

Love vs Hate

1 John 3:11-16

“For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother’s righteous.

Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

“By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

Emotions recap

We are in the second week of a series called Wholly Sanctified. During the next few weeks we will be addressing different emotions and how as spirit filled Christians we understand and live with the emotions that we were created with. If you missed last Sunday you need to go back and listen to that message. It is powerful! Pastor Lance explained that we are made up of Body Soul and Spirit. We will be using a car as a metaphor to understand this.

Your Body = the outside of a car. Paint, bumpers and if you have some tattoos then your car has some pinstriping.

Your Spirit = the engine, the power that makes us go. (God Breathed)

Your Soul or your being = the transmission (where the two meet).

I would like to extend this metaphor a little farther. Emotions are like the lights and gauges on the dash of your car.

Dash lights and gauges tell you about what is going on inside the car, so do emotions inform us on the realities of body, soul and spirit. Emotions can be great indicators of

what is going on “under the hood”. Now cars have gotten really complex lately. Older cars would have one check engine light and maybe a gauge or two. Newer cars can have dozens of lights indicating different things. This also holds true for humans.

Some people tend to be like the old cars. They have one or maybe two emotions and they don't even know what they mean. Some people tend to be like one of these brand new cars with dozens of lights and dials aka lots of emotions. They have deep understanding as to what is going on inside them. Some people aren't sure if they are mad or just hungry. That's what happens when your car only has one check engine light. We call this being “hangry”, You are angry because you are hungry. I have a different version of this, when I get hungry I get sad. My wife knows if I get quiet and sulky I need to eat. Just like with a car there is a proper way to read and understand dash lights, Jesus wants to be our master mechanic and help us understand what is going on inside us.

Jesus wants you to have abundant life! Wholly sanctified!

But we also know that this is a process. It will only end when we are in heaven with Him. Today we are going to talk about the emotions of Hate and Love.

Hate & Love are shown in action.

Hate and Love as emotions are tricky to define. We think of them as feelings. But when we read the bible hate and love are often verbs or actions. How could a feeling be an action?

Vs 16 “By this we know love.” By what? An action.

The action of Jesus laying down his life for us. We know that God is love. Because God IS love this lead him to the action of laying down his life for us. We can't see others emotions and sometimes we can't even make sense of our own but emotions and actions are linked.

The same is true for hate.

Vs 15 “Who ever hates his brother is a murderer.”

This is why God is so concerned with our hearts and our emotions. They will manifest into actions if we don't put them in their proper place by submitting them to the Holy Spirit. Remember last week, before the fall our Souls were oriented this way,

- Mind
- Will
- Emotions

After the fall we are

- Emotions
- Will
- Mind

Now it didn't take long for sin to deeply affect all of humanity. In vs 12 we read that Cain murdered his brother. This is referencing to Genesis chapter 4.

5 "but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. 6 The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? 7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it."

Genesis 4:5-7

We see Cain was very angry. Why? Because his pride was hurt. We know that he was feeling hatred towards his brother. God spoke to Cain, inviting him into intimacy and freedom. Cain had a choice; let the mind rule over his will and let the emotions follow or let the emotions inside him inform his will and let the mind serve the rest.

And this is where we find ourselves every day. In our flesh sin's desire is contrary to you and I. Now, I know what you are thinking right now because it is the same thing I am thinking. I have never murdered anyone, so is this for me? I mean, killing anyone is a hassle and there would be such a mess. Remember that Jesus wants ALL OF YOU! He wants you to be Wholly sanctified! He wants a relationship with you.

Religion tries to control outward actions. Relationship with Jesus changes us at the deepest heart level.

That's why Jesus and John say that if we hate our brother we have murdered him in our hearts.

Most people don't follow hate to murder but hate is still an indicator of brokenness. There are many ways we can experience hate toward others.

Hate defined

I want to take a moment and look at some different shades and hues of hate. Hate is different than anger. This past Wednesday Pastor Lance spoke on anger. Anger and hate can be closely related but not necessarily. Here is one way to understand it. Anger says I dislike what you DID.

Hate says I dislike WHO you are.

hate ;

1 a : intense hostility and aversion usually deriving from fear, anger, or sense of injury

Malice, Rage, Bitterness, LOATHING; are all different forms of hate. But hate doesn't always come served hot. A lesser version of hate is called apathy or lack of care for others.

17 "But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?"

1 John 3:17

This is a classic case of apathy. This brother isn't wishing harm on the brother in need but is shutting his heart. When it comes to Love and Hate there is no middle ground. If everyone is made in the image of God AND Jesus died for the sins of the whole world we as Christians have every reason to love and none to hate. We must remember that every person is made in the image of God if we are to love others. Now you might say, well I am allowed to hate Sin right?? After all in Proverbs **6:16-19**,

16 "There are six things that the LORD hates,

seven that are an abomination to him:

17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue,

and hands that shed innocent blood,
18 a heart that devises wicked plans,
feet that make haste to run to evil,
19 a false witness who breathes out lies,
and one who sows discord among brothers.”

Notice what is the outcome of all of these. They cause pain and trouble to humanity. God hates what hurts the people made in his image. Now God does this perfectly, He hates the pride that I still struggle with but he still loves me perfectly. Us humans aren't so good at this. We have all heard the phrase “love the sinner, hate the sin”. Unfortunately I have seen this used as righteous indignation to cover real hate of others. Remember the story of Zacchaeus the wee little man? Jesus went to his house and everyone was grumbling because Zacchaeus was a notorious sinner. These people considered their dislike of Zacchaeus as righteous Indignation. The next time you find yourself angry or “hating someone's sin” ask yourself why? Are you mad that this person that Jesus died for is getting ripped off by the world? Or are you mad because they are different than you. Jesus sure hated sin. He hated it so much he came down to live with sinful humans and was crucified by them. He hated that they were trapped in sin so he cried out “father forgive them for they don't know what they do”.

