



## The Practice of Radical Hospitality

### ***From Scripture:***

***Leviticus 19:33-34*** – When an alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

***Deuteronomy 10:19*** – You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

***Matthew 10:40*** – 'Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.'

***Matthew 11:28*** – 'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.'

***Matthew 18:5*** – 'Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.'

***Matthew 25:34-40 (selected verses)*** – Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom; for I was a stranger and you welcomed me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me.'

***Luke 14:16-23*** – Then Jesus said to him, 'Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, "Come; for everything is ready now." But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, "I have bought a piece of land, and I must go out and see it; please accept my apologies." Another said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please accept my apologies." Another said, "I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come." So the slave returned and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and said to his slave, "Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame." And the slave said, "Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room." Then the master said to the slave, "Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled."

***Luke 15:1-2*** – Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

***John 1:39*** – Jesus said to them, "Come and see."

***Romans 12:9-13*** – Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

***Romans 15:7*** – Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

***Hebrews 13:2*** – Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

***1 Peter 4:9*** – Be hospitable to one another without complaining.

***From Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations by Robert Schnase:***

p. 12 – We belong to the Body of Christ because of someone's hospitality. Someone invited us, encouraged us, received us, and helped us feel welcome . . . By someone's love, we were engrafted onto the Body of Christ.

p. 13 – Hospitality has us seeing people as Jesus sees them and seeing Jesus in the people God brings before us.

p. 16 – A congregation is a school for love, the place where God's Spirit forms us and the place where we learn how to give love to and receive love from friends, neighbors, and strangers.

P. 18 – What do people need from the church? People need to know God loves them, that they are of supreme value, and that their life has significance. People need to know that they are not alone; that when they face life's difficulties, they are surrounded by a community of grace, and that they do not have to figure out entirely for themselves how to cope with family tensions, self-doubts, periods of despair, economic reversal, and the temptations that hurt themselves or others. People need to know the peace that runs deeper than an absence of conflict, the hope that sustains them even through the most painful periods of grief, the sense of belonging that blesses them and stretches them and lifts them out of the own preoccupations. People need to learn how to offer and accept forgiveness and how to serve and be served. As a school for love, the church becomes a congregation where people learn from one another how to love. People need to know that life is not having something to live one but something to live for, that life comes not from taking for oneself but by giving of oneself. People need a sustaining sense of purpose.

p. 20 – Hospitality is more than common politeness to newcomers. . . . Hospitality is a quality of spiritual initiative, the practice of an active and genuine love, a graciousness unaffected by self-interest, an opening of ourselves and our faith community to receive others.

p. 27 – Churches that practice Radical Hospitality . . . genuinely engage people, listen to them, and help them feel accepted, respected, connected, needed, involved and loved.

p. 27 – To become a vibrant, fruitful, growing congregation requires a change of attitudes, practices, and values. Good intentions are not enough. Too many churches want more young people as long as they act like old people, more newcomers as long as they act like old-timers, more children as long as they are as quiet as adults, more ethnic families as long as they act like the majority in the congregation. We can do better. It takes practicing Radical Hospitality.

### ***From Other Sources:***

It's not the difference between people that's the difficulty. It's the indifference. – *Unknown*

If someone listens, or stretches out a hand, or whispers a kind word of encouragement, or attempts to understand a lonely person, extraordinary things begin to happen. – *Loretta Girzartis*

I have learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel. – *Maya Angelou*

It is in the shelter of each other that the people live. – *Irish proverb*

The scope of who it is that God means to invite to the feast, you see, is not ours to define. We are not put in charge of the guest list. – *Don C. Skinner*