



SET THE TABLE

THE WAY of hospitality in a world of hostility

PRACTICING HOSPITALITY

Best Practices or Tips on doing this well

1. Preparing for a Meal

- Pray First: Ask God to give you eyes for who to invite and to prepare hearts for connection.
- Keep It Simple: Hospitality is about presence, not perfection. Serve what you have, even if it's just soup and bread.
- Set the Atmosphere: Light a candle, play soft music, and create a space that feels restful and welcoming.
- Prepare Conversation Starters: Have a few open-ended questions ready (e.g., "What's something you're grateful for this week?" or "What's a favorite meal from your childhood?").

2. Hosting Tips

- Serve, Don't Entertain: Focus on making guests feel seen and valued, not on impressing them.
- Practice Generous Authority: Guide conversation, invite quieter guests to share, and gently redirect as needed.
- Honor Your Guests: Before they leave, share something specific you appreciate about them or pray a blessing over them.
- Embrace Imperfection: Don't apologize for mess or chaos—authenticity is more welcoming than perfection.

3. Ideas for Different Life Stages

- Families with Young Kids: Invite others into your normal rhythms (playdates, pizza nights, bedtime stories).
- Singles or Couples: Host "bring and share" meals, game nights, or coffee after church.
- Empty Nesters: Offer wisdom and stability by inviting younger families or singles into your home.

4. Creating Missional Moments

- Share Your Story: Be ready to share how God has welcomed you and why hospitality matters to your family.
- Ask Good Questions: Move beyond small talk to deeper conversation about faith, hope, and life.
- Follow Up: Send a note or text after the meal thanking your guests and inviting them to connect again.

5. Sample Meal Templates

- Potluck: Invite everyone to bring a dish—eases the burden and creates a sense of shared ownership.
- Soup & Bread: Simple, affordable, and comforting—easy to multiply for a crowd.
- Brunch: Great for weekends and less formal than dinner.
- Themed Nights: Taco night, pasta night, or breakfast-for-dinner—fun and approachable for guests.

6. Conversation Starters

- What's a highlight from your week?
- If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?
- What's a favorite memory from childhood?
- How did you experience kindness recently?
- Where have you seen God at work in your life?

7. How can you use your passions to serve the church?

- Food Team: Love to cook or organize? Help plan or prepare meals for church gatherings or Sunday Mornings
- Connections Team: Gifted at making people feel at home? Welcome newcomers and help them connect.
- Social Media Team: Enjoy telling stories? Like photography, videography or engaging people on digital platforms? Come join our social media team.
- Missional Communities: Lead or join a group focused on living out hospitality and mission together.

8. Additional Resources

- Formed by Hospitality (Passion Creek Church): Download the full PDF for more detailed guides, checklists, and encouragement for every season of life.

https://formedbyjesus.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/FormedByHospitality_PCC.pdf

“Hospitality is not about changing people, but offering them space where change can take place.” — Henri Nouwen

Week 1: God's Welcome — The Gospel

Foundation of Hospitality

Biblical Definition of Hospitality:

Hospitality in the Bible is “the generous and friendly reception and treatment of guests, strangers, and travelers.” In the New Testament, the Greek word literally means “love of strangers.” Hospitality is a virtue commanded and commended throughout Scripture, reflecting God’s own welcome to us.

Scripture: John 6:1-14, 33-37; Leviticus 19:33-34; Hebrews 13:2

Opening Thought:

“Hospitality is making space for others to belong before they believe.”

— Jeff Vanderstelt

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.” (Hebrews 13:2)

Devotional Reflection:

God’s welcome is the foundation of all hospitality. Abraham’s table was open to strangers; Israel was commanded to love the foreigner, for they too were once outsiders. The gospel is God inviting us in when we were far off. Our tables are meant to echo His.

Discussion Questions:

- What do you notice about Jesus’s attitude and actions toward his guests in John 6?
- How does Leviticus 19:33-34 challenge your comfort zone about who you invite?

- Why do you think the Bible connects hospitality with spiritual blessing and even angelic encounters?
- In what ways has God welcomed you personally? How can you mirror that welcome to others?
- Who could you invite over for a meal this week? What could God do through a simple invitation?
- What team at church (Connections, Food, Social, Missional Communities) aligns with your gifts and passions?
- Who do you want to move into deeper community with this season?

