

Building A Christian Community

Accept One Another

Romans 15:7

Introduction

If there's one thing we should know very well, it's that the church is not a building; it's a body of related believers. This church is alive because we are connected to the head of the body, Jesus Christ. As the body of Christ, we are here to serve a living Christ. The disciples purposefully followed Jesus' command to love one another through several "one another" imperatives.

1. In this series, we have studied:
 - Serve one another
 - _____ one another
 - Admonish one another
 - Confess your faults to one another
 - Forgive one another, and finally
 - Accept one another
2. The base text for this study has been John 13: 34,35, where Jesus said, "A new commandment I give to you, that you _____ one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

I. What Is Acceptance?

3. At first glance, acceptance may sound like a synonym for "_____ one another."
4. The opposite of forgiveness is _____.
5. Acceptance, however, means to _____ someone who is different from you.
6. Paul's challenge is for Jewish and Gentile Christians to welcome one another in loving fellowship without trying to spiritualize their ethnic and cultural _____.

7. The opposite of acceptance is arrogance, _____, or belligerence.
8. Acceptance is acknowledging that every person is created in the _____ of God.
9. Paul says this acceptance is crucial because it is "to the _____ of God."
10. Jesus said the proof of God's love and acceptance is demonstrated in the _____ of Christ.
11. Jesus came to save us and _____ us how to accept one another in His love.
12. Wherever the message of God's love went, _____ communities sprang up and brought people together who would never have been together otherwise.
13. One thing people could not deny is that Christians from very _____ backgrounds loved one another in a way that no one else could.
14. Christians were able to rise above their differences because of their mutual love for Christ and his _____ to love one another.
15. Francis Schaeffer said, "Every Christian community ought to be a pilot plant to show that we can have _____ with each other in spite of all kinds of differences in Christ."

II. The Biblical Basis For Acceptance

16. If we commit to practicing Christian acceptance, we need a _____ basis and practical steps to develop it.
17. We must go beyond regulating behavior and understand the root issue underlying it—namely, _____.
18. Identity refers to the incurable need we have to define ourselves in a way that _____ our existence.

19. Most people, including Christians, define themselves _____ by how we are different from other humans.
20. The only alternative is to develop a _____ identity.
21. Vertical identity is the identity _____ assigns to us and reveals in us.
22. Our _____ have nothing to do with our real identity.
23. We were made in God's image, giving us dignity and _____ in God's eyes.
24. A new identity in Christ includes:
- complete forgiveness through Jesus' death,
 - a deep personal relationship with God through the indwelling of his Holy _____,
 - a common calling to God's purpose for this life and a destiny of eternal life in God's kingdom.
25. Your differences no longer define you because you begin to realize you are a _____ of God to this world!
26. The old life is _____, and a new life has begun!
27. As we learn to accept one another in the love of Christ, it gives us a basis for appreciating and _____ from one another's differences.

III. Practical Steps Toward Acceptance

28. But unless we combine this with _____ steps, it will be a dead letter instead of the life-changing reality that God wants it to be.
29. If you want God to change you, _____ to getting consistently and personally involved with some other Christians who stretch you.

30. Consider _____ in a ministry that serves people who are different than you

Conclusion

31. As you encounter relational _____, focus on the attitudes God wants to change in you rather than on the differences of your Christian friends.

32. Let the Holy Spirit drive you more deeply into your new identity in _____.

33. Differences will always arise that threaten to _____ and alienate us.

34. Building a Christian Community requires us to learn how to love one another the way _____ loved his disciples.

Don't settle for being a church attendee. Get involved and make some Christian friends. And remember, it's essential to learn how to give and how to receive. Relationship is a two-way street.

ANSWERS

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|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Encourage | 20. Vertical |
| 2. Love | 21. God |
| 3. Forgive | 22. Differences |
| 4. Bitterness | 23. Value |
| 5. Welcome | 24. Spirit |
| 6. Differences | 25. Gift |
| 7. Intolerance | 26. Gone |
| 8. Image | 27. Learning |
| 9. Glory | 28. Practical |
| 10. Body | 29. Commit |
| 11. Teach | 30. Serving |
| 12. Christian | 31. Problems |
| 13. Different | 32. Christ |
| 14. Command | 33. Divide |
| 15. Relationships | 34. Jesus |
| 16. Biblical | |
| 17. Identity | |
| 18. Validates | |
| 19. Horizontally | |