



August 17 – Acceptance (clips from How to train Your Dragon)

We all want to think of ourselves as accepting of others. But what if it's your child and they aren't living up to your idea of potential? Or is it someone from a different country whose customs and language are different from your own? Join us this weekend as we let a dragon and some Vikings teach us about acceptance!

Scripture:

Romans 12:6-13 NLT

In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. ⁷ If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. ⁸ If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. ⁹ Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. ¹⁰ Love each other with genuine affection,^[e] and take delight in honoring each other. ¹¹ Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically.^[f] ¹² Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. ¹³ When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

Matthew 22:34-40 NLT

But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees with his reply, they met together to question him again. ³⁵ One of them, an expert in religious law, tried to trap him with this question: ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?" ³⁷ Jesus replied, "'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.'^[e] ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'^[f] ⁴⁰ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."

Questions:

- Think over the people in your life. Who has accepted you for who you are, without trying to change you? Whom have you accepted, as they are without trying to change them?
- Who do you find most difficult to accept? Or to accept as a beloved child of God?
- This week, choose one person/people group in your life, who you have not been accepting of and make strides towards engaging with them – not to tell them you're right or they're wrong – but engage with them as human beings who God loves.

Reading for the Week:

- **Monday:** Matthew 7:1-5
- **Tuesday:** Proverbs 31:9
- **Wednesday:** Hebrews 4:12
- **Thursday:** Ephesians 4:29
- **Friday:** 2 Corinthians 5:10