

## 02, The Biblical Doctrine of Hatred, Part 2

*Biblical Hatred*

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We are in a brief interlude between our exposition of Matthew and the book of Revelation which we'll be taking up in a couple of weeks, and we are addressing an issue regarding which I have been asked a number of questions over a long period of time and so we have decided to address this matter and that is the matter of what the Bible has to say about the subject of hatred. Now we hear a lot about what the Bible has to say about the love of God, about the goodness of God, about the mercy of God, about the grace of God, but what does the Bible have to say about the hatred of God? So we've been exploring the biblical teaching on the subject of hatred and we began this study last Lord's Day morning and we have seen that this issue of hatred is one that is of great concern in our day and age because there is a lot of talk in the public arena about hate crimes, about hate speech, about hate not being a Christian or not being a family value, and it seems that wherever we go and whoever we talk to, the subject of hatred comes up, the expression of hatred is universally and unqualifiably condemned.

So what we want to do is we want to ask ourselves should we reflect this animus towards that our society seems to express or should we have a different attitude towards that subject, and so we have seen, as we began our study last Lord's Day, that the subject of hatred is one that is badly misunderstood in our day and it is one that receives blanket condemnation from every quarter. We saw, however, last Lord's Day, that the biblical teaching is far removed from the popular conception of the topic, and as we looked at the biblical data, we saw that not all hatred is wrong or sinful, in fact, it is at times a righteous act to hate and to fail to hate in some circumstances is actually a sin. So we want to review briefly the material that we spent a whole hour covering last Lord's Day and if you haven't heard the last Lord's Day message, it provides the foundation for what I'm saying today and so it's a little frustrating to me to have some visitors who weren't with us last Lord's Day to hear the beginning of this teaching, jumping right into the middle of it, it can seem a bit harsh but I hope that you will listen to the previous Lord's Day message.

Well, we saw in our study last time that hatred is a characteristic of God. We saw that hatred was a characteristic of God. We surveyed the scriptural witness to the subject of hatred and we saw that God hates a great many things. We saw that he hates them a lot, and we saw that he hates them unremittingly. So we saw that God hates sinful deeds and we looked at various passages where God says that he hates this and he hates that and he

hates the other thing. Then we saw not only that God hates sinful deeds but we saw that God hates wicked people. We saw, for example, from Psalm 5 that God hates all workers of iniquity. We saw in Romans that God loved Jacob and hated Esau. So we then drew two conclusions from that data when we saw that God hated wicked deeds and God hated wicked people, we saw that if God hates, then hatred is not necessarily a sin, in fact, hatred may be a righteous act. So we concluded with the fact that there is a righteous hatred just like there is a righteous anger. We see that God is angry with the wicked every day, so anger cannot, in and of itself, be a sin. There is a righteous anger and there is a sinful anger and in the same way there is a righteous hatred because God hates a lot and a lot of things and a lot of people, and so therefore hatred cannot necessarily be a sin. The second conclusion that we drew is not only that if God hates, then hatred is not necessarily a sin, the second conclusion that we drew that is if God hates certain things, then it follows that we must hate those things as well because we are to be imitators of all of God's moral actions. So, therefore, we moved on to our second major point last time, we saw not only that hatred is a characteristic of God, we saw last time that hatred is to be practiced by the believer. Ecclesiastes 3:8 says there is a time to hate.

So we looked at the commands to hate, we saw one of them this morning as we had our Scripture reading in Psalm 97:10 where it says, "You that love the LORD, hate evil." So if you love the Lord, you're commanded to do some hating. "You that love the LORD, hate evil." So having, then, looked at several commands that are given to us in the Scriptures to hate, we then considered the objects of our hatred and we saw that we, like God, are to hate sinful deeds and we, like God, are to hate wicked people. So we hate what people do and we hate the people themselves who do those things. Finally we saw from Revelation 2:6 that God commends the hatred of his people when they hate what he hates. In Revelation 2:6 God says to the church at Ephesus, "this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." So God commended a church for hating something and he says, "I hate those things too, and because you hate what I hate, this is commendable on your part." Therefore there is a righteous hatred that is required of us and we must exercise that hatred if we are to be godly people.

