



BROUGHT TO YOU BY **CUF**⁺

Session 3: Hospitality

Building a culture of
giving and receiving

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Key takeaways:

- Practicing hospitality invites people into a common life.
- Hospitality is about building two-way relationships.
- Jesus teaches us to give and receive hospitality in a way that heals divides rather than reinforces them.



Feedback from previous session [5 minutes]

If you did the optional next step from the previous session, take a few minutes to share anything you learned or experienced.



Opening question [5 minutes]

Think about the last time you received hospitality from someone. What made you feel welcome or unwelcome?



Read aloud [2 minutes]

Jesus spent a lot of time receiving hospitality in other people's homes. In this story, he was invited to a meal at the house of an important religious leader. In those days, certain seats were considered more important than others at dinner parties (similar to how we might have a 'high table' or a seating plan at a wedding reception). During the meal, Jesus tells his hosts and fellow guests a 'parable', which is a type of story or image that Jesus often used in his teachings.

When [Jesus] noticed how the guests picked the places of honour at the table, he told them this parable: 'When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honour, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, "Give this person your seat." Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, "Friend, move up to a better place." Then you will be honoured in the presence of all the other guests. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.'

Then Jesus said to his host, 'When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbours; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.'

(Luke 14:7–14)

This story is a great example of Jesus' ability to see into people's hearts. It's also very awkward! As a guest, would you rather sit and listen to Jesus calling everyone out, or leave and embarrass the host?

Jesus calls out both guests and hosts for approaching hospitality with selfish motives. Guests choosing the most important seat to try to get honour. Hosts inviting the right guests who could pay them back another time. It was all about what was in it for them.

The way we extend or receive hospitality can say a lot about what is going on in our hearts. Are we sharing life with people, or subtly trying to show them our lives are better than theirs? Are we genuinely loving people, or using them to boost our self-esteem?



Discuss
[15 minutes]

How do you feel challenged by Jesus' words at this dinner party? Why does Jesus say that we shouldn't invite people who can pay us back?

As individuals and as a church, we need to be aware of other unhelpful ways we can approach hospitality.

What is your church's motive for extending hospitality?

Sometimes our hospitality can be:

- **Paternalistic** (e.g. only ever serving others as if they are the only ones who need help)
- **Inconsistent** (e.g. offering a warm welcome at the foodbank but a cold welcome at the church service)
- **Incomplete** (e.g. someone has a good experience of hospitality but doesn't know you are Christians)



Watch film
[5 minutes]



Group discussion
[35 minutes]

Choose a few of the questions below for discussion. Remember there are various contexts where hospitality can be practiced, including online in zoom meetings, facebook groups and streamed worship.

- How have you experienced hospitality changing you (as a recipient or giver)? How has it made you more like Jesus?
- Where and how does your church offer hospitality to others? (e.g. Sunday services, foodbank, small groups, Holy Communion, community meals, parenting groups) Who is involved in each of these? Who is welcome?
- What does your church do well? What does it do not so well?
- Are there any groups within your community which are particularly good at showing hospitality? What can you learn from them?
- How can you share something of your faith in the ways you practice hospitality e.g. praying before a shared community meal?





Pray
[10 minutes]

Thank God for his hospitality extended to us in Jesus Christ—and ask that he might make your community one that extends and receives hospitality in a genuine and fruitful way.



Feedback

We would love to hear your feedback on the Growing Good Toolkit and can make it better. After you have used the material, please share your thoughts with us in this short survey.

[Provide feedback](#)



After the session [Optional]

Invite someone round for a cup of tea at your home or local cafe. Pray that God would bless your time together.

Places of Welcome is a growing network of local community groups providing their neighbourhoods with places where all people feel safe to connect, belong and contribute.

Explore whether your church could start a [Place of Welcome](#).