

A Welcome Heart To the Stranger Small Groups Fall 2009

Introduction

Has the Lord put anyone in your path this last week? What was your response? Did you have a welcome heart? Share any experiences!

Who is the stranger?

What kind of person usually comes to mind when you think of strangers? (Perhaps you hear your mother's voice, "never talk to strangers.") Why do you think we are sometimes apprehensive to have a welcome heart to strangers?

Why isn't a believer who you have never met before not as much of a stranger as an unbeliever? Do you have an example of a time when you felt immediately the kindred spirit of a fellow believer though you had only just met them?

Examples from the Word

Exodus 22:21 – *We could be strangers too*

The Israelites were strangers in the land of Egypt. God was reminding them of this fact when instructing them how they should treat strangers.

Think about a time when you were a stranger somewhere. Has that experience helped you to see strangers in a new light?

Job 31:29-34 – *Doors open to the traveler*

Although Job is boasting of his own virtues here, we know that God said he was righteous. With this in mind, look closely at verse 32 to see Job's actions when there was a need from a traveler. Do you have an example of the blessing of taking care of a traveler? If not, why have you avoided this kind of hospitality?

Genesis 18:1-8 – *A welcome heart to God Himself!*

Abraham had a unique opportunity to welcome the Lord Himself. How does this passage relate to **Hebrews 13:2**? How would you respond if God Himself visited your home?

Matthew 25:35-40 – You have done it unto Jesus?

What are we to do specifically in this verse for the stranger?

We get to have an experience similar to Abraham welcoming the Lord as we welcome the stranger. (See verse 40) Explain this correlation.

Psalm 146:8-9 – It is the Lord's Work!

It is not something that man has dreamed up to take care of the stranger. This is the Lord's work!

Rock Springs has a unique position in terms of ministering to temporary working people. Consider how many single men come through our doors each year and then leave. It is easy to pass by them and ignore them because they will never be a constant part of our church body. This isn't their home or home church and none probably will grow so attached to Rock Springs that they will stay here.

How do we combat the mentality of distancing ourselves from those who are just passing through or working here for a season?

When we see a man who is alone at church, away from his home, let us remember to protect him even as the Lord protects him. By welcoming him, we are protecting his marriage and family back home. Comment on this.

Recap!

This is the last lesson for the Welcome Heart series. Let's go over the list of the type of people we have talked about having a welcome heart to:

- Children
- Poor
- People who are watching us
- Stranger
- The Social Outcast
- Travelers
- Fellow Believers who need encouragement

And the list can go on as the Lord leads you to have a welcome heart...

Spend time in prayer

Consider the times you have encountered strangers. Ask God to give you a welcome heart the next time you encounter a stranger. Who knows, we could be entertaining angels!

Pray as you are led!

The next two weeks we won't be having Small Groups – but we hope to see you all at the Hope for the Home Seminar!