So thus a very brief summary of what we said last Lord's Day morning as we opened this study on the biblical subject of hatred. Now this morning we want to continue to explore this matter further and we want to ask ourselves, "Okay, so you've convinced me based on voluminous biblical data, very clear statements in the Scripture and not a few, there were a lot of them, that God hates and we must hate, what is this hatred that is required of us and how should we express it?" And so that's the question that we want to explore together this morning: what is this hatred that is required of us because it's clearly required of us, and then how should we express this hatred?

So in the first place, then, let's consider together the definition of righteous hatred. The definition of righteous hatred. Now if we're going to rightly understand this subject, we have to properly define it and we have to make a clear distinction between righteous hatred which is to be expressed by the believer and sinful hatred which is to be avoided by the believer. So let me offer you, then, a definition of righteous hatred and having given you the definition, we're then going to take it apart phrase by phrase and

demonstrate its validity from the Scriptures. So here's the definition: righteous hatred is a rational and a decisive rejection of that which is contrary to God and a desire for its destruction by righteous means. I'll repeat that: righteous hatred is a rational and decisive rejection of that which is contrary to God and a desire for its destruction by righteous means. So biblical hatred involves making a rational distinction between what is good and what is evil and having made that distinction between what is good and evil based on rational criteria, there is a decisive rejection of the evil, there is a determined setting of one's self against it and there is a conscious effort to seeing it eliminated in an appropriate and righteous fashion.

Well, let's take that definition apart, then, and examine it in some detail. Notice, first of all then, that righteous hatred is a rational and decisive rejection of that which is contrary to God. Righteous hatred is a rational and decisive rejection of that which is contrary to God. Now as believers, we are loyal to God. God's cause is our cause. His will is our will. His ways are our ways. His reputation is our reputation. We identify with God at every point and in every way, and since we are loyal to God, loyalty to God requires of us the rejection of anything that is contrary to God.

Now some of you here today are married people and you are loyal to your husband and you're loyal to your wife, and if someone is against your wife or against your husband, then whose side do you take? Well, you take the side of your spouse. You're loyal to them and if someone is trying to injure them or harm them or sin against them in any way, you're not indifferent to that. You stand with them, you stand for them, and you stand against the one who is trying to hurt the individual to whom you are loyal. So if we love our spouse, we can't be indifferent to someone who is trying to hurt our spouse. Well, in the same way, we cannot love God and be loyal to God and at the same time be complacent towards God's enemies and to be indifferent to their attacks upon him.

Now this was Jehoshaphat's problem. Turn, please, in your Bibles to 2 Chronicles 19. The book of 2 Chronicles 19. In 2 Chronicles 19:1-2 it says,

1 And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem.

Now what Jehoshaphat had been doing back in chapter 18 is that he had gone with Ahab to battle. Now Jehoshaphat was the king of Judah, the southern kingdom, and Ahab was the king of Israel, the northern kingdom, and he was a very very wicked man, Ahab was. So Ahab and Jehoshaphat made a little treaty with each other and they went out and they fought against a foreign power and when they came back from battle, the prophet confronts Jehoshaphat. Verse 1,

1 And Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem. 2 And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to king Jehoshaphat, Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.

So he asked him this question, he says, "Should you help the ungodly and should you love those who hate the Lord?" And clearly the answer is no. So the prophet goes out and he confronts Jehoshaphat and he says, "You were friendly with and you assisted this wicked Ahab who hates God," and he said, "You were not being loyal to God when you consorted with and went in league with someone who hated God." So clearly Jehoshaphat failed when he was disloyal to God by assisting and being friendly with and helping this individual who hated the Lord. It says, "therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD." Now if someone treated you very badly and then your spouse went and was buddy-buddy with them, would you be okay with that? You would be very unhappy with your spouse for being friendly to the person who was sinning against you and hurting you, and that's precisely the situation here.

