

“Pat Ennis and Lisa Tatlock have served a rich fare of biblical teaching and practical application. With comprehensive scope and depth, this book provides tremendous motivation for obeying the biblical commands to practice hospitality—motivation that is rooted in the character and ways of God himself. Each chapter concludes with insightful questions and Bible studies, as well as practical tips and recipes. *Practicing Hospitality* will help readers grow in understanding and carrying out the biblical mandate of Christian hospitality in ways that honor the Lord.”

—Bruce A. Ware, professor of Christian theology,  
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary,  
and Jo Diane Ware, homemaker

“When we read God’s Word, there is a resounding theme when it comes to hospitality. Those who practice this ministry will not only be a blessing to others, but they too shall be blessed. This book will not only be a valuable tool for those starting out, but also for those who have already mastered the beauty of hospitality. Most assuredly, they will gain new tips and insights. Highly recommended!”

—Donna Morley, Faith & Reason Forum

“Long overdue is a careful study of the biblical teaching on hospitality. *Practicing Hospitality* will help believers recover the practice of welcoming those in need into their homes and lives, providing significant implications for the household of God.”

—Mark Tatlock, vice president of student life,  
The Master’s College

“In a world where it’s easy to focus on *my* needs and *my* wants, Pat Ennis and Lisa Tatlock draw the reader away from self and toward others. *Practicing Hospitality* inspires you to model biblical love and then equips you with practical, easy-to-apply advice.”

—Glynnis Whitwer, author,  
*Work@home: A Practical Guide for Women  
Who Want to Work at Home*;  
senior editor, *P31 Woman* magazine

“I realized quickly while in the Home Economics program that Dr. Ennis and Dr. Tatlock practice the kind of hospitality they teach. Through *Practicing Hospitality* the authors offer us a rich biblical and practical volume, and its principles will prove to be a blessing to christian women who seek to implement them.”

—Robin Contreras, wife of a missionary pastor;  
homemaker

PRACTICING  
*Hospitality*

The Joy of Serving Others

*Pat Ennis and Lisa Tatlock*

Foreword by Dorothy Kelley Patterson

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## Foreword

**P***racticing Hospitality: The Joy of Serving Others* by Pat Ennis and Lisa Tatlock ought to be added to every woman's personal library. What topic should be dearer to our hearts and more on our minds than genuine hospitality! Sharing what we have with those whom God brings into our lives, however briefly, ought to be a God-inspired mandate, which becomes a heart-impelled passion. Scripture commands it; the indwelling Spirit inspires it; every woman must find ways to express it by opening her heart and home.

Hospitality has never been about having House Beautiful with perfectly coordinated accessories and the most up-to-date equipment, nor is it dependent upon having large chunks of leisure time and a big entertainment budget to spend, nor does it call for special training in culinary arts or event planning. Hospitality is about a heart for service, the creativity to stretch whatever we do have available, and the energy to give the time necessary to add a flourish to the ordinary events of life. One of the most exciting things about this book is its "anybody can" mentality, including countless ways for a woman to turn her godly intuitions into earthly service in her own humble home.

## Foreword

Hospitality does indeed begin at the hearth of your own home. Ennis and Tatlock are family-focused, and they make clear the biblical priority of family, including daily mealtimes, special celebrations, unique traditions, and the importance of weaving all of these into the warp and woof of your own home. Yet the authors also skillfully find ways to draw the entire family into the joy of extending hospitality beyond the family's inner circle.

The kingdom perspective is there as well. Evangelism—how better to share the gospel than to offer a cup of cold water in the name of the Savior—is underlying all. Ministries in the church and community are discussed, including ways to create cross-cultural opportunities that pull the world into your own home with a welcoming spirit evident to those who emerge from a different culture and speak another language.

Yes, genuine biblical hospitality is an art—one to be practiced and enjoyed in every season of life—and yet one that can ever be enhanced and polished. Whether married or single, with children or without, managing a household or running a corporation—a Christian woman who begins this book will want to finish it. And she will want to put it on the shelf of her own personal library, refer to its helpful hospitality tips, and use its innovative recipes, as well as find encouragement to pursue a ministry dear to the heart of our Savior—hospitality to the saints!

Dorothy Kelley Patterson

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# Introduction

What do you think of when you hear the word *hospitality*? Some may think of beautifully decorated homes and menus filled with gourmet foods, while others may simply think of a beloved grandmother offering tea in a china cup. The answer to the question, “What makes a person or home hospitable?” is the purpose of *Practicing Hospitality*. Throughout its pages you will be encouraged to define and practice hospitality from a biblical perspective (Rom. 12:13). The foundational principle for the book is found in Hebrews 13:2, which admonishes, “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers.”

Our book focuses on developing both the Christian character and practical skills so that the act of *hospitality* is a joy for the host and hostess and a source of encouragement for the guest. This book is a collaborative effort. Each of us has very different life experiences related to practicing hospitality, but we share a common commitment to biblical truth. Hopefully, this will be an encouragement for you to consider how you can uniquely and creatively practice *hospitality*.

## Introduction

Pat wrote chapters 1, 5, 6, and 8. Chapter 1 uses the letters forming the word *hospitality* to identify key character qualities that motivate its implementation. Chapter 5 challenges believers to use their home as a center for hospitality, while chapter 6 focuses on God's special instructions to extend hospitality to others. Chapter 8 motivates believers to cultivate a heart for hospitality and provides practical tips for implementing it.

Lisa wrote chapters 2, 3, 4, and 7. Chapter 2 suggests hospitality is important for all believers to practice because it models God's love for needy people. Chapter 3 considers unique issues related to practicing hospitality with a family and emphasizes the importance of first meeting your family's needs. Chapter 4 offers practical management strategies to assist you in effectively practicing hospitality. Chapter 7 considers the implications of culture on practicing hospitality.

