***Seven Things that God Hates
RO158-02***

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We continue today in Romans 12:9-12. Our subject is "Christian Conduct," and this segment number four.

**Be Holy, for I am Holy**

The Bible places upon every Christian a seemingly impossible high standard of personal conduct. This is declared for us in 1 Peter 1:15-16, where we read, "But as He who has called you is holy, so be holy in all manner of life, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy.'" This amazing verse requires each of us, as Christians, to match our standard of conduct to the very holiness of God. It calls upon every believer to live a lifestyle that reflects the holiness of God. It is obvious that no unbeliever could possibly reach such a standard of conduct.

It is also true, however, that no Christians can, on his own, resist his old sin nature, which constantly seeks to drag him down from God's standard of holiness. The standard of holy conduct, in mind and in body, however, is not optional for the Christians. The Greek Bible makes it very clear to us that these verses are in the form of a command from God. It is not just an exhortation. It is not just an encouragement. It is a direct order from the God who made us, and to whom we all will report someday. And that command is: "I want you to be just as right as I am right. I want you to maintain perfect, absolute righteousness integrity that is compatible with my perfect, absolute righteousness integrity.

**Learning Bible Doctrine**

Now, obviously, that is staggering to the human imagination, and seemingly an impossible command. Obviously, God has to come in to do something to make it possible for us to live the holy life that He lives. In order to achieve such a supernatural standard of conduct, God has indeed provided a supernatural enablement. First of all, it is the knowledge of Bible doctrine. You cannot be a holy person until you know the doctrines of Scripture. Until you are a holy person, you are a zero in the human race. You may be gifted; you may be intelligent; you may be wealthy; you may be prosperous; and, you may even be in a position of great power over the lives of other people, but you are a zero. You are an ignorant intellectual. You are a nothing.

We come into the Christian life in that status, and it is only as we devote ourselves seriously and assiduously to learning the Scriptures, and to learning what God has revealed to us in the Word of God, that we begin to be something. And that's the first thing that God wants us to do. He doesn't want our service; He doesn't want our hustling; and, He doesn't want anything else from us first. The first thing He wants is for us to become something in the matter of godliness.

If you have ever been overwhelmed with the feeling that you don't amount to much; that you don't particularly like yourself; or, that you really aren't anything, just thank God that you have a clear perspective on yourself, because you're not anything. You don't amount to anything. You're in the same boat that all the rest of us are in. We are zilch – zero. And what you have done is you have stumbled across a great truth that most people never get hold of.

However, it is God's intention that you should become something very, very magnificent – namely, to be transformed into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ. And that is what God means when he says, "I want you to be holy. I want you to be just like My Son."

The first step to experiencing that kind of a transformation, we have already learned in Romans 12, is to have a change of our minds by having it transform from human viewpoint to divine view point through the Word of God.

So, God has provided, first of all, doctrinal understanding, which sets forth for us God's moral standards and the holy characteristics of our God. Then He has given us each a permanent indwelling of God the Holy Spirit, so that we, as Christians, can take the truth of doctrine, and we can put it in practice in resisting the old sin nature, with all of its lust patterns within us. Yes, the devil can manipulate our sin nature, and be frustrated. There isn't anything so great in life as frustrating . . . the devil. He may manipulate all he wants, but the Christian who knows what God knows, and the Christian who has God's standard, and who has a perspective of the ultimate goal of the image of Christ Himself, and God the Holy Spirit has the freedom in the believer to apply those concepts (those principles) – that Christian really does become something.

Then you know what? You're going to see a lot better about yourself. You're going to discover that you really do like yourself. You are going to discover that you like yourself because God likes you. You're going to find that you appreciate yourself because you are something now of great value. You are in the image of Jesus Christ.

So, this is an enormously important passage of Scripture that we are studying today, because we begin with the realization that we have a standard of life which is not optional. It is a command. If we are going to be significant in life to ourselves, and have any satisfaction, and not get caught up in all the trivia of the world, and if you are going to hope to stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ and not be the victim of tears streaming down your face as you realize how you wasted your life, it all begins with knowing the Word of God – being here to be instructed; being a student of the Word during the week; and being a person who applies, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, the things that you know are characteristic of our holy God.

