

Having Happy Hospitality

by James Jennings

This sermon emphasizes the importance of hospitality as a reflection of Christ's love towards us. It encourages believers to show love and kindness by welcoming others into their homes, even if faced with challenges or excuses. The message highlights the need to have a right view of the Gospel, family, possessions, and blessings in order to practice hospitality effectively.

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:7, Romans 12:13, Hebrews 13:2, Proverbs 15:17, Philemon 1:22, John 13:14

Topics: "Hospitality", "Reflecting Christ's Love"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of hospitality as a reflection of Christ's love towards us. It encourages believers to show love and kindness by welcoming others into their homes, even if faced with challenges or excuses. The message highlights the need to have a right view of the Gospel, family, possessions, and blessings in order to practice hospitality effectively.

Transcript

1 Peter 4, 7. Peter says, the end of all things is at hand. That's kind of a weighty statement. The end of all things is at hand.

Now, it's 2,000 years later. Christ hasn't come back yet. Obviously, for many of these Christians, they were suffering.

No doubt, some dying. And the end of all things for them was definitely at hand. And then in another way, the end of all things is at hand because life is but a vapor.

2,000 years is nothing to the Lord. The end of all things is at hand. Therefore, and he mentions some things we should be doing in view of the end of all things being at hand.

Self-control. Sober-minded. For the sake of your prayers.

And he says, above all, keep loving one another earnestly. The end of all things is at hand. Keep loving one another earnestly.

Because love covers a multitude of sins. And then he gives a way in which we can keep loving one another earnestly. The end of all things is at hand, so show hospitality to one another without grumbling.

The end of all things is at hand, so have people over for a meal. The end of all things is at hand, so have people stay in your house. That wouldn't necessarily be something you would expect someone to say after they've mentioned the end of all things is at hand.

Yet he says that. Keep loving one another. One way we can keep loving one another is by showing hospitality to one another without grumbling.

And so this morning, I want to speak to you on having happy hospitality. Having happy hospitality. Where do I get to having? He says show hospitality.

Peter doesn't give a suggestion. In other places, we're going to see it's clear, Peter gives a command. Has anyone here read Alexander Strauch's book on hospitality? What's the title of his book? Is it Hospitality Suggestions? Yeah, The Hospitality Commands, because that's what the Bible gives.

It gives a command. It gives commands, plural, not suggestions. So that's where I get having it, and then I get the happy hospitality in my title from Peter's words.

Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. So you're doing it not grumbling, complaining, murmuring. You're doing it happy, rejoicing, thanking God for this opportunity no matter how it turns out, rejoicing in all circumstances for this is the will of God.

So that's what I want to speak on. Having happy hospitality. Let's pray.

Father, thank You. Lord, thank You for saving us. Lord, thank You for all the opportunities You give us to grow in our love for one another and to grow in manifesting love to other believers.

Lord, You're so good. Lord, even bearing with us when we were lost, You were so patient. Lord, thank You.

Just pray that You would use this Word and these thoughts to minister to this congregation this morning, Lord, and even in my own life, that these things would all the more be areas that we as a church are excelling in. Lord, come and meet with us. In Jesus Christ's name, Amen.

Now, we would ask the question, or I would, the end of all things is at hand. Keep loving one another. Having people over for dinner.

Showing hospitality to one another without grumbling. How is judgment day being nearer a motivating factor for hospitality? I ask myself that question. Or how is me dying, maybe soon from persecution, a motivator to show hospitality? What's a picture of judgment day? Where do we find some of the things that are going to be mentioned in Matthew 25? We get a glimpse.

And it's amazing here, one of the things mentioned is I was a stranger and you invited me in. I was a stranger and you invited me in. That's one of the things on the table when we give an account.

So sure, the end of all things is near. The end of my life, say the end of the universe burning up as with fire. Should I be showing hospitality? If I'm thinking of the judgment, that's one of the things on the table.

That's a way, one of the jewels in the Christian crown that I'm manifesting love is taking strangers in. Jesus says I was a stranger. You invited Me in naked.

You clothed Me. It wasn't actually Christ, but as much as we do to one of the least of these, we do unto the Lord. That's what the King will answer and say.

As you did it to them, you did it to Me. So that's one reason why the end of all things is near. I should feel the right pressure to be having people over.

Because that's going to be something the Lord's going to bring up. So, without grumbling, Peter says right here. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.

You know what that tells me? I can have people over every single week for the next ten years. And I can say I'm doing hospitality, but if I'm full of grumbling and murmuring, it's a dead work and it's not honorable in God's eyes. The Lord wants our heart to be right.

That's what He wants. So what is hospitality? David did a message on this maybe two years ago when he was going through 1 Peter. So you might remember some of that.

But hospitality, the word is a Greek word. It's a compound of two words. Philos meaning love or loving.

And xenia, which can mean stranger and in some verses, xenia specifically is rendered as guest room or lodging. So hospitality is simply to receive someone as a guest, to entertain them, provide for them, lodge them. Now how long must they be at my house in order for me to be showing hospitality? I mean, you could have someone over for a meal.

