Bible Study

Companionship Exemplified: Biblical Examples of the 5 Practices of Companionship

Introduction

This Bible study is intended as a complementary piece to the Companionship workshop by Pathways to Promise. It delves into Scriptural accounts which exemplify the five basic practices of Companionship: Hospitality, Neighboring, Side-by-Side, Listening, and Accompaniment.

Once you have been trained in Companionship, this Bible study would be ideal for use in your Companionship Team meetings as a continuing education piece which can deepen your understanding of your work and provide encouragement in it.

The Bible study contains five sections, one for each of the five practices of Companionship. Each section contains at least one Bible verse related to the Companionship practice, at least one Biblical account which exemplifies that Companionship practice, and some discussion questions. It is recommended to go through one section at a time; therefore, this Bible study could take five weeks to complete depending on the length of your meeting/class.

This Bible study will flow best if there is a designated Bible study leader who guides the group discussion. One person can serve as the Bible study leader for the entire study, or you may have your Companionship Team members take turns leading it each week. The leader should go through the lesson in advance, looking up the Bible passages and preparing his/her own answers in order to be well-prepared for group discussion and anticipate any questions that people may raise during the study.

Finally, we recommend using the English Standard Version (ESV) of the Bible for this study, as it most closely captures the precise wording of the original text. For your convenience, we have included an Appendix containing the Bible passages in order of reference. God's blessings to you as you delve into this Bible study!

Companionship Defined

Companionship is a practice of presence rooted in our natural capacities as human beings to act on our concern for another person. The Companionship Model was developed in 1987 by Rev. Craig Rennebohm when he founded the Mental Health Chaplaincy organization in Seattle, Washington as a way to engage with people experiencing homelessness and emotional and mental health challenges. Over time the practice of Companionship has been extended to a wider array of people, including those who are survivors of trauma, those with substance use disorder, those in crisis, and even those experiencing age related memory loss and dementia. Offering Companionship, however, is not exclusive to our engagement with strangers, but can be offered as well to our friends, families, work associates, and anyone we encounter who may be feeling socially isolated or distressed in some

fashion. A Companion is a person who shows kindness to those they encounter; they are a neighbor who walks alongside another person in distress, offering encouragement and hope.

We all face times of adversity in life. Companionship training helps equip us to understand the suffering of another on some level, offer compassionate care, and help connect the other person to resources beneficial to overall well-being. *(This is a summary of ideas captured on pages 7-11 in your Companionship Training Guidebook.)*

Note: This Bible Study was written by Deaconess Carole Terkula in consultation with Jermine Alberty. The organization Pathways to Promise manages and disseminates The Companionship Movement trainings and resources. Please visit their website for more information: https://www.pathways2promise.org/ or contact them at admin@pathways2promise.org.

Exploring the Five Practices of Companionship through Biblical Examples

Hospitality

"Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality." (Romans 12:13)

Providing a welcoming, friendly atmosphere that is safe, comfortable, and inviting is the hallmark of hospitality. Indeed, warmly receiving people into our houses of worship makes them feel valued and provides the foundation for fellowship and community-building. And we know that healing happens in community; hope happens in connection with one another. *(This is a summary of the section on Hospitality on page 17 in your Companionship Training Guidebook.)*

Opening Discussion Questions

1. When someone visits your home, what are some things you usually do to extend hospitality to your guest(s)?

2. Do you know someone with the gift of hospitality? If so, how has that person exemplified being a good host/hostess in your opinion?

3. Think of some of the ways hotels, restaurants and other service-based businesses try to show hospitality to their customers/clients. Share some of them here.

4. Have you ever had an experience where you did not receive hospitality? If so, how did that make you feel?

5. If you were a first-time visitor to your church, how would you like people to show you hospitality?

Biblical Examples of Hospitality

Read: Genesis 18:1-8

Hospitality is about welcoming people with respect and dignity and offering a safe and comfortable environment where they can find rest and refreshment.

6. Describe how Abraham offered hospitality to his three guests using the description of hospitality above as your guide. Then think of specific ways your congregation offers hospitality using the same guidelines.

