

November 2018

“GOSPEL HOSPITALITY – PAYING ATTENTION”

One of the more profound insights I have gained in recent days occurred while preparing to celebrate the life of a dear Christian sister, Suellen Cosby, who joined the Church Eternal on September 28th. Her husband, Don, her daughter, Kim, and her close friend, Bev, described her as someone who knew how to be a good friend. Suellen nurtured such relationships by ***“paying attention to what you paid attention to.”*** That strikes a chord with me. I want to do this better as a husband, father, pastor, friend... in all of my relationships.

It sounds like gospel hospitality to me. Consider Jesus’ words in Luke 10:27, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” And again in Matthew 7:12, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you.”

Of course, you see it, right? If you want to know and be a friend of God and one another, then pay attention! Apply your heart, soul, strength and mind. That’s gospel hospitality and welcome. Paying attention helps us embody hospitality in every fiber of our beings. It takes intentional and persistent effort . . . otherwise known as spiritual discipline. Paying attention is a lifelong journey, not a one-time event.

Cultivating this mindfulness (or ability to stay in tune or awake) is vital to understanding God’s will and purpose for our lives as individuals and as His Church. Paying attention to what Jesus pays attention to will focus our ministry like nothing else. Think about what it would look like in the ways that we nurture and assimilate visitors and new members. How might paying attention to what Jesus pays attention to help us understand how deeply we’re loved. Or how might it influence how we set our priorities in both mission and stewardship?

Let’s find out, amen? Amen!

PASTOR TODD