ABSTRACT

Welcoming Without Grumbling: Worshipful Hospitality and the Christian Life

Jordan D. Millhollin

Director: Jason Whitt, Ph.D.

In the Netherlands, an influx Muslim refugees has caused incredible strain as Christians struggle to respond to their new neighbors. This a familiar feeling around the world as many people often come face-to-face with strangers who hold religious and cultural beliefs that are far different than their own. However, even in the midst of these frightening and opposing realities, followers of Christ are still called to be hospitable. This thesis highlights the origins and evolution of hospitality in the political and theological life of the Church as well as the emphasis of hospitality in Jesus' ministry. Using the Netherlands as a case study, it also examines several modern responses to hospitality and offers a case for the legitimacy of hospitality to mediate cultural and religious tension. Finally, it will conclude by upholding hospitality to the stranger as central to Christian worship.

APPROVED BY DIRECTOR OF HONORS THESIS:

____

Dr. Jason Whitt, Honors Program

APPROVED BY THE HONORS PROGRAM:

____

Dr. Elizabeth Corey, Director

DATE: __________________________

WELCOMING WITHOUT GRUMBLING:

WORSHIPFUL HOSPITALITY AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of

Baylor University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Honors Program

By

Jordan Douglas Millhollin

Waco, Texas

May 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements iii

Introduction: Guess Who's Coming to Dinner? 1

Chapter One: Development of Hospitality in Antiquity . . . 10

Chapter Two: Biblical Account of Hospitality 29

Chapter Three: Evolution of Hospitality through the Ages . . . 42

Chapter Four: Liberal Secularism and Christian Pluralism . . . 63

Chapter Five: Unadulterated Hospitality and Suggestions for the Church . 84

Bibliography 97

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to Dr. Jason Whitt for his endless donation of time and energy to guide me through this project. His wisdom and patience have been endlessly helpful and are greatly appreciated.

I would also like to thank my family and friends for their continued encouragement during this thesis and throughout the entirety of my education. Their eternal support means the world to me.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge all of the people in southwest Kansas whose incredible ability and desire to demonstrate true Christian hospitality to their neighbors inspired this project.

INTRODUCTION

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?

Southwest Kansas is a fascinating place. Seated roughly four hours from Wichita, five from Denver, and six from Kansas City, Garden City is an incredibly isolated city. Its isolation allows it to be an agricultural center sustained by the 27,000 people who reside there. The residents are mostly expected for this area of the country—farmers and ranchers—with a large exception. Garden City is home to a significant number of refugees, mostly East African, who live and work in one of the most remote cities in America.

The reason for their settlement there is the presence of the Garden City International Rescue Committee office, which resettles refugees when they are granted asylum in the US. Many of them are employed by the large Tyson meatpacking plant in nearby Holcomb, which could be considered a cultural wonder. On the floor of the Tyson plant, thousands of employees are speaking dozens of languages and dialects while they work to supply America with its beef. Somalis, Eritreans, Sudanese, and Burmese refugees efficiently work alongside Hispanic immigrants and native-Kansan employees. In fact, the plant boasts 3,300 employees hailing from between 30 to 40 countries.[1]

In Garden City, in the African Shop run by a Somali refugee family, teas, beauty products, clothes, and seasonings for goat meat line the shelves. Stepping inside, it truly

[1]Kansas Health Institute, "Rural Kansas Hospital Focuses on 'Mission-Driven' Medicine to Recruit Doctors," Kansas Health Institute, accessed April 3, 2019, https://www.khi.org/news/article/rural-kansas-hospital-focuses-mission-driven-medic.

feels like standing on another continent. Shoppers browsing for dates and tea are embraced by the smell of Somalia. The back of the store hosts a gathering place where Somalis meet to watch soccer, enjoy *sambuusas*, and share in communal life together.

The rest of Garden City is largely at peace with their refugee neighbors, though from a distance. The Somalis live in their apartment complex, attend mosque in their apartment complex, and the rest of the people pass by to get to their own neighborhoods and their own churches elsewhere in the city. For the majority of the people in town, the people of each culture are content to stay within their own pocket. African Store owner Adan Kenyan is well aware of the significant segregation in Garden City, commenting that "a white person had never visited his home – and that he had never been in a white person's home in the 10 years he had lived in Garden City."[2] While peaceful, this cultural isolation has manifested itself in feelings of floundering as refugees realize that they have nobody to turn to when they have questions whose answers require a deep knowledge of the US: "What would it take to open a restaurant? How could they learn English while working double shifts at the packing plant? Who might be willing to help them get a driver's license?"[3] Though the diverse residents of Garden City share an unlikely community, their life together rarely extends outside of their own comfortable spheres.

That is, until Benjamin Anderson, the CEO of a local hospital about thirty minutes out of Garden City, began forming a relationship with these refugees in 2016. He would frequent the African Shop to buy tea, honey, and things that he could use

---

[2]Bryan Thompson, "Southwest Kansas Dinner Exchange Aims To Bridge Cultural Gaps," accessed March 15, 2019, https://www.kcur.org/post/southwest-kansas-dinner-exchange-aims-bridge-cultural-gaps.

[3]Ibid.

around the house. As the CEO of nearby Kearny County Hospital, he was acutely aware of the attitudes of the community as well as the health and social needs of the refugees. As a devout Christian, he also recognized the call from Christ to form a relationship with his neighbors. Eventually, the Somali community began to notice his presence in their store, and they began to invite him to their homes, feeding him and becoming friends with him. Anderson was impressed with their hospitality and took it as a challenge to reciprocate. The first time that he left a Somali home, "[He] left thinking, 'Good grief, if we can have people living in our community for 10 years that have never been in the home of a local person, how isolating that must be.'"[4] After hosting several of his new friends at his own home, Anderson began to help them with their medical needs and questions about life in the US.

Shortly after Anderson began to visit the African Shop, a group of three men were arrested for an attempted bombing of a Somali apartment complex.[5] The racially-motivated attack fueled by anti-Muslim rhetoric was an attempt to return "God's country" to its glory days before the influx of immigrants. The men, who called themselves "the Crusaders," meant to kill the dozens of families who live in the apartment complex and inspire enough fear in the rest of the refugees that they would leave. Their plan might have succeeded had it not been for the efforts of an FBI informant who exposed the entire operation shortly before it was scheduled to happen. In interviews after their arrest, the three men admitted that their attempted bombings were actions stemming from an intake

[4]Ibid.

[5]Jacey Fortin, "3 Men Sentenced in Plot to Bomb Somali Immigrants in Kansas," *The New York Times*, January 27, 2019, sec. U.S., https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/26/us/kansas-militia-trial-sentencing.html.

of extremist media and a fear of the unknown. They blamed these refugees for the problems in their own lives and in their city, and they wanted them gone.[6]

Just a few months later, in the summer of 2017, I lived in Garden City as a part of an internship run by Kearny County Hospital. At this point, Anderson had been forming a connection with the Somali population in Garden City for about a year. I arrived with the other interns in Garden City, where our connection to Anderson led to an immediate invitation into the African Shop. The Somali family that met us there fed us delicious goat and *sambuusas* and told to come back soon. During this welcome feast, one of the Somali men shared something with us that I still carry with me. He told us that upon being invited into their home, we would be protected with their lives and treated like family. Our group of interns consisted of Christian students from Baylor University. Just a few months after the attempted bombing of their community, we were just told by a Muslim man that we were welcome back anytime. His hospitality toward us was impactful, especially given the threats that had just faced their community.

One of our goals for the summer was to extend the same hospitality that the Somali community had shown to us to the other ethnic pockets of Garden City. While Garden City was extraordinarily supportive of the refugee community in the aftermath of the planned bombing, it remained helpful at a distance from them. The community clearly cares about their refugee neighbors, but largely seemed to keep them at an arms-

[6]Jessica Pressler, "A Militia's Plot to Bomb Somali Refugees in a Kansas Town," Intelligencer, December 12, 2017, http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2017/12/a-militias-plot-to-bomb-somali-refugees-in-garden-city-ks.html.

length away from their homes and families.[7] Another intern and I were tasked with orchestrating a cross-cultural event whose name was inspired by the movie *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*. Our vision was to see if refugees from across southwest Kansas could meet and share a meal with their Kansan neighbors to bring more cohesiveness to the community. Throughout the summer, we traveled throughout the region to find willing participants. We were invited into the homes of many refugee families, given huge amounts of food and drinks, and made connections in their respective communities. When we got to know a group of refugees, they were often quick to agree to our proposal. If they did not know us well already, they were more hesitant to join. We also spent days making lists of potential Kansan participants, visiting churches and coffee shops, and driving throughout southwest Kansas meeting people to talk to them about our vision of a cross-cultural hospitality event. We heard "no" countless times, and "yes" only occasionally. It seemed as if the culture of fear that is so prevalent in today's United States was crippling the desire of both populations to reach out to the other. Some of the families said, "I just don't know what I'm exposing my family to. This seems too risky."[8]

Our interactions with churches were particularly interesting. We would often make appointments with church leaders to find hosts for our refugee families and also to find a source of donated transportation that we could use to pick up families without cars

[7]Michael Scott Moore, "The Battle for the Soul of America in Garden City, Kansas," Medium, February 13, 2019, https://medium.com/s/reasonable-doubt/the-somali-refugees-living-in-kansas-loved-america-so-did-the-locals-who-tried-to-kill-them-f37ade1ccc4a. "When the news broke across the United States, Garden City on the whole reacted with revulsion…About a week after the arrests, locals organized a candlelight march along Mary Street consisting of around 250 people."

[8]Thompson, "Southwest Kansas Dinner Exchange Aims To Bridge Cultural Gaps."

on the night of the dinners. Many church leaders would meet with us, hear our proposal, and then either tell us that they did not think that their congregation would be interested or that they just did not think it was for their church. Admittedly, we were a bit surprised by these attitudes, since the Church has always been, at least in theory, a body that seeks to share Christ's love to all people. This was certainly not every church or congregation, as evidenced by the church vans that we secured for transportation and the few families that agreed to host on the evening of the meals, but even one church with this attitude is a bit confusing.

Finally, on one very rainy evening in the late summer, something remarkable occurred. Despite the fear from both sides and the story of the attempted bombing fresh in their memories, twenty refugee families traveled to the homes of twenty Kansan families to share dinner together. The refugee families that did not speak English brought a translator with them and those who did not have a car or a license were picked up from their homes in borrowed church vans. Slowly, we all made our way to the dinners around the region, refugees dressed in their best clothes and the Kansan families ready to receive them with open doors and tables full of halal food.

This did not all go off without a hitch; the fear that the families were feeling was palpable that night. After meeting a Somali family at their apartment complex alongside a translator, the other intern and I began to drive the thirty-minute route to the place where they were going to share a meal with a rancher and his family. We were driving in front followed by the translator in his car and the Somali family brought up the rear. Just as we turned up the final road to the home, we began to see the Somali family slow their car down, stop, and turn around. Frantically, we called the translator to ask him why they

were suddenly leaving. Sounding sad and a bit frustrated, he told us that they were probably spooked. They, like most of us, had no idea what to expect. All they knew is that they were driving far away from their community and they were about to enter the unknown house of an unknown family with an unknown culture and unknown motivations. As the translator was chasing them down to reassure them and beg them to come back, I realized that their fear was probably rightly placed, given the events that took place in their own community just a few short months ago and the ongoing rhetoric around them. I also recognized the hesitancy that the Kansan family must have been experiencing as well, given that both families occupy the same culture of fear.

Finally, the translator was able to convince them to return to the road and continue to the home of the Kansan family. As the two families, the translator, and the interns gathered around the table, it was a bit uncomfortable at first. Nobody really knew what to say or how to act. The food, freshly made with care, was brought out and placed on the table. It was at this point that everything changed. I witnessed a white Christian rancher from Kansas serve dinner to a Somali Muslim refugee who teaches at the Garden City mosque, and I watched as their families smiled at one another over the table. The words began to flow—compliments about clothes, the food, the home—and suddenly the room no longer felt like two families who were strangers just a few moments before. It was certainly not reflective of the larger attitudes surrounding the relations of their two cultures just outside the door.

Clearly, there is something powerful about the dinner table and bringing the unknown into personal space. As hospitality began to unfold before me, tensions melted, there was laughter, and friendships began to form. In an interview after the event,

Kansan father Kody Nelson reflected that he initially felt nervous when he agreed to host the family of Ahmed Said Musa for dinner because of what he had heard in the media about people from Muslim nations. However, after getting to know the family, he said, "You know what? They're just like us. It's not us versus them, it's human beings that you really connect with. These people here are wanting to get out, and they want people to know who they are."[9] Musa also reflected that after getting to know the Nelson family over dinner, he began to view them as allies and even friends.

Forming cross-cultural friendships, which has been difficult for these Somali refugees in the past, is of vital importance for their community. As Musa says of Nelson, having an ally who knows about the culture and will vouch for you makes all the difference: "If I need something, I can contact with him [sic], and I can ask him, and he can help me, because he was born here."[10] As for Nelson, he is pleased that he can be a part of Musa's life, and has enjoyed their friendship that sprouted from their shared meal. Since their initial encounter, their two families have met again to continue building their unique relationship. In a world such as this, where media-fueled tensions run high between two cultures, it seems unlikely that the Nelson family would make friends with Musa's family. However, as Benjamin Anderson says, "The dinner table is one of the most powerful weapons in the quest toward social justice, and common understanding, and racial reconciliation. If we can sit at a dinner table and break bread together, anything is possible."[11]

---

[9]Ibid.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid.

Inspired by what I witnessed around the dinner tables in Kansas, I began to seek a deeper understanding of the power of hospitality, especially for the Church. It seemed to me that if the Church's aim is to worship God and simultaneously expand the Church, it should try and engage in hospitality since it clearly has the power to bridge large gaps. Insofar as I was unable to find the Church adequately doing so as a large movement, I began to question whether the Church is appropriately engaged with hospitality. There were a number of other questions that I began to wrestle with partly because of this experience, but the most significant revolved around defining the role of hospitality within the Church both as worshipful practice and as a means to connect to their intra-congregational and external community. Clearly, since it required a great deal of organization before we could host these cross-cultural dinners, hospitality does not come easily to our culture or to the modern churches.

In this thesis, I will outline the history of hospitality in the Christian world, the immense role it played in Christ's ministry, the theological implications behind it, and argue that insofar as it is a practice that is inexcusably absent from the modern Western Church, it must be re-emphasized as a worshipful practice. The first chapter will broadly highlight the origins of hospitality within Western cultures, followed by a chapter discussing the emphasis of hospitality in Jesus' ministry. Third, this thesis will examine the evolution of hospitality in the political and theological life of the Church. The fourth chapter will use the Netherlands as a case study to consider several modern responses to hospitality and offers a case for the legitimacy of hospitality to mediate cultural and religious tension. Finally, it will conclude by upholding hospitality to the stranger as central to Christian worship.

CHAPTER ONE

Development of Hospitality in Antiquity

Current Church practices are often derived from the historical evolution of traditions arising from early Christian communities. Likewise, early Christian communities saw their practices begin according to their unique historical context. Therefore, understanding the context surrounding the foundation of the early Church is vital to comprehending the current Church practice of hospitality. Given that the Church arose as a sect of Judaism during a period in which most of the Ancient Near East was controlled by Rome, this chapter will be dedicated to cataloguing the historical notions of hospitality in both the Greco-Roman and Jewish cultural contexts into which the early Church emerged. I will begin chronologically with the notions of hospitality in the Greek Heroic era, then move forward with hospitality practice through the classical Greek period and into the Roman world. Finally, I will discuss the Jewish notions of hospitality, then conclude by comparing the practices of hospitality throughout the Mediterranean world.

Hospitality in the Greek Heroic Era

An important contributor to studying the development of hospitality is Andrew Arterbury, whose work involves cataloguing the movement of hospitality from ancient times to the modern age. Arterbury writes that hospitality in the Greek Heroic world existed as a relationship between host and guest that primarily took on two forms: simple traveler hospitality and guest-friendship relationships.

> In ancient Greece, any traveler could expect a moral Greek host to provide him or her with at least a one-night stay – no questions asked. On the other hand, if the host deemed the stranger worthy and if the host wanted to enter into a long-term reciprocal relationship with the stranger, then the host could forge a guest-friendship with his or her guest. This guest-friendship, however, carried with it additional obligations for both parties.[1]

All Greek homes, if they were to be properly respectable, had an obligation to provide a place to sleep and refreshments to any traveler that knocked on their door. Often, these relationships did not expand past a simply functional relationship from host to guest. However, when it did evolve into a guest-friendship, there was great ongoing mutual benefit to all involved parties.

The practice did not develop by chance; rather, the entire Greek culture seems to point toward hospitality as a key virtue derived from their religious and social convictions. The Greek religion held that the Pantheon had divine superiority over all things in the world, and the gods often used their divine status to interfere with human affairs. As the head of the Pantheon, Zeus carried many epithets including Zeus Xenios (Zeus the Hospitable).[2] Because Zeus was tied to hospitality, Greeks saw the value of the practice and were expected to practice it openly. The fear of disrespecting Zeus and the desire to act piously drove Greeks to frequently receive guests. Arterbury describes this as Greek theoxenic hospitality, which is "based on the belief that the gods or their representatives often visited humans in the form of beggars or strangers."[3] In this way,

[1]Andrew Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels: Early Christian Hospitality in Its Mediterranean Setting*, New Testament Monographs 8 (Phoenix: Sheffield Press, 2005), 18.

[2]Ibid., 38; Ladislaus J. Bolchazy, *Hospitality in Antiquity* (Chicago: Ares Publishers, 1995). Arterbury quotes Bolchazy's work.

[3]Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 24.

gods were able to test the piety of the humans and bring punishment if they were not well received.