Hospitable Actions	Abraham	Your Congregation
Welcoming people with dignity and respect		
Offering a safe and comfortable environment		
Offering rest and refreshment		

7. The Latin root for the word "Companionship" is "cum panis," which means "with bread." Indeed, food aides in fellowship building. Jesus knew this truth and often enjoyed table fellowship with his disciples and others, where He broke bread with them, taught them, and built relationships with them. Try to list at least 3 Biblical accounts where Jesus practiced this kind of companionship with others:

A.

B.

C.

8. It is especially important to extend hospitality to people experiencing mental health concerns or who are in some sort of emotional distress because they often feel ignored, avoided, isolated, and marginalized. Hospitality acknowledges their inherent dignity and worth as human beings made in the image of God. **Read Luke 19:1-10.**

A. Why would Zacchaeus have been despised by religious leaders in his day?

B. When Jesus reached the spot where Zacchaeus was, what was the first word out of Jesus' mouth?

C. Why is it important to call people by name, especially visitors? When people appear in church whom you have not yet met, you can approach them and say: "Hello! I don't think I have had the pleasure of meeting you yet. My name is ___. How do you like to be called?"

D. How did Jesus view Zacchaeus? How did the way Jesus treated Zacchaeus communicate to Zacchaeus and others his dignity, value, and worth in God's eyes? How can we do likewise to everyone we encounter?

9. In his book *Mental Health and the Church,* Dr. Stephen Grcevich points out several ways congregations can help make their environment most welcoming for people with anxiety and other mental health issues. He offers the following questions to help guide congregations in creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. Consider these questions and discuss as a group:

A. Does our congregation offer a private tour of our facility upon request so that people could walk through our building sometime prior to Sunday worship service in order to reduce anxiety about where things are located and know what to expect? Do we announce that these private tours are available upon request on our website for those seeking a church?

B. Would a first-time visitor to our church struggle to find where they (or their children) need to go from our signage (both indoor and outdoor)? How can our signage be as clear as possible to reduce stress, anxiety, and frustration?

C. Can someone predisposed to severe anxiety/panic attacks in crowded or confined spaces inconspicuously find a comfortable place to sit during worship service? How do we communicate the existence of this space?

D. Can we identify a quiet place (or spaces) within our facility where an adult or child might go to experience privacy while regaining emotional self-control/composure?

10. Based on your reflections on this section on hospitality, how can your congregation improve the hospitality it extends to people who visit as well as to long-time members?

Neighboring

"'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' And he said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Matthew 22:36-39)

"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."
(1Thessalonians 5:11)

The practice of neighboring invites us to discover our common humanity; that is, focusing on what we have in common with one another, setting aside our power and privilege, and meeting as equals. In neighboring, we view the other person as one who is created in the image of God and someone for whom Christ died. Therefore, the other person has great inherent value, worth, and dignity.

Neighboring allows us to come alongside those who may be in distress and offer them care in some fashion. Oftentimes the care comes in the form of building a relationship and then connecting the other person to available resources which may assist them in their time of need. *(This is a summary of the section on Neighboring on page 18 in your Companionship Training Guidebook.)*

Opening Discussion Questions

11. Some of the most common questions we tend to ask another person when meeting them for the first time tend to put people in pigeonholes, or create a sense of hierarchy and power that is detrimental to the mindset of seeing the other person as being of equal value in God's sight. Some of these questions include, "Where do you work?" "Where do you live?" "Are you married?" "Do you have any children?" "Which church do you attend?"

A. Can you think of some other questions we commonly ask others that tend to "put people in boxes" or that stereotype them, or that we ask to see how we "stack up?"

B. Open-ended questions that allow for the other person to share that with which they feel comfortable are often best. For example, try asking: "Tell me a little bit about yourself." Or, "Tell me a little bit about what's going on in your world these days." These types of open-ended questions come across as less intimidating and allow the other person to reveal what they feel comfortable sharing. Practice asking these questions with a partner in your Bible study group now. How did it feel to ask these questions? How did it feel to respond?

12. Can you think of a time when you were asked a direct question which made you feel as if you were on the spot/uncomfortable and you were made to feel "less than?" Describe that situation and the range of emotions you may have experienced, sharing as you feel comfortable.

