

The Harvester



Preparing Souls

To Serve The Lord



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Should All "Hate" Be Hated?

By Brian R. Kenyon

Recently, the South Florida Avenue church of Christ (home of the Florida School of Preaching) had on one side of its marquee, "Homo-Phobia' Is A Misnomer;" and on the other side, "God Hates Sin But Is Not 'Sin-Phobic.'" A response from the "gay community" was expected based on past experiences to similar messages during "Pride Week." However, one element of responses focused on a popular notion of hate. Here is a sampling of some responses: "Shame on you for encouraging hate ... This is not Christian. This is hateful and Jesus would be ashamed of you ... you have the word 'hate' on your sign. And the truth is that God's love knows no boundaries, regardless of sin ... I was under the impression that God doesn't hate anything ... [your] kind of hate is most certainly not what Christianity is about ... Shame on you for openly encouraging hatred of any kind."

Clearly, these responses indicate a misunderstanding of the word "hate." Perhaps this is due to post-modern philosophies that discount objective meaning to anything. Perhaps it is from the idea that many "millennials" seem to hold that disagreement is equivalent to "hate." Perhaps it is from reading a twenty-first century definition of "hate" back into the first century setting. Either way, "hate" is a subject worthy of study.

The Word "Hate"

The verb (*miseo*, μισέω) translated "hate" occurs forty times in the New Testament, always translated by some form of "hate," "hated," or "hatred." Basically, as we might expect, "hate" is defined to "hate;

pursue with hatred, detest" (Thayer 415). Arndt and Gingrich say that "depending on the context, this verb ranges in meaning from 'disfavor' to 'detest'" (652). They go on to say, "The English term 'hate' generally suggests affective connotations that do not always do justice especially to some Semitic shame-honor oriented use ... in the sense 'hold in disfavor, be disinclined to, have relatively little regard for'" (652). Perhaps this can be illustrated by Deuteronomy 21:15-16, where "If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved" (NKJ) is translated, "If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated" (KJV). The English word "hated" in this context does not mean "pursue with hatred, detest," but more of "disfavor" or "little regard for." Vine says "hate" is used "of a right feeling of aversion from what is evil" (Rom. 7:15; Heb. 1:9; Rev. 2:6) and then gives another meaning, "of a relative preference for one thing over another, by way of expressing either aversion from, or disregard for, the claims of one person or thing relatively to those of another" (Mt. 6:24; Lk. 16:13; Jn. 3:20) (292).

People today often make the serious mistake of defining Biblical words through twenty-first century



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See Page 4 for Schedule

glasses and then reading those definitions back into the Biblical text. However, in order to ascertain the Holy Spirit's message, people must first understand what the words originally meant when they were written in Biblical times, then make the application for today. The way most people today view the word "hate" is not always how the Bible uses the term!

How God and "Hate" Relate

The claim that God hates nothing is just simply false! The Old Testament connects "hate" with God much more than the New Testament. For example:

These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: ¹⁷A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, ¹⁹A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren. (Pr. 6:16-19)

There are other things the God "hates," including arrogance (Amos 6:8), evil hearts (Zech. 8:17), false worship/idolatry (Deut. 16:22; Isa. 1:14; 61:8; Jer. 44:4; Amos 5:21), putting away legitimate spouses (Mal. 2:16), and wickedness (Ps. 45:7), to name a few.

Our concern, however, are the passages where the New Testament connects God with "hate." First, Paul alluded to Malachi when he reminded the Romans how God said, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated" (Rom. 9:13 cf. Mal. 1:2-3). Hatred in the ordinary sense will not fit here because God did bless Esau (i.e., the nation of Edom cf. Gen. 36:9-43). God's "hating" Esau here did not involve God's ill-will. Unlike

Jacob, Esau was not the object of God's election (cf. context of Rom. 9:6-24). The point here is that fully committing to one is like hating the other. Even on a human level, when one is fully chosen, there is no room for others (Mt. 6:24). This meaning is similar to Jesus' statement, "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple" (Lk. 14:26). Where Luke has "hate," Matthew reads, "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me" (Mt. 10:37). The sense in which "hatred" is used of one's own family and life is that these "are simply put out of consideration when one takes on himself the responsibility of following Christ" (Harrison 105).

