

The Heart of Hospitality

THE WAY WEEK 11 | AMANDA BEGGS

When you think about hospitality, what comes to mind?

- Our narrow definition: social practice that takes place in our homes

→ Hospitality is less about our homes and more about our **hearts**. Hospitality is more than a meal. It's a picture of the gospel.

Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Hebrews 13:1-2

- **Philadelphia** (brotherly Love) → 2 Greek roots: Philos (love) + Adelphos (brother)
- "Let brotherly love continue" assumes this love is already happening.
- **Philoxenia** (hospitality) → 2 Greek roots: Philos (love) + Xenos (stranger)
- "angels unawares" → Genesis 18

→ Before we open our homes to strangers, we have to open our hearts to them.

Over time, "stranger danger" has evolved from something for our safety, to something for our comfort.

Strangers

- 1. Social Strangers:** people we encounter in our natural orbit of daily life.
 - God purposefully places us around these people.
 - Who do you need to welcome closer?
- 2. Ideological Strangers:** people who think differently politically, spiritually, etc.
 - We feel like it's safer if we don't surround ourselves
 - We feel ill-equipped to communicate
 - We want nothing to do with "someone like that"
- 3. Vulnerable Strangers:** people away from home, separated from or without families

He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.”

Deuteronomy 10:18-19

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.” But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.” Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

Luke 19:1-10

- Practicing hospitality like Jesus is easy to understand. To love the stranger requires us to actively do two things: **see and pursue**.
- For Jesus, hospitality wasn't a hobby, but a habit.

Start practicing hospitality like Jesus:

- See the stranger: put down your phone and look at the people around you.
- Pursue the stranger: invite them to your home, share a meal, get to know them
 - The crowd used faith as the right to build walls instead of the reason to take them down.

As we see and pursue strangers, we come to the divine intersection of curiosity and hospitality:

- Zacchaeus was seeking to see who Jesus was
- As they move toward God and we move toward them, we encounter Jesus

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Matthew 25:35-40

What do we do when hospitality feels hard?

→ Remember that we are the stranger.

Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

Ephesians 2:12

On the cross, Jesus extended the greatest hospitality the world has ever seen.

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:13

the way.

DOING WHAT JESUS DID