Less commonly, the short-term hosting relationship may become something more if the host acknowledged that his guest possessed such stature that a more significant relationship would be beneficial. Unlike the simple traveler hospitality, these guest-friendships carried with them responsibility and expectation. Arterbury quotes M.I. Finley, who argues that "guest-friendships functioned very much like ongoing alliances" where both members received some benefit.[4] For the guest, welcoming and entertaining the previous host became an obligation to repay the kindness that they had been shown before. Any gifts given in the relationship were expected to be met with some benefit for the giver, and these benefits were to be extended down to their children for generations. Homer, the great poet who in many ways defined Greek Heroic culture, wrote extensively of this custom in the epic poem the *Iliad*. During the Trojan War, the warriors Diomedes and Glaucus meet on the center of the battlefield. Wanting to know his enemy, Diomedes calls out to Glaucus, "And which mortal hero are you? I've never seen you out here before on the fields of glory, and now here you are ahead of everyone, ready to face my spear. Pretty bold. I feel sorry for your parents."[5] In response, Glaucus yells his lineage across the battlefield, and it sparks recognition in Diomedes' heart. Realizing that their ancestors had built a guest-friendship relationship, he responds:

> We have old ties of hospitality! My grandfather Oeneus long ago entertained [your ancestor] Bellerophon in his halls for twenty days, and they gave each other gifts of friendship…. But that makes me your friend and you my guest if you

[4]Ibid., 19.

[5]Homer, *Iliad*, trans. Stanley Lombardo (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co, 1997), ll. 6.124-127.

> ever come to Argos, as you are my friend and I your guest whenever I travel to Lycia. So we can't cross spears with each other even in the thick of battle…. And let's exchange armor, so everyone will know that we are friends from our fathers' days.[6]

The power of hospitality, particularly in the case of guest-friendships, was passed through generations so that even distant descendants drew direct benefits from it, even saving them from the threat of death. As time went on, the mutuality of the guest-friendship continued; neither side forgot their obligation to the other no matter the time or circumstance.

These long-term relationships were not lopsided; the host and guest became equals when their relationship grew to something greater than a simple short stay. For instance, when the pair moved geographic locations, the host would become the guest and the guest would become the host. Guest-friendships, while useful for both parties, never assumed superiority over the other.[7]

Marshall D. Sahlins adds a helpful differentiation between guest-friendships and simple traveler hospitality. Sahlins connects *generalized reciprocity* to societal expectations of welcoming the stranger because of moral and religious expectations of the classical world. *Generalized reciprocity* had no clear expectation about when or even if reciprocity was to take place. It was more of an informal relationship, relying primarily on purely altruistic and pious motives rather than the expectation of reciprocity. He calls guest-friendships *balanced reciprocity* because they dealt with a far more expected timeframe and equitable degree of reciprocity. In short, informalized hospitable

---

[6]Ibid., ll. 6.221-240.

[7]G. Herman, "Friendship, Ritualized," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Classics* (Oxford University Press, n.d.).

relationships often did not require an equitable return of investment within a reasonable timeframe due simply to cultural expectations, but formal guest-friendships had a *quid pro quo* understanding that allowed both parties to continue benefitting for a longer period of time.[8] In a sense, these became bonds of obligation in which both parties were tied together by their mutual reliance on one another. In order to receive a gift, it was necessary to continue giving; thus, both parties continued to dispense goodwill to the other in order to continue their mutual benefits.

The cultural expectations for providing hospitality are outlined several times by examples of receiving travelers in the great Homeric epic the *Odyssey*. As Odysseus and his crew make the arduous journey home to Ithaca from the Trojan war, they stop at several points along the way and encounter various challenges. Concerned for the whereabouts of his father, Telemachus, son of Odysseus, travels to find information about the fate of his father after the war. He is told to travel to Sparta, where king Menelaus and queen Helen have information about his father. Upon his arrival to Sparta, Telemachus and his party are greeted by a servant, who informs the king of the strangers' arrival and asks whether they should be greeted with kindness. Offended, Menelaus responds, "Just think of all the hospitality *we* enjoyed at the hands of other men before we made it home, and god save us from such hard treks in years to come. Quick, unhitch their team. And bring them in, strangers, guests, to share our flowing feast."[9] Fast to right the mistake of failing to offer hospitality to the traveler made by his servant,

[8]Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics*, Routledge Classics (Taylor and Francis, 2017), 194–95; Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 19.

[9]Homer, *The Odyssey*, trans. Robert Fagles, Penguin Classics (Penguin Books, 1996), ll. 4.38-42.

Menelaus offers Telemachus a variety of welcoming gifts. The travelers were given feed for their horses, women that bathed them and massaged them with oil, new fleece and shirts, wine, bread, lavish appetizers, meats, and kind words from their host.[10] Most significantly, Telemachus and his party were offered "the choicest part" of the meal, which "[Menelaus had] been served himself."[11] This display is shown again and again throughout the Homeric epics, particularly as cited by Arterbury in the *Odyssey* 3.490; 5.91; 7.190; 14.494; 15.188, 514, 546.[12] Since the *Odyssey* is a core text of Greek mythology, its contents are (though perhaps sometimes hyperbolic) representations of the Greek cultural norms. All the gifts and services that Menelaus provided to his guests are the same things that would have been offered to important travelers in the classical world outside of mythology. Concluding that *all* travelers in classical Greece were presented with the same measure of welcome is a misstep; class and status still played a role in welcome, and the more important travelers were more likely to be given a greater portion of a host's hospitality. However, the welcoming of strangers drawn from the Homeric tradition still represents the broad cultural understanding of how to act as a good host.

The bounty from which their host gives is clearly massive, but while Menelaus does give partly to show off his immense fortune, it is more important to note the primary underlying motivation behind his generosity.[13] Menelaus's response to the servant who asks if hospitality should be shown to the strangers is to call back upon the hospitality

---

[10]Ibid., ll. 4.43-72.

[11]Ibid., ll. 4.73-75.

[12]Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 18.

[13]Homer, *The Odyssey*, ll. 4.87-90.

that he himself received in ages past. Wanting to pass forward the practice, he commands his household staff to show the same kindness to Telemachus. There was a deeply rooted history of hospitality in classical Greece that was not only respected as a tradition but also followed as an ideal practice. In Greek lore, hospitality is what set the Greeks apart from the barbarians; therefore, its continued exaltation as a key virtue was essential to maintaining a truly Greek identity.[14]

No matter the identity of the host or how much they shared with their guest, it was impolite for the host to ask the name or intentions of their guest until after the feast. If the host is kind and truly hospitable, travelers are asked their identity only after they have already feasted on the bounty of their hosts. Notably, in the early scenes of *The Odyssey*, Telemachus receives the goddess Athena as a stranger and offers her food, refreshments, and kindness before posing any questions as to her identity.[15] In contrast, upon the arrival of Odysseus and his crew to the island, the Cyclops immediately asks them who they are without offering them anything first.[16] The Cyclops is considered a far worse host than Telemachus, even if he had not attempted to eat his guests. Tending to the needs of the guest was far more honorable than engaging in gossip. It was, however, customary for the guests to provide some form of story of explanation of their travels after sharing a meal and indulging in the basic offerings of the host. Through the practice of serving the guest before discovering his identity, hosts could demonstrate their impartiality to him, not wanting to give better gifts or welcome to those with a high-status name. When

---

[14]Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 23.

[15]Homer, *The Odyssey*, ll. 3.39-71.

[16]Ibid., ll. 9.252-255.

Odysseus is housed by the royalty of Phaeacia, his kind hosts exhibit incredible hospitality, and he tells them his story after a large feast:

> And once they'd poured libations out a drink to their hearts' content, each one made his way to rest in his own house. But King Odysseus still remained at hall, seated beside the royal Alcinous and Arete as servants cleared the cups and plates away. The white-armed Queen Arete took the lead…her words flew brusquely, sharply: 'Stranger, I'll be the first to question you—myself. Who are you? Where are you from?' … [Odysseus] replied, 'The gods on high have given me my share. Still, this much I will tell you…'[17]

While the expectation of reciprocity may not be required for a simple traveler's visit, the host still receives something for their generosity. The host is permitted to hear about the life of the guest that they have at their table, and the guest is expected to be fully honest with them. Presumably, the guest sharing his story was one of the primary ways that news spread through the ancient world. As such, getting to participate in this process of storytelling and listening was central to the unification of ancient households with the rest of the world.

Practically, the practice of hospitality in a time before rapid transportation, hotels, and fast food restaurants allowed strangers the resources that they needed to be able to travel around the country without harm. The heroic age of Greece is known for being rather violent and dangerous, and travelers would have required protection along their journey. Ensuring protection of the guest was of utmost importance in order to show honor to the gods (most chiefly Zeus Xenia) and to the guest. Of all of the places that Odysseus is hosted on his epic journey home, those that are seen as the most civil are those that provided him with safety and hospitality. The hosts that had no regard for his

[17]Ibid., ll. 7.264-269, 272–280.

safety are viewed as barbarians and perversions of Greek identity.[18] Circe and the Cyclops are both remembered as some of the worst hosts in *The Odyssey*, partially because their interactions with the lost crew led to the death (or transformation into beasts) of the crew.

Hospitality during the Classical Greek Era

The time of Homeric hospitality was marked by the power of individual households and families who formed reciprocal guest-friendships that acted as loose allegiances. With the rise of the city-state, political ties grew from within the household unit to broader allegiances within the *polis*, as well as relationships between city-states. These larger political entities called for the political and military loyalty of their citizens and required that citizens take part in public works.[19] Therefore, the majority of political thought in post-Homeric Hellenistic culture was tightly associated with the emergence and proliferation of the city-state. As such, hospitality became a move through which one could further the fortune and status of the *polis*; thus, hospitality was brought from the private to the public sphere.

The public politization of hospitality meant that travelers had a specific set of individuals that they could ask for help: those who were politically aligned with their own city-state. After the Homeric era, politicized hospitality became universally recognized.

---

[18]Steve Reece, *The Stranger's Welcome*, Monographs in Classical Antiquity (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 5; Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 37.

[19]Marcus Tullius Cicero, *On Duties*, ed. E. M. Atkins, trans. Miriam T. Griffin (Cambrige University Press, 1991); Moyer V. Hubbard, *Christianity in the Greco-Roman World* (Hendrickson Publishers, 2010), 144.

Most city-states had an appointed consul (*proxenos*) by the 6th century BCE. The consul was an accredited representative of a city-state living in another *polis*:[20]

> [T]he primary duties of the πρόξνος [*proxenos*] involved assisting the traveling citizens of the foreign *polis* and service as a local advocate for the interests of that foreign *polis*. For instance, the πρόξνος was expected to assist the travelers who arrived in his residential *polis* by granting hospitality to them, securing entrance to the Assembly or the theatre, aiding them if they were involved in a lawsuit, providing loans to the guest if they were needed, and finalizing the estate of a guest who happened to die while in a foreign city.[21]

The consul acted as an ancient embassy for travelers to another *polis*, both there to attend to the needs of visiting travelers and to represent the foreign state in political affairs. The promise of hospitality to foreign strangers tied the two states together economically and politically, so it was favorable for both city-states to have an appointed consul serve in the other state. To mark their political ties, the *polis* that appointed the consul would place an inscription in both states that "was able to announce to everyone who passed by whom their [consul] was in that region."[22] These inscriptions document the spread of a political hospitality movement that called for the welcoming of the stranger, but only if that stranger could further the well-being of the *polis*.[23]

---

[20]Lionel Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, Johns Hopkins Paperbacks ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 93.

[21]Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 23.

[22]St. George Stock, "Hospitality (Greek and Roman)," in *ERE*, vol. VI, n.d., 811; Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, 94; Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 23. Stock and Casson are cited by Arterbury.

[23]Herman, "Friendship, Ritualized," 130; Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 23. Herman is cited by Arterbury.

Hospitality in the Roman Empire

The *polis* system was replaced by the rise of the Roman Empire, and the politics and culture of each city-state were replaced by those of the Roman Imperial cult. The Roman influence stretched across most of Europe, Africa, and the Near East, unifying all of these cultures under the rule of Rome. As such, notions of hospitality in much of the western world were shaped by Roman ideology for centuries of its rule.

Social status and playing the part of a good citizen was of utmost importance in Roman culture, so much effort was placed into following societal norms and expectations. Roman social structure was stratified into firm levels: senatorial order, equestrian order, craftsmen and artisans, and peasants.[24] Upper class elite members of this social order were expected to maintain an open and generous household to demonstrate their abundant wealth. Entertaining guests was a must, and wealthy homes were often completed with large *atria* that functioned in part as reception areas.[25] In studying the well-preserved architecture of Pompeii and Ephesos, Michele George notes that the large homes containing *atria* would manage their guest's view of the home, only allowing them to see the beautifully decorated *atria*, but keeping them from entering further into the home with sheets. In this way, their public image of being welcoming and generous was maintained while they stonewalled their guests to their private life.

Patron-client relationships, while distinct from guest-friendships, dominated Roman society and contributed to the practice of giving gifts and welcoming guests.[26]

---

[24]Hubbard, *Christianity in the Greco-Roman World*, 146–48.

[25]Michele George, "Domestic Architecture and Household Relations: Pompeii and Roman Ephesos," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 27, no. 1 (September 1, 2004): 7–25.

[26]Hubbard, *Christianity in the Greco-Roman World*, 146–48.

The poor were abundant, and often the only method to earn enough to feed a family was to tend to the desires of the wealthy upper-class. In the morning, the lower-status clients were expected to be at the doorstep of the upper-status patron ready to elevate the patron's status even higher. Clients would often follow their patrons around the city square and cry out his greatness, as well as rally support for him in the political sphere. In return for their public honor and support, the patron would reward their client with meals, clothes, money, and other gifts that may be conflated with hospitality. The more clients a patron had, the more generous and magnanimous they were perceived to be by the public eye. For an upper-class person in Rome to appear popular and influential, it was vital for him to have a steady and consistent stream of clients. Clients were often very proud of their patron and boasted about their benefactor in public graffiti. Since their patron's name was tied to elevated status, clients would boast the name of their patron in hopes that it might elevate their own status.[27] The benefits of this system ran both ways: the client received the basic goods that he needed to survive, and the patron was given glory and honor in politics and in public status.[28]

Arterbury admits that there is a "tendency to confuse" patron-client relationships with guest-friendships because they both provide a kind of mutual benefit for both parties, though one relationship is more balanced than the other.[29] However, patron-client relationships existed more as a political spectacle than a private partnership between two

---

[27]Mary Beard, *The Fires of Vesuvius: Pompeii Lost and Found* (Harvard University Press, 2010).

[28]Hubbard, *Christianity in the Greco-Roman World*, 146–48.

[29]Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 39.

equal parties. They can both be categorized under "ritualized personal relationships,"[30] but they remain distinct in that the patron was always superior to the client. In reciprocal guest-friendships, the roles were reversed when the location changed.[31] The result of politicizing the private life may have led the majority of wealthy Roman homes to participate in patron-client relationships over the more balanced guest-friendships.[32]

Both architecture and the ritualized political-economic relationships are telling of what it meant to regard the stranger during the height of the Roman Empire. The virtue of being generous and open to receiving guests was still prevalent among the cultural norms of society, but it was largely lost to spectacle and competitions of hospitality-for-show. The benefit for strangers and travelers was still there, though diluted with the pitfalls of wealth and status. Because hospitality in the later Roman Empire was born of a desire to appear great and not from a true bend towards generosity, the wealthy often showed preferential treatment to those who they knew would elevate their status:

> [A]t dinner parties… guests were seated according to social standing and allowed to comment on the after-dinner recitation of poetry according to rank, more prominent guests first… The social pyramid was also reinforced by serving higher-quality food and drink to more distinguished guests.[33]

Lopsided and political, hospitality became a method of gaining and keeping social status rather than a virtuous practice that honored both host and guest, as in classical times.

However, this perversion had been occurring for some time. The politization of hospitality existed even in the Greek Heroic era, though it was not as potent. The

[30]Herman, "Friendship, Ritualized," 612.

[31]Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 39.

[32]Herman, "Friendship, Ritualized," 613.

[33]Hubbard, *Christianity in the Greco-Roman World*, 145–46.

acceptance of a traveler into your home did not bear much obligation, though the transition of that relationship to a long-term guest-friendship required an ongoing political relationship between both parties. When the Homeric era gave way to the city-state, hospitality fell to the control of the publicized politics of the *polis.* It should be no surprise that the Roman era saw hospitality continue down its track as a political instrument, though it is interesting to note that the entity that benefitted most from politicized hospitality shifted with the growth of the Roman Empire. The needs and desires of the individual home dictated patron-client relationships, so during the height of Rome, the political power of hospitality once again rested on the individual household. In some ways, hospitality was always used as a tool for political advancement throughout Greco-Roman culture, though when made public, it had far larger political ramifications.

Hospitality in Israel and the early Jewish world

At the other end of the Mediterranean, the nation if Israel was established under far different principles as other nations in the Ancient Near East. As a people that only recognized the authority of one true God, the laws that governed Israelite society were largely religious in nature. As such, their notions of hospitality were largely religious as well, but drew from a different tradition than their Greek and Roman neighbors.

Standards of Jewish hospitality shared some elements with the Greco-Roman notions of hospitality but is distinguishable from it in several ways. First, the length of the stay varied greatly between guests of the Jews and of the pagans. Jewish hospitality was often extended to guests for a simple meal or just one night, while Greco-Roman

guests often stayed at length.[34] Secondly, Greco-Roman hosts placed a larger emphasis on honoring their guests through valuable gifts and clothes from their own back, while Jewish hosts were more focused on honoring their guests through providing a meal and conversation. For example, it was common for a Jewish host to provide a basin of water for his guest to wash his feet, while a Greco-Roman host would instead order his servant to bathe the guest. Third, though it may have been politically influenced, the household was the most important provider of hospitality in Greece and Rome; however, Jews associated hospitality with the synagogue, indicating the extreme religious importance of the practice.[35]

In a sharp contradiction to the Roman pantheon of gods, Jews only acknowledge Yahweh as the one true God, believing that he is the divine creator and ruler of all things. As such, any decree or law given from Yahweh to the people of ancient Israel stands forever as a pillar of Jewish faith. The Hebrew scripture, called the Tanakh, contains stories and lessons to the nation of Israel from Yahweh and his prophets. The early sections consist mostly of stories of the origin of creation, the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel, and the founding of the kingdoms of Israel and Judea. The stories found in these sacred texts were both common household tales and served as religious foundation for Jews at the time of Christ. The earliest followers of Christ, who were themselves Jews, would have been familiar with the contents of these stories and aware of their

---

[34]Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 58; Julius H. Greenstone, "Hospitality," in *The Jewish Encyclopedia: A Descriptive Record of the History, Religion, Literature, and Customs of the Jewish People from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, vol. VI (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1904), 480. Greenstone is cited by Arterbury.

