

Sermon Title: Loving the Stranger – From Heart to Action

Sermon Series: Open House

Scripture: Genesis 1:1-31, 3:8-21

Speaker: Noah Tindale



Hospitality — “The generous and gracious treatment of guests (neighbors and strangers).” – Lexham Bible Dictionary

Biblical hospitality is the act of graciously **providing physical means** in order to bring about **spiritual and relational health** for the life of **somebody in need**.

How God’s Story Fits Into That Definition:

God graciously provided **physical means** (Jesus), in order to bring about **spiritual and relational health** (renewed hearts, minds, and salvation from death) **for us who were in need** (strangers and aliens).

Do you see that we are the strangers in this story who now have a home?

If we are redeemed strangers who were shown great hospitality by God, **how do we now prepare ourselves to show that same act to others, even when it’s uncomfortable for us?**

The Call of Jesus in Being Hospitable

Jesus' Call

1. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." —Mark 12:30
2. "Love your neighbor as yourself." — Mark 12:31

Princetown Church's Mission

1. Love Jesus - with our our heart, soul, mind, and strength
2. Love One Another - our neighbors, the stranger
3. Live with Purpose - this is the hospitality piece, the practical piece, the overflow piece

Preparing to Show Hospitality

In order to prepare to show hospitality to others, even when it's uncomfortable for us, **we must first understand who our true enemy is.**

Our true enemy is Satan

Point #1: Our True Enemy

The Bible says that Satan...

- He is the deceiver (Genesis 3)
- He is "a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44)
- He "prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8)

Ephesians 6:12 ESV

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

When we recognize and know that Satan & his spiritual forces are our true enemy, yet also that Jesus has defeated him - **we have nothing left to fear.**

In order to show hospitality to others, even when it's uncomfortable for us, **we must embrace and long after Jesus in being made whole ourselves.**

Point #2: Embracing Jesus More

Sitting at Jesus' Feet — Mary & Martha

Luke 10:38-42

38 Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.” 41 But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, 42 but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.”

In order to show hospitality to others, even when it's uncomfortable for us, **we must step out in faith and act to serve the stranger.**

This is the overflow hospitality portion.

Point #3: The Call to Action

Multiple places in Scripture, when characters are brought into the grace, mercy, hope and power of God, their embrace is followed by a call to action:

The twelve disciples - after they had experienced and seen all of what the Messiah had done, right before Jesus ascends to heaven — the call: “Go into the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.”

The call to Paul - who was knocked off of his horse on the road to Demascus on the way to persecute Christians, experiences Jesus who says: “...rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.”

The call to Peter - from Jesus to come to him on the water and walk out in faith. Peter often struggled with his faith, but when he obeyed and took the step towards him, until he doubted, he went.

James 2:14-17 ESV

“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? **So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.**”

So here’s our action in hospitality —

To graciously provide physical means in order to bring about spiritual and relational health for the life of somebody in need.

- 1. Understand our true enemy is Satan**
- 2. Embrace Jesus more and more**
- 3. Take action in our faith**

Discussion Questions – January 28, 2024

Getting to Know You Questions:

1. Reflect - how was life in the last week?
2. When you think of hospitality, what do you think of? Does God come to mind when you think of it? Why or why not?

Into the Bible Questions:

Read James 2:14-17

14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

3. What is something from this passage or sermon that surprised you, helped you, confused you, or bothered you?
4. What does this passage tell us about God? People? Living to please God?
5. What does it mean to have faith, but not works?
6. What is one way that you can grow in showing your faith through being practical/hospitable to someone around you?
7. What are some fears or feelings of inadequacy that you deal with in learning to open up your life to somebody who is not like you?
8. How do we work through those feelings?

Read the Story of Martha & Mary - Luke 10:38-42

38 Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." 41 But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, 42 but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

9. Why do you think Jesus commended Mary in the way that he did?

10. What is one way that you can learn to embrace Jesus more / sit at his feet more in your daily life?

11. What do you find challenging about spending time listening to Jesus?

12. What needs to change in your life so you can live this out?

13. Jot down any insights, questions, or key observations.

For Extra Study, Read Ephesians 6:12

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

14. From this passage, what/who are we fighting against? Who is our enemy?

15. Why is it important to understand that Satan is our true enemy?

16. Why is it important to understand that Jesus has defeated sin & that he will one day destroy Satan forever?

17. What are some ways that you can grow in recognizing that our enemy is not one another, but Satan?

Application Questions

This week, how can you remind yourself that Jesus is on the throne?

This week, how can you remember to spend extra time embracing Jesus in your own life?

Who is one person or one group of people whom God has placed on your heart to be hospitable to?