

## 139. THE CHRISTIAN VIRTUE OF HATE: Psalm 139:19-24

### INTRODUCTION.

**Christian's, those who do not love Christ will not love you nor seek your best interests. Actually those who do not love Christ will hate you and seek both your shame and downfall.** In fact, God says through Peter,

"[The wicked] are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you" (1 Pet. 4:4).

The wicked are at war with you, and you must be at war with the wicked and their influences. This war is primarily spiritual, but quickly this can get physical.

MANY OF THE WICKED IN YOUR NATION WANT YOU DEAD OR WOULD OPENLY CELEBRATE YOUR DEATH.

**Charlie was a moderate and they shot him in the neck.**

**(ii) The devil and his confederates are smarter than you, stronger than you, and are always searching for ways to bring you down.** That is why God says again through Peter,

"Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour" (1 Pet. 5:8).

The devils prowls around seeking someone to devour, so you must not be thinking you are able to stroll through life as if he were not a threat.

The sluggard says, "There's a lion in the streets!" when there really is not, so that he does not have to go to work.

The Christian says, "There's a devil in the streets!" when there really is, so that he remembers to keep his head on a swivel and his hands ready for action.

**Q. How should we think and act concerning those who hate us and hate our Christ?**

**A. Matthew 5:43-44** "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate [maliciously] your enemy.' But I say to you, *Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.*"

**Q. Yet what are we to pray?**

**A.** There are many different prayers God guides us to pray through the Scriptures, and at least one virtuous prayer is found in **Psalm 139:19**: "Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God!"

**CON(TEXT).** *To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.*

This is a song of God's omniscience—God knows all things. In it, David praises the Lord for His omniscience and his handiwork in creating man as He does, knitting them together in their mother's womb. Then in **verse 19**, still musing on the all-knowing mind and all-seeing eye of God, David petitions the Lord to slay the

wicked and then invites the Lord to confirm his inward thoughts, which utterly detest the wicked and their ways! Read **Psalm 139:19-24** along with me.

**DOCTRINE.** It is a Christian virtue to hate the wicked because of love for the Lord and His glory.

**OUTLINE.** Let's see what we can learn from these verses:

## **I. IT IS VIRTUOUS TO PRAY AGAINST THE WICKED, EVEN FOR THE LORD TO SLAY THEM (Psalm 139:19a).**

**Psalm 139:19a**

"Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God!"

**PLUMER:** "They are the enemies of God by wicked works; and God is their enemy by righteous indignation, and will fight against them and slay them all."  
— **Plumer, William Swan. Studies in the Book of Psalms (p. 2114). Counted Faithful. Kindle Edition.**

**OBJECTION.** Well that does not seem very Christlike.

**ANSWER.**

**John the Baptist in Matthew 3:7** "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

**Christ in Matthew 23:33** "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?"

**Paul in Cyprus in Acts 13:8-12** "8 But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. 9 But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him 10 and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time." Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. 12 Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord."

**Additionally, this is God's Word sung by God's Prophet-King, David: Psalm 139:19a**

"Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God!"

**CLARIFICATION:**

**THOMAS MANTON:** "In praying the imprecatory psalms, we do not curse men

with a private spirit of revenge, but commit the cause of God's church to His righteous judgment, desiring that His glory be vindicated against those who obstinately oppose His truth." — **Manton, Thomas. *An Exposition of the Book of Psalms. In The Works of Thomas Manton*, vol. 1. 1678. Reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1990, 245.**

**I) Sometimes the Lord slays the wicked by regenerating them unto eternal life** (Acts 8:3; 1 Tim. 1:13-15).

(i) **Paul: Acts 8:3** "Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison." Stephen prayed as Paul watched him being martyred. God saved Paul a short while later

(ii) **Nebuchadnezzar:** Neb made a 90 foot tall Idol and forced everyone in Babylon to worship it. When Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah refused to bend the knee, Neb threw them into the fiery furnace. But after that the Lord saved Neb!

**Daniel 4:34-37** "34 At the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High, and praised and honored him who lives forever, for his dominion is an everlasting dominion,

and his kingdom endures from generation to generation;  
35 all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing,  
and he does according to his will among the host of heaven  
and among the inhabitants of the earth;  
and none can stay his hand

or say to him, "What have you done?"

36 At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendor returned to me. My counselors and my lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me. 37 Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to humble."

**BOYS AND GIRLS...**

## **GOSPEL**

**II) Sometimes the Lord slays the wicked by throwing them into confusion so that they are no longer a threat to the godly** (Ex. 23:27).

**Exodus 23:27** "I will send my terror before you and will throw into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you."

**III) Sometimes the Lord slays the wicked by throwing them down unto**

**eternal death** (Num. 16:31-35; Acts 12:21-24).

(i) Sometimes the Lord defeats groups by throwing them down.

**Numbers 16:31-35** (*Korah's Rebellion*) "31. . .the ground under them split apart. 32 And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the people who belonged to Korah and all their goods. 33 So they and all that belonged to them went down alive into Sheol, and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. 34 And all Israel who were around them fled at their cry, for they said, "Lest the earth swallow us up!" 35 And fire came out from the Lord and consumed the 250 men offering the incense."

(ii) Sometimes the Lord defeats *individuals* by throwing them down.

**Acts 12:21-24** "21 On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat upon the throne, and delivered an oration to them. 22 And the people were shouting, "The voice of a god, and not of a man!" 23 Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down, because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and breathed his last.

24 But the word of God increased and multiplied."

### **BOYS AND GIRLS...**

**Q. Why is it virtuous to pray against the wicked, even for their downfall?**

**A.** Because it glorifies the Lord to judge the wicked and it teaches the world righteousness (Isaiah 26:9).

**Isaiah 26:9** "When your judgments are in the earth,  
the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness."

### **USE FOR EXHORTATION (3)**

Pray these three things for your enemies—for the wicked—in fulfillment of **Psalm 139:19**:

#### **I) Lord, Convert them!**

**This is loving to the wicked because** they will be united to Christ and forgiven all their sins!

**This is loving to neighbor because** the more Christians in the world, the better for everyone.

**This is glorifying to God because** it shines forth His marvelous grace in taking a wicked rebel and turning them into a willing saint!

#### **II) Lord, Kill them!**

**This is loving to the wicked because** it will lesson their punishment by the Lord taking them out now and not letting them store up even more wrath for the day of judgement!

**This is loving to neighbor because** the more wicked there are in the world, the worse for everyone; the less wicked the better for everyone.

**This is loving to God because** His righteous judgement is shone forth and He is seen as He is—the righteous judge who will always do carry out necessary vengeance!

### **III) Lord, Thwart them!**

**This is loving to the wicked because** the Lord will keep them from doing even more evil and storing up even more wrath against themselves because of heinous and grievous sins.

**This is loving to neighbor because** the wicked do great harm to others and need to be thwarted from their devices.

**This is loving to God because** it shines forth His wise providence in thwarting and confusing the plans of the wicked so that Christ's Kingdom will spread and His glory cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

## **II. IT IS VIRTUOUS TO SEPARATE FROM THE WICKED** (Psalm 139:19b).

### **Psalm 139:19b**

"O men of blood, depart from me!"

**BOYS AND GIRLS**, your best friends must be Christians. People who very clearly love Jesus and want to live for Jesus. You should have no close friends who are unbelievers, and you should have no fellowship with those who hate Jesus.

