



# Hospitality, ReBuild, and the Early Church

# CityChurch Network Meetings

Tulsa OK – Cohort 2



# CityChurch Network Meetings

Tulsa OK – Cohort 2



# CityChurch Network Meetings

Canton OH – Cohort 1



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Canton OH – Cohort 1



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Canton OH – Cohort 1



# Our Common Task – Equipping for Service

11 So these were the gifts that he gave. Some were to be apostles, others prophets, others evangelists, and others pastors and teachers. 12 Their job is to give God's people the equipment they need for their work of service, and so to build up the king's body. (Eph 4:11, NT Wright)

# Introduction to Paul's Middle Letters

**RE:BUILD**

Life Rebuilding Programs





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Why is Re:BUILD so engaging? So attractive to churches?

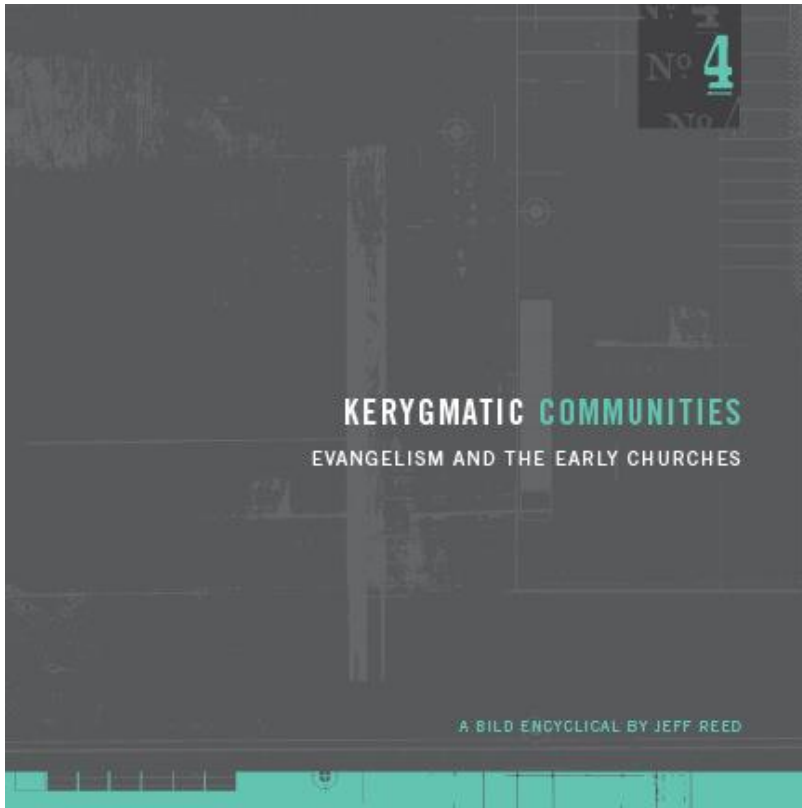
In a practical way, it puts churches back in the game.

And it is at the center of meeting pressing needs in a way no other groups can do it, like the churches—a true family of families.

# Why Is This True?

Why is it that the churches – each a true family of families – can meet pressing needs like no other group can do?

# CityChurch Network – Tulsa discussion



*Jesus was forming a new community. It wasn't like anything before it. It would be His key to the continued proclamation of the good news that He began preaching, taking it to the ends of the earth. What was to be so distinct about this new community? In what ways was it to be totally unique? p12*

# Good Works and Hospitality

Galatians 6:9–10 (NASB)

<sup>9</sup> Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. <sup>10</sup> So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

# Good Works and Hospitality

1 Thessalonians 5:15 (NASB)

<sup>15</sup> See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.

# Good Works and Hospitality

Titus 2:11–14

<sup>11</sup> For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, <sup>12</sup> instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, <sup>13</sup> looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, <sup>14</sup> who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

# Good Works and Hospitality

Romans 12:1, 10-13 (NASB95)

<sup>1</sup> Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God... <sup>10</sup> *Be* devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; <sup>11</sup> not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; <sup>12</sup> rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, <sup>13</sup> contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

# Good Works and Hospitality

1 Timothy 3:2 (NASB95)

<sup>2</sup> An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,



# Good Works and Hospitality

Hebrews 13:1–2 (NASB95)

<sup>1</sup> Let love of the brethren continue. <sup>2</sup> Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

# Discussion

1. What is hospitality? Who is it directed towards?
2. How does hospitality express itself at the individual level? At the family level? At the church family level? At the church network level? What is the impact when all levels work together?
3. Why are NT warnings about not losing heart needed? Why the admonitions to practice hospitality? What are the barriers to hospitality and good works?
4. What will be the fruit? How do we measure impact? What outcomes should we expect?

