

## Hospitality That Changes Lives

### Open Homes, Open Hearts: The Ministry of Hospitality

(Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:1–2)

**Introduction:** Hospitality is a spiritual discipline that welcomes Christ into our home. When we open our homes, hearts, and hands to others, we invite Jesus in.

We live in a world of closed doors and guarded hearts, but the gospel calls us to radical Christian hospitality as a means of grace. Jesus stands at the door and knocks, and when we welcome strangers, we may be welcoming Him. As we move from the idea of hospitality to actually living it out, Scripture first points us to where it begins—right at our front door.

#### I. **Open homes** — Romans 12:13

*“Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.”*

**A. A command** - *Hospitality is not passive; it is something we pursue.*

1. It means loving strangers, not just entertaining friends.
2. Hospitality is tied to generosity: sharing with believers in need is part of Christian love. (2 Tim. 1:16-18; 3 Jn. 5-8; Lk. 14: 12-14; Rom. 12:8; 1 Pe. 4:9)

**B. The context** - Romans 12 is about a living sacrifice of love.

1. In the early church, believers broke bread in their homes and opened their houses for the spread of the gospel. (Ac. 2:46-47)
2. Open homes have always been a ministry tool in God’s hands.  
(1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Rom. 16:5, 23-27)
  - a. Don’t excuse yourself because your home is not big enough.
  - b. God can use a table, chairs, and a willing heart.
  - c. Open your home, and you partner with God’s family-building work.

**As Max Lucado put it**, the early church succeeded without sanctuaries because they had *“the simplest of tools: the home.”*

But opening our homes is only the beginning—because true hospitality doesn’t start with a house, it starts with the heart.

#### II. **Open hearts** — Hebrews 13:1–2

**A. The hospitality of the heart** –

1. The prevailing attitude of the believer
2. True hospitality begins with brotherly love.

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

3. If our hearts are closed with prejudice, our hospitality will feel forced.

**B. Heavenly hospitality** - The command includes strangers, not just familiar friends. (Angels simply means messengers)

1. Abraham’s welcome in Genesis 18 shows that unseen blessings can come through unexpected guests.
2. Entertaining strangers can create fear...
3. Hospitality is the antidote to fear of strangers and stretches the heart.
  - a. Ask God to open your heart to people outside your usual circle.
  - b. Welcome others without prejudice.
  - c. Trust that God may use an unexpected guest to bless you.

**As Stanley once said** – *“hospitality is a requirement, not an option.*  
**Jesus** – Mk. 9:41; Mt. 25:40)

When our hearts are truly open, it naturally leads to something more—our hands begin to open in service and sacrifice.

#### III. **Open hands** — Service and Sacrifice

*“Contribute to the needs of the saints and “show hospitality”*

**A. Hospitality isn’t just light snacks and polite conversation** - it requires sacrifice.

1. Hospitality often costs time, money, comfort, and convenience.
2. Jesus modeled this servant heart: He came to serve, washed feet, and met needs. (Mk. 10:45; Jn. 13; Mt. 14:14)
3. The early Christians shared what they had and helped the needy. (Ac. 2:44-45)
4. Hospitality includes practical generosity and joyful giving (2 Cor. 9:7).
5. Acts of kindness toward others are acts of service to Christ.
  - a. Invite someone unexpected into your home. (Lk. 14:12-14)
  - b. Practice hospitality year-round, not only on special occasions.
  - c. Open your wallet and your hands when someone has a real need.
  - d. Don’t let fear keep Jesus outside the door. (1 Pe. 4:9; 1 Tim. 3:12; Ac. 16:34; 1 Kgs. 17:8-9)

**Conclusion:** Hospitality changes lives because it welcomes Christ into ordinary moments. Open homes, open hearts, and open hands become places where God’s peace and presence are known.