

Question: The apostle John said, "God is love". Is God capable of hatred?

It may seem improper to say that God hates something, especially in view of the scripture quoted above (1 Jn 4:8). However, other scriptures indicate that God, the source of all love, also has the capacity and the desire to hate certain things.

The love of God is unquestionable. His love for man is "greater far, than tongue or pen can ever tell" (F. M. Lehman). Inspiration laid that immovable stone centuries ago. Which one of us cannot quote John 3:16 by heart. By the way, Austin 3:16 seems to be more important to some people than John 3:16. They are in no way complimentary thoughts!

Yet, to examine the complete character of God is to understand His nature:

Rom 11:22 -- "Therefore consider the **goodness** and **severity** of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off."

God possesses both the qualities of "goodness and severity," and He displays those qualities when He deems it necessary.

Deu 12:31 -- "You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way; for every abomination to the LORD which He **hates** they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods."

God commanded Israel not to worship Him in the same way that the heathen worshipped their idol gods (Deu 16:21-22). These two passages indicate God's hatred of vain worship.

Psa 11:5 -- "The LORD tests the righteous, but the wicked and the one who loves violence His soul **hates**."

Wickedness and violence are against the Holy character of God, which is why He hates them.

Pro 6:16-19 -- "These six things the LORD **hates**, yes, seven are an abomination to Him:

- a proud look,
- a lying tongue,
- hands that shed innocent blood,
- a heart that devises wicked plans,
- feet that are swift in running to evil,
- a false witness who speaks lies,
- and one who sows discord among brethren."

Mal 2:16 -- "'For the LORD God of Israel says that **He hates divorce**, for it covers one's garment with violence,' says the LORD of hosts. 'Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.'"

God hates divorce because it is against His nature and the pattern of love He established in the Garden of Eden. Divorce, on grounds other than adultery (Mt 5:32), is an act of violence and treachery, destructive in every way. Marriage, on the other hand, is ordained of God as the wholesome expression of true happiness and love between one man and one woman during their life.

Other examples can be cited, but these are sufficient to show that The Living and True God, the source of all love, is also capable of hatred. Study your Bible and search the Truth, for unless we have a balanced view of God and His will for man, we can never please Him.