So, the Christian who has learned Bible doctrine, and is filled with the Holy Spirit, and under the control of the Holy Spirit, that Christian can live the holy life of God. You have to know what is right conduct, but you also then have to have the capacity to do right. Most Christian instruction centers on telling people: "Do right." And then it even tries to codify what is right, and it lays it out and says, "If you're going to do right, this is what you'll do, and this is what you want to do." So, you get to do-dos and don't-dos so that you can be something significant. But the Bible says that that fails. You have to have something more than knowing what is the standard that you should follow. You have to have capacity to do it.

If you are a Christian who is in temporal fellowship, where God the Holy Spirit is working in your life, you will be amazed how that Spirit of God will guide you; how He will affect your taste; and, how He will direct your choices. You will be pleased with what you discover you can be. And you will look back on your life, and you will wonder why you were so foolish, at some point in time, when you did this, and you did this, and you fouled up, and you wonder why – and what was the worth of it? And now you look upon it, and it has a bad taste in your mouth, and maybe it has long-term consequences as well.

Apart from the guidance of biblical morality, and the Christian character traits that the Word of God lays out for us, and the enablement of the Holy Spirit, our society is nothing but a jungle of evil and violence. And that's what we are discovering. But the Christian does not have to live in that jungle-like atmosphere.

We have learned, and we have been taught several times in a variety of ways, that nature cannot teach man the standard of conduct to produce blessings for time and eternity. We have also known from our own experience, and that of others, that human reason cannot create a standard of conduct for well-being for mankind now and forever. God created people, indeed, to live by a standard which reflects His holy character. That's the only way you can go. That's the only way you can live and make it: "Be holy as I am holy." Nothing else will work, because that's the only way God made us to work.

So, life can be beautiful, even in the devil's world, for those who live by God's standard of right and wrong. Here in Romans 12, the apostle Paul begins to spell out for us specific elements which constitute godly Christian conduct. And I remind you that each of these elements that we will study, one-by-one, that the apostle lays out for us, are the means by which you may achieve what is a popular pursuit today – a good self-image. There is only one way to have a good self-image, and that is through a lifestyle that is devoted and that practices these very specifics that the Word of God is laying out for us. And I think that sooner or later, before we finish the rest of this book, you're going to hit a very tender spot. The raw nerve ends are going to be hit someplace in your spiritual life. And I would caution you now not to ignore it. We will probably will hit one today for somebody who isn't here, because they have chosen to absent themselves at a time when God the Holy Spirit was preparing to give them a shock treatment, to help them to take a step toward the image of Christ, and to help straighten out their lives from its grossness as believers to the winsomeness of Jesus Christ.

When the Word of God starts taking the trouble to lay out that this is the way you should conduct yourself, you better pay attention. And then you will find that you're not going to have all the crazy problems that people have in life because they are out of phase with the Creator. Romans 12 gives us specific standards of godly Christian conduct. The believer is God's servants on earth for a specific service through the use of his spiritual gifts or abilities exercised in his physical body. A Christian cannot serve God, however, apart from a godly lifestyle that is necessary to keep him in temporal fellowship. If your lifestyle is ungodly, you're out of fellowship. If you're out of fellowship, you cannot serve God. If you cannot serve God, you cannot fulfill your mission in life. If you cannot fulfill your mission in life, you cannot take up your cross and follow Jesus Christ, and you waste your life. And there's nothing for you in eternity. You get your salvation, but that's all you get.

So, a Christian cannot serve God apart from a godly lifestyle. Christians who talk holiness, and then live in violation of God's ways are hypocrites. And a hypocrite is an offense to both God and man. And in the Christian community, there are some people who are prime hypocrites types. Yes, the unbelievers look upon Christians, and say, "Oh, there's nothing to that Christianity. They're all a bunch of hypocrites." You bet they are – just as hypocritical as the unbelievers, as a matter of fact (I'm always pleased to tell them). And because the Christian knows better, he is even a worse hypocrite than the unbelievers.

However, that's irrelevant to the message of salvation, and to the reality of God and to the genuineness of what doctrine will do in your soul, and what God the Holy Spirit will make out of you in the image of our Savior. But it is offensive to listen to Christians who talk holiness, and then they live in violation of the principles of godly conduct.

