



THE WAYS

ACCEPT AND DON'T CAST STONES. God's love opens the doors of our church to all people. Just as Jesus did, welcome people as they are. It's not up to us to judge. Love unconditionally; and as Christ has received you, receive others.

1. What types of sin do you tend to be most judgemental towards?

READ Luke 15:1-7

1. What do you assume about people based on who they spend their time with?
2. Why do you think Jesus has a special place for the lost?
3. Does anyone not need to repent? Explain.

Scenario: You come to church one Sunday morning and you recognize the person next to you. They used to live in your neighborhood and everyone knew they they were always cheating on their wife. He eventually left his wife with his kids and now lives with his girlfriend. His wife's house is in disrepair, and you're pretty sure he doesn't help with child support and isn't in his kids lives at all.

1. What is your first, gut reaction to this person?
2. If you had the courage, what would you want to say to him?
3. How do you normally balance acceptance and righteousness with people like this?
4. If you had the faith, what would you want God to do in their life?

What is going on in the world that the Church is more likely to be seen as judgemental people than people of mercy? Somewhere along the way we convinced ourselves that church is for good people; but it isn't, it's for the broken. How beautiful it would be if our churches were filled with liars and slanderers, murderers and prostitutes. That only happens when people start feeling welcomed and stop feeling judged. Everyone has a story, and everyone enjoys their private or public sin, including you. Let's loosen the strings on grace and *Accept and Don't Cast Stones*.

PRAY TOGETHER.

(Pray that the Spirit would convict you of ways you are judgemental towards others..)

DAILY Devotional

MONDAY: *READ:* John 8:7-11. *THINK:* Jesus has no desire to throw rocks. He desires to free people from condemnation. Normally, we think that since He is sinless, He has the right to judge; but what if it is because He is sinless that He can judge well. It is our sin that wants judgement, and our sin that desires condemnation. *Accept and Don't Cast Stones* because it fulfills Jesus' desire in our actions. *PRAY:* God would remove the sin in you that desires condemnation and punishment.

TUESDAY: *READ:* Matt. 7:1-5. *THINK:* Does that passage scare you? How well will you measure up against the stick you use to measure others? Do you expect righteousness from and punishment for others but mercy for yourself? God doesn't do double standards. *Accept and Don't Cast Stones* because mercy is the measuring stick you will desire when you stand before our Lord. *PRAY:* God would you convince you of the mercy you have received.

WEDNESDAY: *READ:* James 4:11-12. *THINK:* Were you the one who made and upholds the law? No? Then why are we so ready to use it to condemn others? It feels nice to sit in judgement, but it is not our place. We are a people of grace, and it is not a treasure to be guarded but a renewing resource to be shared. Don't be stingy with grace, but spread it on thick. *Accept and Don't Cast Stones*. *PRAY:* Jesus would show you how how deep the wells of grace go.

THURSDAY: *READ:* Rom. 2:1-3. *THINK:* What if we took God's Word at its word. When you judge others yet sin, you condemn yourself. That should strike fear into most of our hearts. Have you condemned yourself this month? This week? Today? Because if you have sat in judgement over another, you have condemned yourself. *Accept and Don't Cast Stones* because it is the only way you won't be condemned. *PRAY:* that you would fear God's judgement more.

FRIDAY: *READ:* Eph. 2:8-9. *THINK:* It is a gift of God. Salvation is received; righteousness is imparted; and we are made perfect in Him. These are works which God begins and completes in you. His work and grace, not yours. You know what God has done for you. How wonderful it would be if He did it for the bad people you tend to judge. *Accept and Don't Cast Stones* so that God can work His grace. *PRAY:* for someone you normally judge, that God would extend his grace to them.

SATURDAY: *READ:* James 4:6. *THINK:* At the end of the day, it is pride which desires judgement and condemnation. When we judge others, we can lift ourselves up. "Thank God I am not like them," we say in our hearts. *Accept and Don't Cast Stones* because you are like them, all have sinned, and yet God has chosen to pour out grace anyway. Can I get an Amen? *PRAY:* the Spirit would keep you from seeking to feel better about yourself by judging others.