



DOES GOD HATE THE SIN, BUT LOVE THE SINNER?

By George Lujack

A well-known slogan amongst evangelical Christians is “Love the sinner, hate the sin.” This article will examine the origin of this slogan, reveal whether there is any Scriptural basis for this claim, and answer the question, Does God hate the sin, but love the sinner?

The origin of the phrase, “Love the sinner, hate the sin,” comes from Augustine, a Catholic bishop who wrote in his letter numbered 211, “*Cum dilectione hominum et odio vitiorum*,” which translates roughly to “With love for mankind and hatred of sins.” Mohandas Gandhi, in his 1929 autobiography wrote, “Hate the sin and not the sinner,” which is a more recent version of the phrase. “Love the sinner, hate the sin” does not appear in Scripture, but other verses have been used in support of the philosophical phrase.

JOHN 3:16:

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

ROMANS 5:8:

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Messiah (Christ) died for us.

Neither John 3:16 nor Romans 5:8 directly say, “God loves sinners.” God so loved *the world*... and the world does have sinners in it, but the world also has God-seeking, righteous-living people in it. God loves the righteous. Yeshua (Jesus) came to save sinners from unrighteousness, to show them the way of righteousness, and then die to atone for our *past* sins. He died for us while we were still sinners, but with a conditional message that we should repent and stop sinning. God knew our potential to transform from sinners into becoming righteous beings, and His plan was to save us from His righteous judgment through His Son.

GOD HATES THE SIN AND THE SINNER, BUT LOVES RIGHTEOUSNESS

PSALM 5:4-6:

**For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, nor shall evil dwell with You. The boastful shall not stand in Your sight. You hate all workers of iniquity. You shall destroy those who speak falsehood.
YHWH (the Lord) abhors the bloodthirsty and deceitful man.**

PSALM 11:5,7:

**YHWH (the Lord) tests the righteous, but the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul hates.
For YHWH (the Lord) is righteous, He loves righteousness.**

GOD’S WRATH IS AGAINST THE SIN AND UPON THE SINNER

JOHN 3:36:

He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

ROMANS 1:18-19:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.

ROMANS 2:5:

But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who *“will render to each one according to his deeds.”*

Righteous saints have repented of their sins and live righteously according to God’s laws, while habitual or unrepentant sinners are people who continually sin. We are what we do and we will be judged according to our deeds. God will not throw sin into hell and spare the sinners from hell out of love for the sinners. He is going to throw unrepentant sinners into hell together with their sins.

THE GOOD NEWS

1 PETER 2:21-24:

For to this you were called, because Messiah (Christ) also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

“Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth,”

who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.

The Good News is that God has taken His righteous wrath against sinners out on His Son, so that we do not need to be judged by our deeds. However, avoiding the judgment of our deeds is conditional. The condition is that we must accept Yeshua (Jesus), repent of sin, stop sinning, and live righteously.

The problem with the philosophy that “God hates the sin, but loves the sinner,” is that it divides and separates the sin from the sinner. Lukewarm believers can get very comfortable and confused with their sins and might not understand the need to repent and stop sinning.

It’s fine for people to say that they love people, but to say that they love sinners is a verbal condoning of sin. Homosexual advocates have successfully used the ‘love the sinner’ philosophy to push acceptance of their LGBT lifestyle upon society by implementing programs for parents who do not approve of their child’s choice to engage in homosexuality. Gay propaganda family counseling sessions urge parents to publicly state, “I love my *gay* son,” which is a verbal acceptance, consenting, and proclamation of a child’s sin, in place of “I love my son,” which is a normal thing for loving parents to say of their child.

MATTHEW 4:17:

From that time Yeshua (Jesus) began to preach and to say, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”**

MATTHEW 9:12-13; LUKE 5:32:

Yeshua (Jesus) answered and said to them, **“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”**

The kingdom of heaven is soon going to be at hand again, when Yeshua (Jesus) returns to rule the world with a rod of iron (Revelation 19:15). People who are comfortable living with their sins are spiritually sick and need to repent, stop sinning, get spiritually well, and start living righteously. Comforting sinners with the empty slogan, “God hates the sin, but loves the sinner,” does nothing to encourage them to repent and get right with God.