



Women Devoted to God

Lesson 13

Hospitality

by Gina Broere

Let the love of the brethren continue.

*Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers
for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.*

Hebrews 13:1-2

Questions

1. What does hospitality mean?
2. What weight does God place on it?
3. How and how often does God display hospitality in the Scripture?
4. Is there a deeper meaning that I am unaware of?
5. Having searched the mind of God, what am I to do with it?

1. What is the definition of hospitality?

Hospitality (noun): Philoxenia. A love to strangers.

- **Hebrews 13:2** Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers . . .
- **Romans 12:13** Contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

Hospitable (adjective): Philoxenos. Generous to guests. Friend to strangers, fond of guests, lover of hospitality.

- **I Peter 4:8-9** Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹ Be hospitable, to one another without complaint.
- **I Timothy 3:2** An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach.
- **Titus 1:8** (Concerning the qualification of an elder) but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled.

Showing Hospitality to Strangers (verb): Xenodocheo. To lodge or receive strangers, to be hospitable.

- **I Timothy 5:10** (widows) having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work.

“Hospitality—the willingness and readiness to welcome people into your home (or your apartment) who don't ordinarily belong there.” John Piper

2. What weight does God place on Hospitality?

Job 31:32 “The alien has not lodged outside, for I have opened my doors to the traveler.”

Deuteronomy 14:19 The Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and the alien, the orphan and the widow who are in your town, shall come and eat and be satisfied, in order that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.

Leviticus 19:33-34 When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the LORD your God.

Biblical reasons for loving a stranger as yourself:

Reason 1: _____

Reason 2: _____

3. Divine display of hospitality from Old & New Testaments

Old Testament

Genesis 18:1-8 (Abraham)

Now the Lord appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. ¹When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth, ³and said, "My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by. ⁴Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; ⁵and I will bring a piece of bread, that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant." And they said, "So do, as you have said." ⁶So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it and make bread cakes." ⁷Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf and gave it to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it. ⁸He took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.

Strangers as guests – There is an Oriental proverb that says, "Every stranger is an invited guest." The Bedouin Arab of today, like Abraham of old, will sit in the entrance way of his tent, in order to be on the watch for stranger guests.

Guests believed to be sent by God – These men of the East believe that a person who becomes their guest is sent to them by God. Thus their hospitality becomes a sacred duty. When Abraham entertained three strangers who proved to be angels, he showed much the same attitude. His enthusiasm in receiving the guests would indicate his belief that those he was to entertain were sent to him by the Lord.

Fred Wight

Genesis 19:1-3; 6-8 (Lot)

Now the two angels came to Sodom in the evening as Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. When Lot saw them, he rose to meet them and bowed down with his face to the ground. ²And he said, "Now behold, my lords, please turn aside into your servant's house, and spend the night, and wash your feet; then you may rise early and go on your way." They said however, "No, but we shall spend the night in the square." ³ Yet he urged them strongly, so they turned aside to him and entered his house; and he prepared a feast for them, and baked unleavened bread, and they ate. ⁶ But Lot went out to them at the doorway, and shut the door behind him, ⁷ and said, "Please, my brothers, do not act wickedly. ⁸ Now behold, I have two daughters who have not had relations with man; please let me bring them out to you, and do to them whatever you like; only do nothing to these men, inasmuch as they have come under the shelter of my roof."

"Lot reasoned with them, pleaded the laws of hospitality and the protection of his house, which his guests were entitled to." Matthew Henry

Protecting a guest

In the lands of the East, when a host accepts a man to be his guest he thereby agrees at whatever the cost to defend his guest from all possible enemies during the time of his entertainment. Dr. Cyrus Hamlin, an American missionary in the East, was entertained by a governor. The host took a piece of roast mutton and handed it to the missionary, saying as he did so, "Now do you know what I have done?" In answering his own question he went on to say: "By that act I have pledged you every drop of my blood, that while you are in my territory no evil shall come to you. For that space of time we are brothers." The Psalmist David felt utterly secure, though he had enemies close by him, when he knew that God was his host. "You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies" (Psa. 23:5).

Fred Wight

I Kings 17:8-16 (Widow of Zarephath)

Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, ⁹ “Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there; behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.” ¹⁰ So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks; and he called to her and said, “Please get me a little water in a jar, that I may drink.” ¹¹ As she was going to get it, he called to her and said, “Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand.” ¹² But she said, “As the LORD your God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar; and behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go in and prepare for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.” ¹³ Then Elijah said to her “Do not fear; go, do as you have said, but make me a little bread cake from it first and bring it out to me, and afterward you may make one for yourself and for your son. ¹⁴ For thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain on the face of the earth.’” ¹⁵ So she went and did according to the word of Elijah, and she and he and her household ate for many days. ¹⁶ The bowl of flour was not exhausted nor did the jar of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke through Elijah.

