

Share Christ's Love - Being Hospitable

One of the most important calls that Christ gives His church is to be welcoming to people. We are His ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20), so Jesus uses us to be his welcoming arms to draw people from the outside into His presence. Our actions and reactions tell others who we are and who we are representing. As a church what message are we sending?

Our church has been Christ's ambassadors through hospitable efforts for 275 years. It is good to look back and to see where we have represented Christ in our past which we have celebrated many of them this year. Today we are looking at what Zion is doing now to bring hospitality to our community and beyond.

Safe House on Thursday afternoons we welcome middle school students for a place to gather where they have an opportunity to socialize, play, tutoring and be with peers and adults that care. Another, instance, is the community garden where vegetables are raised and taken to food bank; 30 hour famine where our youth fast and raise money for the hungry of the world; the community cross where all who want can nail concerns on the cross; Vacation Bible School where the young can learn more about Jesus and His love; care packages for college students; faith around the table where families learn together and share faith experiences; work camp; Youth Gathering in Detroit; the clothes closet where used clothing can help the less fortunate; and countless other ways we meet the needs of our community and the world. As a church we need to be creative in finding new ways to minister to a hurting world.



The word hospitality repeatedly shows up in the New Testament and as followers of Jesus we are commanded to show hospitality not only within the church but in our everyday life. The word Hospitality comes from two Greek words meaning Brotherly Love and Stranger. In light of combining these two words for hospitality the common understanding isn't the best way to express the Biblical meaning of our subject. The world views it as entertaining guests, having friends over for dinner but in the eyes of God hospitality is loving strangers like you would love your own brother. This makes a big difference and completely changes the way we should see this term used in Scripture. How do we practice this not only in church but in our everyday lives?

In church, it means when we see a stranger in church we greet them with a sincere welcome so they would want to return. Most of us go to church to have our needs met. We have the attitude of being the guest rather than the hosts. What would our church look like if we approached church hospitality the way God would want us to?

In our everyday life, Biblical hospitality would look like... when we pass a stranger on the street, we smile and say hello instead of nonchalantly looking away and pretending we don't see them. It means when the car in front of us cuts us off, we pray a blessing on them instead flipping them off.

But the Greek word for hospitality had another meaning as well. The dual usage would include "enemies." So then in this case the word hospitality becomes "one who loves their enemies in the same way they love their brother."...Ouch! Would you allow your brother to go hungry...or allow him to be homeless...or kill your brother for any reason? We are to love our enemies just as we love our own brother or sister.

As believers we need to consider ways in which we show the true meaning, Biblical meaning of hospitality. We must remember that whether it is a stranger on the sidewalk or an enemy who is trying to destroy us, they are human beings with immeasurable worth, so valuable that Jesus gave his life for them. Our job is to affirm their value and love them like family.

The word hospitality repeatedly shows up in the New Testament and as followers of Jesus we are commanded to show hospitality not only within the church but in our everyday life. The word Hospitality comes from two Greek words meaning Brotherly Love and Stranger. In light of combining these two words for hospitality the common understanding isn't the best way to express the Biblical meaning of our subject. The world views it as entertaining guests, having friends over for dinner but in the eyes of God hospitality is loving strangers like you would love your own brother. This makes a big difference and completely changes the way we should see this term used in Scripture. How do we practice this not only in church but in our everyday lives?

In church, it means when we see a stranger in church we greet them with a sincere welcome so they would want to return. Most of us go to church to have our needs met. We have the attitude of being the guest rather than the hosts. What would our church look like if we approached church hospitality the way God would want us to?

In our everyday life, Biblical hospitality would look like... when we pass a stranger on the street, we smile and say hello instead of nonchalantly looking away and pretending we don't see them. It means when the car in front of us cuts us off, we pray a blessing on them instead flipping them off.

But the Greek word for hospitality had another meaning as well. The dual usage would include "enemies." So then in this case the word hospitality becomes "one who loves their enemies in the same way they love their brother..." Ouch! Would you allow your brother to go hungry...or allow him to be homeless...or kill your brother for any reason? We are to love our enemies just as we love our own brother or sister.

As believers we need to consider ways in which we show the true meaning, Biblical meaning of hospitality. We must remember that whether it is a stranger on the sidewalk or an enemy who is trying to destroy us, they are human beings with immeasurable worth, so valuable that Jesus gave his life for them. Our job is to affirm their value and love them like family.