**POOLE**: "[David is saying] I renounce your friendship and society. I will not partake with you in your sins, lest I should also partake of your plagues." — **Poole, Matthew. English Annotations on the Holy Bible . E4 Group. Kindle Edition.**

**PLUMER**: "We must either break with sinners, or perish with them (Psalm 139:19)." — **Plumer, William Swan. Studies in the Book of Psalms (p. 2114). Counted Faithful. Kindle Edition.**

## **III. THE WICKED WHO ARE PRAYED AGAINST AND SEPARATED FROM** (Psalm 139:19b-21):

**I)** The wicked who are prayed against and separated from are **Men of Blood** (Psalm 139:19b).

### **Psalm 139:19b**

"O men of blood, depart from me!"

**II) The wicked who are prayed against and separated from  
Speak against the Lord in order to slander Him (Psalm 139:20a).**

### **Psalm 139:20a**

"They speak against you with malicious intent;"

**CALVIN:** "He intimates the extent to which the wicked proceed when God spares them, and forbears to visit them with vengeance. They not merely conclude that they may perpetrate any crime with impunity, but openly blaspheme their Judge. He takes notice of their speaking wickedly, in the sense of their taking no pains to disguise their sin under plausible pretences, as persons who have some shame remaining will exercise a certain restraint upon their language, but they make no secret of the contempt they entertain for God." — **Calvin, John. Calvin On The Bible: John Calvin's Bible Commentary (pp. 4333-4334). Kindle Edition.**

**III) The wicked who are prayed against and separated from  
Take the Lord's name in vain (Psalm 139:20b).**

### **Psalm 139:20b**

"your enemies take your name in vain."

**IV) The wicked who are prayed against and separated from  
Hate the Lord (Psalm 139:21a).**

### **Psalm 139:21a**

"Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD?"

**V) The wicked who are prayed against and separated from  
Rise up against the Lord (Psalm 139:21b).**

### **Psalm 139:21b**

"And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?"

## **IV. VIRTUOUS RESPONSES TO THE WICKED (Psalm 139:21-22):**

**I) Hatred is a virtuous response to the wicked (Psalm 139:21a).**

### **Psalm 139:21a**

"Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD?"

**POOLE:** "I appeal to thee, the omnipresent and omniscient God, whether I do

not perfectly hate them so far as they are enemies to God and goodness." —  
**Poole, Matthew. English Annotations on the Holy Bible . E4 Group. Kindle Edition.**

See the practice hereof in Elisha, when God delivered them into his hands, that sought his life, he brought them to Samaria; and when the king of Israel would have slain them, he forbade him; nay, he caused the king to refresh them with bread and water, and so sent them to their own master [2 Kings 6:14, 19, 21]. For *praying for our enemies*, we have the example of the prophets, of our Savior Christ [Luke 23:34], and of Stephen, who prayed for those that put him to death [Acts 7:60].

*Objection 1.* It will be said, the Scripture elsewhere seems to make against this: "Do not I hate them, O Lord (says David), that hate thee; and do I not earnestly contend with them, that rise up against thee? I hate them with an unfeigned hatred" (Ps. 139:21–22).<sup>347</sup> Whereby it seems that in some cases a man may hate his enemies. *Answer.* First, we must put a difference between our enemy's cause, and his person. Their evil causes and their sins must be hated, and we must give no approbation thereto, but yet their persons being God's creatures, and bearing His image in some sort, must be loved. Again, enemies be of two sorts: private and public. A private enemy is he that hates a man for some private cause in himself, or concerning his affairs; and such a one we must love and not hate, as Christ here commands. A public enemy is he that hates a man for God's cause, for religion and the gospel's sake, and these public enemies be of two sorts: curable and incurable. If our public enemies be curable, we must pray for their conversion, hating their conditions. If they be incurable, and we have plain signs of their final impenitence, then we may hate them, for so we hate the devil. So Paul says, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus, Anathema, Maranatha, let him be finally and wholly accursed" [1 Cor. 16:22]. And yet this we must know, that we ought to direct our hatred to their sins, and for their sins hate their persons, and no otherwise. Now David in that Psalm, speaks not of private, but of public enemies, who hated not only him, but God also in His religion, and were also incurable.

*Objection 2.* But the practice of God's children seems to be otherwise, for David often curses his enemies, and prays for the destruction of them and theirs (Ps. 109:6, 9–10). And Peter wishes that Simon Magus "may perish with his money" [Acts 8:20]; and Paul prays the Lord "to reward Alexander the coppersmith according to his doings" (2 Tim. 4:14). How can this stand with the text? *Answer.* There be divers interpretations of these facts. Some say

<sup>347</sup> In the margin of the old edition of this book.

**GILL:** "Wicked men are haters of God; of his word, both law and Gospel; of his ordinances, ways, and worship; of his people, cause, and interest; and therefore good men hate them: not as men, as the creatures of God, and as

their fellow creatures, whom they are taught by the Gospel to love, to do good unto, and pray for; but as haters of God, and because they are so; not their persons, but their works." — **Gill, John. Gill's Bible Commentary . OSNOVA. Kindle Edition.**

## **II) Loathing is a virtuous response to the wicked (Psalm 139:21b).**

### **Psalm 139:21b**

"And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?" (*Loathe = intense dislike and disgust*)

**POOLE:** "[I loathe those who] rise up against thee, in open hostility and rebellion against thine authority." — **Poole, Matthew. English Annotations on the Holy Bible . E4 Group. Kindle Edition.**

**CALVIN:** "We thus see that he stood forward strenuously in defense of the glory of God, regardless of the hatred of the whole world, and waged war with all the workers of iniquity." — **Calvin, John. Calvin On The Bible: John Calvin's Bible Commentary (p. 4335). Kindle Edition.**

## **III) Complete Hatred is a virtuous response to the wicked (Psalm 139:22a).**

### **Psalm 139:22a**

"I hate them with complete hatred;"

**CALVIN:** "David's example should teach us to rise with a lofty and bold spirit above all regard to the enmity of the wicked, when the question concerns the honor of God, and rather to renounce all earthly friendships than falsely pander with flattery to the favor of those who do everything to draw down upon themselves the divine displeasure. We have the more need to attend to this, because the keen sense we have of what concerns our private interest, honor, and convenience, makes us never hesitate to engage in contest when any one injures ourselves, while we are abundantly timid and cowardly in defending the glory of God. Thus, as each of us studies his own interest and advantage, the only thing which incites us to contention, strife, and war, is a desire to avenge our private wrongs; none is affected when the majesty of God is outraged. On the other hand, it is a proof of our having a fervent zeal for God when we have the magnanimity to declare irreconcilable war with the wicked and them who hate God, rather than court their favor at the expense of alienating the divine layout.

We are to observe, however, that the hatred of which the Psalmist speaks is directed to the sins rather than the persons of the wicked. We are, so far as lies in us, to study peace with all men; we are to seek the good of all, and, if possible, they are to be reclaimed by kindness and good offices: only so far as they are enemies to God we must strenuously confront their resentment." —

[\*\*Calvin, John. Calvin On The Bible: John Calvin's Bible Commentary \(pp. 4335-4336\). Kindle Edition.\*\*](#)

**IV) Contrariness is a virtuous response to the wicked** (Psalm 139:22b).

**Psalm 139:22b**

"I count them my enemies."

