

Hospitality 036201

OBJ: Encourage the practice and reception of hospitality among Christians.

Definitions and observations

- **philoxenia [5381]** (*philos*, loving, *xenos*, a stranger), noun - **Rom 12:13; Heb 13:2***
- **philoxenos [5382]**, adj. - **1Tim 3:2; Tit 1:8; 1Pt 4:9***
- **xenodecheO [3580]** (*xenos*, stranger, *dechomai*, to receive), verb - **1Tim 5:10**, “shown hospitality to strangers”* (“*show hospitality*” A&G. “*to receive and entertain hospitably, to be hospitable*” TH.)
- **xenizO [3579]** (*xenos*, a guest), verb - “entertained,” **Ac 28:7; Heb. 13:2**; “staying,” **Ac 10:6,18,32**; “gave them lodging,” **Ac 10:23**; “we were to lodge,” **Ac 21:16**. (“1. *receive as a guest, entertain...Pass. be entertained*” A&G. “1. *to receive as a guest, to entertain hospitably...pass. to be received hospitably; to stay as a guest, to lodge*” TH)
- **xenia [3578]** (“denotes (a) hospitality, entertainment, **Philm. 22**; (b) by metonymy, a place of entertainment, a lodging place, **Acts 28:23** (some put **Philm. 22** under this section.”* VN. (“*hospitality, entertainment* shown a guest (so mostly). Less frequently the place where the guest is lodged, *the guest room*” A&G. “*hospitality, hospitable reception*; i.q. *a lodging place, lodgings*” TH.)
- **xenos [3581]** (“*the host, one who extends hospitality*” A&G) - **Rom 16:23**. See TH definition in fnt. [Generally used in NT of strange, stranger, foreign or foreign country. **Rom. 16:23** only time used in NT in sense of “host.” Shows range in meanings of words - not focus on “stranger” in this usage.]

Heb 13:2 clearly shows the connection between *philoxenia* and *xenos* family of words. “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers (*philoxenia*), for by this [i.e. by *philoxenia*] some have entertained (*xenizO*) angels without knowing it.” Lexicons also bear out that *xenos* family means hospitality as well as *philoxenia* family.

Fifteen passages total: **Ac 10:6,18,23,32; 21:16; 28:7,23; Rom 12:13; 16:23; 1Tim 3:2; 5:10; Tit 1:8; Phm 22; Heb 13:2** (two words: *philoxenia* & *xenizO*); **1Pt 4:9**.

1. WHAT IS “HOSPITALITY”?

- a. “**hospitable**” - “**1. Cordial and generous reception of or disposition toward guests.**” AHD.

[“Guest” {A key word, srf. AHD not mean someone you meet at the building.} - “**1. One who is a recipient of hospitality at the home or table of another. 2. One to whom entertainment or hospitality has been extended by another in the role of host or hostess, as at a party.**” Interestingly, its etymology is from an “IE base *ghostis*, stranger, guest” AHD.]

Focuses on an ATTITUDE toward “guests”. Contrast this attitude with standoffish, aloof, keep to oneself, cool, unapproachable, remoteness, unsociable, unfriendly, don't won't the trouble, live in our own little world, attitudes.

- b. **Provide lodging?**

May involve providing lodging - **Ac 21:16; Phm 22** - but not necessarily - **Heb 13:2 (Gen 18,19)**. (See note below on **Gen 18**.)

Your house?

Must you have someone *into your house* to practice “hospitality”?

- i. Several cases involving the word or forms of it clearly involved one's lodging.
- ii. Objection: Hospitality is referring to an attitude toward others, not whether you have them in your home.
 - 1) Arg: The focus is ATTITUDE toward others. Could not one exhibit the attitude by providing a room in the inn, **Lk 10:34-35**?
 - 2) Response: While this is certainly an act of love, I do not know if this would qualify as “hospitality.” Providing for the support of a gospel preacher is an act of love (**Php 4:10**), but it is not “hospitality.” Hospitality must proceed out of love, but not all that proceeds out of love is “hospitality.”

However, if one has the RIGHT ATTITUDE toward others, why would they not use their lodging to show their care and concern for others?? It is

certainly a *demonstrable* way of showing concern, care, and one accords with the “hospitality” you read about in the Scriptures.

