



A 4-week small group that teaches you how to LIVE life as a Jesus Follower, establishing a relationship with Jesus and learn daily habits that will keep you in Christ and help you grow. Each week will cover a different topic and its very important that you attend each week.



If you are a mature and seasoned believer you can start here! Discover Awaken is a two-week small group to help you learn more about the mission and vision of Awaken Las Vegas to find your place to serve and grow in this community.

awakenlv.org/signup

THE GOSPEL-CENTERED LIFE

MAKE IT A GOSPEL CENTERED MARRIAGE

Ephesians 5:22-24

WEEK 20

**In a gospel-centered marriage, couples mutually acknowledge
Their shared purpose to radiate Christ's love for His church and
The church's love for Jesus.**

I am sure you would agree when I say the world seems to be getting more and more upside down. You don't have to look far and wide to discover some bewildering and perplexing scenario that provokes you to say, "What is happening to this world?" Of course, Christians know what's happening. The fall of humanity and the marring of societies through sin is going down all around us, including in marriages. Today, where can people find a marriage worthy to be a model or pattern for them to follow? While the divorce rate has been declining in recent years, most attribute this to a decrease in the overall marriage rate, people marrying later in life, a rise in cohabitation before marriage, and the impact of alternative approaches to traditional marriage. In other words, on the marriage front, things aren't getting better; they are getting worse. In the Bible, you discover that Paul considered the gospel the driving purpose for marriage. Like everything else in life, perplexities and problems are solved when we look to Jesus, His redeeming work on the cross, and the beautiful Bride He has created, called the church. This is the model laid down for marriages to meet the ultimate goal intended by the Maker. This is where you find the principle and the power to bring it to pass.

(10 min) OPENING PRAYER

Pray that God will permeate your time with His presence. Ask God to transform the marriages in your group, circle of influence, and church. Pray that they would powerfully radiate Christ's gospel.

(25 min) TIME TO CONSIDER

As you've had the opportunity to reflect on what God has spoken to you through this week's lesson, consider these questions as a group and discuss them.

1. Derek unpacked the word used to describe Eve as a helper, ezerkenedgo. According to the teaching, this compound word is broken up to mean the following: Ezer: someone who aids, strengthens, and helps you in a way that you cannot help yourself—an essential aid. Kenedgo: someone who stands opposite, provides accountability, face to face, contending for your good. Discuss what this means and how this works in marriage.

Healthy marriages don't come from cosmetic changes but spirit-empowered, transformational living.

2. The gospel not only restores image-bearing capacity for marriage to Eden, but it takes it to a whole new level by becoming a living metaphor for Christ's love for His church and His church's love for Him. Discuss how profound this is and how it creates the real purpose for a Christian marriage. In light of this, why is it important to marry a Christian who shares a love for Jesus and Christian values?

Marriage is the one living metaphor through which God has chosen to display the beauty of Christ's love and his profound relationship with His people.

3. Discuss what it means for a wife to submit to her husband and for a husband to be the head of his wife. Remember, Jesus turned submission from a vice into a virtue. Also, remember that He modeled how we exercise authority by lovingly leading.

Submit: To voluntarily place yourself below someone else.

Biblical Authority: self-giving, self-sacrificing, serving by giving yourself up for your wife, and loving, cherishing, and caring for her like Christ does the church.

Christ's authority is exercised through self-giving and self-sacrificing as He leads and guides His people toward what is best for them.

WEEKLY MEMORIZATION VERSES: *Revelation 19:7-8* "Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear."

EXPERIENCING THE SPIRIT TOGETHER: *Spend time as a life group praying and discussing the key things that emerge from your discussion of this week's questions. Consider ways that you can support and encourage the marriages in your group. Be creative. This may mean providing childcare so couples can have a special night out, praying for each marriage, and being open to Scriptures or words of prophecy, wisdom, or knowledge that God may give you.*

(5 min) LIVE IT

Be intentional about centering each day this week around the presence of Christ in your life. Begin each day in prayer and dedicate daily time to reading Scripture. This week, if you are married, choose to center your marriage on the gospel to radiate Christ's love for His people and His people's love for Him. Spend extended time in prayer with your spouse, and be intentional about applying what God has spoken to you in this study. If you are single, pray for and encourage the marriages around you.

