

God Hates

WISDOM'S WARNINGS (PART 4) • PROVERBS 6:16-19

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****COVID-19 SPLIT SERVICE****

It's a blessing to be with you this morning! I hope everybody has the elements for the Lord's Supper, either from home or from the table in the entryway, as we will be partaking of the Supper immediately after we study the Word this morning. Following the Supper, we plan on singing "Angry Words" (#37), and then we will head outside to do our visiting out there in the fresh air. We need to enjoy and appreciate this. As it gets cooler over the next few months, this might be a bit more difficult. Today, though, is just about perfect.

As we begin, we'd like to introduce Caleb and Kari Richter as new members of the congregation. They come to us from the Soldier Creek Church of Christ in Piedmont, Oklahoma, just northwest of Oklahoma City. The elders met with Caleb and Kari last Sunday, and they are ready to get plugged in. Caleb's dad (Ken) preaches for the Soldier Creek congregation and gave us a glowing reference, and we also talked to Loyd Dixon, one of the elders down there, and between Loyd and Ken, we learned that Caleb is a passionate songleader, he has extensive church camp experience (which is awesome). Caleb and Kari have both taught Bible classes. As an RN, Kari coordinated something of a medical support group. Some of you might remember when I preached on fasting a year or so ago, I mentioned how great it would be if we could have some kind of support group for healthy eating, and so on, but we didn't really have anybody qualified to handle something like that at the time. We don't have that excuse anymore! But we are thankful to have Caleb and Kari with us here in Madison.

As usual, we are starting today with the Plan of Salvation. While we were yet sinners, Jesus died for us, he was buried, and he was raised up on the third day. In response, we believe the message, we turn away from sin, and we allow ourselves to be buried with the Lord in baptism. At that point, our sins are forgiven, the Christian life begins, and we live for him. And again today, we have some good news, starting with several baptisms in the Philippines a week or so ago. This comes to us from the Hamorawon, Calbayog Church of Christ. Those being baptized are Crisanto (38), his wife's sister Analyln (22), and also Daniel (15).

We also have some good news from the south suburbs of Los Angeles. About a week ago, Jason Hyde, a gospel preacher, had the privilege of baptizing his own father. Unfortunately, Jason's mother had passed away about a week before this, but something about all of this caused his father to open his heart to the truth of the gospel and was immersed in water for the forgiveness of his sins.

And here in Madison, we are thrilled that Jesse obeyed the gospel last Sunday afternoon! We are glad to have Jesse with us, and we look forward to getting to know him a lot better over the coming weeks and months.

This morning, we return to our brief series of lessons from Proverbs 6. We started several weeks ago by looking at the danger of co-signing on a loan. We need to help people, but we need to help in a ways that are actually helpful. We went on to look at some lessons from the ant, the six-legged preacher. And last week, we looked at Solomon's warning to beware of the scoundrel as he warns his sons to stay away from those who are twisted and deceptive. This morning, we continue as King Solomon describes God as HATING. The picture on the wall up here, by the way, was taken about two weeks ago out at Governor Dodge State Park. This is Enee Point, and this is where we recorded our class. It's a beautiful place, and I would encourage you to stop by if you ever have the opportunity. Today, we are just using this as a background. There's nothing hateful about this place at all! The passage, though, does describe God as hating.

Most of us probably have some things we hate. We might hate being stuck in traffic. We hate those automated calls that start by saying, "Please don't hang up." I personally hate any kind of tuna that comes out of a can. I continue to ask for a 2-hour warning before any can of tuna is opened in the house, so I can make plans to not be there. This morning, though, we come to a passage describing God as hating. And for the purpose of our study, we are thinking of hate as an intense and intentional dislike, even anger against someone or something, controlled rage, we might say.

Many people, though, are shocked at the thought of this. To them, God is love, and so they try to get around this in some way, and they'll argue that God "hates the sin and loves the sinner." We understand the thought, and yet it would be at least a bit difficult to make that distinction in scripture. Even in this passage, as we will discover in just a moment, God doesn't just hate a series of sins, but with some of these God hates the **"false witness,"** he hates the **"one who spreads strife among brothers."** Sometimes, then, a sin and a sinner are so closely tied together, it is difficult to make the distinction. We know, though, that **"God is love,"** according to John. And although he does hate, Scripture never says that "God is hate." God's nature is love, but his love does not exclude the possibility of hating.