For the next many, many weeks, we going to look at the specifics of godly conduct. And again, I remind you, that when you hit the wrong nerve, and you are alerted to some ungodly conduct, don't pass it over. If you refuse to do right in life, then don't act as if you're right with God. You cannot con God, and there's no value in conning man.

**Love without Hypocrisy**

In Romans 12:9, the apostle Paul says that doing right with God is, first of all, having mental attitude love for all mankind. So, Paul has said that love be without hypocrisy – that there is to be no hypocrisy in your putting on a cordial front for people whom you really despise.

The book of Proverbs tells us that that is a pointless and a foolish thing to do. Proverbs 10:18: "He that hides hatred has lying lips." Did you ever meet anybody with lying lips? A big mouthful-of-teeth smile greets you like some long lost bosom buddies, and yet in their heart, they have a resentment; an envy; and, an attitude of despising: "He that hides hatred has lying lips."

So, the Word of God cautions us to have a mental attitude love, and a spirit of goodwill and concern, and a willingness to sacrifice for others, and that apart from their merits. This is something you have for the human race. This is something you have for the slob. This is something you have for the prince. You have this toward people in general. Yes, people who are under Satan's domination, and people who live by the world's standards, are very offensive people. And they shock us, and they raise the level of disgust in us. And we have to remind ourselves that they are destined, if they will let God do it, to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. Most of them won't. But we extend the hope that they will. So, we treat them as those who have great value, for the simple fact that Christ died for them. It is mental attitude love, then, that makes the world go around with some sense and some rationality.

**Abhor what is Evil**

However, the apostle Paul also indicates that doing right with your body and your mind involves being repulsed by evil. So, in verse 9, he says, "Abhor that which is evil." Evil, we have indicated, comes as a double-edged sword. It is in the form of actual acts of sins, but it is also in the form of acts of human good.

You can think of the old sin nature in the form of a diamond. It produces sins, and it produces human goods. The old sin nature remains in the Christian until he meets Jesus Christ in heaven. Whatever comes from the sin nature, even if it's good by the sight of men, is rejected by God. The products of the sin nature are not the products of God, and God has nothing to do with them. He totally rejects them. Our sins are obviously rejected by God. It is 1 John 3 that gives us a very important piece of information about the sin nature in those of us who are children of God. In 1 John 3:2, we read, "Beloved, now are we the children of God." OK, he's talking to Christians. He's talking to those of you who are going to heaven – to those of you who've accepted Christ as your personal Savior.

Now what an amazing statement: "It does not yet appear what we shall be." We are going to be in the image of Christ. We don't look like that now: "But we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." When we come into His presence, this sin nature quality, which resides within the genetic structure of our body, is going to be ripped out. And, suddenly, we will, for the first time in our lives, be free of all desire and all capacity to do evil. We won't be able to do human good. We won't be able to do acts of sins. We'll be just like Christ.

So, verse 3 says, "Everyone that has this hope in him." What hope? The hope of becoming transformed into the image of Christ. That's our future: "Everyone who has that hope in him purifies himself, even as He (as God) is pure. This is another variation of what Peter said, that we read in the previous session: "Be holy as I am holy," God says. Here, Peter says that those who understand that they're to be transformed into the image of Christ, conduct themselves and live their lives toward that goal. A great deal of living in the pattern of Jesus Christ is within your full control – most of it. It's simply a matter of your understanding what is characteristic and befitting the image of Christ, and then permitting the Spirit of God to use that information to put it into effect in your life. You really can be a person who has a good self-image (a true, worthy self-image) – a person who really has a basis for some esteem for yourself, so that you have a basis for glorifying God and living in respect to what He has made of you.

It is the old sin nature, however, that also causes some people, on the one hand, to convey a wicked image; and, on the other hand, to convey a very good image. So, you have somebody that is very moral. He's not born again. He doesn't believe in Christ. He doesn't view Him as the Son of God. He doesn't believe that he needs His death for his sins. But he obeys all the ten commandments. And when you meet this person, a fine person, he is functioning out of a sin nature from its good image capacity. And what he does is take all that right into hell with him.

