

**Katy Bible Church is committed to
the ministry of the Word of God through authentic relationships,
so all would mature in Jesus Christ for the glory of God.**

What is hospitality?

Hospitality is the friendly reception and treatment of guests or strangers, or the quality or disposition of receiving and treating guests and strangers in a warm, friendly, generous way.

There are varying degrees of hospitality: neighborliness, hosting, giving, showing compassion, and greeting.

Hospitality is taking the things you prize most and sharing them with other people.

“We don’t understand the power of the table, the power of hospitality to minister to people’s needs” (Strauch).

Hospitality is commanded of us by God.

God’s Word on Hospitality

Romans 12:9–16

“**[Let] love [be] without hypocrisy.** Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. **[Be] devoted to one another in brotherly love;** give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, **practicing hospitality.** Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.”

Hebrews 13:1–2

“**Let love of the brethren continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers,** for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.”

“The physical force of gravity pulls everything to the center of the earth. In order to break free from earth-centered life, thousands and thousands of pounds of energy have to push the space shuttle away from the center. There is also a psychological force of gravity that constantly pulls our thoughts and affections and physical actions inward toward the center of our own selves and our own homes.

Therefore the most natural thing in the world is to neglect hospitality. It is the path of least resistance. All we have to do is yield to the natural gravity of our self-centered life, and the result will be a life so full of self that there is no room for hospitality. We will forget about it. And we will neglect it. So the Bible bluntly says. Stop that! Build a launching pad. Fill up your boosters. And blast out of your self-oriented routine. Stop neglecting hospitality. Practice hospitality” (Piper, “Strategic Hospitality”).

1 Peter 4:7–11

“The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober [spirit] for the purpose of prayer. Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. **Be hospitable to one another without complaint.** As each one has received a [special] gift, employ it in serving one another as good

stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, [is to do so] as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves [is to do so] as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

“Our pride often tempts us to feel imposed upon when we are asked to serve others. But hospitality rendered with a truly humble spirit, without pretense or pride, is a beautiful manifestation of the work of the Spirit of God in the lives of His people. Through this happy labor we are given the opportunity to touch other lives, promote peace within the church and our families, witness and disciple, encourage those who are laboring for the kingdom, uphold those who are suffering, and comfort those in the midst of trials. What a privilege to be used of God for such important things!” (Wittenberg Gate, “Christian Hospitality”).

“Ungrudgingly! That means, be the kind of people who do it and like to do it! In other words the command to be hospitable is not just a command to do something. It is not just a command that can be legalistically fulfilled with a quota of guests. It is a command to be a certain kind of person, namely, the kind that doesn’t resent having to be hospitable. The kind of person who doesn’t look at the extra dishes and bedding and bother—and grumble” (Piper, “Strategic Hospitality”).

James 2:15–17

“If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,’ and yet you do not give them what is necessary for [their] body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, [being] by itself.”

3 John 5–7

“Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially [when they are] strangers; and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth.”

See also

Genesis 18:1–8. Job 31:32. Matthew 25:35–40. Luke 10:30–37; 14:16–24; 16:19–31. Acts 2:44–47; 6:1–6; 16:15. Romans 16:5. Galatians 6:2. 1 Timothy 3:2; 5:10

Characteristics of hospitality

If we’re going to have brotherly love, we have to open our homes.

“Churchy love” is confined to the church campus on Sunday morning and doesn’t want to see each other the rest of the week.

The point is to be with one another: don’t try to show off in food and fun.

Home-based hospitality allows for flexibility, freedom, warm welcome, and comfort.

An essential quality more than activity.

It’s more about who we are than what we do or have.

We must be available.

Occasions

Plan for scheduled times for hospitality. Start now.
Put feet to your good intentions.

Be willing to be spontaneous.

Holiday celebrations: We don’t want anybody home alone at these times.

Birthday parties

Honoring special events: birth, new job, marriage, deaths, etc.

Activity

Our lives are full already. Instead of simply adding another activity to our schedules, we could invite others to share with us in an activity we're already planning to do.

Keep a guest book with guests writing in their own language.

Eat together

Full course meal

Potluck

Popcorn

Hot dogs and hamburgers

Tea and treats

Play together

Board games

Golf

Work together

Make crafts

Do projects

Offer to host meetings in your home.

Sing together

Talk together

How did you become a believer in Jesus Christ?

How did you meet your spouse?

Where were you born?

Read together

Walk together

Pray together

Celebrate together

Hospitality outside the home

Send food for most any occasion.

Give welcome baskets to guests.

Provide basic information to new residents of the area.

Provide transportation. Invite others to go shopping with you.

Recipients

Unusual, eccentric people

New Christians

Students

Those needing encouragement

Those needing appreciation

The lonely

The depressed

Friends

Students

Guests to KBC

Don't invite the popular people: look for those that aren't invited.

Look for people that would be encouraged by your invitation.

Prioritize the list of those to invite.

Hindrances

"There are many challenges to providing hospitality, but we must not let them become excuses. A little creative thinking can help us to find solutions to our particular problems. We also need to examine ourselves to determine if our biggest challenges might not be within our homes, but rather, within our hearts." (Wittenberg Gate, "Christian Hospitality").

Selfishness

Radical individualism, personal freedom, self-fulfillment, individual rights, privacy, self-determination, no long-term commitments

Cocooning, selfishness, isolation

We would have to step out of our comfort zone, be willing to be inconvenienced.

Fear

Fear of rejection

Fear of inadequacy (“no china, not enough chairs, not enough room, no guest room”)

Insecurity

Messy house

High expectations (of others, or of self)

Lack of time

We must carefully set priorities and keep them.

We are improperly task-oriented over relationship-oriented.

We are overburdened, overcommitted, over connected.

Bibliography

Bright, Vonette and Barbara Ball. *The Joy of Hospitality--Fun Ideas for Evangelistic Entertaining*. New Life Publishers, 1995.

Ely, Leanne. *Saving Dinner: The Menus, Recipes, and Shopping Lists to Bring Your Family Back to the Table*. Ballantine Books, 2005. See also her other books on *Saving Dinner*.

Green, Michael. *Evangelism and the Early Church*.

Jarrell, Jane. *Simple Hospitality*. Thomas Nelson, 2005.

Mains, Karen. *Open Heart, Open Home: The Hospitable Way to Make Others Feel Welcome & Wanted*. Inter-

iversity Press, 2002.

Oden, Amy G. *And You Welcomed Me: A Sourcebook on Hospitality in Early Christianity*. Abingdon Press, 2002.

Piper, John. “Strategic Hospitality.”

http://www.desiringgod.org/ResourceLibrary/Sermons/ByDate/1985/503_Strategic_Hospitality/. Cited 26
October 2006.

Schaeffer, Edith. *The Hidden Art of Homemaking*. Tyndale House, 1985.

Strauch, Alexander. *The Hospitality Commands*. Lewis & Roth, 1993.

Wittenberg Gate. “Christian Hospitality.” http://dory.typepad.com/wittenberg_gate/2004/11/christian_hospi.html.
Cited 26 October 2006.