Our book integrates the results of a "Hospitality Survey"<sup>1</sup> completed by graduates from the Home Economics-Family and Consumer Sciences departments of Christian Heritage and The Master's College. Their practical advice is sprinkled throughout the book and provides meaningful examples of how to live out the principles discussed in it.

Each chapter concludes with recipe resources and projects that provide you with an opportunity to personally apply its content. It is our prayer that as you read through *Practicing Hospitality* you will be motivated to become a believer who joyfully (1 Pet. 4:9) and sincerely loves both friends and strangers through biblical hospitality (Heb.13:2).



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# Hospitality and **Character**

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More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.

—ROMANS 5:3–4

Character—what is it? “For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son” (Rom. 8:29). The desire to encourage twenty-first-century society to embrace some form of ethical values is evident in the establishment of numerous secular organizations, including the Josephson Institute, at which the sole purpose is to remind the culture that “character does count.”<sup>1</sup> Their literature suggests that a person of character:

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- is a good person, someone to look up to and admire;
- knows the difference between right and wrong and always tries to do what is right;
- sets a good example for everyone;
- makes the world a better place;
- lives according to the “Six Pillars of Character”: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.<sup>2</sup>

As a member of twenty-first-century society, I can certainly affirm their definition of a person of character; however, as I ponder the definition, I find myself searching for a standard by which to measure my application of it. Because I am a Christian first and a member of society second, I am blessed to have the Word of God as a standard that challenges me to cultivate a lifestyle that conforms me to the only Person who exhibited character in its purest form—Jesus Christ. Daily it is my prayer that I can say to those whose lives I touch, “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1). As well, as I internalize my heavenly Father’s Word, I am challenged to embrace his standard of *femininity*—a quality that, from a biblical perspective, has little to do with appearance and everything to do with character.<sup>3</sup>

Since we are blending hospitality and character, let’s take a survey of the Scriptures and create a word collage of what a person of character who desires to practice hospitality might look like. Our collage could be labeled:

### **A Person of Christian Character Who Practices Hospitality Is . . .**

*H—Humble*

“Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the

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humble” (1 Pet. 5:5). Humility is the most foundational Christian virtue and is the quality of character commanded in the first beatitude, according to Matthew 5:3. Being *poor in spirit* (humble) is to be the opposite of self-sufficient. It speaks of the deep humility of recognizing our utter spiritual bankruptcy apart from God. It describes those who are acutely conscious of their lostness and hopelessness apart from divine grace.<sup>4</sup> Humility, according to Micah 6:8, is a necessary prerequisite if we are going to be of service to our heavenly Father.

The evidence of my application of this quality is demonstrated when I choose to step out of my comfort zone and invite into my home individuals with whom I may not be totally at ease, or those who may have unrealistic expectations about the event because, after all, I am a professional home economist. I am comforted, however, when I look into my “spiritual closet” and find the perfect garment for this occasion, the garment of humility. When I don this garment I am reminded that I am not too good to serve—and this is pleasing to my heavenly Father (1 Pet. 5:5).

Though I entertain throughout the year, probably the most significant event that occurs at our home the last Friday of each spring semester is the Home Economics Department’s senior dessert. Quite frankly, it is not a convenient time to entertain—the end-of-the-year activities, campus responsibilities, and paper grading impact my already busy schedule. Satan could easily discourage me by suggesting, as I prepare the dessert, clean the house, set up tables and chairs so that everyone can be comfortably seated, and put the devotion in order, that perhaps it is unnecessary for me to add this event to my already busy schedule. However, instead of allowing Satan’s lie to take root in my heart, I choose to focus on the act of selfless service that was taught by my Lord as he washed his disciples’ feet (John 13:1–17). The shift in my attitude brings to remembrance that this is one of the last opportunities I have to model to my “younger women” (Titus

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2:4–5) the character qualities I sought to integrate into their lives during their academic sojourn.

With my Lord’s model preeminent, the evening becomes one of tenderness and affirmation as we celebrate this major milestone. Later, as our home is put back into order from the evening’s event, I am reminded that memories take time and energy to create—and I may have taught my “younger women” more lessons that one evening than during the entirety of their college education. As you consider performing acts of hospitality, is *humility* your foundational Christian virtue?

### *O—Obedient*

“Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice” (1 Sam. 15:22). The words of John 14:15, 21–24 clearly identify that the primary evidence that individuals are Christians is their choice to obey their Father’s commands. Writing on these passages, John MacArthur states: “Love for Christ is inseparable from obedience” and “Jesus emphasized the need for the habitual practice of obedience to His commands as evidence of the believer’s love for Him and the Father.”<sup>5</sup> Though we live in a world that promotes “have things your own way,” I learned that to please my heavenly Father I need to respond to *all* of his instructions with an obedient spirit and not just pick those that appeal to me<sup>6</sup>—and that includes my response to what his Word teaches about hospitality. Let’s examine his instructions.

Romans 12:13 says I am to practice hospitality—literally I am to “show hospitality” (Heb. 13:2)—not simply offer hospitality to my friends. The subtitle for the section where this verse is found in my study Bible is “Behave like a Christian,” which appears in a list of traits that characterize the Spirit-filled life.<sup>7</sup> The application is clear: if I want to demonstrate obedience to my heavenly Father, I will choose to practice hospitality.

## Hospitality and Character

First Peter 4:9 builds on the instruction to practice hospitality and reminds me that my attitude is of utmost importance—I am to practice hospitality without complaining! This verse challenges me to conduct a heart search to discern what my attitude is and whether I am approaching this opportunity to minister enthusiastically (Col. 3:23).

