

Cell Group Bible Study A Heartwarming Hospitality Sermon Series 2025

Introduction

Welcome to the start of our church's sermon series and cell group bible studies for 2025! We will be embarking on this journey for 9 weeks based on the sermon series.

Why study characters who have displayed hospitality in the bible?

1. To **benefit** those whom we want to show hospitality to. Jesus tells us that we are "the light of the world" and our responsibility is to "let our light shine before men" (Matthew 5:14-16). In doing so, those who receive the light will come to glorify our Father in heaven.
2. To **be blessed** ourselves as we extend God's blessings generously to others. Jesus declares the truth that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Our Lord does not ever want us to miss out on the blessing of being channels of God's blessings!
3. To **reflect God's nature** and **extend God's ministry**. Ultimately, we are hospitable because God is a hospitable God. We are only able to love because he first loved us (1 John 4:19). And we are called to continue to grow in our Christlikeness each day.

What is a suggested cell group and bible study format?

1. You can incorporate the elements of the **4 W's** for your cell meeting: **Welcome** (personal thanksgiving), **Worship** (songs), **Word** (bible study) and **Works** (prayer for each other and planning and participating in upcoming events of the church).
2. Each of the bible study will consist of three elements:
 - a. **Introductory question** for discussion (related to the focus of the bible study)
 - b. **Discussion question(s)** based on the passage
 - c. **Possible application(s)** in daily life
3. You may not need to include all of the elements in a single cell group session but do not neglect any of the **4 W's** over the long term.

What can be helpful for cell members to be more involved?

1. Everyone should try to **read the bible passage** beforehand or during the meeting.
2. Cell members can be **rostered** to lead in the various elements within the cell meeting: welcome, worship, bible study or prayer. This will help involve more members for the cell.
3. In smaller groups, cell members can **keep in touch** with one another about how they have been applying the lessons learnt in the sermon/bible study throughout the week.

What is helpful for you as a cell leader to have a fruitful meeting?

1. Start and end every meeting **on time**. This honours the commitment that all the cell members have made to attend cell on time.
2. Encourage **everyone** to share and thank them for sharing – there are no wrong answers (unless it contradicts what God says!) and each opinion should be valued.
3. Look to **affirm** what your members are sharing – especially about how God may be speaking or leading them in their lives.
4. Feel free to stop at any point to elaborate if the Spirit is leading you to – **you don't have to complete all of the discussion questions**.
5. Keep your cell group meeting and your members in **prayer** throughout the week.

"Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes."

A Heartwarming Hospitality Bible Study (26 Jan 25)
#4 – The Widow of Zarephath: The Sacrifice of Hospitality

Big Idea – Our hospitality requires us to challenge our mindsets

Key Verse: *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me... to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.”* Luke 4:18-19

A. Introductory Question

1. Share an instance about a deeply-held perspective or opinion that you had to change. What were the circumstances that led to the change?

B. Discussion Questions

[Read 1 Kings 17:1-16; Luke 4:14-30]

Jesus read from the prophet Isaiah as he stood up in the synagogue to read aloud. The astounding thing about his reading was not what he read but where he stopped. He stopped just before reading the phrase: *“and the day of vengeance of our God”* (Isaiah 61:1-2)

2. Why do you think Jesus stopped where he did and what do you think this tells us about the message and mission of Christ?

Jesus pointed out that Elijah was sent to the widow of Zarephath (a Gentile region) and not to the widows in Israel during the time of famine. Jesus said in reply to the people in the synagogue asking: *“Isn’t this Joseph’s son?”* (Luke 4:22).

3. What was Jesus actually saying to the people? (See Luke 4:23-27) Why do you think he responded in such a way?

C. Application

The Nazarenes’ initial approval of Jesus was a superficial attitude involving no real conversion. The salvation that Jesus brings cannot rest simply on the surface, leaving the depths of human beings untouched, unexplored and unhealed. Luke suggests that he felt trapped and imprisoned by the narrowness he divined in the townfolk. To be true to his mission, he had to bring to the surface and expose the thoughts that lay in their hearts. Coming to “knowledge of salvation” means coming to self-knowledge as well – something that usually involves a painful discovery of the narrowness of one’s thoughts.

4. What is one narrow thinking that you have that the Holy Spirit is exposing in you and challenging you to break out of in this season?

Have a blessed cell group sharing, discussion and prayer!

“Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes.”

Isaiah 54:2