

Values Matter Discovery Starters

We Value People

14. VALUE THE INDIVIDUAL

YWAM is called to value each individual. We believe in equal opportunity and justice for all. Created in the image of God, people of all nationalities, ages and functions have distinctive contributions and callings. We are committed to honoring God-given leadership and ministry gifts in both men and women.

[Gen 1:27](#); [Lev 19:13-16](#); [Deu 16:18-20](#); [Psa 139:13-16](#); [Mar 8:34-37](#);
[Act 10:34-35](#); [Gal 3:28](#); [Eph 6:5-9](#); [Heb 2:11-12](#); [Jam 2:1-9](#)

Value 14 – Value the Individual: Handmade by God

Biblical Foundation:

*You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body
and knit me together in my mother's womb.
Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex!
Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.
You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion,
as I was woven together in the dark of the womb.
You saw me before I was born.
Every day of my life was recorded in your book.
Every moment was laid out
before a single day had passed (Psa 139:13-16).*

Discovery Starter:

Every time a new generation of computers is created we stand in awe of how more data is stored in an ever smaller space. But our greatest technological accomplishments pale in the light of God and his astounding creativity. The human genome project was finished in April, 2003. We now know that each human cell has about 6 feet of DNA coiled within it. When you add up the DNA strands in all cells there are "around 10 billion miles of DNA inside of" every person!¹ What does 10 billion miles look like? Well, the earth's circumference is just under 25,000 miles. If you circumnavigated the globe at the equator once every day, it would take you about 1,096 years – nearly eleven centuries – to travel 10 billion miles! Jaw-dropping amazing!

Consider this. The sun is about 94 million miles from the earth. Our DNA would cover about 53 round-trips between the earth and the sun. According to the *Guinness Book of World Records*, the man who owns the title of “most air miles flown by a passenger” is Fred Finn, a British businessman now in his 70s. Fred has flown some 15 million miles in his life!² But if he had flown all those miles on a voyage to the sun, he’d have gotten less than 1/6 of the way there! Fred Finn would need about another 640 lifetimes to fly the distance covered by the DNA each of us possess in our bodies! Mind-boggling extraordinary!

God’s design for each of us is certainly “wonderfully complex”! No one is mass-produced. Each individual is unique. God creatively shapes the DNA of every individual so that we each have unique finger prints, retina prints, and voice prints. Not only that but God has crafted each one of us with a one-of-a-kind blend of gifts, talents, and callings. We are skillfully and lovingly handmade by God. We are each an unrepeatable treasure marked with the image of God, more valuable than all the wealth in the world (Mar 8:34-37).

Keep Going:

Take some time to do a little internet research. Did you know that the average human body contains some 7 octillion (that’s 7 followed by 27 zeroes!) atoms? Did you know that the retina of your eyes contain 137 million light-sensitive cells? Did you know that your nose can detect about a trillion different smells? Did you know that there are more brain cells in your head than there are stars in the Milky Way? Did you know that you have over 60,000 miles of blood vessels in your body? Did you know...?

Explore. Discover. Learn. Then allow yourself to be amazed and worship the great God who designed you in such an amazing way. Worship and as you do so, recommit your life to him, to live it fully for the wonderful purposes for which he designed you.

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1. Dr. Barry Starr, A Long and Winding DNA, Feb 2, 2009 on <https://www.kqed.org/>
 2. <https://airlinegeeks.com/2019/01/13/the-worlds-most-travelled-man/>

Value #14 – Value the Individual: No Partiality!

Biblical Foundation:

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ. Try to please them all the time, not just when they are watching you. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free.

Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Don't threaten them; remember, you both have the same Master in heaven, and he has no favorites (Eph 6:5-9).

Discovery Starter:

Paul's words seem to be an uncomfortable endorsement of slavery. Is he just perpetuating the continuance of an unjust system? But wait! Though his words initially reflect the accepted perspective of his society ... Paul had a transformative surprise up his sleeve! After rehearsing the expected obligations of a slave, Paul unexpectedly turns to the masters and tells them to treat their slaves "in the same way"! In the course of that brief sentence he turned unjust social hierarchy on its head and established egalitarianism as the new gospel norm. It is impossible to enslave someone if you are expected to serve them in the same way they serve you. They are no longer your slave, but your brother.

