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# Holy Hatred

By **ANDY DIESTELKAMP**

Warning! Proceed with caution! The following opinions will be classified by some as hate speech. What a convenient label we have invented for words which we...hate. Do not misunderstand. There is such a thing as speech that is hateful and sinful, but let us not draw the irrational conclusion that all hate is therefore sinful.

Certainly, the attitude of hate is often condemned in scripture. Jesus positively said that the second greatest command in the Law of Moses was, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mk. 12:31). The legalistic Pharisees imagined a loophole. It doesn't say you can't hate your enemy! Jesus set them straight on that when he said, "Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you" (Matt. 5:43,44).

The beloved apostle John had some strong words for those who hate their brethren. He declared them to be in darkness and blinded (1 Jn. 2:9-11); he calls them murderers (3:15); and, if they claim to love God, he calls them liars (4:20).

Was this hate speech? Of course not! Rebuke, chastisement, and correction do not equal hate. In the very context of the Law of Moses from which Jesus quoted "Love your neighbor" it says, "You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke your neighbor and not bear sin because of him" (Lev. 19:17,18).

Our culture has developed this warped concept that rebuking someone else's behavior, lifestyles, choices, etc., is hateful. It scoffs at the concept of hating the sin, but

loving the sinner. The world demands that the only way to love someone is to accept his/her choices and refrain from any criticism, rebuke, or correction. The Scriptures teach otherwise. God's Word says that true love is seen in patient and diligent correction (Heb. 12:7-17; 2 Tim. 4:2-5).

This truth is further seen in the fact that hate can be a legitimate emotion. While hate is an emotion that we have a very difficult time handling in a godly way, it is nevertheless necessary.

The God in whose image we are created hates certain things. He hates idolatry (Deut. 12:29-32; Gen. 15:16). He hates vain worship (Isa. 1:13-15; 29:13; Amos 5:21-27; Matt. 23:23). He hates immorality. Proverbs 6:16-19 contains a list of seven things that God hates: haughty eyes, lying tongues, hands that shed innocent blood, wicked hearts, feet swift in running to evil, false witnesses and the divisive.

We must hate what God hates! Jesus praised the church in Ephesus for hating "the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate," (Rev. 2:6). We love God's Way and therefore "hate every false way" (Psa. 119:104, 128,163). "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil" (Prov. 8:13). "Hate evil, love good; establish justice in the gate" (Amos 5:15).

Hate is a powerful emotion and is often used improperly; but let us never forget that love was never intended to be used to cause us to tolerate something we should hate. When we tolerate what should be hated, justice and righteousness are neglected. The world will pressure us to love what God has condemned. In this call for "love" the world will appear to be taking the high road, but it can't be the high road when the tolerance of

sin masquerades as love. Love of the truth requires us to hate that which is false. Love of righteousness requires us to hate unrighteousness. Love of God requires us to hate that which is against God.

Hatred of these things, however, does not require or even allow us to take the law into our own hands. It requires us to shun evil, expose darkness and stand for truth; but vengeance belongs to God (Rom. 12:17-21). If the worldly hate what you say or what you stand for they will malign you, threaten you, attack you and perhaps even kill you. Christians must never use these carnal weapons (2 Cor. 10:3,4).

However, hate is not inherently carnal. As in most other things in life, disciples of Jesus will manifest their faith by the godly way in which they handle even such things as their hatred of sin. We must exercise self-control while hating what is evil.

If Satan can't get us to hate God's ways, then maybe he can turn our zealous hatred of every false way into a passion which rationalizes and justifies the virulent, caustic and vengeful power tactics that have become common in politics and labor disputes.

Party spirit can easily infect us so that we begin to think that our indignation is of the righteous variety, when in fact it has less to do with being defenders of the truth and more to do with tradition, position, influence and power.

Beware brethren, if we bite and devour one another, we will consume one another. Do not use your stand against falsehood as an opportunity for the flesh. Hate sin, but love one another (Gal. 5:13-15).

323 E. Indiana Ave., Pontiac, Illinois 61764  
e-mail: [aldiestel@bwsys.net](mailto:aldiestel@bwsys.net)

*"Therefore all Your Precepts concerning all things I consider to be right; I hate every false way" — Psa. 119:128*

# Reflections At A Stop Sign

By ED BRAND

I have been making a little survey. It is not scientifically accurate, nor are the conclusions I have drawn necessary ones. But they are interesting.

