

Hating the Sin and Loving the Sinner

Romans 5:1-11

It is often said that God hates the sin but loves the sinner, and this is true indeed. To be fully Biblical, we should recognize that there is a sense in which God both loves and hates the sinner: “For Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness...Thou hatest all workers of iniquity” (Psalm 5:4-5). Obviously the reason He hates them is because of the sin and iniquity that they are engaged in. It is very difficult to separate the person from the sin which he commits.

As a boy, my father loved me enough to use the rod of correction, which I certainly deserved. I could have wished that he might punish only my sin and not me, but it does not work that way. My sin and I were totally linked together, and I received my just and frequent punishments.

Only God in His grace and mercy can remove my sins far from me: “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:12). God loved us even when we were ungodly (Rom. 5:6). He loved us even when we were still sinners (Rom. 5:8). Indeed, He loved us even when we were His enemies, doing things fully deserving of His hatred (Rom. 5:10).

Our righteous indignation should be aroused by those who commit fornication or by those who engage in homosexual practices or by those who disrespect God’s gender distinctions or by those who blaspheme our God, dragging His Name through the mud. But how we need to share our Saviour’s compassion for these very people who are so enslaved and blinded by such sins, even as we once were (“and such were some of you”—1 Cor. 6:9-11)!

The God who lives in me loves them! So must I.

~George Zeller: www.middletonbiblechurch.org



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