

Day 29 - Welcoming Oasis

This week we will make our way through Stonegate's six core values. These values are the "hills we will die on" and filters to help us make decisions. They are not what we do but characterize everything we do. Today, we will focus on Stonegate's core value of being a *Welcoming Oasis*. We want every facet of our fellowship - our people, our buildings, our teams, our groups, and our events to be a pleasant refuge and peaceful experience in the midst of a difficult, troubled, and hectic world. A *Welcoming Oasis* is where people are welcomed, regardless of where they are, what they look like, or what they currently believe about God while at the same time being fueled and energized to live a life of influence for Christ.

What would it look like for you to be pleasant and peaceful to others, providing a refuge from our difficult, troubled, and hectic world?

Our focus scripture for today is Romans 15:7

"⁷ Therefore welcome one another, just as Christ also welcomed you, to the glory of God."

Jesus embodied this scripture in stark and powerful ways. A quick reading through the Gospels shows us Jesus welcoming sinners, inviting outcasts to share a meal, and healing those held in all sorts of bondage. The ultimate act of welcoming us was taking our place on the cross, saving our souls, and giving us a place in His Kingdom. Near or far from God, we are welcomed home because of what Christ has done on our behalf. This is *Welcoming Oasis* on display. Therefore, we get to welcome those who are near or far from Him back home.

Pause to ask God to establish a heart in you that loves people as He loved you. Ask Him for His perspective, compassion, and love to fill your heart towards people, regardless of their standing.

As an invitation to a spiritual practice—a way to say "yes, Lord," who needs a *welcoming oasis* where you live, work, and play? Who is someone you could welcome in, just as Christ did for you regardless of where they are, what they look like, or what they currently believe about God? Invite someone over for dinner, extend an invitation to coffee, or welcome someone to the seat next to you in church.

Prepare to walk with God into the day before us, the Lord who loves us says in:

John 13:34–35 "³⁴ "I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."

Father, help us discern where you are leading us as a church - making Your invitation clear.

Jesus, help us become worshipers, friends, apprentices, and guides who live as disciple-makers in all areas of our everyday.

Spirit, help us become a disciple-making hub, loving the lost and proclaiming Jesus in all we do and say so our communities will flourish.