# Good Works and Hospitality

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possession – that which is peculiar or special (LN)

zealous – deeply committed to something (LN)

# Good Works and Hospitality

Titus 3:4–8 (NASB)

<sup>4</sup> But when the **kindness of God our Savior** and *His* love for mankind appeared, <sup>5</sup> He saved us, **not on the basis of deeds** which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life. <sup>8</sup> This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that *those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds*. These things are good and profitable for men.

# Good Works and Hospitality

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# Good Works and Hospitality

1 Thessalonians 5:15 (NASB)

<sup>15</sup> See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.

good to the undeserving – sound familiar?

# Summary

1. God's grace, if understood, teaches us to do good. We will be drawn to good because we have been shown good – undeserved.
2. Zealousness for good works should mark us as a special people belonging to God.
3. Leaders must cast this vision because...
  - we will drift towards other desires, even returning evil for evil.
  - we will grow weary after season if not stirred afresh.

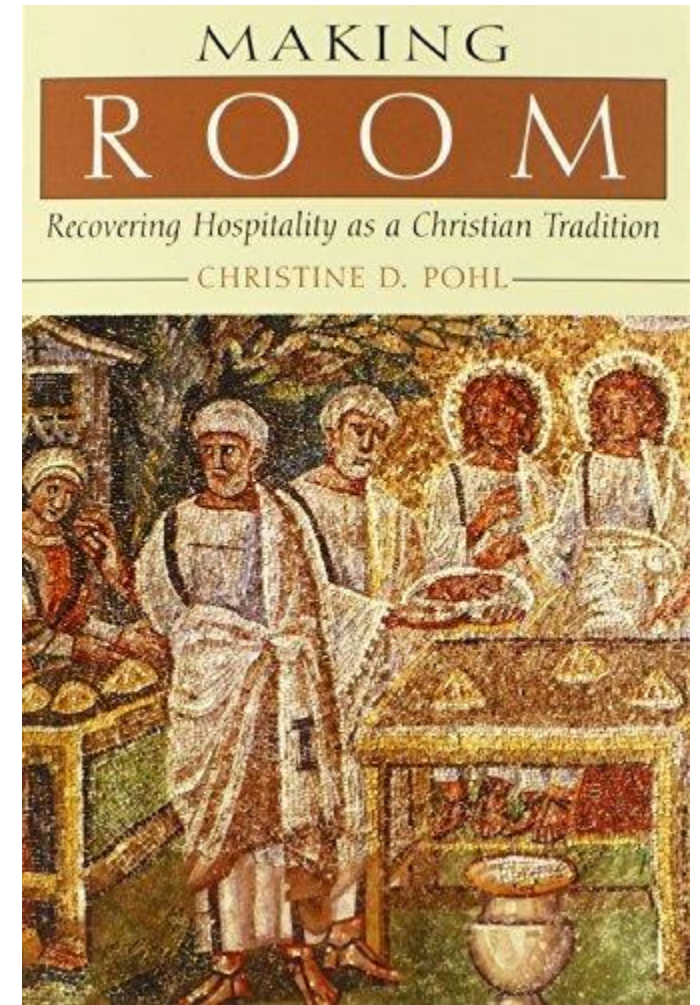
# Good Works and Hospitality

Romans 12:1, 10-13 (NASB95)

<sup>1</sup> Therefore I urge you, brethren, by **the mercies of God...** <sup>10</sup> *Be* devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; <sup>11</sup> not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; <sup>12</sup> rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, <sup>13</sup> contributing to the needs of the saints, **practicing hospitality.**



Hospitality is not optional for Christians, nor is it limited to those who are specially gifted for it. It is, instead, a necessary practice in the community of faith. One of the key Greek words for hospitality, *philoxenia*, combines the general word for love or affection for people who are connected by kinship or faith (*phileo*), and the word for stranger (*xenos*). p31



