

The Hate We Love

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MAIN VERSES

[1 Corinthians 13:4-8](#) • [Matthew 24:12](#) • [1 John 3:14-15](#) • [Matthew 28](#) • [Matthew 5-7](#) • [Matthew 5:38-48](#) •
[Daniel 7](#) • [John 17](#) • [Acts 9](#) • [2 Corinthians 5:14-15](#) • [2 Corinthians 5:16](#) • [2 Corinthians 5:17](#) • [1 Corinthians 15:22](#) • [2 Corinthians 5:18-20](#) • [Romans 5:8](#) • [Isaiah 64](#) • [Isaiah 65](#) • [Isaiah 66](#) • [Romans 12:1](#) • [Romans 12:9-21](#)
• [1 Corinthians 2](#) • [John 13:35](#)

Do you ever find yourself searching for something bigger than you? For a community to be a part of? A place founded on truth and love. A place to worship the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Son of God. Welcome to Founded in Truth, where we're more than just a fellowship. We're a family, so welcome home. Shabbat Shalom everyone. Welcome to Founded in Truth Fellowship. We are online for services currently due to something called the pandemic in the States. So welcome to our services online.

Searching for Something Bigger

Today we're going to tackle something that's been on my heart for a long time. And it's not just because of something like I just saw in other people. It's something I also see and struggle with in myself constantly. And that thing is hatred. Hatred for my brother or sister, hatred towards others in the world. And when I say hatred, yeah, we're doing a sermon on hatred.

When I say hatred, because I already know there are likely those watching who just vetted a list of people that they hate in their life and justified it by saying, "Well, I don't hate them. I just don't like them." So if that was you just now, go ahead and say amen if you just did that. Because when I use the word hate, I mean by that an inability or an intentional ceasing to engulf someone with love.

"Okay Matt, I'll bite. If that's hate, then what is love?"

What Is Love?

Well, let's see what love is as defined by the apostle of Yeshua named Paul in [1 Corinthians 13](#), verses 4 through 8. We're all familiar with this verse or these verses. They were all read at our wedding. Here we go. Love is patient. Love is kind. It does not envy. It does not boast. It is not proud. It does not dishonor others. It is not self-seeking. It is not easily angered. It keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, it always trusts, it always hopes, it always perseveres. Love never fails.

So this is what the love of Christ looks like when it emits from a follower of the Messiah. And if you're in a position or you're in a world or you're in a box where there are people that you have chosen to exclude from this love, for me, I just call it what it is. I call it hatred. Or call it whatever you like. I call it hate. Maybe that word comes across as a little much for how we see or how we view or how we think of or treat others in the world. If you don't want to call it hate, if that's just too big of a word for you to describe yourself with, let's see what Jesus calls it.

What Jesus Calls a Lack of Love

In [Matthew 24](#), verse 12, let's see what Jesus calls a lack of love in the world. "Because of the increase of wickedness the love of most will grow cold." So Yeshua here calls the lack of vitality of love towards others. He just straight up calls it wickedness. And of course, here in [Matthew 24](#), Yeshua is describing the coming destruction of Jerusalem, which his disciples just asked him about. They've said, "Hey, what's it gonna look like?" and all that mess, and at the end of chapter 23, so hate or wickedness is an intentional choosing to not show the love of God towards others.

And we're just jumping straight into the topic today because I feel like we don't just need a reminder to love other people during certain times of the year. We need to be reminded of what the gospel is if we were struggling to love people at all. And that's the issue today.

Hatred Equals Murder

[1 John 3](#), 14-15 says this: "We know that we have passed from death to life because we love one another. Everyone who does not love remains in death. Everyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer. And you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in them."

No eternal life. No actualized relationship with Yeshua. Because one can't exist without the other. John is writing, and he states that if you have hatred towards another person—if there is another that you feel was not deserving of the sacrificial price paid on the cross—you are a

murderer. That's a strong word there. You remain in death. You have not felt the love of God in your life to the truest sense.

But too many times we fail to realize that. And we also fail to realize that we're called to imitate Yeshua, imitate Christ, the very image and fullness of everything God, everything Yahweh is on the cross. That's the example of love and self-sacrificial giving we as Jesus or Yeshua followers were left with. Seriously.

How We Justify Our Hatred

How many times have we seen someone and justified hating them? In your mind, you justified having feelings of hatred for them. And you say justified. Yes, justified.

How many times have you seen or heard about someone? It's a political puke bowl outside in our country right now. So let's go off that. How many times have we looked at someone who may have a different political view and for some reason we make the judgment that they are not trying just as hard as you are to overcome sin in their life? Or maybe they're obviously not trying as hard as I am to have a deeper relationship with Yeshua in their life. Or they're not thriving their best to be the hands and feet of Yeshua like I am.