This is what love looks like. Love looks like forgiveness and grace. Our world knows little of this love. If you spend more than a second on the internet you see the cultural polarity we live in. Our world promotes this idea of all inclusive love. People these days are very loving towards people who are like them or agree with them. There is a severe lack of love with anyone who disagrees with another person or group. Any disagreement or difference with others is then called hate. And you know who the world says its ok to hate? You can hate haters, because they deserve it right? See, our world is so good at justifying hate towards anyone we disagree with or is other. I see this happening on all sides of almost every issue. What it boils down to is hate is justified when the person deserves it. This is a direct denial of what Jesus did and taught. We are commanded to love our enemies and forgive them. When we try and justify hate we are ignoring that that person is made in God's image and Jesus died for them. We are putting ourselves in God's place and saying “this person isn't worthy of love”. Now we can disagree with someone and still love them. Jesus sure did disagree

with the religious leaders of the day but he never hated them. He would give them signs that he was indeed the Son of God because he wanted them to be free and experience the love of God. Unfortunately you and I are not Jesus. Jesus was tempted in all ways we were without sin.

We are born with a sin nature so we experience hate in many unhealthy ways. We get angry and let our pride flare up and hate others in our hearts. How are we to live wholly sanctified lives?

Emotions = early warning signs

Let's go back to the car metaphor. Hate is like a check engine light. It is informing us that for some reason something is wrong inside of us. Now how silly would it be to cover the check engine light with a bit of tape? You don't keep driving your car around. Eventually it will blow up! We can't go around trying to ignore the feeling but on the other hand we can't let it take control of our lives. When your check engine light goes on you take your car into the shop and have them read a code off the computer. You see there are dozens of sensors that can set off a check engine light. So too are there many reasons for us to hold hate in our hearts. The only way to sort it out in a healthy way is to ask the master mechanic to look under the hood of our lives and discover what is causing the hate. If we look back at Genesis chapter 4 this is what God was inviting Cain into. God knew that Cain knew something was wrong. His pride was hurt and he was experiencing hate. His check engine light was going crazy! Cain could have sat there and said "you're right" and from his own strength kept telling himself "I won't murder my brother, I won't murder my brother". This might have kept him from murdering his brother. Then he would have been back at 1 John 3:15 "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer." Remember Jesus is after our hearts. The best option for Cain would have been to call out to God and say "Yes I am angry and my pride is hurt, I hate my brother! Please help me deal with this". If you have spent any time in the Psalms you know this is exactly how David dealt with hate. David brought his hate before the Lord and asked God to change his heart. David knew that his emotions needed to be subjected to his mind but he also knew that this is impossible without the help of almighty God.

Every emotion is an invitation to intimacy with our God.

I have an anxious mind, I tend to worry about certain things. I have an extremely gracious wife.

She is always kind and caring when I open up to her about something that is bothering me. It's hard at first but when I open up to her about what is bothering me, I experience peace and the joy of intimacy. But I have to respond to the invitation. The same is true with God and every emotion we deal with including hate. All our emotions give us opportunity to draw closer to God. You and I need to keep a close eye on any version of hate in our hearts and quickly bring it to Jesus.

“Keep your heart with all vigilance,
for from it flow the springs of life.”

Proverbs 4:23

Love from God

Now we aren't just looking to remove hate from our lives and remain in some neutral ground. God has called us to love Him and love others, after all, these are the two most important commands. But we can't choose love for love's own sake. Now all humans have a level of love because after all we were created in the image of God. Even evil people are capable of love towards their friends. In fact there are many non christians who love so well. But to have the kind of earth shaking unquenchable love that God desires for us we need to be plugged into God the source of Love. I am talking about the kind of love that says “Father forgive them” as Jesus was being crucified. Just as happiness isn't reachable by aiming for it, so is this divine love. If you sit there and try and will yourself to love someone you will eventually fail. We must be plugged into the author and originator of love if we are to love others. Our love must be based on the truth of Jesus and his work of love.

“ We love because he first loved us.” **1 John 4:19**

The truth of God's love will move you to love. Let's go back to the soul. Because I have placed my faith in Jesus I want to live with my mind feeding my will and my emotions following those. Sometimes we read that verse and we don't feel anything. But that is ok! We aren't letting our emotions drive us. When Jesus was on the cross was he loving us? Yes he was and he was demonstrating it. I don't think he was having warm fuzzy feelings at the time. We know that before Jesus was crucified he was in such deep anguish that he was sweating blood.

But he wasn't letting his emotions drive. He was aware of them and pouring out his hurt to God the Father, not hiding his feelings. But his mind was choosing to love us

through his will and he knew that one day his emotions would follow suit and he would experience joy and the full spectrum of love with us in heaven. If you are a christian you have a God who is love living inside of you. When you find yourself feeling “less than loving” towards someone pray for that person. Ask God to bless that person. That is in fact the most loving thing you could do for them, much better than the semi-spiritual jargon of “sending good vibes”. As you seek intimacy with Jesus He will change your heart and your emotions will follow. We are going to end with a time of worship. There is a very practical way to apply this message today. If there is someone in your life who you are less than loving towards or experiencing hate, you pray for that person during worship. In a few minutes we will have some folks up here to pray with you. Better yet, come up and pray a blessing over them and ask God to change your heart towards them.