[35]John Koenig, *New Testament Hospitality: Partnerships with Strangers as Promise and Mission*, vol. 17, Overtures to Biblical Theology (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 16; Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 58.

weight in the Jewish tradition, making the Tanakh influential in Christian theology (during canonization of Christian scripture, the books of the Tanakh would become the Christian Old Testament). These holy books are teeming with tales of hospitality and welcome by Israelites and foreigners alike that lay the groundwork for the practice of Jewish hospitality.[36]

One of the most well-known stories of the Jewish patriarch Abraham is when he welcomes three strangers with great hospitality in Genesis 18:1-16. When these men appear, Abraham quickly leaves his tent and runs to greet them, offering them water to wash their feet and bread to eat. The three men choose to stay, and Abraham turns his modest offer into an incredible spread of generosity, giving them bread cakes made with fine flour, a tender calf from his heard, and curds and milk from his own store. With all of these provisions, he instructs his servants and Sarah to act quickly, anxious to provide for these men. After the men have partaken in the feast, they identify themselves as angels of Yahweh, revealing to Abraham that Sarah will give birth to a son.[37]

Notice here the parallel elements of Abraham's hospitality to the Greco-Roman standards of providing for strangers. Recognizing them as travelers, he rushes out to greet them, hoping to bring them generosity and in return, gain their favor. Lee Roy Martin recognizes this as a commonality in the ancient world:

> The function of hospitality [for nomadic peoples] is to transform an unknown person (who may pose a threat) into a guest, thus removing the threat…. [I]n the ancient world, travel could be dangerous and a lone traveler (or a small group of travelers) would be exposed to attack from robbers and other hostile tribes.[38]

---

[36]Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 71–85.

[37]Lee Roy Martin, "Old Testament Foundations for Christian Hospitality," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 35, no. 1 (January 1, 2014): 2.

[38]Ibid.

Like hospitality shown towards unknown people in the Greek Heroic era, protection for both parties motivates the host and the guest towards a hospitable encounter. The generosity Abraham shows to his guests has large overlaps with basic Greco-Roman traveler hospitality as well. He offers them the opportunity to clean up, eat, drink, and rest before they move on with their journey. However, Arterbury disagrees that accepting all strangers with equal welcome was quite so commonplace in the ancient world. He says that while Abraham shows equal treatment to strangers in theory, in practice, "Jewish hospitality was often limited to traveling Jews," and acts of welcome were not normally extended outside of their ethnic group.[39]

Another prime example of Jewish hospitality is found in Genesis 43, when Joseph shows his brothers hospitality in a foreign land. After his brothers sell him into slavery as a young boy, Joseph finds prosperity in Egypt, eventually becoming the pharaoh's right-hand man. Later on, his brothers visit Egypt during a famine in their father's land to ask for food, and Joseph recognizes them. Rather than seek revenge on them for acting so barbarously in the past, Joseph welcomes them with great hospitality, giving them water for their donkeys, a great feast, and food to take home. Time and again this theme is repeated throughout Jewish scripture: rather than taking revenge, welcoming the stranger (or the enemy) with hospitality pleases Yahweh.

The emphasis on hospitality carries on through the many stories of the patriarchs and is present once the nation is established under the Covenant. The Law of the Covenant established the formal relationship between the tribes of Israel and Yahweh and

---

[39]Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 58.

are the most important laws in ancient Jewish tradition. The Law states, "Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt" (Exodus 22:21). Demonstrating his own actions of grace by reminding them of their removal from the oppression of Egypt, Yahweh again says, "Do not oppress a foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt" (Exodus 23:9). At the heart of Jewish hospitality is their familiarity with being a stranger in a foreign land. Along with the direct instruction from Yahweh, this experiential memory informed their societal practice of hospitality, making it central to Jewish identity. As the nation developed and unified under overarching laws, this creed was explicitly repeated again and again: foreigners are to be treated with kindness (Leviticus 19:33-34; Deuteronomy 16:14; 26:12).[40] A well-known and often repeated tenant of Jewish law reflects these commitments:

> When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and for the foreigner residing among you. I am the LORD your God. (Leviticus 23:22)

The fusion of the law to the power of the name of Yahweh creates a palpable sense of responsibility for the nation of Israel to follow the command and makes clear the priorities of Yahweh.

In fact, Yahweh is credited as the perfect host in much of Jewish mythology. King David's writing in Psalm 23 sees Yahweh opening his doors to David, welcoming him into his own home:

> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

[40]Dennis T. Olson, "The Book of Judges: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflection," *NIB* II (n.d.): 721–888.

The peaceful scene of refuge is indicative of how Jews envisioned Yahweh: a peaceful, benevolent God who provides true protection for those whom he loves. Commentator James Crenshaw writes that Yahweh is a host who both provides for and protects his guest from all harm.[41] Thus, a pious and proper Jew should do the same for his guests, providing both protection and welcome in order to reflect the will and desires of Yahweh.

Conclusion

Christianity developed at a unique intersection point in history, growing as a branch of Judaism into a mostly pagan Gentile world. As a religion not tied to a certain people or nation, it was susceptible to the influence of the cultures into which it spread. With their faith in Christ, the mainly-Jewish Church fathers also brought thousands of years of Jewish covenantal tradition that was extremely influential in the foundational theology of the Church. The theology of Christianity also holds the traditionally-Jewish god Yahweh as the one true God, meaning that the covenantal and lawful traditions of the nation of Israel are relevant to the development of Christianity. However, classical Greek and Roman Imperial traditions were equally important to foundational Christian thinking, especially since most of the early members of the Church were Gentile believers. Using the historical context of these cultures as a background for understanding the thinking of early Church members, the next chapter will demonstrate the evolution of hospitality practice from the biblical era through the modern age.

[41] James L. Crenshaw, *The Psalms: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 62; Arterbury, *Entertaining Angels*, 86. Crenshaw is cited by Arterbury.

CHAPTER TWO

Biblical Account of Hospitality

As the four Gospels of Jesus' life were written, each Gospel author chose to emphasize certain aspects of Jesus' ministry to paint a unique portrait of Christ for their audience. When writing his Gospel, the author of Luke chose to heavily emphasize hospitality as an integral part of Jesus' identity and ministry.[1] Luke centrally displays Jesus as the presence of God visiting the world. Throughout the book, the author juxtaposes how the Messiah is received and how he receives others. Brendan Byrne, a commentator on biblical history and interpretation, describes it this way:

> The crucial point is that those who do receive him find that he brings them into a much wider sphere of hospitality: the "hospitality of God." The One who comes as visitor and guest in fact becomes host and offers a hospitality in which human beings and, potentially, the entire world, can become truly human, be at home, can know salvation in the depths of their hearts.[2]

The Gospel makes hospitality central to the ministry of Jesus. The author includes stories of hospitality throughout his narrative of Jesus' ministry and uses rhetorical devices that bend the audience towards receiving one another in order to experience the divine. In this chapter, I will unpack the narratives that include hospitality in the Gospel of Luke and conclude that the author's emphasis on hospitality is indicative of the nature of participating in the community of the divine.

---

[1]Andrew Arterbury, "Entertaining Angels: Hospitality in Luke and Acts," in *Christian Reflection on Hospitality* (The Center for Christian Ethics, Baylor University, 2007), 20. "[I]n the books of Luke and Acts we see an appeal for Jesus' disciples to practice hospitality in their lives and ministries."

[2]Brendan Byrne, *The Hospitality of God: A Reading of Luke's Gospel* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2017), 8–9.

The author of Luke pairs together individual partial experiences of the divine that, when brought together, forms a community experience revealing a more complete meaning.[3] A key example of such pairing is Elizabeth's pregnancy with John the Baptist paired with Mary's pregnancy with Jesus (Luke 1:39-56). Both mothers have heard of their pregnancy by independent visits of the angel Gabriel. Mary, upon hearing that her cousin has also become pregnant with a son, quickly travels to Elizabeth's home to meet with her. As she is welcomed into Elizabeth's home, their paired experiences of being welcomed and greeted by the angel testify to the greatness of the coming Christ. According to the annunciations of Gabriel to each woman, both have become pregnant, a testament to God entering the world. John jumps within Elizabeth's womb, recognizing the presence of Jesus and sparking the Spirit to come over his mother, who cries out in wonder that she is hosting the mother of God.[4] In her welcome of Jesus and Mary, Elizabeth brings their two stories together as a testimony of the greater story of the Messiah. These two pregnancies, no longer independent events, bring the story of the entrance of God into the world to light. John will announce the coming of the Messiah, who will be brought by the faith of Mary. By sharing their stories together, they have seen a greater picture of glory.

The author's choice to share these stories together seem to be indicative of what he desires for his audience. The individual experiences of believers bringing welcome to God are made far greater when brought together in community. Just as Elizabeth and

---

[3]Ibid., 25. "A favorite device of Luke, particularly prominent in Acts, is to bring together two individuals, both of whom have had a religious experience that they only partly understand. When they share their experience, individual experience becomes community experience and in the process finds full meaning."

[4]Ibid., 26–27.

Mary could not fully understand the coming glory on their own, the Church finds the ongoing message of salvation by continued communal participation. To remain in community is an action of hospitality as it requires welcoming another perspective. By showing that the independent experiences of Mary and Elizabeth are made stronger together, the author of Luke suggests that the divine is best experienced through hospitality.

Juxtaposing the prior experience of welcome at the household of Elizabeth, Luke expresses that the first experience of the newborn Christ was lack of human welcome extended on the night of his birth (2:7). Jesus' parents, who were travelers, were not extended the ability to partake in hospitality because there was simply no room for them in the inn at Bethlehem. This begins a theme of the ongoing denial of human hospitality that will be repeated throughout the life of Christ. That same night, an angel of God announces the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem to a group of shepherds and invites them into the presence of Jesus (2:8-15). On the same night that the world first rejects their Messiah, God begins to extend his hospitality to humanity. Where the Messiah is given no place in the world, the world is given a place in God. The pattern of the earthly rejection of Christ and God's welcome of the world will be repeated throughout the Gospel.[5]

After receiving the invitation, the shepherds respond in kind, traveling to Bethlehem and turning the invitation again outward to the surrounding community,

---

[5]Ibid., 32. "This 'visitor from on high (1:78) finds no 'room,' no hospitality, in the city which, as Son of David, he can rightly call his own. His birth takes place on the margins, beginning a pattern to be realized over and over in his life and ministry. The visitor from God, who could not find hospitality in his own city, will nonetheless institute in the world the hospitality of God. The poor, marginalized shepherds of Bethlehem will be the first to experience it."

causing all who heard the news to be "amazed at what the shepherds told them" (2:18). By receiving the invitation to enter the warmth of God's glory, the shepherds continue to pour outward, expanding the reach of the good news of Christ's birth.

Already, Luke has set up an incredibly noticeable difference between the hospitality of man and that of God. Where God welcomes, man is usually seen to deny. While God the Father invites the world to the birth of the Son, Jesus is denied hospitality to enter the comfort and safety of the inn (2:7). Before Jesus is even born, the author conveys an understanding that Jesus is not fully welcome on earth. Thus, it can be expected that Jesus will undergo much rejection from those surrounding him. In fact, the first taste of Jesus' adult interaction with others is the story of the rejection of Jesus at Nazareth (4:16-30). When Jesus visits his hometown to begin his ministry, the people exile Jesus from their presence because quotes the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1-2 telling them, "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me" (4:18), but also says "no prophet is acceptable in his hometown" (4:24). In essence, the Nazarenes are telling Jesus that they should get the first blessing because they are in the same village that he was raised in.[6] Quoting from Scripture, Jesus tells the crowd that there were "many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah…yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon" (4:25-26). As he preaches this message to the crowd, they completely reject him and drive him out of his hometown. To utterly deny Jesus the right to the protection and benefits of living in a village is a significant insult, especially because culturally, hospitality would have even been extended to a stranger. As discussed by Arterbury,

---

[6]Ibid., 49.

ancient Mediterranean culture dictated that traveling strangers should be welcomed in and offered protection.[7] Kicking Jesus out of the village is a cultural statement of utter rejection; to deny even the most basic rights of hospitality and protection from the place that should have been the most open is to completely dehumanize the rejected, placing him lower than a complete stranger.

Jesus' ministry continues with the healings of a man with an unclean spirit, in a home, of a leper, and of a paralytic (4:31-37, 38-41, 5:12-15, 17-26). Even in the face of rejection from Nazareth, Jesus continues to extend grace and welcome to the traditionally unclean. By continuing to extend hospitality to those whom society rejected, Jesus is fulfilling Isaiah's messianic prophecy that tells of the "year of the Lord's favor" brought by the savior to the world (Isaiah 61:1-2). Byrne writes,

> The "acceptable year of the Lord" is the season of God's "hospitality" to the human race, which it is Jesus' mission to proclaim and enact. It is a time when people are simply accepted, not judged. True, it is a summons to conversion—an urgent and insistent summons to a deep and transforming conversion. But before conversion there is acceptance, welcome, a hand held out to the afflicted, the trapped and the bound.[8]

As the fulfillment of the ancient prophecies, the goal of the ministry of Christ is to give access to God's grace and welcome to all of humanity. Of course, the end of his work will be the salvation of the world, but first he offers welcome so that all may enter into the embrace of God. In calling himself a "physician who heals the sick" (5:31), Jesus acknowledges that his mission is to associate with those who are outside the margins of

[7]Arterbury, "Entertaining Angels: Hospitality in Luke and Acts," 20–21. "[O]ne of the core features of ancient hospitality included the host's implicit vow to provide the stranger with protection."

[8]Byrne, *The Hospitality of God*, 48–49.

society so that they may be healed and repent. Just as a physician does not deny care to the sick, Jesus does not exclude those on the outskirts.[9] Still, the ministry of Jesus goes even beyond simple association with the rejected. Martin William Middlestadt comments that Jesus even becomes an outcast for the sake of ministry:

> Unlike some other movements of his day, which sought to restrict table fellowship, Jesus gets labeled 'a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners' (Luke 7:24) …. Jesus not only embraces the label but displays his openness and vulnerability at table fellowship as a platform for transformational ministry.[10]

In fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah, Jesus makes it known that all people are welcome in the kingdom of God by accepting even those people rejected from society; therefore, one of the key messages of Luke is that through hospitality lies salvation.

Jesus used the first half of his ministry to demonstrate to his disciples how to show hospitality to those rejected by society, giving them a capacity for welcoming others far greater than the norms of traditional Jewish traveler hospitality. In Luke 9:1-6, Jesus suddenly gives his disciples the power and authority to exorcise demons and cure diseases and sends them out to spread his teachings. He instructs them travel around the country with only one tunic so that they were at the complete mercy of the villages into which they traveled. This was an act of trust in Jesus that placed the disciples in the same vulnerable position as the "visitor from on high" (1:78). The followers of Christ were

---

[9]James L. Resseguie, *Spiritual Landscape: Images of the Spiritual Life in the Gospel of Luke* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004), 70. Resseguie writes, "For the religious leaders, 'sinners' are those who do not follow rules of purity, or persons who 'are outside the boundaries, beyond the margins.' For Jesus, 'sinners' are defined more simply as 'those who are sick' and in need of 'repentance.' By denying table fellowship with 'tax collectors and sinners,' Jesus would exclude the very people who need healing and forgiveness."

[10]Martin William Mittelstadt, "Eat, Drink, and Be Merry: A Theology of Hospitality in Luke-Acts," *Word & World* 34, no. 2 (2014): 131–39.

"exposed to the risk of human inhospitality in order to draw human beings into the hospitality of God."[11] In the same way that ancient hospitality was a method by which both host and guest received benefit, the disciples were sent intentionally without anything so that they had to receive hospitality from the people that they visited. They also repaid their guests by healing their diseases and blessing them in the name of Jesus. If they were denied hospitality, Jesus tells the disciples to "shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony" against the villages that deny them entry (9:6). This is how important the issue of hospitality is to the ministry of Jesus; the disciples, the carriers of the ministry, rebuke those who deny them welcome. Such a display was normally performed "by Jews upon leaving pagan territory to shake off 'uncleanness' from their feet… the act warns rejecters of impending judgment if their decision does not change. It expresses their separation from God."[12] The symbolism of the disciples shaking unclean dirt into Jewish territory makes clear the weight of ignoring the kingdom message. It also makes an interesting statement about who is now clean and unclean. In the kingdom of God, the unclean are those who reject the message regardless of their nationality or status. The ministry of Jesus is to offer hospitality to the Gentiles and the ritually unclean along with anyone who hears his message. As the disciples heal and make clean those who show them hospitality, those who deny it to them make themselves unclean.

The feeding of the five thousand serves as one of the most prominent examples of Jesus spreading God's hospitality to His people. Though Jesus withdraws apart from the

---

[11]Byrne, *The Hospitality of God*, 78.

[12]Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament 3 (Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 1994), 817.

crowd in Bethsaida (9:10), a crowd follows him, and "they were not turned away but welcomed."[13] The disciples urge Jesus to send the tired and hungry people home, but Jesus refuses to pass up an opportunity to demonstrate hospitality. First, he instructs the disciples to seat the people in groups, then prays and blesses the loaves and the fishes, and breaks them miraculously to feed the crowd. Jesus himself never directly encounters the crowd, but instead gives the Twelve the opportunity to provide hospitality to the crowd. The apostles will carry on the mission of hospitality once Jesus' earthly ministry has come to an end, so this scene is indicative of the Eucharist. The body of Christ will be celebrated and distributed by the Church in the absence of Jesus. As Byrne notes, "There is indeed a very rich 'apprenticeship' going on in this scene. The Twelve now have authority over demons (9:1). But, with respect to the community of faith, their primary task is to minister the hospitality of God."[14] Followers of Christ are stewards of his body and of his hospitality. The Church may have the ability to rebuke those who reject the kingdom message, but it also has an obligation to continue hospitality.

Luke's primary illustration of the kingdom of God envisions salvation like the hospitality of a great banquet. In a parable, Jesus tells the story of a man who hosted a great banquet and invited his friends, who were prosperous and wealthy. When the man sends his servant to get them for the feast, the invited begin to make excuses about why they cannot leave their lives to come to the feast. When the master hears this, he sends the servant back out to the city to invite the unclean, the beggars, the blind, the crippled, and the poor. When there was yet still room, the master once again sends his servant out

[13]Ibid., 829.