And many of us would say, "Well Matt, obviously they feel XYZ about this scenario or that political stance, and that's just not Christian. And because they aren't Christian, they must hate Christians. And because they hate Christians, I am now allowed to hate them." Sound familiar? And maybe you don't use those words. Do you have those feelings?

"They are voting for Trump! How can they say they are a Christian and vote for someone who has said things that he has said or made those comments about women the way that he has or responded in such and such a way that that doesn't seem very Christ-like at all? Obviously, those people have idols in their life, aren't a Christian, and because I think Trump hates people, they must hate people. So therefore, I hate them."

"Oh! That's not the side of the fence that you're on. Okay, I'm sorry. Let's think of a more relevant, applicable circumstance."

"Oh, they're voting for Biden. Bunch of liberals. Don't they know who and what they're voting for? Man, this guy's an idiot. He's a fool. He has a stuttering problem." Now, of course, my kids have a stuttering problem, or I know someone who has a stuttering problem, or I know someone's kids who has a stuttering problem, but I have not justified mocking them like I have Biden. So let's mock him for a stuttering problem. "Don't they know the things he stands for are

so anti-Bible and full of wickedness and sin? Oh, and his running mate? Oh no! That seals the deal. They're the devil. They're devil worshipers. They're evil. And Jesus said to hate evil. Therefore, shardy, I hate you."

Maybe that sounds more familiar.

Christians Who Justify Hatred

And what is so sad is these are real life examples I have observed of people claiming to be living sacrifices to God's kingdom and ambassadors of Jesus, deputies of Yeshua as Paul calls us. In other words, people claiming to be representatives of Yeshua on earth think and act this way and for some ungodly reason believe it's okay because they've justified it. Because I know for a fact Jesus would definitely vote for Trump or definitely vote for Biden.

Why We Love to Hate

And the thing is about hate—we love it. We love to hate, especially in our American culture. This is what we're taught to do. Because it feels good. It feels good to be angry. It feels good to react. It feels good to think about harm coming to people we don't like. And you don't have to admit you feel that way, but I know. The reason it feels good is because we don't have to absorb the feelings, our flesh, the wickedness of this world, the darkness that is always spreading through malice and wickedness. We don't have to absorb it. We don't have to be the wall that stops it. We can just join in. And it feels so good. It feels so satisfying. Because who wants to stop the hatred in the world by absorbing it? Who wants to be that person? Who really wants to do that? Only someone who's prepared to carry a cross around every day, I suppose, right?

How about when someone we hate gets hurt? It feels good, doesn't it? You don't rejoice just a little bit when someone you hate gets hurt? Come on.

The Disappointment

See, the thing is, two weeks ago, several protesters were killed during a protest in a matter of a couple days. And they were on both sides of the political sphere, if you will. I believe there was one Trump supporter and what appears to be some protesters on a whole other side of the political stance or political sphere. And these people lost their lives. They died. They were killed violently. And I'm in awe at what I see with my brothers and sisters in Christ saying about their deaths. I see things like, "They deserved it." Or, "Oh, they killed that guy and he was innocent. We need to go find and kill whoever did this." Or, "No, no, they had criminal records. They're

fine. It's okay. Another one bites the dust. It's good riddance." Or, "You know that guy who got killed? He committed a felony sometime in his life." As if to say, he's a sinner. Why should he get to live?

And the only thing that makes me so disappointed—the only thing that really makes me so disappointed—in how we love to kneel before the idolatry of our perceived nationalism and spit upon the oath to a kingdom not of this world, ruled by a king that does not rule like this world, the only thing more disappointing than seeing others do that is to realize I'm one of them.

I'm totally one of them. We do this without even thinking about it most of the time. This is like the foundational message of the gospel: to love people the way that Yeshua loved us, despite how resilient we acted towards that mercy, towards that grace, towards that love, despite our sin.

This is like a foundational cornerstone, and it's like the hardest thing for us as believers to comprehend, much less put into action. I look at people who I perceive have petty reasons for hating other people. This is my struggle. And then guess what? I justify my hatred for them. I'm so guilty.

And it's something I've struggled with for many years. And for me, again, it's usually in the theological arena. My sin in this area and that I struggle with and that I pray daily to be stronger in is I get upset at people I feel are unreasonably misrepresenting who Yeshua is to the world. And I allow my anger sometimes to evolve into hate, right? Which is incredible. Incredible on my part because that moment I allow that to take place, I have now misrepresented who Yeshua is to the world.

