



A LIFE OF BEING A DISCIPLE

LESSON 3 – HOSPITALITY

Opening Prayer

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

Precursor: The focus this week is on using our time and talents to show hospitality to others. Through hospitality, as messy and dangerous as it can be, relationships are built and Jesus is shared.

It's important to note what the Greek word means to get at the heart of what God asks of us. The word is "philoxenia," which means "love of strangers." In other words, this is not love for those we already know and love. In Jesus' day, it took days to walk a long trip and inns were scarce. It was common to invite a travelling stranger into your home. Can you imagine? For various reasons, that may not be the way "love of strangers" looks in our day and age.

Hosting Hospitality: Below is a list of ways that we might love strangers. On your own, pick out two that would be comfortable for you to do and one that you are not comfortable with. Be ready to explain why you picked the ones you picked with the group. Are there any you would add to the list?

- Invite a visitor at church out for lunch after worship.
- Invite a church member who has never been to your home for a meal.
- Invite a friend to come with you to church and lunch afterwards.
- Have a 60-second conversation with five people you don't regularly talk to at church.
- Talk to someone you don't know well and introduce them to someone you do know well.
- Find someone in the church who seems to be involved in everything and ask how you can help them.
- Visit shut-ins with a devotion or simply for a visit.
- Find a way to introduce yourself to your neighbors.
- Make cookies for neighbors and deliver them in person.
- Host a block party at your house.
- Arrive to church 15 minutes early on Sunday to greet people.
- Sit next to a new member/one you don't know every Sunday.
- Assist with coffee/treats for a Sunday.

TAKING TIME TO INVEST IN OTHERS

1. Jesus says we must *work while it is day*, because we cannot work when night comes. What does he mean, and what does it have to do with our desire to show love to strangers?

“As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.” (John 9:4)

2. Through the Holy Spirit’s work of faith in our hearts, we “reap eternal life.” How does the fact that we have an eternity in heaven waiting for us motivate us to show hospitality?

“Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.” (Galatians 6:8)

3. Read Luke 7:36-50. List at least three reasons the woman was comfortable approaching Jesus in this way?

- The Pharisee - How did Jesus "love this stranger?"

- The woman - How did Jesus "love this stranger?"

4. Read Jesus' encouragement below. For what reasons did Jesus say this?

"When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." (Luke 14:12-14)

5. Evaluate the importance of the following characteristics when it comes to the topic of "loving strangers."

- **Expectations:** (i.e., I want everyone I meet to know Jesus!)

- **Be genuine:** (i.e., don't pretend to be someone you're not)

- **Care about people:** (i.e., don't just be friendly, be a friend)

GROUP ACTIVITY

- How do you turn the conversation from everyday matters to the spiritual? Let's practice p, P, S, s witnessing.

p:

P:

S:

s:

- What are the characteristics of those who have the gift of hospitality?

- Share a time when you have seen someone's hospitality was a blessing to others or to yourself.

CLOSING ACTIVITY

Bumper Sticker! Take 1 minute to come up with a bumper sticker slogan illustrating a truth about hospitality.