Let's look at the passage, we'll make a few observations about the idea of an abomination, and then we'll do a quick overview of what Solomon says here. But first, let's look together at Proverbs 6:16-19, the words of King Solomon to his son – Proverbs 6:16-19,

- ¹⁶ ***There are six things which the LORD hates,
Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him:***
¹⁷ ***Haughty eyes, a lying tongue,
And hands that shed innocent blood,***
¹⁸ ***A heart that devises wicked plans,
Feet that run rapidly to evil,***
¹⁹ ***A false witness who utters lies,
And one who spreads strife among brothers.***

Before we get into the list, we notice the wording in verse 16. We see something similar in Proverbs 30:18-19 and also a few times in Amos 1-2, I believe. **"There are six things...yes, even seven."** I think of those "as seen on TV" commercials, where the announcer outlines the benefits, and then he says, "But wait, there's more!" and then he continues. In the same way, Solomon is going through some things here, but this is not to be considered

an exhaustive list. And I say this, because we have other passages giving us many other things God hates. In fact, if I were to have us get together to make a list of things that are an **“abomination”** to God, I’m pretty sure we could think up a few that are not here in this passage, but this is an overview. These are some things that are worth hating.

As we go through this list, then, let’s remember that we have these here for a reason. Solomon is teaching: If God hates these things, then we should as well. To be like him, we need to hate what he hates. So, as we move through these, let’s ask: Are we personally disgusted by these things, just as God is? Do we hate what God hates?

I. We start, then, where Solomon does, with the reminder that God hates HAUGHTY EYES.

These are eyes that look down on other people. We’re talking about pride or arrogance here. God hates arrogance. And this, of course, continues over into the New Covenant. We think of Peter’s reminder in 1 Peter 5:5, where he says that all of us need to, **“...clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.”** God, then, is **“opposed to the proud,”** so we need to ask ourselves: What does this look like? How do we know we might be proud? Unfortunately, pride is one of those sins that we rarely diagnose in ourselves. We see it in others, but it’s hard to see in our own lives. So, what does pride look like?

We might start with the figure of speech Solomon uses here, the idea of looking down on people, **“haughty eyes.”** How do we treat other people? Do we think we know more than everybody around us? I can’t remember who said it, but in some lecture on leadership, I remember somebody suggesting that in your leadership team, if you know more than everybody in the room, you probably need to be in a different room! Either that, or you need some better people on your team. And the point of that was: We learn from other people. And if we either know or think we know more than everybody around us, something isn’t working.

Another symptom of pride is when we treat ourselves better than we treat the people around us. Or when we always need to be the center of attention. Or when we are overly concerned with what other people think about us. It seems, then, that the solution for haughty eyes is to start thinking about others, to start being concerned about others, to make a decision to put others first. The biggest challenge, though, is recognizing this in ourselves, and that’s why we have the reminder: God hates **“haughty eyes.”** We are not to be looking down on people.

II. We also find (in verse 17) that God hates A LYING TONGUE.

Today, it seems that we are surrounded by lying; dishonesty in all forms. We have people stealing other people’s identities, living a lie. Husbands and wives lie to each other, hiding relationships, lying about how much they spend on something, lying about where they go or who they see. People lie on resumés. People misrepresent their background or even who they are. Here in Wisconsin, we even have a Liars’ Club (over in Burlington). They have a contest every year, to see who can come up with the best lie. The winner in 2019 was a man from Waupaca. Years ago, I remember reading the contest rules, and I remember them having a limit: No professionals. In other words, politicians are not allowed to enter the contest. They are the professional liars.

The question is: Do we hate lying like God hates lying? Is it as disgusting to us as it is to him? As with pride, the New Covenant also addresses lying. In Colossians 3:9, Paul says, **“Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside**

the old self with its evil practices.” In Ephesians 4:25 he says, **“Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE of you WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another.”** This applies to us. And so, maybe we should ask: Are we as upset about lying as we are by number 3?

III. Because the third abomination here comes in the form of a reminder that God hates HANDS THAT SHED INNOCENT BLOOD.

Notice the emphasis on **“innocent”** blood. Shedding blood is obviously a reference to killing; not an accident, but murder. And I also want us to notice that there is a distinction in God’s eyes when it comes to **“innocent”** blood. In other words, there is a difference between murder and a justified killing. Going back to life right after the great flood, God says in Genesis 9:6, **“Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God He made man.”** So here’s an example: When somebody sheds blood, by man his blood shall be shed. The first killing is murder; the second killing is the execution of justice. One is authorized by God, the other is not.

