

Awaken

The Lord is doing a new thing

Anne Calver & John McGinley

Session 6: Pilgrimage

Pre-read

Chapter 9: Pilgrimage

Look Back

How are you?

As we come to the end of these Awaken sessions what have you sensed God working in you?

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 pilgrimage.

- Goodness of God (or other Psalm 23 based songs)
- I will build my life
- Faithful one so unchanging
- 10,000 reasons
- Or you could use Psalm 84

Read it and pray prayers to enter into God's presence

Offer to God whatever is your current "Valley of Baka," and give thanks for God's promise to turn it into a place of "springs"

The Word

Theme Introduction

To introduce the discussion you could play the Big Church Read Session 6 video from John or Anne for this session or you could introduce it using the following summary:

Chapter 9 frames awakening as a pilgrimage of faith: a costly, purposeful journey into deeper intimacy with Jesus and into his mission of reconciliation. Using Helen of Troy as an image of the spiritual battle as a "war for love" to bring the Bride back to the Bridegroom, the church is called to arise, live by faith and move before we can see outcomes. Pilgrimage becomes a guiding metaphor—an outward journey and an inward re-ordering of the soul—where valleys of weeping become places of springs (Psalm 84:5–7). Pilgrims are contrasted with spiritual tourists: tourists consume experiences and stay shallow; pilgrims travel in community with loyalty, formation, and a destination that shapes how they walk.

An example of pilgrimage is the road to Emmaus: Jesus walks with disillusioned disciples, opens Scripture, and reveals himself in ordinary table fellowship, turning despair into mission. Finally,

Hebrews 13:12–13 calls believers to go to Jesus “outside the camp”—beyond rigid, presence-less religious systems—accepting the cost of misunderstanding and loss of status in order to find Jesus where he is already moving.

Read: Hebrews 13:11 –14

1. What did Jesus do “outside the city gate,” and why? (cross outside the city walls reflects the burning of the carcass’s of the sin offering on the day of atonement outside the camp. This communicates the place outside the camp as a place of uncleanness and rejection).
 2. What are we commanded to do, and what are we told it will involve? Why are we called to do this? Why is our hope of an eternal city important in this call?
 3. In the chapter’s terms, comfort, control, reputation, rigid systems, safety are the interpretation of our camp today. What aspects of the “camp” might you personally be tempted to cling to (role, routine, tradition, approval, certainty)?
 4. Why might the place of “rejection” become a place of presence and encounter?
 5. Where do you already see Jesus “outside”—among the young, the broken, the spiritually hungry, the overlooked?
- What might it mean for the church to join Jesus there?
6. How does the concept of journeying on pilgrimage help you to understand awakening as a process and not an event?

Look Forward

Where do you sense God calling you to “wake up” and walk by faith, not sight right now?

What is one concrete step of obedience your group could take in the next month that is costly in some way, but moves you toward Jesus?

Pray together:

“Pray for Jesus, set your hearts on pilgrimage to more of all he has for you
Pray for courage to follow him outside the camp
Pray for God to seal you with his love so that you burn with hope for others.”