

3 JOHN: JESUS IS OUR INVITATION TO HOSPITALITY

DISCUSSION GUIDE

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

1. Think about the things you really love to hear people say to you. What are the top three things you love to hear?

The most commonly loved phrases people love to hear are I love you, You're forgiven and Let's eat!

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

2. What are common reasons to have a meal together?

Jesus demonstrated the power of the table in many ways. The Last Supper is a famous meal Jesus had with his disciples. Obviously, this was very common for Jesus to eat with his friends and the Bible describes his pattern to also include meals with sinners. After Jesus rose from the grave, one of the first things he did was eat a meal with his friends. It is interesting that in the very beginning, we see a meal that was eaten without God ruining everything. Then in the concluding chapters of the book of Revelation, we find another meal: the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Jesus is all about inviting people to the table of the Lord, where we all become friends with God. Jesus is our perfect example of hospitality and invitation. John encourages the church to show this same hospitality to others.

3 John 1:8 *We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth.*

DISCUSSION QUESTION:

3. Share a time when somebody was hospitable to you and describe what made this experience meaningful.

John goes on to describe somebody in the church who had obviously been given a role of church leadership yet then began calling attention to himself, spreading lies and being unwelcoming to other believers.

Pronunciation of the name, "Diotrephes"
"Dee-awe'-treh-fuss"

3 John 1:9-10 *I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will not welcome us. 10 So when I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, spreading malicious nonsense about us. Not satisfied with that, he even refuses to welcome other believers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church. NIV*

It is interesting that John describes Diotrophes as one who loves to be first. Obviously this was somebody who had previously been embraced and endorsed in leadership but slowly became self-absorbed and unwelcoming to other believers.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

4. Hospitality is the idea of considering yourself less so you can consider others more. What are some things we can put into regular practice to help keep us from becoming self-absorbed?
5. Describe the characteristics of a person who is self-absorbed as opposed to someone who is selflessly generous.

Conclude by prayer after asking each person to share one thing they plan to do this next week to cultivate a generous and hospitable attitude toward others.