

The Joy Of Hospitality (3)

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[0 : 00] If you have your Bibles, let's open them back up to the first epistle of Peter, chapter 4.

1 Peter, chapter 4. I also want to just say thank you to all who helped with the Christmas lunch after worship service this morning. I know there's a lot of people who did that, and a lot of times those are behind-the-scenes things.

And so thank you from the entire church because it was great to be able to be shown hospitality and to spend time together in community. That was a service of love, and it was much appreciated.

We're in a sermon series, sermon number 3 of 4 in the short series on the ethic and the value and the virtue and practice of biblical hospitality.

And we said the hospitality that the Bible is calling us to, it's not calling you to be the next Mary Berry. Paul doesn't say imitate me as I imitate Mary Berry.

[1 : 03] It's imitate me as I imitate Christ. And so hospitality in the Bible is to show the welcome of Christ, the love of Christ, care for the stranger.

As Rosario Butterfield, who we mentioned last week, defines it, she says we want to see strangers become neighbors and neighbors family of God. Somebody was talking to me recently and reminded me of the tie also between the words that came from the same root for hospital and hospitality, right?

And it reminded me of this quote that one pastor said. He said, our homes are to be hospitals, refuges of healing, radiating the light of heaven. Our dinner tables are to be the place where broken souls are nourished into wholeness.

In our church buildings and homes, people should find rest. Rest from the battle to prove yourself. Rest from loneliness. Rest from striving. Rest from feeling they are nothing more than the goods they possess.

Biblical hospitality is an important thing. And brought a visual with us, for us, with me. Put this right here. Got this earlier.

[2 : 08] And I drove here. It's going to stay right there. It's my pineapple. I picked it up in Helensboro. I was out there this afternoon and came back. And I got here early. So I parked up the hill. And I was going over my sermon.

So I went over to Costa. And I was like, well, just got to bring the pineapple with me. So it was me and the pineapple having a cortado at Costa before service. Nobody came up and talked to me. I don't know why. I'm like, Nate, why is there a pineapple here?

Glad you asked. Pineapple, it comes from the Americas. It's not native to Europe. And so the first time that Europeans were able to taste the pineapple was in 1493 after Columbus discovered it and brought it back.

I mean, discovered it for Europeans. Lots of people knew they existed before Columbus was there. And the Europeans loved them. They thought this was just the bee's knees. They thought it was awesome. And the problem was they had to figure out how to transport it across the Atlantic without all of them rotting.

And so one of the ways that they did that was that they would store it in sugar. So this fruit that wasn't native to Europe and sugar, which came from the New World also, all packed together.

[3 : 13] It was very expensive. And so it was this huge luxury. And so if you had a pineapple, oh my goodness, it was wildly popular. It was wildly expensive. And that's why even if you went around and looked at different paintings of lords and ladies, you know what they would often be posing with?

Pineapple. Because it's saying, hey, look at me. Some prestige, right? In fact, if you threw a dinner party, you could rent a pineapple as a centerpiece.

And what you're trying to show people is you're trying to honor them as guests. Hey, listen, you are somebody who's worth lavish welcome. The first pineapple to grow in the UK was in 1723 in Buckinghamshire.

They had to create this thing called the pineapple stove in order to keep the plant warm enough in order to grow the pineapples. It was very labor intensive, very costly. And over time, the pineapple, it started to become this symbol of hospitality, welcome and friendship, that you would go out of your way to not spare anything in order to serve somebody who came into your home.

I don't know if this has any traction here in Scotland, but especially in America, in the deep south, you will see things in hotels. You'll see bedposts where pineapples are carved into them on mantelpieces and so on, on linens, because it pointed to hospitality.

[4 : 37] In fact, at a time, you know, in the American south, if you put a pineapple out on your front porch, it was a sign that you would be welcomed. Come on in. Come on in. Have a glass of sweet tea.

Come and hang out. It was the sign of welcome. And now the point I'm making isn't that you need to buy the most expensive thing and like show off to people, right? We've said hospitality is not entertaining.

It's not trying to get out all of the fine china all the time. That can't be the only way that we show hospitality. The reason I bring it up, though, is just to ask a simple question before we get into our text.

What is going to be your visual reminder to practice biblical hospitality? Just an idea, right? What would it be like if you bought some type of hand towel that had a symbol that reminded you to be hospitable?

What would it look like to have a painting in your kitchen with a Bible verse on it, maybe like an Acts 2 that they shared meals in their homes or that Christ welcomes us?

