

No Stranger Danger

/Craig Rees

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Luke 2:15–20
pg. 1027

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What possessed Mary and Joseph to welcome strangers when they'd just had a baby?

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First, their Heritage

“When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.”

Leviticus 19:33–34

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First, their Heritage

“Do not oppress a foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt.”

Exodus 23:9

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Second, their Experience

“Without question they became social outcasts in their village. They became like ‘foreigners,’ or ‘displaced’ among the people. This is a stigma that they would carry for entire lives.” They welcomed the shepherds because God welcomed them.

Ephesians 2:19–22
pg. 1174

Foreigners

ξένος (xenos)

foreign, a foreigner, strange, stranger(s)

Strangers

πάροικος (paroikos)

dwelling near, foreign, alien, aliens

from 'par' meaning beside or by the side of,
and, 'oikos,' a house, home, or a family

“Stranger” pictures a person standing beside a house, home and family not within one.

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This is our heritage and experience. We were once strangers and foreigners in a world God created. He has not only invited us in, He also made us, “fellow citizens.” Through God’s grace we have become one with a new humanity, the church.

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“Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.”

Hebrews 13:1–2

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Hospitality

φιλοξενία (philoxenia)

from 'phileo' meaning love, brotherly love
and 'xenia,' meaning foreigners

Hospitality is, quite literally, showing brotherly love
to foreigners and strangers

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Because of God's kindness to all people, the new
humanity is philoxenic not xenophobic

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“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”

Romans 12:18

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“Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord. On the contrary: ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.’”

Romans 12:19–20

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Romans 12:19–20

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#1:

In a divided, suspicious world, reflecting the new humanity is driven more by our with-ness than our witness. The incarnation was God's commitment to with-ness being the foundation for future witness. His presence in this world led to the presentation of His love for the world.

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#2

Like evangelism, hospitality is a spiritual gift and,
like evangelism, it is also a requirement.

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“One of the most important methods of spreading the gospel in antiquity was the use of homes.”

Michael Green, Evangelism in the Early Church

Luke 24:13–35
pg. 1060

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Jesus moves through this post-resurrection
appearance from being:
a stranger (on the road v15),
to a guest (at their house v29),
to a host (around the table v30)