

Hospitality: Preparing Your Home for the Holiday

1 Peter 4:8-9

Above all things have intense *and* unfailing love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Practice hospitality to one another. [Be hospitable, be a lover of strangers, with brotherly affection for the unknown guests, the foreigners, the poor, and all others who come your way who are of Christ's body.] And do it ungrudgingly (cordially and graciously, without complaining but as representing Him).

Rich Holiday Traditions for Keeping Jesus the Center of the Season:

- Tara Furman's Christmas Keepsake Journal
- Jesse Tree- The miracle of Christmas is the mystery of God's finding us, God tracking us down and reuniting us to Himself
- Advent Calendar

Basic Hospitality Tips for the Gal Who Struggles with Hospitality:

- The Apostle Paul teaches us that we are to pursue Hospitality. (Romans 12:13, 1Titus 3:2) We think hospitality is just cooking a meal or hosting a party. It is much more than those things. It's a heart issue and a hands issue. The Greek word for Hospitality is **philoxenia**. Literally this means "love of strangers" Reflect a moment and ask yourself : *Have I been practicing hospitality the way Jesus taught? Am I willing to follow his example and obey him?* **BE INTENTIONAL**
1. Someone who recently started coming to church
 2. A new neighbor
 3. The elderly
 4. Invite someone to a Christmas event
 5. Take a plate of home baked goodies
 6. Giving Christmas gifts containing the gospel
 7. Helping in a soup Kitchen
 8. Provide groceries for a hungry family
 9. Don't focus on the "what" of Christmas. Focus on the "who"
 - **on the spiritual needs of others.**

Today we have many opportunities to reach the lost yet scripture also teaches us to show hospitality to one another, that is, within the family of God (1Peter 4:8-9 and 3 John 5-7) Reflect a moment and ask yourself have I been practicing hospitality the way Jesus taught? Am I willing to follow his example and obey him? If so, who will I invite?

1. Someone who recently started coming to church
2. A New Neighbor
3. The elderly
4. Invite a neighbor to tea- ask God to open a door
5. Invite someone to a Christmas Concert
6. Take them a plate of home baked goodies
7. Giving Christmas gifts containing the gospel
8. Helping in a Soup Kitchen
9. Provide groceries for a hungry family
10. Don't simply focus on the "what of Christmas but on the "who" - on the spiritual needs of others.

Hospitality VS. Entertaining/Performing:

In the book Still Living By Faith, Annie May Lewis writes, "Entertaining says, 'I want to impress you with my beautiful home, my clever decorating, and my gourmet cooking.' Hospitality says, 'This is not mine. It is a gift from God and I'll use it as He desires.'"

Here are 10 ways to HOST instead of ENTERTAIN so you can begin mastering the art of Christian hospitality, especially as you enter a season filled with friends and family in your home:

1. Pray. Ask God to allow you to be a blessing to others. Ask Him to help you touch the people who enter your home. Take the focus off yourself - It's Biblical!
2. Keep it simple. Hosting is about the experience, not the presentation. Prepare a meal that allows you time to visit, not one that takes you away from your company.
 - Make a list one week in advance. HAVE A PLAN.
 - Try to do EVERYTHING before your guests arrive (ie...set the table, make coffee, put ice in water glasses, place appetizers...)
3. Be authentic. Remove the masks and let the people see the true you. Warts and all.
4. Request a Dish. – Ask guests to bring something.
5. Announce the desire to be informal.

6. Smile, Tell Stories, Listen well. Make your guests feel valued and loved. Keep it casual and relaxed. Table conversation starters.
7. Use your regular dishes. The more formal the china the more formal the setting
8. Ask for help.
9. Show pictures – they stimulate stories and encourage conversation.
10. Prepare the Kids. Hospitality teaches your children – so include them. If your kids know the boundaries and expectations things will be easier for everyone.

Easy Centerpieces that pack a punch– yet are super cost efficient:

Bow Tutorial
 Thanksgiving Centerpiece Using Produce
 Sheave Centerpiece
 Hurricane Ornament Centerpiece
 Candy Cane Pillar Candle
 Christmas pics prayer book
 Box Tree

A Word on Technology:

- The video says it all....
- Be PRESENT.....Take the time to get to know your nephews, your nieces, your neighbors.
- Consider taking The Pledge. Even if it just for the Thanksgiving break.
- **Make some memories.** Here's some ideas
- Games: Guestures, Apples to Apples, Scattergories, Uno, Old Maid, Chutes and Ladders, Sorry, Pipeline, Don't Spill the Beans, Deck of Cards
- **Go Outside!!!!** - take a walk, sidewalk chalk, play frisbee, miniature golf, go to the park.....
- Make pizza from scratch
- Get some Conversation Cubes
- Take the quiz on the Five Languages of Love. Figure out where you land!
- Involve EVERYONE!!!

Appetizer and Dessert Recipes that are YUMMY:

- Great Grandma's Wine Cookies
- Red Rose Cake
- Roast Beef Roll-ups
- Artichoke/Feta dip
- Grilled Shrimp with Remoulade Sauce

LINKS

www.techtimeout.com

Ideas to keep your home tech free

<https://www.scribd.com/sugarandspicemommy/documents>
Daily Devotions for Jesse Tree

<http://www.aholyexperience.com/category/jesse-tree/>
Easy paper cut outs for Jesse Tree

<http://www.everydayconfetti.org/hello-world/>
Great Hospitality ideas for the whole year

<http://beautyandbedlam.com/jesse-tree-advent/> Make your own ornaments for Jesse Tree

<http://www.linesacross.com/2011/12/ribbon-gift-bows.html>
How to make a gift bow