[14]Byrne, *The Hospitality of God*, 80.

to the highways, calling people in from all around to come join him at his table. The last line of the parable is the most powerful: "For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet" (14:24). Jesus' parable of the banquet is the clearest picture of God's kingdom functioning as a basic unit of hospitality. God is the host of the banquet and greatly desires the kingdom to be filled. However, much like those villages that denied the Twelve, the first invited guests, who reject the kingdom hospitality, are harshly rebuked. Jesus acts as the servant does in the story, inviting all the people who the world has shunned to join the Father at the table, and they can attend simply because they accepted his gesture of hospitality in good faith. This parable beautifully displays the intention of the kingdom, which is "not power and domination, like the kingdoms of the world – but gifting and honoring human beings with the super-abundant hospitality of God."[15] Like the feeding of the five thousand, there is enough to offer hospitality to all who will accept it. The parable sends a clear message: God's invitation to enter the kingdom is easily accessible through faith, which is the acceptance of the invitation to God's hospitality.

God's ongoing hospitality is ritualized by the Passover meal, which is given to the Twelve on the last night before Jesus' crucifixion. While sharing a meal and table fellowship with his disciples, Jesus pauses their meal to bless a loaf of bread and a cup of wine. He tells the disciples, "I will not eat it [again] until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God… [and] I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom comes" (22:16, 18). He then commands the disciples to continue to eat the bread and drink the wine in

---

[15]Ibid., 113.

remembrance of him (v. 19). In post-Easter days, this will become a centerpiece of Christian worship and hospitality:

> [Sharing the Eucharist] will be the mode in which he will be present in the community during [the] space of time before the final establishment of the kingdom. The eucharistic rite will enable the Church to carry on in his name the celebration of the hospitality of God that has been the center of his mission. It will do so in anticipation and pledge of the everlasting hospitality of the kingdom.[16]

Like the feeding of the five thousand and the parable of the great banquet, there is a promise of the everlasting hospitality of God in the Eucharist. In a physical sense, the future Church is being given a direct vessel through which to provide hospitality for the world. In a spiritual sense, Jesus is providing his body and blood so that there will always be enough to provide for the kingdom of God.

That same night, there is a contrast between the hospitality that Jesus offers to the world and that which is denied to Jesus. After sharing Passover with the Twelve, Jesus is betrayed by his disciple Judas and arrested on the Mount of Olives. In his betrayal, Judas has rejected the offer of hospitality that Jesus has just shown to the Twelve, leaving the table at which Christ offers salvation, and has instead placed a monetary value of Jesus' life. Jesus is then denied by Peter, taking away the last connection that Jesus had to a community. Now that he is physically and emotionally alone, Jesus is then mocked and taken before the council, where he is endlessly questioned.[17] When Pilate enters the scene, he attempts to show some grace to Jesus by declaring him guiltless, but his desires are overtaken by the crowds who shout, "crucify, crucify him!" (23:21). The raucous

---

[16]Ibid., 152.

[17]Ibid., 156. There is an emphasis on the emotional and physical isolation of Jesus in Luke 22 that demonstrates the abuse and suffering of the last hours before Messiah's crucifixion.

crowds even ask for Barabbas to be released to them over Jesus, and thus accept the known criminal even over Jesus. Barabbas the murderer is being welcomed into the community with enthusiasm while Jesus, who has offered endless hospitality, is completely rejected. Byrne calls this the "terrible irony" of his trial:

> Rejection, on a trumped-up charge of sedition, the messianic King who would truly bring it peace (19:41-44), Jerusalem, in the person of its leaders, opts instead for one who represents violence, murder and sedition. The choice is symbolic—a premonition of the fate lying in wait for the city that has not known or wished to know the true moment of its "visitation (19:44).[18]

Just as those villages that rejected the kingdom message caused the Twelve to symbolically shake the dirt off of their boots, so Jerusalem has also borne the curse caused by its rejection of Christ's hospitable offer of peace.

Now that Jesus has been completely denied all semblance of hospitality, he is taken to the cross, where he will be denied his life. The cross is simultaneously the ultimate denial of hospitality to Christ and the ultimate outpouring of God's hospitality to the world. Everything is denied to Jesus as he is stripped of his community and dignity and put to death on the cross. As he offers himself on the cross as an invitation into the presence of God, he is completely vulnerable. Yet even in this, Jesus reaches out to the criminal on the cross next to his own. The final act of Jesus was the same as his first: he reached out to the unclean person and welcomed him into the kingdom of God (23:39-43).[19] Through his acceptance of the criminal while being denied in every sense, Jesus utterly shatters the idea that hospitality is anything less than all-consuming love. In this

---

[18]Ibid., 158.

[19]Ibid., 160. Also noteworthy is the welcome of Jesus exists not just "to be saved from physical death but to be 'with Jesus,' to accompany him on the 'exodus' to the Father now underway." In allowing the criminal to come with him, Jesus has shown all people a path to be with him in his kingdom.

moment, the kingdom of God is brought to earth, shared even among the criminals through the power of Jesus' love. At the same time, Jesus accepts the rejection shown to him throughout his time on earth to enter into the hospitality of God:

> Inaugurating his ministry at Nazareth years before, Jesus experienced rejection from his townsfolk. They had sought to kill him by throwing him down from a hill. On that occasion he had slipped through their clutches and gone on his way (4:28- 30). Now, though actually brought to his death following rejection on a much wider scale, he "passes through" death to rise and be "be taken up" (9:51) to glory at the right hand of God.[20]

When the centurion cries out after the death of Jesus, "Certainly this man was innocent!" (23:47), it is a clear indication that God's kingdom has been opened to all through the death of the suffering Messiah.

The first act of Jesus listed in Luke after the Resurrection deals with hospitality on the road to Emmaus. After the death of the Messiah, the kingdom of God is still hidden to those who do not understand how to accept the invitation. This is evident from the blank stares of the two men when they met Jesus on the road. They were finally handed the truth of the kingdom by joining Jesus around their table, inviting him in and receiving the gift of his teaching through the hospitable practice of true listening and hosting in fellowship. As Jesus begins to tell his story, he becomes the host as he begins to offer the hospitality of God to them. As he breaks the bread, Jesus recalls the Eucharist from the last supper shared with the Twelve on the night of his death.[21] This story again illuminates a major theme throughout Luke: the disciples, who only understood part of

---

[20]Ibid., 161.

[21]Ibid., 167. "But once more the guest becomes host. In a way clearly meant to recall the institution of the Eucharist at the final supper (22:19-20; also the multiplication of the loaves and fishes [9:16]), Jesus breaks bread, blesses it and gives it to them (v. 30). He, who is receiving their hospitality, provides for them the "hospitality of God."

the story of Christ, were illuminated upon participating in hospitality and the Eucharist. In this post-resurrection world, the mission of the Church is to continue to offer hospitality and share the Eucharist "in remembrance" of Jesus to reveal the Good News.

The message of Luke includes a great description and instruction of hospitality. Interestingly, Luke's portrait of Jesus molds his hospitality beyond Jewish cultural expectation to include the Gentiles, the sinners, and the unclean. In a post-Easter world, this hospitality is the way that the Good News spreads. Physically, it spreads when villages show the apostles hospitality on their missionary journeys. Theologically, Luke's Gospel shows Jesus as the extension of divine hospitality, inviting the world to communion with the Father, and calling those in the kingdom to extend His invitation to the rest of the world. A major emphasis surrounding the life and ministry of Jesus was hospitality. With such great weight given to hospitality, one of the main purposes of the Church as it was founded is to continue to offer hospitality in the same way that Jesus demonstrated. In the next chapter, I will outline how the Church evolves in this practice through time.

CHAPTER THREE

Evolution of Hospitality through the Ages

Long after the foundation of the Church, hospitality continued to evolve as Church movements shifted with time. In this chapter, I will catalogue the foundational thoughts of hospitality within the Church, followed by a discussion of the evolution of the Christian practice of hospitality through various Church movements. I will also articulate the unique role of hospitality within the worship of the Church.

Foundations of Hospitality within the Church

The words and life of Jesus as described by the Gospels and oral tradition directed the actions of the New Testament Church. Early congregations met in personal homes and received teaching in the form of letters and communication from elders within their network of believers. All action was predicated on the teachings and life of Jesus; as such, congregations paid great attention to his emphasis on hospitality.

Much like their Jewish and Hellenistic predecessors, the household was the place from which hospitality flowed for the New Testament Church. Since the Church was integrally woven into the household, the early Church depended on households to be welcoming in order to expand in number and maintain a cohesive identity. Though individual congregations met in individual households, they grew together under the communal identity of being in the household of God. The sum of the Church became

greater than the value of its parts; each household became less in order to host the household of God.[1]

Christine Pohl, author of *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, seeks to explore the evolution of hospitality practice within the church over time in order to demonstrate the proper practice within a modern Christian community. She documents the phenomenon of early Christian households becoming significant parts of the larger household of God:

> This expanded and transformed household was responsible for imitating God's hospitable and gracious character. God's household represented the welcome of Gentiles into the inheritance together with Israel (Eph. 2:19), and relations within this new household explicitly transcended ethnic boundaries. Worship, care, and hospitality in early Christian households included believers from different political, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, and early congregations developed a trans-local and transethnic identity.[2]

Practically, this manifested as welcoming strangers into the family home in order to share in worship together. Though they may have been unknown to the host, other Christians were openly welcomed as members of the same household of God, regardless of their ethnic or geographic origins.

Pohl notes that early Christian hospitality manifested itself in three main forms: as an expression of respect and recognition of people of all statuses; as a means of meeting physical needs of the local poor and traveling Christians; and as a means to host local assemblies of believers.[3] To meet the physical needs of the community and show respect to all, churches often hosted meals together, sharing their resources for the sustenance of

---

[1]Christine D. Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* (W.B. Eerdmans, 1999), 41–42.

[2]Ibid., 42.

[3]Ibid., 36–39.

the entire congregation. This action demonstrates a Christian political movement towards the good of the greater household of God, but it also benefitted the individual household. These agape meals were meant to show the transformational love of God spilling out to meet the needs of every member of the congregation. There was no deferential service given to the rich or poor, but all people sat around the same table and shared the same food.[4] These meals reflect a sharp contrast from preferential hospitality shown in the Hellenistic age, in which tables were used to reinforce boundaries rather than break them down.[5] Notably, the early Church shared more than just meals together; accounts of the early Church in Acts show that they shared everything together so that the needs of all were met (Acts 2:44, 4:32-35). Within the household of God, a different politic that provided good for all people was demonstrated through hospitality.

The ubiquity and importance of hospitality within the early Church is evident in the canonical epistles sent to early congregations. When it was written, the letter of James was meant to be an instructional tool used to direct the practice of believers in accordance with the Gospel message. One of the first issues that the letter addresses is that of favoritism, especially in the context of serving meals and hosting guests:

> [S]how no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ…. For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," have you not then

---

[4]Ibid., 42. "[T]hese meals were intended to reflect transformed relationships in which worldly status distinctions were transcended, if not disregarded, and formerly alienated persons could view themselves as brothers and sisters at God's table."

[5]Hubbard, *Christianity in the Greco-Roman World*, 145–46. "[A]t dinner parties… guests were seated according to social standing and allowed to comment on the after-dinner recitation of poetry according to rank, more prominent guests first… The social pyramid was also reinforced by serving higher-quality food and drink to more distinguished guests."

> made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? (James 2:1-4).

This comes as a direct refutation of the cultural norm of the Roman Empire, which was to show preferential hospitality to those holding a higher status at the expense of the less fortunate. The values demonstrated by the early Church were in direct repudiation of their surrounding culture. As such, they were often persecuted, imprisoned, and killed for their beliefs. Since persecution is obviously undesirable, showing preferential treatment to those who might otherwise imprison them would have been a simple solution. Acting as such would demonstrate to the authorities that the Church valued the social order over their beliefs and could have saved them from further persecution. Even still, James calls the congregation to a higher standard:

> [H]as not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called? If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors (James 2:5-9).

Showing kindness and welcome to all people was important to maintaining a truly Christian identity. The Epistle of James does not shy away from the counter-cultural nature of the practice but maintains its importance in all circumstances.

The early Christian was expected to demonstrate equal love and care for all people in accordance with the life of Christ, even in the face of persecution. Equal welcome and treatment for all was in line with Jesus' ministry, and so it was in the household of God.

Fourth and Fifth Centuries

Christianity was officially decriminalized when Emperor Constantine issued the Edict of Milan in 313 CE. Eventually, the Edict of Thessalonica (380 CE) made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire.[6] With these conversions, Christianity saw a substantial increase in public resources as well as an increase in social responsibility. With its new legality, the Church became the source of public service to the poor and needy. No longer were the sole expectations of Christian hospitality limited to the individual home and hosting congregational gatherings; now, the Church was thrust into the spotlight and expected to demonstrate its virtues of exemplary charity and hospitality.[7]

By the middle of the fourth century, the Church's role as public servant was well established. Outsiders recognized that the Church was a source of exemplary care through hospitals, which were gathering places where the poor and the sick could go for care.[8] Christians opened these early hospitals in order to expand their hospitality outward, from the Church as the house of God to the world. Never before had public space been used to provide such deep and meaningful hospitality. In earlier times, pagan hospices were built for the shelter of armies, religious officials, and gladiators, but these buildings offered little more than a place to rest. Hospitals revolutionized the use of public space in that they offered entrance to all people regardless of social status and provided care and

---

[6]Arnold Hugh Martin Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe* (University of Toronto Press, 1978), 76.

[7]Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, 43–48.

[8]Ibid., 43.

attendance to the sick and poor. At first, they were multipurpose facilities, providing as many services as they could to as many people as they could find:

> [T]he hospital at its first appearance was quite as much a house for strangers, a xenodochium, a hospice, and the first institutions of the kind received all who needed an asylum, strangers, the poor, widows, orphans, the sick…[9]

Insofar as hospitality was meant to connect the stranger to the community, the physical space of hospitals became a method through which the stranger was welcomed into the caring community of God. This was done through the personal connection of the Christians who brought resources and care for those who stayed there. The hospital began as an institution of Christian care and charity as service and welcome were not denied to anyone.[10]

The first hospital to be substantially recognized was opened in Caesarea with great enthusiasm by its bishop, St. Basil, during the famine of 369-370. For him, the hospital was a method through which to ease the suffering of the poor and the sick through personal counsel as well as through provisions to meet their physical needs, as mandated in Matthew 25:31-46. This early model provided the infrastructure needed to care for a multitude of less fortunate individuals while retaining the personal connection to each patient.[11] The excitement that St. Basil had for the hospital demonstrates the

---

[9]Gerhard Uhlhorn, *Christian Charity in the Ancient Church* (New York, 1883), 323.

[10]Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, 44–46, 48–49; Uhlhorn, *Christian Charity in the Ancient Church*, chap. 4.

[11]W. K. Lowther Clarke, *St. Basil the Great: A Study in Monasticism* (Cambridge University Press, 1913), 166; Anna M. Silvas, "Interpreting the Motives of Basil's Social Doctrine," *Journal of the Australian Early Medieval Association* 5 (2009): 61.

profound ability for the space to fully demonstrate the outflow of Christian hospitality to others.[12]

While they were founded as a demonstration of the depth of the Church's capability for hospitality, the institutionalization that began in the formation of hospitals also came at a cost: when institutionalized, compassion can easily be bled out of hospitality. Hospitals began to recognize that there were far more problems than could be solved in spaces that were established for the general purpose of serving the needs of the people. Thus, they began to spread and specialize, leading to more functional institutions that prioritized physical healing over personal connections. As the public demand for care grew throughout communities in which Christians had established hospitals, the ideology of showing personalized hospitality began to fall away in favor of efficiency:

> Although the development of hospices and hospitals emerged from early Christian impulses toward hospitality, these institutions were unable to capture and express some of the most fundamental, personal dimensions of hospitality. Poor people and strangers were frequently cared for at a distance and in large numbers. Personal hospitality was increasingly reserved served for visiting dignitaries.[13]

The tension between institutionalization and fostering individual hospitality arose as hospitals became more prevalent in caring for the poor.

In many ways, this was due to the political role that the Church took on during this period. Now that Christianity was accepted into the mainline of society, its role grew outward as it was expected to contribute to social welfare. The Christian emphasis on

---

[12]Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, 44. In a reflection on the motivation behind founding hospitals, Pohl writes, "The enthusiasm of Basil and others for the hospital as an institution of Christian care reflects how closely it was originally connected to the practice of hospitality."

[13]Ibid., 45.

hospitality reinforced the Church's ability to provide for the public good, but also increased the public expectation for it to do so. Following the trend of the Jewish and Hellenistic ages, hospitality became an expected political reality within the state to be filled by the Church. The institutionalization of hospitality ensued, driving it away from its original purpose of welcoming in the stranger.

At the same time, monasticism continued to thrive as a method through which to show devotion to the Christian faith. Monasticism provided a space for devotees to live, pray, and serve among an intentional community. Interestingly, major monastic figures like St. Basil of Caesarea were also the forerunners of the hospital movement during its development in the fourth and fifth centuries, inextricably tying together the notion of monasticism and care for the world. As time progressed, monasteries became equally places for dutiful worship and centers for restful hospitality. Pilgrims traveled to monasteries to learn about the aesthetic Christian life, relying on the monks to offer them food and shelter.[14] The *Rule of Benedict* required that these travelers be welcomed graciously along with clerics and the poor because of Christ's identification with those populations in Matthew 25:35. St. Benedict described monastic hospitality as personal and face-to-face, rejecting the increasing institutionalization of hospitality.[15] His model was certainly admirable, but the financial realities of the Middle Ages challenged the monastic ideal of hospitality.

---

[14]Ibid., 46.

[15]*The Rule of Benedict*, vol. 12, Western Asceticism (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1958), chap. 5; Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, 47.