***hospitality* (φιλοξενία) –**

- *strictly love for strangers or foreigners* (ALGNT)
- to receive and show hospitality to a stranger, that is, someone who is not regarded as a member of the extended family or a close friend — ‘to show hospitality, to receive a stranger as a guest, hospitality.’ (LN)

***practicing* (διώκω) –** to do something with intense effort and with definite purpose or goal (LN)

## ***Why does the gospel call us to love strangers?***

“you were dead in your trespasses and sins...” (Eph 2:1)

“you were at that time separate from Christ...strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world (Eph 2:12)

“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens, are of God’s household.” (Eph 2:19)

***How can we not?***

# Good Works and Hospitality

1 Timothy 5:9–10 (NASB95)

<sup>9</sup> A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, *having been* the wife of one man, <sup>10</sup> having a reputation for good works; *and* if she has brought up children, if she has **shown hospitality** to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, *and* if she has **devoted herself to every good work**.

# Good Works and Hospitality

***shown hospitality* (ξενοδοχέω)** – to receive and show hospitality to a stranger, that is, someone who is not regarded as a member of the extended family or a close friend

# Good Works and Hospitality

1 Timothy 3:2 (NASB95)

<sup>2</sup> An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, **hospitable**, able to teach,

# Good Works and Hospitality

Titus 1:7–8 (NASB95)

<sup>7</sup> For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, <sup>8</sup> but **hospitable**, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,

# Good Works and Hospitality

1 Peter 4:8–9 (NASB95)

<sup>8</sup> Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup> Be **hospitable to one another without complaint.**



# Good Works and Hospitality

What might one complain about?

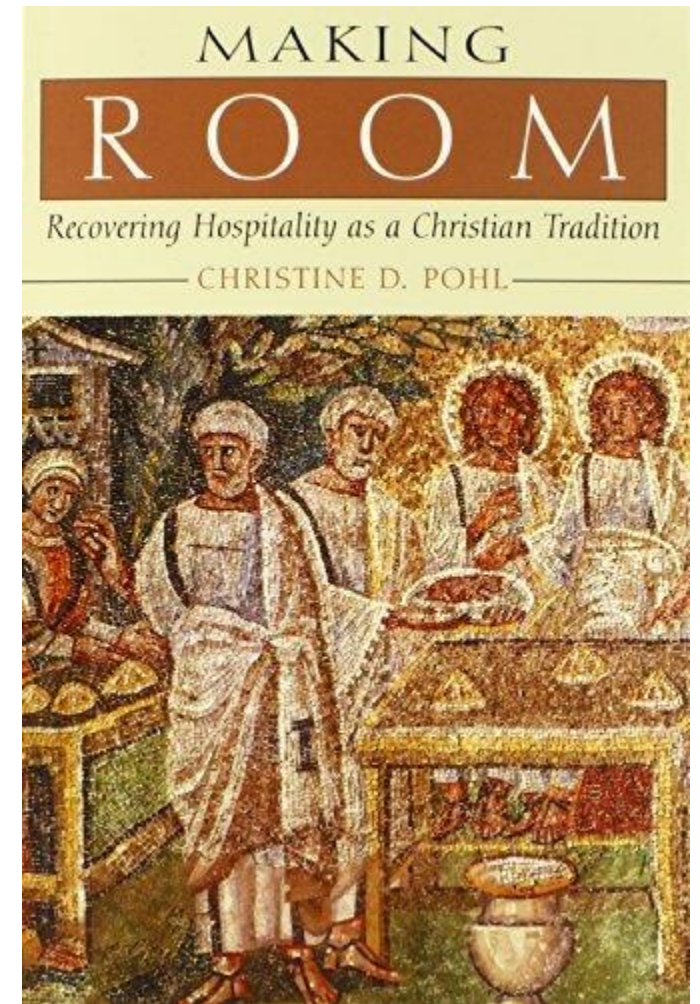
- Maybe newcomers to our family who change the tone the feel of our community
- Anyone who because of personality, background, or class is not like us
- Those we feel are taking much and giving little