13. Personal reflection question: If a person experiencing homelessness, wearing shabby clothes and with personal hygiene issues were to enter your church on Sunday and approach you for help, what would your initial thoughts and reactions be? Be honest! The practice of neighboring attends to the preconceived notions, opinions, and biases we hold. How could you lay aside any hierarchical thoughts and pigeonholing tendencies and see the person Jesus sees? **Read Matthew 25:34-40 and discuss as a group.**

Biblical Example of Neighboring

Read: Luke 10:25-37 (again, we recommend using the ESV for this passage)

***Before beginning this section, take time to review and discuss how the story of the Samaritan in Luke 10 was used as an anchor for the overall Companionship Model in the Companionship workshop.**

Some historical context: In Jesus' day there was bitter hostility between Jews and Samaritans, whom some Jews believed were inferior half-breeds. Samaritans were a mixed race resulting from the intermarriage of the Israelites left behind during the exile and the Gentiles who were in that area. Many Jews tended to view the Samaritans as "unclean" and avoided contact with them even to the point of going around Samaria rather than walking through it, even though it would have been the shorter route between Jerusalem and Galilee.

Furthermore, some Jews viewed Samaritans as spiritual inferiors because their sacred writings only included the first five books of the Old Testament (the Pentateuch), and the Samaritans rejected the other inspired writings included in the Old Testament. Because their sacred writings did not contain the full prophecy of the coming Messiah, the Samaritans' view of the Messiah was very limited; they tended to think of him merely as a teacher rather than a savior.

The Pharisees were some of the powerful Jewish leaders and teachers in Jesus' day who devoted themselves to strict observance of God's Law. Unfortunately their zealousness for keeping God's Law led to self-righteous thoughts which often overshadowed love for their fellow man.

14. A. In this passage, who does Jesus declare to be the neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?

    B. Why would this have been both shocking and humbling to the pharisee who posed the question to Jesus and to Jewish listeners?

15. How did the Samaritan view the man who had been beaten and left by the side of the road?

16. The Samaritan's compassion for his fellow human being spurred him to action. How did the Samaritan care for the man who was left for dead on the side of the road? How was this an enactment of Jesus' words in Matthew 22:36-39?

17. In Matthew 9:13 Jesus quotes Hosea 6:6 when he states, "But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'"

    A. What do you think Jesus means by this statement?

    B. How is the Samaritan an exemplar of Hosea 6:6? Discuss the irony.

    C. How is Jesus ultimately the Good Samaritan to us?

D. Having received God's great mercy towards us, we are then able to extend mercy to one another. Discuss the connection between our Baptismal union with Christ and the good works we do in His name (Consider John 15:5).

E. As Christians, how can we show mercy by helping "bandage the wounds" of those God places in our midst?

- Share some specific ways we can care for those with physical ailments:

- Share some specific ways we can care for those with mental and/or emotional hurts:

- Share some specific ways we can care for those with spiritual sickness:

18. Note that the Samaritan gave what assistance he could at that particular time using the resources at his personal disposal, and then he entrusted the beaten man's care to others who could best care for the man long-term. That is, the Samaritan connected the beaten man to others who could help him too. It is reassuring to know that we don't have to be the sole "hero" for someone else in need—we can and we should employ the help of others who can create a circle of care around that person.

A. Does your congregation have a referral list of a variety of resources that you can share with people in need? If your church does not have a list of local mental health resources, you might consider creating a binder of such materials for ease of access for those seeking community assistance. Pathways to Promise's *Mental Health Ministry: A Toolkit for Faith Communities* has a useful template for creating a list of community helps on p. 34. The Look Up Indiana website, created by The Lutheran Foundation in Fort Wayne, Indiana, also has a local provider search button on the homepage where you can enter your zip code to find agencies and organizations which can provide assistance to those in need.

B. Do you know when your congregation's referral list was last updated?

C. It has been said that a referral list is only as good as it is shared. Are people in your congregation aware that this referral list exists?

