

INTRODUCTION

Almost All of Us Live in a House!

- ♥ Irrespective of the **cost** of our **house**

- ♥ Irrespective whether our **house belongs** to **us** or has been occupied on **rent**

- ♥ Irrespective of the **size, style** or **shape** of our **house**

- ♥ Irrespective whether your **house** is a **bungalow**, a **cottage**, a **Cape Dutch** a **log cabin** or a **Farm** house or an **igloo**

- ♥ Irrespective whether your **house** is an **apartment**, a **single room** house, a **three bedroom** house or a **condominium**

- ♥ Irrespective whether our is a **tiled floor** or a **cement floor**

We can **choose** to have the *doors of our homes* **closed** to **others** (**I, me** and **myself**) or to have our **homes open** to **others**!

Dr. Ajith Fernando in his Commentary on the Book of Acts States that

There are **four types** of **hospitality** in this **2nd Volume** of **Dr. Luke**:

- 1) Having **believers** over for **fellowship** and **meals** (Acts 2: 46)
- 2) Having **traveling Christians** staying in our **homes**(Acts 9: 43)
- 3) Having **non Christians** over in our **homes** (Acts 10: 23)
- 4) Having **Christians** over who have a **special need** (Acts 18: 26)¹

Bible Reading: Luke 14: 1 – 14.

Text: Luke 14: 13

¹ Ajith Fernando., *The NIV Application Commentary* (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids Michigan, USA: 1998), P. 324.

"But when you give a banquet, invite (command) the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind"

Topic: *Is our Homes Opened or Closed to Others?*

WHO SHOULD INVITE?

📖 After the **synagogue service** on the **Sabbath**, **Jesus** together with some **other guest** were **invited** by a **prominent Pharisee** for **lunch**

📖 The **Pharisee** invited **Jesus** with the **intention** of **trapping** Him

📖 He placed a man **suffering** from a **disease** called '**dropsy**' in **front of Jesus**, to see whether our **Lord** would **heal on the Sabbath**

(**Dr. Luke** - an **accumulation** of **fluid** in **parts** of the **body**)

📖 **Not only** did Jesus **heal** this **man** but also **related** '**a parable about reserved seats**' to the **host** and his **guest**

During this Meal, Jesus Noticed that Most of the People Invited by the Pharisee were Important People

📖 Therefore at the **end of the meal**, Jesus leaves **one more message** with the **host**, from **verse 12** onwards

📖 Our Lord **wanted** his **Pharisee friend** to **know** that the **next time** he invites people for **dinner** or **supper**, he should **not call** his **friends** or **rich neighbours** but rather **call the poor** and the **disabled!**

*The Bible Declares in Hebrews 13: 2 that Disciples of Jesus Should;
"(not) forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!"*

(NLT)

"Be ready with a meal or a bed when it's needed. Why, some have extended hospitality to angels without ever knowing it!"

(Message)

Friends, when was it **last** that you and I **entertain angels** at home!

WHOM SHOULD WE INVITE?

📖 Not that our **Lord** is **literally forbidding** us having *normal social life*, for He knows that 'birds of same feathers would flock together' which is **natural** and **good**

📖 Nor is our **Lord** **prohibiting inviting relatives** and *friends* for a meal

📖 Our **Lord** wanted the **Pharisee** to **know** that when he **invites** only those who are **financially** and **socially** in a **position** to **reciprocate** his invitation, he has **failed** to **practice hospitality** which **literally** means to '*show love to a stranger*'

📖 Furthermore, **another reason** our Lord tells the **Pharisee, not to invite** to **dine**, his **relatives, friends** and **acquaintances** is because - if the **rich socialized only** with the **rich**; and the **educated only** with the **educated**; and the **powerful only** with the **powerful**; what would **happen** to the **rest of society**?

Jesus wants the **Gospel** to be **extended** to those **declared unworthy** by **religious groups** like the **Pharisees** - such as

- ♥ The **poor** who are **destitute** at **times** have to **beg** from **others**
- ♥ The **disabled** who are **disfigured** are often **immobilized** in a **limb**
- ♥ The **lame** and
- ♥ The **blind** - who may not only be **physically blind** but many with **sight** who may be **spiritually blind**

Like the Pharisee who Invited his "Own People" to his Home, Many of us Christians Often Invite Only Fellow Christians to our Homes

- ♥ In **Sri Lanka** I have **observed** Christians **organize** a **sea food night**, or celebrate a **birthday** or organize a **Christmas get together** and **almost 100%** of the **guest** are **Christians**

♥ In **Australia** I have **observed** Christians **invite** people **before** or **after** the **Sunday service** for a **cup of coffee** or for a **light meal** and **almost 100%** of those **invited** are **Christians**

HOW CAN WE INVITE?

♥ We can **invite people** to our **homes** for either a **meeting** or for a **meal**

The Early Church Met for Almost 3½ Centuries in 'House Churches'
(At **times** their **non Christian** friends and neighbors too would be **present**)

Today Most Growing Churches have House Church Fellowships

◆ The **prohibited Church** in **China** (largest **church growth** the **church** has **ever seen** these two **centuries**)

◆ The **Church** in **South Korea**

◆ And in **Sri Lanka** and **AOG** and the **Four Square Church** have **cell groups** that meet in **homes**

♥ By **opening your home** too, for **Cottage meetings**, **Bible Studies**, **Cell Group meetings**, and **prayer meetings** we can **make our non Christian friends** who may **feel uneasy** to **enter a church building**, feel at **home** and **hear the good news** that **Jesus saves us from sin**.

We can also Offer Hospitality to our Non Christian Friends

♥ Yet, **many Christians** are **reluctant** to **host** others in their **homes**

An **American Pastor**, **Donald Bubna** conducted a **survey** to **find reasons** as to why **Christians** are **reluctant** to **invite others** into their **homes** and he **discovered** the **following**:

1) **Fright**

2) **Furniture** (the **cost of food** and **tiredness** of **entertaining others** was **ranked much less** in the **list!**)

Says **Pastor Donald**:

"To be a **shamed** of our **furniture** or **afraid** of **servicing** an **inadequate meal** can **best be described** as **pride**"²

² Fernando., p. 135.

And says **another** author **Karen Burton Mains**:

"(Hospitality) has **nothing** to do with **impressing** people, but **everything** to do with making them **feel welcome** and **wanted**."³

CONCLUSION

Some **years ago** we had **staying** in our **home** a **Buddhist mother** and her **daughter** from a **village** where we had **been ministering**. The **girl** had had a **serious heart condition** and was **brought down** to **Colombo** for **treatment**.

The **two** of them **stayed** in our **home** for **about two weeks**. A **few nights before** the **young girl left** for **hospital**, she had a **dream** in which **Jesus met her** and **told her** not to **worry** because **He would look after her**. That **morning** she **told her mother** that she would **like to become a Christian**. The **operation** was **successful** and a **few months later** both the **mother and daughter** were **baptized**.

On **another occasion** we had a **young Hindu convert** stay in our **home** with **his mother** after their **home was burned down** in **riots** between the **Sinhalese race** against the **Tamil race**. She **stayed** with us for **six months**, but before **she left she too** was **baptized** as a **Christian**

Of course **not all such contacts** become **Christians**. One **night** during the **same riots** just **mentioned**, my **wife kept** about **thirty** of these **Hindu women** and **children** in our **home** while gangs **from my race** were **attacking their race**.

³ Ibid.

They were **grateful** for our **kindness extended** to them. But **despite** our **efforts** at **witness**, none of them had **become Christians**.⁴

⁴ Ibid., p. 330.