# Good Works and Hospitality

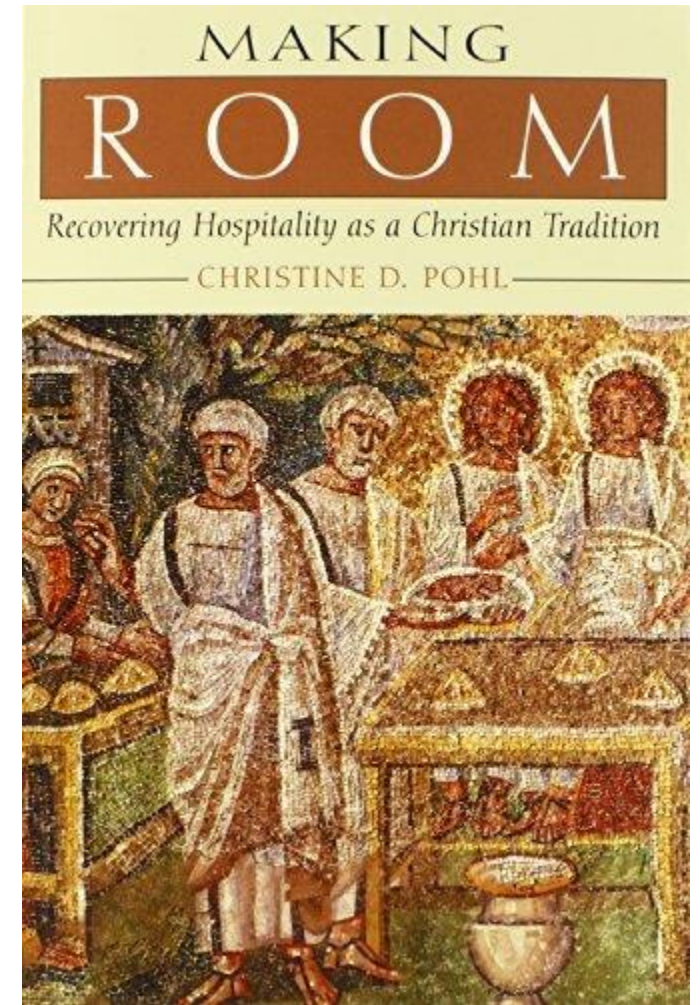
Hebrews 13:1–3 (NASB95)

<sup>1</sup> Let love of the brethren continue. <sup>2</sup> **Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers**, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it. <sup>3</sup> Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, *and* those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.

Hospitality...always included family, friends, and influential contacts. The distinctive Christian contribution was the emphasis on including the poor and neediest, the ones who could not return the favor. This did not diminish the value of hospitality to family and friends; rather, it broadened the practice so that the close relations formed by table fellowship and conversation could be extended to the most vulnerable. p6



The distinctive quality of Christian hospitality is that it offers a generous welcome to the 'least' without concern for advantage or benefit to the host. p16



# Summary

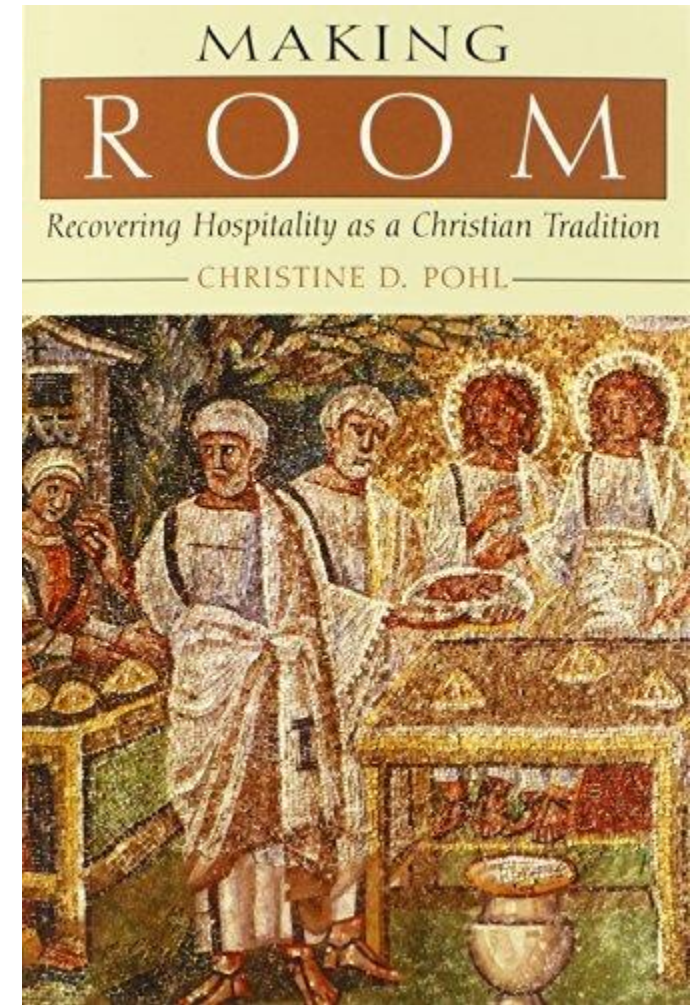
The gospel calls us to hospitality, we who were strangers but have now been adopted into God's family. (Rom 12:13, Eph 2)