- iii. **Gen 18:1f** seems to be a case in point of “hospitality” (**Heb 13:2**) [unless **Heb 13:2** refers exclusively to **Gen 19:1f**. No indication the men that came to Abraham spent the night. However, the men that came to Lot, did. Does **Heb 13:2** include *both* incidents?]. If **Heb 13:2** does include **Gen 18**, the point was *providing a meal, not in the home*—the men were “under the tree” when Abraham brought them the meal (**vv4,8**). Compare also **Jud 13:3f** - note **v15**.
 - iv. “The Greeks gave Zeus, as one of his favourite titles, the title *Zeus Xenios*, which means Zeus, the god of strangers. The wayfaring man and the stranger were under the protection of the king of the gods.” *The Daily Study Bible*, William Barclay, Heb 13:2. Does this point to the use of the word to connote “protection,” provision, and not necessarily housing (i.e. Zeus receiving into his house)? If he *cannot* use his *own* lodging (and some cannot—singles living at home with worldly parents or roommates, wives with non-Christian husbands, etc.), would not a “cordial and generous reception” encourage alternatives, e.g. acting as “host” or hostess” in “extending hospitality” at, say, a restaurant? (See second definition of “guest” above.)
- c. “Strangers”?
- May involve people we are not acquainted with - **Ac 28:23; Heb 13:2** -but not necessarily must they be “strangers” to us - **Phm 22**.
- d. **Traveling brethren?**
- Does it only pertain to *traveling* brethren (i.e. not to those in local fellowship)? It may refer to traveling brethren, **Ac 21:16**, but to that exclusively...?
- i. **Rom 16:23**, “host” to Paul and “to the whole church.”¹
 - ii. “One another” contexts.
Unless there is something inherent in the word that demands such (and Rom 16:23 seems to indicate there isn't), its use in “one another” contexts favor its practice among those working together, **Rom 12:13** (note **13a,14-16**); **1Pt 4:9** (note **8,10-11**).
 - iii. **1Ti 3:2; Tit. 1:8**. Qual. of elders.
 - 1) Local church to “prove” them - based on their reception of traveling brethren? How many opportunities would they have to practice such hospitality so local church could know whether they are “hospitable”?
 - 2) Their work centers in local church. Hospitality an indication of their ATTITUDE toward *these* brethren.

2. VALUE OF HOSPITALITY

Remember the ATTITUDE that should prompt and govern it: care, attention, concern, kindness, friendliness toward others.

- a. **Support the gospel. 3Jn 5-8**

¹“2. one who receives and entertains another hospitably; with whom he stays or lodges, a host:..Ro. 16:23...i.e. either 'who receives hospitably all the members of the church who cross his threshold,' or 'who kindly permits the church to worship in his house'..” TH.

b. **Teach gospel.**

Ac 28:23 - Paul used what “lodging” he had to further the gospel. Note: Not “fancy” nor did he own it.

c. **To serve the needs of brethren. 1Pt 4:9** - note **vv 8-10**.

NT full of “one another” responsibilities: Encourage, **1Th 5:11; Heb 3:12**;
Admonish, **Rom 15:14**; Comfort; **1Th 4:18**; Bear burdens, **Gal 6:2**; Rejoice/weep,
Rom 12:15; Restore, **Gal 6:1; Jam 5:19,20**; Supply needs, **Rom 12:13. Heb 13:1-2** -
Note: No indication these men starving. Hospitality not only provides a medium to
serve these needs, but to KNOW these needs. The “I don't care,” “I'm not interested,”
“Me and my family” ATTITUDE is NOT that of a “CHRISTian” - **Mat 20:26-28**.

d. **To BE served by brethren.**

We NEED one another and can benefit from association with one another in the right
ATTITUDE. **Rom 1:12; 1Th 3:7-8, Phm 6-7**. We and our children need to know
there are others serving the Lord and to make these kind of people our companions.
*We rob ourselves, our family, and our brethren by failing to practice or by continually
turning down invitations to hospitality.* Christians are an island of believers in the
midst of an unbelieving and deceived world.

3. **PROBLEMS IN PRACTICING HOSPITALITY**

a. **Wives who do not want to prepare**

1Co 7:12a (not a Christian); **1Tim 5:10; Pro 12:4; 31:23,27**

b. **Husbands not Christians, or not interested**

1Co 7:13a; 1Pt 3:1-2 - If non-Christian husband unwilling, wife obviously limited.
However, if willing, may be opportunity to influence. And good for wife. Not need
feel guilty for her husband. Sometimes “Christian” (?) husbands not want to...?!

c. **Children**

Parents have resp. to watch their children. **Pro 29:15,17**. Host have right to set rules.
You are in THEIR house. (**Ac 5:4** - ownership, control) Respect them. See your
children clean up whatever mess they make. **Ex 21:28-36** - Israelite held responsible
for negligent damage to neighbor or his property.

d. **Money, house**

i. Too nice - **Jam 2:1f; 1 Tim 6:17-19**

ii. Not nice enough - Poverty not shameful. Joseph & Mary, Lazarus, Paul. Not
require much for a cup of coffee! House not nice enough - self imposed fear - or
excuse. Charge others with own views of poverty. True Christians not let that
deter them. Those who do - that *their* problem, not yours.

e. **Not reciprocated**

Never asked in return. **Lk 14:12-14**. Remember ATTITUDE.

CONC

EXCUSES for not practicing and receiving hospitality. When all is said why do not, Scripture
STILL says, “practicing hospitality”! Do we trust the wisdom and respect the authority of God?