Second, Jesus through the apostle John said to the church at Ephesus, "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate" (Rev. 2:6 cf. Rev. 2:15). "Hate" here "denotes differentiation and disavowal, punishment and judgment ... Hate, as the antithesis of the love to be practiced among believers, implies sharp separation from the world" (Michel 691). A fully committed love for what is good carries with it a corresponding hatred for what is evil. This is why the Messiah is said to "have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness" (Heb.

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*Our final deposit for the month is usually made on the last Wednesday of the month. All contributions received after that time are reported on the next month's financial statement.

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1:9). This is also why the concerned Christian is continually “hating even the garment defiled by the flesh” (Jude 23). Being fully committed to godliness makes ungodliness hated!


Why God’s “Hate” Has Value

Obviously, the idea of “pursuing with hatred” or “detesting” people is foreign to the character of faithful Christians (cf. Jn. 13:34; Col. 3:8-9, 12-14). However, as seen from the above section, love and some aspects of “hate” are not mutually exclusive. Being reminded of the positive aspects of the way “hate” is sometimes used serves at least a two-fold purpose. First, it measures our commitment to the Lord. Are we so fully committed to Jesus as our Master to the point that we “hate” all rival masters (Lk. 16:13)? Are we so fully committed to Jesus’ doctrine as our guide to the point that we “hate” the “doctrines of demons” (1 Tim. 4:1 cf. 2 Jn. 9)? Are we so fully committed to Jesus as our pattern of behavior to the point that we “hate” every manifestation of “doing the will of the Gentiles ... in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries” (1 Pet. 4:3 cf. 1 Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1; 1 Thes. 1:6)?

Second, being reminded of the positive aspects of “hate” also helps to measure our love as free-moral beings. God has always given accountable humans the choice of “life or death,” and He has always wanted them to choose life (Deut. 30:19; Mt. 11:28-30). God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezk. 18:34)! Furthermore, God has provided everything people need to be completely cleansed from sin (Jn. 1:29; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38). God knows that sin, unrighteousness, and false doctrine keep people from choosing life and receiving the salvation He offers (cf. Mt. 7:13-27; Rom. 16:17-18; Gal. 5:16-17; Rev. 22:18-19). Thus, these things must be hated by all who are of the same mind as God! The psalmist affirmed,

“Through Your precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way” (Ps. 119:104).

Conclusion

“Hate” is definitely not a favorite subject but is one that needs to be studied, especially in light of the present culture’s misunderstanding of it. Let us love what God loves and hate what He hates! 

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Switching Hate and Love

or

The “Row-Boater-Phobe” Misnomer

George F. Beals

A man in a rowboat, his back facing a waterfall, was getting closer and closer. Two were on the shore, seeing this. One yells out with warning and great care: “Please, there’s a waterfall ahead!” The other charges, “Leave him alone — he’s in peace, you, you, hateful row-boater-phobe!!”

The former represents the love-motivated Christian, fully aware of what is believed to be the divinely inspired doctrine of the Day of Judgment, and the blessings of heaven for the faithful. The latter represents the bleeding-heart liberal or secularist, who either is unfamiliar with or outright rejects biblical teachings, or is apathetic about them.

Here we have misplaced hate and mislabeled name-calling. The real friend of the row-boater is the Christian, given that the teachings of Jesus Christ in His word are right — and how can they not be: He is the Son of God. Hear the Savior of the world who died for you: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Mt. 7:21). “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world” (Jn. 17:17-18). His apostle Paul asks, “Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?” (Gal. 4:16), and “... Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor ... homosexuals, ... will inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:9-10). Warned Isaiah, “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil” (Isa. 5:20).

In keeping with the fact that God gave us all free will (Rev. 22:17), it is imperative that the total teaching of the Bible be studied on any subject, especially salvation. We lovingly invite you to contact us or call a local church of Christ to learn how we all become saved from our sins.

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Tuesday	__ 8:30-12:00	World Religions (275) Sermon on the Mount (280)	Wheeler	3
	__ 1:00-4:15		Wheeler	3
Wednesday	__ 8:30-12:00	1 and 2 Thessalonians and Galatians (137) Greek I (222)	Patterson	3
	__ 1:00-4:15		Kenyon	3
Thursday	__ 8:30-12:00	Hermeneutics (100) Life of Paul (262)	Beals	3
	__ 1:00-4:15		Brownlow-Dindy	3
Friday	__ 8:30-12:00	Hebrews (210) Old Testament History (239)	Atnip	3
	__ 1:00-4:15		Kemp	3
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Thursday	__ 6:00-8:30	Christian Evidences (244) (Tenth Street church of Christ, Apopka)	Kenyon	2.5
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