The Misrepresentation of Yeshua

I have now warped the very gospel message of hope and reconciliation and mercy into living a life that misrepresents those things. I fall back into the arms of death because hatred and love can't coexist if our God is love. That's a scary message, right?

So let's see what Yeshua says. See, Yeshua at the Great Commission in [Matthew 28](#), He tells His disciples to do what? He says, "Go into all the world, expand and teach all nations what He commanded." It's this image of new creation with a new [Genesis 1](#) storyline where mankind originally was created to be fruitful and multiply where? All over the earth.

So His image bearers would duplicate and multiply. And so Yeshua is re-establishing this original storyline. He is now dispatching his followers to go subdue the earth and to multiply.

And so in Matthew, in the book of Matthew, where do we go to see what Yeshua commanded? He just said, "Go and teach all nations what I commanded you."

The Great Commission

Alright, Matthew, did you put that anywhere in your account? What Yeshua actually commanded? Of course He did. It's the obvious. His sermon. The Sermon on the Mount, right? And the Sermon on the Mount is awesome because it's this image of a new Moses going up on the mountain to reconstitute and teach what the Torah is and how it should actually be lived out. Not just a commanded list, but what happens when it's actually written on your heart and becomes your character.

And here is what he says about this hard subject. And I point this out, again, because this is the hardest aspect of Christianity. Loving people. I would suggest anyway. And it's one I know everyone struggles with, but no one ever wants to talk about.

At what point do you sacrifice your pride to be a witness of Yeshua to your enemy? At what point do you take a slap in the face to stand for a different type of kingdom ethic? At what point do you allow people to take things from you in order to represent an unfailing graciousness of God? At what point do you love someone that is unlovable as they spit in your face, as they throw trash at you, as they intimidate you and they call you names? Where's the line in the sand? And here's what Yeshua says in Matthew chapter 5 verse 38.

Love Your Enemies

You have heard it said, eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth. But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you in the right cheek, turn to them also the other cheek. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat also. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them too. Give to the one who asks you and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it is said, love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you, this is the Master speaking, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? If you only show love to people that you agree with, if you only show love that people who you view are in the same political party or some nonsense like that, if you only show love to people that you have labeled to be your people in your life, what reward will you get? Are not

even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, here we go, what are you doing more than others? Do not even the pagans do that? Be perfect therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

So, notice in verse 48 here, Yeshua makes the bold claim that this is not simply about how you are to act. This is how God acts. "Be perfect." Okay, well how do I be perfect, Yeshua? Oh, act like this. Okay, why do I need to act like this? Because your heavenly Father acts like this and is perfect.

Be Perfect as Your Father Is Perfect

The mission of Yeshua, as described in [Daniel 7](#), the prophets, was to come and destroy the beast that violently tramples the world. And [Daniel 7](#) describes the beast as being made up as people. It's made up of people. The beast is people like you and me. It's made up of people that make up kingdoms that reciprocate this beast-like behavior, living in malice and hatred and violence and lack of authentic God-like love in their hearts.

And in Daniel chapter 7, the Son of Man allows the beast to exhaust its perceived power upon him and kill him. And through his death, the beast is defeated. And then the Son of Man is vindicated. He's put in the clouds of heaven to go up to heaven, not come down, to go up to the throne room of God. And there he is given all power and all authority over all creation, all of heaven and all of earth. And as a result, he launches a new eternal kingdom made up of all nations. That's [Daniel 7](#), right?

Yeshua's prayer for you in John chapter 17 was that you would be one with God like he is one with God. And this teaching, Sermon on the Mount, this is a teaching about what that looks like. And this was revolutionary when he taught it. It was revolutionary and it ticked specifically the more conservative, and don't associate the word Republican with the word conservative when I'm using it here in the first century context, okay? But it really ticked the more conservative religious crowd off.

A Revolutionary Teaching

This religious crowd who found comfort in how they determined who God loved and who God didn't. Because if they could determine that people who didn't eat as clean as they did or were slave status in the Roman Empire, so they had to work on Shabbat, which was like everybody, or if they could determine that someone wasn't up to par with their level of religious piety they could assume that God hates them because they are keeping the commandments and therefore

they can now hate them and look down upon them. See how that works? Too easy to do. Too easy to do, right?

But we know that never happens today with people who follow Yeshua, right? Ever? Never? Incredible. You have your group, you feel above this other group, and you justify hatred or apathy. All leads to the same place: lack of love, hatred or apathy towards another group because obviously God doesn't care about them either. So I'm justified in following suit.

