

# How do I love people who are hard to love?

## Matthew 5:44-45 (AMPC)

But I tell you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, [Prov. 25:21, 22.] To show that you are the children of your Father Who is in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the wicked and on the good, and makes the rain fall upon the upright and the wrongdoers [alike].

## Romans 5:8 (AMPC)

But God shows and clearly proves His [own] love for us by the fact that while we were still sinners, Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One) died for us.

## Matthew 7:3 (AMPC)

Why do you stare from without at the very small particle that is in your brother's eye but do not become aware of and consider the beam of timber that is in your own eye?

## Romans 12:3 (AMPC)

For by the grace (unmerited favor of God) given to me I warn everyone among you not to estimate and think of himself more highly than he ought [not to have an exaggerated opinion of his own importance], but to rate his ability with sober judgment, each according to the degree of faith apportioned by God to him.

## Matthew 18 (AMPC)

AT THAT time the disciples came up and asked Jesus, Who then is [really] the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And He called a little child to Himself and put him in the midst of them, And said, Truly I say to you, unless you repent (change, turn about) and become like little children [trusting, lowly, loving, forgiving], you can never enter the kingdom of heaven [at all]. Whoever will humble himself therefore and become like this little child [trusting, lowly, loving, forgiving] is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives and accepts and welcomes one little child like this for My sake and in My name receives and accepts and welcomes Me. But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in and acknowledge and cleave to Me to stumble and sin [that is, who entices him or hinders him in right conduct or thought], it would be better (more expedient and profitable or advantageous) for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be sunk in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world for such temptations to sin and influences to do wrong! It is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the person on whose account or by whom the temptation comes! And if your hand or your foot causes you to stumble and sin, cut it off and throw it away from you; it is better (more profitable and wholesome) for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into everlasting fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble and sin, pluck it out and throw it away from you; it is better (more profitable and wholesome) for you to enter life with only one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the hell (Gehenna) of fire. Beware that you do not despise or feel scornful toward or think little of one of these little ones, for I tell you that in heaven their angels always are in the presence of and look upon the face of My Father Who is in heaven. For the Son of man came to save [from the penalty of eternal death] that which was lost. What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray and gets lost, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountain and go in search of the one that is lost? And if it should be that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices more over it than over the ninety-nine that did not get lost. Just so it is not the will of My Father Who is in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost and perish. If your brother wrongs you, go and show him his fault, between you and him privately. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother. But if he does not listen, take along with you one or two others, so that every word may be confirmed and upheld by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he pays no attention to them [refusing to listen and obey], tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a pagan and a tax collector. [Lev. 19:17; Deut. 19:15.] Truly I tell you, whatever you forbid and declare to be improper and unlawful on earth must be what is already forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit and declare proper and lawful on earth must be what is already permitted in heaven. Again I tell you, if two of you on earth agree (harmonize together, make a symphony together) about whatever [anything and everything] they may ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by My Father in heaven. For wherever two or three are gathered (drawn together as My followers) in (into) My name, there I AM in the midst of them. [Exod. 3:14.] Then Peter came up to Him and said, Lord, how many times may my brother sin against me and I forgive him and let it go? [As many as] up to seven times? Jesus answered him, I tell you, not up to seven times, but seventy times seven! [Gen. 4:24.] Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a human king who wished to settle accounts with his attendants. When he began the accounting, one was brought to him who owed him 10,000 talents [probably about \$10,000,000], And because he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and his children and everything that he possessed, and payment to be made. So the attendant fell on his knees, begging him, Have patience with me and I will pay you everything. And his master's heart was moved with compassion, and he released him and forgave him [cancelling] the debt. But that same attendant, as he went out, found one of his fellow attendants who owed him a hundred denarii [about twenty dollars]; and he caught him by the throat and said, Pay what you owe! So his fellow attendant fell down and begged him earnestly, Give me time, and I will pay you all ! But he was unwilling, and he went out and had him put in prison till he should pay the debt. When his fellow attendants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and told everything that had taken place to their master. Then his master called him and said to him, You contemptible and wicked attendant! I forgave and cancelled all that [great] debt of yours because you begged me to. And should you not have had pity and mercy on your fellow attendant, as I had pity and mercy on you? And in wrath his master turned him over to the torturers (the jailers), till he should pay all that he owed. So also My heavenly Father will deal with every one of you if you do not freely forgive your brother from your heart his offenses.

## Ephesians 4:32 (AMPC)

And become useful and helpful and kind to one another, tenderhearted (compassionate, understanding, loving-hearted), forgiving one another [readily and freely], as God in Christ forgave you.

## 1 Peter 4:8 (AMPC)

Above all things have intense and unflinching love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins [forgives and disregards the offenses of others]. [Prov. 10:12.]