D. Having a referral list is important; however, being able to provide a warm hand-off to resources for people who are struggling is even better. A "warm hand-off" means you help people needing assistance by directly connecting them to the source(s) of care. That could include making a phone call or email to an organization with their permission on their behalf, or even arranging for their transportation to the agency(ies) where they can get further connected to help. Consider how your congregation can provide a warm hand-off utilizing your referral list.

E. How can your congregation let people know that you can connect them to helpful resources?

***Discuss why you think the Samaritan story was used as the Biblical exemplar piece for the practice of Neighboring in this study. Can you think of other Biblical examples which would fit Neighboring? Explain.**

Side-by-Side

"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." (Ephesians 5:1-2)

The Companionship practice called Side-by-Side reminds us to be mindful of how we position ourselves in the physical space surrounding another person and also our relational stance with that person. Side-by-Side involves walking in love alongside the other person on their wellness journey. Sharing the journey side-by-side helps us to look out at the world together, not imposing our ideas or agenda on the other person. The side-by-side stance allows two people to walk in their relationship with mutuality together. As Companions, we do not push or prod or lead the other person into taking steps he/she is not ready or willing to take. We simply walk alongside, helping create a greater sense of respect and agency as we honor the capacity of the other to act with autonomy. *(This is a summary of the section on Side-by-Side on page 19 in your Companionship Training Guidebook.)*

Opening Discussion Questions

19. The practice of Side-by-Side reminds us to be mindful of how we position ourselves in the physical space surrounding another person.

A. How might direct face-to-face, eye-to-eye contact come across to someone who already feels marginalized?

B. Can you recall a time when you felt uncomfortable with the proximity or stance of another person towards you? Share what that experience was like for you.

20. The practice of Side-by-Side also deals with our relational stance to others, and the importance of letting the other person take the lead in his/her journey. As much as we are able, we can help equip them to take the lead and also encourage them as they take those steps forward.

A. Can you think of a time in your life when you were pushed or prodded into doing something you now wish you had not done? How did that make you feel at the time? Share as you feel comfortable.

B. Describe a time in your life when someone simply walked alongside you in a particular situation or circumstance in your life. How did the way that person related to you during that time impact you?

Biblical Examples of Side-by-Side

Read: Luke 24:13-16

21. Note that on the road to Emmaus Jesus walks alongside the two disciples in their bewilderment, disappointment, and sorrow. Sometimes the greatest comfort we can give someone is simply being present with them in their pain.

A. As he walks with the disciples, what does Jesus ask in verse 17?

B. Note how Jesus then simply listens to the disciples' story. Explain how listening to another person with undivided attention and genuine concern is one of the best gifts we can give.

C. Now read **Luke 24:28-29.** Note that Jesus' staying with his disciples, His abiding presence with them is the key point. List at least 3 Bible verses that come to mind that remind us of God's abiding presence with us always. Use these verses to help encourage someone who may be feeling isolated and alone at this time:

1)

2)

3)

D. In Luke 24:30-32, Jesus reveals Himself in the breaking of the bread. According to His Word, Jesus is present in the bread and wine at The Lord's Supper, and we receive Him and remain connected to Him when we partake of His body and blood shed for us for the forgiveness of sins.

1) How does the certain promise that Jesus comes to us in Communion provide us comfort?

2) What does this reveal to us about the importance of directing people to the worship service in the sanctuary where they can hear God's Word and participate in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, especially when they are feeling lonely and isolated? (See also Matthew 18:20).

3) It is difficult to walk side-by-side with another if we do not have the opportunity to be in fellowship with one another. The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21 has certainly underscored this fact. **Read Hebrews 10:25** and discuss its implications and some of its challenges in light of your current ministry context.

4) Brainstorm some ways in which you can still walk alongside someone as a Companion even when you cannot physically be by their side.

Read: Matthew 20:29-34 and Mark 10:46-52

22. It is important to note in these passages that Jesus asks the other people what they would like done for them. Why do you think He did this?

23. Often we are quick to assume that we know precisely what the other person needs or wants without asking first. As a Companion, it can be helpful to ask, "What do you need?" "What would you like me to assist you with?" Discuss how these questions correlate with maintaining the dignity, agency and autonomy of the other person.

