

Warning: Hell Is for Haters

Imagine an America where people hated sin as much as they hated other people. Gathering with nearly 200 Christians and Jews for a solidarity event in Nashville, a leader suggested we change “anti-Semites” to “Jew haters” to drive home the seriousness of hatred.

“Don’t mess with me about hate for Trump!” declared Nancy Pelosi. She’s not alone. Politicians, celebrities, late-night hosts and commentators do it daily with the election months away.

USA Today reported our problem with the headline, “Divided We Fall?” As the Bible warns us: “But if you bite and devour one another, take heed that you are not consumed by one another” (Gal. 5:15).

The brutal reality is that this is the state of multitudes in America today. Sad to say, this describes many professing Christians who say they identify as “Trump haters,” with scores seemingly ignorant or oblivious to the dangerous direction of our country.

What’s Happening to America?

Not long ago, I heard comments disparaging the former president by a Catholic journalist, seemingly gleeful that former President Trump’s reputation is assaulted daily. When she finished the TV spot, a commentator said, “Of course she makes these statements because she’s a Trump hater!” This is nothing different than we hear from the ladies on “The View,” who hammer him consistently, corroding our culture.

The Bible counters with this reminder, “Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; lest the Lord see it, and it displease Him” (Prov. 24:17–18).

We hear hateful remarks every day. Has this become some kind of merit badge people proudly wear?

Have we drifted so far from our core values of respect, civility and honor toward individuals and leaders with whom we differ that we must lower ourselves to embarrassing levels of contempt, disdain and vitriolic name-calling?

Have we become so accustomed to profanity-laced attacks, rage and insults permeating our public discourse that we simply shrug our shoulders, wince and think, "Well that's just the way it is today?"

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In a similar seriously divided time in our history, President Lincoln said, "With malice towards none," meaning we should have no intention to harm others but instead demonstrate "charity for all" to heal the polarized state of the country.

A few years ago, former First Lady Michelle Obama challenged us, "When someone is cruel or acts like a bully, you don't stoop to their level. No. Our motto is 'When they go low, we go high.'" Sadly, former Attorney General Eric Holder retorted: "The new Democratic motto should be 'When they go low, we should kick them!'" This same animus came from Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., in blasting Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu.

Christian leader Ben Carson had enough of Rep. Maxine Water, D-Calif., one of the worst proponents of hateful rhetoric, writing her to say, "My mother always taught me that people shouldn't throw rocks. ... Basic manners elude you."

Time for a Turnaround

Before we plummet to more dangerous levels of hostility, engendering the brewing societal civil war, we must stop and

remind ourselves how seriously God views this escalating hatred. It's demonically inspired, unacceptable, designed to destroy the fabric of our nation—and it is serious sin. The soon-to-be-released movie "Civil War" brings home this reality in a profound way.

Almighty God hates not people but sin! He is long-suffering but eventually will judge it and punish those who habitually practice it. He's especially sensitive to those identifying as Christians yet hypocritical with hateful speech. "If anyone among you seems to be religious and does not bridle his tongue, but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (James 1:26).

Counterculture Conduct

"Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you" (Luke 6:27b-28).

"Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him" (1 John 3:15).

"Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, outbursts, and blasphemies, with all malice, be taken away from you" (Eph. 4:31).

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In Romans 12, God tells us "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay" (v. 19) and "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (v. 21).

6 Things God Hates

Proverbs 6:16-19 identifies six areas God hates because they bring enormous harm to individuals, marriages, families, relationships, reputations, careers and society itself. Praying for leaders and others is a priority, but it's not

enough. Let's remind ourselves of the specific areas God hates:

1. Pride.
2. Lying tongue.
3. Hands shedding innocent blood.
4. Devising wicked imaginations.
5. Feet rushing to evil.
6. False witness speaking lies.
7. *Sowing discord* (emphasis mine).

God wants to protect us from the devastation accompanying these sins. He also wants to protect us from the ultimate consequence for rebellion: divine justice and eternal separation in hell.

Anyone dismissing the warnings of Scripture regarding hatred, either in person or on social media, should be sobered by the reality of a coming Judgment Day and the reality of hell. Jesus told us that each of us will stand before His throne (2 Cor. 5:10) to give an account for every careless word we've ever spoken (Matt. 12:36). Defamatory accusations, lying, slander, deceitful statements, character assassination, gossip, mockery, profanities and the like will all be adjudicated with no provision for plea bargaining or other legal technicalities.

Hell Is for Haters

From the very lips of Jesus came four sobering facts regarding the dreadfulness of damnation (Matt. 25:41-46). Those refusing to repent, put faith in Christ alone and follow God's will end up in hell. This means:

1. Total separation from God.
2. Association with Satan, demons and history's lost souls.
3. Unimaginable punishment.

4. Never-ending sentence for all eternity.

Here's the Deal: As the '24 election heats up, may all of us true Christians remember: "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). The identifying mark of true Christians is crystal clear. Let's light the way while we continue to pray for those walking in darkness.

George Washington Carver's words are especially relevant for us today: "I will never let another man ruin my life by making me hate him." {eo}

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