[\*\*PLUMER:\*\* "God's people willingly make common cause with him, verses 21, 22. His law is their law; his will is their will; his friends are their friends; his enemies are their enemies." — Plumer, William Swan. \*\*Studies in the Book of Psalms \(p. 2114\). Counted Faithful. Kindle Edition.\*\*](#)

[\*\*PLUMER:\*\* "But in our hatred of sin we should carefully guard against all malice, all private pique, all personal enmity, and abhor the characters of the wicked only as they are abhorrent to God, verses 21, 22. Morison: "Even our very condemnation of what is evil requires to be tested. Does it spring from love to God? from hatred of sin? from attachment to holiness? from a desire not to countenance evil? or does it spring from ostentation? – from censorious feeling? – from hypocritical pretence? from a desire to please certain of our fellow-creatures?"" — Plumer, William Swan. \*\*Studies in the Book of Psalms \(p. 2114\). Counted Faithful. Kindle Edition.\*\*](#)

[\*\*HENRY:\*\* "Note, Sin is hated, and sinners are lamented, by all that fear God. "I hate them" \(that is, "I hate the work of them that turn aside," as he explains himself, Ps. 101:3\) "with a sincere and perfect hatred; I count those that are enemies to God as enemies to me, and will not have any intimacy with them," Ps. 69:8." — Henry, Matthew. \*\*Unabridged Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible \(best navigation\) . OSNOVA. Kindle Edition.\*\*](#)

**V. VIRTUOUS PETITIONS TO KEEP SAFE WHILE WIELDING THE CHRISTIAN VIRTUE OF HATE** (Psalm 139:23-24).

**I) Search me, O God, and know my heart** (Psalm 139:23a).

**Psalm 139:23a**

"Search me, O God, and know my heart!"

**II) Test or purify me and know my thoughts** (Psalm 139:23b).

**Psalm 139:23b**

"Try me and know my thoughts!"

**III) See if there be any grievous way in me** (Psalm 139:24a).

**Psalm 139:24a**

"And see if there be any grievous way in me,"

**IV) Lead me in the way everlasting (Psalm 139:24b).**

**Psalm 139:24b**

"and lead me in the way everlasting!"

## Conclusion.

**THE WAY EVERLASTING IS ONLY THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.**

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## PURITAN QUOTES

**DAVID DICKSON:** "When we have a controversy with the wicked we should take heed that private spleen do not rule us, but that only our interest in God's quarrel with them doth move us, as the Psalmist doth here." — **David Dickson, via Spurgeon's The Treasury of David**

**DAVID CLARKSON:** "To pray that God would break the power of those who obstinately defy His gospel is a duty, not of malice, but of love to His name and His church, provided we submit all to His sovereign will." —**Clarkson, David. *The Practical Works of David Clarkson*, vol. 2. 1680. Reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1988, 156.**

**JOHN COTTON:** "When we cry to God against the wicked who persecute His truth, we do not pray for their destruction as men, but that their evil designs be confounded, and God's justice magnified, whether by their conversion or their judgment." — **Cotton, John. *An Exposition Upon the Thirteenth Chapter of the Revelation*. 1655. Reprint, London: The Baptist Standard Bearer, 2001, 204.**

**SAMUEL RUTHERFORD:** "It is no sin to pray that God would manifest His glory by cutting off the incorrigible enemies of His truth, so long as we leave the manner and time to His sovereign will." — **Rutherford, Samuel. *Letters of Samuel Rutherford*. 1664. Reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1984, 392.**

**JOHN FLAVEL:** "When the godly see the incorrigible enemies of Christ's kingdom prosper in their wickedness, they may lawfully pray that God would arise and plead His own cause, leaving the manner of His judgment to His infinite wisdom." — **Flavel, John. *The Fountain of Life Opened Up: Or, A Display of Christ in His***

*Essential and Mediatorial Glory. In The Works of John Flavel, vol. 1. 1671.*  
Reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1968, 312.

**THOMAS MANTON:** "In praying the imprecatory psalms, we do not curse men with a private spirit of revenge, but commit the cause of God's church to His righteous judgment, desiring that His glory be vindicated against those who obstinately oppose His truth." — *Manton, Thomas. An Exposition of the Book of Psalms. In The Works of Thomas Manton, vol. 1. 1678.* Reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1990, 245.

**WILLIAM GOUGE:** "It is no breach of charity to pray against the enemies of God's church when their hearts are hardened in malice, so long as we seek not their personal ruin but the advancement of God's kingdom and the restraint of their evil." — *Gouge, William. A Commentary on the Whole Epistle to the Hebrews. 1655.* Reprint, Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1866, 389.

**MATTHEW HENRY:** "In praying the imprecatory psalms, we must beware of a carnal spirit; our prayers must aim at God's glory, desiring that He would either turn the hearts of the wicked or restrain their wickedness, according to His righteous pleasure." — *Henry, Matthew. A Commentary on the Psalms. In Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible, vol. 3. 1708–1710.* Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991, 524.

**TRAPP:** "As unskilful hunters, shooting at wild beasts, kill a man sometimes, so while men shoot at Christians, they hit Christ." — *Trapp, John. John Trapp's Complete Bible Commentary (p. 7406). Kindle Edition.*

**WATSON.** "Anger is without sin when it is against sin!" — Thomas Watson

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## STUDY AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Introduction and Context

- 1. Comprehension:** The sermon opens by describing a spiritual and physical war between Christians and the wicked. According to 1 Peter 4:4 and 5:8, how do the wicked and the devil respond to believers? How does the sermon contrast the "sluggard" with the vigilant Christian in recognizing this threat?
- 2. Interpretation:** Jesus commands us to "love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us" (Matthew 5:43-44), yet Psalm 139:19 prays for God to "slay the wicked." How does the sermon reconcile these ideas? What does this reveal about the nature of biblical prayer?
- 3. Discussion:** In the introduction, the preacher states, "Many of the wicked

in your nation want you dead or would openly celebrate your death." How does this resonate with current events or personal experiences? Share examples from history or today where believers faced hatred for following Christ.

#### **Doctrine: It Is a Christian Virtue to Hate the Wicked Because of Love for the Lord and His Glory**

4. **Application:** If hating the wicked is a virtue tied to love for God, how might this change the way you view emotions like anger or disgust toward sin? Use Psalm 139:21 as a reference.

#### **I. It Is Virtuous to Pray Against the Wicked, Even for the Lord to Slay Them (Psalm 139:19a)**

5. **Comprehension:** The sermon addresses an objection that praying for the wicked's downfall seems un-Christlike, citing examples from John the Baptist (Matthew 3:7), Jesus (Matthew 23:33), and Paul (Acts 13:8-12). What do these passages show about how New Testament figures confronted evil?

6. **Interpretation:** Thomas Manton clarifies that imprecatory prayers like Psalm 139:19 are not vengeful but commit the church's cause to God's judgment for His glory. How does this distinction guard against personal revenge? Reference Romans 12:19 for support.

7. **Application:** The sermon outlines three ways God "slays" the wicked: by regenerating them (e.g., Paul in Acts 8:3), throwing them into confusion (Exodus 23:27), or casting them into eternal death (Numbers 16:31-35; Acts 12:21-24). For each, discuss a modern example and pray one of the three exhortations: "Lord, convert them!"; "Lord, kill them!"; or "Lord, thwart them!" How do these prayers show love to the wicked, neighbors, and God (Isaiah 26:9)?

8. **Gospel Connection:** The sermon inserts a "GOSPEL" note after examples of conversion. Why is the story of Paul's transformation (Acts 8:3; 1 Timothy 1:13-15) or Nebuchadnezzar's humbling (Daniel 4:34-37) good news? How does it illustrate God's mercy amid judgment?

