

Love and Its Expression in Forgiveness, and the Kingdom of God (Verses from *King James Version*. It has been said, “everything that came from Jesus’ lips . . . focused human awareness on the two most important facts about life: God’s overwhelming love for humanity, and the need for people to accept that love and let it flow through them to others,” Huston Smith *The World’s Religions* San Francisco: Harper, 1991:326-27. The following utterances help us to understand the extraordinary fellowship of the early Christians. In addition, from the lips of Jesus came the phrase “kingdom of God,” alternately rendered as “reign of God” or “kingdom of heaven,” and it was also central to his teaching. While he sometimes spoke of it as a near-future apocalyptic event, he often implied that the kingdom was here and now, dawning as a present fact. To understand what Jesus meant by the “kingdom of God,” there is not a better or more intriguing guide than in the actual sayings and parables of the master. Also see the Parables of the Vineyard Laborers, Wedding Feast, Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan. While the color coding of authenticity interpreted by the Jesus Seminar is also provided, the following verses reflect traditional Christian attribution to Jesus. Jesus Seminar coding: **Red** = Jesus undoubtedly said this or something like this, **Pink** = Jesus probably said something like this, **Blue** = Jesus did not say this, but the ideas contained in it are close to his own, and **Black** = Jesus did not say this; it represents the perspective or content of a later or different tradition. Source: Phillip Novak. *The World’s Wisdom*. Edison, NJ: Castle Books. 1994:241-42, 243-44.)

a. Love One Another

John 13

³⁴ A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

³⁵ By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

b. Turn the Other Cheek

Matthew 5

³⁸ Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

³⁹ But I say unto you, **That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.**

⁴⁰ **And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.**

⁴¹ **And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.**

⁴² **Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.**

c. Love for Enemies

Matthew 5

⁴³ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

⁴⁴ But I say unto you, **Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;**

⁴⁵ **That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.**

⁴⁶ **For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?**

⁴⁷ **And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?**

⁴⁸ **Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.**

d. The Golden Rule

Matthew 7

¹² **Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:** for this is the law and the prophets.

e. I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food

Matthew 25

³⁴ Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

³⁵ For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

³⁶ Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

³⁷ Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

³⁸ When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

³⁹ Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

⁴⁰ And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

f. Before All Else, Be Reconciled

Matthew 5

²¹ Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

²² But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: **and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.**

²³ **Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;**

²⁴ **Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.**

²⁵ **Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.**

²⁶ **Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.**

g. Let the Sinless Cast the First Stone

John 8

¹ Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.

² And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

³ And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

⁴ They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

⁵ Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

⁶ This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

⁷ So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

⁸ And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

⁹ And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

¹⁰ When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

¹¹ She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

h. The Beatitudes

Matthew 5

¹ And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

² And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

³ **Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

⁴ **Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.**

⁵ Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ **Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.**

⁷ Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

¹⁰ **Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

¹¹ **Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.**

¹² **Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.**

i. The Kingdom of God is Like a Mustard Seed

Matthew 13

³¹ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, **The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:**

³² **Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.**

j. The Kingdom of God is Like Leaven

Matthew 13

³³ Another parable spake he unto them; **The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.**

k. Kingdom of God Is Among You

Luke 17

²⁰ And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, **The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:**

²¹ **Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.**