



**Sermon Series:** Questionable Cliches, Part 4

**Sermon Title:** "Love the Sinner; Hate the Sin "

**Speaker/ Date:** Reuben Scheeringa, April 25, 2021

### Matthew 5:43-44

“Love the sinner; hate the sin” has scriptural backing as do most Bible clichés. This one is rooted in a truth that is spoken here in Matthew in the sermon on the mount, and in Paul’s letter to the Romans. It is to a specific crowd, with a specific message.

Matthew 5:43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, (ESV)

Romans 12: 9 Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.

Often when we say “I love you, but I hate your sin” we are trying to express God’s grace without diminishing the seriousness of sin. However, what we need to realize, is that many people don’t see sin as sin. They view their sin as “it’s just who I am.” It is part of their identity.

So maybe its time to put this cliché away, and find a way to bring these two extremes together.

**Big Idea: Skip The Cliche, Love The Sinner Just As God Loved Me.**

We get here by answering three questions.

#### 1. Who Are We?

In order to fully appreciate this identity issue, we need to know what we were designed to be. **Genesis 1: 26**

God breathed life into us and we became living souls (**Genesis 2:7**). Not just physical beings, but spiritual beings in the image of our creator. God wasn’t done with just a state of being, He also instilled a state of doing. He put our first parents in the garden to work it, to give life to it, just as he gave life to us. Because giving life brings us joy, because ultimately it bring Him joy. Our very identity was in the **IMAGE OF GOD**.

But then something went horribly wrong.....

## 2. What Is Wrong With Us?

Anyone who says that things are fine, just refuses to face reality. This is the result of what went horribly wrong. Genesis 3 reveals this account of how our first parents fell. Looking for wisdom, they found only nakedness and shame. Sin came into the world, and death by sin. Now understand sin is anything we think, say or do that displeases God. Also, the Bible is clear that we are all sinners. **Romans 3:23**

If we are honest with ourselves are we more likely to use this cliché in response to sins we personally do not struggle with? Is there often a hint of self-righteousness in it? Almost as if we are saying “God may be mildly irritated by my sin, but He is really upset with yours.”

As we wander further from God sin overtakes our souls like a parasite takes over a body. Sin takes our identity, and makes us its own. Sin tells us we are designed to be something we are not. It drains the very life God breathed into us.

## 3. How Can We Be Fixed?

How can we do away with this parasite, how can we find our true image bearing Identity? We have realized money, power, sex, adventure isn't working. So, what does work? Doing good deeds, obeying the right set of laws or commands? Impossible. These things can only lead to two places, Pride, or despair. Pride, because we begin to think about how great we are, and how lowly everyone else is. Despair because we may ultimately come to the conclusion I can't do enough, and give up. So, what is it? What is the secret to restoring our Identity? Its Jesus!

**Romans 5:8, Romans 6:23, Romans 10: 9, Romans 10:13**

Identity restoration lies in Jesus Christ, and Him alone. If we put our faith and trust in Him, we are free from the bondage of sin. We are no longer slaves to that identity, but are now heirs to the throne of God. We are a new creation.

**2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.**

## Discussion Questions:

- What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?
- What do you feel people mean when they are saying love the sinner, hate the sin?
- What parts of this idea are properly rooted in scripture? Give examples.
- What does it look like to you to love the sinner and hate the sin?
- In what ways can this cliché miss the mark or be inappropriately used?
- How can loving the sinner and hating the sin have a positive or negative impact on others accepting the gospel? Explain
- Explain why people try to diminish the seriousness of sin
- How has dismissing sin shaped our society?
- We were created in the image of God. Explain what that means. Explain how that should shape our view of sin.
- Have you ever embraced a sin as “just being who you are”? Explain
- What daily practices can you put in place to remind yourself that your identity is found in Jesus alone?

## BIBLE VERSES

**Matthew 5:43** “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, (ESV)

**Romans 12: 9** Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.

**Genesis 1: 26** Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

**Genesis 2:7** then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

**Romans 3:23** ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

**Romans 5:8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

**Romans 6:23** For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Romans 10: 9** because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

**Romans 10:13** For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

**2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.