

31 WAYS

to be

A “One Another” Christian

loving others with the love of Jesus

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Dr. Stuart Scott

~ with S. Andrew Jin ~

The longer I walk with the Lord, pastoring a church and reading my Bible year after year, the more I'm struck by the centrality of love—and not just any kind of love, but street-level love that has feet and that steps into the lives of other people in practical and Christlike ways. So much has been said about the local church lately, but perhaps the greatest need today is for people in church to learn how to love one another, and then to push outside their walls to love broken people around them. This little book will help us get traction on what it really means to love like God has called us to love. Get it. Read it. Put it into practice.

Brad Bigney: Lead Pastor of Grace Fellowship Church, Florence, Kentucky; ACBC Certified Counselor, Conference Speaker, Author of "Gospel Treason—Betraying the Gospel with Hidden Idols"

Dr. Scott and Andrew Jin offer wise insight into the biblical one-another commands. They carefully explain each text in its context while drawing upon their years of pastoral counseling experience to help the reader make practical applications. This book would be excellent as a daily devotion for an individual or a family. I also believe that it would be very helpful in a discipleship group which needs to better understand and apply the "one another" passages.

Jim Newheiser: Director of the Christian Counseling Program and Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology, Reformed Theological Seminary Charlotte; Executive Director, The Institute for Biblical Counseling and Discipleship (IBCD)

This is one of the most helpful books to come along in a long time. This instrument in the hands of a Biblical counselor is invaluable to encourage and challenge our counselees to see what God's Word has to say about good relationships. Our society and human nature teach us to be self focused but this handy little book will be a treasure to have as a vehicle for sanctification. I have wanted something like this for a long time and now I will have this tool in my counseling ministry. Not only is the truth of God's Word explained but application is illustrated. God's people will be better off for this work and I commend Stuart Scott and Andrew Jin for bringing it to God's people. Thank you for your labors in God's ministry.

Bill Shannon: Pastor of Discipleship Counseling, Grace Community Church, Sun Valley, California

In Biblical Counseling, we are frequently tasked with helping people understand how to “do” relationships. Enter this concise, insightful, and entirely practical book by Stuart Scott and Andrew Jin. With explanation, illustration and application of each “one-another” passage, Stuart and Andrew lay out how love for God is to be fleshed out in love for others. I’m so very thankful for this excellent resource and will make regular use of it!

Pamela Gannon, RN, MABC, ACBC Certified; Adjunct Professor at Montana Bible College, Co-author of “In The Aftermath: Past the Pain of Childhood Sexual Abuse”

God assesses the maturity of an individual and of churches by the quality of their “one-anothering.” In these thirty-one devotionals, Stuart Scott and Andrew Jin “one-another” their readers by unpacking the meaning of key “one another” New Testament passages, illustrating them, and then encouraging the reader to apply the truth to daily living. I recommend this study for individuals, family devotions, small groups, and one-on-one discipleship opportunities.

Jim Berg, DMin: Author of “Changed Into His Image”; Professor of Biblical Counseling, BJU Seminary, Greenville, South Carolina

The so-called “one anothers” of the New Testament are often undervalued and therefore greatly unappreciated by countless numbers of professing Christians. Just ask a relatively mature believer to define—let alone illustrate and apply—the various New Testament passages in which the “one anothers” appear, and you will undoubtedly be found disappointed by their response. Therefore, with a brief definition, then an illustration, and finally an application of these various “one anothers,” Stuart Scott, along with co-author Andrew Jin, will encourage you to live out these truths, not merely for your own good, but also for the good of others. And isn’t this precisely what living the Christian life is all about—loving your God and your neighbor? Upon these two truths hang all the Law and Prophets of the Old Testament, as Jesus himself declared! What better way to understand “one anothers” in the context of helping us to take God’s Word at face value for the purpose of helping ourselves and then our nearest neighbors to honor God as God. So, take up and read this little book and learn how to minister to one another in the fear of God.

Dr. Lance Quinn: Senior Pastor, Bethany Bible Church, Thousand Oaks, California

This book is an excellent idea! It is convicting and very practical. I highly recommend it to those who will read it thoughtfully “looking to themselves” to obey God’s commands of one-anothering.

Martha Peace: Author of “The Excellent Wife” and Certified Biblical Counselor with ACBC

It can be easy as a writer to give instruction without talking about how to implement that instruction, making it easy as a reader to fail to put good instruction into practice. Stuart and Andrew have worked hard to help us avoid that trap. So, as you read their book, look forward to lots of helpful instruction *and* lots of direction for how to apply the instruction. I’m confident that as we put these truths into practice our relationships and our churches will profit.