Paul anchors this thought in the most solid of all foundations: in the character and nature of God. Paul's concluding punch line is that this is so because our "Master in heaven ... has no favorites." He is building upon Moses' understanding that "the great God, the mighty and awesome God ... shows no partiality and cannot be bribed. He ensures that orphans and widows receive justice. He shows love to the foreigners living among you and gives them food and clothing. So you, too ..." (Deu 10:17-19; see Rom 2:11; Gal 2:6; Col 3:25).

So you too... Because God sees all people as valuable, so must we. Whenever our societies divide people into categories and value one more than another, they do not reflect God's perspective. Whether "Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female" (Gal 3:28) – all people are valuable. This is true, even though all people have sinned and "fall short of God's glorious standard" (Rom 3:23). Right belief and right behavior is not a pre-condition for being valued. God valued and loved us all even when "we were still sinners" (Rom 5:8). Every human being is valuable, because each one is created by God in his image (Gen 1:25-27; 9:6; 1Co 11:7; Col 1:15-17; Jam 3:9). Every individual has inestimable worth (Psa 72:14; Mat 6:26; 10:31; 12:12; 16:26), created with specific gifts and talents, which are to be discovered and developed for that individual's God-given potential to be fully realized.

Keep Going:

Have you ever considered yourself better than – or worse than – others because of nationality, education, socio-economic standing, or any other reason? If so, what needs to change? Take time to repent and ask God to help you see people as he sees them. Ask God to help you see yourself as he sees you. What steps can you take this day to communicate to someone else their incredible value?

15. VALUE FAMILIES

YWAM affirms the importance of families serving God together in missions, not just the father and/or mother. We also embrace the inclusion of single-parent families. We encourage the development of strong and healthy family units, with each member sharing the call to missions and contributing their gifts in unique and complementary ways. We uphold and celebrate the Biblical view that God's intent for holy matrimony is between one man and one woman.

[Gen 2:21-24](#); [Gen 18:17-19](#); [Deu 6:6-7](#); [Pro 5:15-23](#); [Pro 31:10-31](#);
[Mal 2:14-16](#); [Mat 19:3-9](#); [1Co 7:1-16](#); [1Ti 3:2-5](#); [Heb 13:4](#)

Value #15 – Value Families: Mutuality in Marriage

Biblical Foundation:

7:¹ Now regarding the questions you asked in your letter. Yes, it is good to abstain from sexual relations. ² But because there is so much sexual immorality,

1A– 7:^{2a} ... each man should have his own wife,

2A– 7:^{3a} The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife,

3A– 7:^{4a} The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband.

1B– 7:^{2b} **and** each woman her own husband.

2B– 7:^{3b} **and likewise** the wife to her husband.

3B– 7:^{4b} **In the same way**, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife.

4AB -- 7:⁵ Do not deprive each other except by **mutual** consent and for a time...

5B– 7:^{11b} **And** a husband must not divorce his wife.

6A– 7:¹² ... If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her.

7A– 7:^{14a} For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife,

5A– 7:^{10b-11} A wife must not separate from her husband.

6B– 7:¹³ **And** if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him.

7B– 7:^{14b} **and** the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband...

8AB– 7:¹⁵ But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man **or** woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.

9B– 7:^{16b} *Or, how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? (NIV)*

9A– 7:^{16a} *How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? (NIV)*

Discovery Starter:

Paul's words from First Corinthians 7 (recorded above) stand in stark contrast to many cultural expressions of marriage. Whether ancient or modern, there are often double standards in marriage, whether implicit or explicit. There are different rule books by which each spouse is supposed to play the marital game. Not so in the Scriptures. In this amazing passage, Paul lays out the extraordinary, indeed the revolutionary pattern of mutuality in marriage built on transformational gospel standards. He lays out 9 different parallels between husband and wife which would have been totally shocking in his day and age. What is required of the wife is likewise enjoined of the husband. The rights given to the husband are also – in the same way – given to the wife. No one had ever heard of such mutuality. His radical words totally level the playing field in husband-wife relationships, transforming marriage in a most unusual way.