24. Sometimes the other person may ask us to assist them in ways in which we are not able or in ways which may not be appropriate. Even Jesus experienced this. **Read Mark 10:35-45.**

A. Indeed, giving what the other person asks for may not always be in their best interest (or ours!) Discuss some instances in which this may be true.

B. As Companions, we learn that we have graciously been given limits and boundaries. It is okay to simply say, "I'm not able to do that." You may be able to add, "Nevertheless, I am able to do X, Y, Z for you instead." Discuss how acknowledging our limitations actually creates mutuality with another person.

C. As Christians who practice Companionship, we always point to Jesus Christ as the One who attends to our needs of body and soul. Christ alone is the Savior, Provider, and Healer. List 3 people who come to mind who may need an extra measure of comfort in knowing Christ's abiding presence and care:

1)

2)

3)

Then plan to share with them the verses of comfort you chose in question 21C. Consider including these verses in an email, text, or card to the other person, or include it in prayer as you are praying with and for that person.

Listening

"Know this, my beloved brothers: Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger." (James 1:19)

The practice of listening opens us up to another's story, allowing us to hear the account without passing judgment. It is truly a gift to listen to someone without interruption or without offering our immediate opinion or advice. Listening in such a way honors the other person and helps pave the way for developing an authentic relationship with him/her. *(This is a summary of the section on Listening on pages 20-22 in your Companionship Training Guidebook.)*

Opening Discussion Questions

25. Comment on James 1:19 above. How does this verse rank the skill of listening? Why do you think listening is so highly valued by our Lord?

26. Recall an instance when someone took the time to simply listen to you. How did that make you feel? What affect did that have on your relationship with the other person?

27. Brainstorm and list some ways in which we can show with our body language and brief utterances that we are actively listening.

Biblical Examples of Listening

Read: Proverbs 20:5

28. Discuss how the "man of understanding" in Proverbs 20:5 comes to understand the purposes of another man's heart.

29. Active listening as a Companion involves more than simply hearing the other person. In fact, drawing more information out of people usually requires active listening over time. To encourage people to share more of their experience, feelings, and thoughts, it may be helpful to ask: "Tell me more about that. . ." or "What was that like for you?" or "Help me better understand what you meant when you

said. . .” Can you think of other helpful phrases you have used to draw more information out of people as they tell their story?

It is wonderful when we have a companion who will listen to us and provide comfort and encouragement in time of need. God is our ultimate Companion when it comes to listening! In fact, God invites us to be in frequent conversation with Him! God loves His children and as a caring Father, He listens to us when we pray to Him. God’s Word reminds us repeatedly that He hears us when we pray, listens to our concerns and pleas, and answers us according to His good will. Let’s read a few passages that remind of us God’s promises to hear us. **Read: Jeremiah 29:11-12; Psalm 18:6; Psalm 66:19-20; Isaiah 65:24**

30. What stood out to you in God’s promises in the verses above?

31. When we are Companioning people, it is always good to remind them that we are not the only one who listens, but that God also desires to listen to their story. It is good to encourage them to pour their hearts out to the One who promises to lovingly hear anytime they call upon Him.

Moreover, because Jesus was fully man, He can relate to what we are going through and compassionately listens to us and pleads our case before our Heavenly Father. **Read Hebrews 4:14-16.** What makes these verses so comforting?

32. **Read 1 John 2:1-2.** According to these verses, besides listening to us, what else does Jesus do on our behalf? Discuss the significance of these verses and the impact they have on you.

As Companions, we are given the privilege of giving voice to another’s need by communicating the need with others who can help. This occurs in the practice of Accompaniment.

Accompaniment

¨If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ***16*** *and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; be warm and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?” (James 2:15-16)*

The practice of accompaniment is simply walking alongside the other person, recognizing the material capacity you may have to help that person, and further supporting that person through connecting him/her with community resources to build a circle of care.

Indeed, one of the main reasons why Companionship is practiced in public spaces is so that you are more readily able to connect others who can help to the person in need. That is, Companionship is

ultimately meant to be done in community, and maintaining a public relationship provides greater opportunity for such community to exist.

