

while we do not forget hospitality principles to the present family we are careful that the major extension is beyond ourselves and to others. In large measure it is a friendliness shown to strangers, the giving of ourselves as host to those otherwise beyond us. Note how the noun is used "host" in Romans 16:23 and understand that the Apostle appreciated hospitality as do all who are so benefitted. There are some limitations, of course. We do not squander our stewardship and we do not bid "godspeed" to those who carry evil doctrines. But what we try to do is to extend kindness to those beyond the immediate and familiar circle.

2. Hospitality: What does the Scripture say?

You might expect the Scripture to say a good bit both directly and indirectly...since this is a trait that marks our God. And it does!

a. Matthew 10:42; 25:35 ff. In these and parallel accounts the Lord shows how hospitality credits the belief of those who give it and how it blesses those who receive it.

b. Romans 12:13; . Our text is found in the first of these and in the second (Hebrews 13:2) we find the direct command based on a happening in the Old Testament that is self explanatory.

c. 1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8...these passages show us how necessary this practice is among those who are the shepherds and leaders of God's people...and we should not imagine a higher standard of kindness for the oversight.

d. Luke 7:43-50 gives us a negative view as we find the Lord not treated hospitably as one might have expected. Allusions on this line are common in the Gospels.

e. Romans 16 offers considerable help in this area as does the small book of Philemon and the illustrative portions of Acts where the Apostle and his company are hospitably treated by others. Altogether there is a very impressive list of Scriptures impressing us with the reality of the need for hospitality.