# Embracing Fellowship: Welcoming Strangers with Christ's Love



Explore how genuine fellowship welcomes newcomers, reflecting Christ's love to strangers through intentional kindness and open hearts.





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#### Introduction

**Fellowship** is more than casual socializing; it is a sacred invitation to share life in Christ together. The New Testament highlights *koinonia*—deep, spiritual fellowship—as the heartbeat of Christian community. But what happens when that fellowship involves strangers, those outside our immediate circle? How can we embody Christ's love authentically to newcomers who may feel isolated or unknown?

Welcoming strangers is a costly but beautiful expression of the Gospel. Jesus Himself modeled this by reaching out to the marginalized and the outsider, showing radical kindness and acceptance. The early church also made a priority of opening their homes and hearts to those new among them, creating an environment where everyone felt valued and loved.

This 5-day study invites you to examine how we can cultivate fellowship that goes beyond comfort zones, intentionally embracing newcomers as family. Through prayerful reflection and Scripture, you will be encouraged to extend Christ's love in practical and transformative ways.

Discover how fellowship with strangers not only blesses them but also transforms us, building bridges of grace and unity.















#### Your Verse

Hebrews 13:1-2 - "Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it."

#### **Supporting Scriptures**

- Romans 12:13 "Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."
- 1 Peter 4:9 "Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling."







#### Devotional: Opening Our Hearts: Hospitality's Divine Call

Fellowship begins with love—deep, intentional love that crosses social boundaries. Hebrews 13:1–2 reminds us to "keep on loving one another" and specifically calls out the importance of hospitality toward strangers. The idea that such hospitality might even welcome angels challenges us to see guests with divine significance.

Christian fellowship is not just for those who look or think like us. It is an opportunity to mimic God's inclusive love by intentionally embracing those we do not yet know. Practicing hospitality is a tangible way to break down walls of loneliness and fear. It says, "You matter. You belong here."

Today, consider your own attitudes toward strangers in your community—neighbors, newcomers, or visitors. What might it look like to welcome them with genuine openness and warmth? Let this be the day you begin to open doors—literally and spiritually.







# Reflect and Apply

	How do you currently respond when you encounter strangers or newcomers?
	What fears or reservations do you have about welcoming others into your fellowship?
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	n what ways does Hebrews 13:1-2 challenge your perspective on nospitality?
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## **Journaling Prompts**

1.	List three practical ways you can show hospitality to strangers this week.
	Reflect on a time when someone welcomed you as a stranger. How did it impact you?
3.	Write a prayer asking God to soften your heart toward newcomers.







#### Prayer for Today

Lord, thank You for the example of radical hospitality You showed us in Christ. Help me open my heart and home to those who are unfamiliar or new. Teach me to see strangers with Your eyes—as individuals worthy of love and kindness. Remove any fear or hesitation that keeps me from extending fellowship. May my actions reflect the warmth and grace of Your Kingdom. Empower me to be a welcoming presence, a beacon of Your love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

















#### Your Verse

Ephesians 2:14 - "For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility."

#### **Supporting Scriptures**

- Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free... for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
- John 13:34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."







#### Devotional: Breaking Barriers Through Christ's Peace

Fellowship with strangers challenges us to transcend natural divisions by embracing Christ's unifying love. Ephesians 2:14 declares that Jesus has destroyed the walls that once divided groups of people. This includes differences in culture, background, and status.

When we extend friendship and fellowship to strangers, especially newcomers who may feel isolated, we step into God's mission of reconciliation. The Gospel breaks down hostility and prejudice, creating a new family united in Christ.

Today, reflect on the barriers that exist between you and those you don't know. How can Christ's peace help you overcome these obstacles? How can your fellowship become a living testimony of God's inclusive love?







## Reflect and Apply

1.	What divisions or barriers have you noticed in your faith community or daily life?
2.	How does understanding that Christ has broken walls of hostility affect your attitude toward outsiders?
3.	In what ways can you actively promote unity and peace with those different from you?







#### **Journaling Prompts**

	Identify one relationship where you can bridge a gap and foster fellowship.
2.	Write about a time you experienced reconciliation and what it taught you.
3.	Pray for God to use you as an agent of peace among strangers.







#### Prayer for Today

Father, thank You for the peace available in Christ that breaks down every dividing wall. Help me to see others as You see them, beyond labels and boundaries. Empower me to love as Jesus loves—without partiality or prejudice. May my fellowship be a reflection of Your Kingdom where all are welcome. Give me courage to reach across divides and to nurture unity where there is separation. In Jesus' name, Amen.

















Day 3: Mespitality as a Gospel Witness

#### Your Verse

Acts 16:14–15 – "One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia...She and the members of her household were baptized...and invited us to her home."

#### **Supporting Scriptures**

- Romans 16:23 "Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy, sends you greetings."
- 1 Timothy 3:2 "Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach."







Day 3: fine Hospitality as a Gospel Witness

#### Devotional: Welcoming Homes: Hospitality Proclaims Hope

In the early church, hospitality was more than kindness; it was a powerful witness to the gospel's transformative power. Lydia's story in Acts 16 illustrates how welcoming strangers became an avenue for sharing faith. Her open home led to the baptism of her household and strengthened the early Christian community.

