

Generous Hospitality

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Preacher: Rev. Thomas Hinson

[0 : 00] Good evening, everybody. Glad that we could join together today. My name is Tommy. If we haven't met, hopefully we'll get a chance to do so after the service. But as we've gathered here this week, we are in a season in the church calendar called Lent.

This is a time of preparation for Easter. It's a time when Christians reflect together on who we are in the Lord, who the Lord is calling us to be, and the centrality of the cross, why we need the cross, the death and resurrection of Jesus.

And so even as we're doing that as individuals, we're also doing this corporately as a church body. We're thinking together about who we are now, who the Lord is calling us to be.

We're reflecting on our identity as a church community in a place like Washington, D.C. And so as we've been doing that, we've been looking at this statement up here.

And this is what we believe captures who we are as a church. As a church, we seek the flourishing of Washington, D.C. by building gospel-centered communities that practice generous hospitality, spiritual formation, and missionary faithfulness in every neighborhood.

[1 : 10] Now, some of you are here and you've been a part of this church, and you know that from time to time we need to reflect on who we are so that we can move forward with greater clarity and unity. But even if you're here and you're not a Christian, or maybe you're just visiting and maybe you don't even plan to come back, this is still relevant because this is what we believe captures not only what we're called to be, but a lot of this is what we believe represents or reflects what the Christian faith is all about in general.

And so we've been looking over these weeks at parts of this in greater detail. And so this week we come to our three core values. These are what you see, generous hospitality, spiritual formation, and missionary faithfulness.

These are the three values that we want to infuse everything that we do as a community. And again, we believe that these all reflect what Christians are called to in general. So this week we're going to be reflecting on the first of these values, generous hospitality.

And what does it mean that we practice generous hospitality? And we need to spend some time on this because I think there's a lot of misunderstanding around the concept of hospitality. I know that when I say generous hospitality, that makes many of us think of throwing expensive dinner parties. And that's not in fact what the Bible means when it talks about hospitality. So we're going to get into this, we're going to look at what the Bible actually means when it talks about hospitality. And what we'll see, among other things, is that hospitality is a very important, vital principle.

[2 : 38] It's a value that runs all the way through Scripture. That God's people are called to practice hospitality. And this is the foundation for Christian approaches to social justice.

All of the teaching on social justice that we have in Scripture is really rooted in a robust understanding of hospitality. And I hope to make that connection as we move forward together. So all of our readings that we just heard focus on this theme, but we're going to really look at two of them. We're going to look at Deuteronomy 10, and then we're going to look at Hebrews 13. And they will show us that generous hospitality is three things.

That it's a heart posture, that it's a mindset, and it's a lifestyle. A heart posture, a mindset, and a lifestyle. Generous hospitality. So let's ask the Lord to lead us into His Word.

Our Heavenly Father, we recognize here that if we are merely here to consider the words and reflections of human beings, then we really have no hope, and there is no power here.

[3 : 44] Our great hope now is that we would be able to sit at Your feet, and that You would illuminate Your Word for us, that You would speak Your Word. Lord, the same Word that brought all of this into existence at creation, that You would now use Your Word to recreate us from the inside

out, Lord.

For our good and for Your glory, in Your Son's name we pray. Amen. So as we're talking about generous hospitality, the first thing I want you to see is that it is a heart posture. It flows out of a heart posture, and that heart posture is love. The generous hospitality flows out of a heart posture of love. Now we need to do a little more clarifying here, because I know that when I say the word love, we think of an emotion.

Right? And that's because we live in a society that is greatly influenced by romanticism and individualism. And so when we think about love, we think about the feeling of love, the emotion of love, the deep desire, the longing, the aching for another person.

We think of that romantic sense of love as desire for another. So love is all about my emotions, my desires, my longings and affections.

[5 : 01] And the point I want to make is this, is that that is almost the exact opposite of what the Bible means when it talks about love. For Christians, love is not primarily an emotion.

It's a posture of the heart. It's an orientation of the heart that says you are more important than I am. That your welfare and your blessing and your flourishing is the higher priority.

That my interests and my preferences take a back seat to what's best for you. Meaning the whole community. That's what love, biblically understood, is all about.

So it becomes the lens through which I see everything. If I have a heart posture of love that says your welfare is my primary interest. That affects how I see my money and my house and my stuff.

Right? I begin to see all of the stuff that I have as a means of making sure your needs are met. As a means of making sure you're blessed and that you're flourishing.

