

JEROME'S JOTTINGS



House
Church

HOME FELLOWSHIPS PART 2

That loud sound you heard recently from the Redding area, where the new editor of the Twinspire lives, was her gasp of amazement that my Jottings were sent to her ahead of time! New year, new

leaf turned over. Now, if I can only keep the momentum going for the rest of the year ...

In the Autumn edition of the Twinspire, I began a theme of Home Fellowships that I would like to continue. In that edition, I told you some of the real life testimonies from people who were encouraged and, yes, even inspired, by the benefits of Home Fellowships in terms of what they received and were also able to give to the folk in these groups.

There is an important question to be asked though: are such fellowships scripturally based? As you have often heard me say before, and (no doubt) will often hear me say in the future, everything that we do as the followers of Christ has to be based on the Word of God. The Bible is a true and faithful guide to inform our lives of God's purposes for us and in us. It is not a rule book to spoil life, but it is the Way to true life and living. I am often reminded that, when people seek to live the way that God designed and planned for them, generally, their lives are more fulfilled, contented and productive. Similarly, when people choose to live in a way that is in conflict with the principles of God, generally, their lives are more broken, more incomplete and lack satisfaction.



But I digress. What is the scriptural basis for Home Fellowships? Well, there is quite a lot to be said:

The Example of Jesus

Jesus displayed a teaching and preaching ministry, but he also demonstrated a more private and personal ministry. There are so many instances in the Gospels of Jesus meeting with people over a meal:

- † the party after the calling of Matthew,
- † the meal where the woman wept on Jesus' feet,
- † Zaccheus,
- † Mary and Martha,
- † the two from Emmaus,
- † the wedding at Cana,
- † Nicodemas,
- † the last supper,
- † the feeding of the 5000 and of the 4000,



and this is in addition to all the food-type pictures that Jesus used in His conversations and teaching. The Table is one of the main themes and images of the Christian faith. It is clear that the meal table is both the symbol and opportunity for Christian faith to be expressed.

The Example of the Early Church

Acts 2:

⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Note as well, that the gatherings referred to here are both large gatherings in the Temple (read Church building) and "in their homes". The believers had a place to meet together – the Temple. But that wasn't enough for a new and vibrant church; they also needed to meet in smaller groups and they did so in each other's homes.

The Qualifications of Elders

1 Timothy 3:2

So an elder must be a man whose life is above reproach. He must be faithful to his wife. He must exercise self-control, live wisely, and have a good reputation. He must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must be able to teach.

Whilst we fully accept women elders, similarly, we should accept all these qualifications of an elder. Amongst these qualifications lies the command to

be hospitable, and the most natural venue for that is the home.

Similarly, in Titus 2, Paul writes to give much the same advice about elders:

⁷ For an elder must live a blameless life. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered; he must not be a heavy drinker, violent, or dishonest with money. ⁸ Rather, he must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must love what is good. He must live wisely and be just. He must live a devout and disciplined life.

The Encouragement of Scripture

I would ask you to read through these verses which underscore the need for hospitality:

- † Acts 16:15
- † Acts 28:7
- † Romans 12:13
- † Romans 16:23
- † Hebrews 13:2
- † 1 Peter 4:9
- † 3 John 1:8



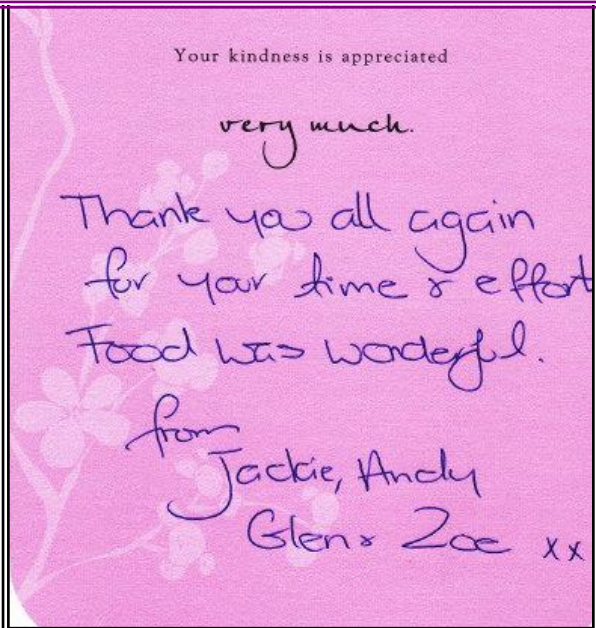
So, it is there in the Bible. Is it going to be there in our lives?

Jerome

MEALS FOR NEW MUMS AND THEIR FAMILIES

The following is a "Thank you" note received from a grateful family for the meals delivered during the first week or so of the arrival of a new baby in the home.

If you are interested in helping with this worthy service, please contact Doreen Baxter on ☎ 716240



CHRISTMAS TREE PRAYERS

Over the last few years the Christmas tree at Polmont Old, positioned to the right hand side of the chancel, is bare! waiting to be decorated. But the decorations added are not the customary baubles, stars and tinsel, but coloured cards (various shapes) with prayer requests.



You will find some of the written prayers and requests, which were added to the tree in 2011, scattered throughout this edition of Twinspire - look for the fir tree symbol.

We trust these prayers shall be an encouragement to you THE Reader at the start of 2012. If you do have any prayer requests, or know of anyone who needs to be prayed for at this time, please complete the prayer cards on the table where the static Prayer Tree is situated behind the Choir stalls on the left of the chancel.



The prayers will be used during the services, at the prayers for the people and also during the prayer time at the home Bible study groups.

Do you men know Jesus Christ?!"



An old nun, who was living in a convent next to a construction site, noticed the coarse language of the workers, and decided to spend some time with them to correct their ways. She decided she would take her lunch, sit with the workers and talk with them.

She put her sandwich in a brown bag and walked over to the spot where the men were eating. Sporting a big smile, she walked up to the group and asked: "And do you men know Jesus Christ?"

They shook their heads and looked at each other, very confused. One of the workers looked up into the steelworks and yelled out, "Anybody up there know Jesus Christ?"

One of the steelworkers yelled down, "Why?" The worker yelled back, "Cause his wife's here with his lunch."

Received by email