#### **II. It Is Virtuous to Separate from the Wicked (Psalm 139:19b)**

9. **Application:** Drawing from Matthew Poole and William Plumer, the sermon warns, "We must either break with sinners, or perish with them." What does "separation" look like in daily life—e.g., friendships, media, or work? How can you maintain Jesus' call to love enemies (Matthew 5:44) while avoiding close fellowship with unbelievers?

#### **III. The Wicked Who Are Prayed Against and Separated From (Psalm**

## 139:19b-21)

10. **Interpretation:** List the five characteristics of the wicked from verses 19b-21 (men of blood, speak against God maliciously, take His name in vain, hate the Lord, rise up against Him). Using John Calvin's commentary on verse 20a, why do the wicked grow bolder when God delays judgment? How does this mirror patterns in society today?

## IV. Virtuous Responses to the Wicked (Psalm 139:21-22)

11. **Comprehension:** The sermon describes four virtuous responses: hatred (v. 21a), loathing (v. 21b), complete hatred (v. 22a), and contrariness (v. 22b). According to John Gill and Matthew Henry, this hatred targets sins and works, not persons. How does Calvin's explanation in verse 22a emphasize zeal for God's glory over personal interest?

12. **Discussion:** Plumer warns against letting hatred stem from "malice, private pique, or personal enmity." Share a time when your disapproval of sin felt virtuous versus self-serving. How can we "test" our responses, as Morison suggests, to ensure they spring from love for God and holiness?

## V. Virtuous Petitions to Keep Safe While Wielding the Christian Virtue of Hate (Psalm 139:23-24)

13. **Application:** David's petitions—"Search me... know my heart... try me... know my thoughts... see if there be any grievous way... lead me in the way everlasting"—follow his strong words against the wicked. Why is self-examination essential before (or alongside) confronting evil? How might ignoring this lead to sin?

14. **Interpretation:** Connect verse 24b to the sermon's conclusion: "The way everlasting is only through Jesus Christ" (John 14:6). How does Christ's omniscience (as praised in earlier verses of Psalm 139) assure us that He leads us safely in this "war"?

## Overall Reflection and Conclusion

15. **Discussion:** The doctrine states that hating the wicked glorifies God. In a culture that often equates hate with immorality, how can believers articulate this virtue biblically? What one action (prayer, separation, response, or petition) will you commit to this week? Pray together using Psalm 139:23-24.

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## SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Christians, those who do not love Christ will not love you, nor will they seek your

best interests. Actually, those who do not love Christ will more often than not just be indifferent towards you. They won't just be unloving. More often than not, those who do not love Christ will hate you. They will hate you. They will seek your shame and seek your downfall. Peter says in 1 Peter 4:4, "The wicked are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery and they malign you. They hate the fact that you don't join them in their wickedness." Believers, the wicked are at war with you. You may not feel as though you are at war with the wicked or wickedness. You may not feel like you are. They're at war with you. You should be at war with them and their wicked influences. Now, this war is primarily spiritual. Not talking about going and getting your guns and trying to kill people who aren't Christians. I'm not talking about that. Talking about a spiritual battle, primarily spiritual. We don't take up arms in order to do vigilanteism or anything like that. But they are at war with you and they don't play by those rules. They will take up arms to kill you. So you need to actually be prepared because the wicked hate you and you need to be prepared to defend yourself and your family and other people. I mean you know this by experience just with something that happened the last few weeks. You need to know Christians, many of the wicked in your nation not only want you dead, but would celebrate it if you were murdered. They want you dead. There were hundreds of thousands of people who celebrated Charlie Kirk getting shot in the neck in a public setting, getting murdered in cold blood in front of thousands of people. I'm sure you've seen it if you've been paying attention, but many people have been fired because they celebrated it. And you might be like me and think I'm way to the right of Charlie Kirk. Like Charlie Kirk was a moderate and they killed him for it. They not only killed him for it, but then many people celebrated the fact that he was murdered. Some went further than that and said, "We need to get his wife next. murder her so that their children can be taken away and raised by someone else. You need to know that it's there are people who hate you. They hate what you believe. If you if you're confused about that at all, just go and look at what Charlie Kirk believed about like homosexuality. Pretty standard basic not what the young people would call based. Just pretty standard basic conservative Christian general position. He had gay people who worked for him at TPUSA. Like they hired gay people. Like he was not some kind of crazy extremist with really far-right views. No. Um he had pretty moderate views, just basic Christian views on a lot of things and they murdered him for it. He was a moderate and they shot him in the neck in public. So you need to know those who don't love Christ, they're not going to love you. They're not going to seek your best interest. And many, especially even in our day, they will hate you and they even celebrate you getting murdered. The devil and his confederates are smarter than you, stronger than you, and always searching for ways to bring you down. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 1 Peter 5:8. So you must not be thinking you're able to stroll through life as if he were not a threat to you, Christian. He's a threat to you because you're a threat to him. If you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, he has enlisted you in his army. He's made you alive together with him. You're a part of his kingdom. You are an

ambassador of Christ. You are someone who believes the law of God, teaches the law of God, proclaims the gospel of God, tells sinners they need to turn from their sin and cling to the son of God or they're going to be judged for their sin.

How should we think and act concerning those who hate us and hate our Christ? How should we think and act concerning those who hate us and hate our Christ? Now, admittedly, this sermon is something of what I what I would think of as a correction and the thinking of modern evangelicals in the West. How should we think about the wicked that hate us, that want us dead, celebrate us dead? Well, sadly, the evangelical church in the West has been led by such effeminate men for so long that the only thing Christians think of, I think, immediately is, well, how should we think about the wicked? It's like, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. And that's all anybody thinks. So this is by admission a correction in that not to say we don't do that but just to say that's not the totality of what God says in his word concerning how we should think about the wicked. How should we should pray about the wicked and what we should do about the wicked? How should we think and act concerning those who hate us and hate our Christ? Well, absolutely. Matthew 5:43 and 44. Christ in his sermon on the mount says, "You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." Now, this hate that Christ is speaking of here and is correcting them of, this is a what we call a malicious hatred. I hate, you've heard, they had heard from the Pharisees that anybody who you don't like, you can hate them maliciously. So, love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But Christ says, "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. Okay. What are we to pray? Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. What should we pray when it comes to our enemies? There are a lot of a lot of things that you can glean from the scriptures about how to pray for your enemies. One would be Steven being martyred in the book of Acts. They're throwing stones at him until he dies and he prays, "Father, forgive them." Like, well, that's obviously an example of scripture that's good to pray that for your enemies, that they would be converted, that they'd be saved. But another thing that you can and should pray concerning your enemies that is not inconsistent with what Christ says in Matthew 5:43 and 44 is verse 19 in Psalm 139. Look at it.

Oh that you would slay the wicked, oh God.

