Jon explained how we use the words renewal, revival, and awakening at Sanctus Church to distinguish between encounters with God. Renewal is when God touches the heart of an individual. Revival is when God touches a whole group or church. Awakening is when the wider society is impacted through mass conversion and life transformation.

Think of Biblical accounts of unusual spiritual experiences. As a group, can you think of an example for each of renewal, revival, and awakening?

Some of your examples might have included clouds. Scripture uses clouds to symbolize the presence of God. Why do you think that is?

Read Matthew 17:1-13.

Jesus led Peter, James, and John up the mountain and Jesus' body was transfigured and they were shown His Heavenly glory. Why was the transfiguration significant for the disciples? How did it impact them?

Two Old Testament figures, Moses and Elijah, appeared with Jesus. What do they represent? What does their presence at the transfiguration (followed by their disappearance) tell us about Jesus?

In what ways is Peter's initial response to the transfiguration (v4) an example of what we should try not to do with spiritual realities?

Read Isaiah 6:5.

God comes close to Isaiah. Describe in your own words his response to being in the palpable presence of the Holy God.

CONVERGENCE

Discussion Guide

Let's Apply

Have you experienced or witnessed an individual having a physical reaction (e.g., weeping, trembling, falling over) in a moment that could be described as an encounter with God? If yes, what did you think about that experience?

Jon explained that revival and awakening are neither normal nor guaranteed. If one expected revival and it did not happen, or alternatively if they were taught revival could not possibly happen but it did, what impact could this have on their faith?

If God in His sovereignty decides revival will happen today, what fruits may be evident in the community? What personal results would you hope for?

Since revival is not normal, but the results are overall positive, what do you need to do and how could you express to the Lord a willingness to be “led up the mountain”?

Let's Pray

Almighty God, we invite you to come close. Humble us and help us to seek your face and turn from our wicked ways (2 Chron. 7:14). Have mercy on us and send your Spirit to revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you (Ps. 85:6) and your glory may be revealed. Amen.

Additional Resources

J. I. Packer, *God in our Midst*.

Jon Thompson, *Convergence*, chapter 12: <https://sanctuschurch.com/convergencebook>.