[5 : 37] Or maybe it could be that you have a great pineapple dessert. This is free of charge, guys. This is just pious advice. This isn't from the text.

You have a great pineapple dessert and you invite people over and you save it for opportunities when somebody comes in and they don't know Christ and you can tell them about the history of the pineapple and you can tell them about this pineapple dessert and you can say, hey, and for me in my faith, you know what?

It's just a reminder that Christ has lavished his love on me and has welcomed me and that's what I want to do for other people and then keep eating and see what happens.

I don't know. Just throwing it out there. Just an idea, guys. It's going to sit there for the rest of the time. Just a little reminder. Here's the thing, though. I think in life, this is what I've found.

Maybe you found it, too. Hospitality is hard. It costs us. Lots of times it's something like the lunch after service where you do a lot of work behind the scenes and a lot of people have no idea how long it took you to do it and maybe a couple people said thanks.

[6 : 42] Many times we have important things to do and lots of times we'd rather just not do it. And when things are hard and costly, what we tend to do, at least I tend to do, I'm not going to put this on you, I tend to complain.

I tend to grumble. It's a problem for lots of God's people in the Bible. Venturing to guess it's probably the same for many of us. When things get hard, we tend to grumble.

But we've got to be honest about it. And our passage in 1 Peter is just that. It is honest about life. Before we look at it, though, let's pray and ask God for his help.

Father, would you help us to come to an end of our self-reliance as we listen to your word? Would you speak, O Lord?

Speak to our minds, speak to our hands, speak to our hearts. If you're silent, we're just going to waste away. We ask this in the name of the word that became flesh.

[7 : 40] Amen. Just two things from our passage this evening. The barriers to hospitality and then the path to hospitality. What are the barriers to it and what is the path to it?

So Peter opens our section that we are looking at in verse 7. And he says, the end of all things is at hand. Like before COP26 and Greta, Peter was there saying it.

The end of all things is at hand. Like 2,000 years ago. And now I don't think Peter, he wasn't trying to say that, you know, expect Jesus within a fortnight to come back. I don't really know exactly what he expected.

But I don't think that's not the point that Peter is making. He actually says in his next epistle in 2 Peter 3, he talks about the coming of the Lord. And he says, one day is to the Lord as a thousand and a thousand is one day.

And so then he says, the Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise. Some count slowness, but is patient towards you. So he says, the end is at hand. He's not saying, hey, like tomorrow, it's going to happen.

[8 : 42] Oh, I was wrong. I guess maybe the next day. What he said, what he's saying is that a new day has, a new age has dawned because of the coming, the living, the dying, the rising, the ascending of Jesus.

Which means, now that that has all happened, because Christ has come, Christ has risen. He says the end could come at any moment. And his encouragement then is to live into this future reality. We're supposed to lean into it, lean into this future reality. In fact, there's an already aspect to this future reality. We are even now enjoying the saving promises of God.

And what Peter's done, if you had time to go back through his letter, is he's built this real deep Christology. He's quoting all these Old Testament passages and he's tying it to Christ. He's saying this is what Christ has done.

And if you are in Christ, in some ways the future has come into the present. And your life is now tied to his and therefore you share in his life.

[9 : 52] And to forget this simple command, the end is at hand. If you forget that, then what happens is the opposite of what he commands.

Does that make sense? Forgetting this is for all of these things that are going to flow from it. You're going to go the opposite direction. So, instead of being self-controlled, you see that? It says, therefore, be self-controlled.

Instead of that, uncontrolled. Right? There's no disciplined hope in your life. And when suffering comes, what do you do? Turn inwards, right?

You ever had that happen? Suffering comes in your life. It's hard to think about somebody else. There's immediate problems in your own life. There's real problems. Instead of being sober-minded, you'd be drunk-minded.

It's hard to see ahead much and therefore you live for self-gratification in the present. Instead of love covering a multitude of sins, instead it's noticing and harping on other people's sins.

[10 : 51] Ever had that in your own marriage? It's easy to see the other person's sins. Maybe your parenting is like one constant lecture. You notice the inconsistencies and annoying idiosyncrasies of other people.

And so it's hard to want to be hospitable. And your home isn't one of welcome and grace but score-keeping. Instead of hospitality without grumbling, maybe you don't practice at all, but maybe you do.

And instead it's just hospitality with grumbling, which is no real hospitality at all. The Greek word there for grumbling can mean to mutter to oneself.

Secret displeasure. I can do all of these things on the outside but in the inside? These people don't say thank you enough. They knew all that I did.