That is the word of the Lord from a prophet of the Lord who is the king of the Lord's people at this time. Oh that you would slay the wicked, you would destroy the wicked, stop the wicked, oh God. Now look back at the beginning of Psalm 139 that we're drawing our attention to verses 19- 24. But look at it. It says at the beginning to the choir master a psalm of David. So David is the one who's writing it. And you need to know that this is a song of God's omniscience that God has all knowledge. He knows everything. That's what the whole psalm is about. And I'm

sure you're familiar with this psalm because this is like the prolife psalm. You know, I'm fearfully and wonderfully made, knit together in my mother's womb, all of that. But it's really just a psalm of God's omniscience and praising God, celebrating God, but the fact that he knows everything. He is everywhere. All of it. All of it is there. Just look at it with me. But I want you to get the flow of it so that when we come to verse 19, you can go, I think, as you should, if you're familiar with Psalm 139, you're going to get to verse 19 and go, that seems like a really strange thing in this psalm. Like, this is the psalm they preach on sanctity of life Sunday. I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Like, we make children's songs about Psalm 139. And then all of a sudden, if you keep reading, you get to verse 19 and you go, "What? Kill the wicked. I hate them with a complete hatred." Okay. So, what's David doing? Look at it with me. Oh Lord, you have searched me and known me. There's this omniscience. He knows everything. Know's David personally. You know when I sit down and when I rise up. You discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue. Behold, oh Lord, you know it all together. You hem me in behind and before and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is high. I cannot attain it. Where shall I go from your spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there. If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth, even there your hand shall lead me and your right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me be night. Even the darkness is not dark to you. The night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you. For you formed my inward parts. You knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works. My soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance. in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as of yet there was none of them. How precious to me are your thoughts, oh God. How vast is the sum of them. If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake and I am still with you. Super pleasant, isn't it? Why does David turn? It seems like, dude, you shifted from first gear to fifth gear. Why did you do that? The whole thing is about omniscience. God, you know everything. You know my thoughts everywhere I can go. You're there. You hold me. You take care of me. You know what I'm thinking. You know what I'm feeling. And David then in verses 19 really until the end until he returns to search me, oh God. So 19- 22, David is vindicating himself saying, God, you know my thoughts and you know they are pure. You know that I hate the wicked and I want them destroyed. David is not confessing that he has a hatred for those who hate God. David is vindicating himself saying, "God, you know my thoughts. Verify that my thoughts are right." David is saying, "If I dared not to hate the wicked, I would be wrong. But Lord, vindicate me. Lord, you know, you know that I hate the wicked. It's the same thing, but the opposite of when Jesus comes to Peter after the resurrection, after Peter had denied him three

times, and Jesus comes to him and says, "Peter, do you love me?" What does Peter say? Lord, you know that I love you. You know that I love you. David is saying to vindicate his virtue when it comes to how he should think and act about the wicked. Says, 'Lord, you know, look at it. Oh, that you would slay the wicked. Oh men of blood, depart from me. They speak against you with malicious intent. Your enemies take your name in vain. Do I not hate those who hate you, oh Lord?

Lord, you know, you know that I have the Christian virtue of hate. Hating the proper things in the proper way, not whatever you may fill in with hate. But David is saying, Lord, you know, oh Lord, do I not hate those who hate you, and do I not loathe those who rise up against you? David's vindicating himself and showing us one of the things revealed in scripture. Not the totality of it, but one of the things revealed in scripture as to how we should think and feel and act about those who hate Christ and hate his people.

The doctrine that you should learn from these verses is this. It is a Christian virtue to hate the wicked because of love for the Lord and his glory. It is a Christian virtue to hate the wicked because of love for the Lord and his glory. Now, don't check out on me. Don't misunderstand me. I'm going to clarify that whole thing. That's the doctrinal summary. And I have chosen not to add caveats into our doctrinal summary. Why? Because that's how God reveals himself in scripture. God doesn't add caveats all the time because it's like, "Oh, you might misunderstand me." It's like, "No, I'm speaking a general truth and you need to understand it." Just as David speaks a general truth when he says, "Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord?" I'm not going to try to soften the doctrinal understanding of that. When God says that, we do need to labor to understand it what that does mean and doesn't mean, but we're not going to qualify everything to death and miss. Something that we, I think, especially in our day, need to recover. It is a Christian virtue to hate the wicked because of love for the Lord and his glory. It is not a Christian virtue to hate the wicked just to hate the wicked. are just because you don't like them. David's whole point in this portion of the psalm is, I hate those who hate you. I hate those who speak maliciously against you, Lord. It's because the wicked are tearing at the Lord's glory and trying to dethrone the Lord if they could that David says, "That is why I have this utter detestation and disgust for them." It's not because David's saying, "I hate the wicked because they're mean to me. I hate the wicked because they tank the economy." Like, no, I hate the wicked because they hate the Lord and seek to dethrone him. So, it is a Christian virtue to hate the wicked because of love for the Lord and his glory. Now, let's see what we should learn specifically from these verses. Look at the first part of verse 19 and see this. Oh, that you would slay the wicked, oh God. That's a petition. That's a prayer. And it is a virtuous prayer.

It is a ver it is virtuous to pray against the wicked, even for the Lord to take them out. It is a virtuous thing, a virtuous prayer to pray against the wicked, even for the

Lord to slay them. That's how David puts it. Oh, that you would slay the wicked, oh God. William S. Plumer points out, "They are enemies of God by wicked works, and God is their enemy by righteous indignation. and God will fight against them and slay them all." They have made themselves enemies of God by wicked works and God is their enemy by righteous indignation. He will fight against them and slay them all. Now, one objection could be that does not seem very Christlike. Is that an objection that you could imagine having or imagine hearing? Oh Lord, slay the wicked. How about John the Baptist in Matthew 3:7? How about how he spoke? When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers? Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

How about Christ in Matthew 23:33? You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? He pronounces curses on them in Matthew 23, speaking to the Pharisees, his chief critics and his chief enemies in his incarnation. How about Paul in Cyprus in Acts 13:8-12? Paul is in Cyprus with Barnabas trying to proclaim the gospel to the proconsul there. And this is what we read starting in verse 8. But Elymas the magician for that is the meaning of his name opposed them. Paul and Barnabas seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. So, here's someone opposing the Lord's people and opposing the Lord himself and trying to keep his law and gospel from coming to this proconsul to turn him away from the Christian faith. But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him at Elymas, and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villain, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord?"

And Paul didn't just speak against them. Paul then performed a miracle and blinded him. And now behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time. Immediately mist and darkness fell upon Elymas, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul believed. The proconsul believed when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord. Additionally, looking at Psalm 139:19, oh that you would slay the wicked, oh God, and seeing that it is a virtuous thing to pray against the wicked, even for the Lord to slay them. If you think that is not very Christlike, I think you might just need a better understanding of who Christ is and that David is Christ's David. David belongs to Christ and is filled with the spirit of Christ and is writing the words of Christ in Psalm 139:19. This is God's word sung by God's prophet king who was the most prototypical view of the coming Messiah of Jesus Christ. David that's the guy that most resembles prefigures the Lord Jesus Christ himself. And he says the very word of the Lord. Oh that you would slay the wicked, oh God.

the day that we live in, the time that we live in, the animosity towards basic Christian beliefs, the truths of God, the attacks that come against Christians,

Christians getting murdered in public, all of that kind of stuff. It warrants imprecatory psalms, these kinds of psalms, praying against the wicked. But the clarification needs to be made. And this I'll let Thomas Manton make it because I think he makes it correctly. He says in praying the imprecatory psalms, I mean imprecatory psalms are the psalms like this that are like Lord destroy the wicked, thwart the wicked. In praying the imprecatory psalms, we do not curse men with a private spirit of revenge. But we commit the cause of God's church to his righteous judgment, desiring that his glory be vindicated against those who stubbornly oppose him. Manton makes the good clarification like we all need to make. It's like this is not a private spirit of revenge that David has. This is not cursing men with a private spirit of revenge, but committing the cause of God's church to his righteous judgment. Acting, asking God to act and defend to vindicate his own glory against those who obstinately or stubbornly oppose him, oppose his truth.