So this was Jehoshaphat's problem, he did not reject this enemy and this hater of the Lord, instead he assisted him. On the other hand, this was David's virtue. David did reject that which was contrary to God. Notice, if you will, Psalm 139. Please turn to Psalm 139. In Psalm 139:21-22 notice how David expresses his loyalty to God and it was the exact opposite of what Jehoshaphat did. Jehoshaphat was friendly with the haters of God. Notice what David says in Psalm 139:21-22, he says,

21 Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? 22 I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.

So what we see is that while Jehoshaphat did not reject that which was contrary to God, namely Ahab, David did reject that which was contrary to God. All of the enemies of God, all of the haters of God were enemies of David and hated of David. So we see that David was loyal to God and basically what he says is, "Anyone who rejects you, God, I reject." Anyone that God rejects, he rejects.

So we must rationally weigh on the basis of scriptural revelation who or what constitutes a contradiction of God and his standards and having determined what is contradictory to God and his standards, willfully and rationally reject it. So what is righteous hatred? It is a rational and decisive rejection of that which is contrary to God. You look at who God is, what he stands for, and then you look at people or you look at behaviors, what they are and what they stand for, and if they are contrary to God, then we reject them. We think it through and we say, "That person or that behavior is contrary to God," that's the rational process, and then I decisively reject it and I say, "I am against that. I oppose that. I hate that." But there's a second aspect to the definition that we want to look at. Having seen that righteous hatred is a rational and decisive rejection of that which is contrary to God, Jehoshaphat was condemned for failing to do that, David was commended for actually doing that, notice secondly, it is a desire for their destruction by righteous means. It is a desire for their destruction by righteous means. Now it's not enough to rationally and decisively reject that which is contrary to God and then say, "Oh well, but we need to live and let live." Rather when we see that which is contrary to God, we need to desire its

destruction. You know, it is the intention of God to destroy everything that is contrary to him.

Turn, please, to Deuteronomy 7. The book of Deuteronomy, the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter and notice, if you will, verses 9 and 10. Deuteronomy 7:9-10. Moses is recapitulating the history of Israel and notice what he says in Deuteronomy 7:9-10, he says,

9 Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; [now here it is,] 10 And repayeth them that hate him to their face [notice the next phrase], to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face.

So it is specifically declared that it is God's intention to destroy those who hate him. You see, here are people who are contrary to God. God makes a rational analysis of their moral behavior and he says regarding that moral behavior that it is evil and that it is wrong, and he decisively rejects it. But he doesn't just stop there, he then says, "I'm going to go a step further and I'm going to destroy it."

Turn, please, to Jeremiah 44. The book of Jeremiah, chapter 44. Israel, of course, set herself against God and God destroyed Israel, sent them into captivity, allowed the king of Babylon and the Assyrian king to come in and wipe out the northern and southern kingdoms. Notice, if you will, Jeremiah 44:4-6. God is speaking here. He says in Jeremiah 44:4,

4 Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate.

And of course, the abominable thing was the false worship that they were engaged in, the burning of incense and the serving of other gods, the making of their children to pass through the fire to those gods. So God sent servants and he sent his prophets and saying, "Don't do this abominable thing," notice, "that I hate." God hates false worship. Verse 5,

5 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods.

They did not decisively reject what God hated. Here's the consequence, verse 6,

6 Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as at this day.

That's destruction. You remember the city was leveled, the temple was burned, the people were slaughtered. There was a destruction of the nation by God.

So ultimately, of course, all of the enemies of God will be destroyed in hell. In 2 Thessalonians, it talks about the fact that they will suffer everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. So we have to understand that when God hates something, he sets out to destroy it and he does and that's the folly of saying that those in hell were ever objects of God's love because God doesn't destroy that which he loves, God destroys that which he hates. So if God destroys what he hates and we hate what God hates, then we must seek its destruction as well, however, while it must be the intention of his people to seek the destruction of that which is contrary to God, our definition says that they must only seek to do it by righteous means. You see, we are not content to see behaviors and people who are haters of God and contrary to God, we're not content just to decisively reject them and let them go on in that behavior and that hatred, no, we want to see that behavior and that hatred destroyed, and so our goal is to destroy the force and to destroy the effect of their contrary actions against God so that those contrary actions against God are neutralized.