[6 : 08] And that way of seeing my stuff in that way, the biblical word for that is stewardship. I see myself not as an owner of my stuff, but as a steward. And I'm meant to use it in ways that bless and benefit the community.

Right? So a heart posture of love enables me to see all that is in my life as a steward. To be used for the blessing of the community. Now I'm reiterating that because it's really important that we get that principle.

And that applies to everything. And Hebrews 13 actually is a striking example of what this principle looks like when it's applied to everything.

So if you look at Hebrews 13, it gives us a principle. Let brotherly love continue. Love as we've just talked about it. Love for the community. So that's the principle.

And then there are several applications of that principle. So in other words, the author of Hebrews is saying, let brotherly love continue. For example, do these things. And I want you to see these, and it's striking how they don't seem to fit together at all.

[7 : 17] At first it says, here's how to let brotherly love continue. Show hospitality to strangers.

Don't neglect to do that. You say, okay, well that sounds like a loving thing to do. Remember those who are in prison.

Yep, that makes sense. Remember and care for victims of mistreatment. Mistreatment, right? This is victims of all kinds of injustice or oppression or inequality, right? So all of these are concerning social justice, right?

So let brotherly love continue. Seek social justice. So all that makes sense. But then look at the next statement. Honor marriage.

What? Don't commit adultery. Avoid sexual immorality, which is any kind of sexual, contact or sexual intimacy outside of a covenant marriage.

And you look at this and you say, well, what in the world does sex have to do with social justice and hospitality? Is this just a random list or is this another example of Christians being obsessed with sex and just talking about it all the time?

[8 : 20] What in the world does this have to do with brotherly love or social justice? And in order to make sense of this passage, you have to come back to the principle. What is the principle? Love means putting the needs of the community and what's best for the community first.

Right? So in the case of hospitality and social justice, well, this makes sense. Right? See, we live in an individualistic, materialistic, consumerist culture.

And because of that, we are shaped to and we are influenced by that to think about our money and our homes and all our resources primarily in terms of self-gratification.

You know, what I need, self-fulfillment, self-gratification, my own pleasure. Right? But the principle of love would say, no, no, no, no. We need to think about this stuff primarily in terms of how does it benefit the community.

So not about what blesses me, but what are the needs out there. Right? Show hospitality to the stranger. Bring the stranger in. Right? Care for those people who are in prison. Care for victims of injustice or mistreatment.

[9 : 26] So that makes sense. Right? And if we're honest, a lot of times when we think about hospitality, it's not so much blessing the community, it's much more the kind of Martha Stewart entertainment industry approach.

It's much more about us. I want you to be impressed with my decor. I want you to be impressed with my cuisine. But what this is saying is that the core principle, the heart posture, sees our stuff as a means to bless other people.

So it doesn't matter if you serve beef bourguignon or bologna sandwiches. The goal, beef bourguignon is really good. But it doesn't matter. Because ultimately the goal is blessing and serving the community.

And, you know, the word for hospitality is actually phylo xenia, which means love for the stranger.

So this doesn't mean inviting your friends over. This means inviting people into your home who you don't know.

It's for their welfare. And when we do these kinds of things, when we care for those in prison and care for victims of injustice and mistreatment, we're building up the community. So all of that makes sense. That's the principle of love applied.

[10 : 33] So then what does this have to do with marriage and sex and adultery and all that stuff? Well, amazingly, the author of Hebrews applies the same principle here too. Think about our culture.

In a culture of romanticism and individualism, we tend to think of sex primarily as we do our stuff, as we do our homes, as we do our money. We think about it through the lens of self-gratification, self-fulfillment.

Right? What's good for me? My pleasure, my preferences. And so we've come to think of sex as a right to which we are entitled for self-expression and self-fulfillment.

But a heart posture of love, in the same way that it reorients how I see my money and my house and my time, it reorients the way I see my own body and my own sexuality.

And it reorients me to begin to think about my body and my sexuality primarily in terms of what is best for the whole community. Not just what I might prefer.

[11 : 37] And so if you think about it, sex outside of a covenant marriage negatively impacts the community. Right? It results in broken marriages. It results in the breakdown of family.

Right? In broken families. It results in single-parent homes. It results in unwanted pregnancies. It results in orphans. Right? And there's a negative impact on society.

And by contrast, when you have stable covenant marriages, those form stable families. And those stable families then become capable of either conceiving or adopting children and raising them in a stable community.

And they have a mom and a dad, an extended family, and a network of support that gives them consistency. And allows them to grow. That's what's best for kids. Right? And it doesn't just apply to kids.

