

VIRTUE 19

HOSPITALITY

Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

—Romans 12:13

Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.

—Hebrews 13:2

Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

—1 Peter 4:9

Hospitality simply means going out of your way to serve and provide for others (e.g., by hosting meals, etc.). Does this sound easy? Well, it's actually not so easy for one reason: it takes work and planning. I remember a time when our family was visiting another family who had invited us to their city to enjoy a major parade and celebration. They knew we were coming weeks in advance. When we arrived the day of the parade, they took us through the city to catch glimpses of the festivities here and there, but seeing anything clearly was difficult because of the enormous crowds. When it came time to go out for dinner, all of the restaurants were packed. We tried a waiting list for one that took over an hour

and we still could not get seated. Practicing better hospitality would have been to call a good restaurant a few weeks before the parade and have all of the reservations set in advance.

So the lack of hospitality just “goes with the flow” and makes no plans in advance. Practicing hospitality means thinking ahead to the needs of your group and taking steps beforehand to set things up accordingly.

While not as seemingly glorious as other knightly traits like strength, honor, and gallantry, hospitality ranks as one of the key traits of knighthood. In medieval times, there were no planes, trains, or automobiles. Travelers who visited your home needed to stay for at least a few days to regain strength and supplies for their journey onward. We need to do the same for others, particularly for those in the family of believers (Galatians 6:10).

In fact, hospitality is such an important knighthood value that there is an entire knightly order named after it: the Knights Hospitaller. The Knights Hospitaller, also known as the Order of Hospitallers, or simply Hospitallers, was a group of men attached to a hospital in Jerusalem that was founded by Blessed Gerard around 1023. Two Orders of Chivalry (knighthood) evolved from this Order: the Order of the Knights of Saint Lazarus and the Order of the Knights of Saint John, later to be known as the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. The Hospitaller knights provided care for poor, sick, or injured pilgrims to the Holy Land. This Order later became a “religious + military” order and was involved in the First Crusade.

In modern times, true knights need to practice hospitality by being both *intentional* and *prepared*. This means being deliberate about who you ask over and when. Sometimes just “hang out” time with the “regulars” should be replaced with time purposefully poured into those who might really need your time, input, and advice.

REFLECT

But I think it is necessary to send back to you
Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow

soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs.

—Philippians 2:25

I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.

—Philippians 4:18

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

—Mark 10:45

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RESPOND

1. What are some areas in your life where you can be more hospitable?
2. How can being more hospitable impact those around you?
3. How can you improve your hospitality by planning more in advance?
4. How can hospitality be practiced even beyond meals and entertaining?
5. How are we blessed by being more hospitable?