



## The Story Church Discipleship Groups | Spring 2021

### Introduction:

Christians believe salvation is all about God's grace, right? No amount of good works can get a person into heaven; only trusting in Jesus can do that. So what's the point of living a good life after deciding you believe in Jesus? Why should Christians subject themselves to discomfort, self-sacrifice, and self-discipline if simply believing in Jesus is enough to punch their tickets to heaven? Part of trusting Jesus means allowing him to shape our lives - not just in eternity - but in the here and now. In this series, we'll explore the ways God's saving grace can transform the believer's character in this life. From your love life to your priorities to your personality, God calls out and equips believers to live lives that are shaped by the cross of Jesus Christ.

### Session 1: A Cross-Shaped Marriage

[WATCH THE SERMON HERE](#)

### Discussion Questions:

What is the source of most of your marriage expectations?

How do you typically react when your expectations are not met?

Read Ephesians 5:31-32. *"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church"*

List out the guiding principles you find in a marriage and in a relationship with Christ. What is the same? What is different?

What are the characteristics of a me-shaped marriage? How can these be destructive in your faith and in your marriage?

What are the characteristics of a cross-shaped marriage? How can these produce fruit and life in your faith and in your marriage?

Read Hebrews 12:2. *“For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

What is the joy set before you in your faith? What is the joy set before you in your marriage?

How can you joyfully endure seasons of suffering?

What are some of the ways you've been in "neutral" in your faith and in your marriage?

What does the author of Hebrews mean by “scorning its shame?” How can you scorn shame? How can you fight for your faith and for your marriage?

List out a practical step forward you can take today to pursue holiness in your life. How can your group hold you accountable and pray with you for this next step?