

Hospitality

Brynmaur Family Church Sermon (Family Meeting)
Stuart Wheatman, Sunday 2nd October 2011 (*also preached 22.2.09*)

Intro

- I am here because people showed me hospitality- Sheila, Don. What made them invite me, a stranger, into their homes? I would not be here today giving this message if they had not shown hospitality. Hospitality is a vital key to Church growth.

1. God has shown us hospitality

Rd Ps 23:5,6

- v5- The King has 'prepared a table for you'**. David knew what it was to be banished from the King's table (1Sam 20:25), and the house of the Lord by Saul, so he found comfort that his real home was the real tabernacle, the King's palace & table. The King has invited us to eat at His table (see Heb 13:10 our altar from which we eat; Mt 22:2-10 invitation to God's banquet; Rev 19:7-9 blessed are those at the lambs wedding feast). Access, curtain torn. Song of Songs 2:4- He brought me to his banqueting house and his banner over me was love'
- v5 'In the presence of your enemies'**- He will honour you in the sight of those who despise you, in the full view of those with which you have no favour He will display His favour to you. You're His favourite. Joseph's coat is yours. You are already seated with Him in heavenly places (Eph 2:6 raised us up together, Jews & Gentiles and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ). David was anointed king even though his brothers hated it and Saul hated it.
- v5 'He anoints your head with oil'**- e.g. Bedouin hospitality. My mint teas in Egypt. Sierra Leone lavish food given to us. Rd Anointing a guest Manners & Customs pgs 313-314:

ANointING GUESTS. Anointing was an ancient custom practiced by the Egyptians, and afterward by the Greeks and Romans and other nations. Olive oil was used, either pure or mixed with fragrant and costly spices, often brought from a long distance. The practice was in use, not only as a part of the ceremony in connection with the coronation of kings, and at the installation of the High Priest, (Psa. 133:2.) but as an act of courtesy and hospitality toward a guest. Thus, the Lord accuses Simon of a want of hospitality in neglecting to anoint the head of him whom he had invited to eat with him (Luke 7:46). There are pictures on the Egyptian monuments representing guests having their heads anointed. Oil was used for other parts of the body as well as for the head, and at home as well as when visiting. The biblical references to the custom are numerous: Deut. 18:40 ; Ruth 3:3 ; Psa 92:10 and 104:15; Eccl. 9:8; Micah 6:15; Matt 6:17 and many others. The neglect of anointing was considered a sign of mourning. See Sam. 14:2 and Dan. 10:3. An anointed face, on the other hand was a sign of joy; hence we read of being anointed with the "oil of gladness." Psa. 45:7 ; Heb 1:9. Tavernier states, that he found the Arabs always ready to accept present of olive oil. As soon as one received it he lifted his turban and anointed his head, his face, and his beard, at the same time lifting his eyes to heaven and saying, " God be thanked ! " Captain Wilson, an Oriental traveler, in his book entitled *Oriental Customs*, published in the 1800's speaking of the custom alluded to in this passage, says: "I once had this ceremony performed on myself in the house of a great and rich Indian, in the presence of a large company. The gentleman of the house poured upon my hands and arms a delightful odoriferous perfume, put a golden, cup into my hands, and poured wine into it until it ran over ; assuring me, at the same time, that it was a great pleasure to him to receive me, and that I should find a rich supply in his house." The Psalmist in the text represents himself as an honored guest of Jehovah, who prepares a table for him, hospitably anoints him, and puts into his hands a full cup.

- v5 'Your cup runs over'**- He spoils you with His love ' 1Jn 3:1 NIV-'How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God'- He does not hold back on His love for you- Rom 8:32 'how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?'-Reason we have been seated with Christ--'that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ' (Eph 2:7)
- v6 'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me'** -not hounded by Saul & his men or by our sins, but by the 'hound of heaven'- God's love that will not give up on us. The Hound of Heaven a Christian poem written by English poet Francis

Thompson sometime before his death in 1907. It was an influence on J. R. R. Tolkien. The Neumann Press Book of Verse, 1988 says about it:

'The name is strange. It startles one at first. It is so bold, so new, so fearless. It does not attract, rather the reverse. But when one reads the poem this strangeness disappears. The meaning is understood. As the hound follows the hare, never ceasing in its running, ever drawing nearer in the chase, with unhurrying and unperturbed pace, so does God follow the fleeing soul by His Divine grace. And though in sin or in human love, away from God it seeks to hide itself, Divine grace follows after, unwearingly follows ever after, till the soul feels its pressure forcing it to turn to Him alone in that never ending pursuit.'

