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Is it Ever Okay to Hate?

Matthew 5:43-44: (NASB) ⁴³You have heard that it was said; you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Hate is an immensely strong emotion. It can ruin relationships, perpetuate untruths, create rage and feed the fire of war. It is because of hate that much of the good in this world is not recognized, and it is because of hate that many in this world are truly unhappy. Did God create hate? Yes, He did! So, if God created hate, when is it a godly time for us to hate?

To truly grasp hate in its proper context, let's look at what we know of what the Almighty God hates. First, we need to define a word that often describes evil in the sight of God:

Abomination: Strongs #8441 tow'ebah (to-ay-baw'); something disgusting (morally), i.e. (as noun) abhorrence; especially idolatry or (concretely) an idol

Here are some things God "hates:"

Proverbs 11:20: (KJV) *They that are of a froward heart (to turn aside, to be perverse, stubbornly disobedient) are an **abomination <8441>** to the LORD: but such as are upright in their way are his delight.*

Deuteronomy 25:13-16: (NASB) ¹³You shall not have in your bag differing weights, a large and a small. ¹⁴You shall not have in your house differing measures, a large and a small. ¹⁵You shall have a full and just weight; you shall have a full and just measure, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you. (Have honest dealings with each other) ¹⁶For everyone who does these things, everyone who acts unjustly is an **abomination <8441>** to the LORD your God.

Proverbs 15:8: (KJV) *The sacrifice of the wicked is an **abomination <8441>** to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is His delight.*

What the wicked sacrifice, how they sacrifice and to whom is perverse. Only God deserves that kind of homage and everything else is idolatry. The first commandment was, *Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.*

Proverbs 15:9: (KJV) *The way of the wicked is an **abomination <8441>** unto the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.*

Proverbs 15:26: (KJV) *The thoughts of the wicked are an **abomination <8441>** to the LORD: but the words of the pure are pleasant words.*

Our very thoughts can be an offense to God!

Proverbs 17:15: (KJV) *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just; even they both are an **abomination <8441>** to the LORD.*

The Pharisees are an example of people who condemned the just.

We know God hates perversity, cheating, idolatry, wicked paths, wicked thoughts and those who stand up for these things. That sure seems like a lot of hate! We need to understand and appreciate what, who and why God hates.

Based on the following texts, God OBVIOUSLY does NOT hate SINNERS...

Luke 2:14: Notice this does NOT say, *goodwill to just the few people who I like because they like Me.* The purpose of Jesus coming was to bring peace for ALL as a ransom for the sin of Adam. **Ezekiel 33:11:** The focus here was on Israel in its sinful state. The principle applies, however, in a bigger picture to all humanity. God loves humanity but hates the wickedness in which we perpetuate our generational experiences. He wants obedience from His creation! **2 Corinthians 5:18-19:** God's plan is one of reconciliation, bringing all of those on the wrong side back to the right side. What foresight! God is not a reactive being like us - He is bigger than that and has an eternal plan that shows His love for humanity, expressed through His hate being put in the right place. How do we put hate "in the right place?"

2 Peter 3:9: God is patient in the unfolding of His plan because He wants all to repent. Therefore, God's "hatred" is for a purpose: identifying wrong and darkness so that right and light will one day be fully and unequivocally embraced!



Observations from God's own example regarding hate:

- Hate executed *properly* can actually be a benefit.
- Hate executed *improperly* is a destructive tidal wave of senseless and godless thoughts and actions!

We will focus on five points of applying hate to the right things and for the right reasons:

1. Hate properly awakened SHOULD have its foundation in principle, not in prejudice.

Check your emotion - if you are acting based on principle, you will generally be far less emotional. When we act based on prejudice, our blood pressure goes up and we *feel* more than we *think*.

Proverbs 8:13: (NRSV) *The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.*

This is perhaps the most important principle in this whole discussion as it sets our table for the right things. If we are to thrive on a meal of loving God, there is no room for evil - anywhere!



Ingroups, Outgroups and Politicians, *Cruelty (book), Kathleen Taylor*

- *So, we have these multiple ingroups and multiple identities. And other people who share those, we tend to accept and people who don't, we tend to dismiss. However if you get, for example, a clever ideologue who can come along as a politician and insert a wedge between you and your outgroup, then you can start developing extreme hostility between those groups and that can be very useful politically, but it can be very damaging to relations between those groups. And what happens when you get that kind of spiraling realization? What happens is that the people in the ingroup start viewing the people in the outgroup differently.*

Amos 5:14-15: The intentional seeking of good must *dominate* our lives. This helps us to properly hate the evil and not the individual person.