So what are, then, the righteous means whereby we seek the destruction of that which is contrary to God whether it be actions or people? Well, one of the righteous means by which we seek the destruction of that which is contrary to God is by supporting the death penalty that is exercised by civil government. Now we are told in particular in Romans 13, that the civil government is given the sword by God for the purpose of punishing evil and rewarding good, and so when someone engages in gross wickedness, that which is contrary to God, then it's the civil government's responsibility to take that person and to punish that person and, of course, the ultimate punishment for the haters of God who manifest that hatred in wicked deeds, is the use of the sword in capital punishment. So the sword of God wielded by the civil authority is used to destroy wicked people for their sinful acts, and so this is the reason why, among other reasons, we support the death penalty, is because the death penalty is the God-ordained means for destroying those who are contrary to God and express that contrariness at a level and to a degree that they are worthy of being put to death.

We can seek the destruction of that which is contrary to God not only by supporting the death penalty by civil government, by supporting the enactment and enforcement of criminal laws to eliminate sinful behavior that is contrary to the law of God. For example, is stealing contrary to the law of God? It is. So we would support the civil authority having laws against stealing and then enforcing those laws by putting people in jail or fining them or demanding restitution out of them, or whatever was required.

So the civil government has a legitimate role to play in the destruction of that which is contrary to God and it is doing what is righteous when it does so and we need to support the civil government in its bearing of the sword and its use of the sword in lesser ways and in greater ways in destroying that which is contrary to God because it is a righteous thing for the civil government to bear the sword against that which is contrary to God. This is one of the reasons why we as a church got involved in the Measure 9 campaign many years ago because we wanted the civil government to destroy the efforts of the homosexual movement to go into the public schools to recruit kids into that lifestyle, and so we tried to get the civil authority to pass a law that says homosexuals can't go in and

promote homosexuality in the public schools to restrain that wicked immorality that was contrary to God. Well, we lost but nevertheless that's why we were involved. Now we can't go out and kill homosexuals ourselves. We can't go out and physically stop them from going into the public schools but the civil government could and should and we urged it to do so, and it would not and does not, and so as a result public schools are just homosexual recruitment centers today and that's one reason why the movement has taken off and gained the traction that it has, is because they got into the public schools and changed the minds of an entire generation and as a result we have rampant sexual immorality in our nation today and all the destruction that flows out of it.

There is a third way in which we can righteously seek the destruction of that which is contrary to God, not only by supporting the civil government in the exercise of the death penalty and in the enactment and enforcement of criminal laws that eliminate sinful behavior that is contrary to the law of God, but thirdly, we can do so by calling people to repentance and conversion through the preaching of the Gospel. We can do so by calling people to repentance and conversion by the preaching of the Gospel. Now seeing people get saved is certainly a means of destroying their former sinful behavior. You see, when someone is living in sin, when someone is unsaved, the Bible describes them as being the old man, but when they get saved what happens to the old man? He's put to death, Romans 6, right? The old nature is taken out and destroyed and they are given a new nature and they become a new person and they engage in new behavior. What's happened? Their former nature and pattern of life has been destroyed and, you see, when we have a rational and decisive rejection of that which is contrary to God and seek the destruction of it by righteous means, one of the ways in which we can destroy haters of God who engage in wicked behavior, is by seeing them transformed into lovers of God who engage in righteous behavior and you have effectively destroyed who they once were and what they once did and now they have become the opposite of that.

So the wicked can be destroyed by death, the wicked can be destroyed by imprisonment, or the wicked can be destroyed by conversion and you see this in Saul of Tarsus, don't you? I mean, here is a man who is hateful. He goes around slaughtering Christians. Was Saul of Tarsus destroyed? Yes, he was. Saul of Tarsus was destroyed, he was killed spiritually on the road to Damascus by Jesus and he became the Apostle Paul and that old Saul was destroyed by righteous means.