I am reminded in Hebrews 13:2 that my willingness to extend hospitality may have far-reaching implications. As we study the lives of Abraham and Sarah (Gen. 18:1–3), Lot (Gen. 19:1–2), Gideon (Judg. 6:11–24), and Manoah (Judg. 13:6–20), we learn that all entertained strangers who were actually special messengers from God. While my motive should never be to give so that I will receive, Luke 6:38 clearly states that the measuring cup that I use to dispense my gifts and talents will be the same one used to provide my needs. As I tabulated Cherie Land’s survey for *Practicing Hospitality*, her response to the question, “How have you used your home as a center for evangelism?” provided a practical application to this truth:

When we moved into our new house I asked the Lord to show me what he wanted me to do in this neighborhood. Well, one day the neighbor lady came and asked what I did to get my children to turn out the way they did, and I said it is only by the grace of God that my children are the way they are. She wanted help with her four-year-old. A few days later she called and said she needed to talk; she came over and was in tears, so I just shared with her and prayed for her right on the spot. I also had your first book (*Becoming a Woman Who Pleases God*) and had only read the first chapter and half of the second, but I gave it to her to read and look up the Scripture verses. It is very amazing the difference in her and the man that she is living with. All this took place on a day that I had scheduled down to the last minute and needed to get things done. Even though I got behind because of the neighbor I was still able to get everything done. Since this has happened I purchased another copy of your book.<sup>8</sup>

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Cherie's neighbor may enter heaven because of Cherie's willingness to take the time to share her faith at an inconvenient time.

Third John 7–8 challenges me to extend hospitality to those involved in ministry for our Lord. It is exciting to know that as I share my home and resources with our Lord's servants, I become an active part of their ministry.

One of the requirements for church leadership, according to 1 Timothy 3:1–2 and Titus 1:7–8, is a willingness to allow others to observe them in their homes—the arena where their character is most graphically revealed. My friend Donna Morley describes the frequent twenty-first-century approach to this requirement:

I remember once meeting a Christian woman who said point blank, "I would love to get to know you by talking on the telephone from time to time, but don't expect our families to get together. No offense—it's just that we don't entertain, and we like to keep to ourselves." After this woman's remark, I started to think how much this is becoming the norm in the Christian community. Why? Because we are living in a society that craves privacy and lack of involvement."<sup>9</sup>

As you consider this statement, what is your response? Are you willing to follow this command and allow our Lord to work his mysterious ways through the unique environment that hospitality provides or will you choose to "keep to yourself"? If you are involved in church leadership it is necessary to keep in focus that these verses are requirements, not suggestions!

Our graying population gives the hospitality requirement found in 1 Timothy 5:9–10 particular significance, since these verses suggest that only those widows who have extended hospitality, among other qualifications, can expect to be materially nurtured by the church. As you consider this requirement, may I suggest several questions:

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1. Does your church have a plan for materially nurturing true widows?
2. Do you know who the true widows are?
3. Are you following the biblical instruction to assist in the material nurturing of widows?
4. Does your life exemplify the qualities outlined in 1 Timothy 5:9–10 so that you would qualify for placement on the “true widows” list?

### S—*Sincere*

“For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we behaved in the world with simplicity and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God, and supremely so toward you” (2 Cor. 1:12). Have you ever been invited to an event but felt that you were not *really* wanted? Perhaps the hostess was very gracious in extending the invitation, but either by her body language, tone of voice, or the conditions under which the invitation was received, you questioned its genuineness. When we extend hospitality, if we desire to please our heavenly Father, we need to endeavor to possess a spirit of sincerity. Philippians 1:10 provides us with the litmus, or perhaps we should say with the “pottery test” of sincerity. John MacArthur illuminates our understanding of this character quality as he writes:

“Sincere” means “genuine” and may have originally meant “tested by sunlight.” In the ancient world, dishonest pottery dealers filled cracks in their inferior products with wax before glazing and painting them, making worthless pots difficult to distinguish from expensive ones. The only way to avoid being defrauded was to hold the pot to the sun, making the wax-filled cracks obvious. Dealers marked their fine pottery that could withstand “sun testing” as *sine cera*—“without wax.”<sup>10</sup>

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Granted, there are times when we may need to deal with our attitude before issuing the invitation, but we need to “stay on our knees” until it can be communicated *sine cera!*

### *P—Prayerful*

“Pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17). Scores of books instruct the believer about prayer, from purpose to posture. As well, multiple Scriptures encourage us to cultivate an intimate relationship with our heavenly Father through prayer (my *Exhaustive Strong’s Concordance* lists a minimum of 464 verses under the topics of “pray” and “prayers”). As we consider prayer and its role in hospitality, let’s take a moment to remind ourselves why we should pray.

- Prayer is commanded (Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:17).
- It is a sin not to pray (1 Sam. 12:23).
- Prayer gives glory to God (Dan. 9:16–19; John 14:13–14).
- Prayer aligns us with God’s purposes (Matt. 6:9–10).
- Prayer results in answers (James 5:16; 1 John 5:15).<sup>11</sup>

Having identified why we should pray, let’s move the theological reasons into practical application. We’ll title our prayer rationale:

I PRAY BEFORE I EXTEND HOSPITALITY BECAUSE I—

- should have a sincere heart when I extend the invitation (Phil. 1:10);
- know that for the event to bring glory to my heavenly Father, I must have his strength (Phil. 4:13);
- want to have a heart that submits to my heavenly Father’s instructions (Rom. 12:13b);
- need to approach any opportunity to minister with a “hearty attitude” (Col. 3:23);

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- have a desire to wear “the garment of humility” to the occasion (1 Pet. 5:5);
- desire to have a gracious spirit in the midst of unforeseeable circumstances (Prov. 11:16);
- wish to glean from the wisdom of my guests (Prov. 1:5);
- seek genuinely to meet the needs of my guests (1 John 3:17);
- long for my extension of hospitality to have far-reaching implications (Heb.13:2);
- need to be excited about allowing others to catch a glimpse of my character where it is most graphically displayed—in my home—especially if I am in a position of leadership (1 Tim. 3:1–2; Titus 1:7–8);
- desire to stimulate conversations that are edifying (Rom. 15:1–2) and encouraging (1 Thess. 5:11) to my guests.

