

## **Small Group Study Guide - Sun, Oct 31 , 2021**

### **Message Series: REMEMBERING HOW TO BE HOSPITABLE AGAIN.**

**Scripture verse: Matt 22:39 – “Love your neighbour as yourself.”**

**Take a moment to pray for the Lord to still your mind, as well as direct your thoughts, conversation and response to the study.**

### **Appetizer:**

Pastor Phil introduces the subject of Hospitality with these two statements:

“The Church is the only organization that primarily exists for its non-members.” – William Temple

“The most telling and defining mark of a mature follower of Jesus is someone who serves, gives, helps and loves *generously*.”

#### **Discuss.**

He then goes on to describe a “cultural headwind” that is pushing against the church because of the mistrust and apprehension that society bears toward the church today.

He lists off 5 contributing factors that he feels that we – the church at large – are responsible for in creating this headwind in recent years.

**What other factors can you think of that have added to this wariness, either from the church or from outside the church?**

### **Main Course:**

Hospitality – in the biblical sense – is very closely connected with the Greek word for Agape.

**How is Agape love unique from any other expression of love? What are some of the words used in the message to describe this very distinctive form of love?**

**How is Agape love “a unique and effective strategy that Jesus invites us to use when sharing the message of God’s love”?**

Pastor Phil shares about the vacuum of kindness, care, concern in our culture today - the lack of respect and consideration and “me-first” behaviour. That vacuum is illustrated in the physics of sailing, where we learned that wind pulls (and not pushes) a sailboat forward.

The case is made for how Agape Love Hospitality can fill the vacuum in the world today by living “different” than the world (ie. loving our enemies), and in so doing, draw people to Jesus.

#### **Discuss.**

### **Dessert:**

The message concludes with an extrapolation of a party hosted by Matthew – the tax collector who invites Jesus, the Disciples and his tax collector friends.

This party isn’t entertainment, nor a random act of kindness. It is an intentionally strategic gathering.

Pastor Phil contends that Agape Love Hospitality earns us the right to be heard, because it paves the way for relationship, friendship and trust.

#### **Discuss.**

**Do you struggle with sharing your faith?  
Do you feel walls go up when you try to talk publicly about anything related to your faith in Jesus?**