Priscilla and Aquila may be the most famous married couple in the New Testament. They are mentioned by name in Act 18:2-3,18-19,24-26; Rom 16:3-5; 1Co 16:19-20; and 2Ti 4:19. They are always linked together when ministry is mentioned. It seems that mutuality was not limited to their marital life, but to the apostolic ministry they shared as a couple. Husband and wife often have very differing gifts, but in God's good design they both find fruitful and fulfilling expression when they use their gifts together in God's kingdom purposes.

It is quite probable that the book of Hebrews was written by Priscilla. If so, hers is the only New Testament book authored by a woman. Towards the end of her "brief exhortation" (Heb 13:22), she wrote, "Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage." (Heb 13:4). Remain faithful. This involves all the little things. The unseen things. The daily things. The seemingly insignificant things. And it is here – among the little, unseen, daily, insignificant things of life – that great marriages are forged. It requires constant attention; daily focus, incessant commitment. Those who are faithful in the little things will reap great rewards.

Keep Going:

In Greek there is a reciprocal pronoun – *allelon* – which describes the back-and-forth dynamic in a mutual give-and-take relationship. This word occurs eleven times in the last five chapters in Romans. You will find it in Rom 12:5,10a,10b,16; 13:8; 14:13,19; 15:5,7,14; and 16:16. The list of actions that we are to undertake for "one another" are not limited to those in a marital relationship, but certainly (if these exhortations are followed) they would enhance any relationship, including that between a husband and a wife. Whether you are married or single, you can reflect on these passages that foster

mutual love. Consider how you can better “one another” those with whom you live and work.

Value #15 – Value Families: Doing Family and Ministry Together

Biblical Foundation:

So a church leader must be a man whose life is above reproach. He must be faithful to his wife. He must exercise self-control, live wisely, and have a good reputation. He must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must be able to teach. He must not be a heavy drinker or be violent. He must be gentle, not quarrelsome, and not love money. He must manage his own family well, having children who respect and obey him. For if a man cannot manage his own household, how can he take care of God’s church? (1Ti 3:2-5).

Discovery Starter:

When our children were aged 15, 13, 11 and 9, God spoke to my wife Christine and me that he wanted to do something new with us as a family. After two decades serving on YWAM bases we felt we were to go “on the road” – visiting some of the most far-flung, least-visited YWAM communities in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. We called our children together to discuss the implications and seek the Lord. We did not rush the decision. Over the next several weeks we talked and prayed together often. When we were sure of the word of the Lord, we embarked on a new Great Commission adventure. Over the next 44 months we traveled and ministered together in 189 YWAM bases in 91 countries. All of us played a key part. Midway through our travels, a mission leader approached Sarah, my pre-teen daughter, and asked her, “How do you feel about your parents dragging you around the world?” Surprised, she looked him square in the eye, “What do you mean? I’m dragging them,” she retorted. She clearly “owned” the ministry we were doing together as a family.

Some have proposed that God’s priority is, “God first, family second, ministry third.” Though well-intentioned, this formula is not found in Scripture. God’s instructions are simpler: God first. Period. There should be no conflict between family and ministry if we listen carefully to God, for he is the source of both. He who called you into ministry has not forgotten that he also called you to family. These two callings complement one another. It’s simple: seek God on every occasion and embrace his guidance together. He is Lord. As a family we are to hear and obey.

In Paul’s instructions to Timothy we see that leadership responsibilities and family life are interwoven together seamlessly. Marital and parental dynamics are really important.

In fact, Paul's final point is that how a person does family qualifies them for leadership in God's family – the church. Family and ministry go hand in hand. We hold family in high regard and celebrate the fact that we can display the kingdom of God with our family.

Keep Going:

Jesus, quoting Psalm 8:2, defended the role of children in ministry when he spoke to religious leaders (Mat 21:15-17). When Jesus spoke to his disciples (most of whom were single), he underlined the importance of children in his eyes. Jesus wanted to make sure that children were included in what he was doing (Mat 19:13-15; Mar 10:13-16; Luk 18:15-17). Take time to read these passages and – whether you are married or single – consider how you can take Jesus' words to heart and not only include children in ministry, but place them front and center as Jesus did. Ask God to lead you to develop ministry expressions which honor and celebrate family.

13. BE RELATIONSHIP-ORIENTED

YWAM is dedicated to being relationship-oriented in our living and working together.

