

## 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?*

- a. 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).
- b. 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
- c. 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."*

Isaiah 54:2

**A Heartwarming Hospitality Bible Study (2 Feb 25)**

**#5 – Zaccheus: The Salvation of Hospitality**

**Big Idea – Our salvation comes in response to God’s unconditional hospitality towards us**

Key Verse: “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” Luke 19:10

**A. Introductory Question**

1. Is there someone that is difficult to love in your family or workplace by either yourself or others?  
How is this person treated?

**B. Discussion Questions**

**[Read Luke 19:1-10]**

A Jewish tax collector in Jesus’ day was hated by his fellow citizens. Not only did he tend to collect more than is required (to line his pocket), but worse still he was seen to be working for the benefit of the “enemy” which was the ruling Roman empire. Furthermore, a chief tax collector was the worst of the lot as he is the head of all tax collectors and most likely receive a greater share of the “earnings”.

2. How do you think Zaccheus would feel about himself in light of society’s judgment on him? Explain your view with evidence that you find in the passage.

More likely than not, Zaccheus would be used to living a life of luxury. He would be able to employ a horde of servants to serve his needs. He would not be used to manual labour. Yet he climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, someone whom he has never met.

3. What does Zaccheus’ action of climbing the tree in order to see Jesus reveal about his heart?

Jesus unexpectedly stopped right under Zaccheus and announced that he was staying at his house that day. The words that Jesus used were urgent in nature: “immediately”, “must” and “today”. Zaccheus complied and even offered to distribute half of his immense wealth to the poor.

4. What did Zaccheus actions reveal about his heart response to Jesus’ hospitality?

Zaccheus is certainly a most unlikely candidate in Jewish eyes to be welcomed into God’s kingdom. Yet Jesus went out of his way to reach out to him despite the negative opinions of others.

5. What does that reveal to you about God’s approach to saving people? (You may refer to the theme verse for this bible study in Luke 19:10).

**C. Application**

6. Has today’s bible lesson encouraged you in any aspect? Share it with the cell.

[For personal reflection] There are three groups of people featured in this short narrative:

- a. *Zaccheus* the tax collector who represents everyone who needs God’s salvation
- b. *Jesus* the saviour who represents those who seek to show hospitality to the lost
- c. The *bystanders* who represent those who give comments or criticisms on the side

7. Which group do you identify with the most at this time? What is the Holy Spirit speaking to you regarding this?

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

Isaiah 54:2