Amy Baker: Biblical Counselor and Ministry Resource Director at Faith Church, Lafayette, Indiana

Dr. Scott, author of *From Pride to Humility*, has done it again in writing an excellent resource for all Christians. Not only does he challenge the reader regarding the “one another” biblical commands, but he also assists the reader with understanding the meaning behind those commands in context, offering biblical, practical help. This resource will greatly enhance my own walk with Christ, and those I counsel. Get it and be blessed by it!

Dr. Shelbi Cullen, ACBC Certified, Adjunct Professor of Biblical Counseling and Studies at The Master’s University, Santa Clarita, California

Utilizing the “one anothers” of the New Testament, Dr. Scott and Andrew Jin provide a template to biblically evaluate our personal walk with Christ. They also provide clear explanations for straightforward action steps that will encourage believers to grow in maturity. The trifold aim of killing sin, pursuing holiness, and growing in fellowship with others will benefit all who engage the authors’ wise counsel.

T. Dale Johnson, Jr., Executive Director, The Association of Certified Biblical Counselors, Associate Professor of Biblical Counseling, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

I love how this book is both thoroughly biblical but also immensely practical. The chapters are very brief and to the point and therefore ideal for small group Bible studies or counseling assignments. All our churches would do well to study this material and ask our

risen Lord to help us put these principles into greater practice in his church.

Steve Viars, Senior Pastor, Faith Baptist Church, Lafayette, Indiana

Recognizing that Christian maturity requires and reflects loving relationships, Scott and Jin provide brief but thoughtful reflections on the expansive array of New Testament one-another commands. The short segments and the practical—and at times, searching—applications make it a helpful guide for personal devotions, counseling homework, adult class study, or small group discussion.

Robert D. Jones, D.Theol., D.Min., Biblical Counseling Professor at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Author of Uprooting Anger and Pursuing Peace

It is virtually impossible to overestimate the contribution that loving, truthful, one-another relationships will bring to the progress of disciple-making in our local churches. To that end, Stuart Scott and Andrew Jin have given the church gracious, heart-challenging counsel to help us grow toward maturity in Christ.

Paul Tautges, Author; Senior Pastor, Cornerstone Community Church, Mayfield Heights, Ohio; Founder, Counseling One Another

Stuart Scott is more serious and more careful than anyone I have ever met when it comes to understanding the text of Scripture and applying it to life. This book is the overflow of wisdom from a man who has carefully studied the Bible, worked carefully to live it out in his own life, and, with Andrew Jin, now wants to share the fruit with you. For those who love Jesus, there isn't a better goal than to grow in the faithfulness of living in Christian community. And for anyone who has that goal, they could not have a better teacher than Stuart Scott. I can't wait to see what happens in your life and in your church as God adds his blessing to your study of this book.

Dr. Heath Lambert, Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Florida

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Introduction: A Word About Relationships

People, created in the image of God, are made for relationships. Although the term “relationship” does not appear as a word in most modern translations of the Bible, the concept is found in all the books of the Bible. The term “one another” is repeated numerous times in the New Testament—and always in a way that demonstrates how one believer is to relate (or be in a certain relationship) to another believer.

Because sin entered the world, the way people relate to one another is often disrupted. The breakdown of relationships is apparent in the home, in the church, and in society all around. Many people go to pastors or counselors for guidance because of problems they have in their relationships with others—problems with their spouses, children, parents, siblings, friends, coworkers, employers, employees, etc.

The good news is that the Bible has a lot to say about how to build God-honoring relationships with one another. It all starts with God, and your love for him—something that begins when you come to repentance and faith—when you experience the new birth and become a believer in Jesus. Jesus made this point very clearly in what he taught about the first and greatest commandment, a passage recorded in Matthew 22:36-40:

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

From this passage, it is abundantly clear that God intends you to be consciously and carefully loving him and other people. Your relationship with God and your relationship with others is directly and intricately linked. As you work on loving other believers by obeying the “one another” commands, you are, in fact, also growing in your love for God.

The “one another” passages of Scripture give very clear guidance on how to develop and maintain good relationships. As you work your way through the various passages in the New Testament, you will find that you are not only being built up in your faith, but you will have the wonderful effect of building up others in their faith, too! So, whether you use this book by yourself, with a friend or marriage partner, or in a small or larger group, you will find much to put into practice.