We desire to be united through lives of holiness, mutual support, transparency, humility, and open communication, rather than a dependence on structures or rules.

[Lev 19:18](#); [Psa 133:1-3](#); [Pro 17:17](#); [Pro 27:10](#); [Joh 13:34-35](#);
[Joh 15:13-17](#); [Joh 17:20-23](#); [Rom 13:8-10](#); [1Jo 1:7](#); [1Jo 4:7-12](#)

Value 13 – Be Relationship-oriented: When God Commands a Blessing

Biblical Foundation:

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brothers to dwell together in unity!
It is like the precious oil upon the head,
Coming down upon the beard,
Even Aaron's beard,
Coming down upon the edge of his robes.
It is like the dew of Hermon
Coming down upon the mountains of Zion;
For there the LORD commanded the blessing—life forever (Psa 133:1-3 NASB).*

Discovery Starter:

God created us to live in loving relationships with one another. We were not designed to live autonomously, as isolated, solitary islands. We have been designed to live in a rich relational context. Six times during creation God looked at what he had made and saw that it was "good" (Gen 1:4,10,12,18,21,25). The only exception during the creation process was right after God had made Adam but before he had created anyone else. God pronounced, "It is not good for the man to be alone" (Gen 2:18). So God created Eve; someone with whom Adam could have a rich and fruitful relationship.

A proverb often shared on the internet states, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." Sometimes this folk wisdom is attributed to the peoples of Africa; sometimes to those of the Pacific. So, whether its origin lies among the Masai or the Maori, it gives us the idea that if we want to get the job done, it's best to do it together. It blends the concepts of task and relationship. This intuitively speaks to our hearts because it reminds us that we were created by a Triune God. Even as God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – live in a wondrous community of unbroken relational love, so we have been designed to live and work together in loving community. Our relational design is rooted in the character and nature of God.

The kingdom of God is designed to grow through relationship-based partnering which values both the individual and the community. Kingdom partnering makes room for individual uniqueness and initiatives, understanding that relationships grow at the speed of trust. This is possible as we each embrace common Biblical goals and kingdom values. While some cultures celebrate the individual more; others honor the community more. Both perspectives are found in Scriptures. Both are found in our YWAM values. We champion the individual without encouraging autonomous isolation and independence and we celebrate community without ignoring personal accountability and responsibility. When we walk in godly relationships, we meet both individual and communal responsibilities. When this happens, God commands a blessing.

Keep Going:

We are able to collaborate with one another in unity when we are willing to:

- adapt (1Co 9:22-23).
- serve (Mat 25:40).
- share (2Ti 2:2).
- include (Luk 6:38).

Where do you need to do to grow in your own life and character to be able to walk in relational unity with your brothers and sisters? What changes need to occur? What areas need to be strengthened? Take time to wait on God and allow him to examine your heart. Are there certain individuals with whom you need to make things right? Are there certain situations that you need to address? Ask God to show you what he would like to do in your life so that you can be a man or woman of peace. What steps to

relational unity can you take in a practical way that will release God to command a blessing over you?

Value #13 – Be Relationship-Oriented: So What’s New?

Biblical Foundation:

So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples (Joh 13:34-35).

Discovery Starter:

What’s new about this commandment? Prior to Jesus, the moral high ground was to love neighbor as self. Because every individual has been created by God in God’s image, all people are equally valuable and we should love each accordingly. But then Jesus came. He loved like no one else had loved before. He introduced a “greater love” (Joh 15:13). Paul says, “But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners” (Rom 5:8). Jesus’ loving sacrifice on our behalf has forever raised the bar. He has changed the narrative of history.

Our love for neighbor is no longer to be measured by how much we love ourselves, but by how much Jesus has loved us. Jesus is the new reference point for defining true love. We are to have the same rights-relinquishing, servant-hearted “attitude that Jesus Christ had” – and which is the glorious theme of an early Christian hymn (Php 2:5-11). Jesus’ example calls us to prefer our neighbors as Christ preferred us. We’re to follow this new example. Therefore, “Don’t be selfish ... Don’t look out only for your own interests ... Don’t just pretend to love others. Really love them ... Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other” (Php 2:3-4; Rom 12:9-10).

