

## BIBLICAL HOSPITALITY

Presentation by Greg Miller, Men's Center Administrator, City Union Mission, for sLi

### I. **The Importance of Biblical Hospitality**

- A. "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect in whom my soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him. . . . A **bruised reed** He shall not break, and a **smoking flax** he will not quench" (Isa. 42:1,3) Some of the people that God sends us are at the end of the road in life; our facility may be their last stop before Heaven or Hell. They are truly like bruised reeds that take very little pressure to completely break, or a dying flame that takes a small breeze to totally extinguish. They come broken, wounded, and sometimes traumatized. Without the practice of Biblical hospitality, and walking in the grace and kindness of God toward our guests, we could be the so called "straw that breaks the camel's back" and further injure those whom God has called us to heal. True Biblical Hospitality helps strengthen the bruised reed, and rekindles the dying flame. Even though this passage of scripture that was chosen is Messianic, it still reflects the character and nature of the one in whose footsteps we are called to follow.
- B. "**A man** shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covering from the tempest. As rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isa. 32:2) People come to places like Gospel rescue missions sometimes for refuge, refreshment, protection, and security. This verse tells us that **we** are the true point of refuge, refreshment, and security, not just our edifice. Through the practice of Biblical hospitality, we become the point of contact for our guests to receive spiritual rest, restoration, refuge, and security. Again, the passage chosen speaks of the future Messianic kingdom and reign of Christ, but the same principles hold true in the lives of those who is called with His calling to minister to the lost and hurting.

### II. **Biblical Hospitality is not only serving, it is serving with Love**

- A. It is possible to serve through systems we have created without the element of love. If we choose to serve our guest without element of love, we become no better than other social services that provide the same services we provide. Food, clothing, shelter, and other things that meet physical needs can be found in many other organizations that do

not profess faith in Christ. Love should be the motivation for our service to the poor and homeless, otherwise, our service has little or no eternal value. “And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor. . . . but have not love, it profits me nothing.” (1 Cor. 13:3)

- B. Serving without love and only through systems create impersonal ministry verses interpersonal ministry. We must **model** God’s love before we can effectively **minister** God’s love.
- C. The entire aim of Biblical Hospitality is to express and demonstrate the Love of God toward those whom we serve. This love is unconditional and not based upon their behavior. The sacrifice that Christ gave for the world was not based upon our behavior, He died in spite of our behavior “But God demonstrated His love toward us, in that, while we were **yet sinners**, Christ died for us” (Rom.5:8)

### III. **Biblical Hospitality is not only proclamation, but also demonstration.**

- A. True Biblical Hospitality couples practice with preaching.” For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in Holy Spirit, and with deep conviction, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake”. (1Thessalonians 1:5-6.) In these verses we see the perfect combination of proclamation “**gospel did not come in word only**” and demonstration of godly living “**you know what kind of men we were**”
- B. Treating our guest hospitable and showing grace and kindness enhances, and makes attractive the Gospel message we proclaim, as well as validates us as his servants.

### IV. **Biblical Hospitality is a balance of grace and truth.**

- A. “And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (Jn. 1:14). Jesus was full of grace and truth, and so should we.
- B. Grace minus truth equals license. When we operate from the premise of grace and mercy alone, it can be easy for us to be passive and hold no one accountable for their actions. This leads to total chaos. Truth minus grace equals legalism. We can also be off balance if we forget about grace and purely operate from the premise of truth; this

could lead to hardness, inflexibility, and being uncompassionate. In showing hospitality, it is important to show a balance of both.

- C. The rules are a tool and a guide, not exclusively a master. We must learn to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit to know when to relax the law and show mercy, yet remain stern and unwavering as maintainers of order when need be.

**V. Biblical Hospitality is hindered through:**

- A. Abuse of power and authority. “Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands (**Power**)....He poured water and began to wash the disciples feet” (**Humility**) John 13:3,5. Jesus used His power and authority to demonstrate humility and service. Our status as staff members and white badges does not give us the right to exalt ourselves over our guest and abuse the authority that he has given us in order to serve.
- B. Lack of compassion. A true passion for God creates compassion for people.
- C. Desensitization. Going through the motions every day and losing our closeness to Christ.
- D. Lack of love and unity among fellow believers. “No man has seen God at any time, if we love one another, God dwell with us”(1 John 4:12) “No man has seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him” (Jn. 1:18). Jesus explained and declared who the Father was because of His intimate relationship that he shared with Him. Jesus made the invisible God visible. We make the invisible God visible through our love relationship we have with one another. These two verses show us how the invisible God becomes visible to others. Remember, “if we love one another, God dwell with us”. He is seen through our love one for another.