Many motorists do not stop when they approach a stop sign. They slow down and creep into the intersection. If not challenged by another “creeper” they proceed through the intersection on to the next one controlled by a stop sign. Then this stately vehicular dance is repeated. They do not seem to understand that “stop” means “stop,” as in “to cease motion.”

Ready for the cosmic conclusion (since this is not a discourse on traffic safety)? Some of us tend to become spiritual “creepers.” We whiz through life at such a break-neck speed that the spiritual intersections are minor/major irritations. Surely, we are not supposed to *stop*, even though the sign reads that way. Are you not with me yet? Let me explain.

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mk. 16:16). This verse really

can't really mean a believer must be immersed, even though Jesus said “and is baptized.” Many folks “creep” right through this verse because they have had some amount of water applied to them. In fact, some get irritated when they are challenged about their “baptism,” which isn't immersion, but was sprinkling or pouring. They think it is hardly worth discussing. They probably also think *stop* means *creep*. Interesting, isn't it?

Before I leave this stop sign discussion, permit me one more observation. Maybe one reason some drivers become “creepers” is because the route is so familiar, the boredom so acute, that they don't drive alertly. They are thinking about something else and don't really think about stopping—just slowing down.



Spiritual “creepers” tend to sort of drift along. They hear sermons about spiritual “stop signs” but they think it's mostly preacher-talk. After all, that's what he is supposed to do. They will never prepare themselves to teach others because their schedules are too tight right now, and besides, others are more talented than they. Their children participate in every kind of school activity possible, but congregational activities are unimportant. They don't intend for their “religion” to interfere with “life.”

Centuries ago, an inspired writer had some words of exhortation for the “creepers” of his day. Here it is: “Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest haply we drift away from them” (Heb. 2:1). The next time you approach a stop sign, think about what *stop* means. More importantly, the next time you read the word of God, think about what it *means*.

Then do it!

1988 Tanglewood Drive, Snellville, GA 30078  
e-mail: edbrand@mindspring.com

## Articles From the Days Gone By

# Some Brethren Think Samuel Swallowed A Camel



By LESLIE DIESTELKAMP

King Saul was like a lot of my brethren today. He was *very anxious to get the job done!* Saul just had to make a burnt offering, even if he had to do it unlawfully. After all, wasn't a burnt offering good? Yes, indeed! Then why be so concerned about incidentals? Why wait for Samuel to come and make the offering?

Some of my brethren are *unduly* anxious to get the job done. They are so anxious that they think “ways and means” are unimportant. After all, shouldn't we do good? Then why be so concerned with incidentals?

Samuel said to Saul, “What hast thou done?” Saul answered that the enemy was upon him and he knew an offering must be made, so “I forced myself, therefore, and offered a burnt offering” (1 Sam. 13:11-12).

Like some of my brethren he could have argued, “Surely, Samuel, you won't strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Can't you see that the important thing was to get the offer-

ing made? What difference who made it, or how? And anyway, Samuel, you shouldn't criticize me when you should have been here to make the offering yourself!”

Samuel said, “Thou hast done foolishly. Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord...” No one can question Saul's motive. His purpose was good, but in his anxiety to do right, he failed to keep God's law.

Some of my brethren today boast of being “progressive-minded”—brethren who believe that too much thought on details and methods of doing work results in little work being accomplished.

These brethren are much concerned with caring for the needy, but they care little for how God wants them cared for. They are greatly concerned with preaching, but it is not important to some of them as to how it is done. They see a great need for much money with which to do good (preach, help the needy, build church buildings, etc.), but it matters little how we get it. They are alarmed about the young people, so it matters little

what is done, just as long as we keep them interested.

Those of us who insist on a scriptural way of doing things are accused of being willing to do nothing. This, of course, implies that if we don't do what they want, the way they want it, we don't believe in doing anything. Because we don't do what they want done, it is assumed that we do nothing!

Just as He did in the days of Saul and Samuel, God has directed us, today, how to do what He wants the church to do. We can be just as wrong in doing a right thing the wrong way, as in doing nothing.