Families, stable families, are able to care for the sick. They're able to care for the aging, the elderly. They're better positioned in some ways to care for the poor in their midst.

[12 : 39] And what you have is essentially this fact. There's no society on earth, definitely not ours, there's no society on earth that is capable of caring for all of the children and all of the sick and all of the elderly unless families bear the brunt of that responsibility.

No society in existence can afford to care for all those people. We need stable families to do that. Right? So you see the contrast here.

Right? In our culture's understanding of love, love is the reason that we have sex with anyone we want. Right? It doesn't matter if you're married.

If you're married and you're trapped in this dull marriage and you meet the love of your life, that in many people's eyes is justification. Well, you love that person. That's your true love.

Love becomes the kind of unassailable absolute truth that we can use to justify really sleeping with whoever we want. And you see the contrast where in our culture love is the reason we have sex with people, whoever we want, regardless of marriage.

[13:50] But biblically speaking, love is actually the reason or one of the primary reasons that we don't do that. Because when we talk about love, we're talking about love for the community.

We're talking about what benefits the common good. So we keep sexuality within the context of a covenant marriage because we believe that's what's best for society. It's best for kids.

It's best for future generations. So this is, by the way, why we announce the bans of marriage. You know, we do this archaic thing in this church where if somebody's getting married through our church, three weeks before we begin to announce the marriage.

And we say if anybody has any reason why these two should not be wed, it's your duty to come and talk to the pastor. Why do we do that? Well, because we believe that a huge dimension of a marriage is not just the fulfillment of that couple, but it's the benefit of the community.

So we're giving you an opportunity to come up and say whether or not you think this wedding, this union, is going to actually be good for the community or not. So that's what the bans of marriage are all about.

[14:49] It's an orientation toward marriage and sexuality that prioritizes the common good. So this is the principle that generous hospitality flows out of.

Does that make sense? A heart posture of love that says the welfare of the community is primary. It's radically running against the individualism that so defines our culture.

That's the first thing, a heart posture of love. The second thing, the second aspect of generous hospitality is it's a mindset. It's a mindset. In Deuteronomy chapter 10, looking at the other text now, you have the situation where through Moses, God is essentially renewing his covenant with Israel. And this passage really gets at the heart of what it means to be in relationship with God. And I just want you to listen to what it says. Verse 14. Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it.

Yet the Lord set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are to this day. Now what's that saying?

[16:03] All of this is God's. Everything. Heaven, the heavens, in the heavens, in the heavens, the earth, everything in it, it's all his. And yet, God chose you.

He set his love on you. It's not that you were just so adorable and ridiculously cute and endearing that God fell in love with you. You didn't deserve it.

You were ignoring God and the world that he made. You were living as though there was no such thing. And God, nevertheless, set his love on you. He chose you. He set you apart.

That's what it's saying. And then it goes on, verse 18. Here's what God is like. He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing.

And then verse 19. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. So what is this saying? God is a God of justice.

[17:04] He cares about the fatherless and the widow and the sojourner. And who is the sojourner? What does that mean? Well, it really means anybody without a community. Or a family.

People who don't belong. For whatever reason. Right? So what does that make us think of? Well, people without homes and families. The homeless. Right? Refugees.

Right? This is talking about refugees. This is talking about immigrants. Right? But it's also potentially talking about people in this very room. People who are lonely. People who have no friends.

People who are surrounded by strangers. People who feel like outcasts. People who don't fit in. People who fall through the cracks. People who have been rejected. People who, for whatever reason, don't feel like they belong.

It's talking about all of those people. And this is saying that God is the kind of God who not only sets his love on people, like us, but he finds the people who don't fit in, the outcasts, the refugees, the immigrants, and God says, I care about those people.

[18:08] I am the kind of God who cares about those people. And then what does it say about us? He says, care for the sojourner, love the sojourner, for you were once sojourners.

What's that reminding us? The only reason that we're not homeless. The only reason that we're not refugees. The only reason that we're not immigrants who have been forced to relocate somewhere

else. The only reason that we have friends or community or education or any of the things that we have.

The only reason is because of God's grace. It is a sheer gift of grace that we have what we have. We like to think that we earned it. We like to think that we worked hard and got good grades and all of that.

But all of the opportunities that even allowed that to be a possibility, those are things that we didn't earn. They were given to us. It's a sheer gift. That you were born with the genes that you were born with, into the family that you were born into.

It's all a gift of grace. So this is the second point, okay? Generous hospitality flows out of a heart posture of love, and it flows out of a mindset of grace.