2 Kings 4:8-11, 13 (Shunamite Woman)

Now there came a day when Elisha passed over to Shunem, where there was a prominent woman, and she persuaded him to eat food. And so it was, as often as he passed by, he turned in there to eat food. ⁹ She said to her husband, “Behold now, I perceive that this is a holy man of God passing by us continually. ¹⁰ Please, let us make a little walled upper chamber and let us set a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; and it shall be, when he comes to us, that he can turn in there.” ¹¹ One day he came there and turned in to the upper chamber and rested. ¹³ He said to him, “Say now to her, ‘Behold, you have been-careful for us with all this care; what can I do for you? Would you be spoken for to the king or to the captain of the army?’” And she answered, “I live among my own people.”

New Testament

Galatians 6:10

So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Gospels

Luke 19:5-7

When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, “Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house.” And he hurried and came down and received Him gladly. When they saw it, they all began to grumble, saying, “He has gone to be the quest of a man who is a sinner.”

“Zaccheus’s forwardness to receive Christ will shame us. We have not now Christ to entertain in our houses, but we have His disciples, and what is done to them He takes as done to Himself.” Matthew Henry

Matthew 25:34-36,40

“Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.³⁵ For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in;³⁶ naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me. . . .⁴⁰ The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’”

Luke 10:34 (Good Samaritan)

And came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him.

Luke 10:38; John 12:1-2 (Martha, Mary, Lazarus)

Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home.

(Luke 10:38)

Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him.

(John 12:1-2)

Luke 24:29 (Two disciples on the road to Emmaus)

But they urged Him, saying, "Stay with us, for it is getting toward evening, and the day is now nearly over." So He went in to stay with them.

Book of Acts

Acts 9:43 (Simon the tanner)

And Peter stayed many days in Joppa with a tanner named Simon. (Acts 10:6, 18, 32)

Acts 10:23 (Peter)

So he (Peter) invited them (3 men from household of Cornelius) in and gave them lodging.

Acts 16:15 (Lydia)

And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

Acts 18:2-3 (Priscilla & Aquila)

And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers.

Acts 28:7, 11 (Inhabitants of the Island of Malta)

In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously . . . At the end of three months we set sail. (Natives showed hospitality to Paul and other survivors of the shipwreck for 3 months.)

Philemon 22

At the same time also prepare me a lodging, for I hope that through your prayers I will be given to you.

4. *The ultimate display of Hospitality*

- Remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. (Ephesians 2:12)
- So then you (Gentiles) are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household. (Ephesians 2:19)
- But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)
- For you once were NOT A PEOPLE, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY. (1 Peter 2:10)
- In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. (John 14:2-3)
- Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. (Revelation 19:9)

“The ultimate act of hospitality was when Jesus Christ died for sinners to make everyone who believes *in Him alone* a member of the household of God. We are no longer strangers and sojourners. We have come home to God. Everybody who trusts in Jesus finds a home in God.” John Piper

5. *Bringing it home... pun intended* 😊

Barriers to practicing hospitality

- I'm intimidated
- I'm not the best cook
- I have a small apartment
- How do I have a family in my home? Could be a bit awkward.
- I'm not very creative
- I don't have lots of money or time
- I don't have the gift of hospitality

Entertaining	Hospitality
Entertaining says, "I want to impress you with my home, my clever decorating, my cooking."	Hospitality, seeking to minister, says, "This home is a gift from my Master. I use it as He desires." Hospitality aims to serve.
Entertaining puts things before people. "As soon as I get the house finished, the living room decorated, my house-cleaning done – then I will start inviting people."	Hospitality puts people first. "No furniture – we'll eat on the floor!" "The decorating may never get done – you come anyway." "The house is a mess – but you are friends – come home with us."
Entertaining subtly declares, "This home is mine, an expression of my personality. Look, please, and admire."	Hospitality whispers, "What is mine is yours." Karen Mains

Some thoughts about hospitality:

- Pray for God's mind and His grace
- Learn to cook
- Don't be prideful about having to have the perfect home or perfect meal
- Be creative

"Therefore when we practice hospitality, here's what happens: we experience the refreshing joy of becoming conduits of God's hospitality rather than being self-decaying cul-de-sacs. The joy of receiving God's hospitality decays and dies if it doesn't flourish in our own hospitality to others." John Piper

Resources:

Matthew Henry's Commentary

Karen Mains, *Open Heart, Open Home*. Cook, 1976.

John Piper, www.desiringGod.org

Fred Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*. Moody Press, 1953.

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