

## Caring By Entertaining:

*Heb 13:1-3 Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.*

These scriptures are dealing with the subject of hospitality and caring for others. Being a caregiver by entertaining them. Look at verse two. This is the only place that you will find these words in the Bible, and it admonishes us not to be forgetful in entertaining strangers.

We by nature love to entertain our best friends, and shy away from entertaining strangers. But an open home is an open heart! Everything that the Lord has given us, He gave us to use primarily for Him. Everything that we have belongs to God. We should be willing to give back to Him a portion of that which belongs to Him.

If God has given us a house, we should use it or at least a portion of it for the Lord instead of a fortress to hide from the rest of the world. He gave us a home or apartment so that we could entertain others at least occasionally.

(our home is often used to house missionaries and evangelists; Martha, Jo Ann; the Murray's; the Hydock's, all have opened their homes in the past for Discipleship Bible studies.)

If the Lord gave us a vehicle we should be willing on occasion to use it for the Lord's work. If the Lord gave us some money, we should use some of that for the Lord. We should use our time, and be good stewards of our time, giving back to the Lord a portion of that time. Anything that God has given to us, part of it should be returned to the Lord! God has given all of us some things in our lives, and in some capacity, it should be given back to Him.

I want to give you some verses of scripture tonight to show you that this is so, so that our people can begin and continue to apply these truths in their everyday lives, caring for others and making a difference.

An open home is an open heart! When we lived in Rochester and attended FBBC, we often had missionaries in our home to stay and to feed and fellowship with. During the annual Bible Conference, it was not unusual for us to have 15-20 people in our home for 5-10 days! It was always an exciting time at the O'Dell Motel!

When we had our home built, my wife and I determined to use it for the Lord's work. We have a visitor's book that we keep near our door and ask all our visitors that stay in our home to sign. It is a real blessing to sit down at times and look at the many we have had the privilege to minister to over the years!

If God has given you a home, a car, some money, it is to use for Him! *Heb 13:1-2 Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.*

"Angels" is a word that sometimes means heavenly beings. The word means messengers! Sometimes they may mean human beings. In the Book of Revelation, each letter to the seven churches was addressed to "the Angel of the church at Sardis, or Philadelphia, Thyatira, or Laodicea, write these things saith..." And it talks about the Lord in what He tells that person in the church to straiten it out!

Now, we don't have any angel hanging around here, but you do have a messenger! And we call him the pastor!

The angels in Rev. 1 are stars, they are messengers that He had sent forth with a message from God.

Look at the subscription that follows 2 Tim 4:22... Timothy was ordained the first Bishop of the church of the Ephesians. History tells us that Timothy outlived both the Apostle Paul and John.

When it says in *Rev 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus...* And that by comparing the scriptures it could also be saying, "Unto Timothy, of the Church at Ephesus!" He was ordained the first bishop of the Church of Ephesus. He was the messenger, the one that was to stand on the behalf of God and bring forth the message.

The point is, *Heb 13:2-3 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. 3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.*

There are three missionaries, men of our flavor, through “New Tribes Missions” who are still in captivity in Columbia and have been for over six years now. (Rick Tenenof, Mark Rich, Dave Mankins) We should remember them in our prayers as though bound with them, as though it were us! Oh, Christian how we should enter into the sufferings of others.

Intercessory prayer on their behalf is a deep form of prayer where we actually intercede on the behalf of somebody as though you were that person, going through that suffering and going through those trials.

(ex. When my kids were small and sick, I wished to God that their sickness were placed upon me and not them because I couldn’t bear to see them suffer so.)

### **Look at what Jesus said concerning hospitality.**

*Luke 14:12-14 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. 13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: 14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*

We need to invite people we don’t know over and entertain them. Why not start something good and start caring for people? Minister to individuals or families that really have a need.

Vs. 14 says. It will be a blessing to you in this life and a blessing to you in the next life!

What a promise! Do you believe Jesus is a man of His word? It means something because Jesus said it did!

*Matt 10:42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.*

The Lord keeps meticulous records, so much so that, if all you do is give a glass of cold water in Jesus name that there will be a reward for you in heaven.

*Matt 25:40 Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

When we minister to the least insignificant individual in this church, Jesus looks down as though you are ministering directly to Him. It is very important that we be doers of the word for other people.

Entertaining is showing hospitality toward others. It is receiving them, providing for them and giving them pleasure, literally, amusing them. I want to give you three principles from the Bible as to who should be involved in giving hospitality.

### **1. Everyone in general should show hospitality.**

Our text: *Heb 13:1-2 Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.*

This is what the care ministry is. Not just greeters at the door, but having a desire to make and be a friend of theirs for the rest of your life. That is our motivation when we meet somebody! “Dear God, give me somebody as I work in the care ministry this week that I can make friends with for the rest of my life!” Perpetual! Let brotherly love continue.

Rom. Chapters 12-16 deal with the duties of the Christian.