That's showing hospitality. You could have them spend a night. You could have them live with you a week.

Two weeks. A month. Or, as a sermon I heard from a brother at the church in Louisville, he started his message and he said, I'm going to play an audio clip of a sound that scares mothers, that terrifies them.

I'm thinking, what's this sound going to be? And then you know what sound you heard? You heard ding-dong. You heard a doorbell. When your doorbell is hit, when you least expect it, when the house is a mess, the kids are about to have a nap time, and there someone is in need, whether a brother meaning a Christian or not, and rather than ignore that, unless it's a telemarketer, you should ignore them probably, but not a telemarketer.

That's on the phone. Whatever that's called. Solicitor.

That's showing hospitality. The doorbell. So how long equals hospitality? I mean, I've had people, they didn't call, they came over, and that's totally fine, and it keeps you on your feet.

That's one reason to live out in the country. You know it takes an hour to get to your house, so then you know people can't get to you easily enough. But, the doorbell rings.

How do you respond? It tests your maturity. Now I appreciate Alexander's definition of hospitality in his book. Listen to this.

I think this really gives a good perspective. He says this, the Christian who offers hospitality to others fleshes out love in a uniquely personal way. Now listen to this.

Through the ministry of hospitality, we share the things we value most. Family. I mean, you're putting that person around your family.

It could influence your children. Good or bad. You share your home, this property you've invested money into.

You share your financial resources with them. They come from a long way. You might give them a check for gas when they leave.

You're using money for food. You're sharing financial resources, your food, your privacy. When you show hospitality, you're sharing your privacy and your time.

Time is valuable. And he says rightly, in other words, we share our lives. When you show hospitality, you're sharing your life.

Time, money, resources, privacy. All of those things we share our lives. And he went on to say this on page 17 of his book, Hospitality Commands, he said this, a cold, unfriendly church contradicts the Gospel message.

Yet, unfriendliness stands out as one of the most common criticisms people have of local churches. It doesn't take people long to figure out that there is a churchy love among Christians that ends at the back door of the sanctuary or in the parking lot. It's a superficial, Sunday morning kind of love that is unwilling to venture beyond the walls of the church building.

Now that's not true of us, praise God. Now, I'll tell you, even today, I've had an email from a person I know who's going to visit here during the 11 o'clock. We have visitors all of the time.

I know some family recently mentioned a couple had been coming here for three weeks. And the couple got invited over to their house and they said, we love the church, we love the teaching, but people are so unfriendly here. Now, I don't think that's a valid truth.

I don't think we're that unfriendly. But people might get that perception. We don't want people to get lost in this big building.

I see some new faces here that I don't know. One of the things we should be thinking of as a Christian is even just showing hospitality to strangers right here when they come. And I know people think that.

But let's keep our awareness there. I remember my first time coming to GCC about ten years ago. I mean, I had so many people talking to me, asking my testimony, different things.

And then the meeting ended and no one left the building. Everyone stayed and had a meal. That was foreign to me.

And then after the meal was done, they had a three o'clock and people shared. After the three o'clock was done, we all got invited to Carlos' house and he was grilling hamburgers. So my first Sunday, I was at the church from like 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Fellowshiping.

That was one of the main motivators that I realized I've got to come back. I mean, I just disappeared from my other church because the love, the fellowship, the bearing of the burdens that was taking place here. And I know, that's our heart, but we just want to be renewed in that focus.

So, how does the Bible speak of hospitality? As I said, it doesn't give a suggestion. It gives commands. Quickly, I'll mention some verses.

Romans 12, 13. In context, Paul is talking about presenting your body as living sacrifices to God. It's pretty serious.

We quote that verse. I'm presenting my body as a living sacrifice. It's all on the altar.

Is your privacy on the altar? Is your time on the altar? Is your money on the altar? Is your house on the altar? Because he goes on to say this, one aspect of presenting your body as a living sacrifice is you're contributing to the needs of the saints and you're seeking to show hospitality. Or you're pursuing showing hospitality. You're taking initiative.

How does the Bible speak about hospitality? 1 Timothy 5 talks about widows who could receive financial support from the church and they could be put on a church role and supported, it seems is the idea. Well, do you just support anyone without discernment as a church body? These widows who grow old, their husbands have died, they have no family to help? No, you don't. There's qualifications.

He says she must have a reputation for good works. So reputation here, if she's brought up children and has shown hospitality and has washed the feet of the saints. That's what our Lord Jesus did.

He came and washed our feet. Cared for the afflicted. Has devoted Himself to every good work.

If that's true of that widow, there's a place where we come along as a body and we're financially supporting her and she's able to help serve others. There's qualifications there. Hebrews 13, he says, "...let brotherly love continue." How? What's one of the ways? He goes right in and he says, "...do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unaware." Don't neglect.

Why would he say don't neglect? Obviously, because that's an area people do neglect. When it says do not neglect to stir up the gift, do not neglect to show hospitality, that's an area you could neglect. You could be negligent and you could fail to do it.