As we conclude this portion of our word collage I would like to tell you about how my dear friend and colleague, Glenda Hotton, chose to incorporate these qualities as she opened her home for a luncheon one warm summer day. Her kind invitation included a number of ladies of differing ages and interests, and when it was extended to me it was evident she wanted me to come. Her home and her heart were prepared for us; her gracious spirit allowed us to have a glimpse into her character. Though the luncheon was tasty, the recollection that is most vivid in my mind is the intentional conversation that led the group of eight ladies toward encouraging and edifying one another. The time and energy she expended in preparation for our time together yielded a precious memory for all of us.

#### *I—Interested in Integrity*

“May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you” (Ps. 25:21). *Integrity* is defined as “uncompromising ad-

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herence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty”;<sup>12</sup> it is derived from the word *integer*, meaning “a complete entity; undivided, or whole.”<sup>13</sup> As a believer, I cognitively know that Scripture calls me to a life of integrity; regrettably, society, and now often the Christian community, encourages me to embrace compromise over integrity. Scripture calls me to refuse to accept society’s standards and to live apart from the world (Isa. 52:11; 2 Cor. 6:17; 1 Pet. 2:9). If I am going to be known as a *true* woman of integrity, I will choose to adhere to my heavenly Father’s standards, regardless of what the mainstream of society is doing. Put into practical terms, I will choose to do what is right when given a choice between right and wrong—even when it is unpopular.

As I choose to display *integrity* when I extend hospitality I will seek to:

- follow the example of the Israelites’ principle of separation from the world so that regardless of when guests enter my home, they observe a lifestyle that is consistent with my stated convictions (Deut. 14:2, 1 Pet. 2:9);
- use Job as a role model of integrity, regardless of the circumstances (Job 2:3, 31:6);
- study the Word of God and revere it as the ultimate authority in my life (Ps. 119:9–11);
- know Christ intimately so that his character is evident to all who enter my home (Eph. 3:14–19);
- cultivate a blameless lifestyle (Philippians 1:10 challenges me to live a life of true integrity that does not cause others to sin);<sup>14</sup>
- desire to lead a godly life (Titus 2:11–12) that bears fruit.

The classic booklet *My Heart, Christ’s Home* challenges believers to let Christ settle down and be at home in their hearts as Lord of all. If I am going to exemplify integrity when

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I extend hospitality, I will do as this tiny booklet suggests and sign over the title deed of my spiritual life for all time and eternity.<sup>15</sup> I then will be able to say with the psalmist, “But as for me, I shall walk in my integrity” as I practice biblical hospitality (Ps. 26:11).

### *T—Trustworthy*

“The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain” (Prov. 31:11). When guests enter our homes they should sense an ambience of trust and confidence. When I consider the character quality of *trustworthy*, I am reminded that Elizabeth’s life<sup>16</sup> (Luke 1:39–56) serves as the type of model I desire to follow. Let’s take a look at what her life teaches us about *trustworthy* hospitality as we see how she responded to her guest, Mary, who was experiencing personal challenges:

- Mary had confidence that she would be welcome in Elizabeth’s home even though Mary had no way of alerting Elizabeth of her intention to come for an extended visit (Luke 1:39–40).
- Mary chose to share freely her situation with Elizabeth, a relative and older woman. This action suggests that Mary trusted Elizabeth to believe the best rather than the worst about her (Luke 1:40).
- Elizabeth waited for Mary to explain the reason for her visit rather than immediately interrogating her (Luke 1:40b–41) or preempting the situation by telling her own good news.
- Elizabeth was a clean vessel that the Holy Spirit could use to affirm the Lord’s work in Mary’s life (Luke 1:41).
- Elizabeth offered extended hospitality to Mary (Luke 1:56). Since Mary arrived when Elizabeth was six months pregnant, she evidently stayed until John the

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Baptist, Elizabeth's son, was born—not necessarily the most convenient time for a long-term guest!

Elizabeth's life prompts me to ask myself some probing questions about the trustworthiness of my hospitality:

- Am I eager to open my home to unplanned guests for an extended visit—even at inconvenient times?
- Am I projecting to others that my home is available as a place of refuge?
- Am I willing to maintain a confidence when shocking news is shared with me?
- Am I open to crossing intergenerational lines to extend biblical hospitality?
- Am I patient to wait for my guest to open the contents of her heart?
- Am I more concerned about what my guest wants to discuss than what I want to communicate?
- Am I a clean vessel that the Holy Spirit can use to affirm the Lord's work in the lives of others?

### *A—Adopted into God's Family*

“For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Rom. 8:15). My parents adopted me as an infant into the Ennis family; they made a conscious choice to integrate me legally into their home and nurture me as if I were their biological child. When they entered eternity, I inherited all of their earthly possessions. When I was ten, they planned a special celebration to tell me that I was not their birth child but very special because they had chosen me. Their explanation made my later transition to salvation smooth, since salvation was described to me as being adopted into God's family. How could I not desire salvation when the first adoption was so wonderful?<sup>17</sup> As believers

## Hospitality and Character

we were all adopted into God’s family, and when we extend hospitality, our character ought to reflect the character of our adopted Father. Scripture tells us that as God’s adopted children we are to:

- demonstrate a spirit of peace (Matt. 5:9);
- glorify our Father (Matt. 5:16);
- behave like our Father (Matt. 5:44–45, 48);
- assume a modest attitude (Matt. 6:1–4, 6:18);
- model our heavenly Father’s pattern of forgiveness (Matt. 6:14–15);
- possess a childlike confidence in our Father (Matt. 6:25–34);
- petition our Father for our needs (Matt. 7:7–11);
- replicate our Father’s merciful spirit (Luke 6:35–36);
- maintain a holy lifestyle (2 Cor. 6:17–18; 7:1; Phil. 2:15; 1 John 3:2–3).

