



Your  
*story*  

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matters.

MAY 25, 2025

Message Notes



### **People-ing 101: Building Community One Story at a Time** **"Accept One Another"** **Pastor Nate Sickler | May 25, 2025**

We live in the most "connected" time in human history. We watch what seems like people's whole lives lived out in front of us online. We can instantly message or video call someone halfway around the world. And yet, despite all that connection, study after study reveals the same thing: people are \_\_\_\_\_ than ever. And it's not just one group - this is affecting every generation.

How can the most connected culture in the history of humanity be struggling so much to find meaningful relationships?

How can a culture that's *always connected* feel \_\_\_\_\_?

Loneliness isn't a new problem. It's been part of the human story for a long, long time. But the good news is - God sees and knows us. He knows what we need most, and He doesn't leave us hanging.

That's why His Word speaks directly to this. Throughout Scripture, especially in the New Testament, God lays out a striking picture of what it looks like to live in healthy, life-giving relationships. There are at least \_\_\_\_\_ passages that talk about how we're supposed to treat one another - they're often called the "one anothers."

These aren't religious checkboxes. These are the blueprints for building real connection - the kind of connection we know we need and \_\_\_\_\_.

Today we will explore a foundational "one another" - Accept One Another (**Romans 15:7**)

#### **I. What Acceptance Is \_\_\_\_\_... (**Romans 14:1-4, 10-13**)**

##### **A. Acceptance Is Not \_\_\_\_\_ Agreement**

- Strong and weak Jesus followers - weak can become \_\_\_\_\_.
- Strong can become \_\_\_\_\_.

##### **B. Acceptance Is Not \_\_\_\_\_ of Sin (**Romans 13:12-14**)**

- Acceptance helps us to move from darkness to \_\_\_\_\_!

##### **C. It Doesn't Mean \_\_\_\_\_ Hard Conversations (**Romans 15:1**)**

- Acceptance includes the \_\_\_\_\_ to challenge and encourage growth - lovingly.
- Acceptance invites growth; tolerance \_\_\_\_\_ it.

## 2. What Acceptance \_\_\_\_\_... (Romans 15:1-7)

### A. Acceptance Is \_\_\_\_\_ for Each Other

- The word "accept" = *proslambano* in Greek = "to take to oneself," "to \_\_\_\_\_ into friendship".
- Not tolerating someone at arm's length - but bringing them close. (Romans 15:2)

### B. Acceptance Prioritizes \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 14:19)

- Jesus accepted us long before we had it all figured out. And He still accepts us even when we think we have it all figured out. (Romans 5:8)

### C. Acceptance Requires Humility (Romans 13:8-10)

- Am I building up or \_\_\_\_\_?
- I can be \_\_\_\_\_.
- I may not know the \_\_\_\_\_ story.

## 3. What Happens When We Accept Like Jesus?

### A. We Keep Jesus the \_\_\_\_\_ (Romans 15:7)

- Our relating to one another becomes \_\_\_\_\_.
- How we relate to others points others to \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus is.

### B. We Create an Environment Where Meaningful Growth Is Possible (Romans 15:5-7)

- Spiritual maturity is not shown by how much you \_\_\_\_\_ - but by how much you \_\_\_\_\_.
- People come out of \_\_\_\_\_ when they're met with love.

## SO MY NEXT STEP IN PEOPLE-ING IS:

- Who have you been keeping at arm's length? Try inviting them to "sit with me".
- What is one judgment or preference that is hurting one of your relationships? It's time to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Who in your life needs to hear some affirmation? Text or call them...\_\_\_\_\_!

"Riverside is not just a church where you go, it is a family where you can \_\_\_\_\_."

***Tell us about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey!***

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Your group matters.

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Icebreaker -

*What is your favorite thing to do on a rainy day and was there time for it this week?*

1. Take time to answer Pastor Nate's question, "How can the most connected culture in the history of humanity be struggling so much to find meaningful relationships?"
2. Pastor Nate explained that acceptance is not automatic agreement, approval of sin or avoidance of hard conversations. Read **Romans 14:1-4**, **10-13**, **13:12-14**, and **15:1**. Has your understanding of acceptance included any of these misconceptions, and if so, how have they impacted your ability to accept others?
3. **Romans 15:1-7**, **14:19** and **13:8-10** show us that acceptance involves making room for others, prioritizing peace, and demonstrating humility. Describe a time when you struggled to accept someone; were you practicing this Biblical understanding of acceptance, and if not, how might it have helped?
4. Pastor Nate stated, "People come out of hiding when they're met with love." How have you experienced or seen this truth in your life?
5. Pastor Nate outlined 3 action steps to show acceptance to others. Review these, then share with the group which of these steps you will take this week.

## PERSONAL GUIDE

*Day One:* Mark 6; Psalm 123

*Day Two:* Numbers 6; Proverbs 30

*Day Three:* 2 Corinthians 13; 1 Kings 19

*Day Four:* Revelation 15; Lamentations 5

*Day Five:* Song of Songs 7; Acts 11

*This Personal Guide has been adapted from Professor Grant Horner's Bible Reading System.*



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How can a culture that's *always connected* feel so alone?

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These aren't religious checkboxes. These are the blueprints for building real connection - the kind of connection we know we need and desperately want.

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## **I. What Acceptance Is NOT... (**Romans 14:1-4, 10-13**)**

### **A. Acceptance Is Not Automatic Agreement**

- Strong and weak Jesus followers - weak can become legalistic. Strong can become judgmental.

### **B. Acceptance Is Not Approval of Sin (**Romans 13:12-14**)**

- Acceptance helps us to move from darkness to light!

### **C. It Doesn't Mean Avoiding Hard Conversations (**Romans 15:1**)**

- Acceptance includes the responsibility to challenge and encourage growth - lovingly.
- Acceptance invites growth; tolerance ignores it.

## 2. What Acceptance IS... (Romans 15:1-7)

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