There are other people that are wicked in every respect. They create a loathing image. Everything they do is vile and horrible, and they are no different than the person who conveys a good image. They're all going into the lake of fire.

So, the old sin nature has a weakness for doing sinful things, and it has a strong attraction for doing human good things. God has no use for anything that flows from the sin nature. It is all evil with Him, and so it's all worthless with Him. Now people can psych themselves into believing that their human good has some merit with God, but one day they're going to find out how wrong they were. Then they'll have all eternity to regret the fact that they thought that when they produced this human good, and they conveyed this good image, that they were doing something that had merit with God. It doesn't carry.

Christians should know better than to waste their lives in the evils of sins and human good. And I'm here to tell you that you can go ahead and waste your life doing human good. That's one of the marvels of the liberty of grace. I'm here to tell you that it's a fool's investment of your life. But I'm here to tell you that the God of grace gives you freedom to make a fool of yourself, and then to take the consequences for all eternity of living with your choice.

**Seven Things that God Hates**

Now because our God is so fair and considerate with us, He takes the trouble many times in Scripture to clarify, in a variety of ways, what He means when He tells us to loathe what is evil, because He becomes very specific about what is evil. And in one classic example, in Proverbs 6:16-19, He lays out for us the seven things that the Almighty Holy God hates above all else. So, this would seem to give us a good starting point if you seriously want to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ. If you seriously want to respond to the call for holiness, then here's the place to begin. We really do have a standard to guide us. Verse 16 says, "These six things the Lord hates; yea, seven are an abomination unto Him.

1. **A Proud Look**

Number one is a proud look. This connotes haughty eyes. This connotes conduct which reveals a proud and arrogant spirit within a person. What is it that took Satan down? What took this magnificent creature down from the highest position that anyone has ever held? Pride. And the Bible is explicitly clear that all of the grief of sin brought into God's creation came through this quality of pride. It is no wonder that when God says, "I will now tell you the seven things I hate above all else, in a human being, or in my angels," that number one should be pride.

This is reiterated elsewhere in the Bible. For example, Proverbs 8:13 puts it this way: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." That's what Paul has told us: "Pride and arrogance, and the evil way, and the perverse mouth, do I hate." God hates pride.

In Psalm 18:27: "For You will save the afflicted people, but You will bring down high looks:" "You that will save the afflicted (those who are the humble), but those who walk around reflecting an arrogant attitude, God says, 'I'm going to bring you down.'"

Psalm 101:5: "Who so secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will cut off. Him that has a high look and a proud heart, I will not tolerate." Do we have any American Christians here today? Do we have anybody who shares Satan's crime of pride? Well, you must answer that for yourself in your treatment and dealing with people: like the waitress that serves you in the restaurant; like the clerk behind the counter; and, like all the people that you deal with in a number of ways who come in, and because they have an arrogant heart, cannot keep from revealing it on the outside. And God says that He knows already what is in your mind. And what is in your mind in the way your pride is going to spew out externally on other people.

**Arrogance**

Matthew 12:34 puts it this way: "Oh, generation of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." Here are these religious leaders parading as representatives of the living God (holy men), and Jesus says, "You're so vile, and you're so corrupt, what makes you think that you could give anything externally that is of value to people, and that is a blessing, when you're so foul on the inside, because the inside is what determines what is on the outside?" So, the attitude of arrogance revokes the holiness of God. Just don't be that way.

1. **A Lying Tongue**

In Proverbs 6:17, God says, "I hate a lying tongue." Lies are the product of Satan through the old sin nature. The Bible makes it very clear that when you tell a lie, you have joined Satan. And you can tell a lie by words. But most of you don't do that. Most of you tell lies by your attitudes – the old, internal, mental attitude sin and hatred, but externally, you're putting on a pretense that you are just the kindest, nicest, well-meaning, cordial person. But inside, you're rolling with all kinds of mental hatreds.

**Satan is the Father of Lies**

The apostle John, in John 8:44 of his gospel, gives us the source of lying: "You are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it." So, that's pretty grim. When you choose to speak a lie, you are making it clear that you are now acting as if the devil was still your father. It says, "I hate what comes out of Satan. I hate the lies that he tells people. And he does that because he has to make himself look good. He deserted the truth, and now he speaks lies in order to make himself look good in the eyes of other people.