And then Yeshua, Yeshua walks into town and he comes in and he says, "No, no, no, no." The entire story of the Old Testament was to gather all people, all nations, all creation to God. And the story of the Old Testament is also about how a people with a face-to-face encounter with God who had the Torah given to them failed.

The Torah was not enough to equip them to fulfill the vocational calling of being God's image. It just wasn't. They failed at being God's image bearers to the world. And it wasn't because of the Torah. The Torah was a blessing. I mean, this is obvious in the Old Testament, and Paul reinforces this in the New. It was a lacking of something else.

A New Heart, a New Spirit

And Yeshua represents that ethic, that we need something more. We need a new heart, a new spirit, and a redefined definition for what we know love to be. And he goes to the tax collector. The tax collector. See, in the Roman scope, the tax collectors were the friends of Rome. They were like the tax collectors of the British before the revolution in America. They were Judeans who profited off the taxing of their own people to give it to their occupiers.

So he went to people that were sympathetic toward the occupiers of Israel. Sympathetic towards Rome. Yeah, yeah. Spoiler alert: Yeshua didn't seem to care a bit about Israel's current political independence in the first century. That wasn't his mission. Now were tax collectors worthy of hate in the first century? Absolutely, totally hate worthy.

And if you said no, they're not hate worthy. How do you feel about the protests and the marches going on right now all over the country? Do we need to talk about some of the stories that are more relevant to us to conjure like maybe some actual emotions you may have towards other people in the world right now? And maybe you don't, maybe you don't. These are things I struggle with and I see others struggling with it.

Who Yeshua Went To

Where else did Yeshua go? Who else did he go to? The zealots? Simon is called the Zealot, most likely meaning he was part of the most radical, you could say liberal, group in the atmosphere. These were a group of weapon-toting individuals who hated the government, who hated the Romans and vowed to do anything they needed to do to push them out of Judean territory. They were also known for wearing cloaks and sneaking up on Romans in crowded streets and stabbing them and then running away.

Simon the Zealot. Jesus said, "Yeah, I want you guys to have life. I want you guys to feel the type of love God is, and you can do it through me. Follow me." Now something incredible happened. These disciples had their eyes on Yeshua, not their political views. These two individuals, Matthew and Simon, frequently sat at a table with each other and broke bread. Do you believe for a minute politics never came up? I bet they did. But there in the midst of them was a greater king birthing a greater kingdom. They had their eyes on Yeshua.

There's no doubt Matthew and Simon disagreed on the political atmosphere of the Roman occupation of Judea. You think we have heated debates here? There's no doubt they were at opposite ends of the political spectrum in first century Judea. You just think that they forgot about it after they met Jesus? No, they didn't forget about their political stances after they met Jesus. Did you? Did you forget about the political atmosphere that you're so zealous about in the nation that you live in after you came to the knowledge of Yeshua? No! But they had what some would call a cross vision or cross-centered lenses of what it means to live out a kingdom-minded ethic despite whatever their political opinions are.

Eyes on Yeshua

What's the mission? To teach all nations what Yeshua commanded. And if you think that means how to keep shabbat more holy by not mowing your lawn you're wrong. It is how to be an image bearer of God's kingdom. It's about what love actually looks like when it's defined and implemented by God. And it's absorbing that love to duplicate it all over the world. It's allowing this love to overtake you and to drown you so that you have no other choice but to rise up as a new creation in this world of darkness, a light that stands for a hope that the world has never seen or never felt.

This is the type of love that transforms a man intent on killing Christians into an apostle sent out to the world. A man by the name of Paul.

A Persecutor Transformed

Now, Paul was a crazy guy. This guy had the good life, right? Think about it. He was living it up as a Pharisee. Tribe of Benjamin, good stock. He brags about that. He had a great, pretty cushy life until Jesus comes and slaps him off his high horse in [Acts 9](#). And then he becomes a church planter, right? Which is just kind of funny but anyway.

And his life is now—I mean, on paper, for all intents and purposes, it's just miserable in all regards. I mean, he's mocked every day, everyone thinks he's crazy, he gets tossed into prison time after time after time. And when he's not serving time in jail, he's getting beat up. Oh, oh, whoa, whoa, we're being persecuted in America because of masks or something. Come on, come on.

Paul finally gets to the point, okay, I'll take a cruise. He gets on a ship. Shipwrecked.

I mean, you would have given up early if you had actually faced what Paul faced as a believer. Likely so would have I. So would all of us. Let's be real.

