

# Sacred Hatred

## When to Hate What and How

February 6, 2022

*Today we're talking about our relationship with the world.*

So let's begin by answering *this*: **Is it ever good to hate?** And if so, *when, what, and how?*



When Jesus appointed His twelve, mostly teenage, apprentices on that seaside hillside near His headquarters in Capernaum, He began right then and there to teach them, *publically*, to *love* their *enemies*, and **to preemptively pray for their persecutors**, so that if-and-when they're *slapped* – as was the *right* of their religious authorities – and their tempers *flared*, **they'd be well pray-pared to "turn to him the other" cheek**, for another slap, rather than to lash out, strike back, or retaliate. (Mt 5:38-45)



So, **should we then turn the other cheek to, say, terrorists?** They're *our* enemies. How about corrupt leaders? Or child molesters?



We're certainly *commanded* to *love* them, and to *pray* for them. But to what end? **Can we not fight against them and, if need be, try to destroy them?** Many see Jesus as a pacifist. But He wasn't. *That's* John Lennon.



**Jesus was the embodiment of love, but He was no pacifist.** Remember when He overturned the tables in the temple? He *made* a *whip* and chased out the sinners with a good thrashing! (Jn 2:15-16) And, the night before the cross, **He told the twelve that it was time to buy a sword;** (Lk 22:36) and yet, when Peter *uses* his sword *that* night to *defend* the Lord, Jesus tells him to put it away. (Lk 18:10-11) Know why? **His timing was off.**



Jesus *commanded* Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the *cup* the *Father* has given Me?" – John 18:11 NIV



Read the room, Peter! This is *not* the *time* for *that*. You see:

There is a *time* for *everything* ... *under* heaven: a time to be *born* and a time to *die*, a time to *plant* and a time to *uproot*, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to *tear down* and a time to *build* ... a time to *be silent* and a time to *speak*, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace. – Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 NIV

Turns out, **turning the cheek is not a command for every occasion.** Therefore in *everything* we *need* to first turn and *read* the room and ask the Lord: **What time is it?** A time of love, a time of hate, a time of war, a time of peace? The *Byrds* didn't write that, the *Lord* did.



We're told that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, for correction and instruction in righteousness, so that the follower of Christ may be *complete* and *thoroughly* equipped. (2 Tim 3:16-17)

So we better know *THIS* song that *King David* sang:

<sup>2</sup> The LORD is my Rock ... <sup>22</sup> All His laws are before me; I have not *turned away* from His decrees [nor turned the other cheek]. ... <sup>37</sup> I pursued my enemies and overtook them; I did not *turn back* till they were *destroyed*. <sup>38</sup> I crushed them *so that* they could not rise; [to do more evil] ... <sup>39</sup> You armed me with strength for battle <sup>40</sup> ... and I *destroyed* my foes. <sup>41</sup> They cried for *help*, but there was no one to *save* them— to the LORD, but He did *not* answer. [Because we must come to Him on His terms, not ours] <sup>42</sup> I beat them as fine as dust ... I poured them out like mud in the streets. ... <sup>46</sup> Praise be to my Rock! Exalted be God my Savior! ... <sup>48</sup> You exalted me *above* my foes; from *violent* men You rescued me. [Because ... there's definitely, Biblically, a time for that!] – Psalm 18:2-48 NIV

We recently read how Jesus said to leave our gift at the altar, to go to a brother or sister who has something against us, and do our best to make it right, and *thereby* offer a *living* sacrifice.

[Well, He also said] "If your brother *sins* against you, go and *show* him his *fault* ... if he will not listen, take one or two others ... If he refuses to listen to *them*, tell it to the *church*; and if he refuses to listen even to the *church*, treat him as you would a *pagan* or a *tax collector*." [Records] – Matthew [a once shunned and shamed tax collector] 18:15-17 NIV



I missed the part in there where we turn the other cheek. All I see is how we're told to treat 'em as *pagans* or *tax collectors*. *But then, how did Jesus treat pagans and tax collectors?* Did He shun and shame, or befriend and love? Remember Zacchaeus? Jesus called him out of a tree, honored him, stayed with him, ate with him, and sought him to save him. (Lk 19:10)

But He didn't trust him any further than He could throw him! Same goes for all the sinners Jesus *loved* and *befriended*. Know how we know? Scripture makes it pretty clear.

Many people were *convinced* that He was indeed the *Messiah*. [They put their trust in Him] But Jesus didn't trust *them*, for He *knew* mankind to the core. – John 2:23-25 TLB

**Trust has little to do with love.** You might absolutely love your daughter's 16-year-old male friend. But would you *trust* him to *drive* her to *San Jose* for a little vacay? No way San Jose! "You out of your tree?! Read the room! I love you, but there's a *time* for *trust* – and it ain't *now*!"