We are called to hospitality regardless of gifts. (Rom 12:13; Heb 13:2)

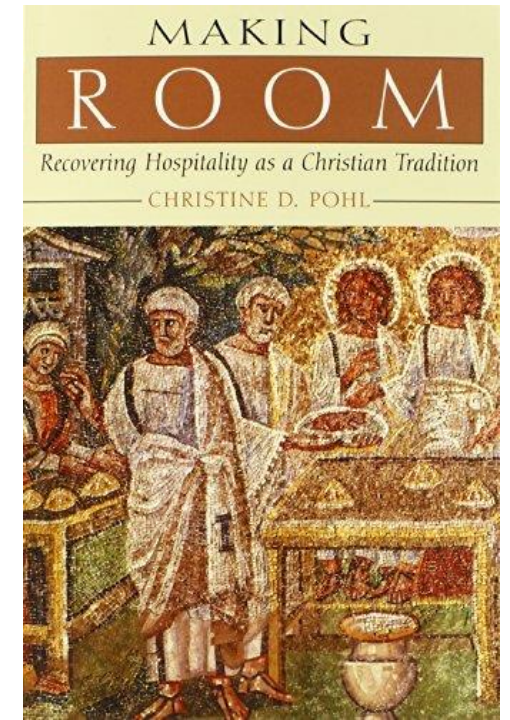
Hospitality is a mark of maturity and an essential quality of leadership. (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8; 1 Tm 5:10)

Hospitality is central to the creation of community and to the mission of community. (all passages)

Even a superficial review of the first seventeen centuries of church history reveals the importance of hospitality **to the spread and credibility of the gospel**, to transcending national and ethnic distinctions in the church, and to Christian care for the sick, strangers, and pilgrims. p6



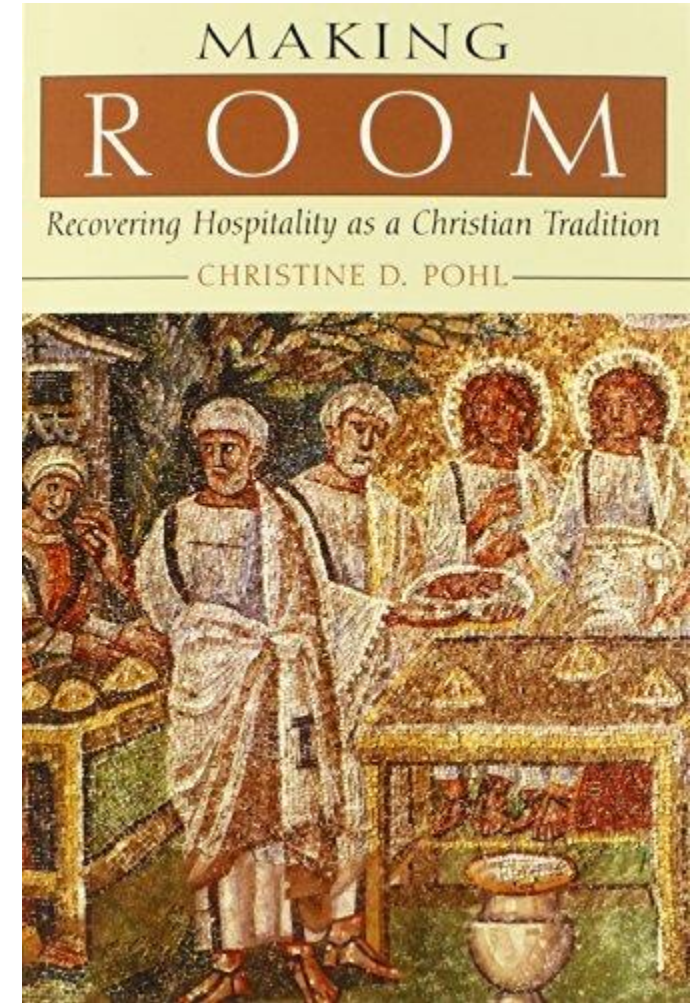
We, like the early church, find ourselves in a fragmented and multicultural society that yearns for relationships, identity, and meaning. Our mobile and self-oriented society is characterized by disturbing levels of loneliness, alienation, and estrangement...People are hungry for welcome, but most Christians have lost track of the heritage of hospitality. **The riches of the first centuries have been obscured from view** and from memory, and even today's practitioners of hospitality have only a limited sense of the larger story within which they might locate their ministry. pp33-34



