

Together Hate Evil and Defeat It

Search for and destroy wickedness. Pursue battle at the gates of hell, not merely at the drawbridge of your own castle. Receive holy scars with honor.

Ps 97:10; Amos 5:15; Rom 12:9; 1 Peter 2:1

Christians are to hate evil, not just dislike it. And, whenever possible, they are to work together to defeat it.

You want to go to heaven noticing the absence of evil there and the tremendous peace such absence brings. This is the same extreme happiness felt by a person moving from a horrible, smog-filled city to pure country air. That person appreciates the absence of smog and the purity of the air more than another who moved from a town with only poor quality air.

Evil this side of heaven makes us anxious and robs us of peace. The more we notice evil now and hate it, the more we will notice and be thrilled with the peace of heaven. Just think of the joy of forever being able to sense the peace of heaven more because you hated evil before you arrived there.

You also want to go to heaven with as close a relationship you can have with God with respect to His holiness. Purifying your spirit to hate a specific evil will be transforming your spirit to love its opposite that is pure and good instead. Then, in that new area of purity in your spirit, you can connect with God who is Spirit and can only relate to what is good.

In the Old Testament God spoke this command: *“Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the Lord God Almighty will be with you, just as you say he is. Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts.”* That is Amos, Chapter 5, verses 14 and 15. After Jesus died for us and rose to life again, the Apostle Paul wrote to us in Romans 12:9: *“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.”*

God has no evil in Him. He is absolutely holy and cannot be a part of anything evil.

When we grow to hate one evil after another, we open up more closeness in our relationship with God and expand our appreciation of heaven when we get there. And, pay attention to this: there will be no evil in heaven for us to hate. So, this opportunity through hating evil more and more to gain a closer relationship with God and greater appreciate the lack of sin in heaven and its incredible peace must be done this side of our death.

The more completely we hate evil, the more our spirits will be able to connect to God who is Spirit now and in heaven for all eternity. So, you and I want to look inside of ourselves and see what specific evils lie within us. Whatever we find, our hatred of that evil will fuel our goal to rid ourselves of it.

Let's use lying as the example of evil to make all of this clear. If someone lies to us, we are to hate the lie but with love forgive the one who lied to us. Then, that growing hatred of lying and the work of the Holy Spirit within us will awake us to our own untruthfulness and empower our desire to stop any lying we do. When we eliminate lying in our own thinking and behavior, God can come closer to us. Keep in mind that God never draws near to sin and evil. He is pure and holy, meaning He is completely separated from anything that is evil.

If we see something evil in another Christian for whom we have some responsibility for their walk with God, we are to help that person hate that particular evil and want to let go of it. If our friend, our spouse, or our children lie, we need to begin a process in our relationship with conversations aimed at eliminating lying from their lives.

When we help another of God's people stop doing a specific evil, God appreciates that we have helped Him have a closer relationship with that Christian. In the process of our hating that evil in our friend or relative, we gain God's gratitude. When we get to heaven, we will relish that appreciation.

Let's talk a little more about finding evil inside of ourselves and hating it. All of us have a bunch of things in us that are not purely good. So, we have work to do to find those things and begin to hate that they are part of our spirits. We want to spend our lives identifying one evil in us to hate and defeat after another. If we have jealousy, greed, self-centeredness, lack of desire for godliness, to name just a few, we want to first grow to hate them and then use that hatred to defeat them. In doing so, we purify our spirits a little more for now and for heaven.

Of course, to hate sin that resides in us, we need to be comfortable, at least in our own minds, that we are not perfect. Claiming that we do not have or do an evil is forbidden. 1 John 1:8-10 reads, *"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he (God) is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him (God) out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives."*

We should want to be like the psalmist who said in Psalm 139:23 & 24: *"Explore me, O God, and know the real me. Dig deeply and discover who I am. Put me to the test and watch how I handle the strain. Examine me to see if there is an evil bone in me, and guide me down Your path forever."* (That is from the Voice translation of the Bible.)

It is entirely safe for someone who has accepted Jesus Christ as her or his Savior to admit an evil inside. That is what Jesus died for. It is part of what is called the "old self" that existed before we came to salvation in Jesus. It died when Jesus died on the cross. We have a "new self" that lives now. The "old self" is dead but still in us, and it is our job to clean house and get rid of it. We believers claim what is said in Galatians 2:20: *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."*

When you and I find evil inside of ourselves, we need to know that is not who we really are any longer. Whatever evil we have found does not belong in us, and with the help of the Holy Spirit we can simply disclaim it and act on it no longer.

For example, if you find yourself lying, hate that you have lied, but don't hate yourself. Tell yourself that lying is not a part of you any longer. Then live in line with your redeemed spirit, not the "you" that was there before you became the "new you" in Jesus Christ. Always hate the evil, but not the one doing it.