## Matthew 5:46-47 (AMPC)

For if you love those who love you, what reward can you have? Do not even the tax collectors do that? And if you greet only your brethren, what more than others are you doing? Do not even the Gentiles (the heathen) do that?

## 1 John 4:18 (AMPC)

There is no fear in love [dread does not exist], but full-grown (complete, perfect) love turns fear out of doors and expels every trace of terror! For fear brings with it the thought of punishment, and [so] he who is afraid has not reached the full maturity of love [is not yet grown into love's complete perfection].

# Suicide Is Not the Answer

## Jeremiah 29:11 (AMPC)

For I know the thoughts and plans that I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts and plans for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome.

# The Parables of Jesus: The Cost of Discipleship

## Luke 14:25-26 (AMPC)

Now huge crowds were going along with [Jesus], and He turned and said to them, If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his [own] father and mother [in the sense of indifference to or relative disregard for them in comparison with his attitude toward God] and [likewise] his wife and children and brothers and sisters— [yes] and even his own life also—he cannot be My disciple.

## Luke 14:27 (AMPC)

Whoever does not persevere and carry his own cross and come after (follow) Me cannot be My disciple.

## Luke 14:29 (AMPC)

Otherwise, when he has laid the foundation and is unable to complete [the building], all who see it will begin to mock and jeer at him

## Luke 14:31 (AMPC)

Or what king, going out to engage in conflict with another king, will not first sit down and consider and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand [men] to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?

## Luke 14:32-33 (AMPC)

And if he cannot [do so], when the other king is still a great way off, he sends an envoy and asks the terms of peace. So then, any of you who does not forsake (renounce, surrender claim to, give up, say good-bye to) all that he has cannot be My disciple.

## Luke 14:34-35 (AMPC)

Salt is good [an excellent thing], but if salt has lost its strength and has become saltless (insipid, flat), how shall its saltiness be restored? It is fit neither for the land nor for the manure heap; men throw it away. He who has ears to hear, let him listen and consider and comprehend by hearing!

# The Parables of Jesus: The Cost of Discipleship

## Mark 8:34-36 (AMPC)

And Jesus called [to Him] the throng with His disciples and said to them, If anyone intends to come after Me, let him deny himself [forget, ignore, disown, and lose sight of himself and his own interests] and take up his cross, and [joining Me as a disciple and siding with My party] follow with Me [continually, cleaving steadfastly to Me]. For whoever wants to save his [higher, spiritual, eternal] life, will lose it [the lower, natural, temporal life which is lived only on earth]; and whoever gives up his life [which is lived only on earth] for My sake and the Gospel's will save it [his higher, spiritual life in the eternal kingdom of God]. For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life [in the eternal kingdom of God]?

## Galatians 2:20 (AMPC)

I have been crucified with Christ [in Him I have shared His crucifixion]; it is no longer I who live, but Christ (the Messiah) lives in me; and the life I now live in the body I live by faith in (by adherence to and reliance on and complete trust in) the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

## 2 Timothy 2:11 (AMPC)

The saying is sure and worthy of confidence: If we have died with Him, we shall also live with Him.

## 2 Corinthians 4:8-10 (AMPC)

We are hedged in (pressed) on every side [troubled and oppressed in every way], but not cramped or crushed; we suffer embarrassments and are perplexed and unable to find a way out, but not driven to despair; We are pursued (persecuted and hard driven), but not deserted [to stand alone]; we are struck down to the ground, but never struck out and destroyed; Always carrying about in the body the liability and exposure to the same putting to death that the Lord Jesus suffered, so that the [resurrection] life of Jesus also may be shown forth by and in our bodies.

## 2 Corinthians 4:11 (AMPC)

For we who live are constantly [experiencing] being handed over to death for Jesus' sake, that the [resurrection] life of Jesus also may be evidenced through our flesh which is liable to death.

## Colossians 3:5 (AMPC)

So kill (deaden, deprive of power) the evil desire lurking in your members [those animal impulses and all that is earthly in you that is employed in sin]: sexual vice, impurity, sensual appetites, unholy desires, and all greed and covetousness, for that is idolatry (the deifying of self and other created things instead of God).

## Ephesians 4:26,27 (AMPC)

When angry, do not sin; do not ever let your wrath (your exasperation, your fury or indignation) last until the sun goes down. Leave no [such] room or foothold for the devil [give no opportunity to him].

# The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

## Matthew 18:15 (AMPC)

If your brother wrongs you, go and show him his fault, between you and him privately. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother.

## Matthew 18:16 (AMPC)

But if he does not listen, take along with you one or two others, so that every word may be confirmed and upheld by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

## 1 Samuel 18:17 (AMPC)

Saul said to David, My elder daughter Merab I will give you as wife; only serve me courageously and fight the Lord's battles. For Saul thought, Let not my hand, but the Philistines' hand, be upon him.

