

Billy Graham: Things God Hates

It's God's love for man that prompts Him to hate sin with a vengeance

We in the church have failed to remind this generation that while God is love, He also has the capacity to hate. He hates sin, and He will judge it with the fierceness of His wrath. This generation is schooled in the teaching about an indulgent, soft-hearted God whose judgments are uncertain and who coddles those who break His commandments. This generation finds it difficult to believe that God hates sin.

I tell you that God hates sin just as a father hates a rattlesnake that threatens the safety and life of his child. God loathes evil and diabolic forces that would pull people down to a godless eternity just as a mother hates a venomous spider that is found playing on the soft, warm flesh of her little baby.

It is His love for man, His compassion for the human race, that prompts God to hate sin with such a vengeance. He gave Heaven's finest that we might have the best; and He loathes with a holy abhorrence anything that would hinder our being reconciled to Him.

What Does God Hate?

What does God hate, you ask? Solomon answers the question in the Book of Proverbs. We read: "These six things the Lord hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:16-19).

First, God hates a proud look. The Bible says, "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18). It says, "those who walk in pride He is able to put down" (Daniel 4:37). And again the Bible says, "Behold, I am against you, O most haughty one!" (Jeremiah 50:31).

In almost every instance in the Bible, as well as in life, pride is associated with failure, not success. We hear a great deal about the inferiority complex, but the superiority complex of pride is seldom spoken of. Pride caused the fall of Lucifer, and he became Satan, the devil.

Pride keeps thousands away from Christ today. What will my friends say? What will my family think? Will my reputation be affected if I become a Christian?

Jesus said, “And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Matthew 23:12). The entrance to the Kingdom of Heaven is gained through your coming in humility.

The greatest act of humility in the history of the universe was when Jesus Christ stooped to die on the cross of Calvary. And before anyone can get to Heaven, they must kneel at the foot of the cross and acknowledge that they are a sinner, that they have broken the commandments of God and that they need the grace of God in Christ. No one can come proudly to the Savior.

Second, the Bible says that God hates a lying tongue. Where did we learn to lie? Isn't it strange that children lie instinctively without being taught? The flagrant sins of fraud, embezzlement, slander, libel and breach of promise are the products of a lying heart.

Where did this blighting deceit come from? Jesus gave us the answer when He said to those who spoke a lie in His day, “You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do” (John 8:44). Human nature was warped and twisted in the fall of Adam. But Jesus Christ, who is the truth, came saying, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32).

Third, the Bible says that God hates hands that shed innocent blood. The sixth commandment says, “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13). Psychologists tell us that the seed of murder lurks in the heart of the most respected person.

The Bible says, “Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him” (1 John 3:15). Murder can be committed in many ways. You can murder your wife, your children and your friends by the poisonous venom of hatred and bitterness.

Not all murderers are behind bars. It so happens that only those who kill the body are punished by the law; but many who are free are just as guilty of destroying the lives, the personalities and the souls of others. The Bible says that you can strike someone with your tongue (Jeremiah 18:18). You can ruin another person's reputation. God holds such people accountable for murder.

Fourth, the Bible says that God hates a heart that devises evil imaginations. Thought is sown in the mind before it is reaped in the field of action. The law judges sin according to the act, but God judges us according to the evil of our hearts. “Whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart,” said Jesus (Matthew 5:28).

We are living in a day when men and women's imaginations are evil in the sight of God. The Bible says that He hates this. No person with an evil imagination can inherit the Kingdom of God. God hates evil imaginations. They lead to habits, habits lead to bondage, and bondage leads to death: “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).

Fifth, the Bible says that God hates feet that are swift in running to mischief. Evil thoughts and imagination, if nourished and fed, will eventually lead to sinful actions. There are people in every community who openly and flagrantly violate God's law. They boast that they are not

hypocrites, and they make no pretense of being good. But this does not excuse them for their wickedness.

Sixth, the Bible says that God hates a man or woman who sows discord among brethren. We seldom hear the slanderer, the libeler or the malicious gossip denounced. We have come to think that it is a harmless thing to sow discord in the office, the shop, the church or the home; but the Bible says that God hates discord and strongly denounces those who sow strife.

“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice,” says the Bible (Ephesians 4:31). And the Bible says, “If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one’s religion is useless” (James 1:26).

What Can We Do?

“What can we do about these dreadful traits that are in our hearts?” you ask. There is little that you can do, but there is something God has done. The secret is found in the words of the Apostle Paul: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2). Jesus Christ, if received into your life, can make your tongue so that it will speak only that which is good. Jesus Christ can come into your heart and transform you, change your nature, until you’ll love instead of hate. Gossiping, slandering and maligning will no longer provide pleasure.

How can this be? I’ll tell you. Christ, through His triumphant death on the cross, purchased for you a new lease on life. “I have come that they might have life,” He said (John 10:10). The Bible says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). This is not just a theological theory; it actually works. It has worked in my own life. What is more, it will work for you. We have seen thousands of people whose lives have been transformed by the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (see Romans 1:16). The same power of Christ can transform your life.

You say, “But Billy, I’m guilty of all the things you have mentioned today.” Yes; the Bible says, “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

But no matter how guilty you may be (you may have broken every one of the commandments), God can forgive you today because Jesus Christ died on the cross for your sins. Yes, God hates the evil of your heart, but He loves you. Just as a parent despises the bad behavior of their child but still loves the child, God loathes the forces that would cause you to be lost, but He loves you with an infinite love.

However, this matter of salvation is not thrust upon you; it is a gift, and it must be duly and properly received. Here is the promise on which you may put your whole trust: “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12).

At this moment you can receive Christ. He will forgive every sin that you have ever committed and give you new strength, new power over the temptations of life. But first you must renounce your sins, confess them and receive Christ into your heart. Will you do that right now? You can at this moment, and He will change your life.

**Scripture quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, New King James Version.*