1

Be Devoted to One Another with Brotherly Love

“Love one another with brotherly affection.”

Romans 12:10a

EXPLANATION

This command is to treat other believers as you would treat a family member. If you get along well with your brothers and sisters, you know what this means. Some readers have not experienced loving, heartfelt sibling relationships. Even so, you can still look to Scripture to give proper guidance.

What kinds of feelings are associated with a family? One would expect warmth, concern, care, and devotion. Romans 12:10 specifically states that one is to love one another with brotherly affection. “Brotherly affection” is the translation of the Greek word “*philadelphia*” which means “love of the brethren.” This term denotes a tender and strong affection¹

for one's family members. Why does Paul use a term that is traditionally associated with family—that is, blood relatives—to show how believers should treat one another? Because most people are devoted first and foremost to their blood relatives before they are to others. However, God calls believers to have a devotion to other believers that is the same as one's devotion to immediate family members. Christians are members of one another—all being a part of the family of Jesus Christ. Romans 12:5 states it well: “So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.” Believers should be so devoted to one another that they do good first and foremost to those who are of the “household of faith” (Galatians 6:10).

ILLUSTRATION

When we go to church and see all the different people, we tend to go to or talk to folks with whom we already feel comfortable. These people are friends or small-group members or those we meet in Bible study. But as we look at the congregation, we should start to see them as blood relatives and show affection accordingly. Think of your family gathering at Christmas Day or Thanksgiving. You are not just sitting around asking, “How are you?” and replying, “Fine.” No, you want to know what has been happening in their lives during the past year. You are genuinely curious and sincere as you talk with brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers. This is how you are to be with other believers.

APPLICATION

- » *How can you work toward being much more intentional in showing brotherly affection to other believers?*
- » *List several good things from your relationship with family members you can implement in your relationship with other believers.*
- » *Write down the name of one believer you have been neglecting to treat like a blood relative. Then mention several specific ways you can implement this command in your life this week.*

2

Outdo One Another in Showing Honor

“Outdo one another in showing honor.”

Romans 12:10b

EXPLANATION

Paul gives this command to outdo one another shortly after he has urged readers to “present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship” (Romans 12:1). Proper love for and worship of God is linked to proper love for and treatment of other believers.

What does it mean to honor? Honor means to give special weight or value to the other person. So outdoing one another in showing honor means giving the other person weighty, serious consideration in all things.

Notice that the command is to outdo, not to give honor. Honor is the manner in which one is to outdo. We are to praise, recognize, and show special attention to the other person more than we would receive from him or her. We must “outdo” the other person.

ILLUSTRATION

“Hi, how are you?” “I’m fine, thanks; how are you?” This is the standard greeting that we use. When we meet another person, it’s not long until we tend toward talking (or wanting to talk) about ourselves more than we want to take an interest in the other person. This “one another” places ourselves in a humble posture and lifts the other person up in our viewpoint. We should be saying to ourselves, “This person is of more importance than I am.” This will help us to love him or her and truly take an interest in such a person above ourselves.

APPLICATION

- » *Are you consciously seeking to prefer others over yourself? For example, when you are in a conversation, do you dominate the conversation? Is the topic often about you? If so, you are not outdoing the other person in showing honor. Think about the last conversation you had with another believer. How could you have thought more and cared more about the other person?*

- » *List one believer you can prefer with honor. How can you make the other person “weigh heavy” in your life this week? How can you value that person? List three specific ways you can do this and be specific, stating both how and when you will do it.*

3

Live in Harmony with One Another

“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.”

Romans 12:16

EXPLANATION

Living in harmony with one another involves having the same mind as the other person in one’s thinking. It means to agree or to have a common mind. Now, having a common mind does not mean that a believer must think exactly the same thoughts as another believer or think exactly the same way about everything—that would be impossible and absurd. Rather, believers are to have the same kind of thinking about one another. For example, they are to think well of one another, seek to love one another, bring encouragement to one another, etc. God is calling believers, regardless of their social, economic, or ethnic status² to “have equal regard for one another.”³

What is the barrier to living in harmony with one another-

er? Simply put, it is pride. This “one another” command goes against pride. Pride seeks to make a person think more highly of himself than he ought to think. Just a few verses before this “one another” command (Romans 12:3), Paul states this very same thing. If one is proud, he or she will think highly of self—and this necessarily means thinking of others as being more lowly. Romans 12:16 contrasts the “haughty” thinking with “lowly” thinking. The end of verse 16 states, “Never be wise in your own sight.” The same thought is found in Proverbs 3:6-7: “In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.” This section in Proverbs is about trusting in God and not relying on one’s own lofty thinking.

