

## Tough Love

Our Lord cared more for the eternal destiny of individuals than anyone else who has ever lived or who will ever live. His intense love for mankind compelled Him to offer Himself as a sacrifice. He gave up not only the glory which He had in heaven with God the Father, but also had to suffer a horrible death on a cross.

His death was not in vain. He came to this world that sinners might stand justified in God's sight (Romans 3:24). But that justification does not come without expense. Living righteously requires great effort, but Jesus was never apologetic concerning the terms of pardon which man was required to render nor the subsequent life man was required to live.

An excellent example of this "tough love" is found in Matthew 19:9-12. This is where Jesus told the Pharisees that the only cause for divorce and remarriage was for the cause of fornication on the part of one of the parties in the marriage. His disciples countered by saying, "*If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry*" (Matthew 19:10). At that point, Jesus could have apologized or backtracked because He saw that the teaching was unpopular, but He did not.

Instead, Jesus said to them, "*He that is able to receive it, let him receive it*" (Matthew 19:11-12). There would be some who could accept this statement and live in harmony with God's will and there would others who would disobey and be condemned. Jesus did not make this statement to be mean and hateful or to discourage anyone from marrying or to gleefully sentence someone to a life of abstinence. He did because He loved mankind and He knew this was the Father's will. As difficult as it may be to accept this statement and live by it, it must be done to live eternally in Heaven. So the next time you hear the phrase, "tough love," think of the One who really had to demonstrate it: Jesus Christ.

Kyle Campbell