

W is for Welcome

Panel Discussion

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Why is an attitude of welcome important?

- It is an important part of our representation of Christ.
- For many, the attitudes of Christians are an introduction to Christ

In a society that is increasingly disconnected and lacking in real community, it is more important than ever that Christians show authentic welcome. Welcome is attractive.

Are some people just better at 'welcome'?

An attitude of welcome is:

- Part natural
- Part gift
- Part practice

We often see others who are more naturally welcome, and shy away from being welcoming because it does not come as naturally to us. However, friendliness is a skill that can intentionally be developed. It is also important to recognize that welcome is expressed differently by each person.

How can we express welcome in our context?

- Inviting people into our community
- Intentionality- making decisions everyday that lead to developing relationships
- Listening genuinely to what people have to say

What are some roadblocks in the way of welcome?

- Fear of being vulnerable
- Fatigue
- Pressure to perform
- Opting for other forms of communication that do not necessarily foster welcome or community

Jesus calls us to a new level of intentionality when it comes to welcome. Though an attitude of welcome may not be easy, it can make an incredible difference in our culture as individuals and as a community.

“When I stopped shouting ‘fresh roasted coffee!’ and started shouting ‘good morning!’, things began to change.”

Discussion:

- Has there been a memorable moment in which someone welcomed you well? Share stories.
- Can you think of a moment in which you intentionally welcomed someone else? Share stories.
- How natural is it for you to extend welcome? Why?
- What are some of the challenges that you encounter when it comes to practicing welcome? How do you work through them?
- In what ways could you see yourself extending welcome to someone in the future?

Possible Next Steps:

- Invite someone out to coffee– someone that you’ve always wanted to get to know better.
- Turn the phone on silent when spending time with someone.
- Invite a family or a few people over for dinner or a cup of tea.
- Take a batch of cookies over to a neighbor’s house.