



The First Thing You Share

Summary and Goal

Biblical hospitality is key to “new” evangelism. The act of hospitality that the Emmaus Road travelers extended to Jesus set the stage for their “aha” moment. As Rosaria Butterfield has written, the gospel comes with a house key. 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?

Main Passages

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

Session Outline

1. What Is Hospitality? (Luke 24:28-29)
2. To Whom Is Hospitality Directed? (Luke 24:30-32)
3. How Is Hospitality Carried Out? (Luke 24:33-35)

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.

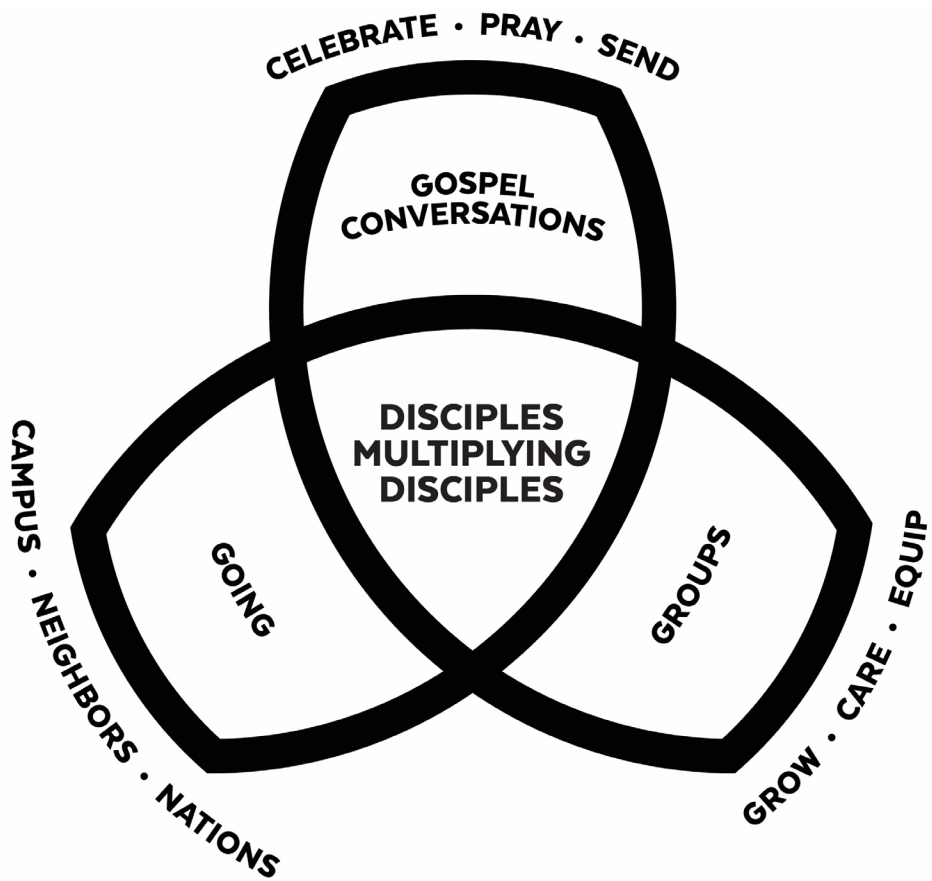
Christ Connection

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.

Disciples Multiplying Disciples



DxD This Week

For the Leader

Spiritual Challenge Question: 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? Who are 2 or 3 couples you can join with to impact your neighborhood with biblical hospitality? Have them over for a meal and discuss ideas for events for your neighborhood that will introduce people and possibly start a Bible study group one day. Contact your Groups minister for more info.

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Session Plan

The First Thing You Share

Introduction

- ❓ 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?

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

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

- ❓ 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?



Expanded Session Content

The First Thing You Share

Introduction

- ❓ 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

Revealed in the Meal


During the evening meal, Jesus blessed and broke the bread. At that point, the two disciples were allowed to recognize Jesus, but he immediately disappeared from sight. Their first thought was to recall the things he had taught them as they walked along the road to Emmaus.

