



Part 1 – Belonging

One of the most basic needs that we all have is to be accepted. We all long to find relationships where we can feel safe, valued and included, and yet we can easily find ourselves withholding acceptance. In a world where agreement seems so scarce, we want to offer acceptance.

Scripture: Matthew 9:9-13, Mark 7:17-23

Discussion Questions

1. On Sunday we talked about our value of ‘belonging.’ What are some of the obvious benefits of creating an inclusive and accepting community? What are some of the tensions that we might anticipate would come along with creating this kind of community?
2. Read Matthew 9:9-13. Why do the religious leaders have a problem with who Jesus eats with? What is the significance of the quote from Hosea 6:6 (check the context of that verse - how does that contribute to what Jesus is trying to communicate)?
3. What does this passage say about Jesus’ priority? Who and what is most important to him and the purpose of his ministry?
4. Proverbs 13:20 says: “Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.” It is one of many Bible verses that warn us about who we associate with. Discuss the tension between (a) making sure that we aren’t negatively influenced by the people we are surrounded by and (b) being a positive influence on the people around us.

Moving Forward

What are some steps that we could take (personally and as a community) to follow Jesus in providing a community for all types of people to belong?