



## Living Proof

Bringing the Kingdom of God into your everyday world

### Week 5: THE BRIDE, JESUS AND CULTURE

1. Reflect on and describe a time when you were a participant in being the “beauty of the bride.”
2. Read Acts 4. This story describes characteristics of a Kingdom Lifestyle (Living Proof, beauty of the bride and music of the gospel). Write some characteristics you find from these key verses:

Verses 14–16: It cannot \_\_\_\_\_

Verses 17–22: It cannot \_\_\_\_\_

Verses 24–31: It cannot \_\_\_\_\_

Verses 27–29: It cannot \_\_\_\_\_

Verses 32–37: It cannot \_\_\_\_\_

*The Jewish culture of Jesus’ day had many rules. Some of those rules were about who you could associate with, lepers were considered unclean and unapproachable, tax collectors were considered extortionists and traitors, publicans were considered robbers, murderers, and reprobate, women had no rights and were necessary to have children and serve men, anyone not Jewish was considered unclean and not worthy of God’s love and salvation and so on.....*

*These rules were part of an extensive religious caste system that included the High Priest, priests, Pharisees and Sadducees which produced a legalistic, judgmental, unloving community which lived out of fear and suspicion and **into this culture walked Jesus with revolutionary grace expressing the love of God.....***

3. Let’s walk with Jesus and the disciples through the New Testament. In each of these stories Jesus defies the cultural norm. Explain what Jesus’ actions had to say about the religious caste system of His day, who He associated with, and God’s heart and purposes.

(These are a few to read—there are many more in the Gospels. You may want to use a study Bible as you do this if you have one.)

Read: The Women at the Well (John 4:4–20):

The Leper Cleansed (Mark 1:40–48):

The Tax Collector (Matthew 9:9–17):

Dinner at Simon the Lepers (Mark 14:3–9):

4. What things hinder you from walking as Jesus walked?
  
5. What tools does Jesus give us to overcome these hindrances?
  
6. Jesus understood His culture’s worldview, values, and behavior and this helped Him know how to associate and speak into people’s lives. This week watch a prime time television show including commercials and answer the following questions.
  - a. What do the characters in the show value? What is important to them?
  
  - b. What would be their response to the question, “Why are you/we here on earth?”
  
  - c. Reflect on the commercials. What do you sense the sponsors feel you need or value?

Spend some time praying for people in your social network.