Eph 2:8 through 10 says it nicely: *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."* That is who you are. A new creature in Christ designed to do good.

Now let's talk about the evil that you see in the world all around you. In identifying evil, listen to God and what is told in the Bible, not the culture in which we live which claims much evil to be okay. To mention only a few things the Bible says God hates, God hates lying, and *"a heart that devises wicked schemes"*, and *"feet that are quick to rush into evil"*, among other things. The Bible tells us of many additional evil things such as saying false things about another person, gossiping, and greed, just to mention a few of the many sins we want to walk away from.

To prepare for heaven by hating more and more evil, acknowledge the evil you see around you and proclaim to yourself and to God in prayer that you hate it. Then, pray against it. And keep praying against it.

When you watch or read the news, you will find many evils to pray against. When you can, pray specifically. If a certain drug cartel is mentioned, pray against drug producers and dealers, but also pray against the specific drug cartel mentioned. When shopping and you see an incident of inadequate or even horrible parenting, pray for the parent out of love, but also hate poor parenting in the world and pray against it. Notice how we hate evil but not the people doing it.

Once in a while you will see some evil in your world that you can do something about, most likely working with others. You might not be able to find a solution to drug cartels, but you very well might be able to befriend and help someone who is overwhelmed with parenting.

To accelerate preparation for heaven by hating more and more specific evils, consult those in your Christian Inner Circle who you can trust not to judge you or gossip. Ask them to watch for any evil in you that you might not see. Give them permission, not to lecture you or speak down to you, but simply to suggest that you might want to look at and pray about something in your behavior that doesn't quite look right to them.

Does this sound too hard to do? Just remember the unending rewards for doing this once you die and go to heaven. You might be embarrassed until you grow in humility and are okay with seeing that part of you that you want to get rid of – or should want to get rid of. The advantage is becoming more like God, growing a little bit more holy and pure of sin.

Hopefully your trusted Christian friends and relatives will see your example and extend an invitation for you to suggest they look at some of their behavior to see where they are unrighteous. The gain for them is a closer relationship with God. The gain for you is the joy of giving to God your friend or relative with a little bit more purity that will honor Him.

Also, we must keep one another from acting hateful, since that is not God's pattern for hating evil. Hatred as an act is a sin. Hatred as an attitude of intolerance of evil that prevents us from going along with it is something altogether different.

We need to use hatred as determination and energy to pray, and, if possible, do something to stop evil or repair its damage. We need each other to see that we do not avoid the responsibility of taking action. Stopping evil is almost always too big a thing to be done alone.

To summarize, there are these five advantages to paying attention to the evil in the world and taking the time to hate it – not the evil doers but the evil itself. Then you can (1) make sure you detest evil, (2) pray against evil, (3) perhaps do something about evil, (4) be amazed at God's total purity without any evil, and (5) later in heaven enjoy a heightened sense of peace because of evil's absence.

Please try not to forget that hating evil is extremely valuable as preparation for the best experience in heaven. First and foremost, the more fiercely we hate evil, the more we will be amazed at God's purity and open up a closer relationship with Him for all eternity. Second, hating evil will determine the extent to which we realize and appreciate its wonderful absence in heaven and the resulting peacefulness while we live there forever.

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This only explains hating and defeating evil a little. To learn much more, go to our website ChristiansTogether.org and go down the list of the Togethers and click on "Together Hate Evil and

Defeat It”.

Prayer to Embrace this Together

Lord of All, I and those in my Christian Inner Circle will need Your help to grow our spirits to hate evil more. Help us to yield to the work of the Holy Spirit for all of us to give You more glory in the way we detest evil.

Please help us all to become more like Jesus and hate evil and want nothing to do with it. We need Your help to notice evil and, as Jesus rescued us from evil, recognize if anyone needs to be rescued by us. Also, help us to see any other kind of evil that You want us to take a stand against.

May our lives worship You more because we, like You, hate evil in all of its forms. Examine us and help us to see and destroy any evil in ourselves. We want our spirits to be as separate from evil as can be while physically we live surrounded by evil and take our stand against it.

Make us strong in Your power to defeat the devil by countering some evil daily. Help us to work with You to turn anyone in our Christian Inner Circles from fear of Satan. We want Your involvement as we not only hate evil in the world, but also that which is in each of us. Enable us to not be resistant to finding our own evil. Help us eliminate it little by little in order to honor You and humiliate the devil.

Amazing Lord, we all want to go to heaven and be exceptionally relieved by the peace that comes with the absence of evil. We want to be thrilled with the peace of heaven when we get there.

In Jesus' Name, Amen.