

## I. Introduction [4 min]

- a. I'm so excited to be joining you for worship here at Awaken.
  - i. To celebrate all that God has done and is doing in and through you.
- b. Something that you will hear quite a lot at Awaken is that this is a church that brings glory to God through faith in Christ Jesus
  - i. Now that glory is seen in the way you love him, in your worship unto him, when you grow as disciples by following Jesus
    1. It is also seen in the way you love others, caring, serving and reaching out with the Gospel.
      - a. This church is dripping with the Gospel in a way that has turned our world **upside down**.
        - i. And that's exactly what we'll press into today.
      - b. (SLIDE 1) The upside-down Kingdom of God.**
- c. When I look at my life, I can see some upside down-ness.
  - i. Prior to joining the team at World Vision, I was a church planter and pastor out of this church to the city of Chicago for over a decade.
    1. Before that and I might be dating myself here, I managed the very last Blockbuster video in the city of Chicago.
      - a. I broke it... I own it... I apologize!
    2. I helped launch a coffee company, toured all over the country as a concert lighting tech
    3. But, before any of those things I was a butcher.
      - a. From Butcher to Blockbuster that's upside down
- d. I take comfort because in scripture I find the upside-down for example Isaiah 61:3 **(SLIDE 2): he will give a crown of beauty for ashes.**
  - i. If my kids brought me ashes, The only thing I would **give** them is questions.
    1. Like, whose are they? Or where's the vacuum
    2. Yet, he will **give** a crown of beauty for ashes, a joyous blessing instead of mourning, festive praise instead of despair.
    3. That's Upside Down and it continues throughout scripture.
- e. For example:
  - i. We follow a KING who washes **our** feet;
  - ii. We follow a teacher who uses examples of
    1. The good Samaritan, turning the other cheek, faith like a tiny mustard seed
  - iii. We follow a coach who calls
    1. Short people to slay giants, Stutterers to be his spokespeople, farmers and fishermen to be his prophets
  - iv. We follow a CEO who chooses failures and misfits to be his sr. leadership team
  - v. And a shepherd who leaves the 99 for the 1... Amen?
    1. **Everything about the bible we believe in, the God we serve, and the Jesus we follow is UPSIDE DOWN from the current world we live in, from the ways of this world.**

## II. Personal Story? [3 min]

- a. Now I'm happily married for over 21 years and here is a picture of my family.
  - i. **(SLIDE 3 Family Photo)**
    1. Straightaway you're going to see we have some height going on. We're tall people.
- b. That makes me think of one of my all-time favorite photos.
  - i. **(SLIDE 4 Natalie Photo)**
    - ii. This is my at the time 12 daughter Natalie at a basketball game.
      1. I love it, you can see the sheer fear in the eyes of the opponents.
- c. I love this photo because it reminds me of when I was 12 years old,
  - i. I know what you're thinking, what did David look like at 12?
  - ii. Here's a photo. **(SLIDE 5, David at 12 years)**
    1. **Already sponsored at 12.**
  - iii. When I was 12 two significant things happened in my life
    1. **(SLIDE 6, BLANK SLIDE)**
  - iv. When I was 12, I received a call from God in my life.
    1. God said, David I am going to use you to be a part of building my kingdom. I choose you. I didn't have specifics, but I knew God was going to use me.
  - v. The second significant thing that happened when I was 12 was that basketball was introduced in my life.
    1. Over a few short years my natural talent grew, and I was equipped to become a really good basketball player.
    2. In my mind this was the arena that God would use me in to build his kingdom.
  - vi. But that all changed my senior year when I came down wrong on a basketball and completely destroyed my ankle and seemingly overnight basketball was no longer an option for me.
    1. I remember sitting alone in the bus thinking God how am I going to be used by you to build your Kingdom here on earth when the one thing I've been equipped for I can no longer do.
      - a. You might say David that is ridiculous you were 17 years old. You have your whole life ahead of you and certainly God can use you in a different way.
      - b. But I bring it up because this is how we can see ourselves when it comes to building the Kingdom
        - i. That we lack the skill, the talent or the gifting to be used by God to reach the world.
  - vii. **(SLIDE 7): God doesn't call the equipped. He equips those He calls.**

