

Session 3

THE FIRST THING YOU SHARE

Luke 24:13-35 (emphasis vv. 28-35)

Memory Verse


Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight. ³² They said to each other, “Weren’t our hearts burning within us while he was talking with us on the road and explaining the Scriptures to us?”

– LUKE 24:31-32, CSB



The First Thing You Share

THEOLOGICAL THEME: The eternal, divine, and perfect love shared between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit is the fountainhead of all human relationship, including the practice of hospitality.

 Do you know how to play a stringed instrument, such as a guitar or violin?

 What sort of preparations must a musician make before he or she can give a performance using a stringed instrument?

Guitars, violins, and other stringed instruments must be tuned. The strings can't be slack. In fact, if you have a guitar and the strings aren't tightened at all, it is useless. It can't make music. A person's life is like a guitar. When he or she is made alive in Christ and put in right relationship with God, it's as if their strings are now taut and tuned. They are now able to make music, and that music adorns the transformation in their life; it adorns the gospel itself.

How does a Christian make music with his or her life that adorns Christ? They do so by walking in obedience to the Word of Christ and by doing the good works "which God prepared ahead of time for us to do" (Eph. 2:10).

An important distinction to make is that the beautiful music a violin makes isn't what turns a block of wood into an instrument. That, of course, is absurd. Likewise, it is equally absurd to suppose that a sin-dead rebel could somehow produce good works that would then turn them into a Christian.

One of those good works that Christians are commanded in Scripture to carry out is the practice of hospitality. In our passage today, we see hospitality in practice as the two disciples took a meal together with Christ (who they were initially kept from recognizing).

Session Summary

Christians are motivated by the gospel. They enjoy God's grace in this life now and will experience His unmerited favor through Jesus when they enter into the presence of the Father as though they had never sinned. This truth is unspeakably precious and comforting to those who are in Christ. Jesus' righteousness being applied to the account of Christians is the basis of all their hope and motivation for obedience. Christians do the good works for which they were created because of good work that Christ did on their behalf on the cross.

In our study today we will consider different aspects of the good work of hospitality. As we look at the account of hospitality found in Luke 24, we will define hospitality, think about whom hospitality should be extended to, and consider how hospitality ought to be carried out. Furthermore, we will take note that the hospitality of Christians is not only motivated by the gospel but is actually a reflection of the gospel.

1. What is Hospitality? (Luke 24:28-29)

In Luke 24, two disciples were making their way to a town called Emmaus after the death and resurrection of Christ. Rumors were flying and the disciples were both confused and grieved. When Christ drew near to them, they were prevented from recognizing Him. As they neared the village, the disciples said, "Stay with us, because it's almost evening, and now the day is almost over." So Jesus went with the disciples to stay with them. These disciples showed hospitality to Jesus, though they didn't recognize Him. They exemplified the words that Peter would later write to the church: "Be hospitable to one another without complaining" (1 Pet. 4:9).

 What is hospitality and what does it look like today?

 Do you find practicing hospitality easy or is it difficult for you? Explain.

The word *hospitality* in the original language, Koine Greek, is a combination of two words, love (*philos*) and stranger (*xenos*). The biblical idea behind hospitality (*philoxenia*) is love for the stranger. Hospitality literally means welcoming the stranger.

Hospitality is simply the gracious and merciful act of sharing one's home and goods with someone who is not entitled to it. Hospitality is exercised in a variety of ways. Here are some examples of how hospitality may be extended:

- Grill hamburgers in the front yard and invite neighbors to bring lawn chairs to join.
- Allow a displaced family to share your home until they can find a permanent place.
- Host a get together for the families from your child's sports team.
- Have a coworker and his family over for dinner.

These are just a few examples. The sky is the limit when it comes to ways that Christians can practice hospitality.

It is also important to remember that implicit in Christian, biblical acts of hospitality is the underlying intent to bless the visitors by acting for them in accordance with Scripture. Christians desire for their neighbors to hear the gospel and respond with faith and repentance. This means that they will act, speak, and plan in ways that help accomplish that goal. This can only happen when the gospel is shared. So, Christians should find ways to express the gospel through their hospitality.

? Application: How did hospitality play a part in your coming to Christ? Have you ever shown hospitality to an unbeliever in order that you might share the gospel with them?

2. To Whom Is Hospitality Directed? (Luke 24:30-32)

When the disciples, along with Jesus, arrived to the house, the text says, “It was as he reclined at the table with them that he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them” (v. 32).

? To whom should Christians show hospitality today? Why?

Christians should show hospitality to all their neighbors. This includes all those who are in their different spheres of influence and social circles. In other words, Christians show hospitality to both Christians and non-Christians. Their primary motivation for this is to obey and glorify God, but they also realize that hospitality benefits both of those groups in different ways.

? How does hospitality benefit believers? How does hospitality benefit non-believers?

Christians are meant to pray for one another, serve one another, build one another up, love one another, and show hospitality to one another. When God shows His mercy and grace to a rebel, sin-dead soul, then that person becomes a child of God. He or she is adopted into the family of God. That family includes not only a faithful heavenly Father, but brothers and sisters who are all on their way to the Celestial City as well.

One of God's chosen means to sanctify and preserve His people is through His people. This means that God has ordained for Christians to help other Christians along in their journey toward heaven. It means if you are a member of a church, then other Christians who are members of your local assembly are responsible to relate to you in biblical ways for your good and God's glory, and you are likewise responsible to them. Showing hospitality is one of the biblical ways that Christians are to relate to one another.

