

Sermon Handout

Christian Hospitality

III John 5-8

I. John's Commendation of Gaius

- a. Constancy of Kindness v. 5 (hospitality is "open-handedness")
 - i. To "the brethren" *cf.* v. 3 (who brought a report to John)
 - ii. To "strangers" (indefinite = on many occasions)
(*transl.* "brethren, particularly since they were strangers"
For the contrary instruction, *see* II Jn 10-11 *cf.* I Jn 4:1
- b. Gaius' love was reported to the church where John resided v. 6
 - i. Hospitality was the expression of Gaius' love
 - ii. John urges him to continue the practice "as worthy of God"
- c. In showing hospitality, we become co-workers in the gospel vv. 7-8
 - i. These men went out to serve Jesus v. 7a
 - ii. The pagans to whom they preached gave them nothing 7b
 - iii. Hence, it falls to the faithful to support them v. 8

II. Hospitality is the Natural Response to God's Mercy

- a. N.T. examples
 - i. Acts 16:14-15 - Lydia
 - ii. Lk 4:38-39 - Peter's mother-in-law *cf.* Mk 1:13 (same phrase)
- b. O.T. examples
 - i. Gen 18:1-8; 19:1, 3 Abraham & Lot *cf.* Heb 13:2
 - ii. Judges 19:16-21 The old man of Benjamin
- c. Hospitality extends beyond opening our home
 - i. Acts 18:27 – Apollos the Egyptian (a traveling missionary)
 - ii. Rom 15:26-27 – giving to the poor saints *cf.* II Cor 9:1-2
 - iii. Phil 4:10, 14-18 – Philippians supporting Paul
- d. Required of Elders I Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8
Implied, but not stated, for Deacons I Tim 3:8 "not greedy"

III. Hospitality – A Standard of Christian Behavior

- a. Our homes should be open for fellowship
- b. We should be particularly kind to those who live of the gospel
- c. Hospitality can take many forms, based on our ability & situation
- d. God is pleased with "open-handed" Christians