

~ "Submit" continued ~

I've given God authority over all of my life. When I "cross the line" I'm able to see it, ask for forgiveness, get back up and try again. It has been freeing for me to understand the true meaning of authority, God's authority.

I have come so far understanding the TRUE meaning of submission. It is such an important thing to understand, not easy for anyone, but it's necessary to get this right. I have the upmost respect for the authorities in my life. I'm still learning from my mistakes and mishaps, but God is great and He knows where I have come from.

**Who are the authorities in your life?
To which authorities do you have trouble submitting?**

"LOVE ONE ANOTHER"

*"A new command I give you: Love **one another**.
As I have loved you, so you must love **one another**.*

John 13:34

I grew up in a Christian home, as the oldest of six children in the 1960's. I was always a big kid, and I'm sure my brothers and sisters were often terrorized by my actions. I had the self confidence and boldness that often comes with being the "oldest child" which I did not always use in the right way.

I can remember that my brothers and sisters often would complain to our mother that "*He is being mean to me,*" and frequently she would reply, "*Now be nice to your brother.*" I am sure that they were at least thinking, "*Why, he isn't being nice to me. It isn't fair that I have to be nice to him when he's being mean to me.*"

As a believer in Christ, at times your Heavenly Father says the same thing to you, "*Be nice to your brother...*" Our human reaction is to say, "*No, I don't want to! Even though he's a Christian, he isn't treating me nicely. It isn't fair that I have to be kind to him when he is being mean to me.*" Still your Heavenly Father says "*Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.*" In fact, when you ask, "Why,?" He replies, "*So others will see that you follow me.*"

**Are you in a situation right now where things are not fair?
How can you demonstrate your "Love one another?"**

On Belay

Devotional—Week #4

"BLOWN AWAY"

*Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you
will fulfill the law of Christ. Galatians 6:2*



On May 31, 1985 a tornado struck our property. It demolished our barns, damaged all six of our tractors, took down the trees surrounding our house, and ripped open the garage wall and roof of our home. We experienced God's hand of protection that night, none of us were hurt. Over the next few months we were blessed with God's provision through His people.

That night people came. They helped us free cows from the rubble, guard our home from looters, and even move our food to a working freezer. The next morning they came in droves with willing hands and work gloves, some brought food and money to help feed the crowd. They gave of their time and whatever they had to help us. One man brought his tree crew to cut up and clear away the downed trees. Some ladies helped clean up glass and wash dirt from walls. One man donated (and paid) his hired man for a month to help with milking our cows in a neighbor's barn.

Over the next months God continued to provide both resources and people as we re-built and repaired. We have warm memories of bags of food, gifts of \$100 bills, and an army of willing workers.... faces and names you might know, and some we never knew. People willing to be used by God, to whom we will be forever grateful.

Are there people in your family and community whose lives have been ripped apart and need someone to be there for them? Keep your eyes open for those around you who are feeling "blown away," and let God use you to help pick up the pieces of their lives.

**Do you see needs around you?
Can you meet those needs?**

“ BROTHERLY KINDNESS”

“Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart.”
1 Peter 1:22

Have you ever thought about what it means to live in *brotherly* kindness? The other day, I was thinking about the difference between kindness and brotherly kindness. I think brotherly kindness is an extended version of kindness; adding a relational side to kind actions. I believe the root of brotherly kindness is truly caring about how someone feels.

I witnessed a prime example of brotherly kindness recently at St. Susan’s Soup Kitchen during the M:4 missions trip. All of the youth working at the soup kitchen were showing kindness by serving food to the needy in our community. But a few of the youth took it a step further by showing *brotherly* kindness. The act of brotherly kindness that stood out most to me was when a teen boy decided to befriend an elderly woman who was sitting by herself. He talked with her and listened to her for a half an hour. He took the time to care about her and to be her “brother”.



The difference between kindness and brotherly kindness is caring about how someone feels and acting on that knowledge. Talking to someone who feels alone, listening to someone who has a heavy heart, and being with someone who just needs a friend are all selfless ways I’ve seen brotherly kindness being given out. Can you imagine if we all showed genuine brotherly kindness to one another?

Today, can you find three ways you can show brotherly kindness to people around you?

“SUBMIT TO ONE ANOTHER”

*Obey your leaders and **submit** to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.*
Hebrews 13:17

The word submit is just gross to me... it’s not supposed to be. The Bible talks about submitting to authority in Romans and in 1 Peter. He talks about wives submitting to your husbands and children to your parents. At times it feels like the Bible reads...SUBMIT, SUBMIT, and SUBMIT.

This has been one of those words that I just can’t stand sometimes. I remember that with my husband, for 9 ½ years of our relationship it was completely horrible, riddled with hate and abuse. I met him when I was 12 years old. He went from control to abuse within 6 months. I never thought anything of it because...well I was 12, and I really didn’t have any teaching of abuse or manipulation. I just knew I wanted to be loved.

I went from not being able to look ahead when I walked down the street, to not being able to call a friend. I had to listen to everything I was told or pay a horrible consequence. As the years passed I grew weaker and he grew stronger. No one knew about the abuse except those close to him, and they weren’t telling. After 10 years I realized that my children were getting older, hearing the things that he was saying, and starting to pick it up. I knew I had to leave.

Fast Forward 1 Year Living in Falconer, not having God in my life and not having a good role model, I told myself that I would never listen to another person again. I was making the decisions for my life and the decisions for my children. I would never again let someone tell me what to do.

Fast Forward 1 Year I was introduced to Christ. I was pregnant and realized I wasn’t doing well. I was going to have to be responsible now for three children. I couldn’t even take care of myself.. I didn’t even know what to do, let alone how to do it. So I asked God to take over.

Since that day, I’ve had battles with people, pastors and family members over not being submissive. I understood that I needed to be to God, but to have to be to all authority God has placed over me was so hard. Still is.

... continued