



Introduction

And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—she was told, “The older will serve the younger.” As it is written, “Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.” (Romans 9:10–13 ESV)

- Those God loved and chose in eternity past for salvation were loved and chosen purely because of God's mercy, not because of anything in them or done by them.

Hatred as Preference

“I have loved you,” says the LORD. But you say, “How have you loved us?” “Is not Esau Jacob's brother?” declares the LORD. “Yet I have loved Jacob but Esau I have hated. I have laid waste his hill country and left his heritage to jackals of the desert.” If Edom says, “We are shattered but we will rebuild the ruins,” the LORD of hosts says, “They may build, but I will tear down, and they will be called ‘the wicked country,’ and ‘the people with whom the LORD is angry forever.’” (Malachi 1:2–4 ESV)

- It is possible that God's hatred of Esau in Malachi and in Romans may be a preference.

When the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren. And Leah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben, for she said, “Because the LORD has looked upon my affliction; for now my husband will love me.” She conceived again and bore a son, and said, “Because the LORD has heard that I am hated, he has given me this son also.” And she called his name Simeon. Again she conceived and bore a son, and said, “Now this time my husband will be attached to me, because I have borne him three sons.” Therefore his name was called Levi. (Genesis 29:31–34 ESV)

Jacob did so, and completed her week. Then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife. (Laban gave his female servant Bilhah to his daughter Rachel to be her servant.) So Jacob went in to Rachel also, and he loved Rachel more than Leah, and served Laban for another seven years. (Genesis 29:28–30 ESV)

Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’ Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? And if not,



while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:25–33 ESV)

Hatred as Judgment

- The Lord has settled anger towards Edom; he is “angry forever” with them.
- God’s hatred is his just disposition towards sin and sinners.

For you are not a God who delights in wickedness;
evil may not dwell with you.

The boastful shall not stand before your eyes;
you hate all evildoers.

You destroy those who speak lies;
the LORD abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man. (Psalm 5:4–6 ESV)

- God does not just hate the evil, but also the one who commits evil.

The LORD is in his holy temple;
the LORD's throne is in heaven;
his eyes see, his eyelids test the children of man.

The LORD tests the righteous,
but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.

Let him rain coals on the wicked;
fire and sulfur and a scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup.

For the LORD is righteous;
he loves righteous deeds;
the upright shall behold his face. (Psalm 11:4–7 ESV)

I hate, I despise your feasts,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,
I will not accept them;

and the peace offerings of your fattened animals,
I will not look upon them.

Take away from me the noise of your songs;
to the melody of your harps I will not listen.

But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. (Amos 5:21–24 ESV)



Did you bring to me sacrifices and offerings during the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? You shall take up Sikkuth your king, and Kiyyun your star-god—your images that you made for yourselves, and I will send you into exile beyond Damascus,” says the LORD, whose name is the God of hosts. (Amos 5:25–27 ESV)

- The Bible is clear about God’s hatred of sin and those who commit sin.
- We tend to ignore or diminish God’s hatred of those who commit sin.

Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. (John 3:18 ESV)

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. (John 3:36 ESV)

- God is a purposeful God that sovereignly loves and hates for his own glory.

Unconditional Love

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (Romans 5:6–11 ESV)

- We diminish the love of God for his people when we diminish God’s hatred of sin and sinners.
- The problem with talking of the unconditional love of God is it is conflating God’s love with the unconditional offer of the gospel.
- Nowhere does the Bible command us to tell someone that God loves them.

The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. (Acts 17:30 ESV)

- Starting with God’s love for the sinner undermines the message of reconciliation.

From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through



Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:16–21 ESV)

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (James 4:4 ESV)

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. (1 John 2:15–16 ESV)

- When the message of God's hatred of those in sin is missing, the gospel is irrelevant.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1 ESV)

- The Bible does not present any type of unconditional saving love of God.

Natural Evil

- Natural evil are those things that we would consider calamities, discomforts, or disturbances.

I form light and create darkness;
I make well-being and create calamity;
I am the LORD, who does all these things. (Isaiah 45:7 ESV)

Does disaster come to a city,
unless the LORD has done it? (Amos 3:6b ESV)

Who has spoken and it came to pass,
unless the Lord has commanded it?
Is it not from the mouth of the Most High
that good and bad come? (Lamentations 3:37–38 ESV)

But Moses said to the LORD, "Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue." Then the LORD said to him, "Who has



made man's mouth? Who makes him mute, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?" (Exodus 4:10–11 ESV)

Moral Evil

- God is not the author of evil, but God rules over all things, including moral evil.

The LORD has made everything for its purpose,
even the wicked for the day of trouble. (Proverbs 16:4 ESV)

As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. (Genesis 50:20 ESV)

For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. (Acts 4:27–28 ESV)

- The God of love ordained the greatest evil ever to destroy evil and save his people.
- The God of love controls the evil realm.

And Micaiah said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing beside him on his right hand and on his left; and the LORD said, 'Who will entice Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?' And one said one thing, and another said another. Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, 'I will entice him.' And the LORD said to him, 'By what means?' And he said, 'I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And he said, 'You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so.' Now therefore behold, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; the LORD has declared disaster for you." (1 Kings 22:19–23 ESV)

- We cannot claim that if God loves us nothing bad will ever happen to us.

Conclusion

- We must be thoroughly biblical when defining God's hate and God's love.
- God's hatred is not incompatible with the truth that God is love.

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



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- God's love does not overlook evil but is actively against evil.
 - Only in Christ can we escape his hatred of evildoers and know his love for the righteous.