We should be careful to be “doers of the word, and not hearers only” (Jas. 1:22). That includes *doing things*, and it also includes *doing them the right way*. If some brethren had been there when Samuel said, “Thou hast done foolishly,” they would have patted him on the back to get him to belch up the camel they thought he swallowed!

This article first appeared in the  
NORTHERN WATCHMAN, February 17, 1952

# My 'Velcro' Friend

By AL DIESTELKAMP

Wise Solomon, moved by inspiration, wrote, "There is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." With no disrespect to my brothers in the flesh, I have long viewed Glenn Beasley as my "Velcro" friend. Being five years older than he, I had always thought that he would have some kind words to say about me at my funeral. Instead, our roles were reversed.

Glenn, who at the age of 56 died June 25, 2002. It would be safe to say that most of our readers were not blessed to know him, but by God's grace I hope you will enjoy living with him in our eternal home in heaven.

At the time of his death, he lived with his wife, Ruth, in Independence, Missouri, where he was a partner in a computer consulting business. He was an active member of the South Avenue church in nearby Blue Springs, Missouri. Jim Bailey, the preacher there, noted that Glenn was "a friend of preachers." How true!

Glenn was born in Arkansas, the son of William and Edna Beasley (now faithful members of the Lord's church in Columbia, Missouri). He is also survived by two daughters, Barbara Winton and Caren Beasley, as well as a brother, Chris Beasley.

Early in his life his family moved to DeKalb County, Illinois, just a few miles from where I now live. As a young man he made the most important decision of his life when he obeyed the gospel, being baptized into Christ for the remission of his sins. He remained faithful to that commitment his entire life.

His wisdom, even as a young man, was demonstrated on December 24, 1965, when he married Ruth Wartick, of Amberg, Wisconsin. Their partnership "as heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Pet. 3:7), has been a blessing to many.

It was while they were on their honeymoon that Glenn and Ruth showed up at the worship assembly of the church in Downers Grove, Illinois, where Connie and I worshiped. There was an immediate "connection" between us, and the beginning of a friendship that has lasted even beyond death.

Our friendship flourished as we worked and worshiped together at Downers Grove. Later we went in different directions geographically, but always remained close. We enjoyed being together, whether snow-bound in Iowa or vacationing in the Virgin

Islands. Even when things weren't going just as we thought they should, just being together made things more bearable, if not better.

While our wives would go shopping, discuss gardening, or work on Bible class material, we were satisfied just to be together. Almost always our discussions revolved around spiritual matters. We shared a common respect for God's word, and usually agreed in matters of controversy. We did not *always* agree, but we *always* respected each other.



Wm. Glenn Beasley  
1945-2002

One of the things that impressed me most about Glenn was his willingness to take a strong stand for truth even when it was not popular. He did so even in the face of criticism, sometimes standing alone for what he believed to be right. When it came to his opinions, Glenn was willing to compromise, but when it

came to his convictions, he found no room for compromise.

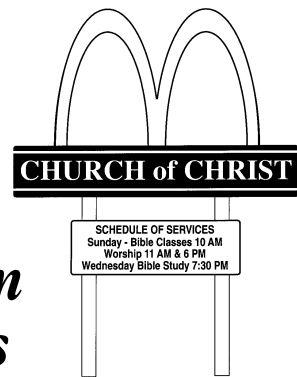
Glenn was a big man! He was a big man physically, but to me he was even bigger as a person. His passing has left a big void in my life. I purposefully delayed the writing of this article as long as possible in the hope that my grieving process had reached a point where I could write about him without tears in my eyes. It didn't work!

The apostle Paul wrote about the pros and cons of dying (see Phil. 1:23-25). Borrowing from some of his words I report that Glenn has departed to "be with Christ." Oh, how I would have liked for him to "remain in the flesh" so that he could continue for my "progress and joy of faith." But for *him*, to depart was "far better."

"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord" (Rev. 14:13). My friend has been blessed!

## A Friend of Think

Besides being my good friend, Glenn Beasley was a friend of this publication. Back when few of us had computers, Glenn volunteered his expertise to put the *Think* mailing list on his computer. He wrote the program which produced the labels in the order required by the post office for bulk mailing. Then for more than six years (1983-89) he maintained the mailing list and provided mailing labels. When we became computer literate enough to do it ourselves, he aided in the changeover.