Medieval Era

During the Middle Ages, parishes were struggling to provide adequate hospitality to their communities. Though the Church was tasked with providing hospitality to the poor members of society, its financial resources varied regionally. Clergy members struggled to offer hospitality when their resources ran thin. During this time, parishioners were expected to tithe, but were not forced to do so. Some of these tithes were given to fund hospitable efforts, but without a requirement to tithe, the funds often did not come in sufficient amounts. Even when there were enough funds to provide for the community, there were often complaints of "absentee priests, misappropriation of funds, and inadequately endowed vicarages" that suggested an inconsistent management of funds.[16]

While the Church struggled to provide hospitality evenly throughout the medieval world, there was also an increase in the number of poor vagrants who roamed the countryside searching for small handouts or performing small tasks for hire. Given that these individuals essentially lived on the generosity of others, their presence made hospitality much more complex. No longer was hospitality about caring for the pilgrim or the sick, but it became about welcoming in people from all walks of life and attempting to meet their needs. The combination of a lack of Church resources and an increase in poor migrants led to unchecked poverty running rampant throughout the era.[17] This unfortunate reality caused municipalities to take over hospitals and public works in

---

[16]Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, 50; Brian Tierney, *Medieval Poor Law: A Sketch of Canonical Theory and Its Application in England* (University of California Press, 1959), 71–72, 98–101.

[17]Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, 49–51.

order to fill in the gaps that the Church was losing its financial ability to deal with. As a result, places of hospitality were increasingly distanced from the Church.

The separation of hospitality from the New Testament Christian ideal also manifested itself in the social life of medieval elites. During the Middle Ages in Europe, the ownership of property became a powerful establishment central to political life:

> [P]roperty, rather than blood, increasingly defined the individual's status and rights. Property created a sense of individuality, and, more precisely, property shaped subjectivity…. Men owned and controlled their selves through the material. What one *owned* defined what one *was*.[18]

Notions of property became important due to the "perceived need to protect property rights 'in the face of increasing powers of national states.'"[19] As such, hospitality became "explicitly and intentionally connected"[20] to displays of property and wealth as a means to indicate great status. Grand dinner parties, feasts, hosting religious celebrations, and lavish guest quarters became indicators of status that were reserved for only the very wealthy. Those households that did not engage in this kind of "strategic hospitality"[21] began to lose their power in society. Through these mechanisms, hospitality became inextricably tied to status. The notion of both receiving and practicing hospitality began

---

[18]Janet Coleman, "Property and Poverty," in *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, ed. J. H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 648.

[19]María Bullón-Fernández, "Poverty, Property, and the Self in the Late Middle Ages: The Case of Chaucer's Griselda," Mediaevalia, July 1, 2014; Janet Coleman, "The Individual and the Medieval State," in *The Individual in Political Theory and Practice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 25. Coleman is quoted by Bullón-Fernández**.**

[20]Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, 50.

[21]Ibid., 50–51.

to grow inseparable from wealth, divorcing it from the menial task of caring for the poor and taking in the stranger.

By the fifteenth century, the need to show influence through extravagant property displays had infiltrated the magisterium. Bishops were just as concerned with hosting events with magnificent entertainment as their aristocratic counterparts. This "forged and reinforced the complex bonds of interdependence between lord and vassal, church and nobility, which were characteristic of feudal life."[22] The actions of the Church and its clergy grew more indistinguishable from the acts of the world. Even though churches still opened their doors to everyone, they followed societal norms and showed preferential treatment to a certain few:

> [T]hose of lower status were received at a different table, fed different and coarser food, and housed in different lodgings. Distinctions in bread, table linens, and seating arrangements were intended to reflect status differences. Except for hospitality to household servants and their dependents, most provision for the poor was done at the gate, not within the house.[23]

As property gained importance during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it became increasingly important for people to display their status through their property.

It is important to note the distinction between this hospitality of entertainment and the hospitality of caring for the poor. These extreme displays of property through strategic hospitality were occurring at the same time as hospitals were continuing to expand throughout the world. Now that the sick and the poor were being taken care of by the municipal hospitals, the material resources of the wealthy and of the local clergy could be rerouted towards increasing status and influence through extravagant exhibitions

[22]Ibid., 50.

[23]Ibid., 51.

of property. As such, the trajectory of hospitality was split into two during the Middle Ages: “hospitality as material care for strangers and the local poor and hospitality as personal welcome and entertainment.”[24] The two institutions drifted further and further apart, resulting in a significant loss of the Church to act as the epicenter for hospitality. Now, care for the sick and poor was found in hospitals while lodging and meals were found in extravagant homes that could use the opportunity to show off their wealth. Pohl writes, “In the diversity of institutions, in the loss of the worshiping community as a significant site for hospitality, and in the differentiation of care among recipients, the socially transformative potential of hospitality was lost.”[25] More and more, caring for the poor was done at the gate and the border fence, not within the home. The sacred nature of the home was reserved for the most prominent guests.

The Reformation

The years leading up to the Protestant Reformation were tumultuous. Significant political changers were taking place that increasingly placed pressure on the Church. As the feudal system crumbled, the property that had once made families wealthy fell away, leading to increased mobility and urbanization in crowded city centers. Monastic households were becoming distinctly rare and unsupported by an economy that was moving away from property ownership and toward trade and skill. High urban populations were prime locations for plagues and war, which increased the number of

---

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid.

poor and sick in the western world. During these times, traditional practices of hospitality became inadequate for addressing the growing needs of the impoverished.[26]

As the Protestant movement grew its influence, one of the complaints that it lodged against the Catholic Church was against "the extravagance, indulgence, and waste associated with late medieval hospitality."[27] In response, they redefined hospitality to focus more on the biblical understanding, which emphasizes comprehensive care for the poor and the stranger regardless of social status. Unlike the Catholic Church in the centuries before, the Protestant Church focused on the frugal management of funds so that a proper welcome could be extended to all people.[28]

Even though the doors were open to the public, the Reformation leader John Calvin is credited as saying that the most "sacred" kind of hospitality is that which is extended to Protestant refugees escaping persecution. Indeed, the prevalence of Protestant persecution during the sixteenth century made hospitality a vital practice to preserve the Protestant population. With everyday men and women being made into martyrs and refugees, the Reformation gave a new value to the lives of ordinary people. With this, the mysticism that had previously encapsulated Christianity was lost for the sake of recognizing the sacred nature of the common life. When Calvin and other early Protestant leaders called believers to practice hospitality, they simultaneously brought the practice back to the general public and "undermined some of the mystery that had

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid., 52.

[28]Ibid., 52–53.

undergirded the potent earlier understandings of Christian hospitality."[29] Hospitality was no longer an essential *Christian* practice because it was now seen as a key *societal* practice that was done not in a sacred sanctuary but in ordinary spaces.

The disappearing mysticism of Christian hospitality along with further expansion of the institutionalized hospitality that began in the Middle Ages consequently caused it to be increasingly associated with the civic sphere. Pohl comments on the immense changes brought to hospitality in the early modern era:

> The public and civic dimensions of hospitality – from hospitals, poor relief, and responsibility to refugees, to later concerns about human rights and equality – became detached from their Christian roots as the public sphere was increasingly secularized. At the same time, the domestic sphere became more privatized; households became smaller, more intimate, and less able or willing to receive strangers.[30]

Care for the poor and the stranger was being taken care of in settings outside of the Church, and economic and political influence were no longer driven by upper-class displays of property. There was no longer a pressing need for the Church to take care of the local poor, and the social environment was not forcing them to act as good hosts. This, along with the loss of hospitality within the mystic vocabulary of the Church, slowly caused Calvin's hospitable desire for the church to fade into the background. The divorce of hospitality from the life of the Church happened quietly and over a period of years, but in the early modern era it essentially disappeared as an essential Christian practice, with a few notable exceptions.

---

[29]Ibid., 53.

[30]Ibid.

One of these exceptions was due to the work of John Wesley and the Methodist Church, which sought to strengthen community through "intense personal interaction, relationship building, and oversight of new believers."[31] Of importance to the Methodist movement was the reintegration of the Church into the family household, so worship meetings, shared meals called "love feasts," and small group meetings were held in individual households rather than a community building. These humble meetings and meals offered the same services to everyone, not showing preference to one group over another. Though the broader Church had departed from offering intentional care and welcome to the helpless, the Methodists set up centers of care for their community:

> [L]ocal Methodist group[s] found homes, furnished them comfortably, and took in as many widows as there was room available. Wesley wrote that in addition to the widows, infirm, and children who were cared for in these homes, four or five preachers regularly ate their meals there…. This blending of poor and weak persons with influential leaders was another significant return to early Christian understandings of hospitality.[32]

The early Methodist movement demonstrated the capacity for Protestant Christians to uphold biblical hospitality and return to the practices of the early Church. However, Pohl notes, their hesitance to label their work as hospitality "actually contributed to the loss of the [Christian] historical tradition."[33] Without the appropriate label, future generations of Protestants lost the vocabulary needed to describe the transformative power of hospitality. As time continued, explicitly identifying hospitality by name faded away from Christian thinking.

---

[31]Ibid., 53–54.

[32]Ibid., 54.

[33]Ibid., 55.

The Modern Era

The effects of the Protestant movement both diminished the mystical aspect of hospitality within the Church and pushed duties of caring for strangers into the public sphere. Institutions which were once "originally located in the household – work, religious observance, protection, education, care for the sick, provision for the aging, and care for strangers" are now sequestered into their own organizations.[34]

In the nineteenth century, philanthropic organizations began to thrive and exist to solve a specific social issue – access to healthcare for the sick, shelter for the homeless, education for strangers – rather than providing broad outreach. The reciprocal relationship and commitment between host and guest were lost as caring for the poor simply became charity. In order to make progress, experts from various fields provide a service to solve the institutional pressures causing their respective social issue. In these institutions, "although physical needs might be met, needs for a social identity and connection are not only overlooked but sometimes intensified."[35] Even when people want to respond to the personal needs of a stranger, they are now faced with institutional pressures that require them to rely on specialists.

The modern age has no more need to open up personal homes to strangers. All services and care can be found in public spaces. Accordingly, the world became closed-off and private. A move toward privacy directly opposes hospitality, which requires both the host and the guest to gather in vulnerability. As demonstrated in ancient custom, the guest would receive food and shelter in return for telling his story and being vulnerable to

[34]Ibid., 56–57.

[35]Ibid., 57.

the host. When extended to a guest-friendship, the host and guest intimately knew one another through a continued exchange of gifts and stories. Christians uniquely also have the imagery of the cross, where Jesus extends his hospitality while in a state of vulnerability. Christ's nakedness on the cross reinforces the idea of vulnerability in Christian hospitality. The modern move toward privacy has made vulnerability unthinkable, especially when dealing with strangers. When all things of personal value are hidden away in private space, both guest and host are much harder pressed to authentically present themselves to one another.

Given this reality, modern "hospitality" tends to cater towards private experiences rather than shared political life. Modern "hospitality" is an industry of hotels, cruises, airlines, and vacations rather than personal welcome and relationships. Though the "hospitality industry" will deliver finely-tuned services for a price, it offers no personal connection or welcome into a community.

Worship as Hospitality

In the Church, hospitality serves both a practical and a mystical role through collective worship. The primary function of the Church is to gather in the worship of God and encourage one another in community. It is important that worship takes place before the Church works in the world because worship is the ultimate purpose of the Church. The work of the people in worships sends the same people out into the world to extend their work. However, worship is not simply a motivator for hospitable action nor can it be classified as a simple human act. Elizabeth Newman writes:

> [W]orship itself [is] our participation in God's own triune life, a life we can characterize as hospitality. To sing, to pray, to pass the peace, to listen to God's word, to eat at God's table is to share, through the gift and power of the Spirit, in

> God's own giving and receiving. Such a vision of worship…enables us to practice hospitality more faithfully.[36]

The worship of the Church is a method by which it participates in the hospitality of the triune God. Creation was formed out of an excess of the triune God's love in himself, which flowed outwardly into a contingent creation.[37] As contingent beings, humans did not need to exist, but do only through the sustaining hospitality of God. Sin is in part a refusal to acknowledge God's gift of being and an unwillingness to accept his invitation of fellowship. Through Jesus' hospitality, even to death, humanity is offered welcome again into the love of God. When the Church worships, it is collectively remembering the reason for its existence and accepting the invitation to participate in God once again. Ritual worship is not about the worshipper, but rather about discovering how God's endless provision can provide for creation.[38]

As the Church worships, it is also acting as a vessel where God's hospitality is received as an entire body. It is important to note that the invitation found in worship to be in communion with God is also an invitation to be incorporated into the body of Christ.[39] The Church exists to worship God as the body of Christ that is brought together by God's hospitality. When an individual believer worships, she is brought into the body of Christ, which is a group of people that has become something corporately that is

---

[36]Elizabeth Newman, *Untamed Hospitality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2007), 41.

[37]Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics the Doctrine of Creation: The Work of Creation (Church Dogmatics) III.1*, Pbk ed. edition (London: T&T Clark, 2004).

[38]Newman, *Untamed Hospitality*, 45.

[39]Ibid., 48.

greater than just a mere collection of individuals.[40] The hospitality that is found in worship allows believers to experience the full body of Christ. What joins together a congregation "most profoundly is not a merely human sense of fellowship but rather the divine reality in which they have a common share…"[41]

Despite its significance, modern worship does not seem to focus on this reality, instead catering to the individual experience and the entertainment of service. Where the theological implication of worship is collective participation in the hospitality of God, the modern Evangelical Protestant church often restricts worship to a time of individuals singing with closed eyes and hands up. D. Stephen Long suggests that this kind of hospitality is reductive of God's character, which limits the ability for the worshipper to understand him.[42] This individual emphasis of worship, while it brings temporary good feelings, removes the worshipper from the long-lasting gift of hospitality that God offers to the entire Church. Of course, this is not to say that the individual holds no value within the Church. The importance is that the individual is not emphasized as the object of worship over the group, because the *entire* collective Church body is the unique recipient of God's gifted hospitality. In the story of the Church, the whole is greater than its parts because individuals enter into a drama that is larger than themselves.[43]

---

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid., 50.

[42]D. Stephen Long, "God Is Not Nice," in *God Is Not…*, ed. D. Brent Laytham, 2nd Printing edition (Grand Rapids, Mich: Brazos Press, 2004), 44. "It is as if God has been reduced to a friendly character with open arms who meets us at the entrance to his magic kingdom, inviting us to come in and find our individual fulfillment."

[43]Newman, *Untamed Hospitality*, 48–49.

The communal Church must also recognize that its worship is only given value through the divine hospitality of God and not through human action. Since the agent of worship is hospitality provided by God rather than man, it means that worship cannot possibly be carried out by human hands alone.[44] As outlined in the second chapter of this thesis, Luke's Gospel presents Jesus as the extension of divine hospitality that invites the world into communion with the triune God. Josef Pieper writes that the renewal that occurs during worship rests only in the hands of God, or "[s]tated more precisely, God gives us what we need to live lives of faith, hope, and love."[45] Once participating in God's gifted hospitality, the Church can extend its mission to the world through the outpouring of God's abundance. This illuminates an incredibly important part of hospitality—its origin is not from man. The importance of right worship is twofold: to receive the overwhelming divine hospitality of God and to continue to practice this hospitality in the rest of the world. For Christians who participate in worship, the outpouring of hospitality to the rest of the world naturally follows as a continued act of the hospitality received in worship.

Conclusion

In the modern era, hospitality is a commodity rather than a sacred and revolutionary act. While it began as a centerpiece to Christian life, the historical Christian notions have been divorced from the practice of modern "hospitality." As

[44]Ibid., 45.

[45]Josef Pieper, *Leisure: The Basis of Culture* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009), 51; Newman, *Untamed Hospitality*, 45.

culture shifted to make hospitality into more and more of a commodity to be purchased, the Church's recognition of hospitality as a sacred and worshipful act was lost. Despite modern expectation, the explicit mention of hospitality in Scripture (Acts 2:44, 4:32-35) along with the role that it plays in worship indicate the hospitality is clearly something the Church should be engaged in.

Therefore, since it is an important practice that is absent from the central emphasis of the modern Church, how should hospitality be approached? There are many objections that people put up against hospitality, especially in regard to the moral or religious stranger. After all, strangers often have remarkably different beliefs that are in conflict with Christian ideas. In such a world, vulnerability and the genuine desire to practice hospitality are difficult to find. However, the fact that hospitality is a natural extension of Christian worship requires that these objections be confronted. Christians, as a manner of right worship, are required to reclaim Christian hospitality, but recovering it as a practice will require key changes in thought. The next chapter will be dedicated to exploring how to approach vulnerable Christian hospitality toward the stranger in the modern era.

CHAPTER FOUR

Liberal Secularism and Christian Pluralism

Over the past several decades, the West has witnessed a massive influx of Middle Eastern refugees drawn to its relative stability and safety. Throughout the twentieth century, there have been waves of refugees seeking asylum following the trend of conflict and extreme religious persecution. Europe has seen three major periods of high refugee immigration: after the downfall of the Soviet Union in 1992; after the start of the Kosovo war in 1998; and the advent of the recent Syrian conflict in 2011 and the ongoing instability of middle-eastern countries in the period since.[1] The year 2015 had a record 1.3 million asylum seekers travel to Europe, with the majority of refugees hailing from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq.[2] Largely unprepared for the record migration, European countries have struggled to adopt policies that address the asylum seekers, leading to a global acknowledgement of an ongoing "refugee crisis."

Since the time of the Roman Empire, Europe has been a Christian majority. According to a 2010 study by the Pew Research Center, 76% of the population of Europe self-identified as Christians.[3] European citizens have felt disruption caused by their new refugee neighbors; followers of Islam made up approximately 4.9% of Europe's

---

[1]"Record 1.3 Million Sought Asylum in Europe in 2015," *Pew Research Center: Global Attitudes and Trends* (blog), August 2, 2016, http://www.pewglobal.org/2016/08/02/number-of-refugees-to-europe-surges-to-record-1-3-million-in-2015/.

[2]Ibid.

[3]"Regional Distribution of Christians," *Pew Research Center: Global Attitudes and Trends* (blog), December 19, 2011, http://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-regions/.

population in 2016, with higher percentages in countries that have attracted more refugees.[4] The ongoing wave of Muslim immigrants has sparked intense debate about national security, immigration reform, asylum regulation, and how to effectively accept refugees. Heated media coverage has largely sensationalized the debate, causing radicalization of beliefs toward Muslim immigration. Certain isolated events, such as the New Year's Eve sexual assaults in Cologne perpetrated by North African men, tend to "strengthen the relation between people's feelings of symbolic threat and their approval of radical responses to Muslim immigration."[5] The response towards refugees has differed by country, with many heavily restricting the number that they admit on an annual basis.[6] Aside from the political debate around accepting refugees, there are also significant Christian implications for the same issue.

