

CIRCLES OF HOSPITALITY

Life Groups
August 20, 2017

Introduction: The three circles in our logo above represent the three moves shaped by hospitality. First is WELCOME. Welcome involves greeting the unknown stranger and inviting him into a safe place. Second is ABIDING. Abiding calls us to share resources and remain in healthy conversation within the space. Third is SENDING. In sending, the group supports and supplies each other with a blessing for their continued spiritual journey.

Scripture Reading: Leviticus 19:17-18

I. You Shall Love Your Neighbor as Yourself.

¹⁷ *"You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. ¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but **you shall love your neighbor as yourself**: I am the Lord" (Leviticus 19:17–18).*

³³ *"When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. ³⁴ You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and **you shall love him as yourself**, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:33–34).*

Tension #1: Human beings are essentially dangerous.

II. Circles of Hospitality – Welcome – Luke 7:36-39

³⁶ *One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. ³⁷ And behold, a woman of the city, **who was a sinner**, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, ³⁸ and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, **she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment.** ³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner" (Luke 7:36–39).*

Tension #2: Properly welcoming strangers requires recognizing our own fears.

A. Vulnerability – The willingness to be exposed and possibly even suffer with or for another.

Tension #3: If a group is formed solely through vulnerability, emotional, social and spiritual boundaries can be broken.

- B. Safety – A condition or virtue more broadly descriptive of the need to avoid suffering for self or another.

Tension #4: If a group is formed solely from safety, we hinder enacting the gospel of Jesus.

III. Circles of Hospitality – Abiding – Luke 7:40-46

⁴⁰ And Jesus answering said to him, “Simon, **I have something to say to you.**” And he answered, “Say it, Teacher.” ⁴¹ “A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?” ⁴³ Simon answered, “The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt.” And he said to him, “You have judged rightly.” ⁴⁴ Then turning toward the woman **he said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment”** (Luke 7:40–46).

- A. Confrontation will happen. Therefore, boundaries need to be set.

Tension #5 - Limits must be in place, flexible and grace-oriented, but limits nonetheless.

- B. All humans bear the image of God, the imago Dei.

Tension #6 – There must be a willingness to forgive and seek reconciliation with perpetrators.

IV. Circles of Hospitality – Sending – Luke 7:47-50

⁴⁷ “Therefore **I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.**” ⁴⁸ And he said to her, “**Your sins are forgiven.**” ⁴⁹ Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?” ⁵⁰ And he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace” (Luke 7:47–50).

Tension #7 – The truth about my present is often different from my hope.

- A. The truth about my behaviors and my thoughts is often difficult for others.
- B. God has placed resurrection power within us to heal and transform another.

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Scripture Reading: Leviticus 19:17-18

I. You Shall Love Your Neighbor as Yourself – Leviticus 19:17–18, 33–34

Tension #1: Human beings are essentially _____.

II. Circles of Hospitality – _____ – Luke 7:36-39

Tension #2: Properly welcoming _____ requires recognizing our own _____.

Tension #3: If a group is formed solely from vulnerability, emotional, social and spiritual _____ can be _____.

Tension #4: If a group is formed solely from safety, we _____ the gospel of Jesus.

III. Circles of Hospitality – _____ – Luke 7:40-46

Tension #5 - Limits must be in place, _____ and _____ oriented, but limits nonetheless.

Tension #6 – There must be a willingness to _____ and seek _____ with perpetrator.

IV. Circles of Hospitality – _____ – Luke 7:47-50

Tension #7 – The _____ about my _____ is often different from my _____.