



4. Blessed is the mind which has gone beyond all things and takes unceasing delight in the divine beauty. (I, 19)
5. The one who imitates God by giving alms knows no difference between evil and good or just and unjust in regard to the needs of the body, but distributes to all without distinction according to their need even if he prefers the virtuous person over the wicked because of his good intention. (I, 24)
6. The disposition of love is made manifest not only in the sharing of money but much more in sharing the word of God and physical service. (I, 26)
7. When you are insulted by someone or offended in any matter, then beware of angry thoughts, lest by distress they sever you from charity and place you in the region of hatred. (I, 29)
8. Whenever you are suffering intensely from insult or disgrace, realize that this can be of great benefit to you, for disgrace is God's way of driving vainglory out of you. (I, 30)
9. As the memory of fire does not warm the body, so faith without love does not bring about the illumination of knowledge in the soul. (I, 31)
10. The one who has zealously acquired the fruits of love does not change from it even though he experiences countless ills. And let Stephen, Christ's disciple, and those like him, persuade you, as well as Christ himself who prays for his murderers and asks forgiveness of his Father as for those acting in ignorance. (I, 37)
11. The work of love is the deliberate doing of good to one's neighbor as well as long-suffering and patience and the use of all things in the proper way. (I, 40)
12. The one who loves God leads an angelic life on earth, fasting and being watchful and singing psalms and praying and always thinking good of everyone. (I, 42)
13. Do not stain your flesh with indecent actions; do not defile your soul with evil thoughts; and God's peace will come upon you and bring love. (I, 44)
14. Afflict your flesh with fasting and vigils. Devote yourself diligently to psalmody and prayer, and holiness in chastity will come upon you and bring love. (I, 45)
15. If you desire not to fall away from divine love, do not let your brother go to bed with anger against you, nor should you go to bed angry against him. Rather, "go, be reconciled with your brother, and come offer" to Christ with a clear conscience the gift of love in fervent prayer. (I, 53)
16. If "love works no evil to one's neighbor," the one who envies his brother and is unhappy over his good name and smears his reputation with scoffing or in any way

maliciously contrives against him, how does he not render himself to love and liable to eternal judgment? (I, 55)

17. If “love is the fullness of the law,” how can the one who keeps a grudge against his brother and sets a trap for him and curses him and rejoices over his misfortune be anything but a transgressor and liable to eternal punishment? (I, 56)

18. Do not lend your ear to the slanderer’s tongue nor your tongue to the fault-finder’s ear by readily speaking or listening to anything against your neighbor. Otherwise you will fall away from divine love and be found excluded from eternal life. (I, 58)

19. Silence the one who is slandering in your hearing lest you commit a double sin with him: by accustoming yourself to this deadly vice and by not restraining him from foolish talk against his neighbor. (I, 60)

20. “But I say to you,” the Lord says, “love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute you.” Why did he command these things? So that he might free you from hate, sadness, anger, and grudges, and might grant you the greatest possession of all, perfect love, which is impossible to possess except by the one who loves all men equally in imitation of God, who loves all men equally and “wills that they be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.” (I, 61)

21. We carry along with us the voluptuous images of the things we once experienced. Now the one who overcomes these voluptuous images completely disdains the realities of which they are images. In fact, the battle against memories is more difficult than the battle against deeds, as sinning in thought is easier than sinning in deed.

22. Do not tolerate suspicions or people that would be occasions of scandal for you against anyone. For those who take scandal in any way from things which happen, intentionally or unintentionally, do not know the way of peace, which through love brings those who long for it to the knowledge of God. (I, 69)

23. The one who is still affected by human judgments does not yet have perfect love, as for example when he loves one and hates another for one reason or another; or even when he loves and then hates the same person for the same reasons. (I, 70)

24. Perfect love does not split up the one nature of men on the basis of their various dispositions but ever looking steadfastly at it, it loves all men equally, those who are zealous as friends, those who are negligent as enemies. It is good to them and forbearing and puts up with what they do. It does not think evil at all but rather suffers for them, if occasion requires, in order that it may even make them friends if possible. If not, it does not fall away from its own intentions as it ever manifests the fruits of love equally for all men. In this way also our Lord and God Jesus Christ, manifesting his love for us, suffered for all mankind and granted to all equally the hope of resurrection, though each one renders himself worthy either of glory or of punishment. (I, 71)

25. It is a great thing not to be affected by things; but it is much greater to remain detached from the thought of them. Therefore, the demons' battle against us through thoughts is more severe than that through deeds. (I, 91)
26. There are many things done by men which are noble in themselves, but still because of some reason are not noble. For example, fasts and vigils, prayer and psalmody, almsgiving and hospitality are noble in themselves, but when they are done out of vainglory they are no longer noble. (II, 35)
27. God searches the intention of everything that we do, whether we do it for him or for any other motive.
28. When you hear the Scripture saying, "You will render to each one according to his works," know that God will reward good works but not those done apart from a right intention. For God's judgment looks not on what is done but to the intention behind it. (II, 37)
29. The one who has come to understand the weakness of human nature has had experience of the divine power, and such a person who because of it has succeeded in some things and is eager to succeed in others never looks down on anyone. For he knows that in the same way that God has helped him and freed him from many passions and hardships, so can he help everyone when he wishes, especially those who are striving for his sake. Although for his own reasons he does not deliver all from their passions right away, still as a good and loving physician he heals in his own good time each one of those who are striving. (II, 39)
30. There are certain things which check the passions in their movement and do not allow them to advance and increase, and there are others which diminish them and make them decrease. For example, fasting, hard labor, and vigils do not allow concupiscence to grow, while solitude, contemplation, prayer and desire for God decrease it and make it disappear. And similarly is this the case with anger: for example, long-suffering, the forgetting of offenses, and meekness check it and do not allow it to grow, while love, almsgiving, kindness, and benevolence make it diminish. (II, 47)
31. The one who does not envy or is not angry, or who does not bear grudges against the one who has offended him, does not yet have love for him. For it can be that even one who does not yet love does not return evil for evil because of the commandment but in no way does he render good for evil spontaneously. Indeed, deliberately to do good to those who hate you is a mark of spiritual love alone. (II, 49)
32. Do not misuse thoughts, lest you necessarily misuse things as well. For unless anyone sins first in thought, he will never sin in deed. (II, 78)
33. It is not food which is evil but gluttony, not the begetting of children but fornication, not possessions but greed, not reputation but vainglory. And if this is so, there is nothing