### III. God chooses us exactly how we are [4 min]

- a. Chooses to die for us and give everything to us
  - i. You might be thinking...There is no way I can actually be one of the people to help build God's kingdom here on earth, because
    - 1. "I am not a pastor, I'm not a missionary, I'm not part of the Pastor Derek and Pastor David 6 Foot Plus Club"
      - a. "I am not this or I am not that."
- b. Do you know what God says to "I am not" statements"?
  - i. To each one he says: "I know you are not....but I AM the great I AM."
    - 1. It doesn't matter what your background is, education, job, skills
    - 2. we are all called to be builders of his upside-down kingdom.
- c. When we accept the love of God and let it become our identity,
  - i. none of our sin, none of our failures or our shortcomings –
    - 1. but live into the fact that **He Chooses us** and we are **his beloved**... then ...**we Are truly free**.
  - ii. And in return for this foolish and upside-down love he only asks one thing of us...TO DO THE SAME FOR OTHERS.
    - 1. To join him in joyfully passing it on... especially those who are hurting.
    - 2. You might be like, David, where in the Bible does it say that?
    - 3. Spoiler Alert
    - 4. Pretty much everywhere, but let's take a look at one of the most direct and clear passages, Matthew 25.
- d. **(SLIDE 8, 9 & 10 - : Matt 25:34-40)**

34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.

35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

**Let's read this together:** 40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. –

**Reinstate**

#### IV. Pillars of the Upside Down Kingdom [4 min]

- a. **What does it mean to do the same for other in the upside-down way God does for us?**
  - i. According to what we just read, according to Jesus.
  - ii. You can boil it down to two pillars, two constants, two givens
- b. 1<sup>st</sup> PILLAR: and perhaps the most obvious is that we are called to **(SLIDE 11) RESTORE the broken circumstances** surrounding the most vulnerable and impoverished people in our world.
  - i. But if we are not careful we gloss over the second pillar of the upside down kingdom of God when Jesus calls the people who are hungry, thirsty, homeless and hurting those that have the least in this world - he calls them his....(audience) brothers and sisters...and in doing so is affirming their inherent, God-given, dignity as image bearers of Jesus Christ
- c. 2<sup>nd</sup> PILLAR
  - i. **(SLIDE 12: - 2nd click "Affirming dignity")**
    1. Jesus knows that we as humans, no matter how good our hearts, we tend to unknowingly protect the false narrative that when people HAVE less they are LESS, therefore if I HAVE more I AM MORE-
    2. F150, House, Career, Kids and for the kids... Screen Time
      - a. I would be enough
    3. Rich Young Ruler...Mt.19:16-30
    4. and in this one small **but holy sentence Jesus completely destroys that lie**, he flips it upside down
      - a. and says NO - just because people have less doesn't mean they are less –
- d. These are the pillars, the constants, of the Upside Down kingdom of God
  - i. **We are called**
    1. **Restore broken circumstances AND**
    2. **Affirm the inherent dignity of others.**
      - a. And if we are honest with ourselves even in our best days, we tend to want to do one or the other.
        - i. Its hard to do both... need the Holy Spirit
        - ii. We can find ourselves wanting to help people by restoring circumstances but ignoring the dignity of the people we are serving.
        - iii. Or we see people and empathy the need but assume someone else will meet the need.
      - b. **But** when we courageously say Yes to being both restorers and affirmers.
        - i. Not only are the people we are serving changed, not only are COMMUNITY'S TRANSFORMED - but OUR lives are changed in ways we never thought possible.

V. **Ramate // Ethiopia 2015 [3 min]**

- a. This dynamic became real to me when my friend Ramate. **(SLIDE 13 PICTURE)**
- b. I first connected with her nine years ago when she was just eight years old.
  - i. Now my wife and I sponsor children through World Vision. We know the power of what \$39 a month can do not just in the life of a child, but in an entire community. We sponsored Ramate.
- c. In 2015 I was incredibly blessed to go to Ethiopia to visit Ramate and to connect w/ her family in person. **(SLIDE 14 PICTURE)** She shared w/ me that every day they walked 4 miles to get to water 4 miles back
  - i. Carrying back 25lbs of dirty water.
  - ii. Water that would often leave her sick and unable to go to school.
    - 1. I was able to do that water walk and carried a Jerrycan.
      - a. It took everything from me.
      - b. **(SLIDE 15 BLANK)**
- d. I was taken to this water source that was an algae pond, that's right Algae, where 800 people gather water daily but also the cattle.
  - i. They collect the water by scraping off a 1-inch film of algae and quickly pour the water over a T-shirt filter into a Jerrycan
    - 1. They were fully aware that the water was unsafe and unhealthy to drink this water causing a 50% IMR
      - a. Meaning half of their children would die before age 5.
- e. When I met Ramate World Vision had just started partnering with her community.
  - i. In just a few years after I started sponsoring Ramate WV built a water point less than 100 yards from her home.
    - 1. She now no longer sick from dirty water and is able to school.
      - a. Her school's enrollment increased 300%
        - i. From surviving to thriving
- f. And through this all,
  - i. Broken circumstances are restored - And Inherent dignity is affirmed
    - 1. PEOPLE AND THEIR WHOLE COMMUNITIES ARE TRANSFORMED