Christians should show hospitality to all sorts of people, but they should especially do this good unto the household of faith. They are motivated first and foremost by the command of God's Word. The Scriptures are clear about a Christian's responsibility toward their fellow church members. Secondly, Christians are motivated to fulfill this great purpose by their love for their brother and sisters, which is kept warm by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Christians can also practice hospitality for the purpose of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with the lost. As non-believers experience the kindness of Christians through warm conversation, the sharing of meals, and time together, they experience a real-life apologetic for the gospel of Christ. They see with their own eyes how Christ changes people.

Furthermore, when Christians practice hospitality, they are afforded opportunities to tell their guests about the hope they have in Christ. This is critical because no one can come to Christ through the testimony of good works. The good work of hospitality sets the stage for a proclamation of the gospel. No one, however, has ever been saved through hospitality alone. The Lord uses the sacrificial hospitality of believers to draw unbelievers to Himself.



Application: Is there a believer to whom you can show hospitality to encourage them? What about an unbeliever? What is an immediate step you can take in this direction?

3. How Is Hospitality Carried Out (Luke 24:33-35)

After the disciples took the meal with Christ, their eyes were opened and He disappeared from their sight. The text says they hurried back to Jerusalem to tell the others what they had seen. It is clear from the context that the disciples wanted to show hospitality. They showed hospitality willingly and with joy.

 Read 1 Peter 4:9. What qualification did Peter make in regards to showing hospitality?

Hospitality requires our time, attention, and resources. It will mean extending friendship to someone we may not know well, and welcoming new people into our existing circle of friends. However, as recipients of Christ's love, we ourselves were welcomed into God's family through Christ's death. A sacrifice was made for us that allowed us to be called sons and daughters. As Christ followers, we offer hospitality that stems from the love God has given to us. In this, we remember and show our true identity in Him.

Peter exhorted his readers to offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. He specifically prohibited grumbling because grumbling undoes what hospitality accomplishes. Complaint spoils hospitality. We were outsiders brought inside, by God's grace. David Mathis says, "Christians love the stranger because we have been loved by the Father when we ourselves were strangers."¹ Hospitality finds its fullest expression when we engage in it as an outflow of remembering who we were (Eph. 2:12). Welcomed strangers ought to be the first to welcome other strangers. The receiving of grace inspires the giving of grace, and this is the heart of hospitality.

Grumbling short-circuits this beautiful expression of the gospel of Jesus Christ. If a Christian offers their home, but does it with a furrowed brow and gritting teeth, then their action ceases to be Christian. Any person in the world can have someone over and simply "grin and bear it," but Christians open their homes to their brothers and sisters with love in their hearts toward them because of the great love that they have been shown in Christ Jesus.

? How does a Christian's proper view of their brothers and sisters kill grumbling?

? When a Christian grasps the fact that in saving him or her God made them a member of His household and gave them the gift of brothers and sisters in Christ, then they will be able to serve others with humility and gratitude.

? Application: Is it difficult for you to show hospitality without grumbling? Are you willing to open your home and share your things with outsiders for the sake of the gospel?

Conclusion

Christians have received new life and the gifts of the Spirit in order that God's grace and goodness will be revealed in their lives, resulting in God's glory. Explain the biblical conception of hospitality, including the importance of showing hospitality to fellow Christians.

Christians live in light of the return of Christ. Those who follow Christ, with Jesus' return in view, will be characterized by acts of service for the good of their neighbor, which results in God being glorified. One of those acts of service is being hospitable.

❓ Who do you need to invite into your home and more importantly, your rhythms of life, so they can both hear and experience the gospel through you?

❓ Do you live with the coming of Jesus in mind or are you comfortable and content with your life here? Have you forgotten that you aren't home yet? What possessions or achievements in your life do you look to for joy, hope, and satisfaction? Have these things taken God's place in your heart?

❓ Is your life characterized by loving and serving others or a lack thereof? Is it burdensome to you to give of your time, money, or energy to help build up the body of Christ or is it a joy? Why?

CHRIST CONNECTION: The mercy and kindness of Christ toward sinful human beings is the ultimate example of hospitality. When Christians practice hospitality in faith with joy, it is a picture of the gospel.

MISSIONAL APPLICATION: When unbelievers experience the hospitality of Christianity, it both is a demonstration of the kindness of God in Christ and provides a context in which the gospel message can be proclaimed with credibility.



FOR NEXT WEEK

God's Faithful Presence in the Midst of Grief

Main Passages

- Ruth 1:1-22

Session Outline

1. Naomi Emptied (Ruth 1:1-5)
2. Ruth Clung to Her (Ruth 1:6-18)
3. The Almighty Dealt Bitterly (Ruth 1:19-22)

Memorize

Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight.³² They said to each other, “Weren’t our hearts burning within us while he was talking with us on the road and explaining the Scriptures to us?”

- Luke 24:31-32, CSB

Daily Readings

- Monday - Luke 24:28-32
- Tuesday - Luke 24:33-35
- Wednesday - Hebrews 13:2
- Thursday - Matthew 25:34-40
- Friday - Luke 25:41-46
- Saturday - Luke 28:30-31

References

¹Mathis, David. “Hospitality and the Great Commission.” *Desiring God*. February 12, 2021. Accessed February 12, 2021. <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/hospitality-and-the-great-commission>.