You could put it off. You could say it's not that important. You could say, well, I grew up in a family and we never had anyone over for dinner.

Sure, the Bible talks about hospitality, but that's not my personality. That's not how we grew up. I like my privacy.

The Bible doesn't give us those excuses. Don't neglect. And then he says right here in Hebrews 13, "...some have entertained angels unaware." Now, he's not giving a motivator there, do hospitality and I'm going to send an angel in disguise over to your house.

That's not his point. But rather, you might have someone come like angels did to men in the Old Testament who had them in, and you might very well receive a blessing and reward that you did not expect. Maybe six months ago, had a call on the church phone Saturday night.

A guy was here on a business trip. I knew nothing about this man. And he already had a place to stay.

He wanted a ride to the meeting. And I thought, okay, it's kind of like, oh, man, I've got a lot going on. Maybe I could find someone else to give him a ride.

And I thought, no, no, no. Okay, I can give him a ride. I've got the two vehicles.

And then it's like, well, why don't we have him over for a meal? There's not a lot going on this morning. Let's have him over for a meal. I got his name.

And then I went and Googled his name. Found him on Sermon Audio. I'd already invited him over for a meal.

Found different sermons he had. We had him over for breakfast. That hour was so edifying.

The insights from that man's life, the death of his child who drowned and these different things he was sharing about the churches up there, that impacted my life. I've not forgotten the things he shared. You know what? If all I did was give him a ride, that wouldn't have happened.

If all I did was have someone else give him a ride, I would have missed out. And if I didn't have him for a meal, I wouldn't have had that time to sit there for an hour and a half fellowship with him. That was so edifying.

So I think that's the idea. You know, you could entertain angels unaware. Sure, it could be an actual angel as happened in the Old Testament, but more than likely right now, what it's going to be, it's going to be a fellow Christian who you know nothing about and there might be great blessing given to you.

Or you might be a great blessing to them. You're not trying to just have people over that you think are going to be a blessing to you. I mean, who wouldn't? I remember nine years ago when Paul Washer came down here and after he had preached, everyone was wanting to get in the car to ride back up to Austin to take Paul Washer.

I understand that. We want to be in the car with a godly person. But what about the person who you don't know who he is? He's been bought with the same blood of Jesus Christ and as much as you do to that little one, you do unto the Lord.

Don't show sinful partiality in these things. So, I was thinking even that example of Abraham which is a place people will appeal to as an example of him entertaining angels unaware. Maybe you could turn there real quick.

Genesis 18, verse 1, it says, "...the Lord appeared to him, to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day." So, get the idea. He's sitting down at his tent in the heat of the day. I mean, the hottest time of the day.

We San Antonians can somewhat relate to heat. It's the hottest time of the day. You're sitting down.

You're not standing up working. Maybe you could say you're resting. "...And he lifted up his eyes." So maybe his eyes were drooping.

"...He lifted up and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him." Hey guys, I'm taking a nap. Leave. No.

"...When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed down himself to the earth and said..." And then he says, O Lord. And I realize the ESV capitalizes that to where it seems like it's referring to the Lord God. Not that one isn't the Lord taking on a form there.

The Lord Jesus Christ, pre-incarnate Christ. But I think the idea here is he addresses Him as Lord. The ESV has a footnote there just referring to He could see one.

One was clearly a master out of the three. And he addressed Him in a respectful way and called Him Lord. He was giving respect to Him.

And then he says, "...If I have found favor in Your sight, do not pass by Your servant. Let a little water be brought. Wash your feet.

And rest yourselves under the tree." So he was just resting. Now he's saying you guys rest. "...While I bring a morsel of bread that you may refresh yourselves.

And after that, you may pass on." So it seems he's just saying they're coming by. We're going to have them in. Feed them.

You guys can go on after that. He doesn't have an expectation. You can pass on.

"...Since you have come to Your servant." So they said, "...Do as you have said." Abraham went quickly into the tent to Sarah and said, quick! Honey, quickly! People are here! The doorbell just rang. Quickly! Get three seeds of fine flour. Knead it.

Make cakes. You can picture, oh wow, got to get ready. And Abraham ran.

So he's going quick. To the herd. He took a calf.

This is no cheap meal. Tender and good. So he didn't find the scrawny one.

And he gave it to a young man who prepared it quickly. Ran. Quickly.

Quickly. There's speed involved here. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared and he set it before them and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

He didn't even eat with them. In honor of them, he stood back and did not eat with them and allowed them to eat. He prepared that meal.

Now in the end, it's clearly angels of the Lord and they tell him that you're going to have a son. But the point is, if this is where Hebrews 13 is referring to, he entertained angels unaware of the blessing that would come of this promise that would be given. And think of the way he did it quickly.

I mean, what if after the meeting, one of you all meets a new family who's come. You had no plans after the meeting. And then you find this out.

You go up to your wife. I go up to Bethany. I say, honey, you need to get home quickly.

And you need to get that meat, the really good piece, defrosted. Let's get that meal ready for that family who's coming over. Someone had done a survey, a secular person.

