

Discipleship and Hospitality

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Share an experience where enjoying a meal with someone turned into a significant time of sharing or where life was transformed (such as an important decision made, reconciliation taking place, or making stronger bonds with someone).

When you think of the word hospitality what images come to your mind?

"Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!" (Hebrews 13:2, NLT)

"The Son of Man came....

- *Not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* (Mark 10:45)
- *To seek and to save the lost"* (Luke 19:10)
- *Eating and drinking"* (Luke 7:34)

"The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners."'" (Luke 7:34 (NIV))

Where we eat says something about the integration of our life.

1. Who we eat with will deals with our mission.

Hospitality and "Strangers" go together.

Strangers are those who move from one culture to live in another.

- Hebrew words for stranger:
 - GER, TOSHAV, ZAR, NOCRI
 - All refer to people moving from one culture to another.

New Testament word for stranger "Xenos" is equivalent to the Old Testament words in that it refers to one foreign born.

Other English words for "stranger":

- Alien
- Foreigner
- Sojourner
- International

Strangers in the USA today:

- 45 million immigrants
- 1 million international students and scholars
- 66 million tourists/year
- 13% of US citizens are foreign born

How often do you include “outsiders (foreigners)” around your table?

2. How often we eat with others reveals our priorities.

What is a good rhythm that can work in your life for developing a lifestyle of hospitality?

Hospitality is normative to following Jesus.

“Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.” (Romans 12:13)

“And if a stranger dwells with you in your land, you shall not mistreat him. The stranger who dwells among you shall be to you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.”

(Leviticus 19:33-34, NKJV)

3. How long our meals last will say a lot about our lifestyle.

How often do you find yourself working through a meal?

How often do you go through a take-out and eat in your car?

4. How we eat is a part of discipleship.

The practice of Biblical hospitality involves welcoming foreign born people into our hearts and lives, sharing what we have, and offering a safe place for rest and encouragement.

The example of Abraham (Gen 18:1-21)

Hospitality is...

- a warm welcome
- sharing food and drink together
- sharing from the heart together

Obstacles to the practice of Biblical hospitality:

- Too comfortable
- Too many relationships
- Too busy
- Too fearful
- Too many excuses

How comfortable are you in having people see you live your life at home?

How stressful is hospitality to you?

5. Where we eat says something about the integration of our life.

6. Hospitality opens the door for those who are traditionally without access to the gospel.

Matthew 11:19

The majority of international students and a significant number of immigrants come from the least evangelized nations of the world.

The book of Acts clearly illustrated that God reaches people with his love while they are away from home. (Acts 2, 8, 9, 10, 16)

7. The practice of Biblical hospitality is rooted in the character of God.

- In Creation Gen. 2:8-15
- In Redemption Ex. 3:17
- In Glorification John 14:2-3

“My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” (John 14:2-3)

“He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” (Deut. 10:18-19)

8. The practice of Biblical hospitality open the possibility of a special work of God in your life.

Illustrations:

- Elijah and the widow at Zarephath (1 Kings 17)
- Elisha and the Shunammite woman (2 Kings 4)
- Martha, Mary, Lazarus (Luke 10, John 11)

9. Hospitality is essential to leadership in the church.

In your leadership training where does hospitality fit in?

“Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach...” (1 Tim. 3:2)

“An overseer... must be hospitable...” (Titus 1:7-8)