Hebrews 1:8-9: This is our template. Jesus loved righteousness and hated iniquity - he was different and set the standard for us. Hating now has a proper form and a purpose - to keep us in tune with loving righteousness! Loving righteousness identifies hating iniquity.

Let's take a further look at what happens when our "groups" engage in hate:



Less than people, *Cruelty (book), Kathleen Taylor*,

- *It's almost as if they are processing the outgroup member as if they are less human. If you look at the language that people use about hostile outgroup members, they talk about them metaphorically as beasts or animals; they talk about them metaphorically as cancers or diseases, infections, swarms, insects - you get a whole set of language that is very, very hostile that is depicting these people. You also, if you ask someone to describe the outgroup member in terms of their emotional life, you get a much more simple description so everything dumbs down. So, it's almost as if they are learning to see people as less than normal people.*

How subtle is the weapon of hate, especially when our peers provoke it!

2. Hate properly acknowledged SHOULD be a response, not a reaction.

Not holding a grudge lifts us out of the anger that hate provokes. When something is malicious and evil, we should hate it! How do we do that without getting sucked in by the hate? It could be just as bad to hold it in without responding. Bottling it up can increase emotions.

How did Jesus show his hate for unrighteousness? The cleansing of the Temple: John 2:12-18: Jesus was not happy with thievery in the Temple and not afraid to show it. But was this an emotional outburst or a righteous action?


- Jesus drove out the animals - easily recovered. He understood their value.
- Jesus did not loose the doves - not easily recovered. If he had let the doves go, the poor would not have a sacrifice. Also, the merchants who had paid for those doves would have suffered a loss.
- Jesus did not seek to do harm or perpetuate evil, he just stopped the extortion.

There was no emotional lack of control - just a hard lesson in righteousness! That is the template for us to have hate as a response and not a reaction.

Because we are not Jesus, we must tread this path carefully: Psalms 26:1-5: Our prayer should be for God to look upon our integrity and for us to trust in righteousness and to look upon all of the actions of our lives to see if we are in fact in a godly manner! Then we can begin to apply a righteous reaction to the evil that we encounter, but we have to design the response. For most of us, the proper response to proper hatred is not natural. We have to build it in our lives based on scriptural principle.

Psalms 139:20-24: This is a test for our hatred of iniquity to make sure it is based on a love of righteousness and not just on anger against another human being. Love the sinner but hate the sin. Because Satan is the ruler of this world, our lives are built around the idea that hatred can fester easily. We must rise above the natural order of things so our love for righteousness spurs our hatred for iniquity but never spurs us to hate the individuals that may be different in another group. Jesus died for them just as he died for you.

3. Hate properly assigned SHOULD be born out of conviction, not out of emotion.

 **Disgust and cleansing, *Cruelty* (book), Kathleen Taylor**

- *"Otherization" seems to happen in all cases of extreme cruelty. Where as you might think that the emotions that are driving that are primarily anger and fear, what seems to have emerged is the primary emotion - perhaps certainly one of the big ones - is disgust. You have to see your enemy as something revolting in order to be driven to commit the extreme acts of cruelty. And that's because what you are doing is you are basically seeing yourself as engaged in a cleaning function. You are seeing yourself as a perpetrator, somebody who's doing a hygienic cleaning up - a dirty task, but a necessary one because it's gonna help, it's gonna cure, it's gonna heal overall and that is the dangerous, horrible justification behind most of these acts of extreme cruelty. For example, the classic example is the Holocaust.*

We have all heard the phrase "ethnic cleansing." That is what she is talking about. You must see your enemy as being revolting. They have lost their humanity in your eyes so you can justify their annihilation. This improper hatred is like a contagious poison.

According to Professor Rafi Vago, (Senior Lecturer and Senior Researcher at Tel Aviv University (Israel) and presenter at The International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem) there are four basic steps that need to happen in order for an atrocity like the Holocaust to take place:

1. Decide that someone else is the "other," for any type of otherness.
2. Society decides to build a legal framework - what the "others" can and cannot do.
3. They cannot live among you - segregate them physically.
4. When they are separate, exterminate them.

This is Satan's prescription for hatred!