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?

Prayer of Response

Pray for the growth and maturity of our congregation. Ask the Lord to help the members of our church to love one another with a love that is based in the love of God in Christ Jesus. Ask the Lord to help our congregation to be hospitable one to another. Pray for help to take the initiative to show hospitality this week to fellow believers in the congregation.

Additional Resources

- *The Gospel Comes with a House Key* by Rosaria Butterfield
- *A Meal with Jesus* by Tim Chester
- *Organic Outreach for Families* by Kevin Harney

For Next Week

Session Title

- 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

³¹ 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

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

Historical Context of Luke

Purpose

The Gospel of Luke is a carefully researched (1:3), selective presentation of the person and life of Jesus Christ, designed to strengthen the faith of believers (1:3–4) and to challenge the misconceptions of unbelievers, especially those from a Greek background. Its portrait of Jesus is well balanced, skillfully emphasizing his divinity and perfect humanity.

Author

The author of the Third Gospel is not named. Considerable evidence points to Luke as its author. Much of that proof is found in the book of Acts, which identifies itself as a sequel to Luke (Ac 1:1–3). A major line of evidence has to do with the so-called “we” sections of the book (Ac 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–37; 28:1–16). Most of Acts is narrated in third-person plural (“they,” “them”), but some later sections having to do with the ministry of the apostle Paul unexpectedly shift to first-person plural (“we,” “us”). This indicates that the author had joined the apostle Paul for the events recorded in those passages. Since there are no “we” passages in the Gospel of Luke, that fits with the author stating that he used eyewitness testimony to the life of Jesus (1:2), indicating he was not such an eyewitness himself.

Since Luke wrote both the Third Gospel and the book of Acts (Ac 1:1–3), it is relevant to consider the dating of both books together. The events at the end of Acts occurred around AD 62–63. That is the earliest point at which Acts could have been written. If Acts was written in the early AD 60s from Rome, where Paul was imprisoned for two years (Ac 28:30), the Third Gospel could date from an earlier stage of that period of imprisonment. The other reasonable possibility is during Paul’s earlier two-year imprisonment in Caesarea (Ac 24:27). From that location, Luke would have been able to travel and interview the eyewitnesses to Jesus’s life and ministry who were still alive.

Setting

Traditionally, the Gospel of Luke is believed to have been written after both Matthew and Mark. Those who date Matthew and Mark in the AD 60s or 70s have tended to push the dating of Luke back to the AD 70s or 80s.

Special Features

The Gospel of Luke is the longest book in the New Testament. Focusing on the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, this Gospel is part one of a two-part history, the book of Acts being part two. Both were dedicated to “most honorable Theophilus” (Lk 1:3; Ac 1:1).

Extended Commentary

Luke 24:28-35

24:28. Jesus started to leave the two disciples just as the conversation got interesting. He would let them go on home, and he would continue his journey.

24:29. The disciples would have none of that. They had a good excuse. Evening was falling. He could not go farther. He needed a place to stay. They had one. "Come on in. Let us continue the discussion. We want to hear more of what you say." Still, they did not recognize him or realize that his interpretation of Scripture pointed to no one but himself.

24:30. A major component of any meal was bread. Jesus acted as host, broke the loaf of bread, and distributed it to his disciples, just as he had often done, and especially just as he had done during the Last Supper. He said a prayer of thanks over the bread. The way he did it caught their attention. Now they focused on him.

24:31. Recognition came. It was Jesus. Immediately, he was gone, disappeared into thin air. This he could do in the resurrection body. He was now different from the way he had been before the crucifixion and resurrection.

