

UNITED

Accept One Another

Read: Romans 15:1-7 & 14:1-4

Reflection:

Paul very clearly commands Christians to “accept one another” and yet many believers and non-believers would point to a church interaction as their most painful situation of rejection and non-acceptance. A sad truth in “church land” is that we tend to gravitate towards those who look like, think like and talk like ourselves. In Denver many churches have become categorized more by their social demographic than their theological beliefs! “Oh that’s the ‘hipster’ church,” “that’s the singles church,” “that’s an ‘old person’ church,” “everyone is young and beautiful at that church,” “there a ton of families at that church,” “that church is filled with all the disgruntled evangelicals with tattoos!” These are all real phrases about local churches! And sadly, we tend to perpetuate these stereotypes by only pursuing and interacting with those people that “fit our mold.” No wonder so many people have felt rejected by church circles!

Similarly, when interacting with people who are adamantly against the Christian faith, the rationale for their opposition is rarely their rejection of the teachings of Jesus and usually a painful interaction with His followers. With this type of “fraternity” mentality in our congregations, it is only a matter of time before people start to feel rejected and alone. So what does Jesus require of his followers in the realm of acceptance? And why does the church seem to be so off base in this area? We will look deeper into this command of “accept one another” in our city groups this week.

Questions:

1. When you hear the phrase “accept one another” what comes to mind?
2. Why is the church rarely associated with the term “acceptance”? Have you experienced a lack of acceptance in the church? Please explain. How would Jesus have dealt with that situation?
3. In this week’s message, we learned that “accepting one another” should take the form of meeting one another’s needs (Acts 28:2). What does this look like practically? How can our group put this into action?
4. Re-read Romans 14:1-4. What directives is Paul giving in these verses (Don’t pass judgment, don’t compare, etc.)? How can we apply these verses at New City?
5. What does it look like to give others the benefit of the doubt?
6. According to Romans 15:1-7, why do we accept one another and what is the purpose of our acceptance?