



PERSPECTIVES

on

SHARING HOPE

OPEN DOOR

We are called to welcome others because -

What the Bible says...

“Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.”

Romans 15:7 (KJV)

“Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory.”

Romans 15:7 (NLT)

“So reach out and welcome one another to God’s glory. Jesus did it; now you do it!”

Romans 15:7 (The Message)

1. God is a welcoming God

We see it in in the OT

“Is anyone thirsty? Come and drink— even if you have no money! Come, take your choice of wine or milk— it’s all free!” (Isa 55:1-5)

We see it in the NT

“I was a stranger and you invited me into your home” (Matt 25:35)

2. We are to imitate God

The Way of the World

“If you love only those who love you, why should you get credit for that? Even sinners love those who love them!” (Luke 6:32)

The Challenge of Love

“If someone says, “I love God,” but hates a Christian brother or sister, that person is a liar...” (1 John 4:20)

3. Becoming a welcoming people accomplishes our mission

Show Hospitality

“Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay.”

(1 Peter 4:8-9 (NLTSE))

Make an Impact

Hospitality is an act of love that helps people see the Gospel.

MESSAGE BASED SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS:

OPEN DOOR

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“So reach out and welcome one another to God’s glory. Jesus did it; now you do it!
(Romans 15:7 (The Message))

1. When you think about God as a ‘welcoming’ God, what image comes to mind for you?
2. What is the most powerful story of Jesus that shows God as welcoming? (cf., Lk 15:11ff; Matt 11:28, etc.)
3. When you see God inviting and welcoming Israel in Isa 55:1, how does this image help you understand the nature of God?
4. Matt. 25 indicates that God sees our hospitality and generosity to others as hospitality and generosity Him. How does this motivate us to show hospitality ourselves and to teach this value to others (our children, close friends, etc.)?
5. The idea of *Imitatio Dei* – the imitation of God – is as old as the Bible. When you read Ephesians 5:1, how does this challenge you as you live your Christian life?
6. How does Luke 6:32 speak to you about showing hospitality?
 - a. How does “imitating God” affect our hospitality?
 - b. What are some things we can do to better imitate God in this way?
7. Loving God includes loving what God loves. How does 1 John 4:20 help us see the implications of this principle?
8. Read 1 Peter 4:8-9.
 - a. In what way does showing love cover sins?
 - b. How is hospitality connected to showing love?
 - c. What do you think the difference is between ‘love’ and “deep love”?
9. The Journey Church wants to be a welcoming place and seeks to do things in a welcoming way. In the end, it is ultimately the followers of Jesus in any church who either help people feel welcomed or unwelcomed.
 - a. As a group, think of five things that you can do together and individually this coming weekend to imitate God and offer true Christian acceptance and welcome to others.