

Loving Strangers

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I. Introduction.

- A. Hospitality was very important in the ancient world.
- B. There was a network of hospitality places for people who needed a place to stay.
- C. The Christian is to be given to hospitality. (Romans 12:13, Titus 1:8, I Timothy 3:2)
- D. It was a special ministry that Christians had to open their homes to strangers.
- E. Almost everything in the early church happened in the home. The home is not supposed to be a haven for a person only. (Acts 12:12, 21, 2:46, 20:7, 10:22, 16:32, 18:26, 5:42, 28:17)
- G. Text: III John.
- H. The love of strangers is one kind of brotherly love.

II. The man who gave hospitality: Gaius.

- A. Gaius was a beloved man. This term is used for Christians. (Colossians 3:12, John 17:23, 14:21-23)
- B. John wants Gaius's spiritual health to be equal to his physical health.
 - 1. God wants a person to be healthy spiritually primarily.
 - 2. God also wants a person to be physically healthy. (I Timothy 5:23, I Timothy 4:8)
 - 3. Holiness is one of the greatest contributors to physical health. (Psalm 38:3)
- C. Gaius is commended.
 - 1. He was loving.
 - 2. He was doing everything in line with the truth. (Romans 16:15, Philippians 2:25, Colossians 2:7, 4:12, James 1:22, John 13, Luke 6, 11:27)
 - 3. The greatest heartbreak is to see Christians who know the truth and do not walk in it.

4. The greatest joy in ministry is to see people walking in the truth. (Hebrews 13:17)

D. Gaius's love made him hospitable. (Matthew 10:40)

E. John encourages Gaius to continue doing well probably in the face of persecution. (Titus 3:13)

F. We are to treat others as God would treat them.

1. We are to do it for God's glory.

2. We are to do it so that we do not rely on the world. (II Corinthians 2:17)

G. Gaius was a fellow helper with the truth. (II John 10)

III. The man who refused hospitality: Diotrephes.

IV. The man who was to receive hospitality: Demetrius.

Application questions:

1. Who do you know that most exhibits qualities like Gaius? What is his or her secret?

2. What are some ways that you can be more hospitable this week?

3. What are some creative ways that you can encourage your church to be more hospitable? Explain.
