

Hospitality at Home and Church

by Cathy Payne



Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Philippians 2:3-4

I. *What is the meaning of hospitable?*

A. Hospitable means “receiving and entertaining guests generously and kindly.”

B. The Greek word means a lover of strangers; one who is ready to receive into his house and relieve every needy stranger; one who is fond of guests, one who entertains strangers; one who is generous to guests.

- Romans 12:13 *contributing to the needs. . . , practicing hospitality.*
- 1 Timothy 3:2 *be . . . given to hospitality.* (KJV)
- Titus 1:8 *be a lover of hospitality.* (KJV)
- Hebrews 13:2 *show hospitality to strangers.*
- 1 Peter 4:9 *be hospitable.*

Christian hospitality is sharing what God has given you for the purposes of evangelization, edification and encouragement.

II. *What are the New Testament commands about “hospitality?”*

- A. Romans 12:13 [Be] *contributing to the needs of the saints, [be] practicing hospitality.*

Seek to show hospitality (ESV)

Practice hospitality (NIV)

Extend hospitality to strangers (NRSV)

Effort is required for obedience to this command!

- B. I Peter 4:9 *Be hospitable to one another without complaint.* (KJV: *use hospitality . . . without grudging*)

Hospitality was an obligation given to Jews by the Law (Leviticus 19:33-34), but here we find it in the NT as a command.

Hospitality is a scriptural injunction to the NT believer. As with any command, obedience to the command to practice hospitality is a choice.

- C. Hebrews 13:1-2 *Let love of the brethren continue.*

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

Don't neglect this command.

- D. I Timothy 3:2 *An overseer, then, must be . . . hospitable.* (Titus 1:7-8)

Hospitality isn't an option; it is part of our calling.

III. *To whom are we to be hospitable?*

A. To strangers

Love strangers. Connect with and bless strangers.
(Leviticus 19:33-34; Hebrews 13:2)

See a stranger in the eyes of Jesus.

B. To saints

Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:1, 3

Be hospitable to all!

IV. *Motivation for showing hospitality*

A. God's example

Psalm 23:2, 5

God is gracious and welcoming to all!

Showing hospitality is an attribute of God. Grace is the hospitality of God to sinners (Revelation 3:20). Those who were once strangers to God and alienated from Him are now reconciled and welcome at the wedding feast of the Lamb. (Revelation 19:6-9).

God's people are called to imitate Him in this virtue.

B. Jesus' own example of hospitality

Jesus wove hospitality throughout his life and ministry.

1. Christ didn't send Zaccheus away (Matthew 14).
2. Christ was interested in Zaccheus' need (Luke 19).
3. Christ let the children come (Matthew 19:14).
4. Christ's own need was the contact (John 4).
5. Jesus spent time with tax collectors and sinners (Matthew 11:19).
6. Jesus is preparing a place for us (John 14:2).

- C. Examples of expectations from epistles
 - 1. Act faithfully toward brethren, *especially when they are strangers* (3 John 5-8).
 - 2. Have a *reputation for good works* (1 Timothy 5:9-10).

- D. How can I be an example?
 - 1. Don't focus on STUFF.
 - 2. Don't concentrate on "entertaining"
 - 3. Focus on love for people, *in honour preferring one another*. (Romans 12:10 KJV; 1 Corinthians 13)
 - 4. See every guest as someone God sent.
 - 5. Your life is "Jesus" to someone. Give attention.
 - 6. Put needs of others over your own. (Philippians 2:3-4)

V. *Lessons from examples of hospitality*

- A. Acts of hospitality further the purposes of God.
 - 1. Abraham to the angels (Genesis 18:1-8)
 - 2. Lot to the angel (Genesis 19:1-11)
 - 3. Rebekah to Abraham's servant (Genesis 24:1-49)
 - 4. Rahab to the Israelite spies (Joshua 6:17, 22-25)
 - 5. David to Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:7-13)
 - 6. The widow of Zarephath to Elijah (1 Kings 17:10-24)
 - 7. The Shunamite woman to Elisha (2 Kings 4:8)
 - 8. Simon the tanner to Peter AND the Gentiles from Caesarea (Acts 10:6, 23).

- B. It is necessary to know not only how to give, but also how to receive hospitality (ex. of Paul in Acts)