

Accepting Our Differences

Ponder: Does accepting our differences make us stronger?

Scripture: "Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God" (Rom. 15:7, NKJV).

A constant barrage of TV spots advises us that "accepting our differences makes us stronger." That sounds noble and good. I want to believe it. But is it true? Yes! And no!

The TV ads omit the obvious question: "What differences?"

No doubt about it, people are different! People were different in Biblical times. Some were Jews, others were Gentiles, and still others were mixed race. By accepting one another's differences, they were united in Christ. Concerning Jews and Gentiles Paul wrote that Christ "has broken down the middle wall of separation . . . so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that he might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross" (Eph. 2:14-16). The New Testament knows nothing of a Gentile congregation on one side of town with a Jewish congregation on the other. Unity and its accompanying strength came from accepting differences.

Different people have different abilities. Accepting such differences enables us to work together like various members of a body. That was true of Christians with supernatural gifts in the New Testament and remains true today even without miraculous endowments (see 1 Cor. 12:4-31). Not everyone serves in the same capacity as you, nor should they expect you to do the same things they do.

Given today's culture in America, however, TV ads are most likely aimed well beyond racial harmony and varying skills. Secular progressives have spent decades pushing for acceptance of moral perversion and gender confusion. Even politicians lecture us that such "diversity" (?) makes us a stronger country. Nevertheless, God's word still says, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34). By cleverly placing lgbtq+ issues in the same context as the legitimate need for racial harmony, they make anyone who upholds Biblical morality appear to be a racist bigot.

When God's word teaches us to accept differences, doing so strengthens us. But when it comes to sinful behaviors He says, "Come out from among them and be separate" (2 Cor. 6:17). Accepting sin will never make us stronger.

Hymn: "More Holiness Give Me"

Prayer: Father, please help us to accept differences where we should, but always to uphold righteousness. In Jesus' name, Amen.