Whether you're talking about your kids or your church family. You ever struggled with that? It's very possible to go through the motions in the Christian life but to miss the heart of it.

[11 : 56] Wouldn't that be tragic? To do all the performing stuff but you're really missing the heart of it. There's a movie called Babette's Feast.

It won the Oscar for Best Foreign Picture in 1987. It was made in Denmark. Anybody seen Babette's Feast? Like, oh, we've got one fan of 80s Danish cinema.

Two. Okay, great. What are the rest of you guys doing with your life? Come on. Don't watch Danish films from the 80s? This movie is like the opposite of superhero movies, right?

If you like Marvel movies, this is going to be the slowest thing you've ever seen. What Babette's Feast is about there is this small, pious, religious, strict, dour, Lutheran community in 19th century Denmark.

And like good Lutherans, the father, the patriarch, he has two daughters and he names one of them, the oldest, he names her Martina after Martin Luther.

[12 : 57] And he names the next one Philippa after Martin Luther's friend Philip Melancthon. Like, that's like, if you think you're Presbyterian, like did you name your daughter Juanita Knox?

Like, this is pretty Lutheran here. And what's obvious is that this community that is portrayed, they want to be very, very holy. They want to practice the Christian life. But what you quickly see is there is little to no joy in their life. In fact, they kind of like reject pleasure altogether. And so what starts is this desire to love God and neighbor. It kind of devolves into judgmental self-righteousness. They're grumbling. They're like inwardly focused. They're morose. They're small. They're just kind of batten down the hatches. And it's like they have this spiritual gift of pointing out all of the sin out there and don't notice anything in here. And one of the ways that the film gets this across is in the bland food that they eat. Like, their dishes, it's like boiled fish and boiled potatoes. My apologies if you make a mean boiled fish and boiled potatoes.

[14:00] I'm sure it's delicious. But in this movie, it doesn't look very good. It's this community that lacks joy. And as a community lacks joy, it's rarely hospitable. And it doesn't have enough joy for itself.

How on earth could this joy overflow to other people? How could it be shared with the world? But into the movie steps Babette. She is this refugee who flees the Civil War in Paris.

And she's lost everything that she has. And she asks to become the housekeeper to Martina and Philippa. But no one knows about her past. And no one asks either. She's just kind of like this enigma who steps into the movie.

And she ends up cooking and cleaning for them for 14 years. And it's just like this other focused source of light into the movie. Just joy. And Babette, she's like the first farm-to-table hipster. She's finding all the best ingredients and just making these delicious food for them. She insists on it. And her cooking ends up bringing this life into this community that would otherwise, they would like spurn the pleasures of food.

[15:05] Now, maybe you aren't into bland food. I certainly hope not. But many of us can, we can relate to going through the motions of the Christian life. And you know what is missing a lot of times?

Joy. Joy. Joy gets replaced by grumbling. There are many things to grumble about. You know, hospitality, it entails other people.

And newsflash, the Bible tells us that every single person is what? A sinner. Not just outside the church. Very much inside it, too. We have sinners. And did you notice the context of hospitality in 1 Peter 4 when it says to show hospitality without grumbling?

It's a one another. It's not just talking outside of the walls of the church, inviting in non-Christians and things like that. It's talking about towards other Christians. It is easy to grumble about showing hospitality to other Christians.

You know, sometimes a stranger is a lot easier because at least you're oblivious to their sin and their idiosyncrasies and those things that annoy you. I mean, spend enough time with me, you'll find out very quickly the sin that I struggle with.

[16:11] And it might annoy you. And it's not just the sin of others that make it hard. It's also the suffering of this life. You know, if we had more time, too, we could go back and we could trace this theme of suffering that comes to Christians in 1 Peter that he's talking about.

You know, he even says a few verses later in chapter 4, verse 13, he says to share in Christ is to share in his sufferings. This is not pie in the sky.

Like, hey, imagine this beautiful thing when everything just clicks and it's wonderful. Isn't life great? And you forget all about the sorrows of this life and you get transported to the heavenly table as you're dealing with it.

No! It's in the context of suffering. There's opposition out there. There's sinners at the table. There's strife in the church. It's very realistic.

Hmm. He's nothing but honest about the trials and hardships of life and they're enough to make you not able to see clearly through the fog of pain and hurt and rejection.

[17:11] The point isn't that these things aren't hard, but when we forget about them, they can often become barriers. The barrier to hospitality is becoming inward focused and lacking joy. You know, not letting love cover sin, but letting grumbling fester.

