



SOMEONE'S KNOCKING

SECTION I. Introduction

- A. What does it mean to offer hospitality or to be hospitable?
- B. What are ways that you offer hospitality in your country?
- C. Why do you personally invite someone to have a meal with you?
- D. Is it considered an honor to be invited to someone's home to have a meal? Why?
- E. Whom do you most enjoy sharing a meal with? Why?
- F. In your country, who might knock on your door? Do you always open the door? Why or why not?

SECTION II. Abraham welcomed strangers into his home. Read Genesis 18:1-8 and discuss the following questions.

- A. What was Abraham doing when the three strangers came?
- B. Did he know these men?
- C. What did he do that showed hospitality?
- D. Who were these strangers? (see verse 1)

SECTION III. Jesus was invited to the home of Zacchaeus. Read Luke 19:1-10 and discuss the following questions.

- A. Who was Zacchaeus?
- B. In this story, did Jesus seek out (choose) Zacchaeus and ask to be invited into his home?
- C. Why were people unhappy when Jesus went to Zacchaeus' house to eat?
- D. After eating with Jesus, what did Zacchaeus say?
- E. In verse 10, what did Jesus say He had come to do?

SECTION IV. Jesus knocks on the door. Read Revelation 3:20 and discuss the following questions.

- A. In this picture of Jesus, when He comes to the door and knocks, what does He want?

NOTES

- B. Think about the stories of Abraham and Zacchaeus. They invited people into their homes. Did they have a relationship with the people when they invited them as guests?
- C. What were their reactions to the *knock* (the request or the opportunity to be hospitable)?

SECTION V. What are our reactions to Jesus' *knock*?

- A. What is Jesus asking us to do when He *knocks on the door*?
- B. What are possible reactions? Can we choose not to open the door?
- C. Are you choosing not to answer the *knock* and refusing to let Jesus in?
- D. When Jesus asks to come in and eat with us, what does He really mean?
- E. When we talk about being together, sharing things, having conversation and caring for one another, we can say that we have a _____ with each other.
- F. When Jesus sought out Zacchaeus and ate with him, what was the result? Where did Zacchaeus get the power to change so suddenly?

G. What might be some results in our own lives if Jesus comes into our lives and has a close relationship with us?

(c) You will want to point out that Zacchaeus did not simply start doing *good* things. He was radically changed by the saving power of Jesus Christ.

SECTION V.

What are our reactions to Jesus' *knock*?

Jesus wants us to allow Him into our hearts when He knocks on the *door*. He wants to enter and share a meal with us, establishing a relationship.

SECTION III. Jesus is invited to the home of Zacchaeus. This section is intended to introduce the idea that Jesus chose (sought out) Zacchaeus, who was a sinner. Jesus initiated a relationship with him.

The righteous people were upset with Jesus' choice of a place to eat. But Jesus gives us a reason for doing this. He says that He is God (the Son of Man—see Daniel 7:13-14) and has come to save sinners. (verse 10)

Jesus invited himself to Zacchaeus' house and asked to eat with him. In the Middle East, sharing food is indicative of close relationships. In Jesus day, the main food was often put into the middle of the group who were eating, and people took bread and dipped it into the common dish. (See Matthew 26:23 the scene at the Last Supper)

After Jesus shared a meal with him, Zacchaeus was a changed man. His new relationship with Jesus brought about results in his life through the saving power of Jesus.

SECTION IV. Jesus knocks on the door. You may have to point out that the *door* is metaphorical.

Having a relationship with us is what Jesus wants when He asks us to allow him to enter so that He can share a meal with us.

Zacchaeus did not *believe in* Jesus when he allowed Jesus into his life. People who are not Christians can allow the Holy Spirit to move in their lives and cause them to *open the door* to Jesus and his power.

While answering question (b), think back to the answers given when asking the introductory question, “Why might we refuse to open the door when someone knocks?”

(a) Jesus wants to have a relationship with us.

(b) The word that answers this question is *relationship*.

SOMEONE’S KNOCKING VOCABULARY

Genesis 18:1-8

oaks of Mamre	Mamre was a place somewhat west of the Dead Sea. It was a place famous for the very large oak trees that grew there.
bow	lean over or bend your head or body to show that you respect another person
stretch out	to lie down at full length, in this case so that they could rest
regain strength	to feel rested again, to get back their strength
three measures of flour	a certain amount of flour—here about 20 quarts or 22 liters

knead	to mix and work the flour and water until it was smooth and formed a ball
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herd	a group of animals which stay together
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calf (plural calves)	a baby cow (baby cows)
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Luke 19:1-10

Jericho	an ancient town just north and west of where the Jordan river flows into the Dead Sea
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tax collector	a person who had the job of collecting taxes to give to the Roman government. These people were hated by the Jews because they worked for the government which was hated. They also often stole from the people.
fig tree	a tree which has very large leaves and has fruit which is good to eat
disapproval	to not like something
cheated	to take what doesn't belong to you by tricking another person
descendant	generations of people who come after us, such as our children, our grandchildren or our great-great grandchildren
Son of Man	a name that Jesus called himself. He was talking about something that is written in the Old Testament, in the Book of Daniel. By using that name for himself, Jesus was saying that He was God.

Revelation 3:20

knocking	making a sharp repeated sound by hitting something. It is usually done with your hand.
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**SOMEONE'S KNOCKING
LEADER'S NOTES**

The questions about hospitality are meant to help people open up and be willing to share. They also lead into the ideas within the study itself.

Section I.

Questions 1 to 4 in the introduction: When people invite someone into their homes, especially to have a meal with them, it usually means that they have a relationship with that person, or want to have a relationship. These questions lead into the later discussion of Jesus wanting a relationship with people.

Question 5 in the introduction: This question explores reasons why people don't open the door when someone knocks. It is a preparation for the last section of the study concerning our reactions to Jesus' knock. When you get to Section V you might compare the reasons given in the introduction for not opening the door to the reasons why we might keep the door closed when Jesus knocks.

SECTION II. Abraham welcomes strangers into his home. This section is intended to introduce the idea of the importance of hospitality in the Jewish culture. In Old Testament times, the role of a host was taken very seriously. Hospitality was considered a virtue.

When the strangers arrived, it was the hottest time of the day, when people avoided activity. Nevertheless Abraham actually ran out to meet them, bowed to them and invited them in. He had their feet washed and had a full meal prepared and put before them.

Note that Abraham did not know these men and they sought him out. Also note that since one of these men was God we can say that God sought out (chose) Abraham.