# Fading role of the church

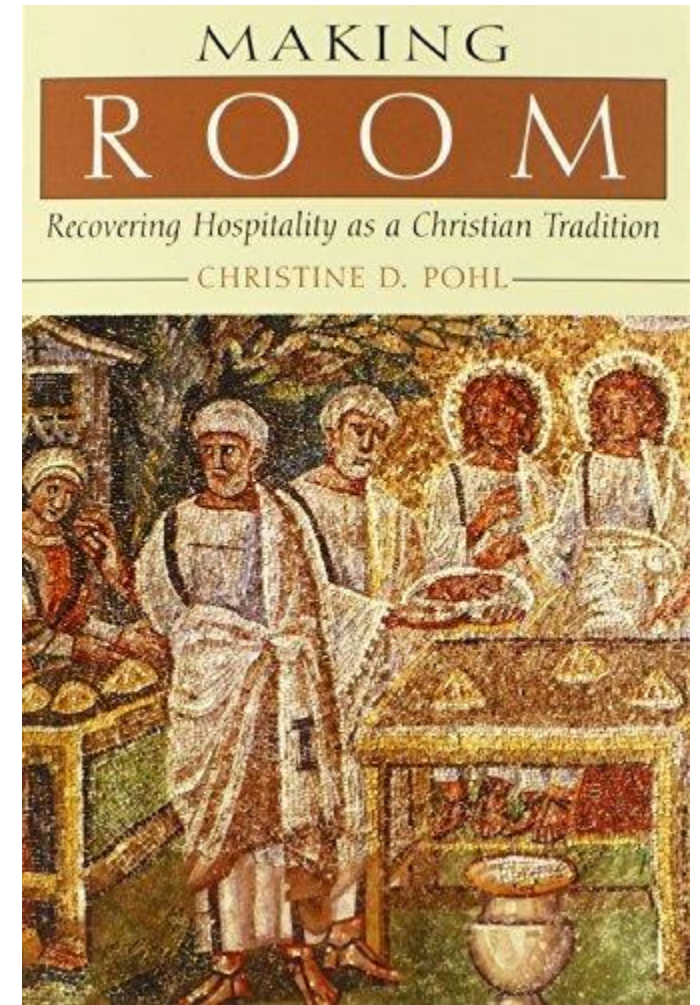
Over the centuries, two trajectories emerged...

1. Hospitality as material care for strangers and the local poor
2. Hospitality as personal welcome and entertainment p51

