

# Radical Hospitality

Learning how to love difficult people like Jesus did

Featuring Dr. Richard Beck

groups

### INTRODUCTION

Living out radical hospitality means showing strangers the same level of kindness, grace, and love we show our family and friends. But that's just the beginning. If we want to follow in Jesus' footsteps, we have to press through our instinctive disgust toward those who are different from us and show hospitality to even the most difficult people among us.

There are people we come into contact with that we instinctively shame and dishonor. They might include the homeless and destitute, those who are physically or mentally handicapped, or individuals we consider deeply morally compromised.

Demonstrating radical hospitality means denying our instincts to treat these people poorly, and instead treating them with special honor. This is how Jesus lived. It's how he calls his followers to live as well.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you think it's realistic to expand your moral circle to include everyone in your spheres of influence? Why or why not?
2. Talk about a time when you had to depend on another person in some way, large or small. What did you learn about yourself through that experience?
3. Do you have trouble knowing how to interact with mentally or physically disabled people? If so, what role do you think disgust plays in your discomfort?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. Is it difficult for you to believe that God gives special honor to the parts of the church body that are weakest and most vulnerable? Why or why not?
5. During the video, Dr. Beck said, "What divides the [church] body is how we shame. It can be as simple as saying, 'This is the most annoying person.'" In what small ways do you shame people you should honor?
6. Who is the least agreeable person in your social circle? What is one thing you can do to practice "The Little Way" by showing that person special honor?

### APPLYING WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED

People who are difficult to love are also difficult to show kindness toward. That's the challenge. To show radical hospitality, we have to choose to be kind to people who don't necessarily deserve it and who may never change the way they behave.

God didn't send Jesus to die on the cross and be raised back to life in order to make bad people good. He did it in order to make dead people live. That's what Jesus meant when he said God desires mercy, not sacrifice. He loves each of us enough to give us the opportunity for everlasting life. That love includes the most objectionable people in your life.

The essence of radical hospitality is opening up your world so no one is ever a stranger.



## CHANGING YOUR MIND

*The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.*

**1 Corinthians 12:21–25**