A fourth way in which we can seek to destroy the haters of God is not only by supporting the death penalty by civil government, supporting the enactment and enforcement of criminal laws to eliminate sinful behavior that is contrary to the law of God, not only by calling people to repentance and conversion by the preaching of the Gospel, but fourthly, by praying for God's restraint upon wickedness. By praying for God's restraint upon wickedness. This is a righteous means to seek the destruction of that which is contrary to God.

Now we know that the heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord and like the rivers of water he can turn it whither-soever he will, and when we see, for example, our civil authorities doing hateful, wicked, evil things, we can pray that God would restrain them

and defeat them from being able to accomplish those things. We cannot go out and kill sinful people, we cannot use unlawful means to restrain sin, but we can use every lawful means to destroy that which is contrary to God and these are four lawful means that we can use to do that: we can support the civil government in the suppression and the destruction of evil; we can preach the Gospel which results in the suppression and destruction of evil and the establishment of righteousness; and we can pray to God and ask him to use his restraining hand to keep the wicked from doing more wickedness than they are currently doing. And we see how this works out. How did God restrain the wickedness of Herod? He killed him, right? He died eaten of worms. How did he restrain the wickedness of Saul of Tarsus? He converted him and changed him into the great champion of Christianity.

So then biblical and godly hatred involves making a distinction between good and evil, rejecting the evil and setting one's self against it, and seeking its elimination, and we do not tolerate or put up with or peacefully coexist with or accept anything that is contrary to God. We desire its removal and we desire its extinction. So we are intolerant of that which is contrary to God, we reject a live-and-let-live attitude, and we desire to see the destruction by righteous means of everything that is contrary to God both actions and persons. I am not content to see people run around, haters of God in enmity against God so as long as they're not committing any actual crimes that the civil government can be involved in and restrain them with reference to, then our weapons are preaching the Gospel and praying and we go out and try to destroy the kingdom of Satan and its citizens by converting them into the kingdom of God and the subjects of Jesus Christ.

Now I want you to understand something and it is this: biblical hatred, righteous hatred, is not so much an emotion, rather it is a rational, that is thoughtful, value judgment expressed in a strong determination to have nothing to do with that which is hated, to reject it, and to seek its removal by righteous means. You know, that's why it just blows me away when people say, "Well, you know, atheists are some of my best friends," and they claim to be Christians. You know, the haters of God shouldn't be our friends. That's what the prophet inspired by God rebuked Jehoshaphat for. He said, "Should you love them that hate the Lord? Should you help the ungodly?" No, what you should be doing is preaching the Gospel to them or trying to employ the civil government if they won't hear the Gospel, to restrain their wickedness, and praying to God that he would defeat their plans and purposes to do evil. That's how you should be dealing with it. Your friends should be lovers of God.

Well, people say, "Pastor, what about Matthew 5:43-44?" Let's turn there and look at that passage. Matthew 5:43-44 says,

43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.



They say, "Well, for the last sermon and a half, you've been preaching that we need to hate the ungodly and here it says we're to love our enemies, so how do you reconcile those two things?" Well, understand that in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is correcting the wrong teaching of the Pharisees. They had perverted the teaching of the law and Jesus is correcting their perversion of it and he's establishing the right teaching and so he says, "You've heard them teach this, that's wrong. Here is the truth." Now I have an entire sermon on this passage when I preached through the Gospel of Matthew and I don't have the time to go into all the detail here that I did there. I would urge you to get the message on Matthew 5:43-48 in order to get the full explanation of what I am just giving you a summary of, but basically what the Jews were teaching when they said, "Thou shall love your neighbor," is that you should love only your fellow Jew. Never love a Gentile simply because he's a Gentile. Now the Old Testament didn't teach that. The Old Testament said you're supposed to love the stranger that's among you, not just your fellow Jew. Secondly, it says, "and hate thine enemy," and that was couched as a command, you had a duty to hate your enemy. Now that sounds dangerously close to what I have been teaching for the last sermon and a half, but there is a very very important distinction we have to make that resolves the apparent conflict and the distinction is this, we have to notice what the thrust of the passage is and the thrust of the passage is this: Jesus here is not saying, "Love my enemies," he's not talking about his enemies or God's enemies, rather he's talking about our enemies. Notice what he says here, "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." So what he's talking about here is about people as they are viewed as our personal enemies. Here are a people who are contrary to us in particular. So as I view people as they are contrary to me and as they are my personal enemy, I am to love them.

