

Loving All the People

I sat on the living room couch and gazed out the window. A sanitation truck stopped in front of our house, lifted up our rollout trash cart, and dumped its contents into the truck. Then, it moved to the next house on the street. It performs the same task all over town. It didn't matter if it was serving the mayor's house, the largest home in town, or the smallest, all were treated the same.

We are all different. It doesn't matter what political party, sports team allegiance, gender, nationality, or if a person attended church or not; we are all equal in the eyes of the Lord. So it is with the town employee. He came to serve all. No questions asked -- He did his job.



How about you? How do you treat people who are different from you?

Do you treat all people with respect? We don't have it right just yet. Our culture tries to recognize the worth of people based on arbitrary factors: where we live, our body's physical features, the size of our bank account, etc. It is human nature to want to be viewed as better than someone else. We tend to compare ourselves with others, putting down others with the goal to feel superior. Comparing may be "human nature," but it is not God's nature. God wants us to accept others and try to be like Jesus. Instead of comparing ourselves with others, *Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith ... (Hebrews 12:2)*. The truth is we are equal in God's eyes. The Bible reminds us: *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28)*.

This weekend, we celebrate the birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King. Dr. King is well known for his "I Have a Dream" speech. Delivered on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial (August 28, 1963), it asks us to look forward to the time when everyone is treated the same. We remember the famous words: "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." Dr. King talked about the hope for future generations when he said, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." As did Jesus, Dr. King died for the cause of freedom.

We live in a country that says it is the "land of the free." Yet, our actions don't demonstrate that. Let's treat all of God's children -- everyone -- equally. It has been 60 years since Dr. King's speech, yet we're not where God wants us to be. *So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him (Acts 10:34-35)*.

Loving our neighbor as ourselves is one of the two great commandments, according to Jesus in Matthew 22:39. For the sanitation worker, treating all residents the same *is* what they routinely do. How about you? Do you routinely treat everyone the same? Are you willing to join hands with everyone and pray for a day when we love all people? Someday -- hopefully not just in heaven, but here on earth we can say, "Free at last. Free at last. Thank God almighty, we are free at last." Let freedom ring, from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city.

Here's the Point: God created us all the same, and He came to save us all. Let us follow Jesus in our love for all God's children.

Prayer: Thank you God, almighty, for giving us the opportunity to realize that we are all Children of God, created for Your purposes, and not our own. We thank you for servants of the Lord who have stood up for Your commandments, even in the face of oppression and were willing to sacrifice for the greater good. Amen.