

HOSPITALITY

Sharing • Relationships • Thankfulness

Are you feeling...

*A need to know who your neighbour is? Supportive?
A sense of ownership/entitlement? An enjoyment from sharing?*

WHAT IS HOSPITALITY?

Hospitality is about organizing our lives so that there is room for others. It is providing a welcome for those who need a listening ear. It is welcoming people not only to our tables, but into our hearts. Instead of holding tightly to what we think is ours, hospitality invites us to live with open hands. The early church was moved by the Holy Spirit to become hospitable in an extraordinary way. They shared everything they owned and looked out for one another (see Acts 2:42-47). This took discipline, it did not happen overnight and, for some, it was a difficult adjustment (see Acts 5:1-11). A truly hospitable person considers their gifts and blessings and ponders how they can be shared with others. Living with open hands is possible when we recognize that all things come from God (see James 1:17).

The word hospitality comes from two Greek words—love and stranger. The practice of hospitality is to show genuine warmth and welcome to strangers. God's Word says, *"Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!"* (Hebrews 13:2). The world tells us that showing hospitality seems risky, maybe even a little dangerous, but locks and firewalls cannot do for the soul what companionship and friendship do. The human soul longs for connection.

Jesus said, "For I was hungry, and you fed me... I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home...I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!" (Matthew 25:35-40).

WHEN DO I APPLY IT THIS DISCIPLINE?

I do not need to wait until my home is perfectly ordered or I have extra money in an entertaining budget. Hospitality is something every believer can practise. When I consider how God has welcomed me, I can seek to mirror those actions. I can look for ways to extend kindness and warmth especially to the disconnected. I can get involved in church opportunities, such as hosting a small Bible study, driving people to services, providing snacks for events or befriending newcomers. Seek the Holy Spirit's direction.

READY TO PRACTISE HOSPITALITY?

1. Read 1 Peter 4:1-11 as you reflect on this discipline.
2. Consider all God has given you and how you can share with others.
3. Carve out time in your schedule for people—family, friends, strangers.

NOTES