They would visit churches and they would rate how loving churches were. And they would give like five points if someone greeted them in a non-harsh way. They gave 60 points if they got invited over for a meal.

That speaks of what that means to someone. I mean, even when I first started coming here as a single person getting invited over for meals, it was kind of like, wow, that's kind of intimidating. 3 John, it mentions, Beloved, it's a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers.

So these are brothers, strangers as they are. There are many Christians out there, you don't know who they are. They're strangers to you.

And he says, they testified to your love before the church. Isn't that something? It's like, Lord, would people see the love of Christ in such a way that we would in a good way have a reputation that people testify of that to the other churches? And he says there, not just testified to your love before the church, but he says, you will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. Is our manner of sending someone worthy as if we were sending the Lord Himself? If this is the Lord going, how many people would want to pitch in? Do different things? So, having happy hospitality.

These people, fellow Christians, are bought with the same blood of Christ. The Bible, it speaks we should specifically look out for Christians. Galatians 6.10, so then as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone.

Yes, everyone, but especially to those who are of the household of faith. So in showing hospitality, there's a right partiality there that's non-sinful. People who are Christians, I should put a priority on them.

He calls us to that. So, if hospitality is sharing the things we value most, family, home, financial resources, food, privacy, and time, and it's a way to show brotherly love, it should obviously be an elder qualification. Right? What type of shepherds do we want? And I trust that in some degree, Tim and I are being to you all right now, shepherds who share our time, privacy, lives, money, homes with you all.

Paul says in 1 Timothy 3, an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable. That is an elder qualification for a person if they're going to pastor. Or you could say, we were to like this, an overseer must share the things he values most.

His family, home, money, food, privacy, and time. If he won't share his life, why would you want him shepherding your soul? You know, one man being considered is Craig. That's obviously something we think about.

Is Craig hospitable? I remember being at Craig's for Christmas Eve one time. It was a great time except I stayed until 3 a.m. The next morning was pretty miserable. But, fellowship.

Being in people's houses. I mean, you go in a person's house, you can see, do they have things in order? Again, how are we even going to know the qualification of if a person has his household in order if you're not ever in the house? There's going to be different degrees of people's availability, even among the shepherds, people who work, who don't work, when they can have over, different things like that. Paul says to Titus the same thing, an elder must be hospitable, a lover of good.

Hebrews 13 says to imitate your leaders. Does it not? It says that. And I'm grateful both Tim and I to some degree in a non-proud way could say, follow us.

To some degree, we are seeking to be hospitable. I was thinking about Tim when I first came to the church. David Gonzalez was living with his family.

And then I heard before that Heather Harker and her kids had been living there. And then different things shuffled up. Eventually, Charlene, when she was single, she was living there.

And then eventually, Jackie and Jayden were living there for a season. Many more living in the home. When you have members living in the home, you know your leaders aren't hiding anything.

They're an open book. I was trying to think if this was a right thing to say or not. I mention this to encourage you and challenge you, not in a way that in any way I hope is sinful, but I asked my wife to count how many entries were in our guest book.

People who spent the night. Who had stayed at our house. And there were some who stayed for months to weeks to one night.

From a family of eight to singles. In our six years of marriage, we had 71 entries of those who signed the guest book. That amazed me.

Nothing with me, but the grace of God. I grew up, we never had anyone over. Often, except family.

Much less people spending the night. And I was looking through the guest book, reading different notes people had left. And it was amazing, the encouragement and remembering that.

And even some people's names. I had a Korean family stay with me. And I thought, I don't even remember that.

Like, who were they? If you're thinking of getting a house, or if you have a house, I hope that's one of the big things on your mind. Not how does this house just fit all of our needs as a family, but does this house give us the ability to have people over, and when needs come up, to have people stay in our home and show hospitality? That should be a big question. Because if this is a command, and I'm thinking how can I obey this? If the Lord gives the means to have property where I can have people stay there, I should pursue that.

You know, even the lost pursue hospitality. We should outdo them. Obviously, I was thinking of Paul when he was shipwrecked.

It says in Acts 28, the native people showed us unusual kindness. So they're native people showing unusual kindness. For they kindled a fire, they welcomed us all, because it had begun to rain and was cold.

When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, he put them on the fire. You know, he was bitten by the snake. The Lord didn't kill him.

He survived. And eventually, it says the neighborhood of that place, the people, Publius, received us and entertained us hospitably for three days. They shipwreck on an island, and these natives bring them around the fire, keep them warm, and then show them hospitality for three days.

Was Paul working miracles among them and seeing people healed? Yes. Maybe that was part of the three-day part. I don't know.

But the point is, even the lost show hospitality. We should outdo them in a godly way. You know, even the difficult cases in the end have been a blessing to my wife and I. You look back and you know the person's

gone and you're kind of at home, and you feel kind of sloppy.

At least, I'll feel sloppy spiritually. Because you kind of have a hard time and then it's like you want to relax, and then you kind of think, I wish they were back here. They kept me on my toes.

