



Fully Human A Biblical Pursuit of Virtue Session V: Hospitality

Opening Prayer Psalm 23

To Be Hospitable

It's a joyful welcome at the door. It's making someone feel at home and that they belong. It's an open sharing of what we have, and yes, it often joyfully centers around food. While welcoming the unexpected company who simply "pops by" may be a less and less common practice in the modern world, hospitality is a virtue which not only offers the gifts of kindness (like a cup of coffee), but it also runs much deeper. In being receptive and attentive to the one welcomed, and in a world which suffers more and more from loneliness, being hospitable is a wonderful expression of friendship.

How would you define the virtue of hospitality?

Share a time when you've been the recipient of someone's hospitality. How are you blessed by someone who is hospitable?

Luther on Hospitality

Martin and Katie Luther were adept in the virtue of hospitality. They would regularly lodge and entertain dozens of guests in their home for days on end, making sure their earthly needs were met. They would often take in Luther's students who would then be blessed not only by the gifts of food and shelter, but also by the extra time sitting with Luther at his table, hearing him speak of the life lived out under Christ's grace.

Read how Luther writes about hospitality:

"There are some of us who think to ourselves, 'If I had only been there! How quick I would have been to help the Baby. I would have washed His linen. How happy I would have been to go with the shepherds to see the Lord lying in the



manger!' Why don't we do it now? We have Christ in our neighbor.” (AZ Quotes on Martin Luther)

“A Christian loves his neighbor as a brother; he makes no difference between persons or things. He does not consider whether he is serviceable or not, whether he is wise or unwise...God loved all, even His enemies, without making any difference. Therefore, we too, should love as brothers even those who are not lovable.” (What Luther Says, CPH #2586)

- How does Luther connect Christ to loving one’s neighbor?
- How is hospitality a Christlike expression of love to one’s neighbor?

Hospitality with Good News

Read Genesis 18:1-15

- How could Abraham have responded to three strangers traveling by his tent in the heat of the day?
- Review the details of Abraham’s exercise of hospitality for these three “visitors.” What are the various layers of hospitality revealed in this account?
- What good news does the Lord share with Abraham and Sarah at this encounter?

Hospitality with More Good News

Read Luke 10:38-41

- How does Martha practice hospitality at the start of this text?
- What tension seems to exist for Martha relating to her sister’s (Mary), action? How might Mary’s action also be seen as practicing hospitality?
- What good news does Jesus share at the end of the text?



Hospitality with Even More Good News

Read Luke 19:1-10

- How is Zacchaeus described at the start of the text? How would this description influence his reputation in Jericho?
- How does Jesus prompt Zacchaeus' hospitality? Why "must" Jesus abide in his home that day?
- How does Zacchaeus demonstrate his depth of hospitality?
- What good news does Jesus share with Zacchaeus? How is it that such a "sinner" can be declared a son of Abraham? (vs. 9)

Jesus' Hospitality

Read John 14:1-6

- What is the context of Jesus sharing this message with His disciples?
- How does Jesus describe His "hospitality" in this passage? What does the imagery of this passage bring to mind for you?
- How do we receive this hospitality? (vs. 6)

Being Hospitable Today

- How do the following passages inform our practice of hospitality? (Leviticus 19:34; Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:2; I Peter 4:9)
- The Greek New Testament word for hospitality literally means "love of the stranger." What challenges do you find in practicing this virtue in your life?



- What good can our Lord accomplish through our pursuit of this virtue for our neighbor? For us?
- How does hospitality remind us of the joy of eternal life? (Revelation 7:9-17)

Closing Prayer