

Gathering Question: Describe a time when you experienced real hospitality. What made that time different from other times?

Be Hospitable to One Another

It may be that real hospitality is a lost art in many places. In fact the word used for hospitality in the New Testament literally means “loving strangers.” Hospitality is a real act of love. To take someone into your home, to give them something to eat and a place to sleep, to see to their needs is a real inconvenience. It takes your time, effort, and your willingness to be disrupted from your every day schedule. It is an act of love!

Why is it so important? One reason is that it lies at the heart of our relationship in the Lord. He has brought us together into a Body, a Family, a Community of Believers and among us there should truly be no strangers. Even though we might not know a brother or sister who is in need of hospitality, they are still family, and we are to open our hearts and lives to them. Even though we have Motel Sixes and Holiday Inns today, hospitality provides incredible opportunities for blessing others.

There is nothing that can take the place of living in another person’s home for a while that can help you to get to really know that person. You have a vantage point you could not get other wise. The same goes for those hosting another person. You really have an opportunity to know someone when you allow them to share your space. I can still remember some of the people I stayed with as a teenager when we would go on retreats or campaigns. By the time we left we always seemed like family.

Hospitality allows you an opportunity to share your blessings with others. It may be that God has richly blessed you with material things. What an opportunity to share with others. It might be some student that needs a place to stay for a while or it might be a family who is on hard times and just needs a place to stay until they get back on their feet. Hospitality gives us opportunities to help those who have not been as materially blessed as us.

Hospitality also breeds a culture of love among the family of God. Loving acts beget other loving acts. When someone has allowed themselves to be inconvenienced on your account you are much more likely to pass that same love on to others. Before you know it the Family of God is practicing real love and devotion to one another.

Finally, hospitality allows you to do the work of Jesus in the world. When people are hungry, we must feed them. When they are thirsty we must give them something to drink. When they are naked, we must clothe them. And when they need a place to stay, we must provide it. What a blessing to do Jesus work in our world!

Read: I Peter 4:9; Hebrews 13:2

Discuss:

1. Why does Peter have to warn people against complaining? What would people complain about?
2. How seriously do you take the angel statement in Hebrews? Could that literally be true? And why would God send angels to your house?