

December Sermon Series: Recovering the Lost Hospitality Commandments

Sermon Title: "Biblical Hospitality: A Closer Look at the Bible's Hospitality Commands".

December 16, 2018

Theme verse: Hebrews 13:1–2 Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. (ESV)

Introduction: Let's move the decisional altar, from the church into the home. Remember how churches used to do it? Come to the altar to receive Jesus as Savior? Imagine your dining room table being that altar where eternal life can begin for your non-Christian friends.

Context

Exegesis

Main point: The biblical command to practice hospitality is timeless, and cultureless and undebatable. Just because it might have been easier in a different time or different culture does not exclude us from practicing the Spirit instructed command to love one another via the practice of hospitality.

1. Biblical command #1 - Romans 12:9–13 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. (ESV)
 1. Since the Bible is relevant to all ethnic groups and all generations, this command is given to us today in our privatized culture.
 2. This command is in the context of loving fellow believers. You cannot love someone as instructed without opening your homes! Therefore closing your homes to others is an indicator of closing yourself off from them.
 3. I need to improve just like you do!
 4. The Greek word for seek is dioko which means "pursue with vigorous effort". What things in life do you pursue with vigorous effort? Dieting? Exercise? Fun? Spiritual Growth? (What would that look like?) What would it look like to vigorously pursue hospitality? Does a hunter wound a deer and decide to leave it or does he pursue and hunt down his prey?
 - First – it needs to be planned otherwise it will never happen.
 - Second – it needs to be simple otherwise people will feel they can't reciprocate.
 - Third – it needs to include those that can't reciprocate.

- Fourth – it needs to be frequent at least once a month if not more often.
 - Fifth - It needs to be prayed over and
 - Sixth – one needs to seek opportunities for it.
5. Questions to ask ourselves: Do we realize how important hospitality is in the context of loving our brothers and sisters in Christ? Do we recognize the command as a Spirit directed command? I.e. you must open your home to others!
2. Command #2 - 1 Peter 4:8–10 Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: (ESV)
 1. Earnestly does not mean emotionally here, it means aggressively.
 2. One way to increase our love for one another is through hospitality. Love buckets get filled the more people spend time together in intimate settings such as our homes.
 3. Why did Peter tell them to do this without grumbling? There is always a temptation to think we are always giving and not receiving. The opposite of grumbling is doing it with joy. Does it cost money? Yes. Is there work involved? Yes. Will it be reciprocated? Does it matter?
 4. Is there a sin of selfishness keeping us from opening our homes? Of course. We don't want our schedules changed or our homes dirtied up or our bank balances affected. What do we say to that? Philippians 2:5–8 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (ESV)
 3. Command #3 - Hebrews 13:1–2 Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. (ESV)
 1. The word Philadelphia was never used by the Greeks for relationships other than blood family. Christians used that term to describe our unique relationship to those within the family of God.
 2. If family celebrations bring such joy, especially around special events such as weddings, Christmas, holidays, then our homes should also be filled with that same kind of joy that those celebrations bring with our Christian brothers and sisters.
 3. The angels mentioned here connect to the angels sent to Abraham, to Lot to Gideon to Samson's parents. They all brought a blessing to the hosts who entertained them with hospitality. I don't think the writer intends for each of us to expect that someday we will have a real angel sitting at our tables (but it is a possibility) but instead to expect a similar blessing from a servant of God who

sits at your table and shares stories of God's faithfulness. How many missionaries have sat at my table and I have heard again and again of how God provided needs of sustenance and physical protection.

When is hospitality forbidden?

1. When a false teacher is intent on getting adherents to his false teaching. 2 John 10–11 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works. (ESV)
 - This can be a house church (what I believe) or a home group where several are gathered (not a home where a Mormon or JW is knocking at the door.
 - This includes not even being polite by giving a friendly greeting!! Wow, why? Because any kindness of ours towards a servant of Satan is showing tolerance to Satan's kingdom and indifference towards the truth we are to guard so carefully.
 - Does this mean you can't watch health and wealth name it and claim it preachers on your television? Kind-of. Why would you do that? This is why the elders years ago said no to a Bible study in one of our member's homes to the teachings of Joyce Meyer. What a horrible influence and damage that caused to our body back then. And,
2. When a disciplined member remains unrepentant. 1 Corinthians 5:9–13 I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you." (ESV)
 - This does not mean providing counsel and biblical advice if the person asks for it but to act as if nothing has changed once a person has been excommunicated is wrong. It prevents the pain of disfellowship of accomplishing its purposes.
 - Breaking off fellowship is one of the best ways of bringing a repentant brother back to Christ.

Application

- Pray for the young lady who called a few weeks ago to accept my invitation for dinner in my home.
- Let the Holy Spirit grade you today. How many times did you open your home in 2018? 5-10 home openings?? 1-4 Openings? 0 openings?