

Love Under Pressure

Matt 5:43-48

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?

47 And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?

48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

■ **Matt 7:3-5**

3 "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"

4 How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?

5 You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

■ Gal 6:7-10

7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

■ 1 Pet 2:19-24

19 For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God.

20 But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God.

21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

22 "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. **Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.**

■ **1Thes 5:14-18**

14 And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

15 Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.

16 Be joyful always;

17 pray continually;

18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

