

Keep in mind these 7 Important Things

(Excerpt from Jeff White, Redeemer Church)

The word “hospitality” literally means, “Showing kindness to or entertaining strangers.” Throughout the Scriptures God uses the metaphors of hospitality to communicate what it means to know him. To experience his love is to have our souls satisfied with the richest of fare (Psalm 63) and he invites those of us who are thirsty to come to water and those without money to come and eat (Isaiah 55).

At the heart of the good news is the glorious truth that though we had become radically estranged from God, through Jesus’ costly death and resurrection, we have been welcomed back into the Father’s presence. This is the news that we are to announce to the world, and how better than accompanied by lives that exude hospitality? And by demonstrating intentional hospitality to our friends that don’t consider themselves Christians is to demonstrate the love and welcome of God. *“Welcome, embrace and accept one another, just as God in Christ has welcomed, embraced and accepted you”* (Romans 15:7). Ours is an extravagantly hospitable God and we are to be his imitators.

While the practice of hospitality often will involve friends and family, it is most powerful when offered to the stranger and those who are different from us. Essentially, hospitality is opening up not only our homes but, more importantly, our very selves to others so that they feel welcomed, loved, cared for, nurtured and valued.

Important things to keep in mind in practicing hospitality:

1. Embrace of others is more important than the place where hospitality occurs.
2. Your space need not be perfect to invite others over. Beauty is found more in the welcome itself than in the space.
3. Lines between guest and host are frequently wonderfully blurred as we invite others to participate in life with us. If we are to truly honor others, we have to give to others and also let them give to us.
4. It is essential that we bring our authentic and flawed selves into our hospitable relationships. Pretending to be something we are not does not give life to others.
5. Engaging in meaningful conversation and cultivating active listening skills in which we take a genuine interest in others are essential.
6. Gathering people who are sometimes very different from one another into meaningful connection with one another is a great gift we can offer.
7. Hospitality is often best practiced as a community. We ought to enlist others to help us rather than trying to do it all on our own.