This other-preferring, self-sacrificing love is not due to some unhealthy dysfunction. Jesus experienced no coercion. He says, “No one can take my life from me. I sacrifice it voluntarily” (Joh 10:18). Jesus’ servant-hearted love was rooted in his wholeness as a person. On his final evening with his closest friends, “Jesus ... loved his disciples ... to the very end... Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So he got up from the table, took off his robe” and washed their feet (Joh 13:1-5), a graphic prelude to what he would do on the cross. Because he was secure in his identity, and knew where he had come from and where he was going, he could voluntarily serve with the greatest love ever displayed. Jesus is the new standard.

Keep Going:

Eight times we are given the positive command to love (*agapao*) in the New Testament. Three of these are about loving our enemies; three are about husbands loving their wives; and two are about how we are to love our brothers and sisters in the body of Christ. Consider these passages in the light of how Jesus' life has redefined the meaning of true love.

- Mat 5:44 But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!
- Luk 6:27 But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you.
- Luk 6:35 Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid.
- Eph 5:25 For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her
- Eph 5:33 So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband
- Col 3:19 Husbands, love your wives and never treat them harshly.
- 1Pe 1:22 so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart.
- 1Pe 2:17 Respect everyone, and love the family of believers. Fear God, and respect the king.

Take time to linger over these passages. Thank God for his immeasurable love. Ask him to show you how he sees the relationships you have – where can you go deeper in love? Ask him to show you steps you can take to grow in Christ-like love. Determine to take those steps which lead you to serve others around you and find new ways to express honor towards them. Take time to tell someone how much you value your relationship with him or her.

17. PRACTICE HOSPITALITY

YWAM affirms the ministry of hospitality as an expression of God's character and the value of people. We believe it is important to open our hearts, homes, YWAM locations and campuses to serve and honor one another, our guests and the poor and needy, not as acts of social protocol, but as expressions of generosity.

[Gen 18:1-8](#); [2Sa 9:1-11](#); [Psa 68:5-6](#); [Pro 22:9](#); [Isa 58:7](#);
[Mat 25:31-46](#); [Act 28:7-8](#); [Rom 12:13](#); [Heb 13:1-3](#); [1Pe 4:9](#)

Value #17 – Practice Hospitality:

Close Encounters of the Divine Kind

Biblical Foundation:

The LORD appeared again to Abraham near the oak grove belonging to Mamre. One day Abraham was sitting at the entrance to his tent during the hottest part of the day. He looked up and noticed three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he ran to meet them and welcomed them, bowing low to the ground.

"My lord," he said, "if it pleases you, stop here for a while. Rest in the shade of this tree while water is brought to wash your feet. And since you've honored your servant with this visit, let me prepare some food to refresh you before you continue on your journey."

"All right," they said. "Do as you have said."

So Abraham ran back to the tent and said to Sarah, "Hurry! Get three large measures of your best flour, knead it into dough, and bake some bread." Then Abraham ran out to the herd and chose a tender calf and gave it to his servant, who quickly prepared it. When the food was ready, Abraham took some yogurt and milk and the roasted meat, and he served it to the men. As they ate, Abraham waited on them in the shade of the trees (Gen 18:1-8).

Discovery Starter:

The story of Abraham's hospitality to the three strangers sets the context for the exhortation we read in Heb 13:2, "Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!" Because of this story the ancient Jewish rabbis taught that "Abraham introduced ... hospitality" into the world (*Midrash Tanhuma Yelammedenu*, Noach 14.2) and therefore hospitality was called "the Abrahamic virtue" (*Chizkuni*, Genesis 21.21.1).

Although Abraham's household was a very large enterprise (from within its ranks he could muster "318 trained men" according to Gen 14:14), when it came to serving these unexpected guests he did not delegate it out to his servants. He welcomed these strangers himself. Consider the many verbs which describe his actions: Abraham "was sitting, looked up, noticed, saw, ran to meet, bowing low, said, [found favor, asked, asked], let me prepare, to refresh, ran back, said, ran out, chose, gave, took, [prepared], served, and waited on" his angelic guests. Abraham's intentional activity modeled the heart and function of hospitality. We read: "*let me prepare some food to refresh you*" – this described the activity (*prepare*) but also the purpose of hospitality (*to refresh*). Three times it mentions that Abraham "*ran*" underscoring his diligence. His actions embodied an over-the-top generosity when he asked Sarah to "*Get three large measures*" (the equivalent of 28 cups worth!) "*of your best flour.*" He certainly wasn't simply meeting a minimal cultural requirement. He lavished hospitality on the three

strangers and did it in a servant-hearted way as he personally “*served and waited on*” them.

