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## ***Adored: You Are a Beautiful Masterpiece***

Featuring

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*Session 1: You Are Second to None*

*Session 2: You Are Known by God*

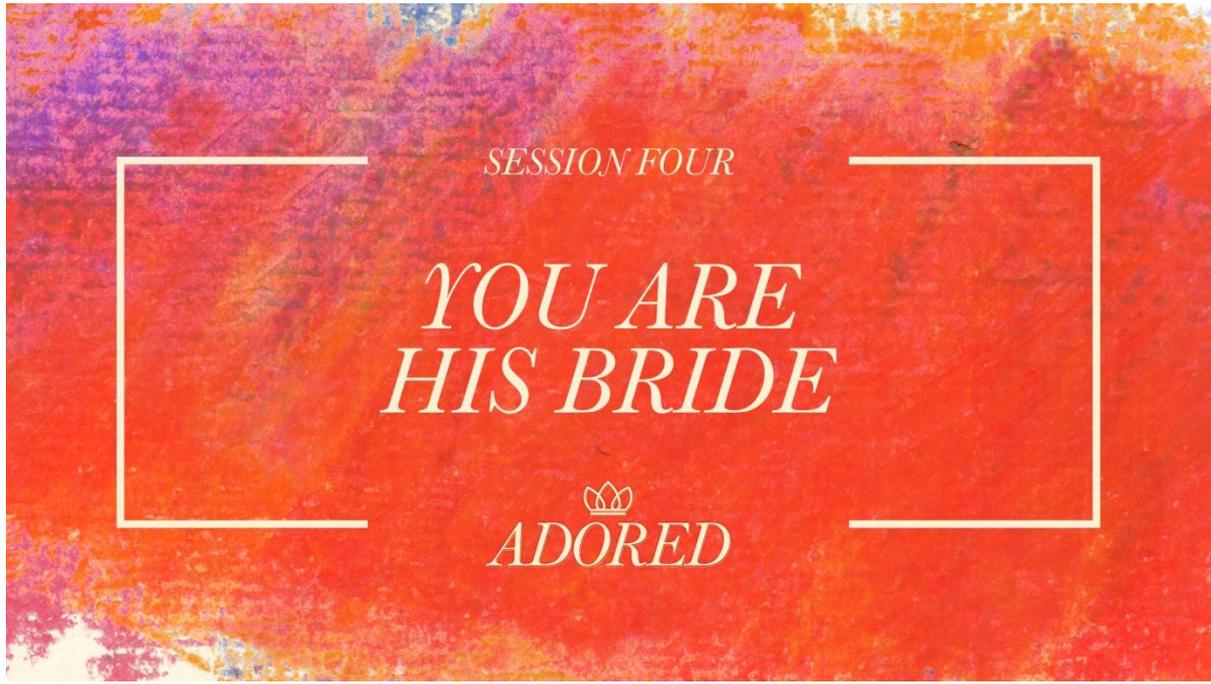
*Session 3: You Are Free from Sin*

**→ *Session 4: You Are His Bride***

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To view the accompanying videos for this series,  
go to <https://ariseministries.net/adored>

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[www.AriseMinistries.net](http://www.AriseMinistries.net)



*Have you ever attended a wedding and found the bride wearing sweatpants and flip flops, slouching down the aisle while her groom stands poised before the crowd in a tuxedo? It's unlikely. The bride doesn't forget to show up on her wedding day, nor does she marry someone she's never met. She carefully plans and prepares before she says "I do" to the one she has pledged her love. A special occasion calls for special preparation. Don't dismiss the analogy because you may be an unwed woman and you think you have nothing to glean from it. In the final week of Adored, we'll examine what it means to make ourselves ready to be united with Christ at His return.*

1. Think about a traditional wedding. What general observations can you make about a bride? What does she look like? How much time has gone into preparing for the event?
2. Read **Genesis 2:24** and **Revelation 19:7-9**. What theme is found in the first book of the Bible and also in the last?

**Genesis 2:24** Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

**Revelation 19:7-9** Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; <sup>8</sup> it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. <sup>9</sup> And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.”

*As the speaker in the video points out, the Bible begins and ends with a wedding. In the book of Genesis, Adam and Eve were joined together in a literal marriage. In the final book of Revelation, the metaphor of a wedding is used to illustrate Christ’s return to be united with His church. Marriage was a commonly understood union, which many people groups would understand. What is the significance of the illustration?*

*God has ordained a permanent relationship between the Church\* and His Son. As followers of Christ, we are the Church—the body of believers. We belong to Him, just as a husband and wife belong to one another in a marriage relationship. As part of His bride, let us make ourselves ready to meet Him in eternity—in spirit, mind, and body.*

*\*Note: “Church” in this study refers to the world-wide, collective body of Christ followers. It does not refer to the local church.*

3. Read this passage of scripture in **Ephesians 5:22-33**. Paul is using a marriage relationship metaphor to describe the relationship of Christ to His Church. He compares a husband to Christ, and a wife to the Church. Identify all the comparisons illustrated in this passage and note how it applies you.

Example: verse 22 – “Wives submit to their husbands as if to the Lord.” This illustrates my authority is Jesus.

