

WEEK 12 (April 26-May 2) THE SLOW LIFE, HOSPITALITY- the art of serving others.

OPTIONAL READING: 1 Corinthians Chapters 1-4

“Hospitality is the virtue that allows us to break through the narrowness of our own fears and to open our houses to the stranger ... Hospitality makes anxious disciples into powerful witnesses.” Henri Nouwen

Day 1 Read the following scripture:

Luke 19:1-10 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

19 He entered Jericho and was passing through. ²And there was a man called by the name of Zaccheus; he was a chief tax collector and he was rich. ³Zaccheus was trying to see who Jesus was, and was unable because of the crowd, for he was small in stature. ⁴So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a ^[a]sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass through that way. ⁵When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, “Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house.” ⁶And he hurried and came down and received Him ^[b]gladly. ⁷When they saw it, they all *began* to grumble, saying, “He has gone ^[c]to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” ⁸Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I ^[d]will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I ^[e]will give back four times as much.” ⁹And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Zacchaeus was a tax collector and considered a traitor by Israel’s religious leadership. He was despised. Anyone associating with him would be criticized and shunned by them. Jesus was bold inviting Himself over for dinner. In these times, eating with someone was accepting them, and Jesus treated Zacchaeus as a person of worthiness. Since Zacchaeus was a Gentile eating with him would be make them unclean.

Things to consider: have you thought about talking to someone who is considered a terrible person?

Prayer: pray for boldness to search for and help anyone God leads you to.

Day 2 Read the following scripture:

John 8:1-11 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

8 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ²Early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and He sat down and *began* to teach them. ³The scribes and the Pharisees *brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the center *of the court*, ⁴they *said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act. ⁵Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?" ⁶They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground. ⁷But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him *be the* first to throw a stone at her." ⁸Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. ⁹When they heard it, they *began* to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center *of the court*. ¹⁰Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" ¹¹She said, "No one, ^[a]Lord." And Jesus said, "I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more."]

The adulterous woman in this passage was treated contemptuously by the scribes and Pharisees. Notice Jesus did not respond to the accusers or the woman. He never condemns the woman but tells her to stop doing what she has done that is sinful. Jesus made present the kingdom of God to her and everyone there. He showed compassion and love in spite of what anyone else thought or said.

Things to consider: do you initially judge those that have committed sin (or even just said to have committed sin)?

Prayer: ask God to give you a heart of compassion, initially and naturally love others.

Day 3 Read the following scripture:

Luke 24:13-24 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹³And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was ^[a]about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴And they were talking with each other about all these things which had taken place. ¹⁵While they were talking and discussing, Jesus Himself approached and *began* traveling with them. ¹⁶But their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him. ¹⁷And He said to them, "What are these words that you are exchanging with one another as you are walking?" And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸One *of them*, named Cleopas, answered and said to Him, "Are You ^[b]the only one visiting Jerusalem and unaware of the things which have happened here in these days?" ¹⁹And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people, ²⁰and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to the sentence of death, and crucified Him. ²¹But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, it is the third day since these things happened. ²²But also some women among us amazed us. When they were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³and did not find His body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive. ²⁴Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just exactly as the women also had said; but Him they did not see."

Jesus lets the 2 men start the conversation to start a relationship with them. He had all the answers but wanted to establish a connection. The men share their emotions with Him and that's when they become vulnerable. It's not when we start telling them all the facts of the gospel, that comes later. The reaction of the men to Jesus explaining the scriptures moved their hearts not their heads. The heart is the key to connecting with others.

Things to consider: when meeting someone do you try to give them an opening to share or do you control the conversation?

Prayer: ask God to help you listen to others before speaking.

Day 4 Read the following scripture:

John 4:1-29 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

4 Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John ²(although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were), ³He left Judea and went away again into Galilee. ⁴And He had to pass through Samaria. ⁵So He *came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; ⁶and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about ^[a]the sixth hour. ⁷There *came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus *said to her, "Give Me a drink." ⁸For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. ⁹Therefore the Samaritan woman *said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) ¹⁰Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." ¹¹She *said to Him, "^[b]Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water? ¹²You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?" ¹³Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again; ¹⁴but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."
¹⁵The woman *said to Him, "^[c]Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw." ¹⁶He *said to her, "Go, call your husband and come here." ¹⁷The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus *said to her, "You have correctly said, 'I have no husband'; ¹⁸for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly." ¹⁹The woman *said to Him, "^[d]Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. ²⁰Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you *people* say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." ²¹Jesus *said to her, "Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. ²²You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³But an hour is coming, and now is, when the

true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. ²⁴God is ^[e]spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." ²⁵The woman *said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us." ²⁶Jesus *said to her, "I who speak to you am *He*." ²⁷At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why do You speak with her?" ²⁸So the woman left her waterpot, and went into the city and *said to the men, ²⁹"Come, see a man who told me all the things that I *have* done; this is not ^[t]the Christ, is it?"

Here Jesus is initially non-threatening to the Samaritan woman but later uses some harsh words when stating she had 5 husbands etc. Jesus pointed out the things we cling to that actually de-humanize us, things that cause others to disregard us. Again, He addressed her heart which is the only way for us to bring others to the reality that salvation can change their lives from the unreality of sin. We were made in God's image so acting sinfully is abnormal and is the antithesis of what God intended for all.

Things to consider: are you willing to say the things the Holy Spirit prompts you to say to others?

Prayer: submit totally to the Holy Spirit as He leads you to those who need your hospitality.