Welcome Home — Session 1— EXTRA! Ideas for Adults
Date: September 2, 2018

Reality Check
The Point: Our lives should serve as a welcome mat into the church.

Get Into the Study

Use this story to introduce Question #1.

The “Brady Bunch” house, which was used for filming exterior shots of the classic television show, recently went on the market in Los Angeles. The house last sold in 1973, before the show ended in 1974, for $61,000, and was described in the recent listing as the second most photographed home in the country. The house was listed for $1,885,000. After a bidding war that included a former member of NSYNC (Lance Bass), the home sold for $3,500,000 to HGTV.

Invite the group to discuss other iconic homes from television shows that stand out to them.

Ask Question #1: What makes a house feel like a home?

When people come to church, we want them to feel welcome, at home. In this session, we will discuss how our lives should serve as a welcome mat into the church.

Study the Bible

Share the following story with your group as you conclude this session and discuss Question #5.

A little over a year ago, Ken Parker dressed in a black shirt with two lightning bolts sewn on the collars. He was identifying himself with the American neo-Nazi group the National Socialist Movement and participating in the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. This wasn’t the only uniform he owned. Parker also had a green robe from his time as a grand dragon of the Ku Klux Klan, which he had joined in 2012.

But less than a year later, on July 21st, 2018, the meaning behind his clothes was entirely different. Parker wore a snow-white robe as he was baptized in the Atlantic Ocean by William McKinnon III, a pastor at All Saints Holiness Church.

Parker’s change of heart had begun in 2017, the day of the rally in Charlottesville. After the rally was declared unlawful, Parker rejoined his group in a parking garage. Deeyah Khan was filming the event for a documentary on hate groups called “White Right: Meeting the Enemy.” Parker was taken aback by Khan’s respectfulness, “I pretty much had heat exhaustion after the rally because we like to wear our black uniforms, and I drank a big Red Bull before the event. And I was hurting and she was trying to make sure I was OK.”

This kind interaction sowed a seed of doubt in Parker about his racist beliefs. A few months later, he decided to speak to an African-American neighbor, who turned out to be a pastor, William McKinnon III. Parker wanted to ask McKinnon some questions, and their discussion led to an invitation to McKinnon’s church.

A month later, Parker shared his confession with the predominantly African-American congregation. “I said I was a grand dragon of the KKK, and then the Klan wasn’t hateful enough for me, so I decided to become a Nazi — and a lot of them, their jaws about hit the floor and their eyes got real big,” said Parker. “But after the service, not a single one of them had anything negative to say. They’re all coming up and hugging me and shaking my hand, you know, building me up instead of tearing me down.” Parker accepted Christ and, a month later, he was baptized.
Invite someone to read Titus 3:3-8a again. Encourage the group to consider how they identify themselves and others in these verses, specifically in light of the story you just shared.

Ask Question #5: How can the truths of these verses help our group be more welcoming? Or What can we learn from Titus 3:3-11 about becoming a more welcoming group?

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Additional Questions

Icebreaker
- When was the last time you entered a business and felt very welcomed?
- What’s the warmest welcome you’ve ever received?
- Where do you consistently feel welcome?

Titus 3:3-8a
- What does it mean to be justified?
- When you read Titus 3:3, what catches your attention?
- How do these verses reveal the gospel?

Titus 3:8b
- In what ways does Christ’s gospel motivate you for His service?
- How would you describe the connection between “good works” and salvation?
- What are the dangers of misunderstanding good works?

Titus 3:9-11
- What effect do divisive people have on a church’s efforts to becoming a welcoming church?
- How can “foolish questions” distract us from the gospel?
- How have you been affected by “unprofitable” debates and quarrels in the church?