

The Power of Community



The Difficulty of Community: Them

20 “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, **21** that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. **22** The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, **23** I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

(John 17.20-23)

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.
(John 13:34-35)

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends.
(John 15:12-13)

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

(John 13:1)

How to love hard-to-love people

1. Roses have thorns.

But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people ²⁵ and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.
(John 2:24-25)

How to love hard-to-love people

2. Don't be offended. It's a sin.

And then many will fall away [offended] and betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹ And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. ¹² And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. (Matt 24:10-12)

How to love hard-to-love people

3. Ask God “who is this man/woman?”
Remember their story. Get to know it
One in Christ has the good heart

From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. ¹⁷

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Cor 5.16-17)

How to love hard-to-love people

4. Truth in Love

Ask permission

Share how you experience them

Humility

Equally open to receive it from them

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ (Eph 4:15)

How to love hard-to-love people

5. Commit to loving them

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love... ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

(1 John 4:7-8,10-11)

² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Col 3:12-17)

How to love hard-to-love people

1. With leather gloves
2. Don't be offended
3. Ask God, "Who is s/he?"
4. Truth in love
5. Commit to loving them

What's one thing you want to take home?
What is God saying to your heart about loving someone who is right now hard to love?