

Friday, April 11, 2025



Day 33

*“Accept one another,
then, just as Christ ac-
cepted you.”*

—ROMANS 15:7 (NIV)

Reflect

Loving someone from a distance is much easier than loving up close. When you get close up, you can see all of their bad opinions, all of their wrongness, all of their hard-to-ignore habits. Francis Collins, a world-renowned geneticist and physician, understands how difficult it is to love people who are so unlike us. He led the National Institutes of Health during the pandemic, which meant he endured and witnessed vitriol on all fronts. What we need, he said, is to get out of our silos and really listen to one another. And that means accepting that the other person might have something valuable to say (as hard as that is for us to admit). Perhaps we might not be as far off as we first imagined.

Respond

What might we reconsider? And what would it take? Maybe start by reading the ‘wrong’ news source and considering another’s point of view. Maybe learning something new about ourselves and “them.”

Blessing for loving some- one when differences divide us

*This is a hard one.
How do I begin to connect
with someone so different from me?
How do I bridge this gap?
It feels wrong, like the beliefs I abhor.
Blessed are we who want included
in the wild and beautiful experiment
to find a common humanity.
Who desire to come into the gap
that separates human from human,
to love the stranger—
especially the one we really don't understand
and secretly want to set straight.*

*Blessed are those standing in the gap,
In what can't be understood.
To actively work on disproving
our own intuitions about another,
to begin to see what they see.
Blessed are we, swimming upstream
against the current of human frailty,
fears and emotions,
and willing to be wrong.*

*To reconsider.
And hold to our integrity
with kindness.
Desiring to map it out
and play the course,
instead of the one we made up.
And to discover that humility
is what makes change possible.
Grace is never neutral.
It works backwards and forwards in time,
conspiring to make wrong right.³⁹*

39 Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. "For Loving When Differences Divide Us" in *The Lives We Actually Have: 100 Blessings for Imperfect Days*. (New York: Convergent Books, 2023). 166-167.