When we choose, through the strength of the Holy Spirit, to behave in a way that reflects our royal heritage, our guests will observe a bit of heaven on earth in our homes.

### *L—Led by the Spirit*

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God” (Rom. 8:14). If I am going to practice biblical hospitality, I must be “led by the Spirit,” or as Galatians 5:16 states, I must “walk by the Spirit.” The doctrinal message of walking by the Spirit is found in Galatians 2:16, while the practical application is found in Galatians 5:16. “Walking by the Spirit” literally means keeping in step with the Spirit. It is a very practical form of living, not a mystical disconnection from reality. As a godly woman in progress I will display that I am walking by the Spirit when I extend hospitality by:

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- bearing others' burdens through ministering to them in times of grief, remorse, sin, and troubles of all kinds (Gal. 6:2; Col. 3:12; James 5:11);
- sharing blessings that combine accompanying our praise to God with practical acts of kindness (Heb. 13:6; James 1:27; 1 John 3:18);
- rejoicing with those who receive blessings and honor by occasions of celebration (Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26);
- being willing to wear the physical and emotional bruises that can be associated with opening our hearts and homes to others. Paul's "large letters" served as a reminder of the physical "bruises" he bore because of his service to Christ (Gal. 6:11). "Physical and emotional bruises" may be acquired as I offer hospitality when
  - I experience weariness or emotional fatigue (and sometimes both) from having guests in our home—even when we have used good time-management skills;
  - I receive unwarranted criticism;
  - there is no evidence of gratitude;
  - it appears there is no fruit for my labor. It is incredibly important to remember that even if I receive the bruise, that does not mean I should not have practiced biblical hospitality—and if I allow it, the bruise will heal without a scar;
- purposing to abstain from the fleshly actions described in Galatians 5:17–22: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and anything similar;
- controlling my thoughts, actions, clothing, and how I use my tongue (Phil. 4:8–9; Col. 3:17; 1 Pet. 3:1–4; James 3:1–12);

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- choosing to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22–23).

### *I—Instrumental in Producing Righteousness*

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness” (Rom. 6:12–13).

The human body is a complex instrument. Romans 6:12–14 reminds me that I am either using it as an instrument of righteousness or an instrument of unrighteousness. My body is “the only remaining repository where sin finds the believer vulnerable. The brain and its thinking process are part of the body and thus tempt our souls with its sinful lusts.”<sup>18</sup> If my body is going to be an instrument of righteousness when I extend hospitality, I will choose, as 2 Corinthians 10:5 suggests, to take “every thought captive to obey Christ”—and that means that I must control what I think about! Philippians 4:6–8 challenges me to be spiritually renewed by refusing to fret or worry about anything, but rather, to humbly present my concerns to my loving heavenly Father—even when the hospitality event appears to be beyond my capabilities. I can implement this spiritual truth by:

- deliberately bringing thoughts of little or large need to Christ’s control. This means that I
  - make my anxious thoughts known to my Lord (Ps. 139:23–24);
  - believe that what I ask in prayer I will receive (Matt. 21:22);
  - wait for his timing (Ps. 37:7; Isa. 40:31);

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- casting my cares on our Lord rather than worrying about them. I choose to
  - roll my burden on my Lord (Ps. 55:22);
  - place my confidence in God (Ps. 56:11);
  - trust my heavenly Father instead of leaning on my understanding (Prov. 3:5–6);
- committing the details of my life to my heavenly Father so that each day is characterized by peace. This is accomplished as a result of
  - seeking and pursuing peace (Ps. 34:14);
  - allowing God’s peace to rule in my heart, and being thankful (Col. 3:15);
  - making a conscious commitment to face all trials with joy (James 1:2);
- choosing to align my thinking according to the guidelines outlined in Philippians 4:8. This means that I will meditate on things that are:
  - true—those things that are found in God (2 Tim. 2:25), Christ (Eph. 4:20–21), the Holy Spirit (John 16:13), and God’s Word (John 17:17);
  - noble—whatever is worthy of awe and adoration;
  - just—thinking in harmony with God’s divine standard of holiness;
  - pure—that which is morally clean and undefiled;
  - lovely—focusing on whatever is kind or gracious;
  - of good report—that which is highly regarded. It refers to what is generally considered reputable in the world, such as kindness, courtesy, and respect for others;<sup>19</sup>
- directing my conversations so they reflect the application of Philippians 4:8. By doing this I will ensure that:

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- my words are always carefully chosen (Prov. 25:21);
- when I speak, godly wisdom flows from my lips (Prov. 31:26);
- I will not verbally stumble (James 3:2).

Just as a fine musical instrument requires tuning by a skilled technician using a fixed standard, so my body must be tuned by the Master Technician according to his unchanging Word. May I be quick to submit to the adjustments of my Master Technician so that my body will always be an instrument of righteousness as I communicate love to friends and strangers alike.

### *T—Thankful*

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful” (Col. 3:15). Focusing on what I don’t have or what I can’t do is a common detriment to practicing biblical hospitality. If I choose to focus on the negative I will never extend an invitation to others—and home life will probably be pretty bleak for me too! As I review Psalms 103, 104, and 107, as well as 1 Thessalonians 5:18, I am challenged, by an act of my will, to extend thanks to my heavenly Father—regardless of whether I feel like it or not. As I thought of being thankful, in terms of hospitality, I recorded some everyday things that contribute to my developing a heart of thanksgiving:

- the new *heart* that I received when I became a Christian (Ezek. 11:19; 2 Cor. 5:17);
- the variety of *opportunities* that I have to share my life and skills with others (1 Tim. 6:18–19);
- the *strength* to accomplish the event—even when I am sure that I can’t do it (Phil. 4:13);