24:32. They began immediately to share their thoughts and feelings with each other. Their grief had blinded them. Their attention to their own loss and sorrow prevented them from focusing on God and finding what God was doing for them at that very moment. And all this was a part of what God was doing, so they could hear Jesus out before they realized what was happening. A disciple could see the risen Lord without knowing he was seeing the risen Lord. Resurrection faith depended on more than just physical presence and physical sight. It depended on spiritual presence and spiritual sight. That came in the breaking of bread, a symbolic act that took them back to the night of the Lord's Supper. They knew their hearts burned. They knew something special was happening as they heard Jesus explain Scripture. But they did not know him until they broke bread together.

24:33. The two disciples had to share their experience. No one in Emmaus would understand. They had to go back to the other disciples. They found them in their gathering place in Jerusalem. The eleven apostles were there. This means the two going to Emmaus did not include an apostle.

24:34. The two from Emmaus were not the first. Their story was not unique. The several women could not convince them that Jesus was alive. Simon could. What was the difference? Jesus had appeared personally to Simon and revealed himself to him. Luke does not tell the story of revelation to Simon Peter. He simply reports that Simon's story had convinced the others of the reality of the resurrection. People could believe without seeing the risen Christ. Personal appearance was not necessary to make people believe. Strong personal testimony about being with the risen Jesus was the necessary ingredient to make the resurrection story believable.

24:35. The Emmaus Road walkers added their testimony. They emphasized that recognition came only in breaking of bread. Physical presence was not enough. They needed the spiritual presence of the supper with the Lord. In so doing they left the ongoing church a reminder. Jesus is present with his people as they break the bread of his supper and remember his body and his blood.²

References

1. Mathis, 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>.
2. Butler, Trent C., and Max Anders. *Luke*. Holman New Testament Commentary. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000.

Author Bio

Trent Butler (Luke)

Trent C. Butler is a freelance author and editor. He served ten years on the faculty of the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and for twenty-two years as editor and editorial director for Holman Bible Publishers and LifeWay. He wrote the Word Biblical Commentary volume on Joshua, the Layman's Bible Book Commentary on Isaiah, the Holman Old Testament Commentaries on Isaiah and Hosea through Micah, and the Holman New Testament Commentary on Luke. He served on the editorial Board of the Holman Christian Standard Bible, and edited the Holman Bible Dictionary. Dr. Butler has a Ph.D. in biblical studies and linguistics from Vanderbilt University, has done further study at Heidelberg and Zurich, and has participated in the excavation of Beersheba.

Max Anders (Luke)

Dr. Max Anders is the author of over 25 books, including the bestselling *30 Days to Understanding the Bible*, and is the creator and general editor of the 32-volume Holman Bible Commentary series. He has taught on the college and seminary level and is a veteran pastor. Max provides resources and discipleship strategies at www.maxanders.com to help people grow spiritually.

David Mathis (Hospitality and the Great Commission)

David is executive editor of desiringGod.org, pastor at Cities Church, and adjunct professor for Bethlehem College & Seminary in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He is author, editor, or contributor for more than ten books, and his regular articles are available online at desiringGod.org/mathis. He is married to Megan and father of three children.

Rosaria Butterfield (The Gospel Comes with a House Key)

Rosaria Butterfield (PhD, Ohio State University) is an author, speaker, pastor's wife, homeschool mom, and former professor of English and women's studies at Syracuse University. She is the author of *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert* and *Openness Unhindered*.

A Meal with Jesus (Tim Chester)

Tim Chester (PhD, University of Wales) is a faculty member of Crosslands and a pastor with Grace Church, Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire. He is an author or coauthor of over forty books, including *A Meal with Jesus*; *Reforming Joy*; and, with Michael Reeves, *Why the Reformation Still Matters*.

Organic Outreach for Families (Kevin Harney)

Kevin and Sherry Harney serve at Shoreline Community Church in Monterey, California. They have authored *Finding a Church You Can Love* and *Loving the Church You've Found* and more than sixty small group Bible Studies. Learn more at: kevingharney.com and sherryharney.com