Now how do I love them? Well, our text says that I love them by blessing them when they curse me, that is, they speak nasty to me and I speak nice to them; by doing good to them when they hate me, they express animosity towards me, whenever I see an opportunity to do something that's a blessing to them, I do it; and by praying for them when they despitefully use me and persecute me, I pray for their salvation, I pray for their restraint, I pray for God to open their eyes. So I may bless them and do them good and pray for them as they are viewed as being my enemies and as they are hating me. Nothing in this passage is said about them being contrary to God. What is being said in this passage is about them being contrary to me, but if in addition to being contrary to me they are also contrary to God, then as I view them as my personal enemy, I love them and bless them and do them good and pray for them but as I view them as God's enemies, assuming that they are my enemies as well at the same time, then when I view them as God's enemies, they are to be hated. So I may bless them and do them good and pray for them as they are my enemies, but at the same time I may reject their behavior that is contrary to God and desire its destruction by righteous means.

Now we have this funny idea that somehow love is to be defined as a warm emotional feeling towards someone. If someone is your enemy, you're not going to have any warm emotional feelings toward them, but if they are your enemy, you can love them because

love is a principal determination to draw someone to yourself by removing the barriers between you and them and if they hate you and curse you and despitefully use you, there are obviously some barriers between you and by blessing them and by doing them good and by praying for them, you're trying to tear down those barriers and take that person who was your enemy and turn them into your friend. So what Matthew 5:43-44 is talking about is our horizontal relationships. It is not even addressing the issue of whether this person is contrary to God or not, it is simply addressing the issue that they are contrary to me, and is it not possible that someone may be a true Christian and because of some offense, they are my enemy and I need to go through a process of reconciliation with them and seek to turn them into my friend again? And that's all that's being discussed in the passage. It's not talking about wicked people who have set themselves contrary to God.

Now perhaps this person is contrary to God in that hatred of me as a believer, and perhaps this person is despitefully using believers and cursing believers because they are unsaved, but it's not addressing these people in their relationship with God, it is addressing people in their relationship with us so as they hate us, we don't have an attitude of retaliation or revenge towards them or a desire to see them destroyed. We work hard at trying to break down the barriers between us and draw them back into a friendly relationship with us. We love them by keeping God's law toward them and not doing sinful things toward them like they do towards us, and we overcome evil with good. But with reference to these people's treatment of God and their attitude towards him, if they are against God, then we are against them, but we are against them, you see, in a rational way, in a decisive thoughtful rejection of what they are and what they do, and we do everything we righteously can do to change that either by preaching the Gospel or by doing what is lawfully in our power to restrain their contrariness to God. That is biblical hatred.

Now the word "hatred" has such pejorative meaning attached to it that we can hardly bring ourselves to say it is a righteous thing to hate because in our day and age, hatred is viewed as the worst thing you can do and be, but when we look at hatred from a biblical perspective, it is clear that there is a biblical righteous hatred just as much as there is a biblical righteous anger. However, there is also a sinful hatred and next week we're going to talk about sinful hatred and I'll give you a preview of that message by telling you what the definition of sinful hatred is: sinful hatred is an emotionally based antagonism toward that which is contrary to ourselves and denies our sinful desires, and which therefore wishes the destruction by unrighteous means of those who oppose the fulfillment of our sinful desires.