Practically speaking, there is to be no social or intellectual aristocracy⁴ in the church. There should be no vain ambition, no fighting for position. People should have the same mind toward one another.

ILLUSTRATION

“Let me play the devil’s advocate.” Have you heard this before? Well, we should not want to take that posture according to this “one another” teaching. Instead, we should seek to agree wherever we can. We should be seeking unity in God’s truth. The church should be striving for a like-mindedness rather than an argumentative or divisive attitude.

APPLICATION

- » *How and when do you find yourself thinking more highly of yourself than you ought?*
- » *Do you notice a particular pattern in your thinking toward others? Is there a commonality in the people toward whom you do not have the same mind? For example, do you find that you do not have the same mind toward those who have a different educational background? Or social background? Toward whom do you have a haughty mind?*
- » *Where have you fought for your preferences over others' desires? Where have you caused disunity because of pride? Is there a particular person that comes to mind? How can you live in harmony with that person this week?*
- » *Write out a prayer of confession and ask the Lord to graciously help you "never be wise in your own sight" (Romans 12:16).*

4

Do Not Judge but Build up One Another

“Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.”

“So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.”

Romans 14:13; Romans 14:19

EXPLANATION

These two commands were written in the context (Romans 14) of judging others and causing others to stumble. Some people in the church at Rome were judging others because of what they ate. Paul was concerned about unity within the body of Christ. The apostle wrote, “So then each of us will give account of himself to God” (v. 12). One must be careful in thinking someone else is unspiritual or thinking what someone else does is unspiritual.

Realize that fostering harmony within the body of Christ

is Paul's primary interest in this passage. There should not be factions and judging but rather harmony and edification. The opposite of judging and tearing down is building up. The "one another" command in Romans 14:19 focuses on having peace within the body of Christ by the building up of one another.

Because of one's relationship with Jesus Christ, there is to be a peace at a horizontal level among fellow believers (this will be further explained in "Be at Peace with One Another"). There should not be factions. If there are cracks between the bricks, the building will not be strong. Bricks joined together in a building are dependent upon one another for strength and support. In the same way, believers need one another and should thus seek to build one another up. Each person should be building the other person up in his or her faith. The interests of the church should take a priority over the interests of self. Focusing on building up specific individuals will contribute to the building up of the church.

There is a stark contrast between verse 19 and verse 20 in Romans 14. Verse 19 speaks of building up while verse 20 speaks of tearing down. If believers are not pursuing things that make peace and things that build up, we are necessarily tearing down. There is no neutral position. One may not be intentionally tearing down, but such a person is doing just that by not building up.

Scripture commands that believers *pursue* the building up of one another. This does not suggest a lazy, apathetic approach to one's relationships with others. Rather, Scripture calls for a purposeful, deliberate, and urgent action among believers to build one another up.

ILLUSTRATION

In today's world, we often judge someone's spirituality by what we see externally. If people dress a certain way or do not do things according to our list of what a real "spiritual person" looks like, we judge them. If you were to write out what a spiritual person is, you would likely write a lot of things that would be measured by externals. You would have a list that looks like "They do this" and "They don't do this." This is an example of how we judge one another. Judging one another in this manner causes divisions and tears down others. Believers must take care that they do not hinder the exercise of their brothers' or sisters' faith.

APPLICATION

- » *How have you judged others and torn them down? How does Matthew 7:1-5 apply to you?*

Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

(Matthew 7:1-5)

- » *Confess and repent of these. Determine how you can put away judging and tearing down, and put on building up.*

- » *List several specific ways that you are currently “building up” one another. Who are the recipients of your action?*

- » 1.

- » 2.

- » 3.

- » *Perhaps you are aware of a few “cracks” in the building. Who can be the recipient of your building up this week? How will you build up that person? What are the specific needs of this person? List them here. Be concrete and specific.*

- » 1.

- » 2.

- » 3.

- » *For married couples, examine each other’s strengths and weaknesses. How do you complement each other? How are you taking advantage of one another’s strengths? How are you trying to build each other up in his or her respective weaknesses?*

	Husband	Wife
Strengths		
Weaknesses		
Plans for building up		