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- the *plates* as well as the other cooking and serving vessels that I have to prepare for the occasion. They don't have to be elegant, just consecrated to my Master's use (Phil. 4:19);
- the opportunities to practice *ingenuity* with the resources that I possess rather than using a lack of resources as an excuse to disobey my heavenly Father's instructions to offer hospitality (Phil. 4:11);
- my *table* and other furnishings that can be used as a tool to offer comfort and refuge to my guests (2 Cor. 1:3–4);
- my *abode*—the environment where I am to minister to others so that my heavenly Father's Word is *not* discredited (Titus 2:3-5);
- the *linens* I have to cover my table and the symbolism of purity that the linen fabric represents. May I be careful to share my excitement of being an invited guest at the marriage supper of the Lamb and thus cultivate an appetite in my guests to join me! (Rev. 15:6, 19:7–10);
- my *ingredients* and the prompting to recall the widow of Zarephath who shared what she thought was the last of her ingredients and found that her supply was multiplied supernaturally (1 Kings 17:8–15);
- my *talents*—both my financial resources (Matt. 25:14–30) and my natural abilities. I am challenged to cultivate them, and to be excited about learning new ones for my Lord's glory (Col. 3:17);
- those individuals who said *yes* to my invitations, and the reality that only eternity will reveal the impact of the time that I spend with them (Heb.13:2).

(If you note the first letter of each italicized word, you will find I used the letters of the word *hospitality* to create my “thankful list.”)

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A study of the life of Paul reveals that he learned to be content in whatever circumstances he found himself (Phil. 2:11). Because he modeled contentment he is qualified to provide me with a list of character qualities that includes the directive to “give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thess. 5:16–22). As I consider my response to Paul’s role model I must ask myself if I am a hostess whose prayer list of personal wants expands while my list of thanksgiving decreases, or if I choose to offer thanksgiving each time I have the opportunity to entertain. My response to these questions determines my character as a hostess.

### *Y-Yielded*

“I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification” (Rom. 6:19).

The upside-down, triangular-shaped traffic sign is an important one to notice since it is a clear warning that the other lane has the right of way, and refusing to yield may create unwanted challenges in our lives. Equally important is our willingness to yield to the heavenly Father’s specific instructions in relation to practicing hospitality; in reality we are demonstrating our love to him by choosing to embrace these instructions with our whole heart—and that is when our joy is complete (1 John 1:4; 2 John 12). As I put the finishing touches on our word collage that pictures a person of character who desires to practice hospitality, I would like to tell you about Heather Lanker.

A talented young woman with the posture of a model and flowing chestnut hair, Heather was both my student and student assistant. Unaffected by her outward beauty, she focused on maturing into a godly woman during her

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college years. Though several young men demonstrated an interest in her, no special spark emerged from the relationships—in fact, I recall the day she reported to work with the statement, “I am *never* getting married!” I gently suggested that *never* was a long time, but she was quite firm in her resolve. Then one day Jason appeared, and I noticed that he increasingly found reasons to “stop by” the Home Economics Center.

Always polite, this handsome young man frequently stopped to visit with me; I still recall the day he told me he was going to ask Heather to be his wife. Each time I walk down the hallway in the Home Economics Center and view their picture in our “bridal gallery,” their wedding picture brings a smile to my face—a wonderful combination of character and joy. As Heather continues to mature into a godly woman, her willingness to yield to her heavenly Father’s instructions is more and more evident.

Jason completed seminary, and they served the Lord in a local church. Then another yielding opportunity occurred. Just recently she wrote:

Jason just started the doctoral program at Talbot last week. He is going full time and really likes it. His only complaint is that he is out of practice with studying; it takes him longer to get through all his reading and writing. Also, he got a part-time job as an associate pastor at the church we were attending. It is a Southern Baptist church, and all the people tell us that we’d better get used to Food & Fellowship ‘cause we’re Baptists now! ☺ We really like it there, and Jason gets to work closely with the college and singles group, which he really enjoys. Well, today Jason preached in “big church,” and here it is customary for the pastor and his wife to stand at the door and shake everyone’s hand as they leave. So as I was shaking EVERYONE’S hand I had this thought (it was a long line)—I had said I would never be a pastor’s wife, and here I am smiling and shakin’ hands; I never would have put myself here! Then I remembered your saying, “Never say *never* because God has a way of changing our plans.” He certainly

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has, and now I'm trying to remember what else I said that I would never do.<sup>20</sup>

Heather's life (and Jason's, too) is an example of someone who did not stall at the yield sign of her character development, and because she keeps merging, she experiences the joy of pleasing her heavenly Father. As we consider hospitality and character, may we be quick to yield to the "hospitality commands" of our heavenly Father.

### A Concluding Consideration

The words of Russell Cronkhite, former executive chef of Blair House, the guesthouse of the president of the United States, offer a fitting conclusion to our chapter:

Hospitality is a wonderful gift.  
We don't need a grand palace, or a dream home—  
few of us have those.  
To make others feel truly welcome,  
we only need an open heart and  
the greater beauty of love expressed.<sup>21</sup>

Only as I allow my heavenly Father to refine my character will I possess an open heart that allows genuine love to be expressed in my home. It is my prayer that you will join me in allowing our heavenly Father to complete the character refinement he has begun in you! (Phil. 1:6).

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1. Table 1.1 offers a summary of the word collage describing a person of character who desires to practice hospitality. Study the table and then personalize it by preparing a table of your own following the example in Table 1.2.

TABLE 1.1

**A Person of Christian Character Who Practices Hospitality Is . . .**

---

**H—Humble**

*Humility* is the opposite of self-sufficiency and is a necessary prerequisite if I am going to be of service to my heavenly Father. I can exercise humility by choosing to step out of my comfort zone and invite individuals into my home with whom I may not be totally at ease, or those who may have unrealistic expectations about the event.

---

**O—Obedient**

The primary evidence that individuals are Christians is their choice to obey all of their Father's commands. I demonstrate *obedience* by obeying all of my Father's commands that focus on hospitality.