So, you see, righteous hatred is rational. It looks at God's law, it looks at the behavior or the person, and makes a comparison between them and it says, "There is not a match here, in fact, there is direct opposition here." Having made that rational analysis, it then decisively rejects it. It says, "You know, I just can't tolerate that or accept that because it's contrary to God's law." And not only do I make a rational decision about whether it's contrary to God's law or not and having made that decision decisively reject it, then what am I going to do about it? I'm going to seek to have it destroyed because I don't want out

of loyalty to God, anyone or anything to be running around contrary to him. But when I seek its destruction, I say to myself, "How should I do that? Well, God has given me these righteous tools to use to destroy that which is contrary to him and his law. I can use the civil government. I can use spiritual weapons. And that's all I can use." So I'm working all my life to destroy that which I hate by using righteous means to do it out of a biblical hatred for the fact that that person or that behavior is contrary to God and to his law.

Now what you have in sinful hatred is it's emotionally based. There's this rage that rises up within me and I get all steamed up and my eyes dilate and I'm angry and mad, wrathful, and I want to, then, destroy the object of my wrath and I'll use a gun, I'll use a knife, I'll use my fist, I'll use vicious words, I'll slander them, I'll gossip against them. Why? Because they opposed some sinful desire I had and exposed it. You know, I wanted to live with my girlfriend and I didn't want anybody confronting me about it and another believer came on and said, "You know, fornicators won't inherit the kingdom of God," and they come under conviction of sin and so they become angry at the one who brought that conviction and they seek to destroy that person by unrighteous means. That's sinful hatred and you see at each point it's the opposite of the definition of righteous hatred.

So it's in sinful hatred where murder comes in and vengeance comes in and cursing and verbal abuse and slander comes in and all other similar behaviors that seek to destroy other people in wicked ways. So sinful hatred has a different motive, it has a different object, and it has a different expression than righteous hatred does. So while the Bible forbids hatred, it also commands hatred, and the difference between what it forbids and what it commands is, is the hatred righteous or is the hatred sinful? So when God says to the church at Ephesus in Revelation 2, "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate," and obviously they didn't just hate them but they sought to undo them, now how would you undo the deeds of the Nicolaitans? Well, one thing you'd do is you'd preach against it and expose the error and the sinfulness and the wickedness of it and you'd try to convert some of those Nicolaitans, and if what they were doing was actually criminal, you'd go and tell the Roman government and get a Roman soldier to come over and grab that guy and put him in jail. That's how you would express hatred of the deeds of the Nicolaitans, and if you did that, God would commend you for that. He would say, "You know, you're a good hater just like me."

That really sounds hard on the ears, doesn't it? Because we are so conditioned to think hatred is just this awful horrible thing. Sometimes it's awful and horrible if you don't hate and it's because our society has not hated evil enough that it is rampant in our society because if you don't hate, you're not motivated to destroy, and if you don't destroy, then evil flourishes, and that's why we have to resist sin and use all the means of resistance that are at our disposal that God has given to us, and when we do, then we are engaging in righteous hatred. Well, you think about these things and mull them over in your mind and hopefully you will be able to say without any emotional revulsion, "You know, I need to be a better hater. I need to hate more strongly. I'm not working hard enough to destroy that which is contrary to God. I'm letting people around me just live in defiance

of God and I'm not preaching the Gospel to them. I don't hate who they are or what they do bad enough to see them changed into something and someone else." Now people would say, "Oh, if you loved them, you'd preach the Gospel to them." That's another aspect. Sure. Sure. But we're not talking about that, we've talked about that in other messages. So may the Lord help us, then, to grasp this and understand it and we need to never become complacent and indifferent towards evil people and evil deeds.

Shall we pray together?

*Father, thank you so much for your word. We ask that you would use it, Father, to strengthen our souls in a right understanding of every dimension of life. Father, we just pray that you would not allow the world to shape our thinking on any topic or subject but help us, Father, to simply look into your word and understand what it says and to then carry it out in our lives even when it seems really strange given the cultural consensus that we live in. Help us to shine as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*