The open acceptance of strangers and travelers has always been a key component of Christianity, as outlined in previous chapters. This tradition of hospitality brings with it an ancient question: "How can diverse people live together?"[7] This question is the central focus of Matthew Kaemingk's work *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in the Age of Fear*. Kaemingk posits that Christianity has always struggled

---

[4]"Muslim Population Growth in Europe," *Pew Research Center: Global Attitudes and Trends* (blog), November 29, 2017, http://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/.

[5]Stefan Stürmer et al., "Muslim Immigration, Critical Events, and the Seeds of Majority Members' Support for Radical Responses: An Interactionist Perspective," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 45, no. 1 (January 1, 2019): 133–45.

[6]Nicole Ostrand, "The Syrian Refugee Crisis: A Comparison of Responses by Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States," *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 3, no. 3 (2015): 255–79.

[7]Matthew Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2018), 1.

with this question, but the modern era of violence and refugees is bringing the question to the forefront of the Christian life. Islam's growing presence in the West presents the opportunity for Christians to answer several vital questions: "How should Western Christians respond to their new Muslim neighbors? Can Islam and Christianity peacefully coexist? Are there limits to religious freedom and tolerance? How much religious diversity can a single nation withstand?"[8] Perhaps more plainly, Christians must respond in such a way as to welcome their Muslim neighbors with hospitality while still maintaining their Christian convictions to the fullest extent. In his book, Kaemingk outlines a country that overwhelmingly failed to do this appropriately, then unpacks how Christian thought deals with this problem of hospitality. This chapter will follow a similar outline, first showing the failures of the Netherlands to properly welcome and respect Muslim refugees, then suggesting ways for Christians to appropriately welcome "the other" in a contemporary setting.

The Failure of the Netherlands

For a long time, Muslims and Christians had little interaction outside of the Middle East. The reality of the modern age is, as Kaemingk says, that "Muslims—who used to be viewed exclusively through the lens of a CNN satellite feed—are moving into Christians' cities, neighborhoods, companies, and even their own homes and families."[9] This new encounter is as much an academic question as it is a lived reality for the people of the Netherlands. Since 2015, the Netherlands has committed to receiving around

---

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid., 3.

7,000 of the 120,000 initial Middle Eastern asylum seekers, bringing a large and sudden influx of Islam into its mostly Christian and secular country.[10] In doing so, the differences between Islamic, Christian, and secular European ideas of how to live are being forced together in a tight community, and the streets of Amsterdam are facing the issue of how to approach religious pluralism.

The Netherlands is fairly well-known for being a highly secular country, meaning that religion hardly, if ever, comes into the public square. Insofar as it claims to be a secular country, the Netherlands also posits that it has an enhanced religious tolerance, expressed as the ability for all people to equally practice and adhere to their own religion. That is, all people are permitted to express their unique religious views so long as it remains in their private lives. It is important to remember that European secularism arose as a response to the overwhelming politicization of Western Christianity that began to agitate Europe during the Reformation.[11] During the long and often painful process of removing the Church from the politics of the state, English author John Locke ascribed a discernable difference between the goals of the Church and the goals of the State. Andrew Copson, summarizing Locke's writing, says:

> The purpose of the church was to "attain happiness after this life in another world" whereas the purpose of the state was: "Civil peace and prosperity…the preservation of the society and every member thereof in a free and peaceable enjoyment of all the good things that belong to each of them."[12]

---

[10]Ministerie van Algemene Zaken, "Refugees in the Netherlands - Asylum Policy - Government.Nl," onderwerp, May 3, 2016, https://www.government.nl/topics/asylum-policy/refugees-in-the-netherlands.

[11]Andrew Copson, *Secularism: Politics, Religion, and Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 11–12.

[12]Ibid., 15.

Therefore, since the goals of Church and State differed in their ends, they had no place interfering with one another. Locke, who lived for a period in the Netherlands, also said that religious views and personal ideas about the truth do not affect anybody else and should therefore be kept as personal as possible.[13]

At first, the Dutch seemed ready to welcome their new neighbors, but with some underlying political realities. Most Dutch citizens could probably admit to their desire to protect refugee human rights to life, but not necessarily to provide explicit protection of all the extras, like extreme differences in belief that affect the public sphere. The problem with Islam moving into the Netherlands is that it brings visual and auditory reminders of religious difference that conflict with the desire of the Netherlands to remain publicly secular. For example, the *adhan*, or Islamic call to prayer, is a very audible reminder of religious difference that sounds out over an otherwise quiet city.[14] According to Kaemingk, the overarching rhetoric in the Netherlands has largely surrounded the question, "How can my government more effectively neutralize Islamic difference?" He continues, "Framed in such a way, the…political goal is a creation of a *European* Islam…that can be closely managed by European states and accepted by European culture."[15] Muslim migration into the Netherlands more closely resembles assimilation than true integration. The desire of the Dutch people to help Islamic refugees is saturated with the fear of accepting the entrance of religion back into the

[13]Ibid., 15–16.

[14]Sindre Bangstad, "Amplifying Islam in the European Soundscape: Religious Pluralism and Secularism in the Netherlands. Pooyan Tamimi Arab. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. 216 Pp.," *American Ethnologist* 45, no. 4 (2018): 12–13.

[15]Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 8.

public square. After all, as the Dutch say, "[Religion] is a personal matter and that is how the Netherlands became the Netherlands."[16] With the evacuation of religion from the public square, issues that by their nature demand moral judgement cannot be explicitly addressed with a particular moral thought. For example, when two distinct religious communities come into conflict, their clash cannot be resolved through a consideration of their respective leadership or particular community morals in order to maintain the precedent of liberal pluralism. In response, harsh political realities are formed with the nation relying on secular social workers, teachers, and politicians to solve the issue of religious pluralism rather than ministers, theologians, and ethicists whose particular voices would certainly be useful in ideological conflicts.

Theo van Gogh, great-grandnephew of Vincent van Gogh, citizen of Amsterdam, and vocal critic of Islam added to the political divides over the reception of Muslim people into his country through his 2004 film *Submission.* In the short film, battered women in hijab tell horrific stories of rape by men while verses of the Quran are flashed across their exposed breasts and backs. All the while, they are shown pleading with Allah for deliverance and justice, but no answer comes to them.[17] Van Gogh and fellow director Ayaan Hirsi Ali were attempting to use *Submission* to show a Western audience the "backwardness" of Islam. Kaemingk explains:

> [The] film was clearly aimed, not at Muslims, but at enlightened Western audiences. [The filmmakers] hoped to supply an answer for Westerners who always wondered to themselves, "What is going on beneath my neighbor's veil?"

---

[16]Bangstad, "Amplifying Islam in the European Soundscape," 14; Jeroen Vullings, "Volgens: Fouad Laroui," *Vrij Nederland*, October 14, 2006. The magazine article by Vullings in *Vrjj Nederland* is translated by Bangstad into English.

[17]Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 6–7.

> Beneath her veil, your Muslim neighbor is pleading with you: Oh, Westerner, please bring me safety, liberation, and enlightenment![18]

Ali and van Gogh paint an image of Islam in relation to Europe as one of helplessness and liberation. As the women are discussing their horror-filled experiences, the Westerner can interpret their cries their helplessness as a result of the backwardness of Islam. The perceived backwardness of Islam gives the Dutch citizen a feeling of superiority over the Islamic world, because they know that the Dutch culture could never be so backwards. Therefore, Dutch citizens should save their Islamic neighbors by making them more Dutch. This is precisely the view leads to the desire to de-emphasize Islam for the sake of increasing the "Western-ness" of the immigrants. If the dominant culture understands the religion of the minority to be backwards and savage, then the dominant population might see it as their responsibility not to welcome this system of beliefs, but to either suppress it or control it. In the Netherlands, advocates for Islamic suppression claim that after enough time of cultural integration, Muslims will naturally see their own backwardness and come to desire the Dutch way of life.

In response to this perception of Islam, a man named Mohammed Bouyeri followed van Gogh through the streets of Amsterdam and assaulted him with a semi-automatic pistol, swiftly ending his life. After a failed attempt to completely decapitate the lifeless body of van Gogh, Bouyeri left him in the middle of the street with a note affixed to his chest with a knife. The note called for the death of *Submission*'s other director, Ayaan Hirsi Ali. In response, "the Netherlands, land of tolerance, looked on in

[18]Ibid., 7.

shock."[19] The weeks that followed the murder of Theo van Gogh were chaos. Mosques were burned down, bombs were planted in Islamic schools, and churches were vandalized. The movie *Submission* and its creators represented the dominant Dutch view on Islam and all other religions: Westernize and liberalize it for the good of secular society, or it will not be accepted. In its natural form, Islam is not acceptable to the liberal pluralist. If it can be trained down so that its ideas and practices are made secondary to those of the Dutch state, then it will be acceptable. The irony of the "land of tolerance" is that it only tolerates the existence of a religion as long as it is willing to subdue itself to preserve the secular public square.

In truth, the Netherlands and liberal pluralists are less concerned with religious acceptance and more preoccupied with maintaining completely privatized and individualized public life. The seeming universal tolerance for religious difference really is not that way at all; rather, the place in which secular thinking thrives is a place truly inhospitable to everyone. Under liberal secularism, it seems that the deeply personal sharing that is a central component of hospitality, is discouraged. Thinking back to the guest-friendships of the ancient world, an ongoing exchange of stories was a key mark of a positive relationship of hospitality. The mediation of guest-friendships through vulnerable story-telling only took place because the story of the individual was highly valued, and they were encouraged to share it as they traveled from place to place. In societies that claim liberal secularism, they insist that the individual is accepted no matter what, but no place is provided for the individual to share her story; hence, the individual is devalued:

[19]Ibid., 11.

> [S]ecular liberalism undermines democratic culture by advocating the expunction of religious reasoning and language from civil discourse. But herein lies the irony: secular liberalism simply replaces one threat to democracy with another; its seemingly neutral and more favourable public reason is itself a threat. By demanding religious citizens articulate their ethical and political decisions in shared reasons and language, secular liberals oppress and ostracise.[20]

The façade of secular "welcome" and the cry for universal acceptance is simply not hospitable.

Arguing Pluralism

While claiming to be the best way to bring in the stranger, modern liberal pluralism has proven itself as fundamentally detrimental to hospitality. Political theologian Jeffrey Stout claims that the overwhelming effect of liberal pluralism is to make shared culture "morally and spiritually empty."[21] In contrast, he says that life with one another is inherently morally and spiritually full. He insists that right government gifts its citizens with civic embodiment in which people can and must fully participate. Stout believes that rather than abandoning civil discourse altogether, these conversations should happen in the public square.[22] In terms of hospitality, bringing difference and personality back to the public square finally allows for a key component of hospitality: some particularity into which to invite the stranger. Without anything to invite the stranger into, there can be no hospitality.

---

[20]Kyle David Bennett and Jeppe Bach Nikolajsen, "The Practice of Pluralism: Jeffrey Stout and Abraham Kuyper on Religion and Civil Solidarity," *International Journal of Public Theology* 8, no. 1 (January 2014): 69.

[21]Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition*, 2009, 2.

[22]Bennett and Nikolajsen, "The Practice of Pluralism," 70–71.

However, bringing personal and religious difference to a civil conversation is a delicate balancing act. On one hand, orthodox Christians believe that God is the one true god, and that Christ is the only Savior through which to attain salvation. Recognizing the legitimacy of other religions is scary insofar as the stranger claims the same for their own beliefs. This largely contributes to religious extremism, racism, and discrimination. However, Christ passed down the requirement to show hospitality to strangers, so Christians are bound through their faith to welcome the stranger rather than disregard her. In order to demonstrate full hospitality, it must be extended out of a culture of vulnerability and attentiveness to the stories of others. How can Christians engage a culture of vulnerability, allowing the space for themselves and others to express their held beliefs, so that hospitality can be spread? Answering this question is no easy task. Nevertheless, for the Christian who recognizes her obligation to demonstrate hospitality and the perplexing scenario this creates, this is a rather important question to examine.

One answer to this question is Christian pluralism, which differs from liberal pluralism in key ways. The Christian pluralist movement began as a reaction to Christian exclusivism, in which the follower of Christ recognizes that Christianity is the sole belief ending in salvation and unequivocally reject all other beliefs.[23] Kaemingk lists several other Christian responses to immigrants and religious minorities moving into the Netherlands: *assimilation,* in which Christians were absorbed into the neutral liberal state at the expense of their religious particularity; *moderation*, in which Christians modified some of their convictions to better fit in while still maintaining some sense of identity; *retreat*, where Christians isolated themselves into smaller communities so as to not

[23]Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 15–16.

interfere with the majority state; and *retribution*, in which the Christian minorities hoped to "retake" the country from liberalism and restore it to full Christendom. Distinctly, Christian pluralists "refused to alter their religious convictions or practices… practiced their faith openly in the Dutch public square… [yet] had no desire to 'take back the country…'" and chose to instead focus on promoting a nation-state in which all religions could thrive and pursue their vision of the good.[24] In contrast to their Christian exclusivist counterparts, these pluralists seem to be treading on an oxymoron.

Though it may have its political merits by allowing for the presence of stark religious difference within one community, this is a dangerous road for any faithful Christian to walk. Pluralist critic and Christian exclusivist Jean-Jacques Rousseau claims that there is a mutually exclusive relationship between "an uncompromising commitment to the exclusive lordship of Jesus Christ [and] an uncompromising commitment to love those who reject that lordship."[25] Like Rousseau, literary theorist Stanley Fish argues that when pluralists place difference as the ultimate good, they claim that their identity as Christians is secondary. That is, their assertion of human freedom matters more to them than their identity as Christians. "A deeply religious person," Fish argues, "is precisely that, *deeply* religious, and the survival and propagation of his faith is not for him an incidental (and bracketable) matter, but an essential matter, and essential too in his view for those who have fallen under the sway of false faith."[26] Deeply committed religious

---

[24]Ibid., 82.

[25]Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (New York: Cosimo, 2008), 135–46; Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 16. Rousseau is cited by Kaemingk.

[26]Stanley Fish, "Boutique Multiculturalism, or Why Liberals Are Incapable of Thinking about Hate Speech," *Critical Inquiry* 23, no. 2 (1997): 380.

persons, in order to remain faithful to their beliefs, should have a deep moral conviction that disallows them from remaining silent when faced with religious difference.

A self-described kind of exclusivist himself, Kaemingk points out that there are multiple camps of pluralism that must be clarified in order to gain a complete understanding of Christian pluralism. *Descriptive pluralism* desires to honestly understand diverse cultures and describe the differences well but does not render judgement on these differences. *Juridical pluralism* argues that descriptive pluralism does not go far enough, desiring to both describe and also provide judicial and political protection to diverse groups. Finally, *normative pluralism* desires to both describe differences and provide systemic protection for diversity, but also argues that diverse beliefs deserve moral praise and celebration.[27] Kaemingk says that a good Christian pluralist will seek to carefully listen to religious difference and "fiercely defend the public rights and freedoms of diverse religions and ideologies."[28] In other words, she will certainly accept descriptive pluralism because she recognize the worth of humans made in the image of God, and will desire to better understand them. She will also "absolutely insist" on the freedom for diverse religious communities to express their beliefs, even though she will absolutely disagree with them. However, she will stop short of fully embracing normative pluralism, instead dividing her evaluation of "cultural and structural diversity" from "ideological diversity." The Christian pluralist will acknowledge cultural and structural diversity by insisting that "God not only desires cultural diversity but also takes delight in pluriformity of human cultures." In this recognition, she will welcome

[27]Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 17.

[28]Ibid., 18.

diverse organizations, families, schools, universities, and artists. However, she will recognize that a person of a different faith has undeniably non-Christian "ideological diversity" with which she disagrees, and she will take no pleasure in knowing that this person is oriented wrongly in their beliefs. This will manifest in an interesting way in her life, because she will "faithfully describe other faiths, she [will] passionately defend their rights, and she [will] even praise their many contributions to the common good," while at the same time not delighting in their wrongly-oriented faith. While her wholehearted belief is to have everyone know Christ, she will never force it upon anyone.[29] One might note that liberal pluralism fully embraces normative pluralism by definition, which is where it both differs from Christian pluralism and where it fails. Unlike liberal pluralism, Christian pluralism allows for the retention of strongly-held religious beliefs and still upholds the God-given dignity of the religious stranger.

Importantly, Christian pluralists still maintain their commitment to Christ, and all of their commitments come from a desire to follow Christ's teachings. In the specific case of the Netherlands that Kaemingk frequently references, the Christian pluralist defends "Muslim rights and dignity…not on ambivalence [toward Christ], but on conviction. Following Christ, the pluralist is commanded to faithfully describe and politically defend Muslim clothing, literature, families, and schools."[30] Questioning the logic of this model, skeptics may ask how this conclusion was reached and how it can remain consistent with the Gospel message.

---

[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid., 19.

In response, Abraham Kuyper, leader of the nineteenth century Christian pluralists, offers a defense of hospitable pluralism that commands Christians to fully embrace their diverse neighbors under God's hospitality. Central to his argument is the orthodox belief that Christ has complete temporal and spatial sovereignty over creation. Recognizing Christ's temporal sovereignty is to acknowledge that Christ alone is sovereign over the history and future of political communities. His spatial sovereignty shows his unique rule over social spaces.[31]

Often, the refusal of the Church to acknowledge their neighbor is driven by the fear of conceding control of the future of their community. Yet, the Christian tradition holds that Christ (and *not* Christians) has ultimate sovereignty over past glory and future achievement of the state. Kaemingk points out that anti-immigrant rhetoric often follows one general thought: "'they' should not be part of 'our' national past, present, and future," and all misfortunes that befall a nation when immigrants are accepted are the fault of the immigrants.[32] The fallacy here is that the Christian claims sovereignty over the flourishing of the country, which is theologically inconsistent with Christ's divine sovereignty. Kaemingk writes:

> If Jesus Christ is sovereign over a nation's past origin, present development, and future end, then those who follow him may not claim total control over their nation's story. True Christian pluralists release the reigns of national history. They recognize that Christ and Christ alone guides the story of the nation, and that any past or future glory is not their own but is thanks to the providence of God.[33]

---

[31]Ibid., 124.

[32]Ibid., 125.

[33]Ibid.