They kept me on my knees. The Lord showed me different sin and my inability to bear with people's pet peeves and frustrations and I need to grow in the love of Jesus Christ. So how much more should our reputation be to show unusual kindness? Because you know what? Christian, you're an unusual person.

You have a God who sent His only Son to this earth to live a perfect life and die on that cross and bear God's infinite wrath for you. And you're believing that. That makes you incredibly unusual compared to the majority of the world on the broad way.

And so we, of all people, should be showing unusual kindness to others. Well, another question. I was thinking of this.

What are important truths to know in order to be hospitable? And no, it doesn't start with how to cook a 15-person meal in a Crock-Pot. That's not the unusual skill. That's not the truth.

You know, the recipes. It doesn't start there. Number one, you need a right view of the Gospel.

That's where it starts. Kind of just what I said. You need a right view of how unusual it is that God didn't just let us all perish and He saved some of us.

And He's caused us to be born again and given us new desires. I mean, in the Gospel, what happens? It's not just we who are strangers were taken in by the sacrifice of God's Son. What does Romans say? We who were, while we were yet sinners and while we were enemies.

Scarcely would one die for a righteous person, but while we were enemies, Christ died for us. So we weren't strangers. We were definitely that.

We weren't just strangers. We were enemies. And God took His enemies and slaughtered His Son as a sacrifice.

You want to talk about making a major sacrifice? You want to talk about sharing your time, your privacy? He shared the blood of His only Son with His enemies in order to pay for our sin. If you get gripped with that, all of a sudden, you realize what on earth? Showing hospitality? Having people over? All these excuses I might have or fears? They're nothing compared to what God has done for me in Christ. Jesus didn't give us a warm bed for a month.

He gave us His precious blood, the forgiveness of sins and paradise to come. A right view of the Gospel leads to a right view of Christian love. Jesus talks about a wedding feast.

Everything is ready. Come and eat. Find rest for your souls.

Second thing, a right view on the Gospel means you have a right view on your spiritual family. And that's important. Mark 3, verse 34, in looking about, Jesus, His mother had just come trying to get Him away from the brethren.

She thought He was out of His mind. It says at the start of Mark 3, in Jesus' response, He looks around and He says, Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of God, he is My brother and sister and mother. If I call you Brother David, am I saying that just in word? Or am I actually treating you like you were My brother? In all purity, as Paul says to Timothy.

Brothers and sisters, etc. Am I actually living out that reality of this is My spiritual family? Here are My mother and My brothers, Christ said. So if I have a right view of you all being My spiritual family, we're just having a family gathering.

That's what it is. Family gathering at my house, I mean, that's what it is. So we need a right view of family.

Thirdly, if you're going to show hospitality, you need a right view on your possessions. And it starts with changing that phrase. They're not your possessions.

They belong to God, and you are a steward of what God has given you. If you have a right view on the Gospel, it must come with a right view of your possessions. Your house? Whose house is it? Yours? Even if you got paid off, is it your house? It's not your house.

It's the Lord's. He's allowed you to have it. He's the One who gave it to you.

He's the One who hasn't burned it down yet. He's the One who's given that house to you, that property to you. You should pray, Lord, what do I do with the money, with the house, with the cars that You own and You've made me a steward of? Lord, You've given me these things.

How do You want me to use them? They're not mine. They're Yours. How do You want me to use them? How do You want me to use them? They're Yours.

That will make you very hospitable in different situations when you realize it's not Yours. No, I'm not saying you throw discernment out the window when you try to discern if you should loan a car to a certain individual. That's blind love.

But more than not, the issue with us making excuses, why not to do something? It's not that, well, there's a really good reason I shouldn't loan my car to that person right now. No, usually it's us making excuses, not trusting God, not viewing our possessions right. Fourthly, you need a right view of the blessing it is.

I've already mentioned it. Entertain angels unaware. There are different things that will happen that as you honor and obey God, He'll have someone come that will specifically meet a need in your life.

That need might be them encouraging you, or that need might be them causing a lot of trouble at your house in order to help sanctify you to be more like the Lord Jesus. You don't get to pick and choose. If it's the way of growing through encouragement, or if it's the way of growing through a fiery trial, God's going to choose which one it will be.

Now another thing I think is important for showing hospitality is having a godly wife. My guest book would not have those entries if I did not have the wife I have. It wouldn't happen.

But, quickly, honey, we're going to have them over. I just got down to take my nap. Is there a place that you might have a husband who's not sensitive and the wife does need a nap and she's pregnant and you don't need to overburden her? Sure.

We've got to be balanced in this. But, you know what? That would be a hindrance if my wife is questioning, kicking against these things and she's a Proverbs 31 woman. It says, she rises while it's yet night, provides food for her household, and portions for her maidens.

Proverbs 31, verse 20. She opens her hand to the poor. She reaches out her hand to the needy.

If you're single, you want that in a wife. Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain. A woman who quarrels with you, that is you're going to live on the corner of a rooftop.

You're not going to have anyone in your living room. You're going to be on the roof living there. So pick who you marry wisely.