The three strangers are called *xenos* in the Greek Septuagint translation: foreigners, outsiders. In English we speak of *xenophobia*: the fear of those who are different from us. It is important to note that when Paul lists the characteristics of a Christian leader in Titus 1:7-8, he mentions five things that a leader must avoid before proceeding to six things that a leader must embrace. The first of these positive requirements is that the leader must be *philoxenos*: a lover of the stranger, who graciously welcomes the outsider into the family of God in very practical ways. This is true hospitality.

Keep Going:

As Abraham saw strangers passing by his house he invited them to partake in a generous meal. Are there strangers in your neighborhood whom you could invite to join you in breaking bread? How else could you reach out to someone in your community that you do not know, and display the welcoming love of God? Why not take the time to pray with those in your household and develop a plan to show hospitality to someone who is a *xenos* to you this week?

Value 17 – Practice Hospitality: Be Ready and Eager

Biblical Foundation:

When God’s people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality. (Rom 12:13).

Discovery Starter:

Dioko is the Greek verb translated “practice” in Rom 12:13. It conveys the urgent intensity of persecutors intent on the pursuit of their prey. In Greek “hospitality,” *philoxenia*, is literally the love of foreigners. It involves the radical welcoming of those who are not like us into God’s household – and our own. It embodies the spirit of adoption in sacrificial love (Rom 8:15-16,22-23). It is a spirit of belonging, of being welcomed into community, of being invited home. It reflects the heart of our redemptive God who pursued us to include us in the fellowship of Trinitarian love when we were “still sinners;” indeed, “while we were still his enemies” (Rom 5:8,10).

The first century culture was rife with ethnic divisions. Into this broken world, the radical hospitality of the early church modeled the transformative power of the gospel.

For this reason Clement, bishop of Rome¹, extolled the “magnificent disposition of hospitality” (*1 Clement* 1:2) of his fellow followers of Jesus. In his letter Clement encouraged them to persevere in hospitality, citing the examples:

- of Abraham, who “for his faith and hospitality a son was given unto him in old age” (10:7),
- of Lot, who “for his hospitality and godliness ... was saved from Sodom” (11:1), and
- of “hospitable Rahab” (12:3), who “for her faith and hospitality ... was saved” (12:1).

The Greek noun *philoxenia* occurs only in Rom 12:13 and Heb 13:2 which urges, “Don’t forget to show hospitality to strangers.” The Greek adjective *philoxenos* occurs three times in the New Testament. Because of the frequent conflict between Jewish and Gentile believers, it was necessary that the newly appointed church leaders must be able to welcome all, no matter their ethnic background. It was not enough to love only your own ethnicity. That is why Paul teaches that church leaders “must be hospitable” (1Ti 3:2; Tit 1:8). Likewise, Peter exhorts all believers to be “hospitable to one another” (1Pe 4:9 NRSV).

Keep Going:

Want to learn more? Here are a couple of books and some articles you may want to read:

- *A Cup of Cold Water: Hospitality at Its Best*, by Debbie Rottier
- *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, by Christine D Pohl
- *Hospitality* PDF – <https://www.baylor.edu/content/services/document.php/53376.pdf>

As you ponder the value of hospitality, consider how you can practice it where you live. Jesus said, "Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples" (Joh 13:35). This love must extend across every societal divide. Are there people of different ethnic origin living near you? Are there immigrants in your city? How can you welcome them into your home, share a meal, build a friendship, introduce them to Jesus? How can you help welcome them into the family of God by sharing your life with them? How can you cross cultural barriers to display the adoptive love of God? How can you make this a regular part of your life?

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1. Clement was bishop of Rome from AD 88 to 99, during the time of the Domitian persecutions that exiled John to Patmos. This is attested to by Irenaeus (in *Against Heresies* 3.3.3) and Tertullian (in *The Prescription Against Heretics* 32.1).

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