In our society, it’s easy to focus on stabbings and shootings, but let’s not forget the ongoing murder of children in the act of abortion. Some might suggest we can’t talk about that; that’s a political issue. How unfortunate, that the killing of children has become a political issue. If we support this based on our politics, we need to reevaluate our politics. We studied this in depth several years ago and discovered (based on statistics from the abortion industry itself) that the most commonly heard reasons for abortion actually account for only a small percentage of actual cases. By a vast majority, the reasons that are actually given are financial and matters of convenience (I’m not ready, this will affect my career or education, this will change my life, I am done having children, I don’t want to be a single mother, I’m having relationship trouble, and so on). Pregnancies resulting from rape or incest, or threatening the life of the mother, are a tiny percentage of the whole – and we are talking about more than a million every year, the equivalent of a 9-11 every single day. This should be repulsive to us. It is an abomination – the shedding of innocent blood. And speaking of 9-11, I learned something this week: The memorial in New York City includes the names of 10 women from the 9-11 attack and one woman from the previous bombing in 1993, and these names are followed by the words, “and her unborn child.” Three are similarly mentioned in the Oklahoma City Memorial, and one is mentioned at the Flight 93 memorial in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. How strange, that some children are mourned and memorialized when killed by an act of terror, while the killing of others is defended, even promoted.

And yet instead of moaning and groaning about abortion in general, we have the power to actually do something. As God’s people, we can foster or adopt. We can support pro-life organizations – we have CareNet and the Elizabeth House right here in Madison, over near the corner of Stoughton Road and East Wash (a few blocks straight south of the abortion clinic). These groups provide housing and supplies, and diapers, and formula to support women who choose life. If we hate this like God hates this, we are motivated to do something.

But back to this passage, the unborn child (scientifically speaking) is 1.) alive, 2.) human, and (according to God) 3.) innocent. And God hates the shedding of innocent blood. This should be revolting to us. The same goes for school shootings. The same goes for unjustified killings of any kind. God hates the shedding of innocent blood.

IV. As we go back to the text, we also find that God hates A HEART THAT DEVISES WICKED PLANS.

All of us have evil thoughts from time to time, but this is more than temptation. This is making plans. The word translated here as **“devise”** comes from a word meaning “to cut in, engrave, or plow.” In a sense, then, this refers to preparing the soil of our heart to do something we know to be wrong. If I’m **“devising evil plans,”** I am preparing myself to do evil. I’m getting ready for it. I’m plotting. I am taking steps to cover my tracks online before I go to the actual website. I’m thinking of what I’ll tell people if I get caught. I’m coming up with excuses ahead of time. I am **“devising.”** I am shaping or engraving my heart, just as I might craft a project out of wood or metal. I am making plans with the goal of committing an actual sin at some point. And this is a heart issue, Solomon says. Jesus says the same thing over in Matthew 15:19, **“For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.”** It’s easy for us to think that we can think about sin all we want, it’s easy to think that we don’t sin until we actually do the thing we are thinking about, but that is not the case. I saw a meme from a bike store earlier this week, it was a sign on the counter that said, “For an extra \$15 we will give you a receipt that matches what you tell your wife you paid.” Obviously, buying a bike is not necessarily evil, but it points to this idea of making plans, the idea of trying to cover our tracks ahead of time. God hates **“a heart that devises evil plans.”**

V. Going back to our passage, we also find that God hates FEET THAT RUN RAPIDLY TO EVIL.

And so we have the idea that when the heart thinks up some evil plan, some people have feet that are eager to carry it out. There’s no hesitation or restraint, but they willingly run toward sinful behavior. As we’ve discussed many times through the years, sin is sometimes described as “missing the mark.” We think of archery or the various shooting sports. We take aim, fully intending to hit the target, but we do miss from time to time. That’s what sin is: We try to do good, but we fail. Sometimes, though, sin is described as a “transgression.” It’s the idea of crossing a line God has told us not to cross. And usually, this happens due to human weakness. We get too close to the line, and we slip. But there are other times when God tells us not to cross a line, and we cross it on purpose. We don’t care, so we run toward the line. There’s more pleasure in sin than there is in following God. That’s what’s going on here – a willing and eager decision to cross the line. And God hates this.

We have a similar warning in the New Covenant. In the second half of Romans 1, many Christians are familiar with God’s description of homosexuality, but there’s quite a bit more in the last few verses as God also warns about those who are...

...filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.
(Romans 1:29-32).