Hospitality involving strangers breaks cultural and social barriers and opens doors for spiritual conversations. Leaders in the church are encouraged to be hospitable because it demonstrates the character of Christ and invites others into His family.

Consider how your hospitality can be a form of witness. Who in your life might be reached or encouraged through your open and loving fellowship?







Day 3: f Hospitality as a Gospel Witness

## Reflect and Apply

1.	How can your home or community space become a welcoming place for strangers?
2.	What role does hospitality play in sharing the gospel according to the early church examples?
3.	In what ways might showing hospitality require sacrifice but yield spiritual fruit?







Day 3: f Hospitality as a Gospel Witness

## **Journaling Prompts**

	Plan a simple event or gathering to welcome newcomers in your community.
	Reflect on what makes you feel truly welcomed and how you can provide that to others.
3.	Write a prayer asking God to use your hospitality to draw others to Him.







Day 3: f Hospitality as a Gospel Witness

#### Prayer for Today

Lord, thank You for the hospitality You modeled and desire from Your followers. Help me to open my space and heart to those who don't yet know You. May my hospitality be a beacon that points others to Your love and grace. Teach me to offer welcome generously and joyfully, trusting You with the outcomes. Use my home and life for Your glory and the growth of Your Kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen.









# Day 4: Empathy in Fellowship









Day 4: 🗭 Empathy in Fellowship

#### Your Verse

Romans 12:15 - "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn."

#### **Supporting Scriptures**

- Galatians 6:2 "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."
- 1 Thessalonians 5:11 "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up."







Day 4: 🗭 Empathy in Fellowship

# Devotional: Walking Closely: Empathy as Fellowship's Heart

True fellowship with strangers requires empathy—sharing in their joys and sorrows as if they were our own. Romans 12:15 calls us to rejoice and mourn alongside others, reflecting Christ's heart for connection.

Showing empathy to newcomers means listening actively, caring deeply, and responding with compassion. This can be especially critical for those feeling lost or out of place. When we bear one another's burdens, we embody the love Christ commands.

Today, reflect on how you can cultivate empathy for strangers. What might you do to move beyond surface acquaintance toward genuine caring relationships?







Day 4: 🥟 Empathy in Fellowship

## Reflect and Apply

1.	How do empathy and compassion deepen fellowship with others, especially strangers?
	When was a time someone showed you empathy that made a difference? How did it feel?
3.	What practical steps can you take to better understand and share in the experiences of newcomers?







Day 4: 🥟 Empathy in Fellowship

## **Journaling Prompts**

	Write about a recent encounter where empathy would have improved the fellowship.
	List ways you can practice active listening with those new to your community.
3.	Pray for a heart sensitive to the needs and emotions of newcomers.







Day 4: 🗭 Empathy in Fellowship

#### Prayer for Today

God of compassion, soften my heart to feel deeply for those I meet. Teach me to rejoice in their joys and support them in their struggles. Help me bear burdens not my own with grace and patience. Let empathy flow through my words and actions, drawing others closer to You. May I be a refuge of understanding and love for all, especially strangers seeking fellowship.

In Jesus' name, Amen. 🤎 🖗 🥴







# Day 5: Strain Becoming a Welcoming Community









Day 5: 🎇 Becoming a Welcoming Community

#### Your Verse

1 John 4:7 – "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God."

#### **Supporting Scriptures**

- Matthew 25:35 "I was a stranger and you invited me in."
- John 15:12 "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."







Day 5: 🎇 Becoming a Welcoming Community

# Devotional: Building Community Through Christ's Love

The culmination of fellowship with strangers is the formation of a genuinely welcoming community. 1 John 4:7 reminds us that love is the foundation of knowing God and being known by Him. This love compels us to invite in those considered strangers with open arms and hearts.

Jesus' words in Matthew 25 emphasize that welcoming strangers is a direct expression of serving Him. When we love as Christ loved, barriers dissolve and community flourishes.

Today, challenge yourself to envision and contribute to a community where everyone—newcomers and lifelong members alike—experience the warmth of God's love through tangible fellowship.







Day 5: 🞇 Becoming a Welcoming Community

## Reflect and Apply

	What does a truly welcoming community look like in your church or neighborhood?
2.	How can you inspire others to practice inclusive fellowship?
3.	In what ways does loving strangers reflect our love for God?







Day 5: 🞇 Becoming a Welcoming Community

## **Journaling Prompts**

Describe your vision for a welcoming community centered on Christ's love.
iove.
Plan one initiative or action step you can take to build such a community.
Pray for the unity and love of your faith community to grow stronger.







Day 5: 🎇 Becoming a Welcoming Community

#### Prayer for Today

Lord, help us be a community marked by Your love and hospitality. Teach us to love one another deeply and to welcome strangers as siblings in Christ. May our fellowship radiate Your grace and draw others into Your family. Unite us in purpose and spirit, that together we might reflect the heart of Jesus. Empower us to build bridges of love that transform lives and communities.

In Jesus' name, Amen. 💙 🙆 🏡 🙏













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