It's a virtuous thing to pray against the wicked. Believers, you should pray against the wicked. You should pray that the Lord would slay the wicked. He would overthrow them. He would defeat them. The wonderful thing is the Lord doesn't only slay the wicked one way. Sometimes the Lord slays the wicked by regenerating them unto eternal life. He kills the old man and brings the new man to live to life in Christ. So when we pray for the Lord to slay the wicked, it's not we don't have to just be thinking, I want them dead. Sometimes the Lord slays the wicked by regenerating them. He did it to Paul. He was ravaging the church and entering house after house. He dragged off men and women and committed them to prison. Paul is holding the coats when Stephen is being stoned to death. Stephen prayed as Paul watched him be martyred. Steven prayed that the Lord would forgive them and then a short time later God actually saved Paul. So sometimes God slays the wicked by regenerating them unto eternal life. He did the same thing with Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel. Boys and girls, have you read the book of Daniel before or at least heard some of the stories from Daniel? You might go, "I think so." And then I'm about to tell you one, you're gonna go, "Yep, I know that one." Nebuchadnezzar was a king of Babylon, and he built a 90 foot tall idol and forced everyone in Babylon to bow down and worship it. 90 feet. That's taller than the top of our roof right there. Big idol. and he forced everyone in Babylon to bow down. We don't know what it was of, but it was probably of him. He probably made this big image and it looked like him because he's the king of Babylon, having everybody bow down to it. Then Daniel's three young friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah refused to bend the knee to this 90 foot tall idol. Do you remember what Nebuchadnezzar did to them? Anybody remember when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego Clark? What did he do? He put That's Nebuchadnezzar. 90 foot tall idol. Everyone must worship it. You don't worship it. Fire. A little while later, the Lord saved him. The Lord converted him. He humbled him to the dirt and then he saved him. So the Lord sometimes takes people like Paul who are ravaging the church, participating in the murder of Christians even

and God slays them through killing the old man of sin and raising them up to be a Christian. He did it with Nebuchadnezzar. He did it with Paul. He's done it with millions. Millions. This is the wonderful news of the gospel that God has better ways of defeating his enemies than you and I. We can't defeat our enemies by converting them because you and I can't convert anyone. Our nation state can't defeat the enemies of the United States by converting them because they don't have the power to give people new life, to change their natures, to give them a heart of flesh rather than a heart of stone. But the Lord Jesus Christ is such a great conqueror that he has multiple ways he can slay the wicked. And one of them, the preferable one is that he would convert them so that those who used to oppose him and his people would meet the Lord Jesus Christ and have new life. Christ lived without sin so that people like Nebuchadnezzar who used to live in wicked idolatry and try to murder believers so that guys like that could be saved and counted righteous. Christ went to the cross and paid for the sins of all who will come to him in faith so that people like Paul who murdered Christians would then later be in heaven with people that he murdered. Can you imagine Paul being in heaven with Steven or with the other people that he had imprisoned or that he participated in their murder? As the meme has even gone, that's how the gospel works. Paul entered heaven to the cheers of those that he had persecuted and killed. That's how the gospel works. That's what Christ does. And so sometimes Christ slays the wicked like that. But sometimes the Lord slays the wicked, defeats the wicked by throwing them into confusion so that they are just no longer a threat. No longer a threat to the godly. Exodus 23:27, "I will send my terror before you and will throw into confusion all the people against you whom you shall come and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you." So this is the general principle of the Lord defeats his enemies or slays the wicked. Sometimes through converting them, sometimes through thwarting them, confusing them, making them of no consequence, and they're not going to hurt the wicked. He did this for a season against Nebuchadnezzar before he converted Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar's persecuting believers and then the Lord's like, "Oh yeah, watch this." And then Nebuchadnezzar ate grass for four years and was out of his mind. So the Lord thwarted him for that time and then after that converted him. So sometimes the Lord just thwarts his enemies. He throws them into confusion so that they turn their backs to you. So that they're of no threat to the Lord's cause and the Lord's people. But sometimes the Lord slays the wicked by actually slaying them, by killing them and throwing them down into eternal death. Sometimes the Lord does this to whole groups like he did in Numbers 16 with Kora's rebellion. the earth opened up and swallowed them. He does it to a whole group of people sometimes immediately takes out the wicked. Sometimes he does it to individuals like he did with King Herod when Herod stood up, put on his purple robes or his royal robes rather, took his seat upon the throne, delivered an oration to the people and the people were shouting the voice of a god and not of a man. Boys and girls, have you heard that story? Herod in the book of Acts, Herod is the king of an area. He sits down on his throne, gives a speech, and the people think

it's so great that they say the voice of a god and not of a man. It's like he's like God. You know what happens, boys and girls? An angel immediately struck him dead. God sent one of his angels and killed Herod because Herod did not give glory to God.

So sometimes the Lord defeats groups like in Kora's rebellion, sometimes individuals like Herod. Sometimes he does slay the wicked by throwing them down unto eternal death. Sometimes just by thwarting them, confusing them so that they're of no effect. Sometimes by converting them. But why

why is it virtuous to pray against the wicked even perhaps for their even you include like perhaps kill them Lord? Why is that a virtuous thing to do? Because it glorifies the Lord to judge the wicked and it teaches the world righteousness. When God kills the wicked, when God struck through his angel struck Herod dead, it vindicates the Lord's justice and judgment and it teaches the whole world righteousness when God executes his judgment. The reason I say that is because God says that in Isaiah 26:9 that when God slays the wicked in the sense that he kills them like Herod takes them out, his judgment is executed immediately. Not just waiting for the final judgment, but he executes his judgment in the here and the now. Isaiah 26:9 says, "When your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness."

You learn righteousness when someone doesn't give glory to God like Herod. People say the voice of a God and not of a man and Herod won't give glory to God and then God kills him. Think that teaches people anything? Yeah. It teaches the world what is right, which is to always give glory to God. So verse 19, oh that you would slay the wicked, oh God, it's a virtuous thing to pray. And so I want to give you three simple exhortations and an explanation to help you think through them. Pray these three things concerning the wicked. These three things concerning the wicked.

Lord, convert them. Lord, convert them. Save them. Regenerate them like you did with Nebuchadnezzar. Like you did with Paul. Lord, convert them. This is loving to the wicked because they will be united to Christ and forgiven of all their sins. This is loving to your neighbor because the more Christians in the world, the better for everyone. This is glorifying and loving to God because it shines forth God's marvelous grace in taking a wicked rebel and turning them into a willing saint. So Lord, convert them. That is a thing that loves the wicked, a thing that loves neighbor and a thing that loves God to pray for that. So pray Lord convert them. Also pray Lord kill them. convert them or kill them.

To pray, Lord, save them from their sins or slay them, is a loving thing to pray for the wicked. That is a loving thing to pray for the wicked because it will lessen their punishment by the Lord taking them out now and not letting them store up even

more wrath by their wickedness for the day of judgment. Every day the wicked rebels against the Lord. Romans 2 says they are storing up more and more and more and more wrath for the day of judgment. Hell will not be the same for everyone. Hell will be far worse for some and far lighter for others. It is a loving thing to pray, "Lord, please save them or take them out." It's a loving thing even for the wicked because it will lessen their punishment by the Lord taking them out now and not letting them store up even more wrath for the day of judgment. It's a loving thing for your neighbor in general because the more wicked there are in the world, the worse for everyone. The less wicked there are in the world, the better for everyone. So asking the Lord to save or slay the wicked is a loving thing for the wicked and for your neighbor. And it's a loving thing to pray towards God for God because his righteous judgment would be shown forth and he is as he is seen as he is the righteous judge who will always carry out necessary vengeance. God is glorified. God is loved. And we pray for him to either save or slay the wicked. A third exhortation, Lord, convert them or kill them or thwart them. Lord, thwart them. That means confuse them. Don't let their wicked plans work. This is loving to the wicked as well. Because if the Lord thwarts the wicked, it will keep them from doing even more evil and storing up even more wrath against themselves because of heinous and grievous sins. It's a loving thing to the wicked. It's loving to neighbor because the wicked do great harm to others and need to be thwarted from their devices. And this is a loving thing to pray concerning God. It's loving to God because it shines forth when you pray, "Lord, confuse the wicked. Don't let their plan succeed. Thwart them." That and his answering yes to that. It shows forth his wise providence in governing the world in such a way that the wicked's plans fail and the righteous are protected.