evil in creatures except misuse, which stems from the mind's negligence in its natural cultivation. (III, 4)

34. If you bear a grudge against anyone, pray for him and you will stop the passion in its tracks. By prayer you separate the hurt from the memory of the evil which he did you and in becoming loving and kind you completely obliterate passion from the soul. On the other hand, if someone else bears you a grudge, be generous and humble with him, treat him fairly, and you will deliver him from the passion. (III, 90)

35. Be on guard lest the vice that separates you from your brother be not found in your brother but in you; and hasten to be reconciled to him, lest you fall away from the commandment of love. (IV, 19)

36. A temptation came upon you from your brother, and the hurt led you to hate. Do not be overcome with hate but overcome hate with love. You will prevail in this way: Pray for him sincerely to God, accept his apology, or else come up with an apology for him yourself, think of yourself as the cause of the temptation, and be patient until the cloud has passed away. (IV, 22)

37. "A patient man is rich in prudence," because he refers every happening to its end, and while waiting for it he puts up with difficulties. "And the end is everlasting life," according to the divine Apostle; "and this is eternal life, that they know you, the onlyh true God, and the one you have sent, Jesus Christ." (IV, 24)

38. Do not, because of the hate which has risen in you today from the evil one's abuse, judge as bad and vicious the brother who yesterday was spiritual and virtuous. Instead, through the patience that love gives, cast out today's hate by thinking of yesterday's goodness. (IV, 26)

39. Do not recall in time of peace what your brother said in time of hurt, even though the offensive things were said to your face, or were said to another about you and you heard them afterward, lest in retaining grudges you revert to destructive hate for your brother. (IV, 34)

40. It is no small struggle to be delivered from vainglory; however, one is delivered by the discreet practice of virtue and more frequent prayer. An indication of this deliverance is to bear no more grudges against anyone who offends us now or has offended us in the past. (IV, 43)

41. The one who does not know how to walk the spiritual way has no concern over passionate representations but devotes his whole time to the flesh. Either he is gluttonous or intemperate; or he is full of hurt, bitterness, or resentment, and so darkens his mind; or else he is not careful in his ascetical practices and disquiets the understanding. (IV, 65)

42. Some of the brothers suppose that they are excluded from the Holy Spirit's gifts, for through their careless observance of the commandments they do not know that the

sincere believer in Christ has within himself all the divine gifts collectively. But since through laziness we are far from having an active love for him, which reveals the divine treasures lying within us, we reasonably suppose that we are excluded from the divine gifts. (IV, 69)

43. If, according to the Apostle, “Christ dwells in our hearts by faith,” and “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in him,” then all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in our hearts. They are revealed to the heart in proportion to each one’s purification by the commandments. (IV, 70)

44. Christ does not way you to have hate for anyone, or grief, or anger, or resentment in any way at all or for any temporal reason whatsoever. And this is thoroughly proclaimed in the four Gospels. (IV, 84)

45. To the extent that you pray from your soul for the one who spread scandal about you, God will reveal the truth to those who were told the scandal. (IV, 89)

46. “Nothing can be compared to a faithful friend.” This is because he regards his friend’s misfortunes as his own and supports him in hardships until death. (IV, 93)

47. You are to love every man from your soul, but in God alone are you to place your hope and to serve him with your whole strength. For so long as he protects us, all our friends respect us and all our enemies can do nothing against us. But if he should ever abandon us, all our friends shall turn away from us and all our enemies will prevail over us. (IV, 95)

48. The friends of Christ love everyone sincerely but are not loved by everyone. The friends of the world do not love everyone nor are they loved by everyone. The friends of Christ maintain the continuity of their love till the end. The friends of the world, on the contrary, maintain theirs until they clash with each other over the world’s goods. (IV, 98)

49. “A faithful friend is a strong defense,” for when his friend is prospering he is a good counselor and sympathetic collaborator, and when he is in distress he is his sincerest and most sympathetic defender. (IV, 99)

50. Many people have said much about love, but only in seeking it among Christ’s disciples will you find it, for only they have the true love, the teacher of love, of whom it is written, “If I have prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge but do not have love, it profits me nothing.” Therefore, the one who possesses love possesses God himself, since “God is love.” To him, be glory forever. Amen. (IV, 100)

[These passages have been selected from among St. Maximus’s *Four Hundred Chapters on Love*, which represent four sections of one hundred passages each. The numeration and translation is from: Maximus the Confessor: Selected Writings, translation and notes by George C. Berthold. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985).