Driven by Love

But it's okay because finally, finally he got that retirement and he got that church pension from Antioch that he waited and worked so hard for. No, he didn't. He finally got killed for proclaiming Yeshua is Lord, not Caesar, in Rome. He got killed for going to the leader of the nation he lived in and saying, Yeshua is king over you and I serve him. He got killed for proclaiming what he pledged his allegiance to.

So people were doing his life. People were watching and hearing all sorts of things about him. And they were wondering. They were saying, what is wrong with this guy? He's got to be crazy. He's got to be a lunatic.

In the church of Corinth, he responds to a letter he gets where people actually are claiming that he's out of his mind. That's what it says. And that's what he's responding to in [2 Corinthians 5](#).

So [2 Corinthians 5](#), verse 13 says, If we are truly out of our mind, as some say, it is for God. If we are in our right mind, it is for you. Stop, stop, hold on. I love that quote. Paul is trolling in the first century. So if you didn't catch it, go back and read it. It's epic, right?

And so here is the response. [2 Corinthians 5.14](#): "...for Christ's love compels us because we are convinced that one died for all and therefore all died. And he died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again."

Compelled by Christ's Love

So Paul has this vision of the God so full of love, this beautiful loving God who gives life for all and therefore all have died. This is what motivates him on.

And then Paul continues in verse 16. So the new creation has come. The old has gone. The new is here. All this is from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

So Paul has this motivation that is compelled by the life of God. This thing that God did. He sent life to die for all and therefore all have died and have this new life in this resurrected Christ.

And verse 16, he says he doesn't regard anyone, any other human being, from a worldly point of view. Some translations will say things like from a fleshly point of view or earthly point of view. It's the Greek word for flesh or earthly or raw is what it is. I don't see anyone through a worldly view that does not include what has taken place on the cross. When I look at other people, I look at them through the lenses of the reality of what took place on the cross.

Through the Lens of the Cross

I used to look at them in a worldly way. They're bad and they suck and they're evil, but oh, oh—over there, they're good and so on. He says no more. I no longer do that. I used to think Jesus was just another human being and I sure don't do that anymore.

And what's he say? Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. It's here. The old is gone. The new is here now. And your translation may say something like, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation or they are a new creation. And I'll be blunt. That's not what it says in the Greek.

If your Bible says he is a new creation, the he there should be in italics because it's not there. In the Greek, if anyone is in Christ, blank, pause, new creation. The old is gone. The new is here. That's it.

And what he's talking about here is the context—how he sees other people, his worldview. That's what that verse is in context of. He's describing when he looks out in the world and he

sees other people and what motivates him to treat other people the way that he does has to do with that verse.

The New Creation Has Come

He doesn't just see human beings that can be labeled by their political opinions. He does not just see people that can be categorized by what type of sin they struggle with in their life. He does not put up walls with certain people he doesn't like. Why? Why? New creation has come through Christ.

And we always love to read that verse as if it's only me. If I am in Christ, I am a new creation. Look at me, right? And that's a view I can totally sympathize with. But the context of this section, as well as what the Greek says, is more along the lines of, if I am in Christ, this world is different now. It is a new creation. The old is gone. Everything I thought I knew about how this world operates, no.

And that phrase—that phrase for new creation—just to put a nail in it, the phrase "new creation" in the intertestamental period of literature, Dead Sea Scrolls, Jubilees, stuff like that, they use this phrase "new creation" as a synonym for the world to come.

The World to Come Is Here

In other words, in the first century, the phrase "new creation" was synonymous with the world to come. That new creation. Paul is saying that through Yeshua, it's begun. It's here. It's a reality now. It can be accessed now, in part.

[Isaiah 64](#) and 65 speak about the coming of God's kingdom fully exploding and birthing on earth. And the only way Isaiah, as a prophet, can even describe it is as a new heavens and a new earth. A new creation. He actually says the old is gone. The former things are gone. This is what Paul is quoting. He's quoting Isaiah having this vision of the world to come finally engulfing the world.

And Paul has this vision that God has done something to and for humanity that has changed everything. And we need to start looking at each other, at other human beings as though that reality is something that we believe.

One Died for All

And look how Paul just all-inclusively says things like, "This thing that brought new creation has affected everyone, not just the people that you want it to. One died for only those who have the right opinions. One died for only those I agree with. One died for only those who keep certain aspects of the Bible that I think are really important. Only those... No! One died for all, so all have died."

Not so only the people I feel deserve to be raised to life in Christ have died to the old world. All, all of creation. He rambles about the same thing and how it affects all humanity in [1 Corinthians 15](#), 22. When he says, and for all died in Adam, so in Christ all will be made alive. He uses that word quite boldly.