Therefore, Christians must recognize that they are not politically superior to any other group and must "accept our position of equality before the law along with those who disagree with us."[34] Kuyper insists that only Christ will create the city in which all nations will gather, and it will be under his divine providence and kingship, not under human politics.[35] Notably, he claims that at the second coming, Christ will have a natural coercion of the nations in which they finally accept him. Until that time, Christians do not have a right to coercion over any other race or religion, and they must "accept [a] position of equality before the law…"[36] On this stage of equality under Christ's temporal sovereignty, Christians must not fear for the future of their community nor do they have any grounds to refuse the stranger.

Kuyper also asserts that under Christ's spatial sovereignty, all social spaces, whether Christian or not, receive their right to exist by Christ alone. Even religious communities that are opposed to Christianity receive their dignity and purpose as a gift from Christ. Therefore, a human political state must only acknowledge the existence of these communities, but it does not have the authority to accept or reject them.[37] Just as he gives these communities dignity, he will also be the one to confer judgement on these communities, determine their value, and decide their fate.[38] According to Kuyper, by recognizing Christ's sovereignty, Christians have no role in judging other religions in the

---

[34]Abraham Kuyper, "Maranatha," in *A Centennial Reader*, ed. James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 220–21.

[35]Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1953), 60.

[36]Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 125.

[37]Abraham Kuyper, "Sphere Soverignty" (Free University, October 20, 1880).

[38]Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 127.

public square, and since they are given dignity through Christ, they must therefore move to protect their right to exist.

Of course, the problematic aspects of Kuyper's work cannot be ignored. Further study of Kuyper reveals a troubling interpretation of Christianity that provides a misguided theological justification for the South African apartheid. Per theologian Piet Naude, Kuyper held a belief that "all people [have] a natural knowledge of God, based on general grace which forms the basis and stepping stone for special grace that leads to a higher knowledge of God in Christ."[39] According to these beliefs, a hierarchy can be constructed between people who know God through special grace and those who have not yet reached their full potential, relying only on natural grace:

> Kuyper's *Gemeene Gratie* brought these ideas to their ultimate practical effect: The three children of Noah reflect the various developmental levels: The children of Shem have received both common and special grace; those of Japhet benefited in a lesser sense from special grace, and the descendants of Ham show a clear lack of both forms of grace (he mentions the Zulu people of [South Africa]). They are therefore to be subservient to the other groups until they have reached the same level of development and civilization.[40]

From these beliefs and the influence of the Dutch Calvinist Church, South African apartheid politics were allowed to take shape. Knowing that Kuyper's work is deeply flawed, modern arguments for pluralism must respond to his foundation without affirming his tendency to defend racist divisions.

Kaemingk admits that though his exploration of pluralism is incredibly in-depth, Kuyper's theology leaves much to be desired. First, Kuyper's Christology is limited in

[39]Piet Naude, "From Pluralism to Ideology: The Roots of Apartheid Theology In," *Scriptura* 88 (2005): 163.

[40]Ibid., 163–64.

that it only identifies Jesus' sovereignty and kingship and forgets Christ's servanthood. Importantly, Kaemingk remarks that Christians are called to live public lives that seek both justice *and* service. Second, Kuyper fails to connect the theory of pluralism to legitimate action by the Church. His work advocated for the Church to form an intellectual understanding of pluralism, but he failed to develop a practical method through which Christians might embody it well through their worship. It is one thing to maintain a knowledge of Christian life that can include diverse cultures, but it is quite another to actually live it out. Though Kuyper missed it in his work, Kaemingk notes, his thoughts can inform Christian actions in the form of rituals, stories, prayers, and songs to cultivate pluralistic character within Christian worshippers. Finally, Kaemingk writes that Kuyper's theology of pluralism is oriented too much toward the political leader and not enough toward the common man. His oversight misses the importance of the small acts of hospitality, which Kaemingk argues function as "a potent cultural force" for acceptance.[41] Accordingly, Kuyper's missteps and lapses must be filled.

Responses to Kuyper

Kaemingk lists theologians who respond to Kuyper, among whom is Herman Bavnick, a Dutch pluralist who was Kuyper's contemporary. In an effort to rightly shape a pluralist form of Christian discipleship, Bavnick asserts that nothing about Jesus, his ministry, or his desires can be left out when trying to imitate his life. In order to rightly

[41]Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 160–62. "Standing alone, each [little] answer to Mecca and Amsterdam appears incomplete and insufficient. However, when brought together, these small and disparate acts of justice, hospitality, and grace function as a potent cultural force for civic tolerance, peace, and democracy."

follow Christ, Christians must have a full understanding of his life and not leave anything out. With such an in-depth understanding of the desires of Christ, Christians can then use individual discernment to wrestle with the "scriptural stories of the whole and concrete Christ."[42] In other words, "while the virtues to which the imitation of Christ calls us are the same, circumstances may modify the application."[43] He reached this conclusion because he believed that the work of Christ is so wide-reaching and multifactorial that it cannot be easily summarized. When relating to the stranger, there is no one good answer. However, a full account of Christ's life points us in the right direction.

A good place to look for how Christ deals with strangers is on the night before his crucifixion. When Jesus is arrested in the garden of Gethsemane, his disciple Peter cuts off the ear of Malchus, the slave of the high priest. Jesus, bound and held captive by the Roman soldiers, rebukes Peter and heals the slave who is loyal to his enemies.[44] Klaas Schilder views this as the culmination of Christ's earthly ministry and the beginning of God's "day of Jubilee" for all of creation. Throughout this day of Jubilee, Christ acts as the liberator of all slaves, though he himself is a slave. Schilder imagines Christ saying: "Listen my son; Listen, Malchus: I am the priest who would become a slave in order to convert servants into lords."[45] This action brings forth the attitude of Christ toward the

[42]Ibid., 170.

[43]Herman Bavnick, *De Navolging van Christus En Het Moderne Leven*, trans. John Bolt (Kampen: Kok, 1918), 142–43; Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 170.

[44]Matthew 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:51; John 18:10–11

[45]Klass Schilder, "Christ's Last Wonder in the State of Humiliation: The Liberator of Slaves in the Form of a Slave," in *Christ in His Sufferings*, trans. Henry Zylstra (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1938), 415; Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 175.

oppressed, even toward his enemies. During his final miracle, Christ illuminates that acts of liberation and justice for the oppressed are central to his mission.[46]

Followers of Christ must equally recognize the day of Jubilee and be merciful to the oppressed. When facing religious strangers, the Church recognizes Christ's concern for the poor. Importantly, it must also recognize that Jesus did not simply heal a friend, but he showed mercy for his enemy. Recognizing the needs of the stranger is not only encouraged under Christ's life, it is mandatory. Schilder's reflections demonstrate the need for the Church to embrace the small actions of healing that bring the stranger closer. Jesus' healing of Malchus reflects a small event in Malchus' life with no follow up. Kaemingk writes, "It is instructive that Malchus' ultimate fate is never explored in the biblical account. Readers are not told whether he ultimately joined the Jesus movement. The force of the narrative is on Christ's initial act of healing…"[47] The mundane acts of mercy toward the stranger are powerfully significant and reflective of Christ's mission.

While fighting for the liberation of the one who comes to bind it, the Church must also be aware of its guilt in the crucifixion of Jesus. Schilder argues that when the world placed Christ upon the cross, stripping and mocking him, humanity revealed its nature. Kaemingk summarizes Schilder's argument well:

> [T]he stripping of Jesus lays bare humanity's pretensions of morality, tolerance, and intelligence. Christ's nakedness exposes our acts of benevolence as a thin and tattered cloth feebly covering our deeper desires for domination and oppression…. For in his disrobing we are fully exposed. We see ourselves as who we truly are—violent, fearful, and selfish.[48]

---

[46]Schilder, "Christ's Last Wonder in the State of Humiliation: The Liberator of Slaves in the Form of a Slave," 415–34.

[47]Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 180.

[48]Ibid., 178; Klass Schilder, "Christ Disrobed," in *Christ in His Sufferings*, trans. Henry Zylstra (Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1938), 169–87.

When the Church operates in the world, it must be aware of its temptation toward cultural oppression and political control. It must also recognize that in Christ's nakedness, its sinfulness was simultaneously laid bare and covered by the clothing of righteousness in Christ. When facing other cultures, the Church must be humble and remember to rely on the gift of Christ's righteousness. It is only out of his gift that the Church will be able to act rightly.

Conclusion

Christian pluralism provides an excellent framework that is predisposed for hospitality. It does so by maintaining the integrity of particular religious communities without asking the Christian to diminish her beliefs. Kaemingk's reading of Kuyper provides a political theology in which Christians need not fear their moral strangers and can instead embrace them. It is clear that Christians also have no need to question the consistency of this work with the Gospel message because it is clearly demonstrated through the life of Christ. When uncertain about facing societal and religious strangers, Christ's life provides an example for how to act. Unlike the Kuyperian Christology which recognizes Christ only as sovereign, Christians must recognize every aspect of Christ—he was also healer and friend to the outcast. When worshippers are intimately familiar with his life, they will be able to use discernment to determine how to act toward their neighbor. Just as Christ's actions are consistent yet diverse, the Church must be multifaceted in its work. Small acts of mercy and hospitality directed at the stranger are important to discipleship. Christians must also recognize that their ability to interact with the stranger is only from the gifts of the Savior, and they must avoid our human tendency

to oppress. Recognizing the totality of Christ's divine nature helps to construct a complex understanding of how to approach Christian discipleship and hospitality in relation to the stranger.

By acknowledging that there is a significant place for hospitality in Christianity, it must also be said that the Church's emphasis on it has been largely diminished throughout history and it does not practice it openly as it should. Various movements have attempted to argue for methods to more openly demonstrate hospitality, but they have often either relied on non-Christian philosophy or otherwise failed. Using the concepts of pluralism as outlined by Kuyper and the responses to Kuyper, the next chapter will list some suggestions for the Church and the Christian to incorporate hospitality in their daily lives.

CHAPTER FIVE

Unadulterated Hospitality and Suggestions for the Church

This thesis has presented many versions of hospitality in an attempt to illustrate the complexity of how it has been interpreted throughout history. Disputes over how to extend it and to whom it should be offered have shaken nations and created significant roadblocks for minority groups and those deemed "other." Its economic and political implications make it a powerful tool that can easily be misused to gain or maintain social status. Greater than its worldly usefulness, hospitality is theologically significant in its role in the relationship between God and Christians. If there is any question of its importance, the account of Jesus' ministry on earth will dispel any doubt of God's hospitable nature. Based on the life of Christ and its theological significance as unpacked in earlier chapters, it must be said that hospitality is important to the worship and political life of Christians. Since the practice is largely absent from the modern Church, a determination must be made regarding how the Church arrived in a place where hospitality is limited. This chapter will serve as a brief investigation into the causes of the Church's motion away from hospitality and conclude with viable suggestions for a revitalization of hospitality within Christian life.

The hospitality of God is a gift that the Church has acknowledged to greater and lesser degrees at different points in history. The life and ministry of Jesus testify to its importance and power in the eyes of God. During his life on earth, Jesus often framed his parables and metaphors about the kingdom through stories of hospitality. He also spent a substantial amount of time ministering to the poor and outcast (i.e. the stranger)

and talking about how the gates of heaven are open to them. When he spoke to strangers, he offered them the love of God. There are many tangible examples of hospitality within the earthly life of Jesus, especially the feeding of the multitudes and the offering of the Passover feast. The way that he taught his disciples was through offering them gifts of food and drink, words of wisdom, and preparing them for the journey that they had ahead of them. Much like an ancient host, Jesus freely offered gifts to his guests before sending them on their way. At the ascension, he instructed his disciples to teach others to do what they had observed Jesus do.[1] The commandment to make disciples is an instruction to extend God's hospitality to the world, and so to bring strangers into the community of Christ. To share the Gospel is an act of hospitality.

Clearly the Gospel is a story of hospitality, as Jesus constantly flips his role in the world from rejected guest to generous host. While he continues to be rejected by the establishments of the world, he still continues to offer physical and spiritual gifts to all who follow him. He systematically offered material gifts that culminate in the more significant gift of his own life, which in turn bears welcome into the presence and love of God. Though he is rejected as a guest by his own creation, his behavior as host in the world demonstrates the right order of things—God is host, not guest. When creation is rightly ordered, God is recognized as the perfect host and the source of all perfect hospitality. The scene of the elders worshipping around the throne in Revelation 4 is demonstrative of how perfect God's gifts are, and how they should be accepted with thanks.

---

[1]Matthew 28:19-20, John 14:12

In their songs of praise and thanksgiving, the twenty-four elders acknowledge that even our existence is a gift from the ultimate host: "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."[2] The ongoing worship of the Church is a reflection of this hospitable reality. The narrative of the Church is evidence of its sustaining through the hospitality of God mediated by Christ's body. Importantly, this story is not merely a collection of individual stories that make up a congregation that meets together. When God offered welcome through the Son, his invitation was not simply entrance into the kingdom, but also an offer of participation in his divine love. This is what makes God the perfect host—the invitation is given in continued excess so that accepting it is to become a part of something much larger than any individual through the love of God. When the Church worships, it is an act of participation in God's nature, and is thus saturated with hospitality. Given that accepting God's invitation is an entrance into the communal life that exists between God and his people and between the people and one another, it follows that hospitality, the means by which the invitation is extended, is a gift to be recognized communally. Certainly, God's hospitality is extended to individuals, but through acceptance they become part of a community greater than the sum of its parts. Proper worship, which is in part a recognition of and ongoing participation in hospitality, should be constructed in a way reflective of this reality.

The appropriate response to this rightly-ordered worship is the continued extension of hospitality outward from the Church. One of the major problems in regard to hospitality is the individualization of worship, in which disregard for God's hospitality

[2]Revelation 4:11

precludes the Church's ability to extend it outward. As illustrated in earlier chapters, the practices of the Church have changed along with shifts in culture. It is tempting to react to this with a desire to violently remove the Church from culture since the Gospel's unchanging truth has an authority clearly set beyond culture; yet as Lesslie Newbigin points out, the embodiment of Christ illuminates a Gospel saturated with culture.[3] Newbigin illustrates this idea by asking the reader to consider a cross-cultural missionary who is sharing Jesus with a foreign culture to his own:

> The Jesus whom [they] thus accept will be the Jesus presented to [them] by the missionary. It will be Jesus as the missionary perceives him. It is only necessary to look at the visual representation of Jesus in the art of different people through the past eighteen centuries, or to read the lives of Jesus written in the past 150 years, to understand that Jesus is always perceived and can only be perceived through the eyes of a particular culture.[4]

Though the message of the Gospel is unmoving and unchanging, it cannot be completely separated from culture, so the Church must acknowledge how it has contextualized it through its own cultural lens. The American-read Gospel is reflective of a culture of individualist consumerism, so it will tend to be laid out as an individual mandate rather than a corporate reality.

Western society has been trending towards that since the Enlightenment, when public thought began to be influenced by the advent of modern science. Theologian Barry Harvey writes that during this time, Renaissance humanists rejected the idea that

---

[3]Lesslie Newbigin, "Post-Enlightenment Culture as a Missionary Problem," in *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 4. "The idea that one can or could at any time separate out by some process of distillation a pure Gospel unadulterated by any cultural accretions is an illusion. It is, in fact, an abandonment of the Gospel, for the Gospel is about the word made flesh."

[4]Ibid., 8.

human beings exist as humans only within the contingent hospitality of the triune God, instead holding an image of humanity as "unfettered by the physical body or the webs of interlocution embedded in social and geographical ties."[5] The ability for man to use scientific reasoning was enough to liberate him from the grip of history. Through this line of thinking, humanity came into full control of its own destiny, unencumbered by the influence of religion.[6] Rather than being ruled by the thinking of theology, the public square had become a place where measurability told the story of creation. By extension, some people argued that religions created a "social regime of power" to hide the true nature of the world from humanity, "and only in this, the age of science, [was humanity] able to poke holes in this canopy and see what the universe is really like."[7] What followed was a desacralization of the public realm so that humanity could pursue its own answers through rational and scientific thinking.

In response to this, religion saw a dramatic shift into private life. Precisely because of its *private* nature, the private world has entered a sort of pluralist state in which there are no suggested ways of living, but where each person can independently exist in her personal substantive reality. It is up to her to decide the best way to live and establish her own values. Newbigin argues that this "separation of value from fact" is a

---

[5]Barry Harvey, *Another City: An Ecclesiological Primer for a Post-Christian World*, Christian Mission and Modern Culture (Harrisburg, Pa: Trinity Press International, 1999), 105.

[6]Ibid., 107. "The dramatic vision of an entirely human order on earth, erected solely with human capacities and resources, served implicitly to narrate the story of the everyday world without reference to the God who had previously been its premise and principle character."

[7]Ibid., 111.

major factor in the privatization of Protestant Christianity.[8] The emphasis is on the personal faith rather than the communal faith, leading to a culture in which congregants are encouraged to keep their faith and values to themselves.

Of course, the cultural bend toward individual choice is part of the issue addressed by Kuyper against liberal pluralism. Liberal pluralism fails because it tries to reconcile morally saturated cultures by repressing their beliefs and ability to carry them proudly in public, which oppressively informs a believer that her belief is not valued. In response, she will either need to give up her belief, fight the culture, or disengage with it. Similarly, Christians must not keep their beliefs to themselves, but acknowledge their role as members of the body of Christ, sharing their faithful lives with others and recognizing the value of others' stories. The corporate beliefs of the Church set it apart from the rest of the world; maintaining the body of Christ by acknowledging both its component persons and its sustained existence through God is important to determining its place the world. When its role and beliefs are concretely defined, the body of Christ will then be able to hospitably engage with those outside the Church because there will be a body of belief into which they can be invited. In a sense, the focus on the individual at the expense of the corporate misses one of the main roles of the Church, which is to act as the conduit for God's hospitality and the place from which it flows in excess.

