



Series: Free To ...

Sermon Title: Free to Welcome

Date: 8/20/2023

Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:2

Several Bible texts include the words, “The Son of Man came...”
The Gospels complete the sentence in 3 ways. The first 2 explain why He came. **Luke 19:10, Matthew 20:28**

The 3rd occurrence describes how He came. **Matthew 11:19**
Jesus framed His mission with invitation, welcome, and feasting.

Big Idea: **Be hospitable, and change the world.**
3 questions that fit the framework of WHAT? WHY? And HOW?

Question #1: **What is hospitality?**

Paul instructs believers what “love in action” looks like. **Romans 12:13**
We might think Paul equates the 1st clause with the 2nd. However, this entire paragraph lists different but complementary actions and attitudes. Sharing with the Lord’s people describes how we relate to believers’ needs. The pursuit of hospitality means “love of the stranger.” Another time we see the same word is. **Hebrews 13:2**

Biblical hospitality speaks of people we don’t know, people who are unlike us. The Hebrews passage, in particular, points back to the experience of Abraham in Genesis 18. “love of the stranger” God would later command through Moses. **Leviticus 19:33–34**

Let’s apply this to two different settings; first, in our worship gatherings. Watch for the person who may be new, different, or alone. Introduce yourself and ask questions. Next, take the even more intentional step of inviting that person to your small group.

Question #2: **Why be hospitable?**

Part of the answer: We’re hospitable to others because Jesus is hospitable to us, just like the lost son in Luke 15, who had squandered his father’s wealth. Another reason we are to be hospitable is that it creates an environment where people want to be led.

Question #3: How can we be more hospitable?

1. Atmosphere matters (where you meet)

Matthew 26 records how Jesus attended a dinner in the home of a man named Simon. In comes a woman with a jar of expensive perfume, with which she anoints Jesus. The disciples insist that her resources could have been more productively utilized. But Jesus rebukes them. **Matthew 26:10**

When we strive to beautify our atmosphere, we create an environment that opens people's hearts to more than simple logic. Beauty causes us to marvel, to wonder. It can even point us to God.

2. **Names Matter.** Ask, take notes, and remember a person's name. Be intentional about training yourself. Write it on a Post-it. And as soon as possible, use that person's name as you speak with them.

3. **Eyes matter.** Give the person you're speaking with your full attention. Focus on their faces and their eyes.

4. **Outsiders matter.** I'm struck by the response of Jesus to a religious leader (Luke 7) who was offended by the uninvited entry of a woman to a dinner with Jesus.

5. Food matters.

One of the wonderful features of 6 PM service is the serving of a meal after the benediction.

Realize that no matter who you are, Jesus sees you. And he invites you into His presence. He wants to know you. A Bible verse that grabs me is...

Revelation 3:20 (NLT) — “Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.

The most remarkable person in all history led people in the context of hospitality. And He invites you to share a universally understood expression of social closeness with him. A meal.

Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **1 Timothy 3:2 lists some elder qualifications. One of the qualities on that list is the need to be hospitable. Why is hospitality important to God?**
- **Describe ways that Jesus was hospitable.**
- **Do you think people today are more hospitable or less hospitable than previous generations? Why?**
- **What external factors influence a Christian's desire/ ability to be hospitable?**
- **Is it easy or an effort for you to be hospitable? Explain**