



# I Was A Stranger: A Christian Theology of Hospitality

*Arthur Sutherland*

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## **I Was A Stranger: A Christian Theology of Hospitality** Arthur Sutherland

Arthur Sutherland places before us our fear of meeting the “other” and the “stranger” in an increasingly global, and frequently dangerous, village. Various social, political, and historical factors have conspired to leave us in a veritable crisis: the decline of hospitality.

Why is this a crisis? Why should we practice hospitality? What is it about Christian theology that compels us to think about hospitality in the first place? Sutherland offers a passionate plea to recover and rediscover hospitality, and to respond to the divine appeal to welcome the stranger.

Therein lies the central concern of the book: that hospitality is not simply the practice of a virtue but is integral to the very nature of Christianity’s position toward God, self, and the world—it is at the very center of what it means to be a Christian and to think theologically. He offers a challenging definition of hospitality and calls us to a practice that is *the* virtue by which the church stands or falls.

Drawing on modern theologians (including Howard Thurman, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Karl Barth, Martin Luther King Jr., and Letty Russell) and considering American slavery, the Holocaust, feminism, and prisons, Sutherland eloquently presents a Christian theology of hospitality.

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