

## Fragrances, Study 4

# **SMELLS FROM THE HOME. HOSPITALITY AND MINISTRY**

*Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.*

**Romans 12:10, 13 (NKJV)**

## **Recap**

Love is closely associated with sweet smelling fragrances (as pictured in the Song of Songs). As we love, we become spiritually fragrant. Agapé love is made up of at least 15 different aspects, as mentioned in First Corinthians 13. Agapé love is not a thing to be used for our own ends.

## **Love In The Home**

Agapé love relates to the home. The husband and father is the one responsible for setting the tone of agapé love in his family. The nucleus of this agapé love within the family is founded on the relationship between a husband and his wife. And together, a Christian family shines like a beacon of love within a community of darkness.

## **“Entertaining Strangers”**

*“Throughout the Mediterranean world, hospitality toward strangers was recognised as a sacred duty. Among the Greeks hospitality was a decisive mark of culture. The civilized were ‘those who love strangers and fear the gods’ (Homer Od. VIII. 576; ix. 175). Zeus himself was the ‘Friend of Strangers’ (2Macc. 6:2). In Egypt the practice of hospitality assured a favourable*

*existence in the next world. For the Romans entertaining strangers was considered a sacred obligation."*

**THE INTERNATIONAL STANDARD BIBLE ENCYCLOPAEDIA, Volume 2, page 105**

Entertaining strangers began as a way of welcoming nomadic businessmen. It was customary for the village or town to take care of strangers by giving them food and lodging, even if the traveller arrived late in the town.

1. Note how this was expressed in Luke 11:5 and following verses-

---



---

No expense was extreme when entertaining strangers (travellers). Luxurious banquets were frequently prepared for the traveller who was treated as an important guest.

2. Note Abraham's comment about his generous provision (Gen. 18:5).

---



---

Eventually villages began the practice of maintaining a guest room for visitors. The expense was shared by the entire village. Note Mk. 14:14.

## ***Entertain Strangers!***

3. What does the Old Testament command in these Scriptures? Lev. 19:33f.; Dt. 10:13f.; 24:17, 19

---



---

This was because Israel were strangers in the land of Egypt (Ex. 22:21; 23:9; Dt. 10:19). Abraham entertained strangers as a matter of courtesy (Gen. 18:2f). Reuel was amazed his daughters did not extend hospitality toward the stranger who assisted them water their flocks (Ex. 2:20). Being a host often meant going without to ensure that your guest didn't. We see this with Elijah being offered the last bit of food left in the house by the widow of Zarephath (1Kgs 17:10f).

## What Jesus Taught

Jesus frequently received hospitality (Mtt. 13:1, 36; Mk. 1:29f; 7:24; 9:33; 11:11; 14:3; Lk. 7:36f; 8:3; 10:38f; 14:1f, 12f; 19:5; Jn 4:40; 12:1f)

4. What did Jesus expect based on Luke 9:51 and following verses?

---



---

He referred to it as a commonly established custom by His reference to it within certain parables (Lk. 11:5f; 14:12f). He sent out the 12 and the 70 on the assumption that they too would be shown hospitality (Mk. 6:8-11; Lk. 10:1-12).

5. What did Jesus say about the hospitality shown toward His servants? (Mtt. 10:40; 25:43; Jn. 13:20)

---



---

## Hospitality in the Early Church

The family home formed a vital part of the early church's ministry (Acts 2:46). A great emphasis was placed upon the entertaining of strangers (Rom. 12:9-13; Heb. 13:1-2; 1Pt. 4:8-9). It was a pre-requisite that elders be hospitable (1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8). In ancient Rabbinic literature (*T.B. Kiddushin 39b*) five acts are listed as bringing future reward- (i) honouring parents, (ii) deeds of love, (iii) hospitality, (iv) establishing peace, (v) studying the Torah [the Law]. But some rabbis [*T.B. Shabbath 127a*] thought the practice of hospitality was more important than the study of the Torah (*The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, page 106*).

The early Church considered the hosting of visiting ministries as a great privilege and essential to the propagation of the Gospel. To be hospitable toward visiting preachers was to be a partaker in their ministry (3Jn 5-8; Rom. 16:3)

We note that Paul & Peter were greatly aided by the hospitality of the early church (Acts 10:6, 18, 32, 48; 16:14f, Philemon 22).

# ***Obligations***

1. Our homes should be a warm loving atmosphere where visitors are made to feel welcome.
2. God actually gifts some families with the ability to be hospitable.
3. Our homes should reflect love for strangers and visitors.
4. Have a sinner for dinner; is not as corny as it sounds.

Amen.

**Next Study:** *Untampered Love*