- **V6 'And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever'**- forever belonging

2. We must show one another hospitality

Rd 1Pet 4:9- show hosp. to one another without grumbling

- Written by one who was tested after a night of fishing, having caught nothing, being asked by a travelling preacher to put out the nets for a catch. Peter went the extra mile, perhaps reluctantly, and as a result reaped a huge blessing with the miraculous catch of fish. How are we when people turn up unexpectedly?
- Written by the one who had his feet washed by Jesus- he learned how to receive & give hospitality. Foot washing was the role of a servant (1Sam 25:41). Simon the Pharisee was rebuked by Jesus for not sorting this out (Luke 7:44). Jesus said to wash one another's feet= extreme hospitality. *Urchatz* was/is the ceremonial washing of the hands seen in the Jewish observance of passover, and this normally used to be done for others by a servant. Jesus, rather than simply doing this custom at His final Seder meal did more than this by displaying that He was in fact the servant who was even prepared to wash other's feet.
- Written by one who witnessed the contrast between the mean Pharisaic spirit, as seen in Simon the Pharisee who was stingy with his hospitality, and the grace that got hold of a tax collector to eagerly accept Jesus into his house without any previous warning, and going to the length of cancelling people's debts. Zacchaeus got it- he was messed up by the grace he witnessed in Jesus and so could never be the same to others.
- Hospitality starts even before someone steps into a meeting & doesn't end after the meeting- lifts, phonecalls, accompanying people, welcoming, chatting to those on their own, inviting back home for meals. Certain individuals greatly blessed me by giving me much needed lifts when I lived 7 miles outside of Abergavenny- they literally 'went the extra mile' in their service. 'Going the extra mile' refers to what Jesus said in Matt 5:41- a Roman soldier had legal powers to force a citizen to carry their pack 1 mile, but no more- Jesus said to go another mile out of a servant's heart.
- 'without grumbling' Tony R's quote- Hospitality is 'making a person feel at home when that's where you wish they were'. Someone once said: "Some folks make you feel at home. Others make you wish you were."
- Wrong concepts- 'Man's home is his castle'- fortification, CCTV nation. Curtain is torn, access- Christian's home is to be an oasis for the thirsty. Cain 'am I my brother's keeper?' The answer is 'yes'
- Open homes- early church & spread of gospel- koinonia-sharing all they had with each other. Can only church plant and see it grow if hospitable. How much of the tea/coffee/food you buy is for you and how much is for your visitors?
- Paul lists the qualities required for eldership and in both lists he includes the need to be hospitable- see Titus 1:8 and 1Tim 3:2. Hospitality is an essential for leaders. A good homegroup leader will not tend to put on their pyjamas at the end of

- homegroup and start yawning as a hint that it's time for people to leave!
- The importance of food- peace covenants were sealed with a meal- seals friendship. Alpha success. Use cooking for God's glory. Inviting visitors back for meals.

3. We must show the world hospitality

Rd Lk 14:7-14 -invite those who cannot repay

- Parable of unjust steward- Lk 16:9- 'make friends for yourselves with unrighteous mammon that when you fail they may receive you into an everlasting home'. First last & last first- the nobodies will have mansions, so let's be nice to them.
- Youth after tent outreach- 'why are you doing this?'
- Heb 13:2- Some have entertained angels unawares (Abraham Gen 18;1ff; Lot Gen 19:1ff). If an angel came to us would be entertain them? Treat everyone as Jesus. Asda- every customer treat as the secret examiner 'would you like help packing/casback?'-Matt 25:43 -you did it to Christ.
- Love revolution, flower power, people are looking to belong & be loved- we have the goods to do it- let's do it!

Summary

- **God has shown us hospitality**
- **We must show one another hospitality**
- **We must show the world hospitality**

Song: He brought me to His banqueting table