## VI. Invitation [4 min]

- a. The love of God is now calling Awaken to deepen the partnership with our brothers and sisters in Kenya.
- b. Specifically in two areas called **Mutito** and **North Horr**
  - i. **(SLIDE 15 COMMUNITY PICTURE)**
  - ii. 8 out of 10 households live in extreme poverty. There's 1 doctor for every 76,000 people and less than 7% have clean drinking water  
Children are exposed to trafficking or child labor and the cycle of poverty... until NOW.
- c. Because World Vision and **Awaken LV** are there. With Christ as the center and with your help, you will be hearing praise reports of all the good things God continues to do in this area.
  - i. TODAY, I am asking you - each and every one of you to become a child sponsor in KENYA. To step up and say yes to sponsoring one **or more** of the hundreds of kids in this community who are desperately waiting on a sponsor to restore their circumstances and affirm their dignity as a child of God.
- d. Grab that card with the QR CODE.
  - i. Everybody got it? It's important! That card is a fulcrum that the entire world can shift on in the life of a child and a family. When you scan that code, you'll get to bless not only the child, but the entire community.
  - ii. We're talking massive water projects, child protection programs, economic development. But you also enter a relationship with that child that's REAL.
- e. **Moses Pellay**
  - i. Let me tell you about one more friend, Moses Pellay, He was one of the first 44 children ever sponsored in Tanzania.
    1. And he carries this briefcase of every single letter from his sponsors.
  - ii. Remember how WV works, we go to the neediest people.
    1. So, when these kids enter into the program, they don't know who Jesus is. He said, the first time he ever the phrase "I'm praying for you" was from a letter from a sponsor.
      - a. The first time I've ever heard "You need to have a dream for your life" was in a letter from a sponsor. Now, he holds a PHD from Berkeley and Cornell. He could be working for the United Nations, but instead he chooses to work at WV Tanzania with the poorest in his country bc of what God did through a relationship.

## VII. Chosen Video Setup [1 min]

- a. Now for years we have partnered with churches all over the US by bridging the gap of transformation and relationship by connecting the local church to global communities in need of transformation.
  - i. We ask for people to sponsor individual children in that community.
    1. Typically, HOW you would sponsor a child would be to walk out to the lobby and there you would see a big display of string and clothespins holding dozens of pictures of the kids we wanted you to choose from.
- b. But for the last year or so we have been praying big prayers at WV.
  - i. Big prayers that God would not let us rest.
  - ii. That God would continue to push us in new ways to better serve his vulnerable children around the world
    1. and a few months ago he birthed an idea that turned our world upside down.
  - iii. He led us to ask the question what else could we do to affirm the inherent dignity of these kids FROM THE VERY FIRST STEP of the relationship with their sponsor...
    1. what would it look like if FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY they instead where empowered to choose us **(PLAY VIDEO NOW Slide 16)**

**VIDEO [2 min] - AFTER VIDEO Derek comes straight up**

**PASTOR DEREK SHAREs [8 min]**

## INSTRUCTIONS [2 min]

SO here is what we want everyone here to do. **2 Step Process** [Slide 17 Show QR Instructions for AWAKEN, pull out phone]

1. **IF you have a smartphone, 1 – SCAN QR (Repeat)**

*(Give them the time to AT LEAST text the bounce back number and get the link on their phone)*

You'll get a text back asking you a bunch of questions and just work your way through it.

2. **Second step is the most important step!** As soon as we're done, go to one of the photo booths in the lobby to TAKE THE MOST EPIC PICTURE THAT YOU HAVE EVER TAKEN IN YOUR ENTIRE LIFE! The photo that a beautiful child will be empowered to choose on Wednesday. That photo will also appear on a private Chosen Summit Church Facebook group for you to be encouraged by throughout the week...and there may be a few surprises as we get closer to the week where you get to see who chose you.

**For those don't have a smartphone or are technologically challenged, NO PROBLEM!** Just head on back there. Our volunteers are there at the photo booths ready to help.

Now some of you might be having flashbacks from Jr. High School

**And may be thinking, "What if I don't get Chosen?" YES, you WILL BE Chosen!**

Finally. Next week – come on back to church because we are going to have a huge reveal party and you will get to find out, who chose you and why!

**DEREK CLOSES [2 MIN]**