



Loving the Stranger

Acts 11:1-18 | Ryan Pfeiffer | June 7, 2026

INTRO. This is our 3rd wk on this story! Peter/ Cornelius! Its a big deal.

- A critical turning pt for the Church & pic of what it means to be Christian
- In 1st century, a shared table meant- shared family. (Solidarity/ belonging)
- Peter wasn't just eating w/ Gentiles—he was embracing them as family.

God is passionate about bringing people into his family... therefore...

The Church exists to help people become a part of the family of God.

To show every person who walks into this room- God loves/ is pursuing them.

There's something unique about the practice of hospitality that acts as a conduit of Gods' love... and what it means to be a part of his family.

I want to talk about our journey into Jesus' radical hospitality and why it's essential to helping others find their way into God's family.

FOCUS. What is Hospitality. What are our resistances to it? How can we embrace it?

WHAT IS HOSPITALITY? 2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him 3 and said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.

What is it that the circumcised believers are upset about?

Its about the fact that Peter receives the hospitality of Gentiles! House/ ate!

Acts 10:48 Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

In receiving their hospitality Peter was also giving them hospitality...

He was showing them they aren't 2nd class in God's family... they belong!

1 Peter 4: 8 Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. 9 Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

Hospitality = φιλόξενος (philoxenos) Philos (love) Xenos (stranger).

Hospitality is the practice of loving strangers... fundamental to Christianity!

It's about showing people thru Christ they have a place at Gods table!

Jesus' love for strangers... people outside God's family... was radical!

Women - Gentiles - diseased...

- Prostitutes - tax collectors - Children -

Hospitality is one of the most concrete ways to show people the love of God.

It's relational... it's costly... it's up close and personal... LIKE JESUS.

WHY DO WE RESIST IT? God gives Peter a vision... 8 "I replied, 'Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' 9 "The voice spoke from heaven a second time, 'Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.' 10 This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again.

PPT. Unclean = Uncomfortable.

For early Christians resistance to hospitality was fear of being UNCLEAN!

1. I think we resist it because it will make us UNCOMFORTABLE!

1. It's not my personality...
2. I'm too insecure. Too anxious.
3. That's not my job it's the Pastor's job.
4. They don't wear enough denim... they're not my vibe

2. I think we resist because hospitality can be inconvenient...

- Disrupt my schedule and my routine...
- Make it harder to connect with my close friends...
- Keep me from getting home to my football game...

3. We resist because we've been disciplined by our culture.

We live in a culture that constantly asks, "What's in this for me?"

Hospitality teaches us to ask, "How can I make room for someone else?"

ILLUS. Story of a woman who shifted from me to them...

HOW CAN WE EMBRACE JESUS' HOSPITALITY? 18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life.

I love how Acts shows us both the struggles & breakthroughs of Church

It shows us Peter was on a journey... and the Church itself.... (Gal 2:11)

We're all on a journey of being formed by the radical hospitality of Jesus...

We practice hospitality both by offering it and receiving it.

BY OFFERING IT...

- Turning to our neighbor...
- Linger after service...
- Inviting people to Church... Treating this as your home... welcoming people...
- Introducing people to others
- Inviting people to our home for a meal. Couple in 50's invited a couple in 20's...
- Hosting space for others to connect.
Another couple regularly opens their home to YA's...
- Leading a community group.
- Joining Strong families... hosting children for a weekend...

BY RECEIVING IT...

Receiving hospitality can be just as uncomfortable/ inconvenient!

1. Jesus received hospitality. Luke 5:29. Luke 10:38
2. He instructed his disciples to receive it. Matt 10:11, Luke 10:5
3. This whole moment was because Peter received it...

ILLUS. Family inviting me over for dinner when I was going thru hard time.

This impacted me deeply and inspired me to do the same for others.

RESPONSE.

In practicing hospitality we love Jesus and become more like him.

Matthew 25:35 — 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 invited Me in.