

Lesson 9: Hospitality in Work

Definition

Hospitality is opening our *heart* and our *home* to others.

Placing heart before home reflects how the Bible presents hospitality as brotherly love:

1 Peter 4:8-9

Love one another earnestly.

Show hospitality without complaining—“service with a smile.”

Hebrews 13:1-2

Let brotherly love continue.

Do not forget to entertain strangers—literally, “hospitality” means love to strangers.

Notice how the negatives reflect our natural tendencies—to neglect and have a bad attitude.

Therefore, open your *heart* and not just your home—to be mindful of others and eager to share.

Since it is an expression of *brotherly* love, hospitality focuses on love to previously-unknown Christians.

This may not exclude unbelievers, but do not wrongly infer equal attention from the etymology (cf. Gal. 6:10).

e.g. Gaius – “host of all the church” (Rom. 16:23; cf. 3 Jn. 3)

e.g. Abraham entertained angels without knowing it (Gen. 18)

In a culture of dangerous travel and poor accommodations, hospitality was very important!

Can you see the significance of welcoming strangers into your home and honoring them with a meal?

Hospitality at Work

Last week, you were encouraged to *add art* to your work.

This week, you are encouraged to *add others* to your work:

Do not work merely to set up your own family (cf. Eph. 4:28 – second purpose of work):

e.g. plan the structure and schedule of your home for guests

Even broader, be *civic-minded*—do what you do for sake of your community and not just your family:

e.g. landscape a public park or at least let others enjoy your yard

e.g. plant a huge garden or orchard and let others pick from it

e.g. start a business for the purpose of providing employment

Significance of Hospitality

Often times we think of hospitality as optional—an extra that is not necessary for normal life. Not so!

Hospitality is necessary for worship.

Did God give you a talent to hide it and enjoy it privately?

No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket; therefore, Jesus commanded:

“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Mt. 5:16).

Hospitality is necessary for evangelism.

If we aim to speak the truth in love, we must demonstrate this love with our deeds (cf. Mt. 5:16; 1 Pt. 2:12).

Many in church history have found hospitality conducive for ministry:

e.g. Martin Luther (table talk), Francis Schaeffer (L’Abri)

Recently, Rosaria Butterfield has encouraged this connection: *The Gospel Comes with a House Key*.

Her own conversion from lesbian liberalism involved a pastor’s kindness, sensitive to her sensibilities.

Hospitality is necessary for cultural morality.

Interestingly, the sin of Sodom ended with attempted homosexual rape but it began with inhospitality:

“Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had arrogance, abundant food and careless ease, but she did not help the poor and needy. Thus they were haughty and committed abominations before Me” (Ezek. 16:49-50).

Remember in Genesis, Abraham’s hospitality and Lot’s occur in the same story as Sodom’s destruction.

This is cultural analysis at its best: *Inhospitality leads to homosexuality!*

How many “Christian” critics of homosexuality have contributed to it culturally through their own sin?

To close my heart and my home to others also opens it up to private sexual sin that “no one” sees.

As with put-off/put-on, youthful lust is replaced with a public joint pursuit of godliness (2 Tim. 2:22).

If this connection is true in society, it is also true in the church—the sin of Sodom was told to Jerusalem.

Therefore, open your heart, open your home, and hospitably add others to your work for the glory of God!