



Study 3: Hospitality: The Home of the Good Neighbour

(Heb. 13:1,2; I Peter 4:7-11)

1. The Bible gives many good examples of strangers being welcomed into a home. Some examples include Lot (Genesis 19); Abraham's servant (Gen.24:22-25); Elijah and the widow of Zarephath (I Kings 17); Elisha and the Shunammite (II Kings 4); Jesus welcomed by Martha (Luke 10); Jesus with the two disciples in Emmaus (Luke 24); Paul with Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18); Paul shipwrecked on Malta (Acts 28).

Quickly scan these (and any other examples that you can think of), and see how many of them resulted in God's direct and evident blessing upon the person showing hospitality.

2. The Bible is consistent in its injunction that we open our hearts and home to the stranger. Consider the following two questions:
 - (a) To what extent were the Israelites to welcome the non-Jews who lived in their midst (Leviticus 19:34)?
 - (b) To what extent has God welcomed us in his family (Ephesians 2:12,13)?

Using these examples as our benchmarks, evaluate on a personal level how we are making out in being a truly hospitable people.

3. What avenues do we use in to share with the needy and, in particular, those who can't repay the favour? Are there any really good ideas that could be developed?
4. Discuss together some practical things that you have learnt about being hospitable. What has worked well for you and what hasn't worked well? What lessons have you learned? See if you can compile a useful list of suggestions for someone who hasn't made this their habit.