Matthew 26:59-68: (NASB) ⁵⁹Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain **false testimony** against Jesus, so that they might put him to death. ⁶⁰They did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward, ⁶¹and said, this man stated; I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days. This shows us the blindness of unrighteous hatred... ⁶²The high priest stood up and said to him, do you not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against you? ⁶³But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest said to him, I adjure you by the living God, that you tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God. Blind hate knows only how to escalate its own passion... ⁶⁴Jesus said to him, you have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven. ⁶⁵Then the high priest tore his robes and said he has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy; ⁶⁶what do you think? Once our blind hate finds its mark, it explodes upon those around us! They answered, he deserves death! ⁶⁷Then they spat in his face and beat him with their fists; and others slapped him, ⁶⁸and said, prophesy to us, you Christ; who is the one who hit you? Blind hate exploded = cruelty, mockery, disgust and murder! This is a dramatic and sobering example of what can happen in our lives. We may not physically murder someone, but we can murder their character by slandering them. God hates that!

How do we keep our emotions in check when it comes to such dramatic circumstances?

Matthew 5:43-46: Hate must not emanate from us because God does not emanate hate. He

hates evil, but He cares for all. We are to rise above our circumstances and emotions and love our enemies. Our actions towards them should not be reactions; but instead they should be actions based in love, kindness and mercy. We stand strong for what is right and against what is wrong. We do not need to use the emotion of hatred against another to stand against what is wrong. We need a strength of conviction of righteousness and a fearless courage. Act out of conviction - do not be convicted by your actions! 1 Thessalonians 5:14-20

4. Hate properly acted upon SHOULD be right, just, wise and loving; not heretical, hypocritical, half-baked or hurtful.

 **Fear, anger and disgust, *Cruelty* (book), Kathleen Taylor**

- *Look at the language the SS used. Look at the language that leading Nazis used about what they were doing and you find that metaphor of hygiene, of surgery, of cleansing coming to the fore again and again. And that is what is so terrifying about extreme cruelty, because fear is something that arises and then when there's no threat, it dissipates. Anger is something that responds to a social offense, but if there's no offense, it's hard to sustain the anger. But disgust - it doesn't matter what the victim does because how do you cleanse yourself of perceived pollution? It's really hard to do, so whatever the victim can do; if you are angry with someone they can apologize, if you are afraid of someone they can reassure you, but if you're disgusted by them, how do they deal with that? So, disgust is a really powerful and dangerous mechanism.*

Let's look at the stoning of Stephen. **Fear:** Acts 6:9-11

Anger: Notice how they recruited the masses to their "group"! Acts 6:12-15

Through Christ we learn to see all of humanity as victims of sin. Jesus was willing to die for them, therefore we should be willing to love them.

Disgust: This section begins with the fearless observational truth that Stephen spoke. Acts 7:52-58: When adopted by the masses, disgust becomes an uncontrollable force of destruction and ruin...

The actions of good King Josiah based in loving righteousness and hating iniquity in action: 2 Kings 23:12-14: There was a systematic deconstruction of the idols - it was driven by righteousness and not emotion. He took the evil apart piece by piece. Notice how even Solomon's folly is listed here - the result of wisdom governed by desire, rather than desire governed by wisdom. We have to hate evil passionately and actively, not passively. We should hate what people do but not the people themselves.

5. Hate properly aimed SHOULD always be at evil, not at people.

Jesus calling out the Pharisees: Matthew 23:13-15: Jesus called out none of them by name but merely denounced them as a class. Stephen also followed this approach, showing us that our stand against iniquity need not go down a path of emotionalism and personal attack - such a road is the self-same iniquity we condemn! Hate can be a tool of classic construction or a weapon of mass destruction! It all comes down to who wields it and why they wield it. Hatred, properly placed in our lives, can build up. God's hatred builds up. Jesus' hatred for iniquity built up. We can follow those examples or, if we allow hatred to be run by our emotions, we can use hatred as a weapon of mass destruction. History proves this over and over with mass destruction "in the name of Christ."

There can be blessing in being the object of hate: Luke 6:22-23

There is great honor in being categorized the same as Christ was: John 15:15-20

Don't try to fight hatred with hatred. Jesus fought it with love, compassion and the sacrifice of his very life. It is critically important for us to realize that hate is appropriate but ONLY according to the guidelines set for us by the life and examples of Jesus and the Apostles. Our hatred should not be against individuals but instead against the darkness of evil, knowing that God will prevail in the end. Love righteousness with all of the passion within you! But hate iniquity by standing courageously and fearlessly against what it stands for.

*So, is it ever okay to hate?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*