In order to do so, the Church must change the way that it thinks about itself and its encultured place in the world. Newbigin's work on the Gospel also comments that

---

[8]Ibid. "The separation of value from fact is reflected in the separation of private from public life that is one of the characteristics of our culture. And, as I shall argue, the response of the Christian churches—or at least the Protestant churches—to the challenge of the Enlightenment was to accept the dichotomy and withdraw into the private sector…where it can influence the choice of values by those who take this option."

because of its existence as a culturally-saturated reality, the Gospel also offers a unique critique of culture. Where the tendency of post-industrial life is to isolate into individual careers, homes, and lives, the Gospel offers an alternative politic of community life that the Church should strive to uphold.[9] Using the Gospel as a critique of culture, the Church will recognize that a congregation that is rightly practicing worship will be equipped to demonstrate outward hospitality because it will be overflowing with the hospitality of God; therefore, the American Protestant Church should uncover its tendency to interpret the Gospel message in terms of American culture and find ways to act counter-culturally for the sake of hospitality. This will involve active conversations about hospitality by congregational leadership to put it back in the minds of their congregants. Since it has been so downplayed for most of the modern era, it will be rather difficult for these conversations to take place. It will require the Church to acknowledge its tendency to contextualize the Gospel in terms of its culture, and it will require action around that to emphasize the corporate reality of worship and hospitality despite their surrounding culture.

This of course will require a dose of humility. If it hopes to be welcoming to the world, the Church cannot pretend to be isolated from it nor can it impose its moral high ground over another culture. If it wants to be heard by the world, the Church must instead be open to hearing and welcoming the world, which can be accomplished through humility. Matthew Kaemingk suggests that the Church can offer three types of prayer for humility that are vital to being openly hospitable: prayers of illumination, confession, and

---

[9]Lesslie Newbigin, "Post-Enlightenment Culture as a Missionary Problem," 4.

intercession.[10] When Christians pray for illumination, they are recognizing that their faith is not simply enough to fully understand the complexities of God's nature and desire. Christians admit that their individual ability to interpret scripture is like looking "through a glass darkly," but that the Holy Spirit and their collectivity can help to illuminate Scripture.[11] The ministerial leaders and the congregants should admit that they need the rest of the Church and God to receive the full gift of Scripture. Through prayers of confession and open dialogue with one another, the Church will establish a precedent of subordination to God and his will, because he is greater than the Church. This practice aligns Christians together in humility, binding them by a recognition of their sinful failures rather than their individual excellence. Finally, Christians can engage in prayers of intercession as means toward self-forgetfulness. Praying for one another unites believers in prayer and enhances their ability to connect to people outside of themselves. In intercessory prayer, "the black worshipper prays for the white, and the white worshipper for the black. Men pray for women, and women for men…. They pray for neighborhoods and nations, friends and enemies."[12] Intra-congregational hospitality for one another through prayer is a necessary precondition for hospitality toward the stranger. The construction of a culture of humility is a precursor to hospitality because it assumes a diminished placement of self in the world, which also helps to form rightly ordered worship. This background work is important to construct before any kind of practiced hospitality toward the stranger can realistically begin. The Christian is

---

[10]Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 228.

[11]1 Corinthians 13:12

[12]Kaemingk, *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*, 229.

humbled through receiving God's hospitality in worship, which is what sets Christian hospitality apart from that of the rest of the world. Without this humility, a Christian practicing hospitality will tend to look a lot like she is engaged in tiered hospitality for social gain, simply acknowledging the stranger when it benefits her. Instead, Christian hospitality is an extension of God's divinely gifted hospitality that is accepted in humility, so its practice is motivated by the abundance of God's hospitable provision rather than by social gain.

Properly constructed humility will also challenge individualized worship. The prayer for illumination demonstrates the attitude needed to recognize the community of worship above personal worship. The subsequent prayers build on this mindset to remind the worshipper of her subordination to God and move her closer to the community around her. Importantly, Christians must recognize that hospitality is the mechanism through which God offers himself to his Church, and the way that the ongoing communion between God and his people is mediated. Given its broad importance, it should be a well-covered topic of conversation so that hospitality will be integrated into vocabularies of all worshippers. When the mechanism of their communion with God is made more readily apparent through teaching about hospitality, it is more likely that Christians will be more open to welcoming the stranger because it will finally be in their vocabulary. Unless the Church teaches hospitality as important to the daily life of worship, it will be absent from the lives of worshippers. Open conversation about hospitality stemming from right worship and wholehearted humility will thrust the importance of the practice into the habits of believers.

If humility is rightly constructed, it should be relatively simple for Christians to welcome in other Christians and engage with them fully. There will be no presupposition of superiority between any two worshippers, and through their worship they should be overflowing with the compassionate hospitality of God through Christ. In response, a healthy congregation will intimately know one another and care for one another as an extension of their individual and communal life with God. There should be no member of the local church going hungry or wanting for anything, because out of hospitality the other members will have provided for these needs. This is clearly evident in the hospitable lifestyle of the New Testament Church, as outlined in chapter three. When everything has recognizably flowed outward from the hospitality of God, it will become second nature to meet the material needs of other Christians. Simultaneously, every Christian should feel encouraged by the other worshippers and should truly feel that she is part of the community. Just as Jesus encouraged others through continued invitation into his own life, the lives of Christians should be open for others to enter and participate, creating a sense of belonging and fellowship in the Church.

It is also important for Christians to acknowledge the difficulty (but not the impossibility) of cross-cultural and cross-faith engagement. Humility means Christians have no moral high-ground over another culture, so cultural strangers can be engaged with one another. It is perhaps understandable that there may be some degree of fear, but Christians must realize that Christ is the ultimate host and that Christian faith supports its practice. Welcoming the stranger who does not profess Christianity is not a betrayal of faith. As Kuyper argues, if Christians truly hold orthodox beliefs, they will recognize that Christ (and *not* the Christian) has ultimate sovereignty over their own lives and the

life of their political community.[13] Engaging with the stranger is dangerous, but it is demanded by Christ. Dutch Christian leader Gert Hunnick has insisted that "fear is not an acceptable guide for Christian political action. Being in Christ, disciples have no right to fear Islam…. The only thing we *can* be afraid of is a weak church that does not faithfully reflect our savior's love and hospitality."[14]

With all of this held in mind, Christians should begin by learning as much as they can about their moral and cultural strangers. Studying another religion or culture does not ask the Christian to give up her convictions, it simply asks her to consider the seriousness with which others hold their beliefs. Learning about Islam, for example, allows a Christian to view her Muslim neighbor without turning to a fear of the unknown that often dominates the American cultural mind. As Kaemingk writes, Christian listening and learning can quickly be transformed to Christian empathy and friendship.[15] A commitment to understanding the stranger relieves feelings of fear without ignoring the differences between the two parties; instead, it simply offers a civil discussion of these differences.[16] Forming attitudes of welcome and extending hospitality are the first steps towards forming community with the stranger.

The point of hospitality is to move the stranger from a state of otherness to a welcome guest and eventually into community. Serge de Boer of the Christian organization *Oase voor Niew-West* (Oasis for New West) has said, "I don't think

---

[13]Ibid., 125.

[14]Ibid., 258.

[15]Ibid., 246.

[16]Ibid.

[refugees]…want to be served by a community, they want to be a part of a community."[17] This movement is like the relationship between guest and host in the ancient era; the stranger remained a stranger until he was invited in to the home and daily life of his host. He then would become guest, and if the relationship continued, he would form a guest-friendship with the host and enter into the host's community. Similarly, Christians should invite strangers to be guests in their daily lives with the hope of bringing them into their community.

The easiest way to do this is by simply inviting people over for dinner. The dinners in Kansas are a wonderful example of how to practice hospitality well because they demonstrate the Christian commitment to caring for the stranger despite cultural expectation. In a place where refugees have been marginalized and feared, Christians sought to show them the hospitality of God. At these dinners, the otherness of the stranger was invited into the familiarity of personal space to share a meal, and that is where the power of hospitality was observed. The "micro-politics" of food, as Kaemingk calls it, can fundamentally change the posture of entire communities. Food is quite obviously a basic human need, but it also has spiritual and cultural roles as well. After all, the table is where Christ first offers his body and blood, and the place that Christian worshippers are called to take the Eucharist. When people eat together, they share an intimate practice that is usually reserved for personal homes and those with whom they are most familiar. During engagement around the table, "[people] are much more relaxed, open, and willing to talk to those around [them]."[18] Hospitality has the power to

---

[17]Ibid., 251.

[18]Ibid.

transform the stranger from a mysterious object of fear to a human being that wants to share a meal just as much as the rest of the world. Engaging in meals with one another also does more than just break down personal barriers—it can start to change the hearts and minds of communities.[19] In the midst of extreme cultural fear of the unknown and resistance to hospitality, small actions like inviting the stranger over for dinner are incredibly powerful in shifting community paradigms. Sharing a meal, a cup of coffee, and an open door to the stranger and the friend alike are practical steps that all Christians can take.

I am certainly not suggesting that it is always this simple, but it is somewhere to start. This thesis does not intend to offer just one solution for demonstrating hospitality. It does, however, mandate that hospitality be seriously considered as a virtuous and important practice within the Church because of the overwhelmingly support for it by the reality of Christ's life. The political and theological framework that is outlined serves as a guide for how Christians can orient themselves and their notions of hospitality within the diverse world. The practical outcome of this may look different for each person, but it should always flow out of the abundance of God's hospitality. Though it may be difficult, this still holds true in the increasingly complex and fragmented world that we currently inhabit. If we are to truly be disciples, we must recognize that even in time of fear, our God did not just offer love (though he did this as well), but he offered himself completely to a world of strangers.[20]

---

[19]Ibid., 250–52.

[20]Ibid., 299.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arterbury, Andrew. *Entertaining Angels: Early Christian Hospitality in Its Mediterranean Setting*. New Testament Monographs 8. Phoenix: Sheffield Press, 2005.

———. “Entertaining Angels: Hospitality in Luke and Acts.” In *Christian Reflection on Hospitality*, 20–26. The Center for Christian Ethics, Baylor University, 2007.

Bangstad, Sindre. “Amplifying Islam in the European Soundscape: Religious Pluralism and Secularism in the Netherlands. Pooyan Tamimi Arab. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. 216 Pp.” *American Ethnologist* 45, no. 4 (2018): 580–81.

Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics the Doctrine of Creation: The Work of Creation (Church Dogmatics) III.1*. Pbk ed. edition. London: T&T Clark, 2004.

Bavnick, Herman. *De Navolging van Christus En Het Moderne Leven*. Translated by John Bolt. Kampen: Kok, 1918.

Beard, Mary. *The Fires of Vesuvius: Pompeii Lost and Found*. Harvard University Press, 2010.

Bennett, Kyle David, and Jeppe Bach Nikolajsen. “The Practice of Pluralism: Jeffrey Stout and Abraham Kuyper on Religion and Civil Solidarity.” *International Journal of Public Theology* 8, no. 1 (January 2014): 67–84.

Bock, Darrell L. *Luke*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament 3. Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Books, 1994.

Bolchazy, Ladislaus J. *Hospitality in Antiquity*. Chicago: Ares Publishers, 1995.

Bullón-Fernández, María. “Poverty, Property, and the Self in the Late Middle Ages: The Case of Chaucer’s Griselda.” Mediaevalia, July 1, 2014.

Byrne, Brendan. *The Hospitality of God: A Reading of Luke’s Gospel*. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2017.

Casson, Lionel. *Travel in the Ancient World*. Johns Hopkins Paperbacks ed. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.

Cicero, Marcus Tullius. *On Duties*. Edited by E. M. Atkins. Translated by Miriam T. Griffin. Cambrige University Press, 1991.

Clarke, W. K. Lowther. *St. Basil the Great: A Study in Monasticism*. Cambridge University Press, 1913.

Coleman, Janet. "Property and Poverty." In *The Cambridge History of Medieval Political Thought*, edited by J. H. Burns. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

———. "The Individual and the Medieval State." In *The Individual in Political Theory and Practice*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

Copson, Andrew. *Secularism: Politics, Religion, and Freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Crenshaw, James L. *The Psalms: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

Fish, Stanley. "Boutique Multiculturalism, or Why Liberals Are Incapable of Thinking about Hate Speech." *Critical Inquiry* 23, no. 2 (1997): 378–95.

Fortin, Jacey. "3 Men Sentenced in Plot to Bomb Somali Immigrants in Kansas." *The New York Times*, January 27, 2019, sec. U.S. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/26/us/kansas-militia-trial-sentencing.html.

George, Michele. "Domestic Architecture and Household Relations: Pompeii and Roman Ephesos." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 27, no. 1 (September 1, 2004): 7–25.

Greenstone, Julius H. "Hospitality." In *The Jewish Encyclopedia: A Descriptive Record of the History, Religion, Literature, and Customs of the Jewish People from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*, VI:480–81. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1904.

Harvey, Barry. *Another City: An Ecclesiological Primer for a Post-Christian World*. Christian Mission and Modern Culture. Harrisburg, Pa: Trinity Press International, 1999.

Herman, G. "Friendship, Ritualized." In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Classics*. Oxford University Press, n.d.

Homer. *Iliad*. Translated by Stanley Lombardo. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co, 1997.

———. *The Odyssey*. Translated by Robert Fagles. Penguin Classics. Penguin Books, 1996.

Hubbard, Moyer V. *Christianity in the Greco-Roman World*. Hendrickson Publishers, 2010.

Jones, Arnold Hugh Martin. *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*. University of Toronto Press, 1978.

Kaemingk, Matthew. *Christian Hospitality and Muslim Immigration in an Age of Fear*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2018.

Koenig, John. *New Testament Hospitality: Partnerships with Strangers as Promise and Mission*. Vol. 17. Overtures to Biblical Theology. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985.

Kuyper, Abraham. *Lectures on Calvinism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1953.

———. “Maranatha.” In *A Centennial Reader*, edited by James D. Bratt. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998.

———. “Sphere Soverignty.” Free University, October 20, 1880.

Long, D. Stephen. “God Is Not Nice.” In *God Is Not…*, edited by D. Brent Laytham, 2nd Printing edition. Grand Rapids, Mich: Brazos Press, 2004.

Martin, Lee Roy. “Old Testament Foundations for Christian Hospitality.” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 35, no. 1 (January 1, 2014): 1.

Mittelstadt, Martin William. “Eat, Drink, and Be Merry: A Theology of Hospitality in Luke-Acts.” *Word & World* 34, no. 2 (2014): 131–39.

Moore, Michael Scott. “The Battle for the Soul of America in Garden City, Kansas.” Medium, February 13, 2019. https://medium.com/s/reasonable-doubt/the-somali-refugees-living-in-kansas-loved-america-so-did-the-locals-who-tried-to-kill-them-f37ade1ccc4a.

“Muslim Population Growth in Europe.” *Pew Research Center: Global Attitudes and Trends* (blog), November 29, 2017. http://www.pewforum.org/2017/11/29/europes-growing-muslim-population/.

Naude, Piet. “From Pluralism to Ideology: The Roots of Apartheid Theology.” *Scriptura* 88 (2005): 161–73.

Newbigin, Lesslie. “Post-Enlightenment Culture as a Missionary Problem.” In *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Newman, Elizabeth. *Untamed Hospitality*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2007.

Olson, Dennis T. “The Book of Judges: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflection.” *NIB* II (n.d.): 721–888.

Ostrand, Nicole. “The Syrian Refugee Crisis: A Comparison of Responses by Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.” *Journal on Migration and Human Security* 3, no. 3 (2015): 255–79.

Pieper, Josef. *Leisure: The Basis of Culture*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009.

Pohl, Christine D. *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*. W.B. Eerdmans, 1999.

Pressler, Jessica. “A Militia’s Plot to Bomb Somali Refugees in a Kansas Town.” Intelligencer, December 12, 2017. http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2017/12/a-militias-plot-to-bomb-somali-refugees-in-garden-city-ks.html.

“Record 1.3 Million Sought Asylum in Europe in 2015.” *Pew Research Center: Global Attitudes and Trends* (blog), August 2, 2016. http://www.pewglobal.org/2016/08/02/number-of-refugees-to-europe-surges-to-record-1-3-million-in-2015/.

Reece, Steve. *The Stranger’s Welcome*. Monographs in Classical Antiquity. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993.

“Regional Distribution of Christians.” *Pew Research Center: Global Attitudes and Trends* (blog), December 19, 2011. http://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-regions/.

Resseguie, James L. *Spiritual Landscape: Images of the Spiritual Life in the Gospel of Luke*. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Social Contract*. New York: Cosimo, 2008.

“Rural Kansas Hospital Focuses on ‘Mission-Driven’ Medicine to Recruit Doctors.” Kansas Health Institute. Accessed April 3, 2019. https://www.khi.org/news/article/rural-kansas-hospital-focuses-mission-driven-medic.

Sahlins, Marshall. *Stone Age Economics*. Routledge Classics. Taylor and Francis, 2017.

Schilder, Klass. “Christ Disrobed.” In *Christ in His Sufferings*, translated by Henry Zylstra. Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1938.

———. “Christ’s Last Wonder in the State of Humiliation: The Liberator of Slaves in the Form of a Slave.” In *Christ in His Sufferings*, translated by Henry Zylstra. Grand Rapids, Mich: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1938.

Silvas, Anna M. “Interpreting the Motives of Basil’s Social Doctrine.” *Journal of the Australian Early Medieval Association* 5 (2009).

Stock, George. “Hospitality (Greek and Roman).” In *ERE*, VI:808–12, n.d.

Stout, Jeffrey. *Democracy and Tradition*, 2009.

Stürmer, Stefan, Anette Rohmann, Laura Froehlich, and Jolanda van der Noll. “Muslim Immigration, Critical Events, and the Seeds of Majority Members’ Support for Radical Responses: An Interactionist Perspective.” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 45, no. 1 (January 1, 2019): 133–45.

The Rule of Benedict. Vol. 12. Western Asceticism. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1958.

Thompson, Bryan. “Southwest Kansas Dinner Exchange Aims To Bridge Cultural Gaps.” Accessed March 15, 2019. https://www.kcur.org/post/southwest-kansas-dinner-exchange-aims-bridge-cultural-gaps.

Tierney, Brian. *Medieval Poor Law: A Sketch of Canonical Theory and Its Application in England*. University of California Press, 1959.

Uhlhorn, Gerhard. *Christian Charity in the Ancient Church*. New York, 1883.

Vullings, Jeroen. “Volgens: Fouad Laroui.” *Vrij Nederland*, October 14, 2006.

Zaken, Ministerie van Algemene. “Refugees in the Netherlands - Asylum Policy - Government.Nl.” Onderwerp, May 3, 2016. https://www.government.nl/topics/asylum-policy/refugees-in-the-netherlands.