If a wife is burdened by cooking meals, cleaning the house, complains, her husband's going to be hesitant to overburden her, and rightly, if his wife needs growth in that area, he shouldn't try to smash her to the ground. He should bear patiently with her. But he should see, hey, this is an area we should improve on.

How am I strategically going to help my wife patiently to get to this point? Because a lot of women did not grow up where they were cooking meals when they were teenagers for families coming over, and they had mothers teaching them all these things. It's totally new to them. So patience is absolutely needed.

The worst thing that would happen is if some husband... And you don't just need a godly wife, you need a godly husband. Because there's going to be some wives who want to have people over, and the husband's just kind of like, I want to play my video games. I want to do this.

I mean, the sports game's on. If we have the family here, they're going to want to talk. God commands you to show hospitality, to pursue it.

Well, if I said anything imbalanced there, someone can inform me after the message. Do we as husband and wife want to share the things we value most? Family, home, finances, resources, food, privacy, time. If you don't want to share your privacy, why not? What's going on? If your home is sealed off, what are you hiding? If you're ashamed to have people in the home, don't just live the next five years like that.

Identify what's going on here. And let's go ahead and start taking care of these things one by one by one. So why is hospitality important? It isn't just showing brotherly love.

It's showing your life has been transformed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Now, another question. Who should not be in your house? One, false teachers shouldn't be.

2 John 1, he says if they're not holding to these teachings, you should not receive them into your house or give them any greeting. And you could turn them away if you want. 2 John 1, 9-11.

If you've not heard this verse, turn to it. Read it for yourself. So if someone is a false teacher, you shouldn't have them in your home.

Now, if someone's into false teaching and they've been deceived, and they're not a teacher, there's a place to have them over and you're trying to reach out to them and teach them truth. I remember at Fatty's years ago. You know how Fatty's is? You've got all these walls and you don't know who all's there and everyone.

I remember seeing in the distance two guys from a cult in our building. A cult we knew very well. And they'd come that Sunday morning.

And I was thinking, oh no. Well, next thing I know, I had someone coming up to me who had already talked to them and said, well, yeah, I got to talk to these two brothers and it should be okay if they stay at the Grace House, right? I'm thinking, no, we can't let them stay at the Grace House. If we would have put them at the Grace House, if we didn't know who they were, you know what? With that group, you know what would have happened? I probably went to the Grace House Monday morning and found no one living there.

They would have probably taken all those people with them to their city where their cult is at and they would have been gone. Because that's the kind of thing they do. So, do we open our house to all strangers? No.

If they're a false teacher, don't let them in there. Our Grace Houses. We've had people move in the Grace House.

When it comes out that they have a false view of who God is, we kick them out. Are we going to leave a person in the Grace House with a false view of God who's going to poison other people's thinking? We had a guy in the Men's Grace House who was teaching modalism and denying the Trinity. We're not going to put up with that.

That's going to damage people. And the one time we didn't kick someone out soon enough, he poisoned someone else, and then we lost both of them. So whether it's your house, the Grace House, or even church discipline, you don't show hospitality to everyone and say, well, we're just loving them.

If they're false teachers, watch out. Secondly, who should not be in my house? Unrepentant, professing believers. Now, I would say unless it's one of my children.

But if someone's staying with me and they are... where did I get this? 1 Corinthians 5.11? You could turn there. But I'm writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he's guilty of sexual immorality or greed or an idolater, reviler, drunkard, and swindler, not even to eat with such a one. If they're a professing Christian and living in sin, don't even eat with them.

Don't even eat with them. Sadly, sin does that. It spoils what is good in our relationships.

A third thing, you should not eat with people and have people over who are stirring up division. Titus 3.10 says, as for a person who stirs up division after warning them once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him knowing that such a person is warped and sinful and self-condemned. So, who should not be in your house? False teachers, unrepentant professing believers who are not your children, or it could even be one who's your child that should be put out if they're an older child in the nature of their sin.

Or those who stir up division. Hospitality can be difficult. You have a family there.

You tell them we're going to have breakfast at 8 o'clock. 8 o'clock comes. No one's there.

You're sitting there with your family and you're like, we said 8 o'clock. They've not come out of their room. Then you're kind of whispering with your wife, do we knock on the room? What do we do? They said they'd be here at 8 o'clock.

Should we knock? Should we not? Should we eat together as a family? You might say, that's difficult. Sure, because I don't want to offend them and rudely awaken them. And I don't want to be wrong by giving a standard.

But I'll let people know, we want you at the meal table. That's one of the biggest times we have fellowship. 8, 12, and 5, we want you to be there.

If you're in the house, we want to have fellowship with you. We want to get to know you. We want to hear from you.

We're sharing our privacy with you. We're putting ourselves under a magnifying glass. That's not always easy.

Property gets damaged, right? Property can get damaged. Or, it can get fixed. I had a person stay with me.

He was a contractor. He walks up to the house. They were staying there two weeks.

And he sees that my trim, the paint, is falling off. So the two weeks he was staying there, he sanded all the trim on the whole house, primed it, and painted it. So, they might damage your house or they might fix your house.

