

Have you ever done a polar plunge or an ice bath? I've done it once and never again
Davenport – Special Olympics Fundraiser – Costumes – Winner – Ordeal...shock system
Passages of scripture like the one today are polar plunges...they are shocks to the system
Tone shifts abruptly...peaceful meditation to cry for justice and a plea for personal holiness
Suddenly, David is talking about slaying the wicked and 'perfect hatred'
Hate is difficult concept biblically...you don't hear it preached from many pulpits...important

- **Hate is murder** – 1 Jn. 3:15 'Anyone who hates his brother or sister is a murderer'
- **Mark Liar** – 1 Jn. 4:20 'Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar'
- **Stirs Conflict** – Prov. 10:12 'Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses.'
- **Love Enemies** – Matt. 5:44 'love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.'

Can we hate with righteousness? Is there such a thing as righteous hatred, biblically? Yes

- **Loving the Lord** - Ps. 97:10 "Let those who love the Lord hate evil."
- **Loving good** – Rom. 12:9 "Love must be sincere. Hate what's evil; cling to what is good"

Bible does not say *all* hate is wrong...directs hate away from people and toward evil actions

Title = No Neutral Ground' - No neutral ground is a central theme of Christian theology

Every thought, action, and person is ultimately aligned with one of two kingdoms

- a. Kingdom of God – Rom. 14:17 'Place of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit'
- b. kingdom world – Spiritual & moral system stands opposition to God's authority **READ**

From a Christian perspective 'Justice' is not a legal concept; core attribute of God's character

God's justice is the perfect outworking of His holy character

Big Idea - We believe in a God who judges perfectly

Spruce Pine NC– Quartz...purest | Chip in every phone / computer – 1 part per billion = Fail
If God has one spec of impurity...one part of Him that is not perfectly just / holy = Not God
Do we believe there's evil in world? Do we believe God is going to do something about it?

1. When Evil Arises: We call for God's Justice (19-20)

Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God! O men of blood, depart from me! ²⁰They speak against you with malicious intent; your enemies take your name in vain.

Intense is verse? 'Oh that you would slay the wicked' – How many have prayed? Wants dead

Who is it that David wants dead? Wicked: Men of Blood – Speak malicious intent – Vain

Clear...wicked people are not people who strive for righteousness, but make mistakes

- It describes a settled posture of life that is opposed to God
- Wicked refers to a person who has a rebellious in heart and unrepentant in direction
 - **Men of Blood** – 'Bloodthirsty men' = People who have no regards for human life
 - Oppressors – People who use violence to get their way...targeting the innocent
- North Korea = Public Execution | Prison Camps | Collective Punishment | Forced Labor
- **Speak Against You** – Continuously and strategically using words undermine God
 - Richard Dawkins (Evolutionary Biologist) – The God delusion (2006 - 3 million)
- **Name in Vain** – Misrepresenting God and using His name to justify evil action
 - All the cults that distort or manipulate God's truth for their own gain
 - Mormonism – Jehovah's Witness – Unitarian – Branch Davidians – People's Temple

This text is a call for God's justice – David just got done expressing all the beauty in world

- Now he is overwhelmed with the amount of evil and cries for Justice

Takeaway = Rejoice in the perfection of the Judge

- **Impartial:** God does not show favoritism based on wealth, status, or power
- **All-Knowing:** He understands motives of heart, ensuring "sentencing" is perfectly fair
- **Consistent:** Ps. 96:13, we rejoice because 'He's coming to judge world in righteousness'

2. When Evil Arises: We confess our loyalty (21-22)

²¹Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord?

Doesn't verse seem like a raisin in the trail mix? How can we love enemies and hate them?

- Cultural understanding...what David is expressing isn't uncontrolled anger...loyalty
Lord...I'm on your team | Lord...I hate what you hate | Lord...I'm on your side
The Bears are having a good year...As a Bears fan I hate the Packers – Do I hate the players?
I hate what they stand for. Why? Because I'm on the opposing team

David is showing that there is no neutrality...Christians hate what God hates

Matt. 12:30 Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters

Going back to the Bears / Packers...you cannot be a fan of both...they are rivals

- We cannot both love the Lord and love things he hates...they are in direct competition
And do I not loathe those who rise up against you? ²²I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies. - What David is doing here is showing his fierce loyalty to the holiness of God
- David is surrounded by people and nations who are doing things that disgrace God
He is saying, in no uncertain terms, I am intolerant of the way our world is behaving

Our world speaks about tolerance like it is the prize hog at a county fair...**I'm intolerant**

There are things that are evil in this world and we, as Christians, should not be ashamed

⇒ **Sexual Immorality** – Sex Trafficking | Pornography Industry | Rape | Pedophilia

⇒ **Created Order** – Abortion | Gender Issues = Boys in girls bathrooms / Sports

⇒ **Radicalized Religion** – The use of any religion to promote violence and genocide

I could go on and on about the things I'm intolerant of because God is intolerant of them

Make something clear...we hate sin and love sinners | We hate actions and love people

Jesus died because of the actions of people...God takes it seriously...so do we GOSPEL

Takeaway = Align your standards with Gods standards

- a. **Submit to God's Word as your final authority** | Not culture – Conscience – Preference
- b. **Be Transformed, not merely informed** | Heart transformation not external rule following
- c. **Walk in the Spirit, not self-confidence** | Obedience flows from dependence, not independence
We are Christians who are devoted to and aligned with the purpose and plans of God

3. When Evil Arises: We commit to God's path (23-24)

²³Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! ²⁴And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

David moves from talking about God to talking to God – David ends with a 2 verse prayer

- This is a bold prayer that takes incredible courage to pray – I challenge you to pray it
Verses = spiritual maturity is not claiming sinlessness but inviting God's searching holiness

Courageous Request – Painful Revelation – Confident Hope

- a. **Courageous Request** - Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!
 - Search my heart – Heart is the seat of desire...David is asking the Lord to search desire
 - Try (Test) my thoughts – The most hidden of all our realities – Thoughts were out loud
 - Times we are blinded to our own faults – Asking the omniscient God to examine
- b. **Painful Revelation** - see if there be any grievous way in me
 - This is radical vulnerability – Asking God to inspect...shine a light on any sin in your life
 - David's point in this is to show correction...so he can get on the right path
 - Survival shows – Stuck in the amazon rain forest at night...a light comes to show path
- c. **Confident Hope** - and lead me in the way everlasting!

- Look at who is in charge...God is doing the leading...He's taking you into the light

Takeaway – Shift yourself from self-help to divine guidance | Read for 7 days...pray it

Talking about evil and hatred can be a polar plunge shock to our system | RECAP