

HOSPITALITY

Love for the Stranger

A THOUGHT ON HOSPITALITY

As we look at the world around us, there is an ever-increasing social pandemic of isolation and loneliness. While we have never been more connected as a people in history through digital platforms, we, at the same time have never been more disconnected relationally. Fueled by the western individualistic culture both inside and outside of the church, we are losing sight of what it means to deeply love and walk with one another.

There is a practice from the life of Jesus which helps us with this, it is....

HOSPITALITY. Hospitality is the act of expressing the welcoming love of Christ to others, those that are both friends and strangers.

Jesus invites people into His life to bless, to talk to, and to share a meal with.

Ultimately Jesus gave His life for others - to provide a way for forgiveness of sin, and to invite us back into God's family.

This season and practice gives us the encouragement to welcome others in grace, just like Christ has done with us - and show hospitality to the stranger and invite people into our lives, and around our table, with Jesus at the centre.

Hospitality: The act of expressing the welcoming love of Christ to others—both friends and strangers.

KEY VERSES

Matthew 25:40

Romans 12:13

Luke 10:25-37

Hebrews 13:2

Rev 3:20

Luke 7:36-50

Acts 11:1-18

1 Peter 4:8-9

TEACHING



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SMALL TABLES

TREKING TOGETHER

FORM

WE ENCOURAGE THESE PRACTICES TO BE PRACTISED TOGETHER. IF POSSIBLE, FIND A SMALL TRUSTED GROUP OF PEOPLE OR EVEN JUST ONE OTHER, THAT YOU JOURNEY & WRESTLE THESE IDEAS, BIBLE VERSES AND PRACTICES WITH.

HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO GET THE CONVERSATION STARTED

QUESTIONS

WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU THROUGH THIS PRACTICE/SCRIPTURE?

WHAT ARE YOU WRESTLING WITH IN TERMS OF THIS PRACTICE?

WHAT IS ENCOURAGING YOU ABOUT THIS PRACTICE?

WHAT IS GOD ASKING YOU TO DO, MOVING FORWARD?



#THETRANSFORMATIONTREK - HOSPITALITY

Love for one another

While we are not asked to show favoritism or develop tribalism in our church world, the bible is clear on this; that our Christian brother or sister who is on this mission with us should be uplifted and blessed by us with a certain level of priority.

It is those in our church community whom we should be able to be most vulnerable, honest and generous with. Opening up our lives, our fears, and our hopes to each other in order to be strengthened and see the kingdom move forward.

Invitation

Over this coming season (Summer), **invite 1-3 people** into your life from your church community with an intentional mindset of growing a deeper relationship with them.

This can play out in many different forms, including:

- A social event, something fun
- A shared meal, beverage
- A Bible study

Bless

Over this coming season (Summer), **Bless - 1-3 people** with the intention of encouragement/exhortation.

This can play out in many different forms, including:

- An encouraging text or call
- A thoughtful gift
- A helpful gesture (babysitting, shouting dinner, helping with a practical need around the house)

Love for Stranger

While the bible and Jesus offer many examples and encouragements towards hospitality within the Church, the Bible does seem to hold a special place for offering hospitality and generosity to those we don't know. Random acts of kindness and blessings are shown through such parables as the "Good Samaritan" or Jesus himself in the way He loves and interacts with all classes of people, most of whom he has only just met. Christlike love for the stranger gives the world a tangible image of who God truly is and how He feels about them.

Let's have fun with this. Below you will see a list of both fun and challenging ideas of how you can practically love people in our world.

- Bake cookies for the elderly
- Reconnect with old friends
- Let someone go in front of you in line or in traffic
- Give a stranger a compliment
- Fill someone's car up with petrol/Pay for someone's petrol
- Make dinner for a family in need
- Insert coins into someone's parking meter
- Buy flowers to hand out on the street
- Leave letters of encouragement on people's cars
- Buy a meal for the person behind you in the drive through
- Pay for someone's meal at a restaurant
- Use your allowance to donate to a charity
- Hold open the doors for people
- Walk a neighbour's dog
- Do a favour without asking for anything in return
- Prepare a meal for your family
- Mow the lawn for your neighbours
- Pay for someone's morning coffee
- Instead of posting negativity online, spread some encouragement
- Share your favourite Bible verses or quotes
- Offer to give a friend a ride home

Love around the Table

There is no doubt that we all love food. (Some of us more than others!) Food though is not just a means to meet an essential need in our lives but, more than that, an invitation to practice and participate in something sacred. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus is constantly either going to a meal, at a meal or coming from a meal. The meal table, while a very ordinary and often overlooked place, is a space in which we can minister to others.

Eat With Others

The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds."

Matthew 11:19

Share a meal/beverage with **1-2** people each week in this season, having a combination of Christian brothers & sisters, work friends, or even strangers.

Ask the Holy Spirit to work in and through you in this practice of Hospitality. Allow people to see the characteristics of Jesus in your life to point them towards Jesus.

The Family Table

A Practice Experienced from a Transformation Trekker

My kids do this thing when we have guests over for dinner where they try and figure out the guest's first, middle & last name by asking a line of questions. It's loud, it's messy (because they ask while they have food in their mouth) and it's usually full of laughter as they try and guess the guest's name and what they do for a living.

It may be a tad chaotic and take energy and time to host and show hospitality but one thing is for sure. Our guest sees an authentic and really clear picture of what my family is about. The good, bad & ugly.

My prayer though is they also see Jesus. Not a perfect example but a family who seeks to have Jesus at the centre.

This is the power of a regular family dinner around a table. Whether it be for the marriage, the kids, the friends or guest. It is a place where values are set, where stories are shared. Yes with laughter but sometimes also sadness. It's a place where Jesus can be placed at the centre and all those that sit & talk can gravitated around this nucleus.

Practice Stacking

Don't know what to talk about when showing hospitality? Practicing a Practice together. Eg Prayer, Fasting, Reading the Bible, Rest etc. This is a great way to invite, share experiences & point people to Jesus.