It is a virtuous thing to pray against the wicked. But look next, look at the next part of verse 19 and see it is a it is virtuous to separate from the wicked as well. David not only prays against the wicked but also separates himself from them. He says, "Oh men of blood, depart from me." Men of blood, just violent men, wicked men. Depart from me. It is a virtuous thing. It is a morally good thing to separate from the wicked. Boys and girls, children, your best friends must be Christians. Your close friends must be Christians. And not just say that they're Christians, but people who obviously they do love Jesus and they want to obey Jesus. They want to live for him. Your close friends must be Christians. People who very clearly love and want to live for Christ. You should have no close friends who are unbelievers. That doesn't mean you shouldn't have what we call acquaintances, that you're friendly towards someone. Your close friends have to be believers. No close friends who are unbelievers. And you should have no fellowship at all with those who hate Jesus. No fellowship with the wicked. No fellowship with those who are like they are described here in Psalm 139. adults. I know outside of Christ, all of us are by nature enemies of God. I know that. I know that outside of Christ, all of us are by nature wicked. We're all by nature sinful. But David is talking not just about those who are indifferent. David is talking even more particular particularly about

those who have a rabid hatred for the Lord and for his people. We have to be able to think in categories and make certain distinctions and not just hear the wicked who hate the church and hate Christ and think, "Well, everyone's wicked outside of Christ." Yes, they are. But there are some that are just casually indifferent and there are some that are foaming at the mouth and celebrate when Christians get killed. And there's a difference.

Oh men of blood, depart from me. Adults, the same is true for you. You cannot have any close friends who are unbelievers. Your close friends need to be in Christ.

And you should have no fellowship with those who hate Jesus. Those who stand against him, those who speak against him, those who take his name in vain. You should have no close friends, no friends like that. Look at David's example. Oh men of blood, depart from me. What does he mean by that? Well, look next. Not only is it virtuous to pray against the wicked, it is virtuous to separate from the wicked. And who are these wicked who are prayed against and separated from? Who does he have in mind? Who are the wicked who are prayed against and separated from? That's what we start learning here at that last part of verse 19. Not only does he say, "Depart from me." We've learned from that separate from the wicked, but he calls them men of blood. Violent men. Violent not in the good way that you use violence in order to protect people. You use violence in order to threaten the wicked so that they won't hurt the innocent. Not in that way. But these are bloodthirsty men. So the wicked who are prayed against and separated from are called men of blood. There are also those, look at the first part of verse 20, the wicked who are prayed against and separated from speak against the Lord in order to slander him. They speak against you with malicious intent. David says this is who he has in mind. praying against these people, separating yourself from these people, asking God to save, slay, or thwart these people, those who are men of blood, those who speak against the Lord in order to slander him. That's the whole point. You can't, just so you know, a theological distinction you need to understand is you can't speak against the Lord without slandering him. you can speak against me without slandering me because you speaking against me, I might have done something sinful and so you could speak against me and it wouldn't be slander because it's true. You can't do that to the Lord. So anytime you speak against the Lord, it's doubly evil. You're attacking him and you're slandering him because nothing you ever say against the Lord is actually true that he's ever done or said anything wrong.

The wicked speak against the Lord in order to slander him. They speak against you with malicious intent. Look at the next part of verse 20. Who are these wicked who are prayed against and separated from? Well, there are those who take the Lord's name in vain.

The third commandment is no small matter. I would encourage all of you today and some however much time you get for if you get private worship time on the Lord's day to go and read the catechism questions in the Baptist catechism on the third commandment. Open up the app, go to the website and look at the catechism questions. And then I want you to go look at the catechism questions for the third commandment in the large the Baptist larger catechism that we also have on the app and the website just in light of him saying these are the people that I'm asking the Lord to kill. They break the third commandment. Like what is it to break the third commandment? Is it just saying things like OMG? What is it to take the Lord's name in vain? I think that'd be good for us to think and meditate on. Look at the wickedness of violating the third commandment. Like, well, what what's required and forbidden in the third commandment? Then let's go look and be reminded of that today. The wicked who are prayed against and separated from are those who take the Lord's name in vain. Your enemies take your name in vain. He says, now look at the first part of verse 21. Who are these people? the wicked who are prayed against and separated from. Well, we can learn from the first part of verse 21 at least that they're the ones who hate the Lord.

Hate the Lord. And this is I think distinguished between those who all of us naturally in an unregenerate state by nature are sinners and we all have enmity towards the Lord. We all hate the Lord before God saves us. I don't think David's talking about that. He's talking about those who very obviously and maliciously attack the Lord, hate the Lord's people, want to thwart the Lord and his purposes, and not just common sinners who are just kind of indifferent and just going about their lives. They obviously don't love the Lord and hate the Lord, but not in the same way that David is speaking of here. So, the wicked who are prayed against and separated from are those who hate the Lord. And then the next part of verse 21, it's those also who rise up against the Lord. Do I not loathe those who rise up against you? So these wicked people in David's mind are those who rise up against the Lord, those who hate the Lord, those who break the third commandment, take the Lord's name in vain, those who speak against the Lord in order to slander him, and those who he generally calls men of blood. Those are the wicked who are prayed against and separated from. Now look briefly.

Look at the virtuous responses to the wicked. Keeping in mind the wicked that David has just detailed. Men of blood slander God. Take his name in vain. Hate the Lord. Rise up against the Lord. Look at the virtuous responses to the wicked. Verse 21. Do I not hate those who hate you, oh Lord? That is a virtuous response to the wicked. Hatred is a virtuous response to the wicked. This is not a hatred of malice. This is not a malicious hatred. This is what theologians, and you'll probably just have to look this up and just think about this for a while, too, because our vocabulary in our day is just so bad. This is what theologians call a hatred of complacency. hatred of complacency, which doesn't mean I hate them and I'm devising on how to destroy them and I want to steal from them or I want to that's

not the hatred he's speaking of. He's talking about a hatred of complacency which is an utter disgust of their wickedness, of their hatred for the Lord, of their rising up against the Lord and being prepared to defend the Lord's honor and defend the Lord's people from their evil. It's a hatred of complacency, not a hatred of maliciousness. And we need to have those categories so we can understand how should I think when he says I hate them with a perfect hatred. And then Christ says, do not hate your enemies. Love them. It's like, okay, so are David and Jesus on different pages? No, they're not on different pages. There's just a difference. And Christ correcting the Pharisees who had taught people, you should hate all of your enemies with a hatred of malice. And David is saying, you should hate those who hate the Lord with a hatred of complacency and utter disgust and disdain for them and a desire for them to be overthrown, not by my own personal vengeance, but by the judgment and justice of God. So God slay them. That's the hatred here. Hatred is a virtuous response to the wicked. If you don't hate the wicked in that sense, like do you love Jesus?