And to want all of God's gifts just for yourself. There's a way about going about church life where joy can remain elusive to you. You show up to all the worship services.

You come to all the prayer meetings. Learn of all the theological terms. And you can do it with zero joy in your life. You can nod an approval as the preacher talks about Christian ethics and the way that you're supposed to live, but not grasp how profoundly the life that Peter describes depends on something outside of ourselves.

The Bishop J.C. Ryle, he once wrote, You can like the fruit of the gospel, but not the root from which it springs. All right. So those are the barriers to hospitality. It's this inward focusedness. It's when joy is completely gone. It's like knowing the lyrics, but not the tune. And so second then, let's look at what's the path to hospitality. Again, let's go back to verse 7.

[18 : 21] The end of all things is at hand. Now let's be honest. Like how many of you guys walk around saying that? Does anybody wake up this morning and is like, The end of all things is at hand.

Do you say that to your kids? Now usually when you think about it, who do you think about? There's some like Christian wacko on Saki Hall Street shouting it loudly, and they're not wearing shoes, right? That's what you think of. But interestingly, when Peter says, He says, The end of all things is at hand.

Therefore, what? Be sober-minded and self-controlled. It entails waking up to the way that things really are. Mark 5, Jesus, there's a man, the demoniac, he's possessed with a demon, and Jesus, he ends up healing him.

This man, he's gone about, everybody knows about him. He screams, he cuts himself. He's a wild man. There's no self-control, right? It's like there's this fog in his life. And Jesus heals him, and it says later, People come, and they find him, and he's sitting there.

And he's clothed. And it says that he is in his right mind. It's the exact same verb that Peter uses here for sober-minded.

[19 : 30] And so it's the one who knows that the end of all things is at hand, who gets it and is in their right mind. We think of the crazy person shouting things like this.

But actually, Peter's saying to live this way, to understand that Christ could come back, to understand all that Christ has done, is to actually be able to see most clearly. You're most sane when you're remembering this.

This is his reminder of the gospel of Jesus Christ and what he has accomplished. To wake up, to realize that the good news of great joy has come. And here's the point.

Listen, I know that there's things in your life that are hard. I am not trying to minimize that. I am not trying to be glib. I don't know all of your stories. But listen, I live in a broken world. And I know people.

And I know my own life. And I've experienced the sufferings of this life. And I'm sure in a crowd this size, there are things that you hate about your life. There are things to mourn.

[20 : 30] Real, sad, hard things. There are ways you've wanted your life to turn out and it has not happened. There are broken relationships within your family. There is bodily suffering. There are diagnoses we do not want to hear.

Peter isn't glib about the reality of suffering in his letter. And God sees your sorrow. He hears your cries. I know these things weigh on you.

But we don't stop there. You know what else I know? Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again. Peter puts it at the beginning of his letter.

He says, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading.

There's a wonder and a joy that comes with the gospel that is made for the harsh realities of this life. That stuff is going to come.

[21 : 31] I said this earlier. I was at Hope Community Church in Helensboro. We were talking about joy, actually. It just so happens. And one of the things I encourage them to is, In your life, Never say, Of course I'm a Christian.

I think we should say, Can you believe it? Me? God saw me? God noticed me? God noticed me? God wanted to come and enter into all of this mess for people like me? He would die for me? Am I a Christian?

Can you believe it? Can you believe it? And it goes from matter of fact to deep, lasting joy. The end of all things is at hand.

Therefore you can see clearly and get on with loving others. This is the path towards hospitality. And notice, there's this other-centeredness that Christ shows us that shapes the Christian life. [22 : 36] Clear thinking is going to lead to proper actions. Not just so you can see everything, so you can make fun of people more and point out more of their sin. No, clear thinking, it's going to lead to proper action.

It's just what happens in Mark 10, 45. Jesus came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. And so Peter writes in verse 8 that we should love one another earnestly. Why? Because love covers a multitude of sins. He's probably quoting Proverbs 10, 12 there. It says, Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses.

You know, he's not saying that you can never call out sin, or we should just like overlook abuse, or there's not a proper application for Matthew 18, right? If somebody sins against you, you go to them. And if they don't, then you bring another person.

You do all of those things. But what he's saying is that love, love from the gospel, it takes the oxygen out of the fire of sin. How should we earnestly love one another in the church?