---

**S—Sincere**

Genuineness, as well as an absence of deceit or hypocrisy, describes *sincere* actions. I will "stay on my knees" until I can extend *sincere* invitations.

---

**P—Prayerful**

*Prayer*—that is, communicating with my heavenly Father—shows my desire for his direction about and dependence on him for the event. I resolve to pray about all aspects of the events that I plan.

---

**I—Interested in Integrity**

*Integrity* is choosing to do what is right when given a choice between right and wrong, even when it is unpopular. I will choose to adhere to my heavenly Father's standards, regardless of what the mainstream of society is doing.

---

**T—Trustworthy**

A *trustworthy* home provides an ambience of trust and confidence. I will study Elizabeth's life (Luke 1:39–56) as a model for my life.

---

**A—Adopted into God's Family**

*Adoption* is choosing to legally integrate an individual into one's home and nurturing that individual as one's very own child. I will choose, through the strength of the Holy Spirit, to behave in a way that reflects my royal heritage, so that my guests will observe a bit of "heaven on earth" in my home.

---

**L—Led by the Spirit**

*Walking in the Spirit* literally means keeping in step with the Holy Spirit. I will purpose to walk in the Spirit so I will not carry out the desire of my flesh (Gal. 5:16).

---

**I—Instrumental in Producing Righteousness**

An *instrument* of righteousness brings "every thought captive to obey Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5) and refuses to fret or worry about anything (Phil. 4:6–8). I must control what I think about and purpose to be spiritually renewed by humbly presenting my concerns to my loving heavenly Father—even when the hospitality event appears to be beyond my capabilities.

---

**T—Thankful**

Being *thankful* is an act of the will that generates the giving of thanks to God—regardless of the circumstances. I choose to *learn* to be content regardless of my circumstances (Phil. 2:11b).

---

**Y—Yielded**

We are to possess a willingness to yield to our heavenly Father's specific instructions in relation to practicing hospitality. I demonstrate my love to him by choosing to embrace his instructions with my whole heart—and that is when my joy is complete (1 John 1:4; 2 John 12).

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TABLE 1.2

**My Definition of Christian Character  
and the Practice of Hospitality**

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**H—*Humble***

My definition of *humble* is:  
I can exercise humility by:

---

**O—*Obedient***

My definition of *obedient* is:  
I can exhibit obedience by:

---

**S—*Sincere***

My definition of *sincere* is:  
I can extend sincere invitations by:

---

**P—*Prayerful***

My definition of *prayerful* is:  
I can exercise being prayerful by:

---

**I—*Interested in Integrity***

My definition of *integrity* is:  
I can choose to display integrity by:

---

**T—*Trustworthy***

My definition of *trustworthy* is:  
I can model trustworthiness by:

---

**A—*Adopted into God's Family***

My definition of *adopted* is:  
I can display my understanding of spiritual adoption by:

---

**L—*Led by the Spirit***

My definition of *led by the Spirit* is:  
I can demonstrate being led by the Spirit by:

---

**I—*Instrumental in Producing Righteousness***

My definition of *instrumental* in producing righteousness is:  
I reflect that I am an instrument of righteousness by:

---

**T—*Thankful***

My definition of *thankful* is:  
I choose to be thankful by:

---

**Y—*Yielded***

My definition of *yielded* is:  
I demonstrate yieldedness by:

---

## Practicing Hospitality

2. Develop a list of hospitality and character principles based on the content of this chapter (a principle is defined as “an accepted or professed rule of action or conduct”<sup>22</sup>).
3. Begin a Hospitality Notebook that will challenge you to integrate hospitality and character into your current lifestyle. You will find out more about personalizing your notebook when we get to chapter 5.
  - Use the ideas and recipes in *Practicing Hospitality* to create menus and time schedules that allow you to successfully put your plan into action.
  - Evaluate the Christian character you exemplify at each hospitality event you hostess using a chart like the one below. Include a section in your notebook for your Hospitality and Character Growth Chart.

### Pat’s Hospitality and Character Growth Chart

<b>Hospitality Event (Include a Definition)</b>	<b>Character Strengths to Display</b>	<b>Character Flaws to Watch for (Include Goals for Correction)</b>
Home Economics Department’s Senior Dessert—a time with our graduating seniors and my faculty; one of the last opportunities I have to model to my students the character qualities I sought to integrate in their lives during their academic sojourn.	With my Lord’s model preeminent, I choose to move forward with the event even though it occurs at an inconvenient time.	Satan could easily discourage me by suggesting that perhaps it is unnecessary for me to add this event to my already busy schedule!  <b>Goal for correction:</b>  Instead of allowing Satan’s lie to take root in my heart, I choose to focus on the act of selfless service that was taught by my Lord as he washed his disciples’ feet (John 13:1–17).

4. Using the letters of the word *hospitality*, develop a meditation alphabet that focuses on your specific needs.

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- Place each letter on a separate card.
- Write the word that aligns with the letter along with your definition; be sure to focus on your needs.
- As you plan your hospitality activities, select one word to meditate upon daily from the time the planning begins until the event is executed.
- Record the blessings of the event on the back of the card. Review your blessings as you plan additional events.

## Recipe Resources

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Practice hospitality by preparing “portable” recipes that you can deliver to others—Iced Nuts, Chocolate Fondue Sauce, or Baked Caramel Corn. Place the caramel corn or nuts in a decorative tin, or the chocolate fondue sauce in a canning jar with a piece of fabric between the lid and the jar ring that was cut with pinking shears. Add a note of encouragement and drop off to a “friend or stranger” as you run errands.

### Iced Nuts

1½ cups blanched whole almonds,  
pecans, walnut halves, *or* cashews  
½ cup sugar  
2 tablespoons margarine or butter  
½ teaspoon vanilla

Line a baking sheet with foil. Butter the foil. Set aside. In a heavy 8-inch skillet combine nuts, sugar, and margarine. Cook over medium heat, carefully stirring *constantly*, 9 minutes or until sugar melts and turns a rich brown color. Remove from heat. Immediately stir in vanilla. Spread mixture onto the prepared baking sheet.