[19 : 11] A mindset that says, everything that I have is a gift. Everything is a gift. I don't deserve any of it. It's all a gift. So Deuteronomy 10 is saying, love the sojourner because grace alone has kept you from being a sojourner.

It's sheer grace from the Lord. And I want to make a point about this before we move on. This is what sets Christian hospitality and the Christian approach to social justice apart from other approaches to justice that are prevalent in our society.

Because we live in a time and place, thankfully, is really good, where lots of people care about justice. Lots of people care about social justice and bringing greater equality to the world.

Lots of people, I think everybody here is passionate about that. But the Christian approach is unique. Because many people in our society, although they care about justice, the only weapon that they have to motivate justice is guilt.

Right? Right? The theory is if you can make people feel guilty and feel a sense of shame over their privilege, then eventually you can motivate them to behave and to live with greater justice.

[20 : 33] Right? So it's a means to an end. You guilt people, make them feel bad and guilty about their privilege, and then produce justice as a result. But the problem is guilt is powerless to actually transform people.

Oh, guilt can make people conform. People will conform if they feel guilty to reduce that sense of guilt. But guilt cannot transform people.

It can't change hearts. There's an interesting illustration of this that comes from a man named Shelby Steele, who's an African-American scholar at the Hoover Institute at Stanford, who recently wrote an opinion piece in the Wall Street Journal.

And he's talking about white guilt. And what he's talking about is the fact that guilt has major limits in its ability to bring about true justice. And I'll just read a snippet from this piece.

He says, So what's he saying?

[22 : 11] He's saying there are real problems in the world. Racism is real. Injustice is real. The plight of immigrants and refugees is real. Those are real issues. But guilt isn't actually producing genuine compassion.

It's producing conformity. People are terrified of being stigmatized. But there's no actual love there. And so it can't actually bring about true justice. Just the pretense of it. So he says this whole guilt-driven justice movement in our culture isn't really about compassion and justice.

It's about moral authority. It gives certain people the ability to claim moral authority over other people. And you see that happen on social media every single day with people shaming each other over this or that issue du jour.

Right? So this is the same thing, by the way, that you see happening in Jesus' day with the Pharisees. The Pharisees used guilt and shame to motivate people to follow God's law.

[23 : 16] And Jesus hated it and spoke against it. Because it just produces a kind of external conformity. But it doesn't produce heart change. But we see the same thing today in the kind of guilt-driven social justice world.

It's just a new form of Pharisaical thinking. And it doesn't work. So guilt can force people to conform. But only grace has the power to transform.

Why is grace different? Because it doesn't just produce resentment or shame or self-hatred or regret. It produces gratitude. When you believe that all that you have, your education and your family and your connections and all of that privilege, when you first recognize that all of that is a gift, that you didn't deserve it, that you can't repay it, when you realize that that was just given to you, it produces gratitude.

And it moves your heart to want to be generous to other people, to want to extend that same grace. Right? So generous hospitality is the product of a heart posture of love that says the community comes first.

And it's the product of a mindset of grace that recognizes all that I have is a gift. And therefore, I am bound, I am compelled to be generous. Because I didn't deserve it.

[24 : 41] And yet it was given to me. Right? And so when those things come together, that heart posture and that mindset, when they come together in your life, they produce, the third point, a lifestyle of hospitality.

They result in a lifestyle of hospitality. So hospitality is a lifestyle. The author of Hebrews says, do not neglect to show hospitality, meaning we should do it regularly and continually.

And then Paul says something similar in Romans 12. He says that we should pursue hospitality continually. It should be an ongoing part of our lifestyle. So this means it's not just Saturday night, once a month.

Invite a friend from work night. Right? It's not just a Saturday night once a month. It's not just something that we do when we go to this or that program that we're involved in. It's our entire orientation to our time and our stuff and our week and our house and even our own bodies. It's the way we think continually. So I want to get practical here with the few minutes that we have left. What does this actually look like lived out?

[25 : 44] And I want to just define it very clearly. What we're talking about when we talk about generous hospitality, this heart posture of love and mindset of grace that produces a lifestyle of hospitality.

What is that? Well, it simply means opening up your day planner and your home and your wallet and your life to invite people in who wouldn't normally belong there.

Right? So not necessarily your friends and the people you naturally connect with, but people who wouldn't normally belong there. You're inviting people in. Strangers. Outsiders.

You're inviting them in. You know, Henry Nowen says that hospitality makes it possible for strangers to cast off their strangeness. I love that.