In Question 18 in the section on the practice of Neighboring above, we have already addressed the importance of connecting the person in need to local community resources and having a referral list to these resources handy. In this section, we will be focusing on the wealth of resources that exist within one of your closest circles of influence—the people you know in your church community! God has given many gifts and talents to the Body of Christ to be a blessing to others and to give God glory. ***(This is a summary of the section on Accompaniment on page 24 in your Companionship Training Guidebook.)***

Opening Discussion Questions

33. Share with the group a talent, gift, hobby, or area of expertise that you have which others may not already know about you.

34. Share some specific ways you are currently using your God-given talents/gifts (or have used them in the past) to help care for the Body of Christ and further His kingdom.

Biblical Examples of Accompaniment

Read: Luke 8:1-3 and Mark 15:40-41

35. What were the names of the some of the women who comprised the circle of care for Jesus and His disciples?

36. According to the passage in Luke, how were they caring for Jesus and His disciples?

37. A. According to the passage in Mark, besides financially supporting Jesus' ministry, how were the women caring for Him and His disciples?

B. Here are some possible ways they may have been practically caring for the needs of Jesus and His disciples: Preparing meals, providing housing, making clothing, doing laundry, etc. How else might they have created a circle of care around Jesus and His disciples?

Now Read Luke 23:55-24:3

38. How were the women continuing to care for Jesus in very practical and tangible ways even after His death?

One of the oils used to anoint bodies for burial in Jesus' day was myrrh. It comes from the sap of a tree which only grows in the Arabian peninsula and because of its high demand it was very costly in Biblical times. In fact, some historians believe that myrrh was just as costly as gold in ancient times.

Read Acts 9:36-43

39. In the passage from Acts we learn of a dedicated Christian lady named Dorcas who used her gifts to care for those in need. What specifically did she do to care for people based on these verses?

40. What are some of the ways in which your congregation cares for each other and for people in need in your community? How might these same gifts be shared with those whom you companion?

41. Does your congregation utilize a time and talent survey to ascertain what the specific talents and gifts of your members are and how they might be used in Christ's service within your congregation? If so, when was this survey last updated? Have all your new members received this time and talent survey? Does the head of each board or committee within your congregation use the results of this survey to reach out to new and existing members to include them in the work and life of the church? If your congregation does not have such a time a talent survey, you may wish to use or modify one such as this : https://www.freechurchforms.com/support-files/timetalentsurvey.pdf from the Free Church Forms.Com website: https://www.freechurchforms.com/survey_examples.html (see the "Time, Talent, Etc." survey).

In the practice of Companionship, it is truly helpful to be acquainted with the talents and abilities of other congregation members so that you can include them in the circle of care supporting the person you're companioning. How well do you know the God-given gifts of those next to you in the pew on Sunday? How might their gifts bless others and the Lord?

Closing Thoughts

42. What stood out to you the most in this Bible study on Companionship and why?

43. What insights have you learned from this study which you can apply within your personal life and/or congregational life?

44. A. Which practice of Companionship do you think is the easiest one for you to practice? Why?

B. Which practice do you think is the most challenging? Explain.

45. How do you envision your congregation embodying the practices of Companionship going forward?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are our greatest Companion in life now and for all eternity! Thank you for making this possible through Your death on the cross for the sins of the whole world and Your resurrection from the dead. Forgive us when we neglect to show compassion to those in need around us. Give us courage to love and engage with others who are struggling with mental health issues and other concerns of body, mind, and soul. Help us connect them to appropriate resources and to always point to You, the Great Physician, as our ultimate source of comfort, encouragement, and hope. In Your Holy Name we pray, Amen.