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Cool completely. Break into small clusters. Store tightly covered.

Makes about 10 ounces or 2¾ cups

### Chocolate Fondue Sauce

1 can (14 ounce) *sweetened* condensed milk

1 package (12 ounce) chocolate chips

½ cup milk

¾ cups miniature marshmallows

1 teaspoon vanilla

Combine all ingredients *except* vanilla in a saucepan. Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly, until mixture is smooth and warmed through. Add vanilla. (Sauce can be made ahead, refrigerated, and reheated. It will keep indefinitely in the refrigerator. Add a little milk if sauce becomes too thick.)

Makes 4 cups

### Baked Caramel Corn

*(Tastes like the expensive, gourmet brand)*

1 cup (2 sticks) butter

2 cups firmly packed brown sugar

½ cup light or dark corn syrup

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon vanilla

24 cups *popped* popcorn

Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Prepare two shallow baking pans, with sides, by spraying with baking spray or buttering.

### Hospitality and Character

Sort popped corn to remove any unpopped kernels. Put in a large container. (I purchased a large plastic dish pan that I save for big mixing projects). Melt butter in a large saucepan. Stir in brown sugar, corn syrup, and salt. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Boil *without* stirring 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in soda and vanilla (you'll get a reaction similar to one of your chemistry labs!). Gradually pour over popped corn, mixing well.

Turn into 2 large shallow baking or roasting pans. Bake at 250 degrees for 1 hour. Stir *every 15 minutes*. Trade oven rack position each time the mixture is stirred.

Remove from oven. Cool completely. Break apart and store in a tightly covered container.

Makes about 5 quarts of caramel corn

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# Notes

## Introduction

1. See chapter 8 for a description and questions.

## Chapter 1: Hospitality and Character

1. <http://www.charactercounts.org>.
2. *Ibid.*
3. See John MacArthur, *Think Biblically! Recovering a Christian Worldview* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2003), 169–86, for elaboration.
4. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Word, 1997), note at Matthew 5:3.
5. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, notes at John 14:15 and John 14:21–24.
6. See Pat Ennis and Lisa Tatlock, *Designing a Lifestyle That Pleases God* (Chicago: Moody, 2004), 45.
7. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, notes at Romans 12:9–21.
8. See “List of Contributors” in this volume.
9. Donna Morley, *Choices That Lead to Godliness* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1999), 169.
10. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, notes at Philippians 1:10.
11. John MacArthur, *Lord Teach Me to Pray* (Nashville, TN: J. Countryman, 2003), 19.
12. *Random House Webster’s College Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. “integrity.”
13. *Ibid.*, s.v. “integer.”
14. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, notes at Philippians 1:10.
15. Robert Munger, *My Heart, Christ’s Home* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1954).
16. A helpful resource for *trustworthy* is Nancy Leigh DeMoss, *Elizabeth: Lessons on Grace and Faith from the Life of an Older Woman*. Visit the Revive Our Hearts web site for ordering information (<http://www.LifeAction.org>).
17. See Pat Ennis and Lisa Tatlock, *Designing a Lifestyle That Pleases God*, 174.
18. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, notes at Romans 6:12.
19. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, notes at Philippians 4:8.
20. See “List of Contributors.”

## Notes

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### Chapter 2: Hospitality and Strangers

1. Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV).
2. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Word, 1997), 1716.
3. *Ibid.*, 34.
4. Steve Wilkins, *Face to Face: Meditations on Friendship and Hospitality* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2002), 90.
5. Survey responses are paraphrases of the original.
6. *Vines Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, s.v. "philoxenia."
7. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, 1717.
8. See the *New International Version Study Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1985), 1876, note on Hebrews 13:2.
9. *Vines Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words*, s.v. "entertain."
10. Alexander Strauch, *The Hospitality Commands* (Littleton, CO: Lewis & Roth, 1993), 43.
11. Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands* (Chicago: Moody, 1953), 69.
12. Merrill F. Unger, *Unger's Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Moody, 1961), 502.
13. James M. Freeman, *Manners and Customs of the Bible*. (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1972), 16–17.
14. Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, 70.
15. *Ibid.*
16. James M. Freeman, *Manners and Customs of the Bible*, 223.
17. Alexander Strauch, *The Hospitality Commands*, 38.

### Chapter 3: Hospitality and Family

1. Dorothy Kelley Patterson, *A Handbook for Ministers' Wives* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2002), 104.
2. Carolyn Mahaney, *Feminine Appeal* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2003), 21.
3. See List of Contributors: Peggy Rowan.
4. See List of Contributors: Tammi Schmorleitz.
5. See List of Contributors: Patti Morse.
6. See List of Contributors: Laurie Twibell.
7. For more information on how to manage your home, see chapter 4, "The Wise Woman Manages Her Home," in Pat Ennis and Lisa Tatlock, *Becoming a Woman Who Pleases God: A Guide to Developing Your Biblical Potential* (Chicago: Moody, 2003).
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9. *Ibid.*, s.v. "heritage."
10. Dorothy Kelley Patterson, *A Handbook for Ministers' Wives*, 108.
11. Noël Piper, *Treasuring God in Our Traditions* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2003), 26.
12. J. Otis Ledbetter and Tim Smith, *Family Traditions* (Colorado Springs, CO: Chariot Victor, 1998), 11.
13. Edith Schaeffer, *What Is a Family?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1975), 183–84.
14. *Ibid.*, 188.
15. Noël Piper, *The Family Treasury of Great Holiday Ideas* (Uhrichsville, OH: Barbour, 1998).

### Chapter 4: Hospitality and Management

1. Harry Nobles, *Hotel Online Special Report: The Legend of the Pineapple* (<http://www.hotel-online.com>).