

Question (shayla): If a unmarried adult couple who lives together in their own home comes to stay with you for the weekend, do you ask them to sleep in separate rooms?

Answer (responsa):

Hospitality is a practical way to serve God. It should be an automatic response to a perceived need and the Ransomed should be passionate about it. When we have guests, we should serve them and give them our best.¹ After all, by practicing hospitality we may even be entertaining angels²; yet even when we know for a fact that our guests are no angels, we should STILL serve them as if we were serving the Lord Himself.³

Hospitality is a spiritual discipline that should be as zealously pursued as the discipline of patience in suffering or prayer. It will only improve with practice.⁴ In fact, hospitality is such an important practice that it is actually a requirement that Church elders⁵ should be capable of both extending and receiving hospitality.⁶ Accepting the hospitality of others allows them to practice this delicate and yet primary gift and an elder should be apt to teach...

Jesus did not limit his social life to the spiritual elite. He was willing to “hang out” with sinful people.⁷ So we should be willing to show love to the sinful as Christ did for us when we were the rebels.⁸

That does not mean that we should enable sin! We must neither give the devil a toe hold in our lives⁹, nor allow sinners to influence our behavior toward wickedness.¹⁰

On the other hand, we cannot separate ourselves from all sin, for to do so we would have to leave this world!¹¹ The only sinners we are to separate ourselves from (while keeping an eye to our own sinfulness¹²) are those who claim to be Christians and yet are living in unrepentant sin.¹³ Living an uncompromised life entails faithful discernment. It involves humbly realizing that sin lies very close at hand at all times, regardless of who we are or where we are spiritually. However, there is hope because no temptation is ever too great to resist and no situation is so complex that no path exists towards righteousness.¹⁴

Balancing these two principles (hospitality and personal righteousness) is a tremendously difficult task. Our Lord left us here as sheep among wolves and so we must be as shrewd as serpents and yet as harmless as doves.¹⁵

It is my judgment that the best approach would be to simply offer the couple two rooms. Do not discuss their situation unless they bring it up. If they do, deal with it lovingly and without condemnation. In that way, you are extending hospitality while not enabling their sin. If they choose to sleep together anyway, then the sin is on their heads.

¹ Genesis 18:1-8

² Hebrews 13:1-2

³ Ecclesiastes 9:10; Colossians 3:17, 23-24

⁴ Romans 12:11-15

⁵ 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8

⁶ Luke 10:7-8

⁷ Matthew 9:10-13

⁸ Romans 5:6-8

⁹ Ephesians 4:27

¹⁰ Proverbs 1:10

¹¹ 1 Corinthians 5:9-10

¹² Matthew 7:1-6

¹³ 1 Corinthians 5:11-13

¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 10:12-13

¹⁵ Matthew 10:16