

HATING HATERS

He live in a time in which people are emphasizing their differences more than their common interests. Instead of pressing together, people are dividing and polarizing. Black, White, Asian, Hispanic, liberal, conservative, male, female, Republican and Democrat — so many are deeply sensitive, and one has to be careful about what you say, how you say it, and to whom you say it. The issues are dividing friends and family and are often the focus of the news and social media. All of this has come to the point of craziness!

What gets me even more is the self-justification that a person will use as a reason for hating. People seem to think they have the right to hate because they hate a hater. Did I lose you? Here is an example — there are those who justify hating white supremacists because these folks are a “hate group.” So people believe they have license to hate because those they hate are “bad people.”

Now flip the coin — there are those who hate Black Lives Mat-

ter supporters because some people think they are a hate group. And the wheels go round and round, each feeling justification to hate for a good reason!

OK TO HATE?

Is it ok to hate? What makes it ok? Does the fact that we have others who agree with us define whom we can hate — does that somehow make it ok? How can we deal with hate?

The Bible tells us, “But I say unto you, *Love your enemies,*

BY JEFF REICH





THE ISSUES ARE DIVIDING FRIENDS AND FAMILY AND ARE OFTEN THE FOCUS OF THE NEWS AND SOCIAL MEDIA.

bles them that curse you, *do good to them that hate you*, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44). In theory this sounds like the Christian’s golden rule, but when emotions get the best of us, reason goes out the window.

I recently saw a touching news article about a black man who was hugging a white supremacist while asking him, “Why do you hate us?” I thought, *Now that’s the way you do it! — by love*. While I strongly disagree with many political and racial issues so often held, I do not hate these misguided individuals. If they do something that hurts another person or personal property, they should be held accountable by civil law. Violence and damage to personal property is totally unacceptable.

However, people should be allowed to believe what they want as long as they do not hurt others. I know there are a lot of complex issues, which this article does not have room to address, but people should be free to think and hold views, even if others disagree. After all, we live in a country that boasts

the Constitutional rights of Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. Do we not see how hypocritical and misguided we can become when we justify hate in any form?

BLIND LEADING THE BLIND

When I was around 30 years of age, a young man who was a friend of ours came from Oregon, accompanied by his girlfriend, to visit us for a weekend. He had almost become an Adventist Christian, but while attending the University of Oregon he instead had become a radical socialistic atheist due to the influence of one of his professors.

It did not take long to realize that everything my family stood for he was against. We home schooled. He said we needed to have our kids in public school so their minds could be shaped for our future society. We disagreed on many moral and social issues. And because we were Christians, he thought us to be ignorant for believing in a God. It was a very uncomfortable weekend to say the least.

But here is the punch line — *Laymen Ministries* was just getting off the ground at this time, and I had just finished writing an article on Bible prophecy dealing with the *Image to the Beast*. This article talked about the work of the United Nations in connection with the World Council of Churches and Catholicism in promoting a one-world government united by a social gospel. I let my friend read this article just to see what he would say.

When he finished, he came into my office and slammed the article down on my desk. “This is Fascist propaganda,” he stated. “One of my best friends is the regional president for the National Council

WE, AS GOD'S PEOPLE, SHOULD NOT LET DIFFERENCES DIVIDE US. THE TRUTH SHOULD UNITE US.

of Churches, and his and my worldviews are just like this!" he exclaimed while crossing his fingers in front of my face! I sat at my desk, a bit shocked, thinking about what he had just said. Here was a socialistic atheist who stated his worldviews were the same as a pastor and regional president of the National Council of Churches. I found that this information only validated the article this individual had just read.

But he was not finished. "When we come to power," he said with a look of determination on his face, "it is Fascist people like you that our new society will have to eliminate." Shortly after this incident, they gathered up their things and left. We never saw them again. I guess from his worldview, he saw me spreading hate because I talked about Christians being persecuted in the last days by a coalition of church/state powers tied together by a socialistic religion not based on Bible truth.

My thoughts went back to how the Nazis started spreading hate in regards to the Jews in the 1930s and thus swayed public opinion. Didn't people see what they were doing? Spreading hate for what they deemed was a "good cause" led to the death of millions of Jews. People in our day and time don't think something like this could happen again, but I disagree.

ROOT TO PERSECUTION

The question must be asked, "Can hate turn into persecution?" Certainly. And we are told that in the last days there will come a persecution of those who are faithful to God

and His commandments. How could such a thing happen in a country that has long been the defender of religious freedom? As we watch the news and the current events, with hate becoming such an acceptable thing, we see the possible handwriting on the wall.

The prophecies of the Bible, and especially the Three Angels' Messages of Revelation 14, tell us there will be a test that separates the true from the false. Deceptions will run high, and our only safety is in following the Word of God and upholding His Commandments. We are told, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). And in the last days of this earth's history, we see that "...at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and *there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time:* and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Daniel 12:1).

Our world has changed a great deal in the last 15 years. People's minds are being conditioned. We live in a time when we could wake up one morning and the world as we know it will have changed. Some think these things will never happen, but as we simply look around us, with eyes that have been anointed with the salve of the Holy Spirit, we can tell the last days are upon us.

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of

their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Timothy 3:1-7).

We, as God's people, should not let differences divide us. The truth should unite us. We can have our differences, and we should stand up to injustice when it happens — but let's not turn our principles into hate. Hate will turn to anger, anger to rage, and then rage to murder. That is the natural progression.

Our country is sliding down a slippery slope that will soon lead to persecution of God's people. Some think this could never happen again, but it seems the masses do not learn the lessons from the past. In the very end, there will only be two groups: those who turn against the truths of the Bible and those that "keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12).