Right? Right? What greater gift could you give somebody than to create an opportunity where they no longer have to feel strange or outside? You create an opportunity where they can feel like they've been welcomed in and that they're a part of something and that they belong.

[26 : 51] Right? So this is what generous hospitality does. And when we say generous, we simply mean going above and beyond. Doing more than the basic. Being preemptive and proactive.

You know, in ancient times, if you were traveling, you couldn't just book a hotel and stay at a hotel. When you came to a city, your only hope of having a place to stay was if somebody in the city were to welcome you into their home.

You had to rely on their hospitality. Well, how did it work? Well, if I came to a city and nobody knew me, they don't know what my intentions are. I could be there to sack the city and try to take over.

They have no idea what my agenda might be. So etiquette required me to wait outside the gates. So I would come. It's the end of a long day. Sun's going down. I'm tired. I'm weary.

I'm thirsty. I'm hungry. And I come and I have to wait outside the gate. And I have to just hope and pray to God that somebody in that city comes outside the gate. Finds me.

[27 : 48] Takes my hand and welcomes me into their home. Right? So it requires a preemptive love. A preemptive. In other words, I have to be willing to leave, come out of the city and meet that person.

Right? You can't wait for them to come to you. And there are a lot of people waiting outside the gate. And what this means is that we have to be generous and proactive. We have to come out of our friend group.

We have to come out of the clique. We have to come out of the small group of the same six people that have been meeting together for ten years. Right? We have to come out of our group house.

We have to come out of our college friends. Like, whatever that is. That you have to come outside those gates. Because I guarantee you in a city like this, there are people right outside the gate praying to God for an invitation in.

So we have to be generous. And we want this to be a value that infuses everything. And that's why we specifically focus on ministries like DC 127 doing foster care and adoption.

[28 : 48] This is why we specifically focus on ministry to refugees. This is why we want in, as time passes, to build a growing ministry of mentoring youth.

This is why we want to do ministry to the homeless. This is why we want our church to be doing these things. Because these are ministries of hospitality to people who need it. But aside from all of those things, I just want to end by giving you a few ideas of things that you can start doing right now that are not going to cost you any money.

They're not going to cost you any time. So these are things that you can start doing right now. I'll just give you three real quick. The first is this. Learn to notice and to respond to the lonely in our midst.

Do not be fooled by external appearances. If anybody is here and they're new, it's your first few times coming. To walk into a room like this full of people like this and to not know anybody is terrifying.

It's terrifying for me. I get used to knowing a lot of people when I go to church. And then when we travel and we go to other churches and I walk in and all of a sudden I don't know anybody. I feel like this big.

[30 : 01] I'm terrified. And normally I would just go to the corner as fast as I can and hope that nobody notices me. By the end of the service, my wife knows everybody in the room. And she introduces me to a couple of those people.

But I get terrified in that setting. And most people do. Right? There are people right here who need to be welcomed. We want Advent to be the most welcoming place in the city. We want everybody when they come through the doors to be warmly welcomed and embraced and given every opportunity to become part of our community.

But we can't do that unless every member and every regular attender sees themselves as a host. That means when you're here, if you call Advent your home, that you, when you see somebody you don't know or you see somebody that comes in that might be new, that you go up and welcome them as though they were coming into your own home.

And only when we're all doing that are we going to be able to be the kind of welcoming, hospitable church that I believe we're called to be. That's the first thing. Oh, another thing that really helps with that. Be here on time.

Okay? Listen. How do you know a newcomer at Advent? Because they're here at 5 o'clock. Okay? Just be on time.

[31 : 11] That's not going to really cost you any money. It may change up your routine by about 15 minutes. Some of you 20, 30 minutes. Okay? But just be on time. If you want to be hospitable, just show up at like 4.50, 4.55.

And just be here to welcome people when they show up, naively thinking that we start at 5. So that's the first thing. Okay? Second thing. Be willing to open your home.

Be willing to free up some time to invite people in, to serve them a meal, to sit and hear their story, and to create an opportunity for friendship. This is how strangers become friends and friends become family.

Right? Be willing to share your table. Again, it doesn't have to be beef bourguignon. It could be PBJs. You know, one of my great memories from grad school is I wasn't married. I was lonely. I really wanted community. And I had a number of friends who I started to get to know, and most of them were married and had kids. And occasionally, from time to time, they would invite me to come have dinner.

[32 : 13] And I would walk in, and my greatest memories were not times when they invited me and all the fine china was set out and everything, the candles and the music was playing and all that.