[23 : 39] The Greek word there says, in verse 9, it says to show hospitality, right? And actually, that word, it kind of looks like a verb. It's actually an adverb in the Greek. You didn't know there's going to be so much grammar tonight.

It's an adverb, and what that means is it's describing the action of what comes before. So it's tying, showing hospitality to what? Love covering a multitude of sins.

How am I supposed to love earnestly? Well, love covers a multitude of sins. And you know what? Be hospitable, without grumbling. Don't grumble at what could be the inconvenience that this has done to you, or how it drains you.

Why? Because love covers. It covers a guest breaking your favorite dish. It covers a guest overstaying their welcome. It covers somebody being so dull to talk to them.

It's like this monumental feat of concentration for you. Love covers. You see, the gospel-centered heart, it focuses itself outward. It's so full of joy.

[24 : 42] A heart that is not full of joy, it's going to cling to every little happy thing for itself. But if it is full, and it's full to overflowing, then there can be something that is shared. We have to go to the root of things.

And we can start to see all these opportunities to love, and to cover sin, and to show welcome. All of them, verse 11 says, that we could give glory to God through Jesus Christ.

Think of that. What hardship are you going through? How can it bring glory to Jesus Christ? Christ. It's not trying to say that that thing isn't hard.

But that we can glorify God in all things. And this is going to take us realizing the gospel every single day, going back again and again. The end of all things is at hand. Christ has come.

Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again. Christ has risen. And it takes a lot of work to kind of rework these habits of thinking in our life. I saw this YouTube video a little while ago of a guy.

[25 : 43] He knew some welders. He was like an engineer. He knew some welders. And they made a bicycle for him where there was this little thingamajig on it where if he turned it left, the bike went right.

And if he turned it right, the bike went left. Do you think you could do it? Do you think you could ride it? Do you think you might need like a day to figure it out? Well, it was really funny.

So he gets on the bicycle. It shows him trying to do it. And it's not just, it didn't look like he hadn't just never ridden a bicycle before. It looked like he came from another planet and didn't understand gravity.

It was just wobbling and falling and all. Again and again and again. And he went on this speaking tour. And he would ask people. He was kind of talking about the ways that our brain needs to be rewired.

And he would ask people, ask for volunteers. If I had a bicycle, I would have brought it. Not just a pineapple. It would have been better. And he asks people to come up as volunteers. And he gives them ten tries to get across the stage on this bicycle.

[26 : 37] And it's absolutely hilarious. Because there are all these people and they're just, they're, ah. Because the brain has been wired to think a certain way. And it would be funny because he would joke with them. And he'd say, no, I told you, if you turn left, it goes right.

If you turn right, it goes left. Don't do it that way. And everybody would laugh. And then he'd say, oh, remember, you're supposed to keep your feet on the pedals in order to go. Like, it's all these basic things. Like, you understand the instructions already.

Stay on the bicycle. Pedal your feet. You turn that way, it goes this way. You turn this way, it goes that way. Right? It's not that hard to understand. But then, the video cuts to him.

And he practices for ten minutes every day for eight months. And all of a sudden, you start to see him. And his brain starts to reconfigure these ways of riding a bicycle. And he starts to, he's not awesome at it, but he starts to get it.

And slight little things throw him off. Like if a cell phone would go off in his pocket, it's like he would forget again. And he'd kind of, like, fall over. Why did I share that?

[27 : 35] You see, we live in this world that wires us one way. And it tries to tell us again and again. And all of these things, what is good and what is evil? Well, what is worthy and what is worthless?

What is joyful and what is sad? And it takes time to work in these new habits of love and other-centeredness. And humility and patience to start to see clearly.

It's like riding a bike that turns the wrong way a lot of times in the Christian life. But when we give ourselves to it. When we return again and again.

He's not going, like, riding on mountain trails. Right? This is like flat pavement that he's trying to go on. So many times we want to skip ahead. But we go back to these basics.

And rehearse them again and again. We're turning again and again to the good news of great joy. We start to get this new muscle memory. It's like we need reminders.

[28 : 32] To the welcome that we've been shown. And yeah, there's, like, slight disruptions that come into our life. Sometimes big disruptions. And they knock us over and we crash. But we come again and again by the power of the Holy Spirit to this love and welcome and hope that changes us.

Love covers a multitude of sins. Hospitality without grumbling. The end is at hand. And did you see in verse 10? In verse 10, what we're to do with the grace and gifts God's given us.

What are you supposed to do? God's given you all these gifts. To what? Enjoy for yourself? Ooh, thanks God. These are mine. What's the purpose of his gifts towards you? To serve one another.

