

Awaken

The Lord is doing a new thing

Anne Calver & John McGinley

Session 5: New Leadership & New Wineskins

Pre-reading:

Chapters 7 New Leadership & Chapter 8 New Wineskins

Look Back

How are you?

How did you get on taking a step to engage in God's missionary call?

What are you thankful for?

Look Up

Take some time to worship God together.

Here are some songs that would connect with the theme of Jesus as Lord of the church.

- I believe in God the Father . . . When the music fades
- I will build my life
- Living Hope
- I speak Jesus
- Holy Forever
- Or you could use Psalm 100

The Word

As you were reading these chapters of Awaken what really struck you?

Or: what sections of this chapter felt particularly relevant to your life or our situation in the church today?

Theme Introduction

To introduce the discussion you could play the Big Church Read Session 5 video from John or Anne for this session or you could introduce it using the following summary:

Chapter 7 calls the church into a new era of leadership shaped not by platform, power, or celebrity, but by servanthood, shared authority, and Christlike character. Drawing on Mark Sayers' image of platforms versus pillars imagery, the church needs to repent of worldly leadership—driven by performance, prominence, and control—and embrace Jesus' model of leadership as a slave who lays down his life.

The form of leadership that will enable this is one that ensures the 5 fold ministry of Jesus is expressed in leaders who then equip all the body of Christ in their calling. This leads into a renewed understanding of fivefold leadership (apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher) as the ministry of Jesus distributed across his body, equipping the whole church for mission and maturity.

The foundational role of apostle and prophet is not hierarchical but because they establish a Spirit-led kingdom advancing culture rather than inward focussed one that currently exists.

Chapter 8 reframes Jesus' "new wineskins" as primarily people, hearts, relationships, and Spirit-shaped community, not merely church structures. New wine—the fresh outpouring of the Spirit for mission—requires flexible, surrendered communities capable of stretching without bursting. The Western church has often tried to patch the inherited model with new ideas (including charismatic renewal), containing the Spirit inside existing systems rather than releasing a Spirit-empowered movement into the streets. Jesus' sober warning stands: many who prefer "the old wine" will resist the new.

The recovery of the meaning of ekklesia is important: the "called-out" assembly, gathered not for services but for a kingdom purpose—to enact Jesus' rule, push back the "gates of Hades," and use the "keys of the kingdom" to bind/loose as the intersection of heaven and earth.

Patterns are emerging of apostolic centres (harbours) and apostolic networks (boats) that resource mission and multiplication. Finally, you call believers to "build arks for my glory"—mobile, safe, revelation-led, presence-centred communities prioritising prayer, worship, unity, and rescue in turbulent times, with younger generations often leading the way.

Read Luke 5:36–39 — New wine and new wineskins

Read: Luke 5:36–39 twice (different readers). Sit in silence for 30 seconds.

1. How would you summarise what Jesus is using the imagery of wineskins to communicate about the tensions between old and new? Where has the church tried to patch the new of what God is doing into an old model or culture?

2. What "old wineskins" might describe church culture today?

You might want to reflect here on aspects of the chapters content such as, the dangers of "platform leadership" or the understanding of the word Jesus uses for church "ekklesia" and what that challenges in current church culture, or the dominance of a church leader as a pastor.

3. What might "new wine" represent in this chapter (Spirit outpouring, mission, deliverance, prayer, fresh community)?

4. How do you respond to the warning Jesus gives about people preferring the old?

5. How do you respond to the need for new shared leadership that reflects the five aspects of Jesus ministry as apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher?

6. In your context, what would "boats and harbours" look like—small missional communities and a resourcing hub?

Looking forward

1. In which area might Jesus be asking you to let go of the old and enable his Spirit to renew you? What will you do to enable him to do this?

2. What might it mean for your group to "build an ark for God's glory" in the next 6 months.

Pray together for the Holy Spirit to release fresh hope and vision for the future however hard that might be.