But I most loved the times when I just got invited to come over, and I came in, and there were kids, and it was chaotic, and there was just stuff everywhere. And they just sat me down at the table, and they said, well, tonight we're having Cheerios.

And they would just plunk down a bowl of Cheerios or a PBJ, and I would just sit there, and the kids, and we would just all eat it together. Right? And it was chaos. That meant so much to me. Because I realized it's not about you trying to impress me or show me how good you are at entertaining.

You actually just want me to be a part of your life. And it meant so much to me, some of my best memories. That's all it takes. Just, yeah, there's a pile of laundry in the corner.

Come over. Let me give you some SpaghettiOs. Do people even eat SpaghettiOs anymore? But I would take a bowl of SpaghettiOs offered in love over beef bourguignon any day.

[33 : 14] Right? Because that's what we really want and need, to know that somebody else cares. Right? So just be willing to open your home and your time. Last thing, and this is not from me. I was talking to a guy named Dave Runyon a couple of weeks ago, and he was telling me some things that they've done in their church, and I thought they were interesting.

He's written a book about it, and so I just thought I would share this with you in case it's of help to you. So there's a slide I'm going to ask you to put it up here. This is called a block map. The concept is very simple.

You're here. Got that? So this is where you live. It could be a group house. It could be an apartment. It could be wherever you live. This is where you live. And chances are, if you live in D.C., you have people who live around you.

Right? So this could be the apartment in front of you or behind you. This could be the house or whatever semi-detached unit, whatever you live in. There are physical neighbors around you. The idea is simple.

What if when Jesus said, love your neighbors, he actually literally meant our neighbors? What if that's what he meant? You know? So just assume for a second that he wasn't being metaphorical and that he just literally meant our neighbors.

[34 : 21] All I'm asking you to do, I'm not asking you actually to love your neighbors. That's just advanced Christianity craziness. Just don't even worry about that. Okay? We'll talk about that next year.

All I want you to do is just learn their names. Just learn their names. And then use them. Right? So I'm horrible with names. I can't even get my kids' names right.

Stop it. Yeah, I just can't. I can't even get it out. I'm horrible with names. And so what I do often is I say, hey, man. What's up, dude? I mean, with my kids.

But also with other, you know, hey, how you doing? What's up? What's going on, man? I'm horrible with names. What I'm asking you to do and what I'm doing as well, just learn the names of your neighbors and use them.

So it's not, hey, man. It's, hey, Mike. And then maybe the next time it's, hey, Mike, did you see the game last night? And then maybe the next time it's, hey, Mike, how did you do that to your house?

[35 : 20] I love what you did with the gutters. Who did? Can I get your contractor? And then maybe the next time it's like, hey, Mike, we're grilling out back. You want to come and have a burger and hang out? And so on and so forth.

And that's how it happens. Just learn their names. So what I want you to do, you have an insert in your bulletin. Just take that, take it home, put it on your fridge. And take a marker and just write the names on that sheet.

And just learn. And then look at that and memorize it. And the next time you see those people, just use their name. That's all you have to do. Nothing else. Just do that. And just see what happens. That's hospitality.

That's generous hospitality. That's saying I'm going to take the first step in seeing if we can't get to know each other. So learn the names of your neighbors. So all of this, just kind of want to draw it together because we're out of time.

Generous hospitality means having a heart posture of love. The community comes first. It means having a mindset of grace. All that I have is a gift, and that motivates me to give generously out of what I have.

[36 : 20] And then thirdly, those two things together produce a lifestyle. Of hospitality. It affects everything we do. And why do we do this? What's the great motivator for all this? It's the gospel.

Because listen, the gospel is God's ultimate hospitality to the world. Look at what Jesus Christ did. Heart posture of love. From his very first moments on this earth, Jesus prioritized our well-being over his own.

In every decision he made, he was putting us and the glory of his Father ahead of himself. Heart posture of love. Mindset of grace. From the very beginning, Jesus intended to give us everything even though we deserve nothing.

And then finally, a lifestyle of hospitality. Jesus literally spent his life. Literally gave it up. Literally spent it. So that those of us who were outsiders because of our sin.

Those of us who were cast out of the presence of God. Could be welcomed in not only as servants or acquaintances. But as family members. In the family and the household of the Lord.
[37 : 32] God's ultimate hospitality. So let us be practitioners of generous hospitality in response to the ultimate hospitality that came through Jesus Christ. Let's pray.

And let's pray. Let's pray. Let's pray.

Let's pray. Let's pray.

Let's pray. Let's pray.