And of course, these verses, like many others, compel theologians and people to conclude that Paul thought of this type of universalistic salvation where one day everybody would be saved.

And that's a topic for another time. But that'd be great if that's the case. If you ever have these conversations, you also have to acknowledge the overwhelming verses that speak about the big judgment that's coming. You might want to prepare for what that judgment is. So always have a balanced approach to that topic. But it doesn't change the boldness that Paul has in saying all. What he's saying is that there's no one that's left out. There's no one that's going to be pushed aside. There's no one that you as an ambassador of Christ has the authority to say, no, they don't deserve the love of God. And Paul's point is something so big has happened and it has changed the way he views the world. And he's telling the Corinthians it needs to change the way they view the world, and he's telling us today it needs to change the way you view the world.

And that new reality and world is transformed through the lens of the cross. Where in Adam, a new humanity was started that lived out a life of choosing to determine good and evil for themselves, ignoring the wisdom of God. That's what Proverbs calls the tree of life, the wisdom of God. But through Yeshua, on the cross, there is a new humanity that has been birthed. And everybody's invited. Oh, but not sinners. Well, especially you. Especially you are invited. And others that need the healing love and mercy of the cross as well. And what's this mean to you? It means that you get to be an ambassador of Christ.

The Ministry of Reconciliation

Let's read this verse again because it will make you uncomfortable if you have a tendency to divide and want to exclude people. And I know this because I'm also a human being, right? Here we go. Verse 18. All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us

the ministry of reconciliation, that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. That's your job. We are, you are, therefore Christ's ambassadors. As though God were making His appeal through you, we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

So with your new worldview of new creation that God's kingdom has come to earth, it has been inaugurated. And sure, I know it's not complete yet, but it's here. It's here to the level that you live it out as an ambassador. Right? And you are that emissary. You are the royal representative of the king. Right? What's that mean? Well, Paul says it means that you have a ministry of reconciliation. You. You are a minister. You are a minister of reconciliation that carries with it, that lives out, that proclaims that God reconciled the world to Himself through Christ, not counting people's sins against them. Clean slate. That's what it says, anyway. Your sins are no longer held against you.

Debts Cancelled Through the Cross

In Colossians, Paul says that the handwritten charges against you have been nailed to the cross. And many times preachers say this is the Torah, which of course isn't quite correct. These were the legal charges against you if you were a prisoner or criminal that would be placed outside your jail cell or if you were crucified at the head of the cross. Your sins were nailed to Yeshua's cross. They've been cancelled. He cancelled the debt that you owe. The Gospel. And the moment that you look at another human being and you say, "No, they have a debt that's way too big for the cross." That's the moment that you forfeit your status as an actual ambassador of Yeshua's love.

Your job is to spread the good news of the reconciliation to God. Through Bible study? No. Through the Torah? No. Through having the right political views? No. Through what God did in Yeshua on the cross. [Romans 5:8](#) says, "But God demonstrated His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, while we were still swimming in it, while we were still throwing it at people, Christ died for us." Yeah, stop acting like you're better than anyone else and stop acting like hating, violence, and devaluing others, even if you can justify it by the world's standards, is okay for an ambassador of Yeshua to do.

Isaiah's Vision of God's Kingdom

We spoke on [Isaiah 64](#) and 65 and this whole section of Isaiah is speaking about the birthing of God's kingdom, right? And you know how [Isaiah 66](#) ends? Awesome, right? So this is the

section of God's rule and reign finally exploding into creation, making all wrongs right, overcoming the parched deserts with greenery, connecting creation back to God's kingdom where it was always supposed to be.

And check this out in [Isaiah 66](#), because this is important. This is important. We already know Paul saw [Isaiah 64](#) and 65 as at least birthing in his generation. And now we're going to see where him and the apostles actually thought the end of Isaiah, this prophecy that's supposed to happen a long, long, long, long time from now, when the day of the Lord happens and all that mess. We're going to see where the apostles actually seem to think that it was taking place in their generation.

So [Isaiah 66](#), starting in verse 18. Famous as archers. Oh, so they were violent people. War people. Now get this. And on mules and camels, says the Lord. So God is going to send messengers out to the rest of the nations to tell them about the glory in his kingdom.

Nations as Living Sacrifices

And these nations, these Gentiles, will be brought back to Jerusalem to be made as offerings, Thanksgiving offerings, if you will, to the Lord. They will be an offering to Yahweh. They will be a living sacrifice unto the Lord. And this is going to make Torah people mad because the Torah never changes and such. But check this out. Yahweh will select some of them to be priests and Levites. These non-Israelites, non-Levitical, non-Son of Aaron people will be a living sacrifice and they will be chosen to become the priest for God's temple, the place where heaven and earth meet. Right? It's beautiful.

