

Room for the Stranger

Have you ever been the new person? We all know what it's like to be on the outside of a room where everyone else is on the inside. Maybe you've been the new person at church. Or, the new employee at work. Today, I want you to see what God does with this very common feeling and see how he builds a command on it. He doesn't ask us to imagine what the stranger feels — He wants us to remember.

I. Israel Was Told to Remember

- A. Leviticus 19:33-34: Two commands:
 - 1. Don't **oppress** the stranger, 19:33.
 - 2. You are to love him as **yourself**, 19:34.
- B. See how He ties it all back to Egypt. *for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God*, 19:34 See also Exodus 23:9; Deuteronomy 10:18-19.

II. The Church Has Inherited This Command

- A. Hebrews 13:1: Let **brotherly love** continue. Brotherly love (Philadelphia)
 - 1. Hebrews 13:2: Don't neglect to show **hospitality**, ...describing the love of a stranger.
- B. Notice how he phrases the second command: Don't **neglect** to show hospitality, ...
 - 1. Romans 12:13: Share with the saints in their needs; **pursue** hospitality.
 - a) Chase it. Go after it. Don't wait for it to come to you.
- C. The reason for the pursuit: Hebrews 13:2...*for by doing this some have welcomed **angels** as guests without knowing it.* He's thinking of Abraham in Genesis 18:1-10. You never know who is at the door.

III. So, How Far Does it Go?

- A. Galatians 6:10: *let us work for the good of all, **especially** for those who belong to the household of faith.*
 - 1. *Especially* sets a priority. Those in the brotherhood come first.
 - 2. But this is inside of *the good of all*. It needs to be a priority.
- B. 2 Corinthians 9:13: *Corinthian generosity in sharing with them and **with everyone**.*

IV. Now, the Harder Part

- A. Matthew 5:44: *But I tell you, love your **enemies** and pray for those who persecute you,*
- B. Matthew 5:47: *And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what are you doing out of the ordinary? Don't even the Gentiles do the same?* Loving the people who love you back is no achievement.

V. What This Looks Like Tomorrow

- A. Who's the stranger you already know about?
- B. Most of what we've talked about today is not dramatic.
 - 1. Titus 3:14: *Let our people **learn** to devote themselves to good works for pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful.* We have to be taught this. Nobody's born hospitable.

VI. Look to Jesus.

- A. He was the stranger.
 - 1. Matthew 8:20: *Foxes have dens, and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.*
 - 2. John 1:11: *He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.*
- B. On judgment, He will put Himself in the stranger's place.
 - 1. Matthew 25:35: *For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a **stranger** and you took me in;*
 - 2. The stranger at your door and the Lord at the judgment are closer together than you think.

VII. As We Close...

- A. Israel was told to remember. So are we. You were the stranger once. Somebody made room. Go and do the same.