

Activate 4 - Welcome - The Hospitable Church
October 24, 2021
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Acts 2:42-47
Mark 9:33-37

“The believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to the community, to their shared meals, and to their prayers...They shared food with gladness and simplicity. They praised God and demonstrated God’s goodness to everyone.” Acts 2:42, 46b-47a, CEB

“What are you arguing about?...[Jesus] sat down, called the Twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be least of all and the servant of all.”” Mark 9:33, 35, CEB

διακονία (greek) *diakonia* - meaning servant

“Jesus reached for a little child, placed him among the Twelve, and embraced him. ““Whoever **welcomes** one of these children in my name **welcomes** me; and whoever **welcomes** me isn’t actually **welcoming** me but rather the one who sent me.”” Mark 9:36, CEB

Karam - arabic for generosity. It is the core of Arab hospitality.

Arab hospitality is a sacred ritual. To break this tradition is paramount to sin.

- Brings guests (strangers) into the family circle; becoming a temporary family member with all the benefits of family. (Care, protection from harm, provision, etc.)
- Host will do everything in their power to make guests feel at home.

Pharasaic Law (and common practice) refuted these ancient traditions.

- Jewish people ate with their own people
- religious and socio-economic strata were kept as well, only ate with their “own people”

δέχομαι (greek) *dechomai* - welcome, accept, to receive as a guest

Jesus oversteps the boundaries of his tradition and law in order to invite people in; bringing people before God, and God before people.

Simply put, Jesus welcomed all the wrong people!

“I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” Matthew 25:35, CEB

““Then the king will reply to them, ‘I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me.’” Matthew 25:40, CEB

Goal 1: Surprise all guests with a glimpse of the unmerited, gracious love of God we see in Christ Jesus.

Goal 2: Recognize the stranger, neighbor, needy among us.

Goal 3: Awareness of who is NOT present. Welcome them in.

WELCOME - TAKING JESUS SERIOUSLY DEMANDS RADICAL HOSPITALITY.