If you don't hate the actions of those who murder and martyr Christians, like do you love the Lord? If you don't have a response of hatred for those who take the Lord's name in vain, who lie about the Lord, who try to slander the Lord, like, do you love the Lord? Calvin was fond of saying, "A dog barks when his master is attacked. What kind of coward would you be if you won't defend the Lord when his truth is attacked?" Calvin's right. But that should and I think that's a response of a lot of Christians that I've even seen like since Charlie Kirk's murder is like this the right kind the virtuous kind of hatred. That's good. You don't need to listen to those who would say no, no, no— don't have that. You need to be careful not to have a hatred of malice but you should. It is a virtuous thing to hate the wicked in that sense. David did and prayed for their destruction.

Hatred is a virtuous response to the wicked. Do I not hate those who hate you, oh Lord?

John Gil said, "Wicked men are haters of God, of his word, both law and gospel, of his ordinances, of his ways, of his worship, of his people, of his cause, of his interest. And therefore, good men hate them. They don't hate them as men being created by God. They don't hate them as image bearers of God or their fellow creatures. He says, "But they hate them because they are those who hate God, not their person, but their works."

Loathing is a virtuous response to the wicked. Look at the next part. Do I not loathe those who rise up against you? Loa is this word loathe in the Hebrew is just this intense dislike and disgust. It's not far different from I hate those who hate you. And this hatred of complacency, not a hatred of malice, but the hatred of complacency and lo, they're very close to the same thing. As is often found in the Psalms when the psalmist says the same thing in two different ways. He's saying,

"Do not I hate those who hate you, and do not I loathe those who rise up against you?" an utter dislike and disgust for the wicked. A hatred of complacency for the wicked for not their persons but their works is a virtuous response.

And it's almost like David knows that in our day people and pastors will be so effeminate that they avoid these kind of things or that they'll try to explain away when he says, "I hate those who hate you." It's like David knows that and says, "Did you miss what I said? I hate them with a perfect hatred. Did I stutter?" It's like what David's saying. Look, he repeats it. He doesn't just say, "Don't I hate those who hate you? Don't I loathe those who rise up against you?" He says, "I hate them with a perfect hatred." Complete meaning a complete hatred.

Calvin's commentary on the Psalms is extremely helpful at this point because he guards us from being hypocrites. Calvin, I'll read this quote at length, but I want you to understand the gist of what he's arguing for. He's saying the reason David loathes the wicked, hates the wicked, hates them with a complete hatred, is not because of the attacks that the wicked make against him. It's all about they're trying to steal the Lord's glory and defame the Lord and ruin his name and his reputation. David has like a zealous fire burning in him right now because of the wicked trying to attack the Lord. That's how much David loves the Lord. So, it's the Lord, not himself. Listen, Calvin says, "David's example should teach us to rise with a lofty and bold spirit above all regard to the hatred of the wicked." When the question concerns the honor of God, when the question concerns the honor of God, we should, David's example should teach us to rise with a lofty and bold spirit and rather to renounce all earthly friendships than falsely pander with flattery to the favor of those who do everything to draw down upon themselves the divine displeasure.

Calvin rightly says, "You should learn from David's example. Let goods and kindred go. This mortal life also the body they may kill. The truth abideth still." He's saying when it comes to the honor of God, lose every single friend you've got to. If you need to defend the honor of the Lord Jesus Christ, do not let God be dishonored. rise with a lofty and bold spirit. We have the more need to attend to this, Calvin says, because the keen sense we have of what concerns our private interest, our private honor, our private convenience makes us never hesitate to engage in contest when anyone injures ourselves while we are timid and cowardly in defending the glory of God. Thus, as each of us studies his own interest and advantage, the only thing which incites us to contention, strife, and war is a desire to avenge our private wrongs. None is affected with the majesty of God.

On the other hand, it's a proof of our having fervent zeal for God when we have the magnanimity to declare irreconcilable war with the wicked and them who hate God rather than court their favor at the expense of alienating the divine layout. You know, did you pick up what Calvin's saying? He said, "You get more upset when

someone wrongs you. You're ready to go to war when someone wrongs you. And not when they wrong God. Not when they dishonor God. Not when they blaspheme him. Not when they slander him. Not when they break the third commandment and take his name in vain. Not when they rise up against him. Not when they slay his image bearers as men of blood.

It is a proof of our having fervent zeal for God when we have the magnanimity to declare irreconcilable war with the wicked and them who hate God rather than court their favor at the expense of alienating the divine layout.

Complete hatred is a virtuous response to the wicked for the love of God and for the glory of God. Contrariness is a virtuous response to the wicked. Contrariness being contrary being an enemy, counting them your enemy and God's enemy. Look at the last part of verse 22. He says, "I count them my enemies.

God, how far modern evangelicals are from that. Those who hate the Lord, you've been discipled through things like the Gospel Coalition and Together for the Gospel and a lot of limp-wristed pastors in the last 20 or 30 years. You've basically been discipled to try to do everything you can to get those who hate the Lord to think you're kind of cool.

We're so far from David saying, "No, I count them my enemies. I really I love God to save them, asking God to kill them or at least thwart them. I don't want them to like me. I'm not trying to court their favor. I want what's best for them, but I I'm not trying to win a popularity contest." Contrariness is a virtuous response to the wicked. Now look in closing, look how he finishes out this psalm.

I would hope we understand enough of what he said and then we can have these virtuous petitions at the end.

These are good ways to check yourself and to pray because wielding hatred can be dangerous. You can't give in to malicious hatred. It's got to be according to God's standard. It's got to be according to God's word. It's not according to your own private revenge, but it's according to God's majesty. And so we want to be careful, but don't be so fearful of hate that you ignore the virtue of it.

But pray things like this. Search me, oh God, and know my heart. Try me. That means test me. Purify me and know my thoughts. See if there be any grievous way in me. lead me in the way everlasting. I think that's those are very good verses to end with. Like how should we respond and think about and feel about the wicked? We'll pray for their overthrow that the Lord would slay them, separate from them, know them, know what kind of people he's talking about. What are virtuous responses to them? Well, there we go. We've got that, too. And now what are some virtuous petitions, some prayers to keep safe while wielding the Christian

virtue of hate and make sure that it's the Christian virtue of hate and not the world's distortion of maliciousness. We don't want that.

Lead me in the way everlasting. Beloved, the way everlasting is faith in and obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, who lived without sin, who died even for his enemies, and he who will slay them or save them. Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Trust in him. Pray to him. And may God give us the grace to rightly wield the Christian virtue of hate.

Let's pray.

Our Father, help us to hate what you hate and love what you love.

We ask that you slay the wicked. slay them through saving them by regenerating them, changing them, killing the old man that was dead and sin in Adam and bringing the new man to life in Christ. We ask you to save people like Paul, people like Nebuchadnezzar. Save everyone that's here that is not yet united to Christ. We ask you to save all of our children.

Save the wicked, those who hate you, those who rise up against you. Save them or kill them. So that their judgment would be less so that our neighbors would be loved and so that you would be glorified as you show forth your justice. We ask you, save them, kill them, or thwart them so that their plans, their plots would be totally in vain that would harm the innocent. It would take advantage of the righteous or hurt your people.

Help us to love your honor so much that we will defend you no matter what it costs us personally. Help us to love your glory so much that we would be utterly disgusted by any and all sin, even and especially our own personal sin. Help us to hate our own sin more than we hate anything else.

Help us to learn from your word. Sanctify us in the truth. Your word is truth. Receive everything that we do now for Christ's sake. All of our songs, our prayers, the Lord's supper, our offerings, our fellowship.