

# The Bulletin

## Meeks St. Church of Christ

1201 Meeks St. Corinth, Ms. 38834  
Phone – (662) 287-2187  
Meeksstreetchurchofchrist.com

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### ***“Loving The Sinner—Hating The Sin”***

By Brian Meade



Today there is a lot of talk about how Christians are to be all about love, forgiveness, compassion, tolerance and acceptance of everyone— unconditionally. But is that the way Christians are to convert the world to Christ? By loving the sinner and leaving them in their lost and sinful condition? The challenging question to every Christian is— how are we to love the sinner and deal with their sin?

The phrase “loving the sinner, but hating the sin” is not directly stated in the Bible per say, but the principal is clearly in the scriptures. In fact, so much so, that several men have been able to see it and are attributed to this quote.

- (1) **Mohandas Gandhi** is generally the one who is given credit to “*Love the sinner, hate the sin,*” because of his 1929 autobiography. But there were others before him who recognized this Bible principal.
- (2) **Thomas Aquinas**, who lived 1225—1274 AD, is quoted as saying, “*Our duty is to hate sin, but love the sinner himself for what he is.*”
- (3) **St. Augustine** wrote in a letter (211) in 424 AD, “*With love for mankind and hatred of sin.*”

Just what exactly does the Bible say about loving the sinner and hating their sin? First, let’s look at Jude verses 22-23, “*And on some have compassion, making a distinction;<sup>23</sup> but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.*” Here is perhaps the clearest passage of scripture to see the attitude of those who are trying to save the person we love from their sins. Notice that the hated garment is ‘defiled by the flesh’ (sin) and therefore must be gotten rid of. And our love for them is the motivation to help them see their need to discard what, not only hurts, but will ultimately destroy their lives!

We often hear by people in the world, that Jesus was all love and compassion for the sinner and never condemned sin in any way. And it is usually framed in such a way as to give comfort to the sinner while they are still practicing sin unapologetically. But is that the real Jesus? Notice what the Hebrew writer says about Jesus’ life and character in Hebrews 1:9, “*You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.*”

Jesus showed great love and concern for those He met during His stay on the Earth— yet, He did NOT overlook, excuse, or ignore sin in their lives. In Mark 2:17, Jesus said, “*.....Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.*” Jesus was the great physician to those who were sin-sick and in need of a Savior. Just as a doctor, who loves his patients, will seek to treat and address what is causing the sickness. Jesus’ role as the Savior was to help with the malady of sin. If we will only let Jesus have His way with us, we can be free from sin!

It is well known in the Bible that God loves those who are sinner, and thus are undeserving of His love. Passages of scriptures, such as John 3:16 and Romans 5:6-8, demonstrate the love, mercy, and grace extended by God to sinful man. It is without question that God loves us! It is by grace (undeserved favor) that God loves us!

But on the other side of the coin, God cannot be righteous, just, and holy in simply ignoring the sin that unrepentant sinners practice. God's attitude toward sin is clearly seen in the book of Proverbs 6:16-19, "*These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: <sup>17</sup> A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, <sup>18</sup> A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, <sup>19</sup> A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.*"

Notice that it is the actions that God hates, not the person themselves. It is the proud looks, the lying tongues, the murderous actions, the devising of wicked plans.....etc, that God hates. God's hatred of sin is based upon His holy character, sense of justice for what is right, and moral goodness (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 129:4; Psalm 145:17).

God said in Deuteronomy 16:22, "*Neither shalt thou set thee up any image; which the LORD thy God hateth.*" (KJB) Idolatry was an abomination (detestable) to God and behavior that God hates.

Notice the stern words Jesus said in Revelation 2:6, "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." He said again in Revelation 2:15, "*Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.*" Jesus hated the doctrine and deeds of those who taught and practiced evil contrary to the gospel (Galatians 1:7-9; 2 John 10-11). And when concluding some rebukes to the lukewarm church of the Laodiceans— Jesus calls them to repent, as He said, "*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.*" (Revelation 3:19)

This is further proof that God's love does not negate the need to repent of sin. Repentance is the natural reaction to the goodness of God being shown to us (Romans 2:4). It is also true that repentance will be easier, if we develop repulsion or strong dislike of what God calls transgression of His word (Psalm 119:104).