Family Practice:

Share stories of when you felt welcomed or left out. Choose to have an intentional meal as a family this week. Make a list of neighbors, classmates, or coworkers who might need a place to belong. Pray together for God to prepare your hearts and theirs.

Hospitality Resource:

- Start with prayer: Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind someone to invite.
- Extend an invite: It doesn't have to be fancy—just ask! If home isn't possible, meet at a park or café.
- Prepare your space: Tidy up, set a welcoming tone (music, lighting), and have a few conversation starters ready.
- Serve, don't entertain: Focus on making guests feel seen and valued, not on impressing them.

Week 2: Everyday Hospitality — From Sunday to Everyday

Biblical Definition of Hospitality:

Biblical hospitality is the intentional, generous, and loving reception of guests, strangers, and those in need, as an expression of Christian love and community, not just a social nicety.

Scripture: Acts 2:42-47; 1 Peter 4:7-10

Opening Thought:

“Hospitality is not about changing people, but offering them space where change can take place.” — Henri Nouwen

“Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.” (1 Peter 4:9)

Devotional Reflection:

The early church made hospitality a daily rhythm. God uses the ordinary—coffee, errands, shared meals—to draw people together and display His love.

Discussion Questions:

- What stands out to you about the daily life of the early church in Acts 2?
- Why do you think Peter warns against grumbling in hospitality?
- What are some simple ways your family can include others in your everyday routines?
- Who could you invite into your daily life this week?
- What team at church could help you grow in everyday hospitality?
- Who do you want to share more of your everyday life with?

Family Practice:

Pick a simple act of hospitality towards someone in the church: invite someone for coffee, out to a restaurant, or share a meal after school or work. Reflect together on how it felt to include someone.

Hospitality Resource:

- Hospitality in all seasons: If you have young children, invite others into your regular rhythms—embrace the chaos!
- If single or young: Reach out to someone in a different life stage for mutual encouragement.
- Keep it simple: The goal is connection, not perfection.

Week 3: Radical Welcome — The Guest List of the Kingdom

Biblical Definition of Hospitality:

True hospitality is the generous and loving reception of guests, strangers, and those in need, reflecting God's heart for the outsider and the vulnerable. It is a spiritual practice, not just a social duty.

Scripture: Luke 14:12-24

Opening Thought:

"The gospel creates a new kind of guest list—one that includes the poor, the lonely, the overlooked." — John Mark Comer

"When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed." (Luke 14:13-14)

Devotional Reflection:

Jesus calls us to invite those who can't repay—the marginalized, the forgotten, the lonely. Radical hospitality reflects God's heart for the outsider and turns our homes into outposts of His kingdom.

Discussion Questions:

- What does Jesus' parable in Luke 14 reveal about God's priorities for hospitality?
- Why do you think Jesus emphasizes inviting those who cannot repay?
- How does this passage challenge your family's current "guest list"?
- Who could you invite to your table this week who might never expect it?

- Which team at church could help you reach those on the margins?
- Who do you want to move into deeper community with, especially those different from you?

Family Practice:

Plan a meal or outing for someone who might not expect an invitation—maybe a neighbor who lives alone, a new family at school, or someone going through a hard time. Talk about what it was like to welcome them.

Hospitality Resource:

- Serve, don't entertain: Focus on serving your guests, not impressing them.

Honor your guests: End your time by speaking words of gratitude and encouragement over them.

Week 4: Leadership and Repentance — Modeling Missional Hospitality

Biblical Definition of Hospitality:

Hospitality, in the biblical sense, is the loving, generous, and intentional welcome of others—especially strangers and those in need—reflecting God’s character and Christ’s example.

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:3; Romans 12:13

Opening Thought:

“Leaders go first. If you want a culture of hospitality, it starts with you.”

— Jeff Vanderstelt

“Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”

Romans 12:13

Devotional Reflection:

Hospitality begins with those who lead. Sometimes, we need to admit we’ve been too busy or closed off. God gives grace when we repent and start again. Our example sets the tone for our families and church.