## Matthew 18:18 (AMPC)

Truly I tell you, whatever you forbid and declare to be improper and unlawful on earth must be what is already forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit and declare proper and lawful on earth must be what is already permitted in heaven.

## Matthew 18:19 (AMPC)

Again I tell you, if two of you on earth agree (harmonize together, make a symphony together) about whatever [anything and everything] they may ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by My Father in heaven.

## Matthew 18:20 (AMPC)

## Matthew 18:21 (AMPC)

Then Peter came up to Him and said, Lord, how many times may my brother sin against me and I forgive him and let it go? [As many as] up to seven times?

## Matthew 6:15 (AMPC)

But if you do not forgive others their trespasses [their reckless and willful sins, leaving them, letting them go, and giving up resentment], neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses.

## Ephesians 4:26 (AMPC)

When angry, do not sin; do not ever let your wrath (your exasperation, your fury or indignation) last until the sun goes down.

## 2 Corinthians 2:10-11 (AMPC)

If you forgive anyone anything, I too forgive that one; and what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sakes in the presence [and with the approval] of Christ (the Messiah), To keep Satan from getting the advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his wiles and intentions.

# The Parable of the Unforgiving Servant

## Mark 11:23-25 (AMPC)

## Matthew 18:23-25 (AMPC)

Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a human king who wished to settle accounts with his attendants. When he began the accounting, one was brought to him who owed him 10,000 talents [probably about \$10,000,000], And because he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and his children and everything that he possessed, and payment to be made.

## Matthew 11:25-27 (AMPC)

At that time Jesus began to say, I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth [and I acknowledge openly and joyfully to Your honor], that You have hidden these things from the wise and clever and learned, and revealed them to babies [to the childish, untaught, and unskilled]. Yes, Father, [I praise You that] such was Your gracious will and good pleasure. All things have been entrusted and delivered to Me by My Father; and no one fully knows and accurately understands the Son except the Father, and no one fully knows and accurately understands the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son deliberately wills to make Him known.

## Matthew 18:28 (AMPC)

But that same attendant, as he went out, found one of his fellow attendants who owed him a hundred denarii [about twenty dollars]; and he caught him by the throat and said, Pay what you owe!

## Matthew 18:28-30 (AMPC)

But that same attendant, as he went out, found one of his fellow attendants who owed him a hundred denarii [about twenty dollars]; and he caught him by the throat and said, Pay what you owe! So his fellow attendant fell down and begged him earnestly, Give me time, and I will pay you all ! But he was unwilling, and he went out and had him put in prison till he should pay the debt.

## Matthew 18:31-33 (AMPC)

When his fellow attendants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and told everything that had taken place to their master. Then his master called him and said to him, You contemptible and wicked attendant! I forgave and cancelled all that [great] debt of yours because you begged me to. And should you not have had pity and mercy on your fellow attendant, as I had pity and mercy on you?

## Matthew 18:34-35 (AMPC)

And in wrath his master turned him over to the torturers (the jailers), till he should pay all that he owed. So also My heavenly Father will deal with every one of you if you do not freely forgive your brother from your heart his offenses.

## Luke 7:36 (AMPC)

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to dine with him, and He went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table.

## Luke 7:37 (AMPC)

And behold, a woman of the town who was an especially wicked sinner, when she learned that He was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment (perfume).

## Luke 7:38 (AMPC)

And standing behind Him at His feet weeping, she began to wet His feet with [her] tears; and she wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed His feet [affectionately] and anointed them with the ointment (perfume).

## Luke 7:39 (AMPC)

Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw it, he said to himself, If this Man were a prophet, He would surely know who and what sort of woman this is who is touching Him—for she is a notorious sinner (a social outcast, devoted to sin).

## Luke 7:40-48 (AMPC)

And Jesus, replying, said to him, Simon, I have something to say to you. And he answered, Teacher, say it. A certain lender of money [at interest] had two debtors: one owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they had no means of paying, he freely forgave them both. Now which of them will love him more? Simon answered, The one, I take it, for whom he forgave and cancelled more. And Jesus said to him, You have decided correctly. Then turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, Do you see this woman? When I came into your house, you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave Me no kiss, but she from the moment I came in has not ceased [intermittently] to kiss My feet tenderly and caressingly. You did not anoint My head with [cheap, ordinary] oil, but she has anointed My feet with [costly, rare] perfume. Therefore I tell you, her sins, many [as they are], are forgiven her—because she has loved much. But he who is forgiven little loves little. And He said to her, Your sins are forgiven!

## Luke 7:49-50 (AMPC)

Then those who were at table with Him began to say among themselves, Who is this Who even forgives sins? But Jesus said to the woman, Your faith has saved you; go (enter) into peace [in freedom from all the distresses that are experienced as the result of sin].