

# 3 Movements of the Spiritual Life

*From Loneliness to Solitude*  
*From Hostility to Hospitality*  
*From Illusion to Prayer*

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## From Hostility to Hospitality

1. In what circumstances can people feel hostile? \_\_\_\_\_  
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  2. How are loneliness and hostility related? \_\_\_\_\_  
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  3. What are the effects or results of hostility? \_\_\_\_\_  
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  4. What is hospitality? \_\_\_\_\_  
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  5. How does hospitality affect our own faith? \_\_\_\_\_  
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### Biblical Hospitality

*For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' Matthew 25:35-36*

- This biblical concept is often used with the terms "guest," "stranger," and "sojourner." "Hospitality" in this sense means kindness/compassion done to a foreigner or individuals outside one's normal circle of friends.

### Practical Hospitality

- The Second Movement of the spiritual life is the movement away from **hostility** towards **hospitality**.
- **Because a changing relationship with ourselves can impact on the relationship we have with others**
- Reality is that **many search for hospitality**. (a place without fear, without rejection and filled with kindness, sincerity and openness)
- Hospitality is not out to change people, but to offer them **a place where change can take place**

### Receptivity

- **Highest form of hospitality is listening**. It is a central part of relating to others.
- Genuine hospitality involves active openness. Real honest receptivity means inviting the stranger into our world on his or her terms, not on ours

### Intimacy

- Taking the invitation of Jesus, recorded in the Gospel of John, "Make your home in me as I make my home in you" John 5:4-5. **Fear is the great enemy of intimacy in relationships** between people and between people and God.
- Fear is most commonly expressed, either in distancing individual from individual, or moving to a place of unpleasant closeness.
- True intimacy in relationship respects individual space, freedom and responsibility **in the way that God respects us** in divine human encounter.
- An intimate place is like a cupped hand, neither totally open nor totally closed. It is the space where growth can take place. **This image is an image of love**, which is the true friend of intimacy.
- **God alone is free enough from wounds to offer us a fearless space**. In and through God we can be faithful to each other: in friendship, in marriage, and community. This intimate bond with God, constantly nurtured by prayer, offers us a true home.

## **FURTHER READING - HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO SHOW HOSPITALITY?**

BIBLE READING: Genesis 18:1-33

KEY BIBLE VERSE: "My lord," he said, "if it pleases you, stop here for a while. Rest in the shade of this tree while my servants get some water to wash your feet. Let me prepare some food to refresh you. Please stay awhile before continuing on your journey." "All right," they said. "Do as you have said." (Genesis 18:3-5)

### **HOSPITALITY IS A PRACTICAL WAY TO SERVE GOD.**

Abraham was eager to show hospitality to these three visitors, as was Lot (19:2). In Abraham's day, a person's reputation was largely connected to his hospitality-the sharing of home and food. Even strangers were to be treated as highly honoured guests. Meeting another's need for food or shelter was and still is one of the most immediate and practical ways to obey God. It is also a time-honoured relationship builder. Hebrews 13:2 suggests that we, like Abraham, might actually entertain angels. This thought should be on our minds the next time we have the opportunity to meet a stranger's needs.

BIBLE READING: Luke 10:1-16

KEY BIBLE VERSE: When you enter a town, don't move around from home to home. Stay in one place, eating and drinking what they provide you. Don't hesitate to accept hospitality, because those who work deserve their pay. (Luke 10:7)

### **ACCEPTING HOSPITALITY ALLOWS OTHERS TO PRACTICE GENEROSITY.**

Jesus' instruction to stay in one house avoided certain problems. Shifting from house to house could offend the families who first took them in. Some families might begin to compete for the disciples' presence, and some might think they weren't good enough to hear their message. If the disciples appeared not to appreciate the hospitality offered them, the town might not accept Jesus when he followed them there. In addition, by staying in one place, the disciples did not have to worry continually about getting good accommodations. They could settle down and do their appointed task.

### **HOSPITALITY IS A WAY TO SERVE THOSE WHO SERVE US.**

Jesus told his disciples to accept hospitality graciously because their work entitled them to it. Ministers of the gospel deserve to be supported, and it is our responsibility to make sure they have what they need. There are several ways to encourage those who serve God in his church. First, see that they have an adequate salary. Second, see that they are supported emotionally; plan a time to express appreciation for something they have done. Third, lift their spirits with special surprises from time to time. Our ministers deserve to know we are giving to them cheerfully and generously.

BIBLE READING: Luke 10:38-42

KEY BIBLE VERSE: As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a village where a woman named Martha welcomed them into her home. (Luke 10:38)

### **HOSPITALITY SHOULD FLOW OUT OF WHOLEHEARTED DEVOTION TO GOD.**

Mary and Martha both loved Jesus. On this occasion they were both serving him. But Martha thought Mary's style of serving was inferior to hers. She didn't realize that in her desire to serve, she was actually neglecting her guest. Are you so busy doing things for Jesus that you're not spending any time with him? Don't let your service become self-serving.

Jesus did not blame Martha for being concerned about household chores. He was only asking her to set priorities. It is possible for service to Christ to degenerate into mere busywork that is no longer full of devotion to God.

BIBLE READING: Romans 12:9-21

KEY BIBLE VERSE: When God's children are in need, be the one to help them out. And get into the habit of inviting guests home for dinner or, if they need lodging, for the night. (Romans 12:13)

### **HOSPITALITY IS A GIFT THAT IMPROVES WITH PRACTICE.**

Christian hospitality differs from social entertaining. Entertaining focuses on the host-the home must be spotless; the food must be well prepared and abundant; the host must appear relaxed and good-natured. Hospitality, by contrast, focuses on the guests. Their needs-whether for a place to stay, nourishing food, a listening ear, or acceptance-are the primary concern. Hospitality can happen in a messy home. It can happen around a dinner table where the main dish is canned soup. It can even happen while the host and the guest are doing chores together. Don't hesitate to offer hospitality just because you are too tired, too busy, or not wealthy enough to entertain.