This is always the thing that happens. You must be careful with Christians that you know, and maybe that have carried esteem in your eyes before. Some of you need to review the tapes on the doctrine of reversionism. Some of you need to review what happens to the spiritual mentality of a human being, and how he goes spiritually crazy (insane), once he goes negative to the Word of God, so that you will be on guard to know that a person who begins to reject the truth in his mind will begin conveying lies to you with his mouth. He won't think he's lying? He won't intend to be lying. But because of his mental disorientation from God's thinking, he will be advising you, and giving you information, and directing you in a direction which is contrary to the mind of God. He's lying to you.

**Satan's Lies**

That's what the devil is doing all the time. The devil is always a subtle liar, not an open liar. He doesn't come up to you and say, "Listen, fella, I want you to swallow the biggest lie that I have ever cooked up, and here is what it is. And I'm going to spell it out, and I want you to believe it," because you'd kick him out. But instead he comes up and puts his arm around you, and says, "Hey, fella, I want to tell you something. I have something that's just so wonderful, you should know it." And then he gives you the lie. And because he's so personable, and so nice, and so warm, you believe it. God is our standard. His word is our guide. Don't be a sucker for lying lips. We live in a society that is filled with lies. Do you understand why God hates what our society and what most people in our society are doing? The people who are the power brokers, and the people who are the pacesetters in our society – they're liars, left and right. Most of them are sincere liars. They are so deluded, that they actually think that they're telling you the truth. They actually think that they're telling you something that's good. They don't realize that they're liars. But with God, the truth is the standard that is not relative and flexible.

So, when people get out of line with the Word of God, their sincerity doesn't make any difference. They're still lying when they start promoting that which the Bible condemns.

In Proverbs 12:19, this same principle is reiterated: "The lip of truth shall be established forever; but a lying tongue is but for a moment." How well put: "The lying tongue is but for a moment." Yes, it will meet a momentary needs, but it will bear its bitter fruit.

**Vanity and Deceit**

Proverbs 21:6: "The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro by those who seek death." Do you think that there are people in our society who are trying to get rich by lying? I can see you don't think so. Do you think there are people who think that it's OK to lie, and deceive, and be insiders, in order to get on top of the outsiders, and whatnot, because wealth is really that important, and they think that they have something? The Bible says the getting of treasures by a lying tongue vanity. That means it's nothing. It's a deceit. It's empty. It's zilch. It's tossed to and fro of those who seek death.

If you're a Christian, your lying tongue gets you temporal death. It gets you the death of losing your temporal fellowship with God. If you push it far enough, it'll get you your physical death as well.

**Flattery**

Let's add one more – Proverbs 26:28: "A lying tongue hates those who are afflicted by it; and, a flattering mouth works ruin." This verse is telling you that a lying tongue can be an outright deceit. And another kind of lying is flattery, and that is one of the best devices in the world that the con artists use to flatter people. They're lying to them. They don't really mean what they're saying, but they can use them then for their means. The power brokers of our society have tongues that flatter. They are not genuine in their speech. When you find someone whose speech is not couched in flattery, and whose words are genuine, esteem that person very highly, because you've got a very good friend. He will not con you. He will not lie to you by flattery. And when you get a word of appreciation and commendation from that person, you've got something very, very real. You've got something which indeed reflects the holiness of our God when he speaks.

1. **Hands that Shed Innocent Blood**

The first thing that God hates above all else is a proud look (internal arrogance and pride). Then comes a deceitful mouth. Now we come to "hands that shed innocent blood." These are hands that commit murder. This is the unauthorized taking of a life – premeditated homicide. Here is man – made in the image of God. God gives you life, and God says, "It is my privilege to take your life, and nobody else's privilege. You do not take your own life, and no one else takes your life. You do not take the life of an unborn child in the womb. You do not take the life of a child outside of the womb because there's something that's not quite right with him after he is born, and maybe never will be. And you don't take the life of the older person who is no longer on top of things, and who no longer has the capacity to be where he once was." So, he becomes a little bit of a nuisance and a drain, and requires our efforts and attention. God says that life is His.

