

# On Belay

## Devotional—Week #2



### "STOP PASSING JUDGMENT ON ONE ANOTHER"

*Let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way. Romans 14:13*

I've heard it said that the best way to save face is to keep the lower half shut. Oh, if it was only that easy!



How often we condemn others who don't hold to our particular opinions, prejudices, or standards. In Paul's time, some thought it wrong to eat meat that was sacrificed to idols. Some Christians today are convinced it's wrong to wear a wedding ring, makeup, or play cards. We are each responsible to God for our convictions, but are not to tear one another apart for differing opinions. We waste far too much time warring against each other for silly differences, while the world watches.

While Paul urges us to be sensitive to weaker believers whose faith may falter because of our actions, we should not sacrifice our liberty in Christ to satisfy the selfish motives of those who try to force their viewpoints on us. We are not to fear them, or criticize them, but each of us must follow Christ as closely as we can.

We need to be careful not to flaunt our freedom in Christ in such a way as to make another Christian stumble in his faith. Nor should we try to fence others in with petty rules and regulations, causing dissention. Because we are all strong in some areas and weak in others, we must watch the effects of our behavior on others.

**Who needs to hear you declare them "not guilty"?**

### "ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER"

*Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. Romans 15:7*

This is such an extremely wonderful yet confusing verse. I know that we are to accept one another because Christ accepted us. He loves us and even gave His own life for us. Before we were even born, He died on that cross to give us life, freedom, and a chance to be with our Father in heaven.

I think of all the people I have accepted and not accepted in my life. Sometimes maybe it's because they're not Christians, so I want them to be saved and I try and be close to them, but I don't truly accept them until they are saved, or I just drift away from them. The only time I have accepted them is because I remember that Christ accepted me first. I am only who I am today because of Him.

Other times I find myself drawn to the people who need me. Whether it is because they need a friend and I love friends and people, or it's because I am that person God has chosen to put into their path. At that very moment, I truly know what it is like to be truly used by God and feel extremely close to Christ. I realize the thing that I have learned in the last few years is something they need to understand. Sometimes it is just a day before I have been introduced to them.

But that is not good enough! Christ did not say only accept the ones who know Him. He did not say that we are to only befriend the "Saints". He came into this world to help the broken, lost, hurting people. Doctors don't heal the healthy, they heal the sick.

**Who is God asking you to accept today?**

## "OFFER HOSPITALITY TO ONE ANOTHER"

*Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.* Romans 12:13

*Offer Hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others.* 1 Peter 4:9-10

My passion is hospitality. My door is always open, my food is your food, my house is your house. Hospitality isn't merely entertaining. Rather, it focuses on the guest and what he or she needs: a place to stay, food, a listening ear, acceptance. My house isn't a showplace; the dog sheds, and my windows are sometimes so dirty that I don't even have to pull the shades to keep the sun out, but the food is good, there's laughter, conversation, and good will.

My house doesn't belong to me; it is God's. So are my time, money, car, clothes, food, washer and dryer. Everything I have is from Him and belongs to Him. There is great joy and blessing in sharing what I have with others. The people who have come to my home have blessed ME! Sometimes strangers have come through the door; a workman, someone needing directions, a delivery person, a jogger, a worker from a kiosk in the mall with no place to go on Thanksgiving. They have needs, and they have stories. Who knows but that I have extended hospitality to angels without realizing it! (see Hebrews 13:2). But there are some who would never offer what they have to another, let alone a fellow Christ-follower! My friends, these things ought not to be!

Keep your eyes open to offer hospitality. Don't be afraid that your home isn't "good enough". It is exactly what is needed for a "one another" experience. Let your home be a haven to the foreigner, the lonely, the misunderstood, the unloved, the blessed, those sitting next to you on Sunday. You may well be entertaining angels.

**What hinders you from opening your self and/or your home to others? To strangers?**

## "HONOR ONE ANOTHER"

*Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.* Romans 12:10

The biggest thing I have learned over the years is that in order to accept one another we have to accept our self. I know a lot of people who stay away from making relationships because they look at themselves as horrible people, not measuring up to everyone else's standards. This includes me.

My biggest problem accepting people is I see them as comparisons to myself. Then I pick them apart and find all their faults and insecurities. I look to them to help feed the hole that is in my heart. Instead of letting God fix me, I pick apart other people.



In the past year one thing I have learned that helps me deal with these problems is to look at everyone and see at least one great thing about that person, then tell them. You would be surprised the reactions you get, not only in them, but the changes you feel in yourself. Sometimes it comes across a little weird, but you learn to embrace others rather than to reject them.

God created us to fellowship with one another. Other wise we would loose that spark that He gives us when we do accept one another and develop relationships. He has created so many cool people in this world...you just need to open your mind, your heart, and most importantly your arms...embrace them!

So remember to accept one another just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. Then accept yourself!

**Who do you need to re-see as God sees?**