

Coach House Church BEACONS

TO BE HUMAN

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Racial equality is an expression that has been in the spot light for some time now.

Before the recent international scandal and demonstrations, I wonder if people thought consciously about racial equality in their day to day activities and in their interactions with their neighbours or strangers on the street .

When I was a child together with my sister, we were not allowed to play with certain children. At that point in time we did not understand why and to be honest with you we got constantly in trouble because we disregarded my parents rules and played with the children we were not supposed to play with.

Later when we grew a bit older we we were told that the children we were not allowed to play with were different to us that's why we were not to play with them.

As people we like to associate with people that like and do the same things as us. For example: football is big in Manchester. If you are a blue you can't associate yourself with reds . In music If you are a metal head you look on pop stars and hipsters as if they were extraterrestrial . The same happens if you are a dog person or a cat one . You can't take the cat out for a walk when your neighbour invites you for a stroll with their dog.

I could go on and on talking about differences that build up walls between people , that separate groups of people without even getting close to people's race or religion.

When all these differences are taken in the right spirit with humour and acceptance is all very well, however, when we look at the differences between us with hate aggressiveness and pride , nothing good can come out of it.

The bible has nothing good to say about pride . The book of Proverbs warns us repeatedly against it. In chapter 16 v5 says " the Lord detests all the proud of heart " and verse 8 says " pride goes before destruction " .

On the opposite site of pride is humility; humility is a sought after quality in the Bible. Proverbs 18:12 the second part of the verse says:" humility comes before honour and Proverbs 11:2 tells us that with humility comes wisdom .

The Bible is a good source of knowledge and inspiration when it comes to interpersonal relationships. This is because God knows that we need to learn how to be kind and how to love one another. He knows that our hearts and minds have been corrupted by sin ; because of it we are more likely to burn bridges between ourselves than to build them .

Before Jesus came to this earth , the Jewish people had the law given by God to Moses . The trouble with the law was that people over time kept on adding to it so, the simple person that wanted to follow it ,would get lost in the "do's and don'ts". Therefore, when they were listening to Jesus they asked him which command is the most important . In Mark 12 v 29-31 Jesus answers ." Hear oh Israel the Lord our God is one , love your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this - love your neighbour as yourself. There is no command greater that these.

When you love your neighbour as yourself - this is the person sat next to you on the bus or in the queue ; the person that pinched the parking space near the door of the supermarket just before you backed into it ; the person that picked up the last bag of flour off the shelf just in front of you- you would try to see the things that you have in common and not the differences .

In Luke chapter 18 from verse 9 to 14 , Jesus told the parable of the 2 men that went up to the temple to pray .let's read it :

To some that were confident in their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else , Jesus told this parable. Two men went up to the temple to pray . One a Pharisee and the other a tax collector - these people were in total different classes socially . The first was highly esteemed and the second was viewed as a traitor for he collected money from the Jews to pay the Romans - the Pharisee stood by himself and prayed : " God I thank you that I'm not like other people - rubbers, evildoers , adulterous- or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a Tenth of all I get. But the tax collector stood at a distance . He would not even look up to heaven but beat his breast and said " God have mercy of me , a sinner "

I tell you that this man rather than the other went home justified before God . For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled and those who humble themselves will be exalted "

We all have imperfections, there is no reason for self-righteousness, arrogance and smugness .

When God created man and woman and put them in the garden of Eden ,He created mankind , not just one race of people and then later made the others . As humans we are one race descended from one family -one man and a woman . In my family we are very different. My mum was brunette had dark skin brown eyes and my dad is blond with blue eyes and white skin; as for hair he has none. He's gone bald over the years. When it comes to my sister and me , you would not put us in the same family at the first glance: one is brunette and dark the other blond and white . Did that make a difference to my parents ? ..not at all . They love us just the same as I'm sure you love the ones in your family's even though they don't look and act the same .

Jesus told the people who were listening to his teachings : "do to others as you would have them do to you" Luke 6:31

If we want to be loved accepted and respected by others , that's what we must do .. even to those we dislike; if we like to be forgiven , we need to forgive . If we want others to be kind and polite to us , we need to show kindness . If we want to be blessed share generously with others regardless where they come from or how they look like.

Lord help us to see each other as you see us - all the same . Help us to love each other the way you loved us so much that you give Jesus to die for us all.
Amen



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