**Ephesians 5:22-33** Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. <sup>[a]</sup> <sup>28</sup> In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. <sup>29</sup> For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, <sup>30</sup> because we are members of his body. <sup>31</sup> “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” <sup>32</sup> This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup> However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

*Perhaps your past relationships fall short of the standard outlined in Ephesians 5, or you struggle with believing this kind of relationship is possible. Put aside your past experiences and view this passage as a description of Christ's relationship to His bride, the Church.*

4. How does the passage in Ephesians 5 show His adoration of you, His follower?

*If we are the bride of Christ, let us examine some ways in which we can prepare to be in relationship with Him.*

5. Read the following scriptures. What is necessary to be part of His Church?

**Romans 10:9** Because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

**John 3:16** For God so loved the world, that He gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

**John 14:6** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

*To enter into a relationship with Christ, we must first choose to **believe** He died and rose from the dead to offer us forgiveness for our sin. When we accept Him as our Lord and Savior, we become part of the Church – the bride of Christ. We are His beloved. (To learn more about what it means to be a follower of Christ, see the additional information at the end of this session.)*

6. What is the common theme of the following scriptures?

**John 14:15** If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

**James 1:22** But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

**John 14:21** Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.

**1 John 5:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

*As part of being His bride, we demonstrate our love for Him through **obedience**. It's our only reasonable response to His adoration of His beloved. Do we always feel like bending our knee to His commands? No. Sometimes our flesh desires to step out of His will and exercise self-rule. Have you ever experienced the unsettled feeling of knowing you are walking outside of God's best for you? Consider unwavering obedience as the key to peace. The bride of Christ finds joy in being surrendered to His authority.*

7. In addition to accepting Him as Savior and obeying His commands, worship is another way we prepare to be His bride. Read the following scriptures and write your thoughts about worship.

**Romans 12:1** I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

**Hebrews 13:15** Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

**John 4:23** But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.

*We **worship** Him in many ways. Our lives, poured out in service and surrender to His will, are spiritual acts of worship. We praise Him with our words, in our conversations, and with the overflow of our hearts. The Father is spirit, and we are called to worship Him in spirit and in truth.*

*Some people are of the mindset that they will engage in full worship once they are united with Him in eternity. Consider this, if we are not accustomed to worshipping Him here on earth as His adored bride, what will be different in the future? We worship Him now, as a practice of our lives, so that when we see Him face to face our heart finds itself at home with our Beloved.*

8. Let's revisit the analogy of a healthy marriage relationship. A husband and wife mutually place the needs of the other before their own. Their desire is to do good for one another as an expression of their promise to love. How do these scriptures help you see that our **good deeds** are an expression of love for Christ?

**Ephesians 2:10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

**Matthew 5:16** In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

**Hebrews 10:24** Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,

9. As you examine opportunities to prepare yourself to be the Bride of Christ, summarize the importance of each of these in your life.

Believe Jesus is Lord.

Follow Him in obedience.

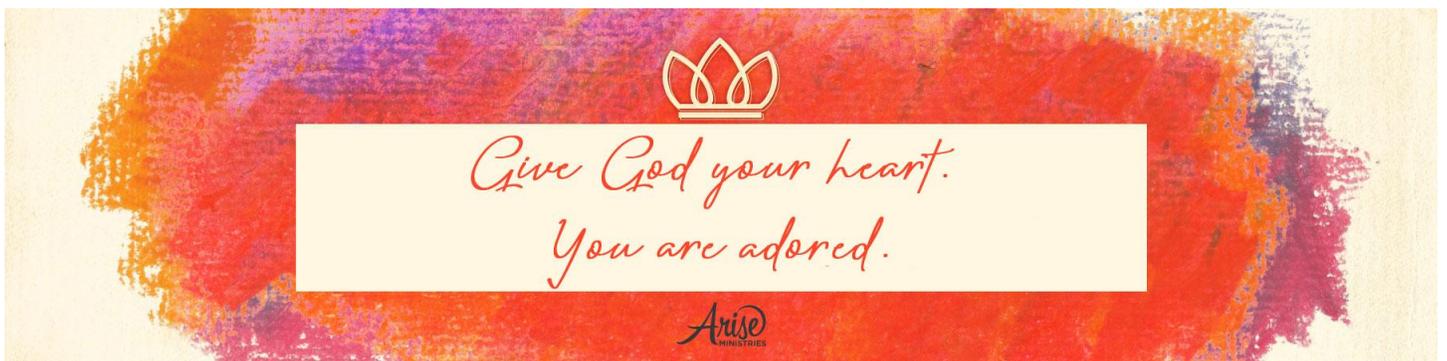
Worship in spirit and truth.

Do good deeds to reflect His glory.

*Seeing yourself as the bride of Christ has nothing to do with an actual marriage relationship. His followers are His Church, and at His return He will claim his spotless bride who has made herself ready. The metaphor illustrates how we wait for Him, with a posture of our heart to honor, respect, and love Him as our authority and our Savior.*

*He has laid down His life for you. You are chosen, you are being made holy, and you will someday be united with Him. His love for you is great. You are adored.*

10. Conclude this series by praying for God to give you eyes to see how you can prepare yourself for an eternal relationship with Him.



### **Notes for Small Group Discussion:**

1. Briefly share your thoughts on the video.
2. Briefly talk about spiritual concepts you learned.
3. Share with your group a choice you need to make that will honor God.
4. Consider practical ways to find accountability with these truths.

To share your thoughts regarding this study, contact us at [info@ariseministries.net](mailto:info@ariseministries.net).

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##### **Video Content Author**

Daniel has been preaching the gospel since the age of 15. He has been the lead pastor of The Cross Church in Norman, Oklahoma, for over 12 years. In addition to ministry, he serves the community as a 6th grade Social Studies teacher and as the head football and track coach at Irving Middle School.

Daniel and his wife, Jessica, are blessed with two daughters and a son. As a family, they are passionate about building relationships with others and believe Jesus can change everything.

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#### **KIM HEINECKE**

##### **Study Guide Content Author**

Kim serves as the Director of Operations with Arise Ministries and coordinates the online Bible study content. As a former single mom, she uses her life experiences and personal spiritual growth through studying God's Word to encourage women. Kim writes for [www.AriseMinistries.net](http://www.AriseMinistries.net) and for her personal website [The Mom Experiment](#).

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