It’s that last part that ties in here. We have all of these sins, and there are some who **“not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.”** That’s the **“feet that run rapidly to evil”** part of this, as God warns not just about the sin itself, but the attitude of giving hearty approval to it.

VI. Going back to Proverbs, we also find that God hates A FALSE WITNESS WHO UTTERS LIES.

And again, notice: It's not just the actual lie that God hates, but he hates the *"false witness"* who utters these lies. Sometimes, it's a bit difficult to separate the sin from the sinner. We've already handled the *"lying tongue,"* so this is now the second reference to lying, but this time, we're talking about a lie that is told with the purpose of hurting somebody. The goal here is to destroy somebody's life or reputation. Gossip involves sharing information that may or may not be true, but this is slander – this is spreading something we know is not true, and we do it for the purpose of hurting somebody. Perhaps I misrepresent what somebody did to me to try to make them look bad. Maybe I try to exaggerate somebody's mistake for the same reason. God hates this. God hates the person who does this. This is repulsive to God.

In the New Testament, this is what happens to Jesus in his sham of a trial in Matthew 26:59-60, *"Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death. They did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward..."* False witnesses crucified Jesus, so this is especially repulsive to God.

VII. Returning to our text, we find the seventh and final item in this list is that God hates ONE WHO SPREADS STRIFE AMONG BROTHERS.

And once again, this hatred is not just for the strife itself, but this hatred is toward the *"one who spreads strife."* This is personal. And as the last item, *"There are six things which the LORD hates, yes, seven which are an abomination to Him,"* this almost seems like the very worst. Compared to murder, we might minimize the spreading of conflict if we had to rank these things in some kind of order, but spreading strife seems to be in that, "But wait, there's more," category. In other words, out of all of these things, this one is about as bad as it gets, and so the Lord hates the *"one who spreads strife among brothers."*

Several translations refer to *"one who sows discord among brothers."* The NIV refers to *"a person who stirs up conflict in the community."* Like that phrase we looked at last week, we have the picture of a fertilizer spreader, a seed spreader, a salt spreader. There are some people who seem to thrive on conflict. They aren't happy until everybody's on edge. And here, the conflict is within the family. Of all the people we could have conflict with in this world, we certainly don't want strife within the family. But there are some people who always need to be going at it.

As parents, maybe we could try to see this from God's point of view. As parents, things go so much better when our kids are getting along. But we know the stress that comes when our kids get into it. How stressful for those of you who teach two have two students get into it. How stressful as a manager to have two employees get into it. How stressful as a camp director to have two campers go at it. It ruins my whole day to have to deal with that. So maybe we understand at least something of what God goes through when we get into it, and why he is so upset with someone who would *"spread strife between brothers."* We remember what Paul says in Galatians 5:15, *"But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another."* This is a real danger!

Conclusion:

As we look back over this passage and as we realize that God really does hate, we might also realize that we've done some of these things. We might still struggle with some of these things. At the same time, though, we also realize that God loves us. He loves us even when we are completely unlovable, even when what we do is an abomination. As Paul says in Romans 5:8-10,

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

Jesus died for us, even when we were **"enemies,"** but his love calls us to repent, to turn away from sin, and to obey the gospel (as we explained at the beginning of today's lesson). So, if we have sinned, if we have done the things in Proverbs 6, if we have done these things God hates, forgiveness is available. And if we've already obeyed the gospel, forgiveness is available again, when we confess, when we turn back, and when we go to God in prayer, asking for his forgiveness.

As we close our study, let's go to God in prayer:

Our Father in Heaven,

We praise you this morning for being a God who not only hates sin, but your love is so great that you offered your only Son in our place.

- Today, instead of looking down on others, we pray that we would humble ourselves and serve.
- Instead of lying, we pray that we would always tell the truth.
- Instead of shedding innocent blood, we pray that we might step in to protect the innocent.
- Instead of devising evil in our hearts, we pray that we might make plans for doing good.
- Instead of rushing to cross a line that you have told us not to cross, we pray that our feet would always run quickly toward doing what is right.
- We pray that we would always have the courage to testify truthfully.
- And we pray that as your people we would be the ones to promote peace within our Christian family.

This morning, we are thankful for Jesse's decision to obey the gospel. We are also thankful for Caleb and Kari. We pray that we might encourage each other to stay spiritually strong and to always do what is right.

Please, Father, hear our prayer. We come to you with these requests in the name of your son Jesus. AMEN.

To comment on this lesson: foullakeschurch@gmail.com