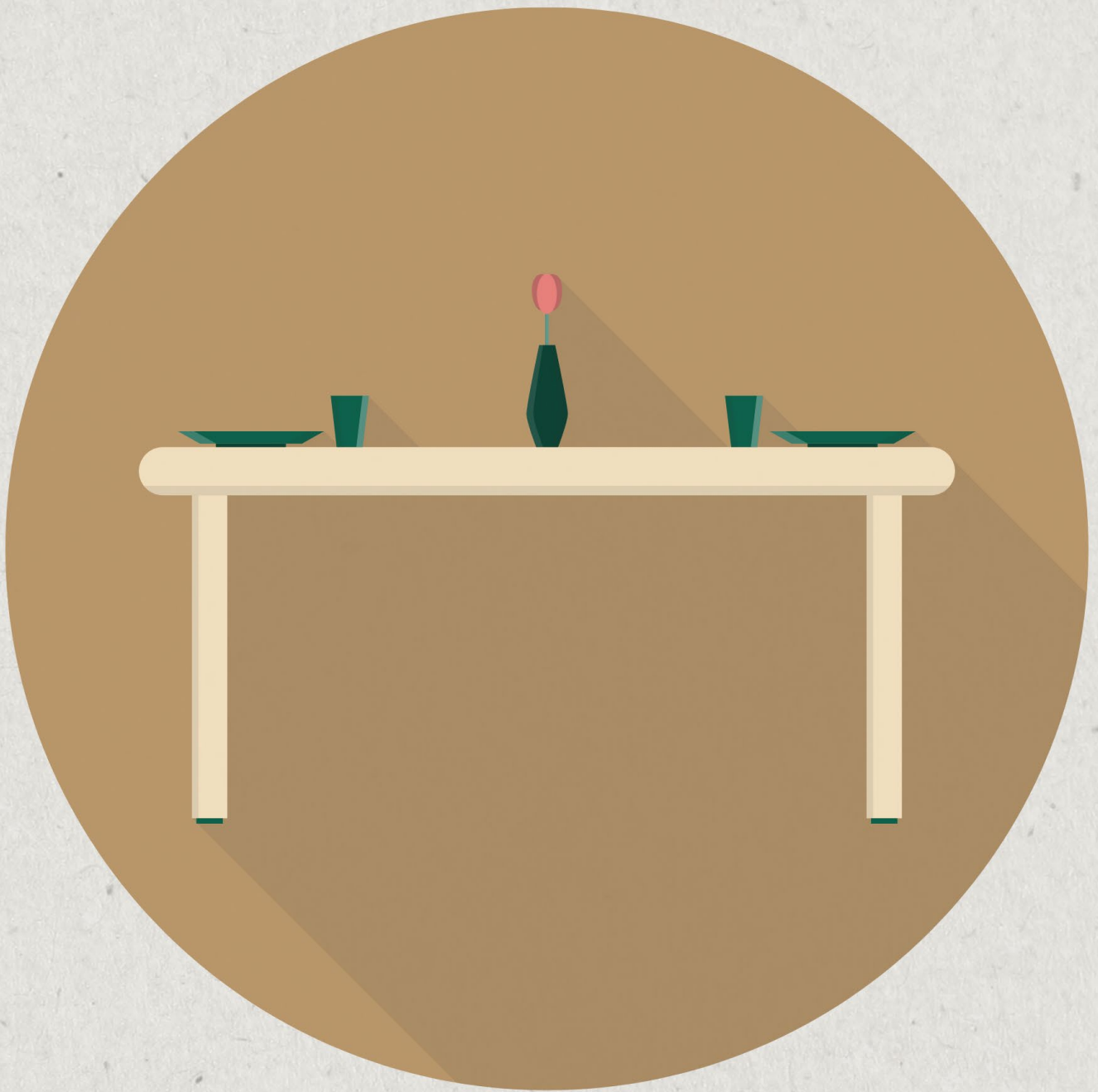


HOSPITALITY AS MISSION

DINING ROOM



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Welcome to the dining room. The table is set, full of good food. The sights and smells are appetising, and the room is warm and welcoming. There is a place for you. Take your seat.

Pause and think who is around the table with you.

Hospitality plays a crucial role in Christian mission by creating opportunities to share faith, demonstrate God's love and build strong, supportive communities.

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Read Luke 14:15-24:

The Parable of the Great Banquet

When one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus, 'Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God.'

Jesus replied: 'A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, "Come, for everything is now ready."

'But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, "I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me."

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‘Another said, “I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.”

‘Still another said, “I have just got married, so I can’t come.”

‘The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, “Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.”

““Sir,” the servant said, “what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.”

‘Then the master told his servant, “Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be

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full. I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.”

Reflection

Take a few moments to reflect on the following questions:

1. Are the people at your table, in your dining room, different from the people who come to this banquet?
2. How do the different responses to the invitation reflect people's attitudes towards God's Kingdom?
3. How can we apply the lessons from this parable to our own lives and attitudes towards God's invitation?

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Here are some key ways hospitality contributes to Christian mission. Which one resonates most with you?

1. Demonstrating God's love: By welcoming others into their homes and lives, Christians can show the love and grace of God in tangible ways. This act of kindness can open hearts to the message of the gospel.

2. Building community: Hospitality fosters a sense of unity and belonging within the Christian community. It helps build strong relationships and support networks, which are essential for spiritual growth and mutual encouragement.

3. Creating opportunities for evangelism: Inviting non-believers into a Christian home provides a natural setting for sharing the gospel. Through conversations and acts of kindness, hosts can witness to their

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faith and invite others to explore a relationship with Christ.

4. Reflecting Christ's example: Jesus often shared meals with sinners and outcasts, demonstrating that no one is beyond the reach of God's love. By practising hospitality, Christians follow Christ's example and extend his invitation to all.

5. Spiritual growth: Hospitality encourages Christians to step out of their comfort zones and serve others selflessly. This practice can lead to personal spiritual growth and a deeper understanding of God's heart for people.

6. Breaking down barriers: Sharing a meal or offering a place to stay can break down social, cultural and religious barriers. It creates a space for genuine dialogue and

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understanding, which is essential for effective mission work.

Do you have any experiences of hospitality that have impacted your faith or mission work?

What can you do to action some form of hospitality from this time of prayer?

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Invitation

Come to the Feast

*Great, great is the love the Father has
lavished upon us.*

*Loved as daughters and sons, we are his
children.*

*He invites us to come, he welcomes us into
his family;*

All nations as one; we are his children.

*Come to the banquet! Sit down and eat!
Everyone's welcome at Jesus' feet.*

*The lost and the lonely, the last and the
least;*

The Saviour is calling: Come to the feast!

*Out into the world, the Father is sending
his precious ones.*

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With a message of hope; we are his children.

His welcome is wide, extending to all who would hear it;

One family of love, we are his children.

People from every tribe! People of every tongue!

Feasting at Jesus' side; We are one!

Riches mean nothing here! Status and rank are gone!

Seen through the Father's eyes, we are one!

Come to the banquet! Sit down and eat!

Everyone's welcome at Jesus' feet.

The lost and the lonely, the last and the least;

the Saviour is calling: Come to the feast!

- Major Matt Spencer

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