## Golden Arches Out Front?

By AL DIESTELKAMP

The way some brethren act you'd think we ought to have golden arches in front of our church buildings! When you've seen one McDonald's restaurant you've seen them all. They're all pretty much alike. Even the decor is recognizable. We've come to expect uniformity in service businesses when they are part of a larger corporation, or even a franchise operation.

When my children were younger (and I was too), I embarrassed them one time when I visited a well-known donut franchise. My favorite was the regular glazed donut. I proceeded to order a variety of donuts, but when I asked for some glazed donuts the clerk informed me that they didn't have any. I was irritated! I said, "You call this a donut shop?! You might as well close your doors!" and I walked out. In my defense, I believe that brand has since ceased making enough "dough" and has gone out of business.

Perhaps our expectations in the business world have colored how some think local congregations should function. Though we all have Jesus as our Head, He did not build His church in such a way that local congregations function exactly alike. Except in those areas where God has been specific in how or when He wants things done, within the bounds of authority there are many options.

Judging from how irate some brethren get when they visit or move to a congregation and find them doing things differently than other congregations, I am forced to conclude that they fail to grasp the Bible concept of local autonomy. Please don't misinterpret this to mean more than I have said. There *are* some things which *must* be the same everywhere. When God's word specifies what, how, or when, *that's* when we must "all speak the same thing" (1 Cor. 1:10).

However, matters such as the times of worship, how many services, order of worship, choice of hymnbooks, style of singing and a host of other options are left up to the discretion of the local church, always keeping in mind that even within the bounds of things which are lawful, "not all things edify" (1 Cor. 10:23).

# AN ATTITUDE OF REVERENCE

By **RAY FERRIS**

Several years ago I was shocked and amazed while attending a funeral service in one of the funeral "chapels" at a mortuary in a neighboring city. While a crowd of friends assembled in preparation for the period of comfort, consolation, and exhortation for the bereaved family, and in commemoration of the deceased, a noisy group attending a wake for another who had died were loudly and boisterously talking and laughing. This was being done right in the doorway of the room where the "service" was about to begin, and even continued into that "service" to the point of disturbing many in the rear of the room.

This conduct seemed to me to be thoughtless and wholly out of order. There were people there who logically had a right to expect a period of quiet and respectful meditation as an honor to the dead as they prepared to make the final separation from the

tabernacle of clay that had housed the spirit of the deceased. They were denied this privilege by the utter thoughtlessness and lack of consideration of a few other people.

It would appear that we can be almost as thoughtless at times when we have assembled to worship God, or at least as we are in the process of doing so. We have long recognized in the Lord's church that the church building is not a "temple of God," and that many religious groups attach a reverence to the building, and especially to what they call the "sanctuary," that is totally unwarranted by scripture.

However, have we not tended to go to another extreme? The *church* is the temple of God! Such passages as 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 6:16 and Eph. 2:19-22 illustrate this affirmation. Is there any logical time in which we could more reasonably think of the Lord as being among His people than when Christians assemble to worship Him? Remember that Jesus said, "For where two or three have gathered together in My name, there I am in their midst" (Matt. 18:20).

One of the key functions of our worship on the Lord's day is to commemorate the death of Jesus on the cross for our sins. He said, "This is My body which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me," and again, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." Then Paul adds, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes" (1 Cor. 11:24-26).

Isn't it as logical for me to be loud, boisterous and jesting at a funeral service as to be like that when "the Lord is in His holy temple"? Let us give some consideration to the desires of others in this matter. Enter in

silence! Wait in patience!! Worship in reverence!!! Do we really act as though the Lord is among us when we come together? If not, why do we take the seriousness of this extremely solemn occasion so lightly?

203 Felmley Drive, Normal, Illinois 61761  
e-mail: rferris123@aol.com

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## A BROTHER AT OUR DOOR

Written by **Al Diestelkamp**

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dealing with institutionalism & the  
social gospel concept

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Al Diestelkamp <aldiestel@aol.com>

P.O. Box 891, Cortland, IL 60112 • (815) 756-9840

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Editor **AL DIESTELKAMP**  
P.O. Box 891  
Cortland, IL 60112-0891  
(815) 756-9840

E-mail **AlDiestel@aol.com**

Home Page **http://users.aol.com/thinkpaper**

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Cortland, IL 60112-0891

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