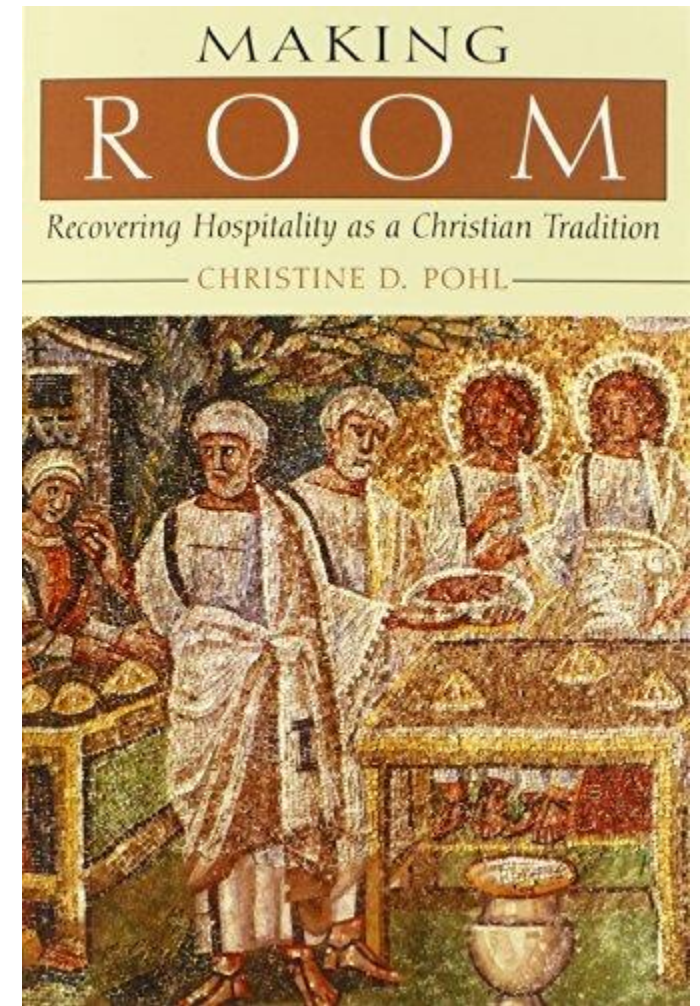




The church was made up of family households, but it was more than a sum of those individual households. **The church was a new household, God's household, and believers became family to one another.** Early Christian hospitality was offered from within this overlap of household and church. P42



While it is clear that the household has been crucial to hospitality throughout almost all of human history, it is also clear that households today are in trouble. Families are unstable; often no one is at home. The future of Christian hospitality is partly tied to the future of the home and family. **Recovering hospitality will involve reclaiming the household as a key site for ministry and then reconnecting the household and the church**, so that the two institutions can work in partnership for the sake of the world. pp57-58



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And it is at the center of meeting pressing needs in a way no other groups can do it, like the churches—a true family of families.

# ReBuild requires hospitality at many levels

**Our conversations** – Do you take interest in a newcomer, stranger, disadvantaged?

**Our tables** – Who do you eat with?

**Our homes** – Is it a sanctuary or a center of mission?

**Our circle of relationships** – Is this circle closed or open for more?

**Our churches as a family** – Who do you connect with outside the meetings?

**Our agape meals** – Are all welcome?

**Our common work and service** – Are all invited to contribute?

# ReBuild requires hospitality as many levels

Notice the levels

- Individual hospitality
- Family hospitality
- Church family hospitality
- Hospitality within our clusters and entire network

The whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts

# Barriers to Hospitality

- Class separations
- Preserving your privacy
- You're tired or have lost heart
- You entertain rather than love strangers
- Afraid of the risk
- Don't want your routine messed up
- Feeling a lack of resources

# Barriers to Hospitality

- Don't want people to sit on, spill on, wear out, break, ruin, or steal your stuff
- You don't want them to see your warts
- Worried about being used, conned, or taken advantage of
- Afraid to disrupt a close set of church family relationships
- Not willing to be vulnerable or let people help you
- Expectations regarding your impact

# How do we answer the difficult questions?

With wisdom and judgment, guided by the biblical principles, informed by experience, and with the counsel of leadership.

“Am I thinking about this right?”



# Outcomes of Hospitality

- Genuine, tangible needs are met
- The church family is united
- Social barriers are broken down
- Homes are life-giving
- Lives are changed through the example and model of others
- The gospel is adorned
- God's wisdom is made known

# But we must be patient...

Galatians 6:9–10 (NASB)

<sup>9</sup> Let us not lose heart in doing good, for **in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.** <sup>10</sup> So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

# CityChurch Network

Canton OH – Theology in  
Culture discussion



# CityChurch Network

With ReBuild we are bringing the N.T. themes of good works and hospitality to bear on cultural issues like...

- generational poverty
- substance abuse and addiction
- fragmented families
- incarceration without rehabilitation

These issues are everywhere. Each problem we solve here contributes to the bigger discussion.