

Adult Bible Studies

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Called to Humility and Hospitality Luke 14:7-14

Alejandro Ortiz, owner of Papi's Mexican Cuisine in Denham Springs, Louisiana, wanted a way to help out hungry people who could not afford to buy food. On a wall of his restaurant, he placed a sign that reads, "If you are hungry or know someone that is hungry and has no money . . . [these] tickets have been paid in advance. Grab a ticket and eat." Next to this sign, he placed the text of Matthew 25:35-40.

Ortiz's family paid for the first meals, and then customers paid for more. For Ortiz, it is not only about feeding the hungry but about allowing "them to enjoy a hot meal with full service." He says, "They feel, even for a moment, that they have all of their dignity back. They're not begging for nothing. They just come in here, get a ticket and they eat." He adds, "This homeless man gave me the most real hug I've ever had in so long. I mean he made me . . . cry."¹

Referring to Jesus' parable of a wedding celebration, the student book author writes, "The host was to seek guests with low social standing, people who would probably not be able to return the favor."² Jesus said "to actually go out and invite those who are socially ignored or outcast. The duty falls to Christians to go out of their way to make the invitation."³ The student book writer encourages the time, effort, and dedication that believers put into ministry with the ignored and the outcast. We seek people, go to where they are, and invite them in.

Ortiz takes feeding the hungry a step further. He offers dignity through hospitality. Some restaurants offer food to hungry people through the back door, expecting them to eat on the streets. Ortiz offers hungry people a place of honor in his restaurant, with full service. He invites people in.

1. In what ways do the faith communities in your area go out of their way to make an invitation to vulnerable people?
2. In what ways do the ministries of your community preserve someone's dignity?
3. How is dignity related to hospitality?

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¹From "Local Restaurant Giving Free Meals to Homeless and Less Fortunate Patrons," by Bess Casserleigh, WBRZ (wbrz.com/news/local-restaurant-giving-free-meals-to-homeless-and-less-fortunate-patrons).

²From *Adult Bible Studies*, Spring 2019, by Taylor Mills (Cokesbury, 2018); page 7.

³From *Adult Bible Studies*; page 8.

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