This Bible study was written by Deaconess Carole Terkula, Ministry Associate at The Lutheran Foundation, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, April 2021, in collaboration with Pathways to Promise.
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Appendix

Genesis 18:1-8

18 And the LORD appeared to him by the oaks[a] of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. **2** He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth **3** and said, "O Lord,[b] if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant. **4** Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree, **5** while I bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." **6** And Abraham went quickly into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quick! Three seahs[c] of fine flour! Knead it, and make cakes." **7** And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man, who prepared it quickly. **8** Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

Luke 19:1-10

19 He entered Jericho and was passing through. **2** And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. **3** And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. **4** So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. **5** And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." **6** So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. **7** And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." **8** And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." **9** And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Matthew 25:34-40

34 Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. **35** For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, **36** I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' **37** Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? **38** And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? **39** And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' **40** And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers,[a] you did it to me.'

Luke 10:25-37

25 And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" **26** He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" **27** And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." **28** And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

[29] But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” [30] Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. [31] Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. [32] So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. [33] But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. [34] He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. [35] And the next day he took out two denarii[a] and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ [36] Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?” [37] He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” And Jesus said to him, “You go, and do likewise.”

Matthew 22:36-39

[6] “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” [37] And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. [38] This is the great and first commandment. [39] And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

John 15:5

[5] I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Luke 24:13-17

[13] That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles[a] from Jerusalem, [14] and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. [15] While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. [16] But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. [17] And he said to them, “What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?” And they stood still, looking sad.

Luke 24:28-29

[28] So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, [29] but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them.

Luke 24:30-32

[30] When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. [31] And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. [32] They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”

Hebrews 10:25

[25] not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Matthew 20:29-34

29 And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. 30 And behold, there were two blind men
sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, “Lord,[a] have
mercy on us, Son of David!” 31 The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent, but they cried out all
the more, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!” 32 And stopping, Jesus called them and said, “What do
you want me to do for you?” 33 They said to him, “Lord, let our eyes be opened.” 34 And Jesus in pity
touched their eyes, and immediately they recovered their sight and followed him.

Mark 10:46-52

46 And they came to Jericho. And as he was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd,
Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. 47 And when he heard that it
was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” 48 And
many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on
me!” 49 And Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take
heart. Get up; he is calling you.” 50 And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. 51 And
Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And the blind man said to him, “Rabbi, let me
recover my sight.” 52 And Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And
immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

Mark 10:35-45

35 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him and said to him, “Teacher, we want you to
do for us whatever we ask of you.” 36 And he said to them, “What do you want me to do for you?” 37 And
they said to him, “Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.” 38 Jesus said
to them, “You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be
baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?” 39 And they said to him, “We are able.” And Jesus
said to them, “The cup that I drink you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you
will be baptized, 40 but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for
whom it has been prepared.” 41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and
John. 42 And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers
of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 But it shall not be
so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant,[a] 44 and whoever would
be first among you must be slave[b] of all. 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve,
and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Proverbs 20:5

5 The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water,
but a man of understanding will draw it out.

Jeremiah 29:11-12

11 For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare[a] and not for evil, to give you a
future and a hope. 12 Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.

Psalm 18:6

6 In my distress I called upon the LORD;
to my God I cried for help.
From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry to him reached his ears.

Psalm 66:19-20

19 But truly God has listened;
he has attended to the voice of my prayer.
20 Blessed be God,
because he has not rejected my prayer
or removed his steadfast love from me!

Isaiah 65:24

24 Before they call I will answer;
while they are yet speaking I will hear.

Hebrews 4:14-16

14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

1 John 2:1-2

2 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

Luke 8:1-3

8 Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, 2 and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, 3 and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them[a] out of their means.

Mark 15:40-41

40 There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. 41 When he was in Galilee, they followed him and ministered to him, and there were also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.

Luke 23:55-24:3

55 The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was
laid. 56 Then they returned and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they rested according to
the commandment.

24 But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had
prepared. 2 And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, 3 but when they went in they did not
find the body of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 9:36-43

36 Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas.[a] She was full
of good works and acts of charity. 37 In those days she became ill and died, and when they had washed
her, they laid her in an upper room. 38 Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was
there, sent two men to him, urging him, "Please come to us without delay." 39 So Peter rose and went
with them. And when he arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him
weeping and showing tunics[b] and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them. 40 But
Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise."
And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. 41 And he gave her his hand and raised her
up. Then, calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. 42 And it became known throughout all
Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. 43 And he stayed in Joppa for many days with one Simon, a tanner.