Either way, rejoice. Maybe someone has to damage it, then someone else comes and they fix it. That might be what's happening there.

I remember as a young kid, it so messed up my conscience, I still remember it. I was at my Uncle Rex's. He had just bought this massive big house in the middle of the country.

And we were there for a family fellowship. I don't know how old I was. I was somewhat young.

And I remember I went to the bathroom and the toilet over-flooded. And I saw it was overflowing and the water was coming out. And I thought, well, I'm not going to go tell them I did this.

And I just shut the door and went and played. A lost kid will do that. And what if that happens in your house? How are you going to respond? How are you going to respond? Here's a question.

How are you when you visit others? We don't just want to think about will people stay with us how they treat us. How do you? Do you do unto others as you want them to do unto you? When I stay with someone, am I keeping my word? Am I submitting to their standards? Am I being sensitive when they go to bed and shifting how I am to that? Not making them shift to me. I'm in their house.

If they go to bed at 1 a.m. in Monterey, Monterey, Mexico, I'm going to bear with that. I'm not going to say you all need to go to bed when I go to bed. Do I abuse someone's hospitality in any way? Do I abuse it? We're being hospitable to those staying in our men's and women's grace houses.

Are you taking care of that property as if it's your own? Hospitality can go really good. I was thinking Prem Wagmeier mentioned an example. He had missionary Bak Singh stay at his house.

And he went into Bak Singh's room in the morning and the bed had not been touched. And he said, brother, did you sleep? And he said, no, I was in the arms of Jesus all night in prayer. So his wife, she

didn't have to change the bed.

So you might get a preacher who prays all night and your wife doesn't have to change the sheets. Or you might get people, they stay there and you know what happens? They actually take the sheets off and put it in the washer for you. They clean things up.

I was thinking of Charles Leiter. When Charles stayed with me, I got a lot of home improvement tips. He pointed out that my washroom doors were upside down.

He pointed out an area where I'd removed a hinge and I had never removed the trim and put wood putty and primed it and painted it and sanded it. And he said, you need to do that. And every time I was in that bathroom, I would look at that and think of Charles Leiter and I finally did it.

So maybe that wasn't a good tip. But one family had us over for dinner and in the middle of the meal, it came up that I didn't have a lawnmower or a weed eater. And the brother said, you know what? Someone at work just gave me a lawnmower and a weed eater.

A John Deere push lawnmower. And we left their house that night with a lawnmower and a weed eater in the back of our van. Kindness is from the Lord.

And parents, you know what? I thought of that family who gave us that mower and that weed eater. I remember the little kids outside kind of thinking, oh, Daddy, what's going on? Because the kids kind of think this is ours now, right? And they had another set, so that's why they were able to give the one away. Well, the parents were able to say, no, we're giving this away.

You see, we're giving this. That's what Christians do. They give away their possessions.

They give away their time. They give away their privacy. They give away their pride in order to do all of these things.

They seek the interest of others. Alexander Strout said in page 30 of the book, I believe our children, his, are more mature and experienced because they have had to meet and relate to all kinds of people from all over the world. Stephen Oldford, born to missionary parents in Africa, said, hospitality is a thrilling adventure and it brings wonderful returns.

Looking back over my boyhood days, I praise God for the enrichment that came into my life through godly men and women who passed through our home. Impressions made in formative years stand a child in good stead in maturity. If you want your kids to grow, you better not just have a mindset, I've got everything I can offer those children.

There are people you can have over in this church who have different insight and different things in their character that you don't have and it's going to be an example to those kids. And they might learn that good characteristic from you or from the guest and not from you. Well, we don't have a lot of time.

Let me see what else is worth mentioning. How do I get started? Well, first, get a fresh glimpse of Christ's love towards you. Second, put away wrong motives.

When we think of hospitality, the world often practices hospitality to do what? Show off their house? Impress everyone? Look at our entertainment skills and we've got all of these things. That's what the world does. That's not Christian hospitality.

Here's some excuses people give. My house isn't big enough. I've known people who had an RV and invited a family of six over to their RV.

Excuses. We're too low in the social standing. That other person, they're rich, high paying job, why would they come to our house? Why would they come to our house? Maybe no one here has that type of excuse.

Christ left His throne in heaven and came down for us. We should expect even the richest of Christians will come to our home. If they're too snobby to do that, then that would be a concern about what they really love if they really love the Lord Jesus Christ I would say.

An excuse. We don't have an outgoing personality. Another excuse.

We don't have finances for a good meal. Look, if you can do a good meal, that's great. But a good meal is not what matters.

Proverbs 15, 17, better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a fattened ox and hatred with it. I'd rather be at your table eating herbs and getting them down my gut than having a fattened ox and a bunch of dissension and disputing around it. Another excuse.

People say, I'm afraid we'll fail or be judged. You will fail. And people will be critical of you.

And that's fine. Isn't that part of growing as a Christian? You're going to let people down? That doesn't keep you from obeying in other areas of the Christian life, does it? Well, I'll fail at evangelism. I should never evangelize.