And of course, we already know that in the New Testament, that place where heaven and earth meets is Yeshua. And we become a part of that, stone by stone, building up a habitation for God's Spirit. It's all temple language used to say that God has equipped us to do what we were always supposed to do. And that is to bear His image with His Spirit to the world. His temple was always meant to engulf the world. Why? What's so great about the temple? That's where His presence dwells. Oh, wait, wait! Who was Paul writing to when he mentions those elements of Isaiah? The Gentiles in Rome.

Apostles Living Out Isaiah

In Romans chapter 12, verse 1, not only here, but the entire book of Acts is about the apostles living out [Isaiah 66](#). That's why they go forth. That's why they do what they do. That's the point

of it. They see themselves as now going forth from Zion, delivering this message to the world of God's majestic glory and what He has done in the person of Yeshua.

But here's Paul—that's exactly what he said in [2 Corinthians 5](#) about putting on the lenses of the cross when you look out in the world. Not looking at the world the way the world tells you that everybody is and all these people are supposed to be. No, you need to renew your mind and put on these glasses and look through the lenses of what took place on the cross.

One Body of Christ

Then, what does he have to remind them of? The very next section in Romans here, verse 3. Stop thinking you're better than someone else, in other words. He's talking about how to operate as a single body of Christ. The hope and the trajectory is that the entire world would be one with God as Yeshua is one with God, right? all one body operating as His image-bearing kingdom. And what's he say? Verse 9 here.

Bless those who persecute you. Bless and do not curse. Oh man, why do you have to read that last part? Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil. Now notice he says, hate what is evil, not people that do evil. Hate what is evil. See the difference? Yeshua taught his followers to be pro-everybody, but not pro-everything. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor, serve, be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer.

Don't Repay Evil With Evil

Yeah, but what if someone does something mean to me or calls me names or, I don't know, persecutes me or fill in the blank? Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge. I love that. So in this, Paul is saying, listen, do not repay evil with evil. And instantly we're like, okay, well, what can I use as revenge to get back at someone that's not evil? It's like—revenge is what he's saying, don't do. That's evil. So stop trying to justify it, right?

And he says, leave room for God's wrath, which is something many of us are like, yeah, I'll just leave room for God's wrath. And maybe if I pray hard enough, God will come down here and stomp on him, right? And the thing about God's wrath—and Paul understands this—is that throughout the Old Testament, especially when dealing with kingdoms, and throughout the New Testament, Paul mentions this in [Romans 1](#)—God's wrath in Psalms is described as this bubbling cup of high gravity alcoholic beverage that the nations and Israel just want so bad. We

just want it so bad. We want to pursue the sin and the things that make us feel good and the lust of our flesh. We want it and we want the consequence. We're willing to absorb the consequences to get what we want. So we grab the cup and we gulp it down—that's what it says. And then we stumble around, afflicted by God's wrath—that's what it says.

We stumble around and fall to the ground. It seems that, biblically, God's wrath is less about God smacking us and stomping on us and more about Him letting us go and allowing our own sin and transgressions to overtake us and destroy us. That's what [Romans 1](#) talks about. God's wrath. But you, if your enemy is hungry, make him a hot pocket. If they're thirsty, you give them something to drink. If they're naked, you clothe them. Fill in the blank. You be the type of love that Jesus is to them. And Paul makes this comment, he says, "In doing this you'll keep burning coals on their head." And I know it almost seems as if Paul is saying, "Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, you'll get them then."

Paul's theology is not about getting them back. Okay? Paul's theology is about this getting their attention. And it will cause a burning in them. It will cause a frustration because they are not going to be able to comprehend what level of love this is that they're experiencing by their enemy. You don't do this to get satisfaction and revenge. "Oh, I hope they feel bad now." That's not Paul's theology here. Paul's theology is that maybe you can be the best example of Yeshua that they need in their life so that they can come to the knowledge and the hope and the peace and the love and the forgiveness of God. That's the pursuit if you're wearing cross-centered lenses. Right?

See Them Through Cross-Centered Lenses

And so, yeah, the people that you tend to justify hating, or justify holding back the love of God from. Those people, they could be people that you never met but have only seen on TV. Yeshua died for them. Yeshua does not hold their sins against them. Are you seeing them with the old lenses of the world or do you see who they are through the lenses of new creation through Yeshua? Urge them to be reconciled with God. Show them what that love and mercy and loving patience looks like. That is what we are called to do. Or we can justify hatred.