To serve one another. Right? It's like giving you this bicycle and you're like, oh, thanks. I'll never ride it. Right? The way that we enjoy the gift is by actually using it. Use what God has given you.

And he says we steward the varied graces of God. What it's trying to say is he has given gifts in different ways to you. So, so many times you hear things like, oh, be like, do outreach and do evangelism.

[29 : 39] Practice hospitality. Spirituality. And usually a lot of times we just think of other people who are really good at it. You're like, well, I don't have that gift. What am I supposed to do? You know, if I just had gifts like that person in the church, then maybe I could start doing ministry.

And we completely missed the point that if you are a new creation in Christ and the Holy Spirit has been given to you, there are these things called spiritual gifts that he's poured into you. Right? And the more that we come to him and we practice these things, the more the fruit of the Spirit grows in our life.

Do you believe this? That God not only loves you, but he equips you and he gives you gifts. And the only way those gifts are going to be enjoyed is if you employ them for the love and service of other people.

And listen, we need each other in that then. Because then there's gifts that he's given you that, guess what? He's not given me. It goes through different lists. Right? Whoever speaks is one who speaks oracles.

Whoever serves is one who serves by the strength that God supplies. No matter what it is in his varied grace of what he has poured into your life, he's calling you to serve. And it's only through the body of Christ working together that we're going to be the witness that he calls us to be.

[30 : 49] So you might have an extra room or a big house or great cooking skills or the gift of evangelistic persuasion. Or maybe you've been given time. Prayer.

The gift of, oh my goodness. For the gift of prayer. Somebody who loves and devotes their life to prayer. Let's go back to Babette's feast.

I'm going to ruin it for you guys. You had like since 1987 to watch the movie. Sorry. Spoiler alert. Here it comes. You know, Babette, she finds out that she's won the lottery back in France. 10,000 francs.

And what she wants to do with that money is to cook a feast for this dour Lutheran community. And they think that, you know, oh hold on, what are we going to do? It's probably going to be a sin to indulge in this food and to enjoy it.

It's too rich of a food she's probably going to make. And so they kind of get together and they decide, you know what we're going to do? We'll eat it, but we won't enjoy it. That way we won't be sinning.

[31 : 49] Operation No Joy. And what you find out is that Babette is actually this famous chef from Paris.

And all of a sudden you start to see all these ingredients showing up. And she's making these exotic things. This turtle soup and bringing out the pigeon and stuff like that. It doesn't sound good to me, but apparently it's amazing.

And she makes this meal that transforms them. And you start to see at this meal these people, it's just quiet. Again, like this movie would not make any money nowadays. There's no, nothing blows up. It's just people sitting there quietly and you can hear the clink of their spoons.

And their face is sad. And it's so amazing that they just start to smile. And then they find out the cost of it.

How much she spent. One of the sisters, she goes into the kitchen to thank Babette. And she's like, oh, Babette, now you've won the lottery. We're going to miss you so much. Now that you're going to return to Paris, surely.

[32 : 46] And Babette says, I'm not going to be going back to Paris. I have no money. I spent it all on this feast. She serves these people a meal at the cost of everything to her.

It's because of her deep love for hungry people that she feeds them with everything she has. Her love, it's like it covers a multitude of sins. Her hospitality, it's costly and it changes them.

It turns grumbling into joy. This is what Christ has done for us. That he has fed you at infinite cost to himself.

It's his grace that feeds us. And then his table is offered freely to you. Are you going to partake of it? Will you let his love cover a multitude of your sins?

It's his promises. They're not petty and hollow, but they're rich and full. His promises and that we see that the tomb of empty sadness becomes this mouth of resurrection, joy.

[34 : 01] Do you believe this? Will you partake? Will you let him feed you? The end is at hand. So let's get on with this loving and showing hospitality.

And reminding that God's given us this grace in order to steward it and to serve one another. All the glory of Jesus Christ. Let's pray together. Father, would you help us to abide in our Savior Christ?

To abide in his love? To walk in his ways? We want our joy to be in you and our joy to be full. And so full that it overflows the thresholds of our homes to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

To our family. To our neighbors. To strangers. Would you make this church family a reflection of the joyful welcome we've received in Christ? Father, would you root out grumbling from our hearts?

Please do this. Would you give us the humility and boldness to do this? All so that in everything you may be glorified through Jesus Christ. For to him belong glory and dominion forever and ever.

[35 : 14] And so we pray this in his name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. 911. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.