

You can have an amazing marriage. - Amazing through action. Wk. 2

**Ice-Breaker:** *(Group Leader - Have everyone in your group answer this question. Start with one person and then proceed around the group in a circle until the last person has answered. Be specific with who you would like to start with.)*

- **What is a story about something your spouse did for you early on in your relationship?**
  - Examples: Spontaneous trip, Thoughtful gift or kind gesture...

**Questions to talk about:** *(Group Leader - Ask a few people to answer these questions.)*

1. What are three things you used to do for your spouse early on that were a blessing to them?
2. Do you still do them?

**Text to consider.**

**Ephesians 5:29-32** *(Group Leader - Ask 1 person to read the following scripture.)*

*29 After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body. 31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." 32 This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church.*

**Group Questions:** *(Group Leader - Ask 2 or 3 specific people to answer these questions.)*

- What is the mystery that Paul is talking about as he writes to the people in Ephesus?
- Is marriage as seen in Genesis 2:24 a foreshadowing of Jesus and his Church?

**Statement:** *The church is the group of people who believe that Jesus died for them, the Spirit lives in them and they will be raised from the dead to eternal life because of their faith in him.*

**Turning point:** **If marriage is a picture of Jesus and the church we can glean truth from his relationship with the church to apply to our marriage.**

**Text to study:** Jesus is telling John (*the disciple he loves*) to let these churches know how their relationship with him is going.

**Revelation 2** **"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write:**

**These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands. 2 I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. 3 You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.**

**4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first. 5 Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place. 6 But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.**

**7 Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.**

**Group Questions:** *(Group Leader - Ask 2 or 3 specific people to answer these questions.)*

- What have they lost?
- Do you ever feel like you have lost this in your marriage?
- What does Jesus instruct them to go and do?
  - Notice: The instructions of Jesus to return to first love is all about action. Love is not a feeling, but an action. Amazing is found through action. We love Jesus because he first loved (**Left Heaven, Hung out**

*with us, Died on the cross & then rose from the dead... all for us) and we should be like him towards our spouse.*

**Discuss this statement:**

**You will have what you used to have if you will do what you used to do.**

**Hard questions to wrestle with:**

- What is something that you used to do that you could do once again?
- Have you ever apologized to your spouse for marrying them as the priority only to later reduce their value and placing something else as the priority in their place?
- What do you think about the statement feelings follow faith?
- Will you commit to act out one small blessing toward your spouse and one large one this year?

**Amazing is found through Action!**

**Closing Prayer:** *(Group Leader - Please pray this with your group.)*

- God, will you be with us as we go back and do what we used to do. Will you help us receive as our spouse acts out love towards us and to once again set this relationship as the priority in our lives.

**Data:** The Branches marriage intensive starts in the first week of April. Sign up at the info kiosk on Sunday mornings.

**Thanks:** Thanks to everyone for coming to group.