**Abortion**

This business of abortion in the United States is a touchstone. Do you know what a touchstone is?" It's a stone that you test a thing with. It's like in chemistry, where you have litmus paper to tell what is acid and what is alkaline by the color of the paper. This is a touchstone on a person's thinking, character, and quality, and what he will do for you and where he will lead you. The person who is for abortion is a person that is under the hatred of God. You must decide how much authority you want to invest in a person like that, and how much association you want with a person like that. God says, "I hate murder. I hate those who take the lives of people in whose image I have made them."

**Killing**

Now, He's not talking about killing. You understand that. He's talking about the illegitimate taking of life. It is legitimate to kill a person for first-degree murder. God says that you must do that. God says that in a society that does not do that, "You have spilled the blood of innocent people on the ground, and that blood will cry out for vengeance." And if you do not execute that person, there will be a time when God will cause that earth in that country to vomit out its inhabitants. Many, many civilizations in the past have been destroyed because they were vomited out, so to speak, by the land itself, because they tolerated homicide. They tolerated murder.

What should they do to that character, if they catch him, who stabbed to death that pregnant young woman outside the video store in Plymouth Park this week, because she resisted when he wanted to grab her purse and take it? Now what kind of a human being is this? This a human being, first of all, that our attitude of goodwill goes out to, as our pity does, for he is made in the image of God, and could be in the image of Christ. But on the other hand, we share the holiness of God, and we share the hatred for this heinous crime that he has done. And he has found that that hatred against what he has done is to be expressed with God's justice – part of His holiness. And if we are holy, then we must be just, and we must execute that person for what he has done. Hands that commit murder, and which are not restrained, and which justice does not recompense with death of the individual, is a society which is under the judgment of God.

You can see all the cute words you want. And you can make all the speeches about getting a person killed who doesn't deserve to be killed, which hardly ever happens. And the God in heaven is still smarter than you are, because He also thought of that possibility and tried to ensure that that would not happen by the kind of testimony that would confirm the guilt of the person. So, you needn't come up with some excuse and some super smart justification for never executing a person as if God had not taken everything into account.

I'm getting sick and tired of people in our society who speak as if we do not know what God thinks and what God has said, and who speak as if we are just making up all this stuff that the Word of God proclaims. We are not. And we're here to tell you, in the final few years of this age, that those people are dead wrong, and at least in eternity, they will not look back and say, "Why didn't you tell me?"

In Psalm 37:32, the psalmist said, "The wicked watches the righteous and seeks to slay him." The wicked want to knock off the righteous. That's how it always is. It is the wicked who want to silence the righteous.

Matthew 15:19: "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, thefts, fornication, false witness, and blasphemies." Out of the heart: out of the mind – that's what it means by "the heart." It's a matter of what you think. And it is your thinking that gets fouled up, and your thinking results in these heinous crimes.

1 Peter 4:15: "But let none of you (you Christians) suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters." Boy, could we spend the next few weeks on that verse? "Let none of you suffer as a murderer," and murder begins with your hatred. Don't forget that: "Or as a thief." Do we have any Christians here who are stealing; any Christians who haven't paid for services they receive; or, any deadbeats or con artists or gold bricks as evil doers? All those little evils that you think are not significant? And the worst evil is all that human good you've been doing, as a busybody in other men's matters – poking your nose into the privacy of the lives of other Christians.

Revelation 21:8 makes a serious statement on murderers: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Those who have not had these sins forgiven, pay for them in the lake of fire forever. The execution of those guilty of homicide is not murder. The taking of the life of those who have not been legally constituted as murderers is a very grave sin, and God hates it.

1. **A Mind that Plots Evil**

Proverbs 6:18 tells us that the next thing that God hates above all sins: "A heart that devises wicked imaginations" – a mind plotting evil. This is a mind which is used to devise evil actions. God has given you the capacity that He did not give to animals. He gave you a capacity to think. He gave you a capacity to make decisions, by which you could do things better, and by which you could stop doing things that are counterproductive.