*Rom 12:13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.*

When we know someone who is hurting, who has financial needs, we should be willing to do something. It may not be much, but “needs never last long in the presence of obedient people.”

*1 John 3:17-18 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*

There are people all around us that live on fixed incomes struggling, some have medical expenses that can stagger you, legal expense, some who don't have two Nichols to rub together! Some people are hurting!

You and I as God's people should look out for them and distribute to the necessity of the saints. It doesn't mean we will or that we have to give to everyone that has a need, but we should give to somebody sometime!

*1 Peter 4:8-9 And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging.*

This is not to be done unwillingly or reluctantly. "The pastor says we have to, so I guess we have to." No we are to do it as unto the Lord!

## **2. Ladies should show hospitality.**

They seem to be particularly singled out in *1 Tim 5:9-10 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, 10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.*

There is a doctrinal teaching as to which kind of a widow the church should remember and support. There are some widows that the church should support. They are called, "widows indeed" (I Tim. 5:3,16).

A widow indeed is one whose husband is departed, no relatives left, all her children have died.

I hope you never become one. The Bible even speaks of the extended family. It goes so far to say that the nephews should take care of their aunts! (I Tim. 5: 3-16), Why? That the church be not charged!

The Bible believes that we ought to have close family ties, where not only sons and daughters take care of their parents but where nephews ought to be looking out for their aunts.

You may be a widow someday, and some in our church are already. Heaven forbid that you become a desolate widow, a widow indeed, but this is what is expected of you as a lady.

For the church to start caring for your needs, the bible says:

*1 Tim 5:10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.*

Ladies, there ought to be a spirit about you, a spirit of hospitality.

## **3. Pastors should show hospitality.**

*1 Tim 3:1-2 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;*

This is something that my family and I have enjoyed over the years to have guests in our home. And not just missionaries and evangelist either, we have had some complete strangers stay with us on occasion just trying to be a blessing to them.

*Titus 1:7-8 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; 8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;*

My desire has been for a long time, to build on an addition for extra class rooms in the church, handicap accessibility, bigger office space and a missions quarters or a prophets chamber, a place for people to stay when they are passing through the area. My wife and I in our travels have stayed at many of these and truly what a blessing it has been!

**Advise if you are going to be given to hospitality.**

1. Get your house or apartment as clean as possible. Our yards clean, our homes clean, bathrooms, sinks, your vehicles clean, clothes, teeth, breath, our bodies. Uncleanliness is the work of the flesh.
 

*2 Cor 7:1 Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*

*1 Thess 4:7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.*

God wants his people to be clean!

Our elders had a saying, “cleanliness is next to godliness.”

Prepare as if for royalty! Remember... *Matt 25:40 Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

Fix up your house, your apartment as if Jesus Christ himself was coming to your home, because He is, when we minister to strangers.

(ex.) I remember when the Department head at Kodak made an announcement that he was going to come out to the production floor and visit with the factory workers. We cleaned, mopped, painted, we bent over backwards to present to him that our workplace was a positive and clean environment. I made and hung a sign that read, “This department produces the finest quality photographic paper in the world.”
2. Once in a while, have your family plan on an evening when you specifically invite guests to your home to entertain them.
 

At our home in Rochester, we did this every Sunday night! Our service started at 5:00 and went till 7:00. That left plenty of time yet in the evening to fellowship and get acquainted. We always made it appoint to invite a new couple or family as well as some of our best friends to come over.
3. Cook or order a fine meal, for all attending. Do something special! I’m very impressed and astounded by what my wife can whip up in a pinch!
4. Invite those you have met most recently. New people! Somebody different than the same friends every time. Some of our single people feel very lonely in this church.
 

Don’t let our own members fall through the cracks.
5. Limit your fellowship from two to three hours.
 

*Prov 25:17 Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be weary of thee, and so hate thee.*

Don’t overstay your welcome. When the host come downstairs with their pajama’s on and asks you to turn off the lights when you leave, you know that you have overstayed your welcome!
6. Try to control the conversation so that it would be spiritually edifying.
 

*Prov 10:19 In the multitude of words there wanteth (lacketh) not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.*

Fellowship. Talk about the Lord, teach some things about the Lord, sing, have a word of prayer together, etc.

*James 3:8 But the tongue can no man tame;* This is one reason why you might wish to limit your time. Things can get out of line when you run out of things to talk about. The conversation will tend to go downhill after that.
7. Begin a hospitality ministry! Show others the love of Jesus Christ. Entertain them In Christian love, in Christian conversation, in spiritually edifying fellowship and prayer.
 

That is what Senior Saints is about. This will help stamp out some of the loneliness and the hurt that some of God’s people have.

Please be sensible: Don’t cause uncomfortable situations to occur between the sexes.

I don’t think that the Lord is asking of us too much.

“Lord, help us to sanctify our homes to your use. May this hospitality ministry produce in our lives many good memories for years to come. Heavenly Father, Speak to our hearts about obeying you in this matter tonight.”