The way Paul understood the magnificence of what has happened, the victory that has happened on the cross overtook his entire life. That through the cross, God has resolved the debt of sin in your life and in the world. And you can embrace that today. You can experience new life today. Or we can choose to remain in darkness, enslaved to our sin, which is always the result, which will always result in the wrath of God allowing you to be swallowed up in it.

The Victory of the Cross

[1 Corinthians 2](#) says, Nothing. All of Paul's knowledge of Hebrew? No. The Torah? No. All of the lessons from Gamaliel? No. All of his pharisaical wisdom? No. Nothing except for this, because this is what has changed everything. Nothing else can touch it. Nothing else is that important, according to Paul. This is the lens that Paul wore to view the world.

And so the question is, what lenses do you wear today? What lenses are we wearing today? Because far too many times we get sucked into the world's funnel of emotion and allow it to tell us who it wants us to exclude from the love of God. Don't fall for that trap. Don't rejoice when someone you have determined is excluded from God's love gets hurt or killed or shot. Why would a Christian ever rejoice in someone being killed or harmed? The only death that we rejoice in is Yeshua's. That is how He was enthroned through His death because of the sin we were enslaved to. Don't enslave yourself back to an old master through hate. Don't give in to the hate that we all love. Yeshua died so that we could overcome even that.

What Lenses Will You Wear?

We are called to change the world, not just sit back and look pretty and show off our religious trinkets to the world and say, "Oh, look at me! I pray! Oh, look at me! I keep Sabbath! Oh, look at me! I give donations to these ministries! Look, I lead a Bible study!" All great, awesome things! But your mission, your mission is to be a minister of reconciliation that proclaims to the world that God has reconciled it to himself through Yeshua. That's your mission. The momentum that carries that message is called love. And love conquers all. That is how we change the world. That is the trajectory of God's mission. Will you choose to be a part of it or will you choose to not? And to be perfectly honest, everything is going to end the same way. It has happened. It is happening. The choice is are you gonna embrace it? Are you gonna join it? Or are you going to face the reality of what happens when you ignore it?

Love Conquers All

Followers of Yeshua love. That is the only attribute Yeshua said we would have as his followers to the world. In [John 13:35](#), "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, by this one thing, if you love one another." That's all we got. That is what Yeshua said we would be defined by. When the world looks at us, are we defined by the one thing that Yeshua said we would be defined by? Or is there no difference? Or do we act like the world? And when the world says, "Oh, this person doesn't deserve X, Y, Z," do we go, "Yeah, you're right!" Or, "This person doesn't

deserve mercy," "Yeah, you're right!" Or, "This person thinks this," "Yeah!" Or, "This person's legitimately a bad person. Do we join in the world and say, yeah, they're not worthy of anything? Or do we dare put on the lenses of what happened on the cross that day and dare to look at the world with those lenses on?

By This Everyone Will Know

This is, I'm convinced, the hardest thing of being a follower of Yeshua. This is it. And it goes unaddressed unless we go through the once a year Sermon on the Mount message and we do a little message on it. No one talks about it because it's too easy to hide. And no one wants to talk about it because we love it so much.

So I don't know where you're at today. I don't know if you're at a place where God's love has fully consumed your heart and you are living as the fullest extent of an ambassador of Christ. Maybe you're struggling in some areas, struggling with hatred, and you get annoyed by some people and that annoyance grows into a dislike and that dislike grows to a point where it's like, "No, I don't wish ill will towards them." Maybe you're fully consumed today. Maybe you're fully consumed with something that you've learned keeps you warm at night called hatred, when in reality it's just slowly burning you up.

The Love That Conquers

There is a love that can conquer all because love never fails. And that is the love that is only found in the person of Yeshua. And when you find that love, your job is to not just tell people about it, it's to show it off to people. That's our calling.

And so my hope for today is that the Spirit, the Spirit of Yeshua that resides within us, would prick our hearts, and would pull back the curtains of the people that we've selected in our life that we've deemed unacceptable of seeing and feeling the love of God. That's my hope. That's my hope for me, and that's my hope for you, and that's my hope for all believers, is that we can move forward from this, and we can be better in our mission as ministers of reconciliation and proclaiming to the world that they have been brought back to God. Their sins are forgiven. Embrace it. Embrace it. Shalom.

I'm Matthew Vander Els, and I hope you enjoyed this message. Founded in Truth exists to build a community that bears the image of God and lives the redeemed life only Yeshua gives. If this message impacted you or if this ministry has been a blessing to you, we invite you to take part in making sure the message of Yeshua and the truth of God's word continues to reach others. To

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