I'll fail at hospitality. I should never be hospitable. You know, we've got to have thick skin.

Not easily be offended. Will people like what you fix for dinner? No. And they might be the type where they verbally say that at the table.

You know, this is bad. Or something like that. That's fine.

That immature person's comment is a chance for you to grow in patience and humility. Some make an excuse. We're not disciplined to make this happen.

Or some on the opposite end. We're so disciplined, we can't have anyone over because everyone's just crazy compared to how disciplined we are. The Bible calls us to pursue hospitality just as with other commands.

We should not create a list of why we can't do it. What we should do is ask the Lord for grace, obey Him, and go and do it. Okay, how to start? A good thing a lot of people will say is fix a certain day every week or one day a month for starters and determine to have people over.

And don't wait until the last minute to try to have people over. Plan in advance. I mean, it's very simple.

We don't have fellowship meals every Sunday. Many of you do this already. Determine.

Sunday evening, we're going to have a family over. We're going to ask them a week in advance. My wife will cook a meal Saturday night, put it in the Crock-Pot.

If she doesn't feel like leaving it at home, she'll bring the Crock-Pot to the building, stick it into one of the chargers. The meeting ends, we all go to the house, we bring the Crock-Pot, we eat, we fellowship. We bear each other's burdens.

It's not too hard. Just plan it in advance. Set a day.

If you're a married couple, set a day, set a time. If you're a single person, I mean, there are single people who have their own property and they're able to have people over, and that's very encouraging when singles do that. If you say that I don't know anyone, well, seek to know people.

Don't wait for others to take initiative to go after you. Go after them. Too many people use that excuse.

But they're sitting around not going and getting people to know. Another thing, how do you get started? Look, here's the situation. A lot of people will contact us through the church website now, I'll be honest, and they're wanting to visit, okay? I tend to be the one who gets that information.

And that's part of the reason I tend to hog people. If I can have them at my house, I'm not going to give them to anyone else. As Tim's daughter's getting married out, then his house has more rooms and he can have people stay there.

I got Matt Tomlinson a couple times because Tim's house was full. And I appreciated that. But what's my point? What I'm wanting to do, I'm wanting to create a separate email list specifically for those who, for example, there's a sister who was saved a year ago.

She's going to visit in three weeks. And she's going to be here seven days. Okay? Who's she going to stay with? Who's she going to go around with during the week? If you're specifically interested in having people stay at your home, or specifically interested in having people come over for a meal.

And I realize you can say, well, the whole church is. Well, yes, to some degree we are. But just sending the church email out so often, it's like, well, who took care of the need? I'm wanting to make a new way by which we can easily make sure these needs are being met.

And I was talking to Connie about it. We might have a list, like to take a meal, where you can see when these people's schedules are taken and when they're going over to someone's house. Well, Philemon 122, Paul says, at the same time, prepare a guest room for me.

He's saying this to someone. I'm hoping that through your prayers, I'll be graciously given to you. Paul felt comfortable enough to say, hey, Zeke, prepare a guest room for me.

I'm coming down. Is my home so open that someone can feel like they can do that? Hey, brother, we're going to be in town on these dates. Is it going to work out? Is anyone there? Can we stay with you guys? That's the type of people we should be.

We should have people able to do that. I realize it's not going to be for everyone. Everyone doesn't have a house.

But there are all different ways you can show hospitality. So I'm out of time. Maybe one of these examples I'll read.

William Grimshaw, dear friend of George Whitefield. John Newton recorded that when one of his friends was staying at Grimshaw's house, the house was so full of guests that without any indication of a problem, meaning Grimshaw didn't let people know it was full. He didn't want them to feel bad, right? That's loving.

You know, a lot of times we kind of want it, well, you know, we'll make these comments. He didn't do that. Grimshaw himself went to sleep in the hayloft.

This famous preacher went to sleep in the hayloft. Gave up his own bed for a visitor. Even more surprising to his friends, whom must have been an early riser himself, was he discovered in the morning Grimshaw was busy cleaning his muddy boots for him.

At an hour when he expected his friend would still be asleep. And you know, I read Robert Chapman's biography. Exact same thing.

Early in the morning, Robert Chapman was up cleaning these men's boots. Jesus washed our feet. The equivalent of that in their time was a dirty boot.

And Grimshaw and Chapman, they rose early. People who were staying there, they washed their boots. They slept in a hayloft.

They gave up their bed. What a thing. There's so many examples as you read biographies.

It just humbles you. It amazes you at the manifest love of Jesus Christ that Christians in the past have shown through hospitality. May we keep excelling in that area.

Let's pray. Father, Lord, please help us to excel all the more in this area. And Lord, we just need grace.

And Lord, I pray if anything was mentioned not in a balanced way or something, maybe not understood, that You would allow nothing said to hinder or trip anyone up or condemn anyone in any way. But Lord, yes, convict us where we fail. Make us more like the Lord Jesus Christ who left heaven and came and washed our feet and died on that cross.

We bless Your name. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/5LNXNliRjFk.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/james-jennings/having-happy-hospitality/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net