How are Christians to put into practice the love we should have for the lost— and yet have a hatred of sin? It is all about *what* we love (the souls of the lost) and *what* we hate (the sin that destroys their life). We must with great care, do both to save the sinner!

## **How Should We Love Sinners?**

### **(1) Show Them God Has a Better Way to Live.**

Sinners need to know by our teaching and example (Matt. 5:13-16) that there is a much better way to live than in the mire of sin! (Luke 15:13-17; Gal. 5:19-24)

### **(2) Teach Them the Truth of the Gospel.**

The gospel is all about converting from our old life of sin, wickedness, and transgression of God's word— to a life of holiness, righteousness, and obedience to God (Luke 24:46-47; Acts 2:37-38; I Cor. 6:9-11; Titus 2:11-12). The gospel is God's way of making us righteous (Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 1:16-17).

### **(3) Be Kind, Respectful, And Loving to Them.**

Being cold, hard-hearted, and unloving to sinners will NOT work to convert them to th If we are to win the lost sinner to Jesus— we must show respect, courtesy, kindness, and love to all men. Speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15 & v.29).

### **(4) Pray For Them Genuinely & Fervently.**

Love seeks the best for those we love (1 Cor. 13:4-7). And when we genuinely love the lost, we will pray for them (1 Timothy 2:1).

## **How Should We Hate Sin?**

### **(1) By Obeying the Command of God.**

"*You who love the LORD, hate evil! He preserves the souls of His saints; He delivers them out of the hand of the wicked.*" (Psalm 97:10) "*The fear of the LORD is to hate evil...*" (Proverbs 8:13) "*Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good.*" (Romans 12:9)

### **(2) By Imitating the Example of David.**

"*I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not cling to me.*" (Psalm 101:3) "*Therefore all Your precepts concerning all things I consider to be right; I hate every false way.*" (Psalm 119:128) "*I hate and abhor lying, but I love Your law.*" (Psalm 119:163)

### **(3) By NOT Participating in Sinful Actions.**

"*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*" (Ephesians 5:11) See also: 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Revelation 2:6.

### **(4) By Rebuking the Sin in the Spirit of Meekness.**

"*Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed.*" (Proverbs 27:5)  
See also: Proverbs 9:8; Galatians 2:11-14; I Timothy 5:20.

**News and Notes:** sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Tammy Kilgore (Jerry's Niece), Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Linda Harris, David Taylor, Danny Cottrell, The family of Mergie Duncan (she passed away last week), Robbie Doles, Sandi Poole, and Pat George.

Our Spring Gospel Meeting with Billy Randolph will begin Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup>—24<sup>th</sup>. Monday through Friday (20—24) starting time is 7:00 PM Nightly.

**Those Who Serve:**

**Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:**

**Opening Prayer:** Tim Harris Sr.  
**Preaching:** Brian Meade  
**Sermon #1:** *"How We Can Make Void—Effective Things"*

**Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am**

Fred Johnson  
The Book Of Romans (Kyle Pope)  
*Page 83, Question #1*

**Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:**

**Announcements:** Fred Johnson  
**Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:** Lee Busby  
*Psalm 111:1-4*  
**Song Leader:** Paul Busby  
**Lord's Supper:** Paul Johnson  
**Assisting:** Lee Busby & Jerry Kennemur  
**Singing Service:** *Men of the Congregation Lead in Singing*  
**Invitation:** Jerry Kennemur  
**Closing Prayer:** Doug George

**Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.**

**February 26<sup>th</sup>:**

**Auditorium Bible Class:** Russell Briggs  
The Book Of Psalms (Randy Blackaby)  
*Page 55, Question #1*  
**Invitation:** Brian Meade  
**Song Leader:** Paul Busby  
**Closing Prayer:** Nathan Meade