Discussion Questions:

- What does Romans 12:13 teach about the connection between generosity and hospitality?
- How does Peter’s call to “not lord it over” but “be examples” (1 Peter 5:3) relate to hospitality?
- Is there someone you’ve avoided inviting because it felt inconvenient or uncomfortable?
- Who could you invite this week as a step of repentance and renewal?
- What team could you serve on to help shape a culture of welcome?

- Who do you want to invite into deeper community, even if it stretches you?

Family Practice:

Talk honestly about any ways you've neglected hospitality. Pray together, then choose one person or family to invite over as a step toward renewed welcome.

Hospitality Resource:

- Prepare your space: Make it comfortable, lived-in, and restful—not perfect, but cared for.
- Treat guests as family: Arrange seating so everyone feels included and valued.

Week 5: The Table as Mission — Jesus Eats with Sinners

Biblical Definition of Hospitality:

Hospitality is the generous, loving reception and care of guests, strangers, and those in need, reflecting God's love and grace. It is not merely a social duty but a spiritual practice that demonstrates the character of Christ.

Scripture: Luke 5:27-32; Matthew 9:10

Opening Thought:

"The table is the place where strangers become friends." — Henri Nouwen

"Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" (Matthew 9:11)

Devotional Reflection:

Jesus' meals were never just about food—they were about grace. He invited outsiders, making the table a place of mission. Our meals can be moments where people experience God's love in tangible ways.

Discussion Questions:

- What does Jesus' choice to eat with tax collectors and sinners reveal about His mission?
- How do you think the people at the table felt being welcomed by Jesus?
- What makes sharing a meal such a powerful act of inclusion?
- Who is someone in your life who might be waiting for an invitation to belong?
- Who could you invite over for a meal this week, not as a project but as a friend?

- What team could you serve on to help create environments where outsiders feel at home?
- Who do you want to build a deeper friendship with this season?

Family Practice:

Pray for someone who feels far from God or left out. Make a plan to invite them for a meal. Before and after, pray for God's presence at your table.

Hospitality Resource:

- Prepare for conversation: Think of open-ended questions and topics that help guests feel comfortable.
- Practice “generous authority”: Guide the conversation, ask questions, and listen well.
- End with honor: Before guests leave, share something specific you appreciate about them.

Week 6: The Future Feast — Hospitality and the Mission of God

Biblical Definition of Hospitality:

Hospitality is the loving, generous welcome and care for others—especially strangers and those in need—as a tangible expression of God’s love and a witness to the coming kingdom.

Scripture: Revelation 19:6-9; Matthew 26:26-29

Opening Thought:

“Every meal now is a rehearsal for the great feast to come.” — Jeff Vanderstelt

“Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!”
(Revelation 19:9)

Devotional Reflection:

When we set our tables, we’re telling a story: God’s welcome is for everyone. Our meals become moments of hope, anticipation, and joy. Who could you invite into God’s story this week?

Discussion Questions:

- How does the image of the “wedding supper of the Lamb” shape your understanding of hospitality?
- In what ways does your family’s hospitality point to the hope of God’s coming kingdom?
- Who could you invite to join your table as a way of sharing God’s story?
- What team could you serve on to help others experience the joy of God’s welcome?
- Who do you want to continue building community with after this series?

Family Practice:

Ask God to give you the opportunity to share a meal with someone you didn't know before embarking on this challenge. Look for the opportunity and take advantage when the Holy Spirit prompts you. To prepare for this, pray and, ask God to keep using your family to set the table for His glory and to draw others into His kingdom.

Hospitality Resource:

- Feasting as a foretaste: Remember, every meal points forward to God's ultimate welcome.
 - Celebrate stories: Share and celebrate stories of hospitality at your final meal together.
-

"Who will you set your table for this week? As God has welcomed you, go and welcome others. Let's set our tables to share Jesus, receive from Him, and live out His mission together."



Meal # 1

Intentional Family Dinner

Meal # 2

Close Family Friends

Meal # 3

An Acquaintance

Meal # 4

A Neighbor/Coworker

Meal # 5

Someone far from Jesus

Meal # 6

A Stranger

Share with us how it went. Record a 30 second video and tag us on social media or email it to us at info@tgps.church