An animal does not have that capacity. An animal works by instinct. When a bird builds a nest, he may build the worst nest in the world. It's drafty. The chicks complain all the time that they're cold. They shiver. It's a stinking, crude little nest. Do you think that mama and papa bird say, "That was a really bad nest we had last year. This time we're going to fill those cracks with mud, and we're going to weave some stuff together, and we're going to make it a little softer in the bed for the chicks." No, those stupid birds are going to make the same drafty nest every time because they just work by instinct. Their minds do not think.

So, God says, "Where do you get off? One of the greatest qualities reflecting deity in you is your capacity to just think, and to rise above the animal level if you choose to do so. And you use it to devise evil actions."

Proverbs 3:29 says, "Devise not evil against your neighbor. See that he dwells securely by you." Isn't that dirty pool? Here's somebody that trusts you, and you devise evil for him? Who's the last person that trusted you, and you double-crossed him with your evil.

Proverbs 4:16: "For they sleep not except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away unless they cause some to fall." Now that's how gross you can get. God says here that there are some people who can't sleep unless they've done something dirty to somebody. It just keeps them awake until they have devised some devious plot by which they can do somebody some dirt.

Proverbs 6:12: "A worthless person (a wicked man) walks with a perverse mouth. He winks with his eyes. He speaks with his feet. He teaches with his fingers. Perversity is in his heart. He devises mischief continually. He sows discord. There shall his calamity come suddenly. Suddenly shall he be broken without remedy." Evil imaginations include human good projects which destroy people and nations. Now that's very sobering. You might say, "But I wanted to feed these people. I wanted to clothe them. I wanted to give them better housing. I wanted to give them better schools." Yes, but you did it on the basis of the human good product of the old sin nature, and God calls that evil. You have plotted evil." You might say, "Well, I didn't mean to." Yes, but you were told. You were instructed. You were given guidance to know better.

Yes, there is a way to feed the hungry; to clothe those who are without garments; and, to give shelter, and to give assistance, and to give physical care. And God has a way of doing that in a way that does not degrade the person, and in a way that does not incapacitate him from becoming an individual with his personal self-respect and capacity, for from doing all the things to people that are destructive of them, because you are going to meet an immediate need without consideration for long-range consequences. You might as well face up to the fact that if that's what you're doing, you're going to answer for this at the Judgment Seat of Christ. You will not get away with it. People might think you're the greatest, but you do not con God.

1. **Feet that are Swift in Running to Mischief**

Then verse 18: "Feet that are swift in running to mischief." God says, "I hate feet that are swift to mischief." This is the pursuit of wicked practices which violate the divine standard of righteousness. You may read on your own Romans 1:24-32. That is the sober description of what is being practiced in our society today – feet that are devoted to pursuing the vilest kind of evil imaginable.

Let's read Romans 1:24: "Wherefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts (evil in the mind – that's where it starts) to dishonor their own bodies between themselves (an evil mind produces evil in the body); who exchanged the truth of God for a lie." God gave them information on how they should treat their bodies, and what His moral code was. And they exchanged it for a lie, and said, "That's not the way it has to be:" "And they worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator who is blessed forever. Amen." They made their own gods – mostly making themselves their God:

"For this cause, God gave them up unto vile affections. For even their women exchange the natural use of that which is against nature. And likewise, also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men, working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error, which was fitting (such as AIDS). And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not seemly." Do you know what a reprobate mind is? It is a mind which thinks that evil is right. This is a terrible condition. Just pray that God never delivers you over to the reversionistic consequence of a reprobate mind, where you are so spiritually crazy, that even every false doctrine now becomes truth in your eyes. And every immorality becomes a moral, virtuous exaltation:

"Being filled with all unrighteousness: fornication; wickedness; covetousness; maliciousness; full of envy; murder; strife; deceit; malignity; whispers; back-biters; haters of God; insolent; proud boasters; inventors of evil things; disobedient to parents; without understanding; covenant-breakers; without natural affection; implacable; unmerciful; who, knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

Now do you see why God says, "I hate those who run into doing evil, and who sit and devise and plan violations of My standard of righteousness?" These people described here not only were vile creatures in what they did, but they knew better. But they took great pleasure in what they were doing. They not only did this against God's cautioning, but they found great satisfaction when they saw other people joining them in their evil.

