

## Love above all

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)

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Love for Christ knows no bounds, neither does love for your neighbour. It should extend everywhere, to the ends of the earth. Everywhere, to everyone.



Let me give you an example. There was a monk who had two disciples. He tried very hard to bring them up to scratch and make them better. But he was worried about whether they were really making any progress in the spiritual life, if they were making headway, and if they were ready for the kingdom of God. He waited for a sign from God about this, but didn't get an answer. One day, there was going to be a vigil in another skete that was a good few hours away from theirs. They'd have to make their way through the desert. He sent his disciples off early, so that they'd get there early and get the church ready, while the Elder himself was to leave later in the afternoon. The disciples were well on their way when suddenly they heard groaning. There was a man there, badly hurt and asking for help;

- Take me with you, please. I'm stuck out here in the desert. Nobody ever comes by. I'll never get any help. There's two of you. Pick me up and carry me to the nearest village.
- We can't. We're in a hurry to get to the vigil. We've been told to get it ready.
- Please! Take me with you. If you don't, I'll die and get eaten by wild animals.
- We can't. Sorry, but we have to do what we've been told.

And they left. In the afternoon, the Elder left for the vigil. He went along the same path. He got to the place where the injured man was lying. He saw him, went up to him and said:

- What's the matter, man of God? What is it? How long have you been here? Didn't anybody see you?
- This morning a couple of monks came by and I asked them to help me, but they were in a hurry to get to a vigil.
- I'll take you. Don't worry.
- You can't. You're an old man. You can't lift me. No way!
- No, I'll take you. I can't leave you.
- But you can't lift me'
- I'll bend over and lift you on top of me. It'll take time, but I'll get to the nearest village. A little bit today, a little bit tomorrow, but I'll get you there.

So he lifted him, difficult though it was, and started to trudge through the sand. He was sweating freely and thought: 'Even if it takes three days, I'll get there'. As he was tramping along, he began to feel that the burden was becoming lighter, and then, at one point, he seemed not to be carrying anything at all. He turned his head to see what was going on and, to his amazement, saw he was carrying an angel. The angel said to him:

- God sent me to tell you that your two disciples don't deserve to enter the kingdom of God, because they don't have any love.

Source: *Αγία Ζώνη*, Periodical of the Church of the Holy Girdle, Patisia, vol. 19, 2010