

This Is Us

Part 5: United

Ice Breaker: Invite people to share about a time when they were extremely convinced of something, but they turned out to be wrong. (It will probably take a few minutes for people to think of something.)

What were some of the things that most resonated in you from last Sunday's message?

We're there things you struggled with?

Were there some things you weren't sure you agreed with?

READ: Romans 14:1-12

“Accept other believers who are weak in faith, and don't argue with them about what they think is right or wrong. For instance, one person believes it's all right to eat anything. But another believer with a sensitive conscience will eat only vegetables. Those who feel free to eat anything must not look down on those who don't. And those who don't eat certain foods must not condemn those who do, for God has accepted them. Who are you to condemn someone else's servants? Their own master will judge whether they stand or fall. And with the Lord's help, they will stand and receive his approval. In the same way, some think one day is more holy than another day, while others think every day is alike. You should each be fully convinced that whichever day you choose is acceptable. Those who worship the Lord on a special day do it to honor him. Those who eat any kind of food do so to honor the Lord, since they give thanks to God before eating. And those who refuse to eat certain foods also want to please the Lord and give thanks to God. For we don't live for ourselves or die for ourselves. If we live, it's to honor the Lord. And if we die, it's to honor the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. Christ died and rose again for this very purpose—to be Lord both of the living and of the dead. So why do you condemn another believer? Why do you look down on another believer? Remember, we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For the Scriptures say, “ ‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bend to me, and every tongue will declare allegiance praise to God.’ ” Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God. So let's stop condemning each other. Decide instead to live in such a way that you will not cause another believer to stumble and fall.” Romans 14:1–13 (NLT)

Paul mentions some issues that were controversial among believers at that time. What are were they?

What are some of the controversial issues among believers today?

Paul says in verse 13 that we should “*live in such a way that you will not cause another believer to stumble and fall*” referring to some of the controversial issues of his day. Can you think of things Jesus said and/or did that some people stumbled over? How do you reconcile what Jesus sometimes did with what this verse says?

Often times we are trying to *solve a problem*, when we should be trying to *manage a tension*. Can you think of examples of this?

Fill in the blanks: “In the essentials we have unity, in the non-essentials we have liberty, and in all things we have love.”

What are the “essentials” for Jesus followers?

READ Matthew 22:35–40 (NLT)

“An expert in religious law tried to trap him with this question: “Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?” Jesus replied, “ ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.” Matthew 22:35–40 (NLT)

Why do we often feel it is more important for us to be “right” than it is for us to be “kind?”

What are the advantages of being right? Are there sometimes disadvantages of being right?
What are the advantages to being kind? Are there any disadvantages to being kind?

READ Colossians 3:10-15 (NLT)

“Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like him. In this new life, it doesn’t matter if you are a Jew or a Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and he lives in all of us. Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.”

Close in prayer