



## I don't "Hate" them, I just don't "Like" them.

April 15, 2019

**1 JOHN 4:20 NIV - (20)** Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen.

Biblically speaking, there are positive and negative aspects to hatred. It is acceptable to hate those things that God hates; indeed, this is very much a proof of a right standing with God.

However, the hatred that is negative surely has to be that which is directed against others. The Lord mentions hatred in the Sermon on the Mount: "But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment" (**Matthew 5:22**). The Lord commands that not only should we be reconciled with our brother before we go before the Lord, but also that we do it quickly (**Matthew 5:23-26**). The act of murder itself was certainly condemned, but hatred is a "heart" sin, and any hateful thought or act is an act of murder in God's eyes for which justice will be demanded, possibly not in this life but at the judgment. So heinous is the position of hate before God that a man who hates is said to be walking in darkness, as opposed to the light (**1 John 2:9, 11**). The worst situation is that of a man who continues professing religion but remains at enmity with his brother. The Scriptures declare that such a person is a liar (**1 John 4:20**), and he may fool men, but not God. How many believers live for years pretending that all is well, putting on a front, only to be found finally wanting because they have harbored enmity (hatred) against a fellow believer?

Hatred is a poison that destroys us from within, producing bitterness that eats away at our hearts and minds. This is why the Scriptures tell us not to let a "root of bitterness" spring up in our hearts (**Hebrews 12:15**). Hatred also destroys the personal witness of a Christian because it removes him from fellowship with the Lord and other believers. Let us be careful to do as the Lord advised and keep short accounts with everyone about everything, no matter how small, and the Lord will be faithful to forgive, as He has promised (**1 John 1:9; 2:1**).

Most of all, let us move from the concept of "I don't hate them, I just don't like them." God knows the heart. Let us not be deceived with trickery language.

**SCRIPTURE READING: PROVERBS 10:12**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:** Life without God is like an unsharpened pencil. No point.