1 Peter 3:12 says, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open under their prayers. But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." Yes, you can do your evil, but don't expect to have God's attention and care.

Proverbs 4:3-5: "For the time passed of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the gentiles." You and I, as Christians, should have had enough of living like the world when we were part of that world system – when we walked in lasciviousness; lusts; excessive of wine; revelings; carousings; and abominable idolatries, in which they think it strange that you run not with them to the same profligacies, speaking evil of you; who should give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead." Yes, the people who you will not follow in their evil ways will badmouth you, but they will answer to God. Don't join the crowd who is rushing to fulfill the lusts of the sin natures.

1. **A False Witness that Speaks Lies**

The next thing that God says, "I need above all else," is in Proverbs 6:19: "A false witness that speaks lies." This is a person who tells lies, especially a person here who tells lies in the court of law.

Proverbs 12:17 says, "He that speaks truth shows forth righteousness; but, a false witness, deceit."

Proverbs 14:5: "A faithful witness will not lie, but a false witness will utter lies."

Proverbs 14:25: "A true witness delivers souls, but a deceitful witness speaks lies."

Proverbs 19:5: "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaks lies shall not escape."

Proverbs 90:9: "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaks lies shall perish."

Proverbs 21:28. "A false witness shall perish, but the man that hears speaks constantly."

Proverbs 25:18: "A man that bears false witness against his neighbor is a club of war, and a sword, and a sharp arrow. It is like attacking a person when you tell him a lie.

You can see that the book of Proverbs is filled with serious cautions about telling lies.

1. **The One who Sows Discord among Brethren**

Finally, in Proverbs 6:19, God says that He: "Hates the one who sows discord among brethren. This is the person who causes suspicions and bad feelings among believers. And here is something that's amazing that God would include what most Christians treat in such a trivial way. They say something that creates a bad feeling, and creates conflict between Christian, and they don't think much about it.

Ephesians 4:3 says, "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace." God the Holy Spirit has created the unity. But we are supposed to keep that unity, and not to fracture it by our misrepresentation and sowing discord among Christians.

Romans 14:19: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things with which one may edify another." Christians are to follow the things by which they can encourage one another, and strengthen one another in the Lord.

1 Peter 3:10-11: "For he that will love life (now listen to this, you life-lovers) and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips – that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil, and do good. Let him seek peace, and pursue it." What a tremendous verse. There it is, all put together – if you want something great out of life.

Notice James 4:11, which says, "Speak not evil, one of another, brethren. He did speaks evil of his brother, and judges his brother speaks evil of the Law and judges the Law. But if you judge the Law, you are not the doer of the law, but a judge." Where do you get off speaking evil of other Christians, even if there is something evil about them to speak of? Where do you get off discussing that as if you were the judge, and have taken God's place as the judge in the matter?

Proverbs 16:28 says this: "A perverse man sows strife, and a whisper separates chief friends." This is the great tragedy of somebody's loose mouth breaking up people who actually were great friends.

Proverbs 17:9: "He that covers a transgression seeks love, but he that repeats a matter separate friends." What a great verse. You don't have to tell everything you know about people. You don't have to tell their evils. You have to concern yourself for covering up and helping them to do better. "What good is it," the Word of God says, "for you to be sowing discord among believers instead of trying to heal breaches and breaks?"

So, God hates these seven things. He hates false religion in general. He hates its false morality; its false salvation; and, its false government. One religion is not just as good as another. God loves only that which is the truth – His absolute righteousness. But He hates these seven things above everything else that a human being can do. Keep them in mind: "I hate your arrogance and pride. I hate your lying tone. I hate hands that commit murder. I hate minds which plot to do evil. I hate feet that rush to join in doing that evil. I hate those of you who bear false testimony in a court of law. And I hate those of you who sow discord among brethren.

God hates these things. When he hates your actions, the consequence of that hatred does affect His attitude toward you. He loves you for restoration, but He must treat you as His enemy when evils like this are characteristic in your life. The Word of God gives us good advice when it says, "Abhor that which is evil." These seven give us a start on what to abhor.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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