**Turn the other cheek, but don't be a blockhead.** Those seaside instructions were very *time* specific; and they make perfect sense when we see that He's speaking to His *representatives* (Mt 5:2; Lk 6:20) regarding face-slapping *harassers*, not life-threatening *killers*. That's when it's time for the sword. *Because, when God's enemies cross a line, different laws apply.* *Because* He *commands* us to defend and rescue the innocent and oppressed, (Is 1:17; Jer 22:3) and to *fight against* their tormentors ... with a *pure heart* ... which is what He was working on that *time* by the *sea*, saying:

“You have *heard* that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ [An out-of-context excuse for knee-jerk retaliation and reflexive revenge, wrenched from an entire chapter (Ex 24) covering criminal compensation] But I tell you, do not resist an evil [cheek-slapping] person. [It’s *just* a slap; so] If someone strikes you on the *right* cheek, *turn* to him the *other* also. [Cuz *that’s* how you *win* with *him!*] ... You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your *neighbor* and *hate* your *enemy.*’ But I tell you: *Love* your *enemies* and *pray* for those who *persecute* you,” – Matthew 5:38-39, 43-45 NIV

So *should* we turn the other cheek to a *terrorist*? Sure ... if their *terror* is no more than a *slap* on a cheek. Look at those recurring phrases, “You have heard that it was said”, “But I tell you”. What’s going on here? **Is Jesus amending Scripture? Was it written wrong?** Is He *not* the same yesterday, today, and *forever*? (Heb 13:8) Will the *Word* of the Lord *not* stand forever? (1 Pet 1:25) No. No. He is. And it will. Because, **He came to reveal it instill it and fulfill it, not denounce it.**

There’s a little *code* Jesus uses. If He says, “It is *written*”, as He does three times when tempted, (Lk 4:4-12) **He’s pointing to the authority of Scripture.** However, when He says, “You have heard that it was *said* ... but *I* say”, **He’s pointing to a false teaching or misapplication.** The way they were being taught to abuse that eye-for-eye quote from *Exodus* is strictly *forbidden* in *Leviticus*.

You shall not hate your brother in your heart. [Now] You shall surely *rebuke* your neighbor, and not bear sin [by having *hate in your heart*] because of him. You shall not take *vengeance*, nor bear *any grudge* ... [because] you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord. [So don’t look for a *workaround*] – Leviticus 19:17-18 NKJ

So when “it was *said*, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy’”, the first half of the quote came from *Leviticus*; (19:18) any idea where they were getting that hate-your-enemy half? It’s another *worship song* by David that they sang in church.

Oh, that You would slay the *wicked*, O God! ... *Your* enemies take *Your* name in vain. Do I not hate *them*, O Lord, who hate *You*? And do I not *loathe* those who rise up *against* You? [Everybody *sing!*] **I hate them with perfect hatred; [meaning:]** I count them *my* enemies. [Just as they are God’s. So] Search me, O God, and know my heart ... and see if there is any wicked way in me, [having *hate* for the *person in his heart*] and lead me in [the opposite way of the “wicked way”] the way *everlasting*. – Psalm 139:19-24 NKJ



Not only does David is repulsed by *God’s* enemies as though they were his *own*, **he asks the Lord to search his heart to make sure he hasn’t allowed the sin of hate to make its way in.** But this Psalm was being used to direct devout Jews to hate Romans, to hate tax collectors, and to hate pagans and all their *personal* enemies. But those aren’t *God’s* enemies. *These* are those Christ came to *save*. **The teachers were distorting David’s heart and hate.** They had dissected and ‘*wrongly divided*’ the love-your-neighbor *limb* in *Leviticus*, and Frankensteined it to Psalm 139’s dismembered hatred-of-enemies, thus creating their own monstrous saying: “Love your neighbor and hate your enemy”!

In Psalm 139, **David not only hates what God hates, but as God hates.** That's the only way David's heart could be searched and his *sinless* hatred found *sacred*. Because, although there's a time to *love* and a time to *hate*, **there's never a time to have hate in your heart**, and those times aren't determined by our emotions, but the Lord's definitions. Look at these two verses:



Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. – 1 John 2:15 NIV

“For God [*the Father*] so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son” – John 3:16 NIV

Is God confused, or double-minded, or undecided? *Or*, are *we called* to cultivate a love/hate relationship with this world? Because, **two worlds are clearly referred to in Scripture.** One to love and the other to not-love. Two worlds, worlds apart: **the world's people** and **the world's system.** When John warns us to not-love, i.e. hate, the world, he defines which one he means.

Everything in the world—the *cravings* of sinful man, the *lust* of his eyes and the *boasting* of what he has and does—comes *not* from the Father but from [*the system of*] the world. The world [*we're called to hate*] and *its desires* pass away, but the *man* [*who God so loves*] who does the will of *God* [*rather than the world*] lives forever. – 1 John 2:16-17 NIV



So **we must work to save the sinful as we work to slay the system.** Trouble is, as sinners *ourselves*, we have a hard time hating *sin* without hating *sinner*s. But **sacred hatred loathes wrongdoings while it loves wrongdoers.** Cuz there's a *time* to love and a *time* to hate; and *many* times *both* times arise at the *same* time in the same *person*. So it gets a bit tricky.



But **would you want an oncologist who didn't hate cancer?** No! *Why?* Hate's *good* that *time*. But **what if they hate the patient?** No! Hate's *bad* that *time*. So be *mindful* of what you're *aim* is, and what *time* it is. **Hate what God hates, but love who God loves.** Cuz *these* are *those* our Great Physician came to save.

It's not *easy*. It's *holy*. And it's *trustworthy*, because:

Your *right hand* [*Jesus' OT nickname*] will find those who hate You. You shall make them as a fiery oven in the *time* of Your *anger* ... For they intended evil against You; [*Apparently thinking our patient Doctor is either powerless or a pacifist*] – Psalm 21:8-11 NKJ

[*So*] Be diligent to present yourself approved to God ... *rightly dividing* the Word of Truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. – 2 Timothy 2:15-17 NKJ

[*Therefore*] You who *love* the *Lord*, hate *evil!* – Psalm 97:10 NKJ

**Don't you think it's time?**